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FRA *today*

The magazine of the Fleet Reserve Association

SEPTEMBER 2021

WAR HORSES FOR VETERANS



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LOYALTY, PROTECTION AND SERVICE

The FRA is a congressionally chartered, nonprofit organization advocating on Capitol Hill for current and former enlisted members of the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard.

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Has It Really Been 20 Years?

It just occurred to me, that 20 years ago, on Sept. 11, one of the craziest days ever in my lifetime unfolded.

I was on business in Ohio for another association, staying at the Hotel Breakers. We were supposed to begin the budget and finance meeting, which had a three-day agenda. While I was in the lobby waiting, I saw the news that was on the television. That was when my boss's right hand, Mandy, began unfolding the morning tragedy.

I called home from my hotel room (pre-cell phone era) and my wife and I watched the first tower come down together by TV. There was silence between us for what seemed like forever.

We all have those stories of where we were and what was going on in each of our lives. But what I miss about America back then is how the country came together and dealt with the events.

That warm and sunny morning, about half past 7, the five men who just went through security at Dulles International Airport and boarded American Airlines Flight 77, were not going to Los Angeles. The crew of six and the 58 passengers were headed to the Pentagon instead.

Following the impact of the jet at the Pentagon, what followed was extreme bravery exerted by the men and women who were both in and out of uniform, as well as all those fearless local first responders.

There was a surge of action as those who were trained to fix things under pressure responded with true American heroism.

Some so-called experts from abroad claimed it would take us four or more years to get the Pentagon back to 100 percent functionality.

After the rescue and fire crews contained the situation, construction workers began their job of clearing and rebuilding with the goal of having the building open in one year. "We the people," had staff moving back into those offices an impressive 11 months later.

This is a great example of America coming together. It tells you what our country can do when we work together.

Twenty years later, America is still in the fight. It all started that day in early September. This is why Marines, soldiers, sailors and airmen are still deployed. It's better to fight them there than here.

Active-duty military serving today, like those serving in 2001, all share a common bond of their commitment, honor and courage. These service members are the future of our military. Just think, today's all-volunteer force might just be more driven, more focused, and certainly better equipped.

One thing to consider is that every person who enlisted or got commissioned post-9/11, each and every one of them, volunteered knowing exactly where they were going — let's never forget. **FRA**

In Loyalty, Protection and Service,

William D. Stevenson, Editor-in-Chief

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Now, THIS is a Knife!

This 16" full tang stainless steel blade is not for the faint of heart —now **ONLY \$99!**

In the blockbuster film, when a strapping Australian crocodile hunter and a lovely American journalist were getting robbed at knife point by a couple of young thugs in New York, the tough Aussie pulls out his dagger and says "That's not a knife, THIS is a knife!" Of course, the thugs scattered and he continued on to win the reporter's heart.

Our Aussie friend would approve of our rendition of his "knife." Forged of high grade 420 surgical stainless steel, this knife is an impressive 16" from pommel to point. And, the blade is full tang, meaning it runs the entirety of the knife, even though part of it is under wraps in the natural bone and wood handle.

Secured in a tooled leather sheath, this is one impressive knife, with an equally impressive price.

This fusion of substance and style can garner a high price tag out in the marketplace. In fact, we found full tang, stainless steel blades with bone handles in excess of \$2,000. Well, that won't cut it around here. We have mastered the hunt for the best deal, and in turn pass the spoils on to our customers.

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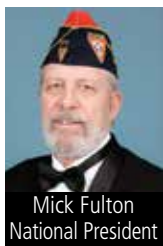


"The feel of this knife is unbelievable...this is an incredibly fine instrument."

— H., Arvada, CO



Shipmates, Regional and National Conventions will Proceed



Mick Fulton
National President

As I write this column, the FRA has just completed its Midyear National Board of Directors meeting, which was held the last week of June in conjunction with the LA FRA Pilgrimage to the Mast of the Maine. LA FRA National President Jackie Scarbro laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery. It was great to see a large contingent of FRA and LA FRA members participate in the ceremonies, even though the temperature was hovering around 100 with much humidity to boot!

The NBOD meeting was conducted along with the National Committee on Budget and Finance Midyear meeting, which was a judicious use of FRA travel funds because the meeting allowed the regional presidents the opportunity to see what is involved in the FRA budget process.

