14  FRA Welcomes FO Steve Cox
16  FRA Mourns the Passing of PNP Bob Bastian
28  Retaining Current Members
If you or a loved one has been diagnosed with, or died from asbestos related lung cancer or mesothelioma, we may be able to help you get monetary compensation from the asbestos companies.

With over 65 years of collective experience in asbestos litigation, the professionals at Bergman Draper Ladenburg welcome the chance to provide you with the highest quality representation and the individual attention you deserve.

Call for information and a free consultation.

The Northwest’s Leading Asbestos Litigation Firm

BERGMAN DRAPER LADENBURG

614 First Avenue
4th Floor
Seattle, WA 98104

206.957.9510
888.647.6007 Toll Free
www.bergmanlegal.com

We accept cases throughout the United States and Canada
Featured

18 FEEDING THE FLEET
U.S. Navy Culinary Specialists (CS) understand the delicate and powerful relationship between food, crew morale and readiness. Today’s CSs are passionate about food and committed to serving healthy, tasty meals to the crew.

Departments

2 COMMUNICATIONS
5 NED PERSPECTIVE
6 SHIPMATE FORUM
8 ON & OFF CAPITOL HILL
Sequestration Cuts May Grow Larger
16 IN MEMORIAM: PNP ROBERT L. BASTIAN
28 MEMBERSHIP MATTERS
Retaining Current Members
31 REUNIONS / LOOKING FOR...
32 TAPS
34 NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES
36 FRA AUXILIARY NEWS
Message from National President Diane Hoover

LOYALTY, PROTECTION AND SERVICE
FRA IS A CONGRESSIONALLY CHARTERED, NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION ADVOCATING FOR CURRENT AND FORMER ENLISTED MEMBERS OF THE U.S. NAVY, MARINE CORPS AND COAST GUARD ON CAPITOL HILL. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP, PLEASE VISIT WWW.FRA.ORG OR CALL 800-FRA-1924.

ON THE COVER
Forks at the Ready: Today’s military personnel are well-trained, well-equipped and well-fed, thanks to the tremendous work of Navy Culinary Specialists.
Preparation is Key

NATIONAL CONVENTION IS UPON US!! As this issue of FRA Today goes to print, a whirlwind of preparation activities are taking place all over the country — all aimed at making our annual gathering in Chattanooga as productive and pleasant as possible. There are countless moving parts involved in making an event of this size happen.

The 2013 National Convention Committee is making the final arrangements for meeting rooms, meals, entertainment, the Welcome Aboard party (don’t forget your sock hop attire!), hospitality room, trips to Lookout Mountain and other area attractions, and a hundred other details that will surely make this convention a smashing success.

The staff at FRA National Headquarters (NHQ) is equally focused on convention preparations: printing delegate kits, programs and signage; confirming guest speakers, organizing workshops, arranging audio-visual support and making arrangements to get all the required laptop computers, office supplies and other necessities from Virginia to Tennessee.

Shipmates and Auxiliary members are making travel arrangements, committee chairs are planning their respective convention meetings and delegates are preparing to represent their respective branches in conducting FRA and Auxiliary business. FRA is a supremely democratic organization and convention is a time for shipmates’ voices to be heard.

Among the important decisions FRA shipmates will make in Chattanooga is the election/selection of a new National Executive Director (NED). The next NED will determine the future of the Association in many ways and each of the candidates being considered is highly qualified. I’m confident delegates will choose wisely and well.

Regardless of who succeeds NED Joe Barnes in this important position, he will have large shoes to fill. NED Joe has ably steered FRA for the past 11 years and has been a unifying force for the NHQ Team. Doing what’s best for the Association has been the cornerstone of Joe’s leadership style and the guiding principle in every decision. On behalf of the entire FRA staff, I wish him fair winds and following seas as he begins the next chapter of his personal and professional life.

NED Barnes’ influence has been felt on Capitol Hill and throughout the Sea Services community. Shown (at left) with FRA’s former Legislative Counsel Mack McKinney and former Missouri Senator Ike Skelton during an impromptu meeting in Skelton’s office and (right) with outstanding Sailors from Naval Sea Systems Command who visited FRA NHQ earlier this year.

Lauren Armstrong is FRA’s Director of Communications and serves as the Managing Editor of FRA Today. Please contact her at lauren@fra.org.
TO HONOR YOUR SERVICE TO COUNTRY

EXCLUSIVE UNITED STATES NAVY DIAMOND DRESS WATCH

Personalized With Your Initials & Service Years

Featuring Our Official Navy Emblem Dial, Minted in High Relief and Set with a Brilliant Diamond at 12 O’clock

- Created for Veterans Commemoratives by Selco of Oklahoma, custom watchmakers since 1935.
- Dress Watch Case and Bracelet decorated with 24 KT Gold detailing.
- Fine quartz movement for accurate timekeeping within seconds per month.
- Case back laser-engraved with your initials and years of service.
- Order with confidence—guaranteed 100% or return within 30 days.

YOU HAVE EARNED THE RIGHT TO WEAR THIS EXCLUSIVE U.S. NAVY DIAMOND WATCH

CAREER SERVICE BIRTHSTONE RINGS

Handcrafted in America featuring your service emblem in 10kt gold, career insignia, plus TEN of your Personal Birthstones or Diamonds!

- Each ring is handcrafted by America’s premiere maker of Military Rings.
- Solid 10KT Gold Navy Service Branch Emblem sits atop a brilliant capstone.
- Eight personal birthstones of your choice set on the inner bezel. United States Navy in bold letters on the outer ring, along with two additional birthstones.
- The ring body is .925 Sterling Silver detailed with genuine 24KT Gold.
- The inside band is solid & smooth for comfort fit. Rings are never hollowed out!
- As a final touch of exclusivity your ring will be engraved with your initials and years of service.
- Your Career Insignia is featured on the side of the ring, opposite the United States Navy Emblem.
- Thank you priced at just $239* with an affordable payment plan available. (Optional genuine Diamond Rings are $389*).

YOUR CHOICE OF NAVY CAREER INSIGNIA:

- NAVY SERVICE
- QUADRANT ELECT. TECH
- NAVY ATOMIC ELECT. TECH
- NAVY ELECT. TECH
- NAVY TECHNICAL ENGG
- NAVY ELECTRONIC ENGG
- NAVAL ORDNANCE SPECIALIST
- NAVY MECHANICAL SPECIALIST
- NAVY MARKSMAN SPECIALIST
- NAVY RADIO SPECIALIST
- NAVY NUCLEAR SPECIALIST
- NAVY MULTI-ROLE SPECIALIST

YOUR CHOICE OF BIRTHSTONE:

(Names refer to color. Stones simulated for consistent size and color. Optional genuine Diamond rings available: Eight 1/2 PT (inner bezel) and two 3 PT (outer bezel).)

Garnet Amethyst Aquamarine Zircon Emerald Alexandrite Ruby Peridot Sapphire Rose Zircon Golden Sapphire Blue Zircon

FREE FLAG PIN WITH EVERY ORDER

SHIPPING ADDRESS: (We CANNOT ship to P.O. Boxes) Allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

Name ____________________________
Address _____________________________________________
City ___________________ State ______ Zip ____________

Phone # ____________________________ Email ____________________________

Yes. I wish to order the U.S. Navy Diamond Dress Watch personalized as follows:

CAREER CHOICE: (N1 thru N16), see above: _______ BIRTHSTONE NO. (1): ________
I prefer all diamonds for an extra $150* added to my first payment.

RINGSIZE (Use the ring size below right or check with a jeweler): _____

INITIALS (3): ____________________________ SERVICE YEARS: ____ to ____

I need send no money now! Bill me in four monthly installments of $59.75* each, with the first payment due prior to shipment. My satisfaction is guaranteed or I may return my ring within 30 days for replacement or refund.

CALL TOLL FREE TO ORDER:
1-800-255-3048
Mon - Fri from 9am - 5pm EST. Please have Credit card & ring size ready.

FREE FLAG PIN WITH EVERY ORDER!

ORDER BY NOV. 8TH FOR CHRISTMAS DELIVERY!

PURE GOLD AND DIAMONDS

For fastest service call toll free to order: 1-800-255-3048

FOR OTHER FINE MILITARY RINGS & WATCHES VISIT VETERANS COMMEMORATIVES ONLINE AT VETCOM.COM

For Christmas Delivery! 

* Plus $14.95 for engraving, shipping, and handling. PA residents add 6% state sales tax.

© ICM 2012-2013

CARSTD-NA-1013

ORDER BY NOV. 8TH FOR CHRISTMAS DELIVERY

Free shipping for U.S. orders over $50.00. Other shipping and handling rates apply. PA residents add 6% state sales tax.

Visit us online at vetcom.com
We were there when you landed on the northern coast of France.
We were there when you returned to the Philippine shore.
We were there when you fought in Korea and Vietnam.
We were there when you rolled across the deserts of Iraq.
We were there then. We will always be there.

Serving the insurance needs of Enlisted Military for over 73 years.
Thanks for Your Support!

THIS IS MY FINAL column as FRA’s National Executive Director and I’d like to thank the shipmates of our great Association for their strong support since I was first selected to serve in this position at the 75th National Convention (Orlando, Fla.) in 2002.

It’s been an honor to serve as your NED (formerly NES). This job has been especially fulfilling and the culmination of my professional career following retirement from the United States Navy in late 1993. My Navy career (professional musician, public affairs assistant, PAO/communications director and department head), education, teaching experience and previous positions at FRA helped develop leadership and management skills that have served me well.

Prior to being selected NED, I had the privilege of serving as FRA’s Legislative Director (1994–2002), learning from the penultimate mentor, shipmate and friend, the late SgtMaj Mack McKinney, USMC (Ret.). Mack was known as the “dean of military legislative advocates” and, as FRA’s legislative counsel before his passing in 2005, his guidance was invaluable.

I also wish to thank PNP and PNFS Jerry Sweeney for his strong support and assistance, particularly during the early years of my tenure as NES, as well as from recently retired FO Paul Rigby. I must also acknowledge the strong encouragement and support of other PNPs — something that will continue to be especially important to whoever is selected as the next NED.

National Headquarters (NHQ) operations are much different today than when I first began serving as NES and I must recognize the very dedicated and professional team we have working at NHQ. I’m grateful for their strong commitment to FRA’s mission and their efforts to support leadership and assist our members. Because of their skills and commitment to our Association, we’ve established appropriate controls and operating procedures that ensure smooth day-to-day operations and compliance with increasingly stringent oversight requirements for tax-exempt organizations.

“Judge your success not by what you achieve, but by what others achieve through you.”

Together we’ve expanded the scope of work at NHQ to now include the in-house iMIS membership administration program, fund-raising and IT support, an expanded VSO program to help train shipmates at the Branch level, a separate FRA Education Foundation to expand awareness and support of our scholarship program, a calls program for non-renewing and new MALs, and FRA is now a member of the Veterans Day National Committee. We’ve also established the annual national convention sponsorship program and scheduled annual Hill visits for FRA leaders in conjunction with the mid-year meeting of our National Board of Directors.

As indicated in my 86th National Convention Report, NHQ has operated in “recession mode” since 2003, resulting in expenditures consistently below (around 85 percent) annually budgeted amounts. Despite this, we’ve sustained a strong financial standing, adjusted expenditures to match revenue, increased non-dues revenue, minimized staff turnover and maintained a highly regarded and strongly committed professional staff. We’ve also sustained a consistently strong and impressive “case statement,” channeling 85 percent of our revenue from dues, donations and other sources directly to member services. This is a direct result of bringing membership admin, fundraising and membership renewals/card processing in-house — the latter during the past Association year.

We’ve also worked hard to address the Association’s foremost challenge — sustaining a strong membership base. This effort has included an outreach program, calls program, national convention forums, developing a strategic plan and an associated special (and now-permanent) future planning committee, a marketing/communications plan, utilizing electronic communications campaigns and partnering with other organizations to expand awareness of and support for the Association and its important mission.

