

YOUR MISSION • YOUR VOICE

# FRA *today*



Meet Master Chief  
Petty Officer of  
the Coast Guard  
**Steven Cantrell**



- 13 History of FRA: 1970–1979
- 14 FRA Calls Program
- 26 2014 Americanism Essay Contest Winners

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# Featured

## 18 MEET MASTER CHIEF PETTY OFFICER OF THE COAST GUARD STEVEN CANTRELL

Less than two weeks after assuming the watch as the Coast Guard's senior enlisted advisor, MCPOCG Steven Cantrell granted an exclusive interview with FRA. Learn about his vision for the Coast Guard and the high regard he holds for the men and women with whom he serves.



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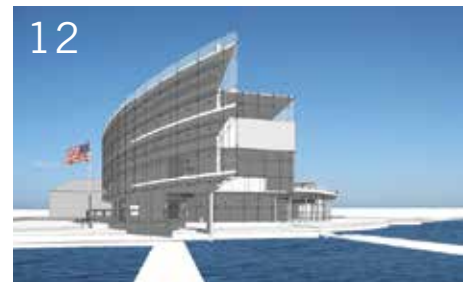
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### LOYALTY, PROTECTION AND SERVICE

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### ON THE COVER

Master Chief Petty Officer Steven W. Cantrell assumes the duties of the master chief petty officer of the Coast Guard during a change-of-watch ceremony Thursday, May 21, 2014. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Patrick Kelley.

## A Team Effort



Lauren Armstrong

**CREATING EACH ISSUE OF** *FRA Today* is like assembling a one-of-a-kind jigsaw puzzle, with a variety of unique pieces and parts coming together to create the whole. Contributions from shipmates, branches, various departments within FRA National Headquarters (NHQ) and our advertising representative must be assembled to meet a variety of requirements and deadlines. It's an invigorating challenge to coordinate this effort on a monthly basis.

One of the most satisfying parts of my job is the opportunity to engage with those who also play important roles in bringing each edition to completion. Virtually every department at NHQ contributes to the production of this magazine and it really is a team effort. Our Legislative and Membership departments, as well as FRA leadership, contribute editorial content to fill these pages. Our Member Services and Admin staff ensure we pay tribute to our shipmates who've passed on and our Accounting and Finance departments collect advertising revenue and make sure our printing and postal accounts are up to date. And without our IT staff, we'd be hard-pressed to keep our membership database up-to-date, which is critical to ensuring each shipmate receives his/her issue at the proper mailing address. It's also a privilege to accept copy and photo submissions from shipmates and branches around the world, and a pleasure to work with the creative graphic designers at FIREBRAND.

Another gratifying aspect of my responsibilities as editor of *FRA Today* is the interesting people I have the privilege to interview for each month's feature story. I always learn something new and feel good about my efforts to share that newfound knowledge with you — our readers. This month's interview with Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard (MCPOCG) Steve Cantrell is just another example of the fascinating folks with whom I get to engage. MCPOCG Cantrell had only been on watch for less than two weeks when we met and it speaks volumes about FRA's relationship with the Coast Guard that he was willing to accommodate our request for an interview so early in his tenure. It's an honor to represent FRA in these encounters knowing the level of trust and respect our organization has garnered over its 90-year history. I'm sincerely grateful for the opportunity to be a part of the FRA Team.

It was a thrill to accept a challenge coin from the new Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard Steve Cantrell.



**Lauren Armstrong** is FRA's Director of Communications and serves as the Managing Editor of *FRA Today*. Please contact her at [lauren@fra.org](mailto:lauren@fra.org).

# FRAtoday

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VOLUME 93 NUMBER 7







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**DURING THE PAST SIX** months, many activities have made the FRA stronger and more visible. Members of the Association's management and leadership teams continue to meet with representatives from various major military commands throughout the nation, often introducing active duty and Reserve personnel to our noble organization for the first time. It has been astonishing to learn how many senior enlisted service members and young officers have no knowledge of the FRA.

Many of these visits have shown that active duty and Reserve Component facilities are willing to open their doors and welcome our shipmates with open arms, offering opportunities for local branches to advertise or publish articles in base newspapers at no charge, post flyers or set up information tables at commissaries or exchanges. FRA branches and individual shipmates have the ability to develop continuing relationships with these service members and facilities by simply offering a commitment to assist and support those who serve. I highly encourage all shipmates and branches to seize these opportunities, not only to promote the FRA, but to support Sea Service personnel as outlined in our preamble.

These command visits have been very positive experiences and have allowed us to share FRA's important work with commanders and senior staff members. It has been heartening and a real point of pride to talk about FRA's work to protect and enhance pay, benefits and other quality-of-life benefits for service members, retirees, veterans and their families. They now know about our commitment to engage on Capitol Hill when those

benefits are threatened and ensure their voice is being heard.

As the Association moves forward, we must concentrate on the future and focus on our goals to strengthen our membership base and position the FRA for the next decade and beyond. It is imperative that we make every effort to pull out all the stops to attract younger service members, retirees and

Change is often  
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another 90 years.

veterans to our organization. We must be willing to deviate from the status quo in order to achieve these goals and maintain the stability of our organization. Change is often met with fear and dissension, but new ideas and methods are needed to ensure FRA's mission continues for another 90 years.

There are some new tools available to provide better service to our shipmates and assist them in recruiting new members. An FRA app is available for the iPhone (Visit the Apple App Store and search for FRA) and one is being tested for use with Android platforms. A new information brochure is now available for use at branch recruiting events or in one-on-one interactions



Virgil Courneya

with prospective shipmates. A poster is also being developed for use at commissaries, exchanges, grocery stores, watering holes and other public places that Sea Service personnel, retirees and veterans might frequent. The poster will allow branches more visibility within their communities and will provide a springboard for dialogue about the FRA.

It has been a pleasure visiting and working with branches around the country and an honor to recognize shipmates for their dedication to the FRA. I've enjoyed listening to shipmates' stories and experiences, as well as learning why they joined the FRA and why they've stuck with us year after year. I've also been gratified to observe the interactions of the National Headquarters staff and how they leave no stone unturned in their efforts to advance the best interests of our organization and members.

In order for us to secure FRA's future, we must work to establish and maintain strong and mutually beneficial relationships with those we serve, as well as those we wish to recruit and retain in our ranks. I welcome your constructive suggestions for improving our great organization.

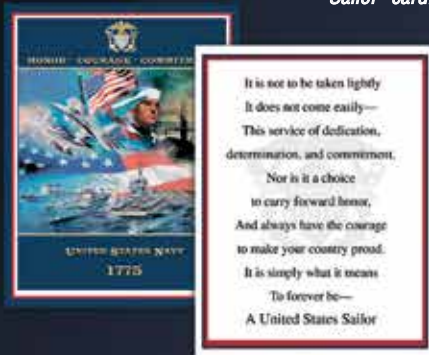
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**Virgil Courneya** was elected to serve as FRA's national president during the 2013–2014 Association year. He is a member of Branch 274 (Reno, Nev.) and can be reached at [mgysgtvpc@att.net](mailto:mgysgtvpc@att.net)

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**01-20098-001-E27941**



## Benefits of Life Membership

I would like to know how or if my Life Membership in FRA affects my wife once my membership is done. I'm wondering about any FRA benefits for her if I should die first; i.e. family education scholarships, discounts, future membership for spouses, etc.

Peter Sadler

**FRA Response:** We hope you're around to enjoy the benefits of your FRA membership for many years to come, but in the event you pass away before your wife, some of those benefits will continue to be available to her and other family members. Your widow will continue to receive FRA Today and she, as well as your children and grandchildren, would continue to be eligible to apply for scholarships through the FRA Education Foundation. Some types of insurance coverage may also be available for her through our affinity partners (Mercer and GEICO), particularly if you currently have coverage through these vendors and/or she is a member of the FRA Auxiliary.

## VA Scandal

How involved is the FRA in this investigation [of the VA improprieties revealed in the recent Inspector General report]? As an FRA Veterans Service Officer, I am getting questions every day about what the FRA is doing to help solve this problem. Now that the media is running with this humongous problem, is The Military Coalition involved or is it just a few veteran groups on their own? Out here in the trenches, we are not rolling over. We are fighting for all veterans, not just Sea Service veterans.