We are now rolling right into the regional convention season, which kicks off the last weekend in July. The East Coast Region is holding theirs via Zoom due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions impacting the ability to contract a venue on short notice. All of the other regional conventions will be held during the month of August and as long as the travel restrictions stay the course, I will be attending most of them. I am really looking forward to visiting with the Shipmates across the country. I am especially looking forward to attending the North Central Regional Convention, as I will have the pleasure of instituting a new branch of the FRA! The paperwork is in place for Branch 32, Lake of the Ozarks, Missouri, to join the team. Congratulations to the officers and Shipmates who have worked to make this happen!

At the time you are reading this column, your branch will have received the resolution package for the national convention. I urge the leadership of every branch to thoroughly review those resolutions and decide on the stance that the Shipmates of your branch feel is the road ahead for the Fleet Reserve Association. Be sure to provide that decision to your delegate chair. If your branch is not



Fulton presented Rep. Gus Bilirakis the 2020 FRA Pinnacle Award during the board of directors lunch held in June.

sending a Shipmate to the convention, I implore the leadership of the branch to designate a proxy so that your branch's desires are known. Due to the fact there was no national convention held last year, there were no resolutions acted upon. We now have two years of business to conduct.

The Shipmates and auxiliary members of the North West Region, with help from LA FRA PNP Doris Fri, PNP Christina Murray and JrPNP Bea Parco, are collectively working hard to put on a successful national convention.

If you are tired of being cooped up and feel like getting out and about, seriously consider attending the 93rd FRA and 88th LA FRA National Convention at the Mirabeau Park Hotel and Convention Center in Spokane Valley, Washington, from Oct. 2 to 9. If you need a copy of the Convention Newsletter and are having trouble locating one, contact PRPNW Peg Burke at fra.nwregion@gmail.com and she'll get you one. The newsletters are also online at the FRA website under the "Events & Programs" tab. Just click on "National Convention." in the tab's drop-down menu.

Stay safe and keep your Shipmates in your thoughts and prayers. **FRA**

I remain always in Loyalty, Protection and Service,
Mick Fulton

Mick is the national president of the Fleet Reserve Association and may be reached at: FRANP@FRA.org.

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My Midway Experience: Like Senior Chief Womeldorff

The chief's input [in the June 2021 Shipmate Forum] was interesting. His time on Midway overlapped mine, but mine was 12 months straight with one long weekend R & R to Hawaii.

Midway was a naval station, not Naval Air Station, but was organized like an NAS. For instance, I was in GEMD (ground electronics maintenance division). My shop, the mobile shop, was in the terminal building, but there was not a lot of interchange, except for the club.

I reported as an ETSN straight from "A" school, and within a week or so had the mobile shop to myself. If it was an electronic device anywhere on the island, including Sand Island, it was mine. TED, RED, all boat and security vehicles, both structural and crash trucks etc. You had to be 1st class or chief, or as an officer, full commander, to have family there.

The goonie birds kept us entertained and we had a good flick almost every night. Great beach.

I once went out on the garbage boat to trouble shoot an intermittent radio problem. After it was fixed, I fished over the fantail with a big ocean gear. Something bit the big lure in half.

As one who dealt with maintenance, I had interface with many of the NAVSTA people.

The supply chain was preposterous. For that reason, many deals were made by cumshaw at the club.

A secondary mission was a supply depot, so we had merchants bringing in cargo frequently. A non-rated person's nightmare — 6 hours on and 6 hours off until she was unloaded. I got picked up as a jumbo crane operator and still had to work cargo as a third class. Running a crane is easier than stacking pallets in a hold!

I left in June of '64 as a proud third class, and off to WESPAC.

*Dennis Rowe, EW1, USN (Ret.)
Lake Shasta Branch 281*

The DEW Line

The June issue contained two letters, both referring to the seaward extensions of the DEW Line using WV-2 aircraft and both written from the West coast perspective with a single sentence in one of the letters referring to the East coast counterpart.

I would offer a minor correction and a minor addition. When the writer of one of the letters listed the members of a crew, he missed any mention of an electronics technician who was usually kept busy maintaining the radar and

the 6 CIC (Combat Information Center) consoles containing the operators' scopes plus any other electronic equipment needing attention such as radios, intercom, even altimeters. As an Aviation Electronics Technician (AT2), I was usually quite busy.