FRA continues as a steadfast and recognized leader in the military and veteran communities and is widely known as one of only a few organizations that is truly engaged and working enlisted personnel issues on Capitol Hill, i.e., actions speak louder than words.

I’ve also had the privilege to serve consecutive terms as co-chair of The Military Coalition (TMC) since 2004 — which has afforded many opportunities to interact with congressional leaders and staff, and testify annually; not only representing FRA shipmates, but the collective membership of 32 or more other military and veteran organizations. TMC’s work has impacted all who are currently serving, those who’ve served in the past, their widows, families and survivors — and our magnificent wounded warriors.

continued on page 31
Concerns about “Obamacare”

Exactly how is Obamacare going to take care of the masses, when the government can’t even take care of the veterans? The backlog for disability claims and treatment in many veteran hospitals is inadequate at best. It’s way past time to voice your concerns and complaints to your elected officials. Don’t wait for the other guy; he’s waiting for you. Do like you did in the service and work as a team.

Robert J. (Chuck) Riley

I am 80 years old and my wife is 71. We both have Medicare and Tricare-for-Life. We have been very pleased with our medical coverage and do not wish change. We are beginning to find it hard to believe that famous Obama statement: “If you like your health care, you can keep your health care.” Can you enlighten us on what we can expect?

Ed Coffin

FRA Response: FRA worked to make sure Tricare was excluded from the Affordable Care Act (i.e. Obamacare), so your Tricare-for-Life will not change as ACA is implemented. That said, there is no law protecting pay and benefits, and it’s important to maintain membership in the FRA, track what’s happening on Capitol Hill and weigh in regularly with your elected officials.

Protecting Personnel Programs

I am a retired senior chief petty officer and served for 24 years aboard four nuclear-powered attack submarines during the period of 1967–1991. I participated in many submarine special operations and missions. It pains me to see the shape the Navy and DoD is in. I see my Tricare Prime benefits eroded, base personnel being “furloughed,” while gophers are being protected and, in general, the Navy going downhill. I served my country and the Navy proudly and was very honored to be a member of “The Silent Service.” I thought that getting a SecDef who was a veteran would mean the DoD would now honor its promises to veterans, instead of cutting benefits, laying personnel off and, in the Navy’s case, fighting over which uniform to wear. I was proud to wear khakis, dress blues and submarine coveralls underway. I was also a diver, so I wore divers’ greens. It seems to me that the Navy has more worries than what color of BDU’s to wear. I am glad to have an organization like the FRA fighting for us. Keep up the great work.

Louis Slate

I would like to see FRA propose [legislation] that [would allow] enlistment contracts and commission appointments to be modified to stipulate the person being enlisted or commissioned be guaranteed they will retain all benefits promised at the time of entry into the service. It seems our government is willy-nilly and all-too-willing to cancel those terms under which we entered the service years ago. The reason many entered was due to the benefits promised. Heaven knows in the 1950’s the pay was poor and living conditions worse, but we thought if we managed to survive 20 or more years service, we would have the promised benefits. Now they say they weren’t promised.

I recommend the entry contract stipulate what benefits they will receive and further state these will not be cancelled by anyone at anytime.

Jim Borgman

Review of the Review

I was very happy to read of your “book review” and, yes, I think you should put your “privilege” out there when you think it may be of benefit or enjoyment for us shipmates. I was particularly pleased to read of your (first) endorsement of Shadow Divers. Here in Wisconsin, we enjoy listening to “Chapter a Day” on public radio. After I heard quite a few chapters read on the air, I decided to buy the book and read it for myself. The radio reader was particularly “in” to the role as a book reader and caused us to mourn a missed hour! Very intense!

I was a shipmate on the good ship USS Preserver (ARS-8) when we loaded up the Bathyscaph Trieste [a deep-diving research vehicle] to locate the sunken submarine USS Thresher that went down 220 miles east of Boston. The sub was on sea trials when she went down. So, Shadow Divers has some relevance to me. Although I was not on a submarine, nor a diver, I was on the ship that located a sub. Thank you so much for being “our” managing editor. And yes, please tell us about other books that may be of interest to us.

Dave Kampa

Submissions Send Shipmate Forum letters to Editor, FRA Today, 125 N. West St. Alexandria, VA 22314. E-mail submissions may be sent to fratoday@fra.org. Please include “Shipmate Forum” in the subject line. FRA reserves the right to select and edit letters for publication. Letters published in Shipmate Forum reflect the opinions and views of FRA members. They do not necessarily reflect the official position of FRA as a whole. FRA is not responsible for the accuracy of letter content.
When the sun turns up the heat, you need a necklace that will make a splash. Ever since ancient times, sailors have sworn by aquamarine for protection on the open water. We guarantee it to turn heads, by land or by sea. And today you don’t have to leave shore to reap the benefits of this legendary blue gem, because your ship has come in. Today, you can wear this spectacular 300-carat Maré Aquamarine Necklace for only $99!

Claim your “Mermaid’s Treasure.” On any vessel crossing the oceans, there was no more precious cargo than aquamarine. Sailors paid handsomely for its power, considering it their most valuable commodity. In scientific terms, the chemical composition of our Maré Necklace beads are cousins to precious emeralds. They begin life as geological twins underground, colorless until something sparks a change. Sprinkle in a dash of minerals and one becomes vivid green and the other becomes brilliant blue. That’s the beauty of chemistry.

A legend among luxury jewelers. Named for the Latin words for “water of the sea,” aquamarine shines with all the colors of the ocean. Each bead is like a droplet of the sea frozen in space and time. Walk into the most exclusive retail jewelers and you’ll find aquamarine in a place of honor. Fifth Avenue thinks nothing of offering a strand of aquamarine “pebbles” for nearly $12,000. But with a color this captivating, you deserve more than a dollop. That’s why we collected the bluest stones from three continents, polished them to perfection and arranged them in this double-stranded, 300-carat masterpiece.

Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed. Try the Maré Necklace for 30 days. If you don’t fall in love, send it back for a complete refund of your purchase price. It’s that simple. But once your wear 300 carats of aquamarine, you’ll find that there's no better way to make a splash without getting wet!

Necklace Independently Appraised at $1,590*

This is how you make a splash...

Maré Necklace (300 ctw) $179
Now Only $99 Save $80

Call now to take advantage of this fantastic offer.
1-888-373-0654
Promotional Code MAN279-06
Please mention this code when you call.

* For more information concerning the appraisal, visit http://www.stauer.com/appraisedvalues.asp.
Sequestration Cuts May Grow Larger

**Furloughs for Civilian Defense** employees were reduced from 11 days to six and commissaries have returned to regular hours of operation, but shipmates are reminded that FY 2013 was only the beginning of the sequestration spending cuts mandated by the Budget Control Act (BCA) of 2011. Provisions of the BCA will be implemented over 10 years and the cuts may grow with each year, unless alternative spending reductions are authorized. It’s also important to note that 50 percent of the cuts must come from the Defense Department (DoD), despite the fact that DoD makes up only 17 percent of the total budget. This fiscal year’s defense cuts amounted to $37 billion and next year (FY 2014) those reductions may increase to $52 billion. Neither the Administration’s 2014 budget request nor the House and Senate versions of the Defense Authorization bill (H.R. 1960, S. 1197) account for sequestration cuts.

Congress reconvened the week of September 9th and FRA, along with 33 other Military Coalition organizations, signed a letter to all members of Congress expressing concerns about continued defense cuts and asking lawmakers to work together to “eliminate the harmful effects of sequestration.” The letter warns that such broad-based cuts will compromise our nation’s defenses and “the very viability of the All-Volunteer Total Force.” Members are also strongly urged to use the FRA Action Center (www.fra.org) to ask their elected officials to eliminate Defense spending from sequestration.

**Bill Introduced to Fund Coast Guard Museum Operations**

Rep. Joe Courtney (Conn.), co-chairman of the Coast Guard Caucus, recently introduced the “United States Coast Guard Commemorative Coin Act” (H.R. 2932) that would honor the men and women of the Coast Guard and support the establishment of the National Coast Guard Museum. Despite its significant role in our national defense, the U.S. Coast Guard is the only uniformed service without a national museum to showcase its 223-year history.

In 2004, legislation was passed authorizing the National Coast Guard Museum to be located in New London, Conn. Construction is expected to begin in 2014 and the museum is scheduled to open in 2017. This bipartisan bill seeks to authorize the minting of a special commemorative coin and proceeds from sales would be used to support the development and operation of the museum. The National Coast Guard Museum Association, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting the facility and expanding awareness of the important history, service and missions of the Coast Guard, will administer the funds generated from coin sales.

Members are urged to use the FRA Action Center (www.fra.org) to ask their Representative to support this legislation.
FRA Briefs Navy and Coast Guard Retiree Councils

The Secretary of the Navy Retiree Council recently met at the Washington Navy Yard and NED Joe Barnes briefed the panel on current legislative issues associated with retiree benefits. He summarized major challenges impacting the military retiree community and ongoing threats to earned benefits. These include targeting retirees for drastically higher healthcare fees, the prospect of additional sequestration budget cuts in 2014 and beyond, the recently appointed Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission established by the 2013 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), and the recently announced “10-15-55 Plan,” proposed by the U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute that, if approved, would significantly change current retirement benefits. (See story on below.)

The SecNav Retiree Council is co-chaired by MCPON-8 John Hagan and USMC retired Lt. Gen. Ron Coleman, and meets annually to consider issues of importance to retired Navy and Marine Corps personnel and their families. The council is organized into four committees and submits a report on their findings/recommendations to the Secretary of the Navy. FRA has provided legislative updates to the Council for many years.

FRA also shared similar information with members of the Commandant of the Coast Guard’s Retiree Council. Director of Legislative Programs John Davis and Phil Odom of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) recently briefed the council during its annual meeting in D.C.

FRA salutes the eighth Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard (MCPOCG-8) and FRA’s Past National Chaplain Vince Patton and retired RADM Ronald Silva, USCG, who have served as council co-chairmen since 2002 and 2010, respectively. They are being relieved by RADM John C. Acton, USCG (Ret.), and retired MCPOCG-10 and FRA Shipmate Charles “Skip” Bowen for the coming year. Penny Collins, FRA’s director of Membership Development, is a member of the council, which meets each year to ensure retirees’ concerns are brought to the attention of USCG leadership and that members of the retired community are kept informed on key legislative initiatives.

USCG Council members also visited FRA NHQ for a reception, where Patton and Silva acknowledged the great work of NED Joe Barnes and the FRA Legislative Team, and thanked FRA for its continued support of Coast Guard programs on Capitol Hill.

Study Would Delay Retirement Benefits

The Strategic Studies Institute, which is part of the U.S. Army War College, recently published a report entitled “A Framework for Restructuring the Military Retirement System,” which proposes a plan for reforming the military retirement system. Dubbed the “10-15-55 plan,” the report calls for service members and the military to contribute to a 401(k) account, starting as soon as military service begins. If the member leaves the military after 10 years, he/she would get their contributions returned and 50 percent of the military’s contribution. After 15 years of service, the service member controls his/her contributions and 100 percent of the military contribution. Service members who stay for 20 or more years would also be eligible for a defined benefit plan as it currently exists, with the exception that they would not receive any benefits until age 55. Current service members would be grandfathered under the existing plan.

The proposal is only a report and has not been introduced as legislation. In addition, the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission will also be examining the military retirement system. FRA strongly opposes efforts to “civilianize” military benefits that have been earned with 20 or more years of arduous military service.

VA Letter to TFL Beneficiaries Explained

More than 12,000 TRICARE-for-Life (TFL) beneficiaries, who are also in Priority Group 8 at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), received a letter explaining a change in the out-of-pocket expenses incurred at VA medical facilities. In the past, these veterans used VA facilities for care not related to a service-connected disability, they’ve paid very little out of pocket if they used their TRICARE benefit.