PRPNW Bud Bessey

**FRA Response:** You are not alone in your outrage with the recent VA scandal and FRA is not "rolling over" either. We believe that delayed and inadequate care for our nation's veterans is a violation of a solemn vow made to these men and women and FRA firmly supports any and all actions that will ensure these veterans get the care they've earned and deserve.

As it has for the past 90 years, FRA continues to be actively engaged in addressing this and other veterans' concerns. FRA National President Courneya addressed these and other VA issues when he testified before a joint hearing of the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees last March, and shipmates' concerns are consistently referenced in correspondence and meetings with lawmakers and VA officials.

Additionally, FRA is supporting legislation (H.R. 4031) that would authorize senior VA executives to be dismissed if their performance and behavior warrant it. We are also calling for additional congressional oversight, continued focus on legislative remedies and policy reforms, and other measures to ensure all VA employees and leaders are held accountable. When asked "what is FRA doing?" please refer them

to the FRA Action Center ([action.fra.org/action-center](http://action.fra.org/action-center)). FRA shipmates and others can be part of the solution by sharing their concerns with lawmakers, volunteering through the Department's Voluntary Service (VAVS) program, and participating in FRA's survey on VA service at [www.fra.org/survey](http://www.fra.org/survey).

## Agent Orange

Your magazine mentioned a move to get help for Sailors who may have been exposed to Agent Orange while serving in the waters offshore in Vietnam. I did three WESTPAC cruises on the USS Coral Sea and spent nine months offshore during each one. I also spent two nights in Danang, an afternoon in Camron Bay and another in Bienthuey.

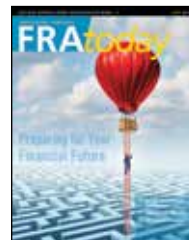
I was in a plane that was taking shots from the ground and the pilot had to pancake onto the runway and we ran for low ground in the middle of a nasty firefight. I've been told that if you had boots on the ground in Vietnam, you were exposed to Agent Orange.

I'm writing because I have an incurable itch on my back and have been told I will have it for the rest of my life. I've seen nine doctors, two acupuncturists, two natural practitioners and seven dermatologists and have tried every medicine created, but none helped.

Thomas Funderburgh

**FRA Response:** We're sorry to hear of your medical problems and encourage you to register with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), if you haven't already. It's not clear from your letter whether any of the medical professionals you've seen were affiliated with the VA, but if it can be determined that your health problems are related to your military service, you may be eligible for some form of compensation. Money certainly won't relieve the physical discomfort you're experiencing, but it might alleviate some financial stress and bring you some peace of mind.

As you've no doubt heard in recent weeks, scheduling an appointment with the VA can be a serious challenge at some facilities (see page 8 for more details) and processing time for disability claims is beyond acceptable limits. The sooner you get yourself and your claim into the system, the sooner you can be seen and/or potentially receive benefits.



**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](mailto: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.



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Monthly Rate	\$14.99	\$19.99
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John Davis

## Moving Forward

**RECENT INVESTIGATIONS REVEALED MAJOR** systemic problems in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) appointment processes, as well as ethical lapses and accountability failures with regard to scheduling and providing care at VA medical facilities. FRA believes decisive and appropriate action is required to correct these deficiencies, improve processes and restore veterans' faith in the department that exists solely to support them.

FRA commends former VA Secretary Eric Shinseki for stepping down in order to place the focus where it needs to be — on solving the ongoing problems associated with providing prompt, high-quality healthcare services to our veterans. (See related story on page 9.) Sloan Gibson, acting VA Secretary, has pledged to accelerate access to care and ensure the quality of care remains strong. FRA stands ready to support any and all initiatives that advance that agenda. (Despite these recent outrages, it is important to remember that many veterans being treated at VA hospitals and clinics are highly satisfied with the quality of care they receive.)

FRA has long advocated for legislative, administrative and policy reforms to ensure wounded, ill and injured veterans receive the care they've earned and deserve, and addressing these most recent concerns is no exception. The Association remains engaged with VA leaders and congressional oversight committees, calling for resolution to these long-standing problems and complete transparency as the VA moves forward.

Our nation has a moral duty to care for our veterans and there is strong bipartisan support for legislation to reform the delivery of VA services. In addition to reforming the VA health care system, lawmakers are calling on the VA to develop a seamless transition from military to VA services, improve the disability claims process to eliminate bureaucratic delays and ensure consistency in how disabilities are rated. Members are encouraged to use the FRA Action Center at [action.fra.org/action-center](http://action.fra.org/action-center) to urge their elected officials to support a variety of VA reform initiatives.

## FY2015 NDAA Moves Forward

The Senate Armed Services Committee recently amended and approved its version of the FY 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA, S. 2410). The measure is being considered by the full Senate as this issue of *FRA Today* goes to print and includes proposals to:

- Reduce active duty and Reserve pay increase from 1.8 percent to one percent;
- Increase pharmacy co-pays for prescriptions filled outside military treatment facilities (MTF) (the amount of increase is unknown);
- Maintain the annual \$1.4 billion commissary subsidy and require the sale of generic products;
- Reject recommendations to combine TRICARE Prime, Standard and Extra into a single plan;
- Hold increases to Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) below the rate of inflation;
- Allow payment of SBP annuities to special needs trusts for disabled children;
- Cut end strength of all services except the Navy by more than 50,000; and
- Grandfather those who join the military prior to January 1, 2016, (currently January 1, 2014) from the one-percent cut in cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) for military retirement (CPI minus one percent).

The full House approved its version of the NDAA (H.R. 4355) that authorizes just over \$600 billion in FY2015 defense spending. This version of the bill rejects combining three TRICARE plans into one and does not call for new TRICARE fees. It also seeks to maintain current BAH rates, but does call for:

- A \$100 million cut to commissary funding in FY 2015;
- Cuts end strength of all services by more than 50,000 (except for the Navy);
- Elimination of the "good soldier defense" in sexual assault prosecutions and requires review of the terms of discharge for those who are victims of sexual offenses to ensure they have not been persecuted for reporting crimes; and
- An increase in funding for behavioral and psychological health programs to address the scourge of military suicides.

After the Senate approves its version of the bill, a conference committee will be appointed to resolve the differences between the two versions. The resulting conference report will be approved by the House and Senate and then sent to the President to be signed into law or vetoed.

## VETERANS/RETIREE ISSUES

## VA Secretary Resigns

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs resigned in the wake of an interim report by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) that determined that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) falsified records to misrepresent the amount of time veterans had to wait for medical appointments at the Phoenix, Ariz., VA hospital. The investigation revealed that 1,700 veterans were kept on a secret waiting list before being put on the official waiting list in an effort to make it appear that these patients had waited 24 days or less to be seen. In fact, these patients had waited, on average, 115 days for an initial appointment. VA employees received pay increases and bonuses based on the false wait times and the report indicated that the problems were not isolated to the Phoenix facility.

The report did not determine if delays led to the deaths of any veterans, but did identify criminal violations and the OIG is coordinating its investigation of VA facilities across the country with the Department of Justice.

Improper scheduling practices are not new to the VA. Since 2005, the OIG has issued 18 reports finding "scheduling problems" at many VA facilities and there are a variety of legislative initiatives aimed at fixing the problem.

The House Veterans' Affairs Committee (HVAC) held a hearing within hours of the release of the IG report, with HVAC Chairman Jeff Miller (Fla.) calling for "a criminal investigation into VA's widespread scheduling corruption" and the resignation of VA Secretary Eric Shinseki. "Shinseki is a good man who has served his country honorably," said Miller, "but he has failed to get VA's health care system in order despite repeated and frequent warnings from Congress, the Government Accountability Office and the IG."

Rep. Mike Michaud (Maine), Ranking Member on the Committee, said "I was extremely disappointed to read in the Inspector General's interim report that many of the alleged failures in care at Phoenix have been borne out. These failures are unacceptable, which is why

I was glad to see the report include several very clear steps Secretary Shinseki can take immediately to begin righting these wrongs. I urge the Secretary to act immediately on implementing these recommendations. And once we have a full IG report, I absolutely expect those responsible for perpetuating any actions that ended up harming our vets to be held fully accountable."