The other item I would like to add is that on the East coast, the three squadrons involved were based not in the Azores but in two other locations. AEWBARRON -11 (Airborne Early Warning Squadron LANT) commonly referred to as VW-11 was based in Argentina, Newfoundland. While I was there, VW-13, my squadron, and VW-15 were based at Patuxent River, Maryland and deployed to Argentina from where we flew our barriers, flying from there to the Azores and returning to Argentina, the flights lasting 14 hours or so as did the West coast flights. Each deployment for VW-13 and VW-15 consisted of 6 or 7 barrier flights over a period of two weeks or so, then returning to Pax River for a week or 10 days for maintenance and R&R. The only time a crew saw the island of Lajes, Azores was if there had been an emergency, such as having lost an engine. The plane would land at an Air Force base where there was a small Navy detachment and within a few days take off again with a replacement engine.

The times that we returned to Pax River were a welcome respite, and for a newly married sailor like me there were many honeymoons! Pleasant memories, indeed!

*Best regards,
Edmund Paszkiewicz, ATC, USN (Ret.)*



DEW system office emblem. Public Domain.

Article in November 2020 Magazine

I know it has been quite a while since the article "Doing a Man-Size Job" was published and I have been putting off writing to you.

Your article was about the Women's Reserve appealing to young women. It talked about the design of the WAVES uniform, which included a Navy cover, collared shirt, fitted jacket, tie, gloves, knee-length skirt, pantyhose, polished oxford heels and an optional handbag.

I take exception to the pantyhose. Pantyhose was not created until 1959 by Allen E. Gant. It may have been nylons that were offered, but not pantyhose.

I remember my mother telling me how difficult it was to get nylons during the war. Nylon was used in parachutes during the war, and it was not easily available. She told me young ladies would draw a line on the back of their calves to give the illusion that they had nylons on.

Someone else may have brought this to your attention, I may have missed it.

*Submitted,
Cdr. Glenn A. Furth, USN (Ret.)*

Feeding the Navy

I read with interest the article on page 27 of the April 2021 issue of the FRA magazine. Yes, we've come a long way from "Hard Tack" to "Hollandaise" aboard ship. I spent three years aboard the first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier *USS ENTERPRISE* (CVN-65) with over 5,000 sailors on board when the squadrons were with us. I wondered how they were able to feed everyone decent meals every day — and most of them were pretty good. They usually had hamburgers for mid-rats. The cartoonist who worked for me in the public affairs office jokingly referred to them as "hockey pucks" in our daily newspaper at sea. There were times when some of us noticed that roaches were baked into the corn bread or cake. We always knew when we were out of fresh fruit and vegetables that supply ships were unavailable. We got used to having canned apricots for dessert much of the time since that was all that was available. I learned to like apricots later and planted my own tree at home.

One meal turned out to be a particularly bad one for me — I had fried shrimp and sauerkraut. My system may have been leading up to it but I ended up in sick bay for several days while we were steaming in the Indian Ocean and Idi Amin was playing political games in Uganda. I was attached to a stomach pump, and after several x-rays, the flight surgeon said he preferred to have me wait until we reached Subic Bay in the Philippines for surgery. An ambulance was waiting at the pier to take me to the Naval Hospital at Cubi Point. More x-rays were taken and my gallbladder was surgically removed. I spent 30 days in the hospital due to an infection. Shipmates bid me farewell as the ship steamed back to Alameda. When I was released from the hospital, I was taken to Clark Air Base and flown to Alameda where I spent 30 days at home recovering, since I was not allowed to climb ship ladders for a while. What a harrowing experience that was!

Leonard E. Churilla, JO1, USN (Ret.)



Photo from Naval History and Heritage Command.

USS NEW JERSEY (BB-62)

Hi Ann,

I read your very well-done article about the *USS NEW JERSEY*. Interestingly, my wife and I were taking a ferry from Cape May to Lewes [Delaware] the day that the *NEW JERSEY* was entering the Delaware Bay under tow. It was an exciting opportunity. I took some pictures. Those have been donated to the organization that maintains the ship. We have also visited the *NEW JERSEY* when it first opened. From the info in your article, I think that another visit is in order.

When we visited the ship, there were preparations for a concert in the facility next door. The booming of the amps added an exciting dimension to the visit.

*Dave Blood
W&M '64*

FRAtoday: Hello Dave,

Thank you for your nice note! I bet that was a sight to see, and I'm glad to have inspired you to return.