By law, TFL pays only after Medicare and any other health insurance benefit have been paid. Although the VA is TRICARE-authorized, it is not Medicare-certified, and therefore cannot receive payments from Medicare. Current reimbursements to the VA have been more than authorized and, effective October 1, 2013, TRICARE will only pay the required 20 percent of TFL allowable charges. TFL beneficiaries seeking non-service-related care at the VA will have to pay the remaining balance. All military retirees should enroll with the VA, regardless of whether their health conditions are service-connected or not.

In related news, Rep. Michael Michaud (Maine) introduced the “Medicare VA Reimbursement Act” (H.R. 2953) to address this situation. The measure seeks to authorize Medicare reimbursement for eligible veterans to improve access for Medicare-eligible veterans and enhance health care funding for the VA. Most veterans pay into Medicare for most of their lives, yet the law prohibits them from using this earned benefit at VA facilities.

The legislation is listed on the FRA Action Center (www.fra.org) and members are urged to contact their U.S. Representative to ask for their support.
**House Panel Reviews Preventable Deaths at VA Medical Centers**

The House Veterans Affairs Committee recently held a field hearing at the Allegheny County Courthouse in Pittsburgh, Pa., to examine the emerging pattern of preventable veteran deaths and serious patient-safety issues at VA medical centers across the country. The Committee focused on recent events at VA medical centers in Atlanta, Pittsburgh, Dallas, Buffalo and Jackson (Miss.), and discussed whether the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has the proper management and accountability structures in place to stop this disturbing trend.

Rep. Jeff Miller (Fla.), committee chairman, complained that the VA “has consistently given executives who preside over these events glowing performance reviews and cash bonuses,” citing an instance where the deaths of five Pittsburgh veterans from Legionnaires disease were kept secret for a year. The top VA official in that region received a $63,000 bonus only a few days after the VA Inspector General report was released indicating that the outbreak was a result of mismanagement. In addition to numerous allegations of poor patient care, the IG report also attributed a patient death by overdose and two suicides in the Atlanta facility to mismanagement and cited the reuse of disposable insulin pens as the cause of 18 veterans contracting hepatitis in Buffalo.

Robert Petzel, VA Undersecretary of Health, told the committee that “patient care issues raised by the committee are serious, but not systematic.” Petzel also provided the committee information outlining disciplinary actions taken in response to these events and steps VA has taken to ensure these problems are avoided in the future.

---

**GAO Study Addresses VA Bonuses**

A recent Government Accountability Office (GAO) report indicates that Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) employees have received millions of dollars in “excellent” performance bonuses while disabled veterans experience exorbitant delays in the adjudication of their disability claims. GAO confirmed gaps in information, and a need to more appropriately administer this type of performance award and improve oversight to ensure that medical centers comply with award requirements.

“I am very disappointed in these findings,” said House Veterans Affairs Committee Ranking Member Michael Michaud (Maine), who requested the study. “When I requested this evaluation, it was due to concerns that were raised through hearings and other forums that health care providers (at the VA) were being given performance pay and awards when they did not deserve it. This report appears to confirm that perception.”

FRA is closely monitoring the backlog of disability claims and advocating a solution to the continuing problem for too many of our nation’s veterans, which is also a violation of the nation’s solemn commitment to properly care for disabled veterans. A copy of the report is available at www.gao.gov/assets/660/656185.pdf.

---

**VA Offers Retroactive Benefits**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently announced that veterans filing original, fully developed claims (FDC) for service-connected disability compensation may be entitled to up to one year of retroactive disability benefits. The retroactive benefit will be considered for FDCs filed between August 6, 2013, and August 5, 2015, and is a result of an FRA-supported comprehensive legislative package (H.R. 1627 – P.L. 112-154) signed into law last year. Only veterans submitting their first compensation claim as an FDC are potentially eligible for up to one year of retroactive disability benefits under the newly implemented law.

“VA strongly encourages veterans to work with veterans’ service organizations (VSO) to file fully developed claims and participate in this initiative, since it means more money in eligible veterans’ pockets simply by providing VA the information it needs up front,” said Allison A. Hickey, Undersecretary for Benefits. “At the same time, it helps reduce the inventory of pending claims by speeding the process.”

Filing an FDC requires the veteran to provide all supporting evidence in his/her possession when submitting the original claim. Doing so significantly reduces the amount of time VA must spend to gather evidence from them or other sources, which is often the longest part of the claims process. VA typically processes FDCs in half the time it takes for a traditionally filed claim.

FDCs can be filed digitally at www.ebenefits.va.gov, the joint DoD-VA online portal. VA encourages veterans who cannot file online to work with FRA or other accredited veterans service organizations (VSO) that can file claims digitally on veterans’ behalf.
THE REVIEWS ARE IN:
“AMAZING”
“IMPRESSIVE”
“UNBELIEVABLE”
“ART ON YOUR WRIST”
“STUNNING”
“AN EYE CATCHER”
“WHOA”
“WELL DONE, STAUER”

HYBRID Watch Breaks Time Barrier

Take a leap across the “Great Divide” with the Stauer Compendium—yours today for ONLY $49!

Once upon a time, we were forced to choose sides. New technology demanded a decision. You pledged allegiance to analog or dedicated yourself to digital. You either listened to vinyl records or mp3s. You tapped on a touchscreen or pounded the keys of an old typewriter. And your watch, it either had hands that moved or numbers that blinked. But never both. That just wasn’t an option. Until now...

The Stauer Compendium is no ordinary wristwatch. This is the machine that jumps the “Great Divide” of timekeeping technology, an exceptional hybrid chronograph with over a dozen analog AND digital functions. It’s big, bold and more versatile than any watch we’ve ever engineered. And at ONLY $49, it’s proof that technological innovation doesn’t have to cost a fortune!

How to tell tomorrow’s time today. The Compendium’s stunning dial blends an analog face with a stylish digital display. Three ultrabright luminous hands keep time along the inner dial, while a trio of circular LCD windows track the hour, minutes and seconds. An eye-catching digital semi-circle animates in time with the second hand and displays the day of the week. On your wrist it looks sophisticated enough for a formal evening out, but rugged and tough enough to feel at home in a cockpit or on a covert mission.

Your satisfaction is 100% GUARANTEED. If for any reason you aren’t fully impressed by the performance and innovation of the Stauer Compendium Hybrid, simply return the watch within 30 days for a full refund of the purchase price. The future of time has arrived!

Stauer Compendium Hybrid Watch

Regularly priced $395

Exclusive Call-In Price*

ONLY $49 + S&P

Includes FREE Stauer Flyboy Sunglasses ($99 value)

Features:
- Digital/analog display
- Stainless steel bracelet
- Ultrabright EL backlight
- Rotating bezel
- Stopwatch & alarms
- Water resistant to 3 ATM

FREE $99 Sunglasses with Compendium Watch!

Flyboy Optics™ Sunglasses with UV protection

THE REVIEWS ARE IN:
“AMAZING”
“IMPRESSIVE”
“UNBELIEVABLE”
“ART ON YOUR WRIST”
“STUNNING”
“AN EYE CATCHER”
“WHOA”
“WELL DONE, STAUER”

Call now to take advantage of this fantastic offer.
1-888-324-4370

Promotional Code VHW547-05
Please mention this code when you call.

* Price quoted is for Call-In Customers only versus the original Stauer.com price.
TRICARE and the Affordable Care Act

A number of shipmates have inquired about the impact, if any, of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), also known as "Obamacare," on their TRICARE benefits. Effective January 1, 2014, all Americans must have Minimum Essential Coverage (MEC) to fulfill the individual-coverage mandate of the legislation. Unless exempted, those without MEC may be required to pay a penalty ("shared responsibility payment") for each month they go without healthcare coverage. The TRICARE Management Activity (TMA) confirms that TRICARE Prime, Prime Remote and Standard; the US Family Health Plan, TRICARE Overseas plans; Transitional Assistance Management Plan; and TRICARE for Life (TFL) qualify as an MEC. Purchased programs such as TRICARE Young Adult (TYA), TRICARE Retired Reserve (TRR), TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS), and the Continued Health Care Benefit Program also qualify. Those eligible for direct care only (MTF care only) or for Line of Duty conditions only do not have MEC.*

FRA worked to ensure TRICARE and VA healthcare programs are separate from the PPACA and, as a result, the new healthcare law will not impact TRICARE or VA beneficiaries. FRA’s Legislative Team continues to monitor implementation of the PPACA to ensure those programs are not adversely impacted by unanticipated consequences.

* According to the TRICARE Prime Handbook (available online at www.humana-military.com/library/pdf/prime-handbook.pdf): "If your parents or parents-in-law are dependent on you for support, your local MTF may be able to help with the cost of their health care. Although dependent parents are not eligible for most TRICARE benefits, they may be eligible to receive health care at the MTF. Health care for eligible dependent parents or parents-in-law is available on a space-available basis at certain MTFs. Access to care is subject to change based on the MTF’s capacity and capabilities.”

Doc Fix Legislation Pending

The deadline for significant cuts to reimbursement rates for physicians seeing Medicare and TRICARE patients is fast approaching. Reductions of nearly 30 percent are slated to take effect on January 1, 2014, unless Congress acts to prevent them.

Congress approved only temporary fixes in the past, but earlier this year the House Committee on Energy and Commerce’s Health Subcommittee approved legislation that authorizes comprehensive reform of the formula used to determine physician reimbursements. The bill (H.R. 2810), sponsored by Rep. Michael Burgess (Texas), seeks to make the so-called "doc fix" permanent by repealing the antiquated Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) formula for determining Medicare and TRICARE reimbursement rates and replacing it with a fair, stable and simplified system of physician payments. The bill is awaiting further consideration by the full House.

This bill is listed on the FRA Action Center at www.fra.org, where shipmates can urge their representatives to support the bill.

TRICARE Retiree Dental Program Changes

Effective October 1, 2013, all TRICARE Retiree Dental Program (TRDP) beneficiaries are required to pay their monthly premiums by an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) or through military retired pay allotment. The ability to pay premiums by check or through an online bill pay system ended in September.

Most TRDP enrollees will need to take no action; however, Delta Dental sent letters to all TRDP participants in July with information on where to submit EFT authorization forms and how to submit an EFT authorization online at www.trdp.org.

Delta Dental of California will continue managing the TRICARE Retiree Dental Program through 2018. As a result of this continued relationship, TRDP enhanced the program and overseas participants can look forward to several changes effective January 1, 2014.

• An increase in the annual maximum benefit for each person enrolled, to $1,300;
• Coverage year will run from January 1 through December 31;
• Maximums and deductibles will restart every January 1;
• An increase in the annual maximum benefit for dental accident coverage for each person enrolled, to $1,200
• An increase in the maximum lifetime orthodontic benefit for each person enrolled, to $1,750;
• A third cleaning allowed for children and adults with documented Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes; and
• A decrease in monthly premiums

Current dental enrollment cards will remain valid under the new contract; however, verification of TRDP eligibility and enrollment will be managed by Defense Eligibility Enrollment System (DEERS).

TRICARE Retiree Dental Program is voluntary, premium-based coverage. To get more information about this benefit, visit http://www.tricare.mil/trdp
Enjoy A Bath Again... Safely and Affordably

The Jacuzzi® Walk-In tub is luxurious, feature-packed and affordable

There is nothing like the simple pleasure of taking a warm bath. The cares of the day seem to fade away, along with the aches and pains of everyday life. Unfortunately for many aging Americans with mobility issues, slipping into a bath can result in slipping onto the floor. The fear of falling has made the simple act of bathing and its therapeutic benefits a thing of the past until now. Jacuzzi®, the company that perfected hydrotherapy, has created a walk-in tub that offers more than just safe bathing, peace-of-mind and independence, it can actually help you feel better.