FRA believes that delayed and inadequate care for our veterans is a violation of a solemn vow by our nation to properly care for our veterans. The House has recently passed the "Department of Veterans Affairs Management Accountability Act" (H.R. 4031), which authorizes the VA Secretary to remove any senior VA executive if the individual's performance warrants dismissal. This FRA-supported bill is being considered by the Senate at press time. Members are urged to use the Action Center ([action.fra.org/action-center](http://action.fra.org/action-center)) to ask their senators to support this legislation.

## Caring for Military Families

Members of FRA's Legislative Team recently attended a media event highlighting Caring for Military Families, a joint effort of the Elizabeth Dole Foundation (EDF) and the Wounded Warrior Project (WWP). Sponsored by Speaker of the House John Boehner (Ohio) and Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (Calif.), the Capitol event was the venue for former Senator Elizabeth Dole to explain that, while the nation is quick to rally behind our military and provide veterans the support they deserve, the caregivers themselves are often overlooked. The WWP and EDF recently teamed up to pay for the first comprehensive, evidence-based study on the needs of military and veteran caregivers conducted by the RAND Corporation. The study's findings confirmed that our nation has neglected the most important factor in the recovery and well-being of our wounded veterans — the spouses, parents, siblings and other loved ones who care for them at home.

An estimated 5.5 million caregivers assist and care for our wounded warriors, and this

care would cost \$15 billion annually if it were provided by paid caregivers. These family members and loved ones are desperately struggling to negotiate the labyrinth of family finances and legal matters, all while managing the daily medical and emotional needs of their injured veterans.

FRA supported the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act that was enacted into law in 2010. Unfortunately this law is limited to supporting caregivers for wounded warriors from the War on Terror. Only 20 percent of the nation's military caregivers (1.1 million) provide care for Post-9/11 veterans; the other 4.4 million caregivers receive very little support.

FRA is supporting the "Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act" (S. 1982) that includes a provision to expand the current Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) caregiver program to all veterans who were seriously injured in the line of duty. This legislation is listed on the FRA Action Center



John Davis, FRA's Director of Legislative Programs, poses with former Senator Elizabeth Dole, who heads the Elizabeth Dole Foundation.

Photo provided courtesy of Deirdre Holleman, TRCA

([action.fra.org/action-center](http://action.fra.org/action-center)) and members are strongly urged to contact their Senators on this important issue.

See more about Caring for Military Families at: [www.elizabethdolefoundation.org/hiddenheroescoalition](http://www.elizabethdolefoundation.org/hiddenheroescoalition)



## SGLI Premium Adjustment Effective July 1, 2014

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has recently announced that the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) program will adjust its monthly premium rate from 6.5 cents per \$1,000 back to the 2006 rate of seven cents per \$1,000 of insurance, a modest increase to ensure the SGLI program remains in a strong financial position. For a service member with the maximum \$400,000 of life insurance, this change will mean an increase of two dollars a month.

Insurance companies hold reserve funds to ensure they can pay future claims, and it is common practice in the insurance industry to adjust premium rates as reserve funds increase and decrease. VA also uses actuaries, individuals who deal with financial impact of risk, to conduct program experience studies when evaluating and adjusting reserve assumptions. Additionally, an independent auditor verifies the accuracy of their reserve calculations each year.

The new premium rate will take effect on July 1, 2014. Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) members who are drilling for points toward retirement or who do not receive pay for other reasons will be billed by their branch of service for the higher premium beginning in July 2014. For information on the new rates, visit: <http://benefits.va.gov/insurance/sgli.asp>.

## ACTIVE DUTY/RESERVE ISSUES

### New Coast Guard Leadership

Admiral Paul F. Zukunft recently became the 25th Commandant of the Coast Guard, relieving Admiral Robert Papp, who retired in late May. Prior to his selection as Commandant, Zukunft concurrently served as Commander of the Coast Guard's Pacific Area and Commander of Defense Force West, and also provided U.S. Coast Guard mission support to the Department of Defense (DoD). Previous flag assignments include Assistant Commandant for Marine Safety, Security and Stewardship; Director of Response Policy, Assistant Commandant for Capability; Commander, Eleventh Coast Guard District; and Director, Joint Interagency Task Force West.



Admiral Paul F. Zukunft

Photo courtesy of USCG

Steven W. Cantrell, who is the subject of this month's feature article on page 18, assumed the duties as the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard from Michael P. Leavitt to become the 12th MCPOCG. Shipmate Leavitt retired after more than 32 years of Coast Guard service and plans to relocate with his family to his home state of Idaho.

Master Chief Eric L. Johnson, a 33-year Coast Guard Reservist, assumed the watch at the sixth Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard Reserve Force. He relieved MCPO-CGRF Mark Allen, an active and long-time FRA member, who retired after 37 years of distinguished Coast Guard service.

### New USMC Commandant Selected

Four-star General Joseph Dunford, the top U.S. military commander in Afghanistan, has been nominated by the President to be the next (36th) Commandant of the Marine Corps. The position of Commandant is a four-year term, and requires Senate confirmation.

Raised in Quincy, Mass., Dunford graduated from Saint Michaels College in June 1977. He earned his commission after college graduation, and is also a graduate of the U.S. Army War College, Ranger School and the Amphibious Warfare School. He holds a Master of Arts degree in Government from Georgetown University and a second Master of Arts in International Relations from Tufts University. He is noted for leading the 5th Marine Regiment in the 2003 invasion of Iraq.



General Joseph Dunford

Photo courtesy of USMC

## FRA Recognizes Outstanding Coast Guard Performers

FRA continued its long-standing tradition of recognizing outstanding service members by participating in the Coast Guard's Enlisted Person of the Year program. FRA recognized the outstanding performance of AET1 Travis Cutler and Reservist ME1 Wesley Mundy during events held in Washington, DC, in early June. Each honoree was meritoriously promoted to Chief and FRA presented them with a gift card, coin, certificate and complementary membership in the Association.

FRA's National Executive Director Tom Snee poses with AETC Travis Cutler, the Coast Guard's 2013 Enlisted Person of the Year.



Photo courtesy of USCG



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— A. FROM FLORIDA



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\* This offer is valid in the United States (and Puerto Rico) except in TX, FL, CO, OK, RI, NH, WV, OR, SC, VA and ID. These state residents will be charged one cent (\$.01) + shipping & processing for the item. Void where prohibited or restricted by law. Offer subject to state and local regulations. Not valid with any other offers and only while supplies last. This offer is limited to one item per shipping address. † Free is for Call-In Customers only versus the original Stauer.com price.

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## ACTIVE DUTY/RESERVE ISSUES

### DOJ Penalizes Lender

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) recently announced an enforcement action against Sallie Mae (also known as Sallie Mae Bank and Navient Solutions), the largest servicer of federal and private student loans, which was found to be systematically violating the legal rights of U.S. service members. The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) also reached a settlement with the companies that addresses allegations of student loan servicing misconduct. Sallie Mae is ordered to pay \$96.6 million in restitution and penalties. Sallie Mae violated several consumer protection laws related to federal and private student loans, including the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) that protects active duty military personnel against harmful overcharges.

While the recent DOJ orders will provide restitution directly to most victims, consumers may still wish to file a complaint with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) if they are concerned their account was illegally handled. To file a complaint go to [consumerfinance.gov/complaint](http://consumerfinance.gov/complaint) or call 855-411-CFPB (2372).

Improper practices related to student loan servicing for members of the military has been a major concern for the CFPB's Office of Servicemembers Affairs (OSA). The OSA has released a new action guide for service members with student loans. The guide is available at: [files.consumerfinance.gov/f/201405\\_cfpb\\_servicemember-student-loan-guide.pdf](http://files.consumerfinance.gov/f/201405_cfpb_servicemember-student-loan-guide.pdf)

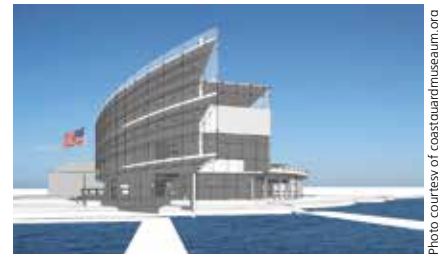
### Senate Bill Introduced to Fund Operation of New Coast Guard Museum

Senator Christopher Murphy (Conn.) recently introduced the "United States Coast Guard Commemorative Coin Act" (S. 2303) that would honor the men and women of the Coast Guard and support the establishment of the National Coast Guard Museum. A similar bill (H.R. 2932) has been introduced in the House, sponsored by Rep. Joe Courtney (Conn.).