And I like your charitable description of the amps ... We are overdue for a trip to Philadelphia ... for a number of reasons, not the least of which is the Italian market, since DiBruno Brothers shipping is costly, and we need to visit my sausage guy, if he's still there.

*All the best,
Ann Norvell Gray*

FRA

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ON & OFF *capitol hill*

News & Notes **L** *from the Fleet Reserve Association's Legislative Team*



John Davis
Director, Legislative Programs

NDAA and Concurrent Receipt

As *FRAtoday* goes to press, the National Defense Authorization Act, or NDAA, is far behind schedule and will probably not be completed by the Oct. 1 deadline. Your association will be working to get floor amendments filed on concurrent receipt and other issues.

Also, more than half of the U.S. Senate (51 senators) is now co-sponsoring key concurrent receipt reform legislation: the Major Richard Star Act (S.344). The House companion bill (H.R.1282) has 113 co-sponsors. Concurrent receipt reform is of paramount importance to the FRA, and the association is continuing to work to eliminate this unjust offset of benefits. There are still many more lawmakers who would support this legislation if they heard from constituents.

Members can call their lawmakers through the toll-free U.S. Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121. If you provide your zip code, they will connect you to your legislators. When talking to legislators or their staff, remind them that retired pay is for vested years of service paid by the DOD, while disability compensation is for lifelong injury paid by the VA. To reduce retirement pay because of a disability is an injustice!

Members are also urged to continue to use the FRA Action Center at www.fra.org to weigh in on this issue.

NewsBytes is the FRA's free weekly legislative update. If you would like to subscribe, please email: NewsBytes@Fra.org. Include your name and contact information in the body of the email. If you are a member of the FRA or LA FRA, please include your member number.

SBP/DIC Offset Repeal Update

The FY2020 National Defense Authorization Act was enacted with the long-sought repeal of the SBP/DIC offset, often referred to as the "widow's tax." The repeal will be phased in over three years. Surviving spouses receiving both Survivor Benefit Plan payments and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation should have seen an increase in their January benefits that were deposited on Feb. 1.

Instead of deducting the full DIC payment from the SBP annuity, only two-thirds will be deducted (\$905 for the standard DIC) for the first year of the offset repeal's implementation. In 2022, only one-third of the DIC payment will be deducted from SBP. In 2023, the elimination of the SBP/DIC offset will be complete, and surviving spouses will receive full SBP annuity and DIC.

NDA Markups Begin

The Senate Armed Services Committee and its subcommittees started consideration of the FY2022 National Defense Authorization Act behind closed doors in the last week of July. As *FRAtoday* went to press, the text of the bill was not available. Based on discussions with staff and other sources, the SASC FY2022 NDAA seems likely to include:

- No additional TRICARE fee increases.
- An active-duty annual pay increase that keeps pace with civilian pay increases (2.7%).
- A requirement that the Defense Finance and Accounting Service provide a 90-day notice before stopping or suspending Survivor Benefit Plan payments.
- A new basic needs allowance to ensure service members do not suffer from food insecurity.
- Additional impact aid for school districts serving military children.
- An expansion of Selective Service System enrollment to all Americans at age 18, rather than just males.
- The reassignment of responsibility for sexual assault investigations to an entity outside the chain of command.

It has also been said that the Senate NDAA will add \$25 billion in additional spending above the president's request. Once the markup is complete, the bill will go to the full Senate for further consideration.

At the same time, the House Armed Services Committee's subcommittees marked up their portions of the House FY2022 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R.4350). Key provisions in the Military Personnel Subcommittee markup include:

- Choosing not to implement any new TRICARE fee increases.
- Prohibiting any reduction or realignment of military medical staff at military treatment facilities.
- Providing an annual active-duty pay increase that keeps pace with civilian pay increases (2.7%).
- Establishing the Naval Community College as a degree-granting institution for enlisted sailors.
- Requiring the Defense Department to pay a basic needs allowance to a qualified service member.
- Expanding the in-home child care pilot program that provides financial assistance for in-home child care.



US Rep. Mac Thornberry has represented the 13th District of Texas for 26 years and was leader of the House Armed services Committee.