Unlike traditional bathtubs, this Walk-In Tub features a leak-proof door that allows you to simply step into the tub rather than stepping precariously over the side. It features a state-of-the-art acrylic surface, a raised seat, and the controls are within easy reach. No other Walk-In Tub features the patented Jacuzzi® PointPro® jet system. These high-volume, low-pressure pumps feature a perfectly balanced water to air ratio to massage thoroughly yet gently. Some swirl, some spiral, some deliver large volumes of water and others target specific pressure points. They are all arranged in precise locations designed to deliver a therapeutic massage, yet they are fully adjustable so that your bathing experience can be completely unique.

Why spend another day wishing you could enjoy the luxury and pain-relieving benefits of a safe, comfortable bath? Call now and you’ll get an unsurpassed limited lifetime warranty. Knowledgeable product experts are standing by to help you learn more about this product. Call Today!

What To Look For in a Walk-In Tub:

Five major considerations to help make an informed decision before buying a Walk-In Tub:

- **Quality** - A walk-in tub is a major investment. You want to find a quality tub that will last for decades. Look for one that’s 100% leak-proof, mold-resistant, full metal frame construction and one that’s American made.

- **Warranty** - Ask for a lifetime “no leak guarantee.” The best tubs offer a lifetime warranty on both the tub and the operating system.

- **Pain Relieving Therapy** - Find a tub that has both water and air jet therapy to soak away your aches and pains preferably with a perfectly balanced water to air mix. This tub is the first to offer a specialized foot massage experience. Its unique spinning motion provides optimal therapy to feet and legs. Best of all, you get it at no additional charge.

- **Comfort** - Insist on ergonomic design, easy-to-reach controls.

- **Endorsements** - Only consider tubs that are ETL or UL listed. Also look for a tub tested to IAPMO (International Assoc. of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials) standards and that’s USPC (Universal Spa Plumbing Code) Certified.

SEE THE JACUZZI® DIFFERENCE
Laboratory tests clearly show how Jacuzzi® jets outperform other manufacturers’ jet systems, producing a deeper and wider plume of revitalizing bubbles. You get the best technology for an affordable price!

New & Improved Jacuzzi®
Walk-In Tub
For information call: 1-888-514-0739
Call now Toll-Free and mention your special promotion code 50366.

Third-party financing available with approved credit. Aging in the Home Remodelers Inc. is neither a broker nor a lender. Not available in Hawaii and Alaska

© 2013 Aging in the Home Remodelers Inc.
Alternative Military Pay Plan

In a recent letter to Congress, President Obama referenced his authority under Title 37 to set military pay increases for FY 2014 at one percent — the amount requested in the new Administration’s budget for the new fiscal year — versus the Employment Cost Index (ECI) level of 1.8 percent. The House supports authorization of the higher amount as part of the FY 2014 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA); however, it’s unclear at press time if the full Senate will follow its Armed Services Committee’s recommendation for the lower amount. FRA strongly supports the 1.8-percent pay hike for service members to maintain pay comparability with the civilian sector and continues its advocacy on this matter as Congress works to approve a final version of the NDAA.

TAP Reorganized

The FRA-supported VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 requires a major renovation of the military Transition Assistance Program (TAP). The program has been redesigned into a comprehensive, mandatory program for separating/retiring service members through the efforts of an interagency team from the Departments of Defense (DoD), Veterans Affairs (VA), Labor (DOL), Education (DoE), Homeland Security (DHS), plus the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the Small Business Administration (SBA). The redesigned TAP is known as Transition Goals Plans Success (GPS), or Transition GPS, and is currently a pilot program that began at a few DoD installations last year. It is expected to replace the old TAP by the end of 2013.

FRA Welcomes FO Steve Cox

FRA is happy to introduce Steve Cox, the Association’s new finance officer (FO). Steve joined the National Headquarters Team in mid-August, replacing Paul Rigby who retired on August 30.

FO Steve comes to FRA after serving as the Director of Accounting, Contracts and Human Resources at the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS). During his time there, he was responsible for all fiscal, financial and administrative activities, including oversight of the organization’s budget, taxes and rental revenue.

Steve is attending our National Convention in Chattanooga this month and is looking forward to meeting many of the shipmates and Auxiliary members. You can learn more about Steve in January, when he and FRA’s new National Executive Director will be profiled in FRA Today.

The FRA Legislative team is Joe Barnes, National Executive Director; John Davis, Director of Legislative Programs; Bob Washington, Health Care Advisor and Outreach Manager; and Chris Slawinski, National Veterans Service Officer.
America has a profound history filled with momentous events and generations of people with pioneering spirit who have stood strong together—united as one. Now, you can let American patriotism live on, when you represent this proud and historic nation with the “American Pride” Dogtag Pendant.

**HANDCRAFTED IN AN EXCLUSIVE DESIGN**
Crafted of tough-as-an-American stainless steel, our dogtag pendant features a majestic sculpted eagle and American flag motif on a bold hand-enameled black surface. Adding to the meaning and value, a stunning banner reads, “AMERICAN PRIDE.” Plus, the dogtag pendant is finely etched on the reverse side with “GOD BLESS AMERICA,” along with a waving American flag. As a final touch, the pendant has a custom designed bail, showcasing an array of sculpted stars and stripes, that holds a 24” open linked chain.

**AN EXCEPTIONAL VALUE... AVAILABLE FOR A LIMITED TIME**
This handsome pendant is a remarkable value at $79, payable in 4 easy installments of just $19.75* and backed by our unconditional 120-day guarantee. It arrives in a velvet jewelry pouch and gift box along with a Certificate of Authenticity. To reserve, send no money now, just mail the Reservation Application. This is an exclusive Bradford Exchange design—you won't find it in stores. So don't miss out—order yours today!

**LIMITED-TIME OFFER**
Reservations will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Respond as soon as possible to reserve your "American Pride" Dogtag Pendant.

*Plus $8.98 shipping and service. Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery of your jewelry after we receive your initial deposit. Sales subject to product availability and order acceptance.

9345 Milwaukee Avenue · Niles, IL 60714-1393

**YES.** Please reserve the “American Pride” Dogtag Pendant for me as described in this announcement.

Signature
Mrs. Mr. Ms.

Name (Please Print Clearly)

Address

City State Zip

E-Mail (Optional)

RESERVATION APPLICATION SEND NO MONEY NOW

01-16042-001-E27847
YNC Robert L. Bastian
U.S. Navy, Retired
June 10, 1920–September 1, 2013
FRA National President 1970–1971

FRA PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENT (PNP) Robert Lowell Bastian joined the staff of the Supreme Commander on September 1, 2013.

PNP Bastian grew up in Wabasha, Minn., and enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1941. During his nearly 20 years of active service, Bastian attained the rate of Chief Yeoman, serving at a variety of duty stations at sea and ashore, in the U.S. and overseas. His career culminated in his four-year assignment to the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations and he transferred to the Fleet Reserve in September of 1960.

Shipmate Bob joined the FRA in 1952 and became an active member in Branch 4 (Washington, D.C.). During his first year as an FRA shipmate, he was elected to the branch’s Board of Directors and, during his 61 years in the FRA, he continued to make significant contributions to the Association at all levels. He held every possible branch office; chaired and was a member of numerous branch, regional and national committees; served as East Coast Regional Vice President (1962–1963) and Regional President (1963–1964), National Vice President (1969–1970) and National President (1970–1971).

National President Bastian was a strong advocate for a strong national defense and led FRA in its quest to ensure equitable pay, allowances; housing and benefits for all military personnel. He also advocated for the expansion and protection of earned rights and benefits for military retirees. During his tenure as national president, FRA supported a $2.4 billion increase in military pay, which was approved by Congress in advance of the all-volunteer force that would take effect in 1973.

FRA also opened its membership to women and members of the U.S. Coast Guard during Bastian’s term of office and he also experienced other unique events: He was a guest at the launch of Apollo 14 from Cape Kennedy and attended a White House Sunday worship service as a guest of President and Mrs. Nixon.

PNP Bob will be remembered as a shipmate’s shipmate. He was deeply committed to the FRA and was proud to have attended every national convention since 1959 … with the exception of the one that coincided with the birth of his son. He was easily recognizable in his red hat and bright red jacket. His dedication to Loyalty, Protection and Service extended beyond the FRA and was evidenced by his active involvement with a variety of other fraternal and community organizations. An active member of St. Joseph Catholic Church, Bob volunteered at weekly bingo games and was a member of the Knights of Columbus. Even into his 90s, Bob regularly volunteered with the Hagerstown Police Department and Hagerstown Community College, and often helped FRA widows with paperwork and regularly drove them to medical appointments. In addition to FRA, he also held memberships in the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Catholic War Veterans and the Navy Cryptologic Veterans Association.

FRA offers its sincere sympathies to Shipmate Past National President Bastian’s family and friends.
Our lowest price ever for 2013!

The Koala is Australia’s silver dollar. This massive silver dollar contains a full Troy ounce of 99.9% pure silver.

But there’s another reason savvy buyers seek out this “Down Under” Silver Dollar: It’s one of the world’s most limited silver dollars! MILLIONS fewer Silver Koalas are struck than any of the comparable silver coins of Canada, China, Austria, Mexico, or the U.S. Collectors place low mintage coins near the top of their “must have” list—and you should too!

The first-year 2007 Silver Koala originally sold for $29.95. Today, that low mintage coin sells for $129.95! Now you can secure the brand new 2013 Koala Silver Dollar for as low as $33.45.

Brilliant Uncirculated Condition
Silver’s allure is timeless. It’s also the most affordable precious metal. So it’s no wonder that massive one Troy ounce Australian Silver Dollars are prized by collectors—especially in pristine Brilliant Uncirculated condition.

Double Guaranteed
There’s a ‘secret’ to buying legal tender silver dollars. You own pure silver with the absolute security of government guaranteed purity, weight, and authenticity. This government guarantee is struck directly into the surface of the coin! You’re also protected by our 30-Day Guarantee. If you’re not satisfied, return your coins within 30 days for a full refund (less all s/h).

Buy More and SAVE More!
One 2013 Koala Silver Dollar coin for only $34.95 plus s/h
Five for $34.45 each plus s/h
Ten for $33.95 each plus s/h
Twenty for $33.45 each plus s/h
SAVE $30 or more!

1-800-969-0686
Offer Code BKS163-03
Please provide this code when you call

New York Mint®
14101 Southcross Drive W., Dept. BKS163-03
Burnsville, Minnesota 55337
www.NewYorkMint.com

Prices and availability subject to change without notice. Past performance is not a predictor of future performance. NOTE: New York Mint® is a private distributor of worldwide government coin and currency issues and privately issued licensed collectibles and is not affiliated with the United States government. Facts and figures deemed accurate as of July 2013. ©2013 New York Mint, LLC.
Feeding the Fleet

BY LAUREN ARMSTRONG
Since before the American Revolution, military leaders have understood the importance of a well-fed fighting force. In Frederick the Great’s instruction to his generals (1747), he said, “The foundation of an army is the belly.” A few decades later, Napoleon Bonaparte declared, “An army marches on its stomach.” And he would know — his army lost more soldiers because of spoiled food than from battle. To be effective, military troops rely heavily on good and plentiful food.

Despite dramatic improvements in war-fighting and mess cooking philosophies, strategies and techniques, the underlying premise remains unchanged: A well-fed crew is healthier, happier and better able to do its job.
Do you get discouraged when you hear your telephone ring? Do you avoid using your phone because hearing difficulties make it hard to understand the person on the other end of the line? For many Americans the telephone conversation – once an important part of everyday life – has become a thing of the past. Because they can’t understand what is said to them on the phone, they’re often cut off from friends, family, doctors and caregivers. Now, thanks to innovative technology there is finally a better way.