Members are urged to use the Action Center ([action.fra.org/action-center](http://action.fra.org/action-center)) to ask their Senators and Representative to support these important bills.

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 started on May 2, 2014, and the museum is scheduled to open in 2017. This bipartisan legislation would honor all those who have served in the Coast Guard by the minting of a special commemorative coin. Proceeds from coin sales would be used to support the development and operation of the museum via 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.

FRA shipmates approved a donation of \$10,000 to the Museum's fundraising campaign, which was presented earlier this year. Visit [www.coastguardmuseum.org](http://www.coastguardmuseum.org) to learn more about the Museum.



Artist rendering of the U.S. Coast Guard Museum to be located in New London, Conn. The Museum's iconic presence and relationship to site, water, and sky will recall the Coast Guard's maritime imagery.

Photo courtesy of [coastguardmuseum.org](http://coastguardmuseum.org)

The FRA Legislative Team is National Executive Director Tom Snee, Director of Legislative Programs John Davis, Assistant Director of Legislative Programs Stephen Tassin and National Veterans Service Officer Chris Slawinski.





# The History of FRA

## 1970-1979

1 **1970**

FRA welcomes Coast Guard personnel and women as members.

1



**1972**

FRA plays major role in the enactment of the Widow's Equity bill, the precursor of today's Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP).

2 **1972**

Jimmy Short (far left) began working at FRA National Headquarters. He and Rod Kennedy (far right), who began his employment with FRA in 1975, are both still employed by the Association.

2



**1973**

The U.S. military becomes an all-volunteer force.

3 **1974**

FRA celebrates its 50th anniversary. Commemorative decanters were produced in partnership with the Jim Beam Distilling Company to mark the milestone.

4 **1974**

FRA is a charter sponsor of the Navy's first Sailor of the Year competition, a tradition that continues today. FTG2 Dean Zaharis received the "Sailor of the Year" award for 1974 from USS Little Rock Captain Peter K. Cullins.



**1975**

The Association opposes unionization of the U.S. military.

5 **1977**

FRA conducts a series of White Hats Panels to solicit the enlisted perspective on pay and benefits, and presents its findings to Congress in its 48-page "Sound Off to Congress" report.

**1977**

The Association successfully defeats Administration plan to alter the military retirement system.

3



5



4



## The FRA Calls Program

**MEANINGFUL FRIENDSHIPS** with fellow shipmates are among the most valuable benefits of FRA membership and one way to keep any relationship strong is by maintaining regular contact. This is particularly important among shipmates who don't consistently attend branch meetings or outreach events. Regular communication keeps shipmates "in the loop" on upcoming events and other FRA happenings, and helps them feel more involved, even if they can't always attend. Shipmates who are engaged and feel wanted are more likely to retain their membership in our organization.

A branch can designate an individual or committee to keep other branch members informed all year long, but it's particularly important to touch base with shipmates who are nearing the end of their membership term. This should by no means be the only time a shipmate is contacted, but a simple reminder when a shipmate's membership renewal is due can pay huge membership dividends.

FRA Headquarters (NHQ) uses the FRA Calls Program to contact Members-at-Large regarding their about-to-expire memberships and has realized significant success in retaining these members. An NHQ rep contacts approximately 170 shipmates per month and has achieved a 32-percent renewal rate among those contacted. Branches can realize similar successes by following the simple instructions and script available by clicking the "Branch and Regional Officers" link under the "My FRA" tab on the FRA website ([www.fra.org](http://www.fra.org)). The Calls Program resources are available on the right side of the page, including instructions on how to generate a list

of shipmates whose memberships are about to expire.

Included with the instructions are several scripts for these calls, depending on whether the shipmate's membership has recently expired or is about to. The scripts provide general recommendations for what to say to members about their dues payments, but shipmates are encouraged to personalize the message and make it more suitable for the caller and the shipmate receiving the call. It is a real plus if the caller has a genuine enthusiasm for the FRA and can speak sincerely about the value of FRA membership. Some ideas might include reference to FRA's legislative advocacy work that's been instrumental in legislative improvements to veterans education and disability benefits, as well as holding the line on proposed increases to TRICARE fees; FRA's communications vehicles (*FRA Today* and *NewsBytes*, our weekly e-mail newsletter) that keep shipmates up to date on legislative news that impacts them; the FRA Education Foundation that offers generous scholarships to shipmates and their family members; the great work your branch is doing to support community service initiatives in your area; or the camaraderie shared with fellow shipmates during FRA meetings and activities.

Several branches offered their suggestions for using the Calls Program effectively:

- Shipmate Bob Campbell, President of Branch 13 (Atlantic City, N.J.), uses the online search function to determine which branch members are nearing their membership expiration date and makes personal phone calls to each of them.



Penny Collins

Shipmate Bob finds the personal touch makes the difference in discussing dues payments with his shipmates.

- PRPSC Jerry Pugh, of Branch 371 (Baton Rouge, La.), uses the Calls Program in conjunction with e-mails, letters and the branch newsletter to remind shipmates to renew.
- Shipmate Dalton Ruth, Secretary of Branch 290 (Mayport, Fla.), focuses on membership and retention by using a branch group call list to contact members.
- Branch 293 (Elizabeth City, N.C.) has a Membership Chairman who uses similar methods for contacting members. Shipmate Frank Gates says sometimes it works and other times it doesn't. You have to continually think of other ways to pique the interest of branch members to attend meetings and keep their membership current. Branch 293 also looks for creative and unique ways to make sure the FRA name is visible in the community, including announcing meetings and events in the local newspaper.

Everyone's reasons for joining and remaining a member of the FRA are different, so feel free to share yours when you call a shipmate to renew his/her membership. Whether it's the Association's legislative advocacy work, our generous scholarship program, community involvement or the company of fellow shipmates, it will be obvious if the caller is speaking from the heart.

---

**Penny Collins** is FRA's Director of Membership Development and a member of FRA Branch 24 in Annapolis, Md. She can be reached at [penny@fra.org](mailto:penny@fra.org).



# U.S. GOV'T GOLD AT-COST

TODAY - United States Gold & Silver Reserve has scheduled what could be the final release of U.S. government-issued \$5 gold coins previously held at the U.S. Mint at West Point. These government-issued gold coins are being released on a first-come, first-served basis for the incredible markup-free price of only \$136 per coin. Please be advised: Our at-cost U.S. government gold inventory will be available at this special price while supplies last or for up to 30 days. Do not delay. Call a Senior Gold Specialist today.

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# Meet Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard Steven Cantrell

**On May 22, 2014, Master Chief Steven Cantrell became the 12th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard.** As the service's most senior enlisted member, Cantrell will advise the Commandant on enlisted workforce policies, advocate for military benefits and entitlements, serve as a mentor to senior enlisted members of the Coast Guard and act as the sounding board for select enlisted administrative actions. He will travel throughout the Coast Guard to observe training and operations, as well as communicate with Coast Guardsmen and their families. In one of his first official engagements, he granted an exclusive interview with FRA and shared his leadership philosophy, vision and goals for his tenure as the senior enlisted leader of his service.

**FRA:** What led you to join the Coast Guard?

**MCPOCG Cantrell:** I joined the Coast Guard in Jackson, Miss., in 1983. My father was a career Coast Guardsman, but my parents were divorced, so I only saw him when he came for visits. He always had these great stories about the places he went and the work he did, so I really became enamored with the Coast Guard. He didn't really encourage me to join the

Coast Guard; in fact, he retired shortly before I joined. Recruiters from the Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force all visited my high school, but there was never a recruiter from the Coast Guard. I guess I took that as some sort of sign, went to a USCG recruiting office and two months later, I was in basic training.

It's still sort of amazing to me how little people know about our service. After Hurricane Katrina I visited my hometown, which is only about four hours from New Orleans. Many of the folks who'd evacuated from New Orleans had come to

Mississippi, so the local residents were more keenly aware of the Coast Guard's involvement in that operation and clean-up. For many of my old high-school friends, they'd certainly heard about the DoD services, but that was their first real exposure to the Coast Guard.