- Directing the DOD to notify sexual assault survivors of the outcomes of any administrative action taken against their perpetrators.
- Mandating that violations of civilian protective orders are punishable under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

The FRA would also like to note that the HASC's Readiness Subcommittee markup contains a provision for the DOD to provide a report on child development centers' waiting lists and would require safety inspections for privatized housing and CDCs. The subcommittee markups now go to the full committee for consideration and then will be sent to the full House for further consideration.

Once both chambers pass their versions of the NDAA, a conference committee will be appointed to resolve the differences between the two defense authorization bills. This conference committee will write a final NDAA based on the provisions of the two bills. When there is agreement on a final bill, it will be submitted to both the House and Senate for a final vote. If approved by both chambers, it will be sent to the president to be signed into law or be vetoed.

The FRA is working to get floor amendments filed to include concurrent receipt reform and the Military Retiree Survivor Comfort Act (H.R.2214, S.1669) in the final NDAA. Members should go to the Action Center at www.fra.org to weigh in on these and other issues.

FRA Participates in Speaker Pelosi's Veterans Roundtable

FRA Director of Legislative Programs John Davis and representatives from several other veterans and military service organizations met with Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and House Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Mark Takano to discuss various pending legislative issues. This is the first veterans roundtable with the speaker since November 2019.

Davis thanked Takano for passing the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act in 2019. Davis noted that the FRA supports Rep. Sanford Bishop's comprehensive concurrent receipt legislation (H.R.333) and the Major Richard Star Act (H.R.1282, S.344). Davis said that retired pay is for years of arduous military service paid by the Department of

Defense, while disability pay is for lifelong injury paid by the Department of Veterans Affairs. To reduce retirement pay because of a disability is an injustice, Davis asserted.

The legislators discussed the accomplishments of the past session. They noted improvements to suicide prevention programs, VA education programs, programs for female veterans (through the Deborah Sampson Act) and sexual assault programs. Pelosi noted the efforts to get every veteran vaccinated against COVID-19.

There was extensive discussion of the infrastructure needs of the VA. The HVAC chairman estimated that the VA needs an infrastructure recapitalization budget of \$100 billion.

Rep. Gus Bilirakis Given Pinnacle Award

During the FRA national board of directors meeting, National President Mick Fulton (Imperial Beach Branch 289) presented the prestigious FRA 2020 Pinnacle Award to Rep. Gus Bilirakis (Fla.). The congressman was first elected to the Congress in 2006. He is known for distancing himself from partisan fights and focusing on his legislative agenda. Bilirakis represents the 12th Congressional District of Florida, a seat formerly held by his father, Michael Bilirakis, who also received the Pinnacle Award in 2005.

In the last session of Congress (2019-2020), Bilirakis co-sponsored more than 25 bills impacting the lives of service members, veterans and their families. One of the FRA-supported bills was the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act (H.R.299), which was enacted into law in June 2019. In 2020, he introduced a comprehensive veterans toxic exposure bill, the Protection for Veterans' Burn Pit Exposure Act (H.R.4086).

For years, Bilirakis has been a leader on the FRA-supported issue of concurrent receipt reform. In this



Rep Gus Bilirakis speaks to FRA board members during a lunch in Alexandria, Virginia. Staff photo.

session of Congress, he introduced the FRA-supported concurrent receipt bill the Retired Pay Restoration Act (H.R.303). More recently, the congressman introduced another concurrent receipt bill, the Major Richard Star Act (H.R.1282). These concurrent receipt bills are listed on the FRA Action Center on the FRA website, www.fra.org. Bilirakis is also currently in the process of drafting a bill that would create a commemorative coin for the FRA's 100th year.

New Veterans Legacy Memorial Website Features

The Department of Veterans Affairs has recently debuted new features on the Veterans Legacy Memorial website, www.vlm.cem.va.gov/. Originally launched in 2019, the VLM contains a memorial page for each of the nearly 4 million veterans and service members interred in a VA national cemetery, and visitors can leave written tributes.

The VLM will now permit online visitors to submit photos and biographical summaries of a veteran's life, along with historical documents such as award citations, letters and newspaper clippings. Another feature will allow visitors to follow their veteran's page and receive email alerts when new content is posted.



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THE GLADIATORS PAYCHECK

Roman bronze coins were the "silver dollars" of their day. They were the coins used for daily purchases, as well as for the payment of wages. Elite Roman Gladiators—paid to do battle before cheering crowds in the Colosseum—often received their monthly 'paycheck' in the form of Roman bronze coins.