A simple idea… made possible with sophisticated technology. If you have trouble understanding a call, the Captioning Telephone can change your life. During a phone call the words spoken to you appear on the phone’s screen – similar to closed captioning on TV. So when you make or receive a call, the words spoken to you are not only ampliﬁed by the phone, but scroll across the phone so you can listen while reading everything that’s said to you. The captioning function can be turned on as needed. Each call is routed through a call center, where computer technology – aided by a live representative – generates immediate voice-to-text translations. The captioning is real-time, accurate and readable. Your conversation is private and the captioning service doesn’t cost you a penny – all you need is a high-speed Internet connection from any Internet provider and a standard phone line. Callers do not need special equipment or a captioning phone in order to speak with you.

Finally… a phone you can use again. The Captioning Telephone is also packed with features to help make phone calls easier. The keypad has large, easy to use buttons. You get adjustable volume amplification along with the ability to save captions for review later. It even has an answering machine that provides you with the captions of each message.

Breakthrough technology converts phone calls to captions.

New amplified phone lets you hear AND see the conversation.

The Captioning Telephone converts phone conversations to easy-to-read captions for individuals with hearing loss.

Call now for our special introductory price!

Captioning Telephone

1-877-511-4798

“For years I avoided phone calls because I couldn’t understand the caller… now I don’t miss a thing!”

See for yourself with our exclusive home trial. Try the Captioning Telephone in your own home and if you are not completely amazed, simply return it within 30-days for a refund of the product purchase price.

Captioning Telephone is intended for use by people with hearing loss. In purchasing a Captioning Telephone, you acknowledge that it will be used by someone who cannot hear well over a traditional phone.
**Instant Feedback**

Navy frigates of the past usually had a single ship’s cook who was commonly an older or disabled petty officer too infirm to perform the rigorous work required of a Jack Tar. He would be assisted by mess cooks, who were elected by each of their “messes”— a dining group of eight to 10 men — to serve for one-week stints as cook’s helpers. Neither cooking experience nor expertise were required.

Fast forward to today, where Navy galleys are manned by professionals who are not only trained in food preparation, but also in food safety, inventory management, record-keeping and the myriad skills necessary to provide nutritious and appetizing meals to their shipmates. Whether working at sea or in a shore-based galley, Navy Culinary Specialists (CS) are making sure the crew has fortifying and appealing meals. And they take justifiable pride in the role they play in ensuring morale remains high.

“CSs are dedicated to getting the job done and doing it well,” says Chief Culinary Specialist (CSC) Josh Ryan. “We make a difference on a daily basis, whether we’re on a ship, deployed or at a shore base. In some instances, a good meal is one of the few things Sailors can look forward to in their day and it’s up to us to bring our A game.”

“Our work impacts every crew member, which has a direct impact on the mission,” adds Senior Chief Culinary Specialist (CSCS) Derrick Davenport. “Napoleon was right when he said ‘an army marches on its stomach.’ The galley and mess decks really are the heart of the ship.”

Besides preparing daily breakfast, lunch, dinner and midnight rations (commonly known as “mid rats”), CSs go the extra mile to make mealtime a meaningful and enjoyable experience. Sometimes it’s a routine that makes a meal special. Crewmembers often count on Wednesday being “Burger Day” or pizza being served on Saturdays. On some ships, Sunday means picnic fare of grilled hamburgers, hotdogs and marinated meats. Or it may be a holiday or celebration meal that makes a difference.

“It feels good to know your work has a positive impact on the crew. We try to prepare special meals for holidays and special events,” explains Senior Chief Culinary Specialist (CSCS) Wes Tavares. “For example, we celebrated Midway Day with a Pacific meal … roasted pigs and the whole deal. It was a celebration and really boosted morale.”

And it’s easy for a CS to tell if his/her work is having the intended effect, particularly aboard ship. “Young CSs start out in the fleet; it’s where they learn the Navy. And when you’re a young cook working the chow line, you get to greet every crew member and see their immediate reaction to your work,” Tavares elaborates. “If it’s good, everyone knows it. When I started my first sea-duty tour, we served about 400 breakfasts each day. By the end of my tour, we were serving 600 to 700 breakfasts and morale was noticeably up. It’s great to see Sailors smile and ask, ‘Did you make this? It’s really good!’”

“You get instant feedback,” chuckles Ryan, “good or bad! You can’t please everyone every time and you’re only as good as the last meal you served!”

“Being a Navy cook is directly related to the morale of the crew. It’s our responsibility to make what’s on the chow line look and taste appetizing,” summarizes Master Chief Culinary Specialist (CSCM) Shawn McMahon. “I’ve always tried to make food interesting and plentiful and, when you get it right, you can see an improvement in morale immediately.”

**On Land and At Sea**

Each type of CS assignment brings its own challenges and benefits. Shorebase CS duty means more ready access to fresh ingredients, for example.

“On shore and, to some degree, even on some larger ships, we get used to getting fresh ingredients on a regular basis,” says Davenport, who served for five years on fast-attack submarines, which are smaller and have fewer crewmembers than ballistic nuclear submarines, or boomers. “If a ballistic nuclear sub can be compared to a Cadillac, a fast attack sub is more like a Smart Car.

“Duty on a fast attack means tight quarters and we have to rely more on frozen, canned or dehydrated ingredients,” he continues. “Another way we address the limited space is by making more things from scratch. Prepared items make more sense when you’re serving meals to 5,000 or 6,000 people and have the room for storage — on an aircraft carrier, for example. But prepared items often come in larger, bulkier containers. On a fast attack sub, it makes more sense to carry food in a less-prepared state. We’re more likely to have 50 pounds of flour that we can use to make a lot of different things. And when you’re preparing meals for a crew of 150 or so, it’s more feasible. It’s a constant balancing act and it becomes a personal challenge to elevate the ingredients to the best of my ability and a matter of taking pride in what I create.”

Culinary Specialist Seaman Teresa Juarez prepares lunch aboard the guided-missile destroyer USS Chafee (DDG 90). U.S. Navy photo by MCS2 Sean Fury.
According to McMahon, CSs assigned to shore duty can focus more on cooking, but regardless of assignment, they must also shoulder a variety of collateral duties. Particularly aboard ship, these additional responsibilities may not be closely aligned with the galley or mess decks, but are critical to meeting mission.

“Like other rates, CSs stand watches, are assigned to fire parties, security and damage control details, and have to be certified on a 9mm at the firing range, which is a requirement to stand watch,” says McMahon, who also has a supply background and has overseen barbers and paint details as part of his duties. “Time management is critical, particularly on deployments. There’s so much work and so much responsibility, we have to work as a team to be successful. The Navy’s a professional organization and it’s a big game. The whole crew has to be all in.”

**Inventory Management**

Feeding a frigate crew of 400 required some 620 barrels of salt beef and pork, 1220 gallons of molasses, 15,840 pounds of rice, more than 56 tons of hard bread and 8,650 gallons of rum. Imagine what kind of stores must be laid in to feed an aircraft-carrier crew of 5,000!

CSs prepare menus and assist supply officers in ordering the appropriate types and quantities of food necessary to feed the crew until replenishment can take place. They must also keep records to ensure these resources are administered properly. Managing the ship’s food inventory is one of a CS’s primary responsibilities.

“On longer sea deployments, space is limited, so you can’t over-order. As a result, inventory is limited and, the longer you’re away from port, the more creative you have to be. We plan menus and schedule replenishments, but weather and other diversions might force us to stretch our stores until we get to the next port,” says Tavares. “We like to serve high quality food throughout the cruise, like we did on the first day, but by the 60th day, it can be more of a challenge. The crew understands this, but they’re also dealing with the stresses of their own job.”

“Regardless of whether we’re at home or deployed, we have to manage inventory, just like you would at home,” adds McMahon. “On board ship, for example, where it can be weeks before fresh supplies arrive, we stretch produce by serving the more fragile things, like berries, first.”

“We also follow basic rules of food conservation,” chimes in Tavares. “Some young kids were going to throw out some bananas that were overripe. We educated them on making banana muffins instead.”

And although individual ration portions aren’t legislated like they were in the early days of the U.S. Navy, there are prescribed guidelines for today’s Navy menus. To ensure some level of uniformity and ready access to key ingredients, there is a Navy Standard Core Menu that outlines menu options for CSs and includes recipes.

“The recipes are developed by a Navy corporate chef and include meals that can be prepared with ingredients that are available globally. We’re urged to follow it 100 percent and, during inspections, we are rated on how closely we adhere to the Core Menu. Most CSs use it as a guideline and we track acceptability. If only 20 percent of the crew ate a certain item, we remove it from the menu. We also track our budget daily. As we get near the end of the month, it’s not uncommon to see a lot more pasta and hamburgers,” explains McMahon.

Shipboard offerings usually include a regular entrée and a healthy (lower in calories and fat) choice, with a minimum of two...
proteins. There’s also usually a salad bar and soup of the day. On larger ships, there’s often a pasta bar and soup bar. Caloric values for each item are posted on the chow line, so Sailors can make educated food choices.

“We still occasionally serve SOS [chipped beef on toast, affectionately known as Shit-on-a-Shingle], but things have improved a lot over the past few years. The Food Network and the many cooking shows that are on the air these days have elevated the expectations of Sailors. It used to be that mess cooks slung chow on the line, but the level of food is way higher today; it’s cuisine,” adds McMahon. “It used to be that a chubby Sailor was the standard, but the Admiral [Winnefeld, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, for whom McMahon works] sees our Sailors as professional athletes. Like the rest of the rates in the Navy, CSs are skilled professionals trained to keep these ‘athletes’ performing at their best.”

**Deployments**

Not all deployments are aboard ship and not all CS assignments are the same.

CSC Ryan’s first assignment after A School was with a Seabee battalion in Gulfport, Miss., which he learned later was a bit different from working in the fleet. During his tour with the 133rd Construction Battalion, he deployed twice to Okinawa, once to Iraq and once to Kenya. Okinawa is a small base with a shore galley, where he and other CSs served three squares a day, seven days a week, to about 300 Sailors. During his deployment to Fallujah, Iraq, he didn’t do any cooking. Instead, he managed and maintained the MWR [morale, welfare and recreation] programs for the troops. In Kenya, he served as one of 12 members assigned to a Civil Action Team (CAT) tasked with drilling water wells.

“My time in Kenya was the craziest and the most fun deployment of them all,” beams Ryan. “We were in the middle of nowhere, living in tents. The nearest town was a three-hour drive away and we’d wake up to find giraffe and zebra wandering around outside our tents. It was real National Geographic-type stuff.”

Cooking facilities were pretty rudimentary and there were real challenges to serving hot meals, but nothing is too challenging for Seabees.

“I had a gas pressure burner for cooking and MREs [meals ready to eat] were available, but I wanted to be able to provide at least one hot meal a day. The Seabees used their ‘Can Do’ capabilities and built a cinderblock oven and stove and we were in business,” describes Ryan. “About 98 percent of our food stores were canned, but we were able to supplement with some fresh items from Djibouti. The local villagers would come to our camp and offer us camel milk, but it was 120 degrees outside and we had no way of knowing how long it’d been sitting out in the heat, so we always passed on that. I cooked mostly with charcoal and, if I had to be away from camp for some reason, I’d try to prepare something in advance so it only had to be reheated.”

CAT is part of the Navy’s humanitarian outreach program and, in addition to their well-drilling work, the Seabees also helped repair and supply a local school. “When I wasn’t cooking, I helped repair windows and paint the local school and build desks for the students,” adds Ryan. “We’d play soccer with the kids and they thought we were all cool and, of course, everyone was grateful for the water well.”

Ryan is proud to be part of the Seabee brotherhood and gained a lot of new perspectives on this African deployment. “We were there for six months and, because it was a small group, I really enjoyed the camaraderie that we developed. This deployment also allowed me to see a completely different side of the world and of life. The tribes we met seemed very happy with their life and it really reminded me how much we take for granted.”

CSCS Davenport also spent 14 months in the Middle East, where he learned a great deal about Afghani military and culinary culture. His assignment was to train 50 members of the Afghan National Army who were tasked with standing up a food service program.