**FRA:** Was there ever a moment during your career when you thought you might be sitting in your current office?

**MCPOCG Cantrell:** I didn't even know what a master chief was until I'd been in the service for three years! (Chuckle) When I was a 3rd class petty officer, my master chief was impressive. He just had a majestic air about him and I remember thinking that I wanted to be like him



someday, but I certainly didn't plan to be the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard.

My plan was to do my four years and get out. I'm sure there are a lot of career service members who had a similar plan! When I got to the four-year point, the CO [commanding officer] came to me with re-enlistment papers in his hand and told me I'd been selected to advance to 3rd class.

I was stationed at Charleston, S.C., at the time and had two young children living in Mississippi. If I accepted the promotion, he could offer me an assignment closer to my kids. That was my first exposure to the Coast Guard's culture of taking care of its people. I realized then that's what I wanted to do. I hope some young person serving in our Coast Guard today wants to be like a master chief; not just like me, but like the many great master chiefs we have in our service.

You have to remember that back in the mid-1980s, taking care of our people wasn't really a part of the military culture. There wasn't any discussion about work-life balance and the mentality of the day was more like "leave your personal problems at the door" and "if the military wanted you to have a wife and family, they would have issued them to you with your seabag." I want our people to know they have someone they can talk to about their concerns and that someone genuinely cares about them. That's our culture now, and I think it's an outgrowth of our mission. We've always had a strong humanitarian component to the work we do, and wanting to take care of others and each other is an inherent part of who we are.

---

From left, Atlantic Area Command Master Chief Cantrell, Pacific Area Command Master Chief Leilani L. Cale-Jones, Atlantic Area Commander Vice Adm. Robert C. Parker and Rear Adm. Mary E. Landry, eighth district commander, listen to a briefing at the Bayo Chico Staging Area in July 2010. These senior personnel flew in to tour the staging area and Pensacola Beach to see how federal, state, and county officials are working together in responding to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

**FRA: What experiences in your USCG career and personal life have prepared you for this unique opportunity?**

**MCPOCG Cantrell:** I've spent eight years in the Command Master Chief role and I've also spent about four years connected with Coast Guard Headquarters, one of which was working with the Vice Commandant of the Coast Guard. I learned "how the sausage is made" ... gained a better understanding of the Coast Guard's worldwide presence and developed a more strategic view of how things work.

My tour as Command Master Chief for the Atlantic Area really helped me put the pieces together. The Deepwater Horizon oil spill happened just as Commandant [Bob] Papp was relieving Admiral [Thad] Allen as Commandant. I had the opportunity to see firsthand how Headquarters deals with events like this. When you're out in the field, you don't necessarily see how engaged leadership is, but that experience showed me that our leaders were paying attention to what folks on the ground were saying.

I've also had a good relationship with MCPOCG Leavitt and the rest of the

leadership team, so that's been helpful in preparing me.

**FRA: In reading your bio, it's obvious you've had a variety of leadership experiences. What, in your opinion, makes a good leader and how do you define your personal leadership style?**

**MCPOCG Cantrell:** I believe a good leader is one who cares for his people and can act as a compass for those in his/her unit. I always looked up to leaders who I felt I could talk with, and I think that's particularly important to young people. Particularly in my new role, where I am their voice to the Commandant, it's important that those on the deckplates see me as approachable and a leader they can trust. I don't ever want to be seen as unapproachable.

I think it's also incredibly important for everyone to feel they are respected and that their views have value. I learned this valuable lesson from my wife, who does a great deal of volunteer work — it's important to treat every human being with respect. During my younger years in the Coast Guard, I might not have felt my work was valued at the time, but I always felt like my leaders listened to



U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Zach Zubricki.

me and treated me well on an individual level. When people are treated with dignity and respect, the result is a trusting relationship that can play a big role in accomplishing the mission.

I think my leadership style would be described as calming. I never get upset, and try to project a positive attitude at all times. That's one of those things I always share during Chiefs' Call to Indoctrination: Try to project a positive, happy image. I know folks can't be happy all the time, but nobody wants to look up to someone who's negative and down.

**FRA: What are your goals for your tenure as MCPOCG?**

**MCPOCG Cantrell:** I see the transition period for Commandant Zukunft and me as a continuation of what's already happening in the Coast Guard. I want to continue the momentum that's been generated around our leadership continuum. We ask a lot of our young people and expect them to shoulder a lot of responsibility. If we're going to give a small boat to a 3rd class, we need to make sure he or she has had good leadership training. Some new initiatives have been implemented and we have a lot of good things going on. I want to continue that.

I also want to leverage and solidify our relationships with our sister services. They have a lot of great training programs that we can adapt for our people and the other services been very generous about sharing their expertise and programs with us.

We're facing a lot of challenges right now — cases of sexual assault, alcohol and drug abuse, etc. We need to be up-front about these challenges and make sure our E-5s and E-6s are prepared to deal with these situations if they should arise in their units. It's our job to make sure they have the tools they need to do the job and be ready now. There's nothing worse than going to a leader to ask for help and then have that leader looking at his shoes or having to run for a manual.

Another item on my agenda is to review the Chiefs' Call to Indoctrination. It's

something we look at every four years and, although I think it's a good program right now, we might want to tweak it a bit, based on feedback from chiefs. It's part of my job to ensure we make the best chiefs possible. In order to get the best result, we need to employ solid professional development techniques and not make the process some sort of social experiment.

I'd also like to beef up our peer-to-peer leadership program for E-5s and E-6s. There are some great groups out there providing social interaction for shipmates who are 25 years old and younger and are E-5s or below. Coast Guard commands in Alameda (Calif.) and Portsmouth (Va.) are doing a great job of offering movie nights and other alcohol-free outings, as well as workshops on bystander intervention and other development programs that are really a demonstration of our people taking care of each other. These programs are modeled after the Navy's Coalition of Sailors Against Destructive Decisions (CSADD) and the Navy's been kind enough to let us look at their work and pull from it. We'd like to expand this program from these two locations and create a standardized Coast Guard format that can be implemented at any station.

There's only so much that can be accomplished in the couple years I'll be in this position, but I like to think of myself as an idea guy. I'll revisit these goals in 18 to 24 months and see where we can make improvements.

**FRA: You and Commandant Zukunft are both taking the reins at the same time. What can you share about your joint vision for the Coast Guard?**

**MCPOCG Cantrell:** Admiral Zukunft and I have crossed paths over the years, particularly when he was the commander of the Coast Guard's Pacific Area and I was the command master chief of the



Command Master Chief of Coast Guard Atlantic Area Cantrell visiting USCG units in the Northern Arabian Gulf in June of 2012.

U.S. Coast Guard photo, provided courtesy of Master Chief Petty Officer Steven Cantrell

Atlantic Area, but this will be the first time we've worked closely together. Over the past couple months, we've had a chance to discuss the Coast Guard's future, and I can tell you he places great value on people and family.

He recently released his vision for his tenure as Commandant and my priorities align with his guiding principles. The first is our Service to Nation. For the entirety of my 31 years of Coast Guard service, and the Commandant's 37 years, we have witnessed the selfless service of our predecessors. It is this service, to a cause greater than ourselves, that has achieved a special trust by the American public. Next is our Duty to People. Our service's strength will always reside in our greatest commodity — our people. Finally we must have a Commitment to Excellence. No one knows when we'll encounter that next disaster, be it natural or man-made. We must prepare for the worst and always remain true to our service motto — Semper Paratus — and be always ready.

We have world-class talent in today's Coast Guard. They are smarter and more mature than I was in my early years on duty. They are focused and have a great sense of purpose. As leaders, we need to provide them with the training they need. They want to serve and we owe it to them to meet their needs and help them be successful.

**FRA: What challenges do you see on the horizon for USCG personnel and how do you hope to address them?**

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**MCPOCG Cantrell:** In the coming years, there are some workforce management initiatives that are going to impact Coast Guard personnel. High-year tenure, retention screening panels and stiffer reenlistment requirements are going to create some anxiety for some of our folks, but it's important to understand we are not trying to reduce the force. We want the same size workforce four years from now and that requires some management to keep the flow moving, particularly when our retention rate is so high. It's going to mean folks need to be competitive to stay in and our people aren't used to that. We're starting to see advancements and A-School slots opening up, and those looking for opportunities to be upwardly mobile now have to be at the top of their game.