But this particular Roman bronze has a gladiator pedigree like no other! Minted between 348 to 361 AD, the Emperor's portrait appears on one side of this coin. The other side depicts a literal clash of the gladiators. One warrior raises his spear menacingly at a second warrior on horseback. Frozen in bronze for over 1,600 years, the drama of this moment can still be felt when you hold the coin. Surrounding this dramatic scene is a Latin inscription—a phrase you would never expect in a million years!

HAPPY DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN

The Latin inscription surrounding the gladiators reads: "Happy Days are Here Again" (*Fel Temp Reparatio*). You see, at the time these coins were designed,

the Emperor had just won several important military battles against the foes of Rome. At the same time, Romans were preparing to celebrate the 1100th anniversary of the founding of Rome. To mark these momentous occasions, this new motto was added and the joyful inscription makes complete sense.

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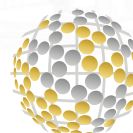
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VA Delays EHR Implementation

The Department of Veterans Affairs has announced that it will completely overhaul its training and deployment schedule for the VA's Electronic Health Record Modernization project, acknowledging fundamental flaws in the work done so far. At a recent Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee hearing, Chairman Jon Tester (Mont.) expressed serious concerns about the cost of the program.

"I, for one, am fed up with the amount of taxpayer dollars we're spending on this program without any demonstrated benefits to veterans or VA medical staff," stated Tester.

The Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee recently held an oversight hearing on the Department of Veterans Affairs rollout of the Electronic Health Record Modernization program, including the findings of this year's strategic review of the program and the VA's proposed path forward. This hearing also discussed three recent reports released by the VA Office of Inspector General concerning issues with the management and deployment of the new program.

The association believes congressional oversight of the ongoing implementation of VA technology upgrades to provide a joint DOD-VA EHR system is vital to ensuring improvements to the system. The FRA wants to ensure adequate funding for Department of Defense and VA health care resource sharing to deliver seamless, cost-effective, quality services to personnel wounded in combat and other service members and their families. The cost and the long time for implementation notwithstanding, the FRA believes there is a tremendous opportunity for improved care if the two departments use the same EHR system.

Witnesses at the hearing included VA Secretary Denis McDonough, VA Deputy Inspector General David Case, and Marc Probst, chief innovation officer at Ellkay, a health care connectivity company. Although Ellkay is not involved in the EHR Modernization program, Probst was present to provide third-party industry experience on EHR implementation.

\$5 Billion Requested to Improve Military Day Care

Chairwoman of the House Armed Services Military Personnel Subcommittee Rep. Jackie Speier (Calif.) is among 47 lawmakers in the House and Senate asking for \$5 billion in additional funding for child development centers on military installations through the Military Child Care Expansion Act (H.R.3121, S.1572). Speier stated that 135 CDCs are in poor or failing condition, and 9,000 military families have kids on a waiting list for day care services. The FRA's 2021 Survey of Military and Veterans Benefits indicated that 75% of

active-duty members rate availability of child care as "very important," the highest rating.

"When a military family can't get the child care they need, that's a crisis for the family's finances and our military readiness," Speier said in a press release. "Servicemembers need safe, quality, available child care so that they can focus on the mission."

Members are urged to use the FRA Action Center at www.fra.org to weigh in on this issue.

House Appropriators Advance Defense Spending Bill

The House Appropriations Committee approved the FY2022 Department of Defense Appropriations Act (H.R.4432) and sent it to the House floor for further consideration. The bill would provide a \$10 billion budget increase over the current year. Some of the key provisions in the spending bill include:

- Adequately funding the Defense Health Agency without any new TRICARE fee increases.
- Providing funding for an active-duty pay increase of 2.7%, which keeps pace with civilian pay increases.

- Reducing active-duty end strength by 1,600 for the Navy and 2,700 for the Marine Corps.
- Providing \$70 million in impact aid for public schools with large military populations.

The FRA submitted written testimony on its defense spending priorities to the House Appropriations Defense Subcommittee in conjunction with the subcommittee budget hearing that was held on May 27. A copy of the testimony is on the FRA website at www.fra.org under the "Advocacy" tab.