“Our job was to train them to feed about 4,000 Afghan Army personnel,” he described. “The traditional Afghan diet is much simpler than American diets and they only eat what’s in season; for example, we served lamb in the spring and summer, and beef in the fall and winter. We stressed how important it is to maintain proper hygiene and food safety. All the food was halal [permissible under Islamic law], so of course we didn’t serve any pork. We used a lot of fresh ingredients and it wasn’t uncommon for us to receive a freshly slaughtered lamb or cow, with the hide removed and wrapped in a blanket in the back of a truck. It would still be warm.

“Being a cook in the Afghan Army isn’t considered a top post,” Davenport continues. “There’s a stigma that cooking is women’s work and that it’s not being a real warfighter if you’re ‘in the rear with the gear.’ They even offer bonuses to entice soldiers to take cook duty. It was rewarding to show them the important role they played in maintaining the morale of the troops. We opened up their first bakery, where we made thousands of loaves of naan [leavened, oven-baked flatbread]. Our facility was voted ‘best dining facility’ in the Afghan Army, so that went a long way to helping them develop a sense of pride and professionalism in their work.”

**Training**

To be a Navy Culinary Specialist, recruits must attend CS A School, currently located in Fort Lee, Va. The program is nine weeks long and includes training in food preparation, nutrition, dining service, sanitation and food safety. They also learn to maintain food service spaces and associated equipment in a clean and sanitary condition, including storerooms and refrigerated spaces.

The lessons learned at A School are the foundation for future CS development, says Tavares. “By the time CSs graduate from A School, they have earned their food handler card, but sanitation training is always going on. CSs need to know it for advancement
Ryan had already earned his Associate’s Degree from the Pennsylvania Culinary Institute and was working as an executive sous chef in the civilian world when he decided to join the Navy in 2004. Because of his civilian training and experience, A School was optional for him, but he decided it was important to attend.

“At A School, they also teach you how to cook the Navy way,” explains McMahon. “You learn how to convert recipes to feed a crew. There are Core Menu cards that give recipes to serve 100 and you have to learn to convert those recipes to feed 340 or 580 or whatever’s required.”

Serving meals en masse is different from cooking for your family or even from a commercial food service, adds CSC Ryan, and it’s no small undertaking. “Serving a chiefs’ mess might mean serving 300 meals at a time. An enlisted mess aboard an aircraft carrier feeds 4,500 to 5,000 crewmembers, which means serving 2,500 meals at a sitting!”

After A School, CSs are assigned to ship or shore stations, where they receive plenty of on-the-job training. Formal training is important, but CSs are all teachers and students of one another and the learning is ongoing.

“There’s so much we don’t learn in school,” adds Tavares, who is also a CEC and is qualified as a certification evaluator, as well. “We learn to improvise and be flexible. We learn how to enhance dishes, how to plate the food and ways to improve presentation. You can only learn so much from any one person, because there’s not one right way to do things. Cooking involves a lot of creativity.”

Additional and specialized training is available for specific certifications and assignments. Davenport, for example, trained to become a Certified Executive Pastry Chef (CEPC). All of the CSs interviewed for this story are currently assigned as Enlisted Aides (EAs) to senior military officers, posts that required completion of an EA course.

“School assignments are dependent on the job you’re going to, whether that be general mess duty, operations or to enlisted aide duty,” explains McMahon. “For example, I got selected to be an EA and went to school before I reported for duty. CSs helped write the EA curriculum and I think the program is better because of it. We knew what the Navy needed.”

Being an Enlisted Aide

Being an EA may mean being a personal food service specialist in admirals’ and generals’ messes, which can include providing catering service for senior military leaders and government executives, as well as operating the White House Mess. Because these senior leaders are affiliated with joint commands, Navy EAs may serve as part of a joint staff, often with culinary professionals from the other services. Being selected for EA duty is a recognition of the high level of skill and professionalism demonstrated by the individual CS during his/her career. EAs are a very talented group and there are fewer than 75 serving today.

“As EAs, it’s our job to run the quarters,” says Tavares, who, along with McMahon, serves on the staff of Admiral James Winnefeld Jr., Vice-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. “For official parties, we’re responsible for doing the shopping, making sure guests’ dietary restrictions are considered and that the guest of honor’s preferences are taken into account. We have to be cost-effective and we’re always mindful of the cost per person. With sequestration, we’re even more mindful of how we spend our resources. It’s a top-down initiative and our expenses must meet the requirements of the Official Representation Fund.”

“When serving dignitaries and guests from other countries, we have to be very conscious of cultural dietary restrictions, as well as personal medical restrictions,” adds Davenport, who is an EA for Army General Martin E. Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. “We try to make the menu as appropriate as possible for the entire gathering. For instance, if a guest is a vegetarian, we will try to prepare the majority of the meal to suit their dietary restrictions and simply serve them the same thing every other guest gets, but without the meat.”
Invention of the Year!

**Difficulty understanding conversations?**
**Now there’s a simple, invisible and affordable solution.**

Perfect Choice HD™ is the personal sound amplifier that’s like reading glasses for your ears™!

Over the years, I’ve had more and more trouble understanding what people are saying. I have to get them to repeat themselves over and over… it’s really embarrassing. I found myself avoiding parties and gatherings— even church, where my inability to understand people was a problem. Then a friend told me about Perfect Choice HD™. It’s a small personal sound amplification product that’s simple to use and virtually invisible. It’s like a whole new world’s been opened up to me.

There isn’t anything wrong with my hearing, it’s just that some sounds— conversations, the TV, birds chirping— aren’t loud enough.

Now, this small, battery operated amplifier let’s me turn up the volume when I need it. I can adjust the volume to the level that suits me. Best of all, no one knows I’m wearing it. The battery case sits behind my ear and the clear sound tube carries the amplified sound to the tiny sound bud that rests in my ear canal. It’s comfortable, it doesn’t fill up my ear and, even though it’s small, the controls are easy to use and the battery is simple to change.

“Reading glasses for your ears”

Why Perfect Choice HD is the best choice!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lightweight / Inconspicuous</th>
<th>Less than 1 ounce</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sound Quality</td>
<td>Excellent – Optimized for speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test and Fitting Required</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Batteries for Life</td>
<td>Yes, ask for details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-on-One Personal Set Up</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly Return Policy</td>
<td>60 Days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Top signs that you might benefit from Perfect Choice HD

- People complain that you have the TV or radio turned up too loud
- You ask people to repeat themselves
- You hear conversations but have trouble understanding the words
- Talking on the telephone has become difficult
- People tell you that you talk too loud
- You find yourself avoiding crowded situations like restaurants or parties

“Reading glasses for your ears”

Now, thanks to the work of a doctor who leads a renowned hearing institute, you can experience this remarkable product for yourself with our exclusive home trial. If you are not totally satisfied with this product, simply return it within 60 days for a refund of the product purchase price. Call now— you’ll never know what you’re missing.

Affordable, Simple to use, Virtually impossible to see

---

**Perfect Choice HD™**

Call now and find out how you can get FREE Batteries for Life!

Please mention promotional code 47151.

1-888-299-7972

1998 Ruffin Mill Road
Colonial Heights, VA 23834

Perfect Choice HD is not a hearing aid. If you believe you need a hearing aid, please consult a physician.
EA duty, usually a 12- to 14-hour work day, starts between 5:30 and 6:30 AM and ends at 7:00 PM for CSC Ryan, who is an EA for Admiral Jonathan Greenert, Chief of Naval Operations (CNO). If there’s an evening event, the day is longer.

“There are four EAs working at CNO’s residence and each one has his or her specialty. It’s a real team effort,” explains Ryan. “We all help with the set-up, serving, clean up, etc., but each of us has our specialty. One of our EAs, for example, has a real talent for creating beautiful floral arrangements and table decorations suitable for the specific event. We also help out other EAs if there’s a special event going on at their respective admiral or general’s quarters.”

Another part of an EA’s responsibility is to take care of the admiral or general and his/her home. CNO Greenert, for example, lives in the historic Tingey House, built in 1804 on the grounds of the U.S. Navy Yard in Washington, D.C.

“We’re really taking care of history here,” says Ryan with pride. “We also make sure CNO’s uniforms are ready. He’s representing the entire Navy and we help make sure he’s squared away. He has bigger things to worry about than whether his uniform is in order.

“CNO Greenert genuinely cares for the Navy and the people in it,” continues Ryan, who has worked for the admiral in previous assignments. “There’s a great deal of trust and loyalty. He sees all Navy personnel as family and he’s genuinely concerned with helping Sailors in the fleet. It’s our job to help him, so he can focus on that.”

“I love what I do!”

The four CSs profiled in this story exemplify a genuine passion for the culinary arts, a passion they believe is shared by others in the CS community. Each joined the Navy to become a CS and their demonstrated initiative, imagination and drive have helped them achieve cooking and military success.

Tavares started cooking in high school and learned early that it “made the girls happy.” He joined the Navy to see the world, but once he began working in the crew galley, he knew he’d found his calling. “I loved it! It was great to see the faces of the crew, and later of the wardroom and chiefs’ mess, when they liked what we served. The food service officer gave me the latitude to explore and experiment, and also recognized my efforts.” As his level of responsibility increased, his culinary skills were also enriched.

Davenport was a seven-and-a-half-year veteran in the culinary arts when he joined the Navy. He’d trained under a certified master chef who’d been a Navy cook in the 1960s, who “talked about his service in Vietnam and told a sea story almost every day about his Navy cooking career. It really piqued my interest and I decided I wanted to serve my country.” He scored well enough on his Navy entrance exams to become a nuclear engineer on submarines, but his passion was cooking. He takes pride in his work.

“Cooking for the Chairman is different than cooking for the crew, but it requires the same amount of effort. They taught us in A School that it takes as much effort to make a bad meal as it does to create a good one,” smiles Davenport. “You might not have the technical skill to create a five-star entree, but you should always put forth your best effort.”

After two years of college, McMahon really didn’t know what he wanted to do with his life. He’d spent a lot of time in the kitchen with his grandmother while growing up and intuitively understood the connection between food, family and a sense of joy. He believes his professional success started with a simple act of culinary ingenuity.

“One morning while I was stationed aboard USS Enterprise (CVN-65), there was no donut delivery. I demonstrated some initiative and made pastries,” smiles McMahon. “The captain was impressed and when he was looking for a captain’s cook, I was recommended. I believe I was recommended for the unique assignments I’ve had because I’ve shown my passion for cooking, along with a little flair for presentation.”

Ryan had already begun his culinary training before he joined the Navy and believes he’s part of an elite community of impassioned professionals. “There are a ton of really talented cooks and chefs in the Navy and the people I’ve met over the past nine years are just unbelievable. The level of cooking skills I see every day is amazing. And we challenge one another to do our best. Navy CSs aren’t just sloppin’ food on a tray; we care about preparing good food and we care about Sailors.”

“Cooking involves a lot of technical skill and we use our passion and talent and present it on a plate. I love what I do,” adds Davenport. “There’s a lot more reward than there is stress. If someone likes to cook or wants to make food service a career, I highly recommend exploring the Navy culinary world. The Navy’s been good to me and I wouldn’t trade my Navy experience for anything.”

Lauren Armstrong is the Contributing Editor and Member of the FRA Auxiliary. She can be reached at lauren@fra.org.
The only Cuckoo Clock inspired by the Wonders of Ancient Egypt

CELEBRATE THE TIMELESS GLORY OF AN ANCIENT WORLD...

An icon of unwavering strength, breathtaking beauty and political prowess, Queen Nefertiti has been heralded throughout history as one of the world’s greatest rulers. With a name that translates as “A Beautiful Woman Has Come,” she epitomizes the unrivaled allure, wealth and prestige of a mysterious ancient world.