We'll be looking at the professional growth points for those who are retirement eligible. Up until 2015, if you exceed a certain point level, you'll be selected for retirement. In 2015, the point level will be lowered, which will affect some who are not retirement eligible for the first time. That's going to create a challenge for our service, but we're giving folks a couple years to prepare and make themselves more competitive. There is a waiver process, which may be particularly important in rates where advancements are moving slowly.

Master Chief Petty Officer Steven W. Cantrell (right) assumes the duties of the master chief petty officer of the Coast Guard during a change-of-watch ceremony overseen by Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Robert J. Papp Jr. Cantrell relieved Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard Michael P. Leavitt to become the 12th MCPOCG.

Our younger people are hyper-motivated and we want to retain them, but that's difficult when there's sometimes a three-year wait for A-School. After three years on a ship or station, they're ready for new opportunities and we owe them that. It's energizing to talk with those who are waiting and see they haven't lost that motivation. I always encourage them to follow their passion. It's better to wait for the spot they really want rather than take a job they aren't really excited about simply because it becomes available sooner. Wait for YOUR opportunity!

This is really a reflection of the caliber and culture of the young people we have coming into our Coast Guard. My stepson is a Coast Guard recruiter and until two or three years ago, he was recruiting heavily. More recently, there's a two- to three-year wait for folks to get in. We can pick the best of the best. Forty percent are college educated and they're a bit older — in their early twenties — with some life experience. I recently spoke to a company of 98 recruits and more than half of them knew exactly what they wanted to do in the Coast Guard. They're confident in their ability to complete boot camp and want to stay in the service.

**FRA: What advice do you have for Coast Guard members as they face these force management challenges?**

**MCPOCG Cantrell:** Stay positive. We see all this stuff on the news about reduced budgets, but that's really beyond our junior personnel's control. It's leadership's job to deal with these budget issues and I encourage our folks to have faith in leadership and allow us to be a strong voice for our service. That's what we're paid to do.

I tell our members to take care of the things they can control, like their performance and behavior. Work hard, take opportunities as they come and you'll be fine. I genuinely believe that old adage: Attitude determines altitude. And if you don't understand something or are having a problem, pop a flare. It's my job to make sure our folks get answers to their questions and help them understand.

**FRA: There's a lot of talk these days about changing the structure of military retirement benefits to more closely align with those offered in the civilian workforce. How do you think this would affect Coast Guard recruiting, retention and readiness?**

**MCPOCG Cantrell:** If there are changes in military retirement, I don't really see it having an immediate effect on recruiting and readiness, because I don't think most folks join the Coast Guard for the retirement nugget at the end of their career.

I do think it might have an impact on retention, though. People love serving in the Coast Guard and our retention rate is very high ... 90+ percent. Even though any changes to the existing retirement system won't affect those who joined the Coast Guard before the first of this year, I think we may see an equity issue for those who joined after January 1, 2014. Just like with the REDUX and high-three retirement formulas, we'll have folks doing the same jobs, but have different retirement benefits based on when they joined the service.

**FRA: How can FRA assist you in taking care of Coast Guard personnel and their families?**

**MCPOCG Cantrell:** I really appreciate FRA's advocacy on behalf of our personnel and their families and I hope more people know that organizations like FRA are looking out for us. As I said before, I encourage folks to worry about the things they can control and leave the rest to others who have that responsibility. That's FRA role and we're all beneficiaries of FRA's work on improving pay and benefits.

We're grateful that the Coast Guard is an FRA priority and that you consistently call for Coast Guard parity with the DoD services. We're also grateful for your support of our Enlisted Person of the Year program, your sponsorship of the annual Coast Guard Caucus breakfast on Capitol Hill and all the other ways you support the Coast Guard family. We've absolutely benefited from your strong advocacy on our behalf and appreciate the strong relationship we've built with FRA over the years.



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## 2014 WINNING ESSAY

# The Bill of Rights and Me

By Elizabeth Wong

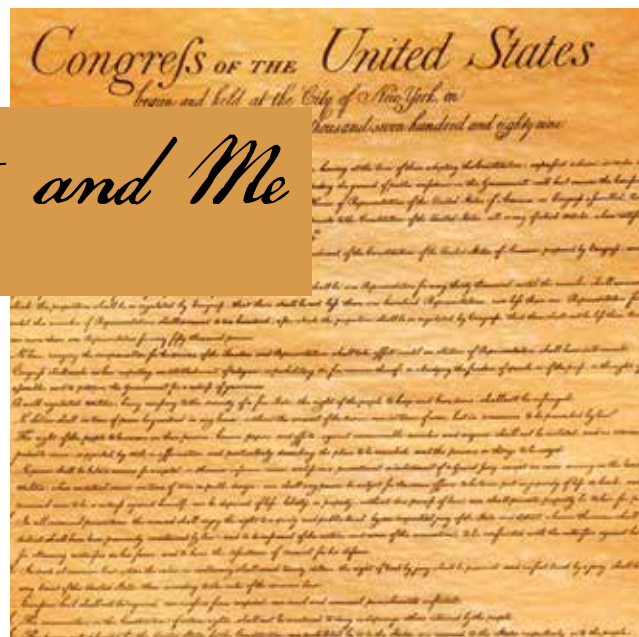
Sponsored by Branch 11, Fort Worth, Texas

The Bill of Rights was formed because there was someone, a long time ago, who came to a conclusion. That individual realized that there are certain laws undeniable to all humans, laws that have stood the weathering of time. It started with an epiphany and culminated in what I, and all Americans, now know as the Bill of Rights.

That document tells me, that as a citizen of the United States of America, I bleed red: I, along with other citizens, have the same rights, the same inner workings, and the same equality. It grants me the right to protect myself: whether it be by firearms or the right to speak and believe what I want or to defend a claim in court. I am enabled to be a leader, to spread ideas, and to have the power to choose.

The Bill of Rights is from top to bottom about protection. It protects me from being persecuted, allows me to protect those who are irreplaceable, gives me rights in court so that I may protect myself, and limits the government so that I will not be taken advantage of unfairly. It is not simply about what I and other citizens can do, but about what should rightfully be mine by the simple matter of being alive.

What is my life if I do not live it? I am in this world; I



have the freedom to say something. I have a working body; I defend it. I possess intellect, so I make the most of it. I am alive, so I can help someone else. The Bill of Rights made America into the Land of Opportunity. It created the chance to speak and be listened to, to stand up for an ideal, and to work toward dreams. I do not have to live in fear and wonder what the consequences of my actions will be. Thanks to the two-hundred-plus-year-old epiphany, I am able to live my life to the fullest.

## 2013–2014 FRA AMERICANISM ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS

### OVERALL WINNER

Elizabeth Wong, Branch 11, South Central Region

### FIRST PLACE WINNERS

- 7th Grade:** Katherine Dyke, Branch 208, East Coast Region
- 8th Grade:** Savannah Olsson, Branch 091, Southeast Region
- 9th Grade:** Jedidiah Jenkins, Branch 044, Southeast Region
- 10th Grade:** Elizabeth Wong, Branch 11, South Central Region
- 11th Grade:** Hermena Ibrahim, Branch 226, New England / North East Region
- 12th Grade:** Kelli Edwards, Branch 29, Northwest Region

### SECOND PLACE WINNERS

- 7th Grade:** Megan Watson, Branch 386, Southeast Region
- 8th Grade:** Austin Wentzel, Branch 338, New England / North East Region
- 9th Grade:** Samuel Trowbridge, Branch 275, West Coast Region
- 10th Grade:** Megan Thompson, Branch 289, Southwest Region
- 11th Grade:** Albert Chon, Branch 302, Southwest Region
- 12th Grade:** Cara Darr, Branch 185, West Coast Region

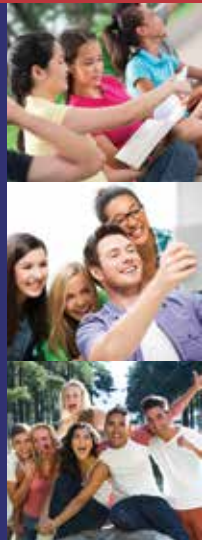
### THIRD PLACE WINNERS

- 7th Grade:** Nabeela Zoss, Branch 070, Southwest Region
- 8th Grade:** Breeanna Partida, Branch 201, South Central Region
- 9th Grade:** Abdul Eyad, Branch 38, Northwest Region
- 10th Grade:** Riaz Lane, Branch 293, East Coast Region
- 11th Grade:** Cameron Shadmehry, Branch 89, Southeast Region
- 12th Grade:** Sierra Stern, Branch 87, New England / North East Region