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Commission Proposes Sexual Assault Prosecution Changes

The Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military released its final report with more than 80 recommendations, including one that the prosecution of sexual assaults in the military be taken out of the chain of command. The 90-day independent review commission had been established by Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III on Feb. 26 at the direction of President Joe Biden. The IRC was comprised of 12 military and civilian experts from the fields of civilian criminal justice, victim advocacy, policy and program development for sexual violence prevention and response, public health, and research.

During the 90-day period, the IRC gathered input from different sources. The team met with more than 600 individuals in the U.S. military — including sexual assault survivors, researchers, current and former service members, commanders, junior and senior enlisted members, and advocates. FRA Assistant Director of Veterans Programs Noelle Huffer has monitored this process by attending multiple video conference calls with the members of the IRC.

The IRC presented Austin with its report, which made some recommendations addressing four broad areas: accountability, prevention, climate and culture, and support and care of victims. A total of 82 recommendations were made. Austin reviewed the recommendations made by the IRC and stated he agreed with everything submitted. Based on the recommendations from the IRC, Austin has directed the department to work with Congress to make changes to the Uniform Code of Military Justice that will shift the responsibility for prosecuting sexual assaults and related crimes, such as domestic violence offenses, child abuse and retaliation, away from military commanders.

Making changes to the UCMJ, which is part of federal law, requires congressional approval. Austin has directed Deputy Secretary of Defense Kathleen H. Hicks to prepare a road map for implementing the recommendations from the IRC. Following his approval of that road map, Austin said, "It will be the role of the undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness to oversee the implementation of recommendations."

Both Youngest and Oldest Secretary of Defense Dies at Age 88

Donald Rumsfeld, the only secretary of defense to serve two nonconsecutive terms, has died at his home in New Mexico at the age of 88. Family spokesperson Keith Urbahn reported to the New York Times that the cause of death was multiple myeloma.

Rumsfeld first took the oath of office for secretary of defense in 1975 at age 43 with limited experience in Defense policy. He had served as a fighter jet pilot and flight instructor in the U.S. Navy from 1954 to 1957, and continued his service in the Navy Reserve for many years afterward. His tenure as the youngest secretary of defense lasted only 14 months near the end of President Gerald Ford's administration. His focus was on modernizing each component of the nuclear triad.

After being nominated by President George W. Bush in 2001, Rumsfeld became the oldest secretary of defense, reaching age 74 by the end of his tenure. He was inside the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001, when a hijacked jet airliner crashed into the building. He stayed at the Pentagon throughout the day overseeing rescue efforts from the attack that killed 189 passengers and people in the building. He vowed that the Pentagon would be open for business the next day and he fulfilled his pledge.

Rumsfeld became a central figure in developing and implementing the global war on terror, including the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. His efforts were not without criticism. Opponents accused him of advocating for the torture of suspected terrorists and engineering the invasion of Iraq in search of weapons of mass destruction that his critics claimed he knew probably did not exist. After Democrats gained control of Congress in the 2006 election, Rumsfeld submitted his resignation.

Despite his critics, he had a large number of supporters who admired his work ethic, intelligence and impatience with those who failed to share his sense of urgency for getting things accomplished.

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Photo courtesy of the War Horses for Veterans Foundation.

War Horses for Veterans

Finding Confidence, Calm & Connection Through Horses

By Elise M. Howard

Patrick Benson saw some intense fighting during his time in the U.S. Army infantry from 1998 to 2004. Shortly after enlisting, he was deployed to Kosovo, and later he fought in Fallujah and Ramadi, Iraq. When he separated from the Army in 2004, he immediately began a horse training and horsemanship education business.

"I literally [was] ... in firefights, and two weeks later, I'm starting PB Equestrian," Benson recalled. "It was pretty abrupt."

The bustle of separating from the Army and setting up his new business left Benson little time to process his combat experiences. Although he had some mental health challenges following his service, as the years passed, he began to notice that he was faring significantly better than some of his battle buddies who had left the Army with similar experiences.

When he met other combat veterans in the course of his business, "they'd say, 'These horses saved my life.'" Benson said. "And I kind of put the parallel together and I was like, 'Holy smokes!' ... Who'd have realized what I was doing for a living had an impact on my processing, [my] transition?"

Connecting More Veterans to Horses

As Benson began pondering how to give more veterans the mentorship, networking and emotional coping opportunities that working with horses had given him, a former client introduced him to Andy Brown. Brown and his wife, Patricia, owned a pipeline supply company and had a particular passion for helping veterans. The Browns lived on a horse ranch outside Kansas City, and needed a skilled trainer for a problem stallion. Benson and Andy Brown got along immediately, and it wasn't long before Brown hired out Benson's services full time.