In a first-of-a-kind celebration of the opulence of ancient Egypt and one of its most famous leaders, the The Bradford Exchange presents the exclusive Treasures of Ancient Egypt Cuckoo Clock.

MASTER CRAFTED FOR LAVISH APPEAL...

Expertly crafted by hand, this unique musical edition showcases:

- Two hand-cast golden sphinxes and Bastet cats
- Sacred scarab beetle and rich turquoise lotus flower depictions
- Embellished with Aten—the sun god—and Eye of Horus symbols
- Symbolic hieroglyphics
- The bust of Nefertiti—inspired by Thutmose’s famous sculpture—emerges on the hour, while Anubis, Ra and Nefertiti circle around the base
- Regal golden Canopic jar–inspired pendulums

SUPERB VALUE—ORDER YOURS TODAY!

Worldwide demand has been strong for this precision quartz movement clock. Act now to acquire yours in five convenient installments of only $39.99, for a total issue price of just $199.95*, backed by our 365-day money-back guarantee. Pay nothing now; simply complete and return your Reservation Application today!

www.bradfordexchange.com/ancientclock
Retaining Current Members

EXTENSIVE RESEARCH SHOWS THAT improving FRA's retention rate would dramatically strengthen our overall membership numbers and, ultimately, strengthen our organization. During the past membership year, 34 Branches throughout the Association earned the 100% Award for no losses in membership numbers. Six of these branches started and ended with the same number of members at the end of the year, which means their recruiting efforts kept pace with the number of shipmates who passed away or let their membership lapse. I asked some of the key leaders in these branches about the tools they use to retain members.

Branch 212 (Meade, Md.) Secretary Paul E. Taylor explained their branch's good fortune in retaining members. Shipmate Paul believes keeping members engaged is integral to retaining members and the social events hosted by the branch make a difference. Their meeting times (Saturday mornings at 10:00) and location are also convenient to the members — something that also facilitates involvement.

Shipmate Steve Matthews from Branch 261 (LeMoore, Calif.) believes involvement is an important part of retention. He contends the true test of retaining members would be an accounting of accomplishments throughout the year. What has the branch done for its members and the community? If the branch completes and submits the annual committee reports for Americanism and Patriotism; Hospitals, Welfare, and Rehabilitation; Youth Activities and Public Relations, then these reports will tell the story of accomplishments and programs for the members and community. Branches that are strong contenders for recognition in these categories almost always have high retention numbers.

Branch 283 (Elsmere, Ky.), Branch 315 (Joplin, Mo.) and Branch 338 (Nashua, N.H.) use the personalized approach to retaining members. According to Branch 283 Secretary James Hammond, each member receives a copy of the branch newsletter by mail and personal letters are also sent to members about renewing their membership. Inside the envelope there will be a small trinket, which may be an ink pen or small letter opener with the branch name, number and contact information. He orders these items from the National Pen Company (www.pens.com) and believes the trinkets make the mailings more memorable and encourage the recipients to retain their membership. The Board of Governors, Board of Directors, and Club Manager are really engaged in doing things to keep current members engaged and also bring in members via various events each month, such as picnics and Mother's/Father's Day breakfasts,” says Shipmate Rob. “If you can get them in the door, they are more likely to stay.”

Like all membership initiatives, retaining current members is about establishing and maintaining relationships. Remembering birthdays and membership anniversaries, recognizing members' achievements and milestones, or simply checking in with a shipmate you haven't seen in a while — and not just when you need a volunteer or a check for membership dues — are equally important aspects of membership retention.

Branch 261 (LeMoore, Calif.) President Rob Walecki also chairs the branch’s Membership Committee and reminds us that recruiting and retention are different approaches to a common goal — maintaining and increasing FRA's membership numbers — and that both work best when a personal touch is used. Shipmate Rob uses the sample template in the FRA Recruiting Manual to send personal letters to prospective and previous members. Additionally, the branch is active in a variety of outreach events and utilizes the local base newspaper to help get the word out about the branch, unit, and club. Being a “retired Navy guy” and working on the base as a contractor helps, offering opportunities to interact with those prospective members who meet the requirements to join the FRA. “The Board of Governors, Board of Directors, and Club Manager are really engaged in doing things to keep current members engaged and also bring in members via various events each month, such as picnics and Mother’s/Father’s Day breakfasts,” says Shipmate Rob. “If you can get them in the door, they are more likely to stay.”

Like all membership initiatives, retaining current members is about establishing and maintaining relationships. Remembering birthdays and membership anniversaries, recognizing members’ achievements and milestones, or simply checking in with a shipmate you haven't seen in a while — and not just when you need a volunteer or a check for membership dues — are equally important aspects of membership retention.
Have you ever said to yourself “I’d love to get a computer, if only I could figure out how to use it.” Well, you’re not alone. Computers were supposed to make our lives simpler, but they’ve gotten so complicated that they are not worth the trouble. With all of the “pointing and clicking” and “dragging and dropping” you’re lucky if you can figure out where you are. Plus, you are constantly worrying about viruses, spam and freeze-ups. If this sounds familiar, we have great news for you. There is finally a computer that’s designed for simplicity and ease of use. It’s the WOW Computer, and it was designed with you in mind. This computer is easy-to-use, worry-free and literally puts the world at your fingertips. From the moment you open the box, you’ll realize how different the WOW Computer is. The components are all connected; all you do is plug it into an outlet and your high-speed Internet connection. Then you’ll see the screen. This is a completely new touch screen system, without the cluttered look of the normal computer screen. The “buttons” on the screen are easy to see and easy to understand. All you do is touch one of them, from the Web, Email, Calendar to Games—you name it... and a new screen opens up. It’s so easy to use you won’t have to ask your children or grandchildren for help. Until now the very people who could benefit most from Email and the Internet are the ones that have had the hardest time accessing it. Now, thanks to the WOW Computer, countless older Americans are discovering the wonderful world of the Internet every day. Isn’t it time you took part? Call now, and a patient, knowledgeable product expert will tell you how you can try it in your home for 30 days. If you are not totally satisfied, simply return it within 30 days for a refund of the product purchase price. Call today.

Call now and find out how you can get your own WOW! Computer.

Mention promotional code 47152 for special introductory pricing.

1-877-792-7096

firstSTREET

© 2013 by firstSTREET for Boomers and Beyond, Inc.
Get the card that helps your voice be heard.

Apply for the FRA USAA Rewards™ World MasterCard® and take advantage of:

- **No annual fee**¹
- **Variable purchase Annual Percentage Rate (APR) as low as 10.9%**
- **0% introductory APR for 12 months** on balance transfers and convenience checks made in the first three months of account opening (10.9% to 25.9% variable APR on these balances after 12 months)
- **USAA Rewards points** that you can redeem for your choice of cash, merchandise or other exciting rewards²

USAA Bank, which is dedicated to serving the military community, helps make it easier to support the FRA.

**Apply today.**

usaa.com/fracc  877-372-8722

USAA means United Services Automobile Association and its insurance, banking, investment and other companies.

¹ Offers subject to approval. As of 8/1/13, regular APRs on purchases, cash advances and balance transfers are 10.9% to 25.9%, depending on your credit history and other factors and will vary with the market based on the Prime Rate. There is a transaction fee of 3% on cash advances ($200 maximum on each balance transfer and each convenience check) and 1% on foreign transactions. Rates and fees subject to change. Please contact us for the most current information. If your credit history and other factors qualify you for a credit limit under $5,000, you will receive a USAA Platinum MasterCard with the same rates and fees. Rewards points terminate if account is closed or delinquent or program ends. Earn 1 point for every $1 in credit card purchases. Other restrictions apply. USAA Rewards Program terms and conditions will be provided with your card. Availability restrictions apply. Purchase of a bank product does not establish eligibility for or membership in USAA property and casualty insurance companies. FRA receives financial support from USAA for this sponsorship.

Credit cards issued by USAA Savings Bank, Member FDIC. © 2013 USAA. 145573-1013
MCPO Dick Baney, USN (Ret.) and wife, Misako
Last known assignment was on USS Cochrane (DDG-21), homeported in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. They were our next door neighbors on Cruse Place in Navy Housing from 1971 to 1977. Please contact Robert Andrews and Martha at 707-422-2107 or rama1801@comcast.net

William T. (Tom) Bassett
He was an ex-QM who went through the LDO Program. We were stationed together with Comphibron Ten out of Little Creek, Va., 1966 to 1968. Please contact Donald L. Kimble at 607-795-4342 or ae3z@verizon.net

Ernesto Tigue
We were plank owners on the USS Constellation (CVA-64). I think he might be in the Los Angeles area. Anyone else on the Connie who remembers me as a V-2 Div Arresting Gear crew member can contact Lawrence (Larry) Evans at 718-810-1100 or sweetstime450@gmail.com

William Holland
We discussed your extra copy of 1973 Coral Sea cruise book. My other offer fell through, so I am still looking. Will pay postage for any book. Please contact Gregg Womeldorff at 303-688-0637 or g_womeldorff@earthlink.net

FCC (first name unknown) Todd, USN.
He was stationed on Guam, 1966–1967, with duty at Ships Repair Facility (SRF). He was married to Carol, and had daughters, Wendy and Stormey. Please contact Don Bastin at 562-425-6526 or deefromlb@verison.net

LT(jg) J. F. Maier, USNR.
He was the Engineer Officer of the USS Hake (SS-256) at the end of WWII. I would like to correspond with him, a member of his family or someone who was stationed with him on the Hake. I have the Record of Submerged Runs that was dated Feb 19, 1945 through Aug 21, 1945. Please contact John C. Craig at 928-706-8511 or e-mail limeng@frontiernet.net

BT2 John Green/Greene
We served together on the USS Paul Revere (LPA-248). Please contact Alphonzie Moses at 8978 Talca Ct., San Diego, CA 92129-2166 or 619-972-0573 or 858-484-2379.

USS Aldebaran (AF-10)
October 16–19, 2013, Mobile, AL. Contact Joe E. Bostwick at 512-357-6774 or txjeb@austin.rr.com

USS Hancock (CV-19)
April 24–27, 2014, Jacksonville, FL. Contact Max Pate at 7912 Terrace Ridge Dr, Temple Terrace, FL 33637; max-pate@tampabay.rr.com or 813-972-1417.

My sincere thanks also go to my wonderful wife, Patty, for her love and unwavering support through the years, and to our daughters Christina, Allison and Emily (and granddogs Winston and Coco). The many messages and words of appreciation and support from current and past national officers and other shipmates since I announced plans to retire last January are also very much appreciated.

In closing, it’s important — especially for those of us in branch, regional and national leadership positions — to always do what’s best for the Association and a quote that I noted recently seems appropriate: “Judge your success not by what you achieve, but by what others achieve through you.”

Thanks for the opportunity and best wishes to all.