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### FRA AMERICANISM ESSAY CONTEST RULES

- All entrants shall be students in grades seven through twelve (or equivalent).
- Entrants must be sponsored by a branch of the Fleet Reserve Association or a unit of the Auxiliary of the Fleet Reserve Association.
- The essay shall be on the theme designated and shall not exceed 350 words.
- The essay shall be legibly written or typed on one side of the paper.
- A student may submit only one entry each year.
- Each entry must be accompanied by a separate sheet stating: the entrant's name; address; zip code; telephone number; school grade (or equivalent); name of school or the words "home schooled;" student's Social Security Number (optional); number of words in essay; and the sponsoring branch/unit or sponsor's name.
- Entries submitted to branches shall be submitted to the Branch Americanism-Patriotism Committee and postmarked not later than December 1st for judging at the branch level.
- Entries sponsored by members-at-large shall be submitted to the national chairman and forwarded to an appropriate branch for judging in their respective grade group. All entries shall be postmarked not later than December 1, 2014.
- All entries become the property of the Fleet Reserve Association.



### LANSHIPRON 9

September 10–14, 2014, New Orleans, LA. Contact David J. Vicknair, 504-467-4201, vicknvnv@aol.com

### NASKEF

September 4–7, 2014, Keflavick, Iceland. Contact Maria Ben, 00354-859-3610, mariaben@keflanding.com

### USMC Motor Transport Association

September 21–24, 2014, Camp Pendleton, CA. Contact Marcel Arbelaez, PO Box 1372, Jacksonville, NC 28541, 910-450-1841, secretary@usmcmta.org

### USS Agawam (AOG-6)

September 8–10, 2014, New Orleans, LA. Contact Dick Cypher, 405-359-1513, dc47@aol.com

### USS Boston (CA-69, CAG-1, and SSN-703)

July 10–13, 2014, Danvers, MA. Contact Arthur L. Hebert, 2047 Milesville Rd, Elon, NC 27244-8929, 603-672-8772.

### USS Canisteo (AO-99)

September 9–10, 2014, Norfolk, VA. Contact Larry Wortz, 17640 Mt. View Rd. Emmitsburg, MD 21727-9301, 301-447-6764, lr67shelby@aol.com

### USS Casa Grande (LSD-13)

October 9–12, 2014, Jacksonville, FL. Contact Melville Foster, 4311 Armstrong Rd., Muskegon, MI 49441, 231-798-1245, ms1retlsd13@hotmail.com

### USS Diodon (SS-349)

September 23–25, 2014, Branson, MO. Contact Jay Everitt, 25677 S 608 Rd, Grove, OK 74344, 918-876-8851, jayss349@hotmail.com

### USS Enterprise (CVAN/CVN-65)

September 24–28, 2014, Waterloo, IA. Contact Mike Butler, Enterprise CVAN/CVN-65 Association, PO Box 951, Cedar Falls, IA 50613, 319-277-1779, Mike.Butler052@gmail.com

### USS Horne (DLG/CG-30)

September 18–21, 2014, Mount Pleasant, SC. Contact Dave Hunt, 319-594-7373, davehuntinfo44@yahoo.com

### USS L.Y. Spear (AS-36)

September 3–7, 2014, Chicago, IL. Contact Patty Kelso, 913-677-1837, pattykelso@usslyspear.org

### USS Thomas Jefferson (SSBN-618)

September 21–24, 2014, Charleston, SC. Contact Ron Bekech, 239-437-4999, Bekech@comcast.net

### USS Tidewater (AD-31)

September 3–7, 2014, Branson, MO. Contact Dean Agee, 294 Old Hillcrest Rd., Fair Grove, MO 65648, 417-759-2860, rdmlagee@dishmail.net

### VP-26

September 14–17, 2014, Gettysburg, PA. Contact Bob Buell, 301 Windebanks LN, Minoa, NY 13116, bobbuell99@gmail.com

Members can post reunions online at [www.fra.org](http://www.fra.org), submit to [reunions@fra.org](mailto:reunions@fra.org) or mail to: FRA Reunions, 125 N. West St., Alexandria, VA 22314.



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## LOOKING FOR...

### Great Lakes Boot Camp Photo, Company 77-350

I'm trying to locate a photo from Great Lakes Company 350 from January 1977. Any information on how to locate such an image is greatly appreciated. Contact Dan Burger, 464 Quiggley Cir., Harrisburg, PA 17112-8950 or 717-566-9282.

### HTCS Joseph "Arco Joe" Hitesman, Nuclear Welder

We served on USS L.Y. Spear (AS-36) and MTG at NPTU Idaho Falls 1970-76. I heard he may have passed away in the 1990s. His daughter may have married HT2 Latham. Please send any information to CDR Neil Wollam, USN (Ret.) at [wollam585@aol.com](mailto:wollam585@aol.com)

### PC1 Charles Ince (wife Keiko) and PC2 Larry Tharp

Both were stationed at COMFLEACTS Sasebo, Japan, during 1980. My acquaintance was due to being a Postal Assistance Advisor FMC Yokohama on an official postal visit/inspection. Charles Ince possibly could be living somewhere in the Northern California area. PC2 Larry Tharp is possibly in Washington State. Please contact either PC1 Patrick Huston (Ret.) at [phuston001@cfl.rr.com](mailto:phuston001@cfl.rr.com) or 321-984-2293 (all incoming calls screened) or Allen Krohn at [akrohn@live.com](mailto:akrohn@live.com) or 308-238-1767.

### CASU #8 from 1943 to 1945, Solomon Islands and Russell Island.

I served in this area and want to connect with others. Contact Joe Aboussleman at 408-247-0923 or e-mail my daughter at [sahare@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sahare@sbcglobal.net).

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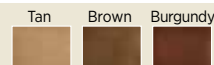
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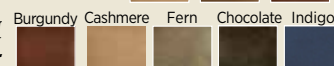
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NAME	BRANCH	NAME	BRANCH
Allemand, Joseph, USN	091	Hill, James E, ABE1, USN	022
<b>Allen, Roy L, AD1, USN</b>	<b>203</b>		
Asay, George F, AQC, USN	077	Jones, Floyd T, BMC, USN	005
<b>Baber, Goldie F, ENC(SS), USN</b>	<b>181</b>	Kicklighter, Carl K, ENC(SS), USN	MAL
Baloy, Guillermo L, HM1, USN	178	Krasinski, Steve J, BM1, USN	057
Barnhart, Delbert J, CTRC, USN	MAL		
Beck, Herbert J, BTC, USN	MAL	Lala, Charles M, AMCS, USN	117
Bernard, Roland R, PO1, USN	022	Limprecht, Charles H, AFCM, USN	101
<b>Bessey, Robert J, MCPO, USN</b>	<b>328</b>		
Bliss, Thomas F, MCPO, USN	MAL	Marchese, Salvatore, BMC, USN	018
<b>Booth, Noah C, AOC, USN</b>	<b>147</b>	Marth, George, AOC, USN	115
<b>Boudreau, Nery B, ATC, USN</b>	<b>091</b>	Martin, John, BMC, USN	285
Brazo, Richard S, SF1, USN	290	Masters, Gary L, BTCM, USN	161
Breeden, Sammy R, MM1, USN	011	May, Byron E, ABCS, USN	MAL
Breslin, John W, YNC(SS), USN	MAL	McAliley, John R, CTM1, USN	MAL
Burchette, Joe, CTOC, USN	MAL	McMurtrey, James E., SGT, USMC	024
Burke, Robert A, SGTMAJ, USMC	028	Mead, John D, POC, USN	086
Bushman, Jerrold L, AEC, USN	MAL	Menard, Phillip, HMC, USN	175
		Miller, Raymond C, CSC, USN	029
Carbo, Herman S, ADR1, USN	162	Mohan, Vincent W, EMC(SS), USN	MAL
<b>Carner, Glenn M, EM1, USN</b>	<b>060</b>	Motley, Robert J, YN1, USN	053
<b>Christensen, Bjorn, CWO3, USN</b>	<b>MAL</b>		
Coff, Carl G, ICC, USN	021	Nicolais, Donato, SKC, USN	288
Cook, Richard L., 1STLT, USMC	029		
Cox, Kenneth E, RM1, USN	188	O'Loughlin, Richard C., CAPT, USN	091
Cramer, Carl L, STGC, USN	106		
		Pallera, Antonio B, PO1, USN	043
Dickerson, John B, HMC, USN	099	Paquet, Richard C, CTRCS, USN	MAL
Dietz, George W, RMC, USN	106	<b>Paquette, Raymond E, HM1, USN</b>	<b>146</b>
Donnelly, Joseph, MCPO, USN	147	Pate, Billy A, BTCS, USN	047
Drake, Bobby T, BMC, USN	MAL	Pecha, Keith J, BMC, USN	238
Durham, Roger, MM1(SS), USNR	029	Presley, Odell G, BMC, USN	029
Feichtinger, William M, CDR, USN	099	Rellamas, Simplicio F, PO1, USN	074
Fischer, Philip H, MMC, USN	092	Reneaux, Richard, GYSGT, USMC	137
Flategraff, Bradley A, SKC, USN	MAL	Ridenour, Jimmie P, PH1, USN	315
Fletcher, David J, ETC SS, USN	MAL	Roberts, Francis R, PNC, USN	126
Fogg, Reginald S, CDR, USN	MAL	Rozansky, Frank P, SKCM, USN	091
Ford, Warren G, HMCS, USN	047		
Freeman, Winifer W, AOCS, USN	MAL	Shippey, James G, AFCM, USN	MAL
Frock, Marion D, SF1, USN	163	Shirley, Floyd L, BMCS, USN	MAL
		Shuchart, John P, TMC, USN	147
Gaudreau, Charles H, HON Member, USN	040	Slank, Ronald M, MMC, USN	285
<b>Giansanti, Alfred A, MSGT, USMC</b>	<b>186</b>	Smith, William H, PHC, USN	179
Goodgame, John, FTMC, USN	MAL	Smith, Duane W, ADR2, USN	093
		Smith, Wesley R, ACCS, USN	MAL
Hackmann, Robert L, YN1, USN	MAL	Spence, Charles R, AMHC, USN	041
Haley, Russell H, ENC, USN	022	Spink, Donald E, AMS1, USN	091
Hansen, Vernon C, CPO, USN	091	Steele, Robert D., CAPT, USN	MAL
Henning, Clifton L, 1STLT, USMC	091	<b>Testman, Thorvald J, ADC, USN</b>	<b>022</b>



NAME	BRANCH
Thomas, William, PO1, USN	MAL
Tibbals, Richard M, BUC, USN	344
Tireman, Henry A, GYSGT, USMC	208
Tonges, Edward, AME1, USN	091
Travis, Arthur R, SHC, USN	023
Turner, Ben M, GMCM, USN	290
Turner, Edward L, EOCS, USN	042
Ward, Don J, AK1, USN	089
West, Albert E, AMSC, USN	091
Wiese, Danal C, FTCS(SS/DV), USN	263
Williams, Jesse B, CTIC, USN	212
Wilson, James E, YNCS, USN	181
<b>Wilson, Reginald K, MMC, USN</b>	<b>022</b>
Winnen, Robert P, CS1, USN	311
Woodson, Richard A, MNCS, USN	147
Wright, Douglas A, RMC(SW), USN	MAL

Names in **red** indicate 50 year continuous members.

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**BRANCH 298 GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.**

Branch 298 set up an information table at the 2013 VAMC Battle Creek Welcome Home Veterans Salute held at Grand Valley State University. Shown (l to r) are Branch President Rosemary Posekany, the North Central Region's NCR Shipmate of the Year Ray King and HW&R Chairman Dick Priest. (Photo by PRPNC Marty Posekany)



**BRANCH 247 DAGUPAN CITY, P.I.  
BRANCH 154 BAGUIO CITY, P.I.**

Branch 247 President Roberto G. Macaraeg and Branch 154 President Arthur Gongon cut a cake in celebration of the U.S. Navy's 238th birthday.



**BRANCH 276 OMAHA, NEB.**

Shipmate Earl Jones (right) presents a bugle to FRA Branch 276 President Carl Burnham (left) and Vice President Charles Evans (center) for use at Memorial Day and funeral services.



**BRANCH 166 VIRGINIA BEACH, VA.**

Shipmate Donald E. Meyer is congratulated by President Thomas Cecil on his faithful service and 50+ years of continuous FRA membership.



**BRANCH 226 STATEN ISLAND, N.Y.**

Branch President Jim Brown presents Shipmate Phil Leone with his pin and Life Membership card in recognition of his 50 years of continuous FRA membership. He will celebrate his 94th birthday in August.

**BRANCH 29 BREMERTON, WASH.**

Bremerton Mayor Patty Lent recognizes 60-year FRA member Mike Harsche during the 2013 Northwest Regional Convention. Harsche was one of many veterans welcomed home by Branch Vice-President Allan Horne, Shipmate Glenn Wahlbrink, Past Branch Presidents Frank Duncan and Otis Robinson, Sr., after participating in the inaugural Puget Sound Honor Flight.

**BRANCH 14 MILWAUKEE, WIS.**

PRPNC Leon Zalewski presents Shipmate George Cavros (left) with Branch 14's Shipmate of the Year award.

**BRANCH 63 LEWISTON, IDAHO**

Sharon Ledbetter, 3rd from the left, a local Lewiston quilting club leader, presented Shipmates Jerry Tinnel, Rick Kramer, John Currin, Theresa Currin, and Gordon McGregor with Quilts of Valor made by members of the quilting club.

**BRANCH 208 JACKSONVILLE, N.C.**

Shipmate Robert R. Baum, Branch 208, Camp Lejeune, N.C., received the Jacksonville City 2013 Outstanding Veteran Award from Mayor Sammy Phillips at a City Council Ceremony this month. A certificate and a City Outstanding Veteran Pin were included.

**BRANCH 42 QUONSET POINT, R.I.**

PRPNEng Phil Justin congratulates Shipmate Bill Grimshaw (right) on his 101st birthday in early May. Shipmate Bill served in the Pacific during WWII and is also a member of the Seabee Veterans of America. He participated in an Honor Flight with fellow Shipmate Joe Cormier late last year and will mark 40 years of continuous FRA membership in November.



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

## Message from the Southeast Regional President Ann Lyons

**I CANNOT BELIEVE THE** year is almost over! I have tried to get to as many units as possible, but it's been a challenge since I injured my knee at the Mayport, Fla., Pearl Harbor Day ceremony in December. I'm now in need of a new knee!

I visited Birmingham, Ala., for the national Veterans Day parade, which lasted for more than four hours! The formal dinner on the night prior to the parade and the luncheon on parade day were both wonderful events and I was honored to be in attendance.

In January, I attended the remembrance service for the USCGC Blackthorn in St. Petersburg, Florida. I had the honor of placing a wreath at the Blackthorn Memorial with FRA Southeast Regional President Fred Hill. It was a very moving ceremony.

The Southeast Midyear Meeting was hosted by Branch and Unit 269 at Goose Creek, S.C., and it was a good time, as always. PNP Sandy Robbins conducted a workshop that covered many topics and included a good Q&A time.

The Tennessee Caucus welcomed us with snow! I had not seen snow for many years and, living in Florida, I had forgotten how cold it can be! We were grateful for the warm welcome provided by the branches and units!

Branch and Unit 126 hosted the Florida Council for the first time and did a splendid job. During the event, I was surprised when the ROTC cadets performed and sang Happy Birthday to me! What a treat!

I encourage all Auxiliary members to remain focused on recruiting and retention. Signing up new members is vitally important, but we must also ensure they get and remain engaged, involved and motivated to maintain their Auxiliary membership. Some of our older members have difficulty in getting to meetings or paying dues, and all units need to work together to see how we can address these concerns.

Hope everyone has a very happy 4th of July.



**ANN LYONS**  
*Southeast Regional President*



During my visit to Unit 91 (Jacksonville, Fla.), I had the honor of posing with PNP Pat Garwood (left) and PNP Sandy Robbins.



It was wonderful to meet the Auxiliary members from Unit 183 (Interlachen, Fla.)



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**LeRoy Riddell**

1935 - 2008

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