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 Future Planning.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>BRANCH</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>BRANCH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ackerman, Hillie W, BMCM, USN</td>
<td>MAL</td>
<td>Halstrom, Kenneth H, YN1, USN</td>
<td>038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allen, George A, BM1, USN</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>Henderson, John E, AKC, USN</td>
<td>MAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anderson, Allen E, BT1, USN</td>
<td>061</td>
<td>Hinda, George, EN1, USN</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backerman, David Harold, AECS, USN</td>
<td>097</td>
<td>Hoopes, Martin C, CTC, USN</td>
<td>010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barker, Robert E, YNC, USN</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>Hudson, Marion M, SWC, USN</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrios, Kerry J., CPL, USMC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PNP, Bastian, Robert L, PNP, USN</strong></td>
<td><strong>004</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beal, Charles E, RMC, USN</td>
<td>319</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bickford, Lewie, CPO, USN</td>
<td>049</td>
<td>Kennon, Thomas D, MCP2, USN</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Britton, Warren A., OM2, USN</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>Kent, Robert C, HM1, USN</td>
<td>MAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buckner, James R, DTC, USN</td>
<td>MAL</td>
<td>Kirk, Carter Lucas, SGT, USMC</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butler, Everett L, YNC, USN</td>
<td>014</td>
<td>Kitt, Gary L., USN</td>
<td>046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cacha, Rodrigo T, MMSC, USN</td>
<td>084</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christofferson, Arthur, CWO, USN</td>
<td>066</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clabaugh, Jack, MLC, USN</td>
<td>MAL</td>
<td>Mallady, Homer R, CTOS, USN</td>
<td>MAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comeau, Randall O, ETCM, USN</td>
<td>022</td>
<td>McCusker, James E, PNC, USN</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crawford, Fred E, ADRC, USN</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>McMahon, James P, ETCM, USN</td>
<td>060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dacus, Leo R, MGYSGT, USMC</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>McMullan, Albert W, SMCS, USMC</td>
<td>093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalin, Melford J, ETC, USN</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>Mills, George M., HTC</td>
<td>020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dixon, Homer W, QMC, USN</td>
<td>050</td>
<td>Moore, Robert P, AEC, USN</td>
<td>022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dixon, Ralph A, DCC, USN</td>
<td>MAL</td>
<td>Morgan, Donald R, DTC, USN</td>
<td>MAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dornberger, J J, SCPO, USN</td>
<td>040</td>
<td>Morris, Bruce A, MSGT, USMC</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dotson, Talbert R, FT1, USN</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>Mosman, Werner E, ADRC, USN</td>
<td>MAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drake, Joseph P, LTJG, USN</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>Mozgal, Teoii F, ADRC, USN</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumond, Dale, PFC, USMC</td>
<td>061</td>
<td>Mutch, Ralph H, PO1, USN</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duran, Rick M., DS1, USN</td>
<td>097</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durkee, Miles E, AC1, USN</td>
<td>MAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duvall, D W, ISTSqm, USMC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edwards, Louis T, AO1, USN</td>
<td>MAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairchild, George B, ADRC, USN</td>
<td>386</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felton, Elmer J, ADC, USN</td>
<td>018</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuller, Thomas L, SHC, USN</td>
<td>060</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaabucayan, Rodrigo J, PO1, USN</td>
<td>289</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardner, Frederick R, AMSC, USN</td>
<td>126</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gomez, Felix, BMC, USN</td>
<td>067</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant, Mercer A, YNC, USN</td>
<td>089</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Griffith, Andrew H., EO1, USN</td>
<td>089</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grimm, Earl C, ENC, USN</td>
<td>MAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hall, Francis S, AOC, USN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Names in red indicate 50 year continuous members. Bold indicates Past National Officer.
Finally, a cell phone that's... a phone.

Introducing the all-new Jitterbug® Plus.
We’ve made it even better... without making it harder to use.

All my friends have new cell phones. They carry them around with them all day, like mini computers, with little tiny keyboards and hundreds of programs which are supposed to make their life easier. Trouble is... my friends can’t use them. The keypads are too small, the displays are hard to see and the phones are so complicated that my friends end up borrowing my Jitterbug when they need to make a call. I don’t mind... I just got a new phone too... the new Jitterbug Plus. Now I have all the things I loved about my Jitterbug phone along with some great new features that make it even better!

GreatCall® created the Jitterbug with one thing in mind— to offer people a cell phone that’s easy to see and hear, simple to use and affordable. Now, they’ve made the cell phone experience even better with the Jitterbug Plus. It features a lightweight, comfortable design with a backlit keypad and big, legible numbers. There is even a dial tone so you know the phone is ready to use. You can also increase the volume with one touch and the speaker’s been improved so you get great audio quality and can hear every word. The battery has been improved too— it’s one of the longest lasting on the market— so you won’t have to charge it as often. The phone comes to you with your account already set up and is easy to activate.

The rate plans are simple too. Why pay for minutes you’ll never use? There are a variety of affordable plans. Plus, you don’t have to worry about finding yourself stuck with no minutes— that’s the problem with prepaid phones. Since there is no contract to sign, you are not locked in for years at a time and won’t be subject to early termination fees. The U.S.-based customer service is knowledgeable and helpful and the phone gets service virtually anywhere in the continental U.S. Above all, you’ll get one-touch access to a friendly, and helpful GreatCall operator. They can look up numbers, and even dial them for you! They are always there to help you when you need them.

Call now and receive a FREE Car Charger – a $24.99 value.

Jitterbug Plus Cell Phone
Call today to get your own Jitterbug Plus.
Please mention promotional code 47153.
1-888-679-3644
www.jitterbugdirect.com

We proudly accept the following credit cards.
Branch 89 Atlanta, Ga.

Shipmates (l to r) Joe Farquhar, Don Lear and Wayne Barron pose in front of the “Memphis Belle” B-17 that is touring the nation. The WWII aircraft appeared in the title role of the movie, “Memphis Belle.”

Branch 1 Philadelphia, Pa.

PRPNE and Branch President Charles E. Rainey places a wreath on the Philadelphia Korean War Memorial during Veterans Day ceremonies.

Branch 136 Minneapolis, Minn.

Shipmate Richard Garty (left) poses with Branch President Tom Dooley after accepting his 50-year FRA membership certificate and pin. Garty is a Pearl Harbor survivor, who was a Marine mess cook, peeling potatoes at the time of the attack, and is also a Korean War and Vietnam veteran. He will celebrate his 90th birthday in November.

Branch 251 Mt. Home, Ark.

During his visit to the branch, then-RPSC Bob Holcomb (left) presents the Robert F. Doherty Award for special recognition by the Americanism-Patriotism Committee to Shipmate Terrence Louis.

Branch 20 Groton, Conn.

Shipmate Jack Neighbors (left) is recognized for his 40 years of continuous FRA membership by Branch President Herb Horne (center) and Secretary PNP George Hyland.
**BRANCH 207 DALE CITY, VA.**

Branch President Abe Zino presents a thank-you gift to Retired Navy Commander and former POW Paul Galanti during an event to celebrate the end of the Year of the Chief and the beginning of the Year of the Military Woman at Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA). NAVSEA Command Master Chief and FRA Shipmate Evelyn “Vonn” Banks (far right) and the NAVSEA Chiefs were also on hand for the event.

**BRANCH 61 CHULA VISTA, CALIF.**

PRPSW Gus Hermes (left) and FRA NVP Virgil Cournay discuss the details prior to Memorial Day services at Glen Abbey Memorial Park in Bonita, Calif.

**BRANCH 126 JACKSONVILLE, FLA.**

Shipmate Marlin Crider (left) received a letter of commendation, lapel pin and FRA ID card denoting his 60 years of continuous FRA membership. Branch President James Thomas presented the award during a recent branch meeting.

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

Maddie Meyer, who took national second-place honors for 8th graders in this year’s FRA Americanism Essay Contest, received an FRA plaque and certificate and a check for $1,500 for her outstanding effort. The entire congregation crowded around Maddie, who is shown here with her parents, Branch President Jerry Piva (left) and RPNC John Partin (right).
A Message from National President Diane “Lady Di” Hoover

I AM SO PROUD to have followed in the footsteps of all the Past National Presidents. Everything and everywhere I went was a “first” for me and you have given me memories that I will cherish forever. Thank you for the honor of serving you as your National President. I also want to thank my counterpart, FRA National President Mark Kilgore, for his support this past year.

The September 2012 issue of FRA Today featured an article on support dogs for Veterans. (You might remember a beautiful black Labrador retriever on the front page of that issue.) That article laid the foundation and awareness for my National President’s Project, “America’s VetDogs,” an organization headquartered in Smithtown, N.Y. A veteran who graduates from the VetDogs program receives a lifetime of aftercare, including home visits and refresher training as required. There is no better gift for a disabled veteran than to have a support dog for life. If you can help, please send your donation to: NFS Karen Smith, 5820 Wonder Drive, Fort Worth, TX 76133. Please make checks payable to LA FRA and please write “VetDogs” on the memo line. My project ends October 31, 2013, so please hurry. You can make a difference. I am amazed, inspired and grateful for the amazing generosity so many of you have shown. You’re what making a difference looks like! Your support for my National Presidents’ Project “America’s VetDogs” through August 2013 has generated $25,000 and I feel confident we will reach $30,000. My goal is $50,000, but I am ecstatic about what we have accomplished. Individuals, units and branches, and all the fundraising events have pushed the thermometer up. You can’t see me, but I’m totally doing a happy dance!

Thank you for the fantastic memories. This is Lady Di saying, “Put your Choo-Choo on!” See you all in Chattanooga!!!!!!

2013 Scholarship Recipients

The LA FRA proudly announces its scholarship recipients for 2013. We’re extremely proud of the following winners:

**Sammantha N. Burris**, attending Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, Indianapolis, IN where she is studying Forensic Science and received the LA FRA Allie Mae Oden Scholarship $500.

**Kaitlyn A. George**, attending North Carolina State University, NC. She wants to be a Microbiologist and received the LA FRA Sam Rose Scholarship $500.

**Daniel E. Corney**, attending MIT, Cambridge, MA. He wants to be a Nuclear Engineer and received the LA FRA Scholarship $500.

**Justin T. Woodbury**, attending Peter T. Paul College of Business at University of New Hampshire. He is studying Business and received the LA FRA National Presidents Scholarship $1,500.

Congratulations to all!!!!!!!
ATTENTION: U.S. NAVY VETERANS
MESOTHELIOMA COMPENSATION CLAIMS FILING DEADLINE

U.S. Navy veterans have been exposed to asbestos onboard ships and many have developed mesothelioma lung cancer as a result. Millions of dollars in compensation are available for those who have been diagnosed with mesothelioma lung cancer and their loved ones. Thousands of US Navy veterans have already received compensation. Strict time deadlines may bar late claims. If you or a loved one has been diagnosed with mesothelioma then you need to call now for a free consultation and Claims Information & Evaluation Package.

CALL NOW TOLL FREE!
1-888-310-2138
NAVY VETERANS MESOTHELIOMA CLAIMS HOTLINE

Sponsored by Quinn Law Firm. Nationwide representation of US NAVY Veterans and their families in mesothelioma claims. In home appointments are available nationwide by appointment only. Fees, costs, and expenses are charged only against any recovery that is made. No recovery – no fee. We do not sue the U.S. or Navy. Principal office Fort Worth, TX
MESOTHELIOMA
ASBESTOS LUNG CANCER
AND RETIRED SAILORS

Many sailors were exposed to asbestos onboard ships in the U.S. Navy. This asbestos exposure often causes lung cancer much later in life. Mesothelioma is a particular form of lung cancer that is only caused by exposure to asbestos.

FREE INITIAL LEGAL CONSULTATION
If you or a loved one has been diagnosed with MESOTHELIOMA OR ASBESTOS LUNG CANCER, please call us immediately to find out about the compensation you may be entitled to recover.
We provide retired sailors and their families with a free no obligation initial legal consultation with an experienced lawyer.
We represent clients from all 50 states.

NO RISK TO CLIENTS
Our clients are never at risk of paying any fees, costs or expenses out of pocket. All legal fees, court costs and other expenses are paid by the client only out of any judgment or settlement in the case.

DON’T LOSE YOUR RIGHTS!
Your legal claims must be filed within the time period allowed by law or you and your family members will lose all of your rights to recover against the corporations that are responsible for your injuries. CALL NOW!

“Those guys sure helped me out after I got diagnosed”
LeRoy Riddell
1935 - 2008
U.S. Navy Retired
Member VFW, DAV, American Legion
and the Fleet Reserve
Former National President of the
Retired Enlisted Association
and client of The Johnson Law Firm.

The Johnson Law Firm
CALL NOW! 1-888-MESO-HELP TOLL FREE
1-888-637-6435

“Nationwide legal representation of mesothelioma and lung cancer victims”
In home and local appointments available nationwide by appointment only. Principal office Fort Worth, TX.
* Past successes cannot be an assurance of future successes since each case is decided on its own merits.