One evening, the two men found themselves sitting on the Browns' porch discussing how they could do more for veterans.

"I told him, 'Yeah, I have an idea. ... It won't be cheap, but I know it'll work.'" Benson recalled. "And 30 minutes later, I'd told him, and he said, 'Get it started.' They're very generous, huge hearts, and believed in the vision and myself and the possibility."

With Andy and Patricia Brown's financial backing, emotional support and experienced



Photograph provided by the War Horses for Veterans Foundation.

mentorship, Benson's business-oriented mind set to work laying out an initial three-year plan for the nonprofit that would become known as War Horses for Veterans.

"I've seen equine therapy programs, but I wanted something very different," Benson said. "I wanted something that I would go to, and my buddies would go to, and other people that ... would normally not go to something like that [would go to]. And we've been very grateful and successful with that."

It was decided that the program would take place at the Browns' ranch, with the veterans staying at a nearby hotel; veterans who currently attend the program stay at a local DoubleTree by Hilton hotel that has generously agreed to cover the costs of their stays. Benson and the Browns were determined that the program be absolutely free for veterans, including their meals and airfare to Kansas City. Although the program has secured some private grants and corporate partnerships to help cover

these costs, it still relies on individual donations to make its work possible.

Not Just a Pony Ride

After months of planning, in 2015, the program welcomed its first group of veterans. Ever since, War Horses for Veterans has been bringing combat veterans together for three to six days of camaraderie and networking, wholesome food, personal coaching, and hard work. Yes, you read that right: hard work.

"You're working horses for sometimes up to 10 hours a day. ... You're not just petting them and doing a little pony ride; you're going to learn a lot about yourself," Benson said. "You're going to learn how to train. You're going to learn the different teaching tools that give you a toolbox, and you're going to literally go through the whole process. From the horsemanship point, you don't have to know a darn thing about horses at all, and we will go from the basics of how you manage, from farm



Photograph provided by the War Horses for Veterans Foundation.

chores to taking care of them, to grooming, to just general care and then to round-pen work, to bridle work.”

Unlike most equine therapy programs, at War Horses for Veterans, participants learn real horsemanship skills that they can apply to civilian work if they so choose. Veterans learn at their own pace, but can work toward any horsemanship goal they set, including training; jumping; roping dummies; and English, Western, bareback or dressage riding. Accomplishing these goals, and the smaller steps along the way, builds confidence and self-efficacy.

The Healing Power of Horses

Overcoming the challenges of learning to ride and care for a horse also requires one’s full attention and concentration, demanding a focus on the present moment that leaves no room for anxiety about the future or ruminations about the past. For many veterans, these are the first moments in years that

they have spent without these constant streams of anxious or depressing thoughts.

“For the first time since being retired, I felt alive and wasn’t all wound up, nervous and on guard inside,” wrote a former Army combat engineer and 2015 program participant identified only as Gregg R. on the War Horses for Veterans website. “Being around the horses was like nothing I have ever experienced and Rifle, (the horse I worked with), seemed to sense every emotion I was feeling and somehow seemed to calm me.”

Benson noted that because horses pick up emotions easily, riding one successfully requires a calm, trusting relationship with good communication, something that can be especially challenging for those coping with the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder.

“They’re a 1,000-pound animal,” Benson explained. “You get up and start riding that horse, you better have built up some form of relationship with them and develop that connection and



Photograph provided by the War Horses for Veterans Foundation.

overcome your fear.”

Trying to lead an inherently distrustful animal several times your size can also have a humbling effect, which further develops critical relationship skills, Benson added.

“At the same time you got this humbling experience, you then became vulnerable, but then you overcame the fear of vulnerability to learning how to feel,” Benson said. “Then you learn how to communicate. Then you learn how to connect. Next thing you know, you’re galloping and riding this horse that you were terrified of about an hour and a half ago.”

In the course of conquering challenges, refocusing on the present, revitalizing their relationship skills and experiencing vulnerability in a nonjudgmental environment, veterans often find the ability to talk about their wartime experiences naturally.

“I didn’t want the participants to feel psychoanalyzed, and, you know, ‘Hey, tell me about your feelings and what’s going on right

now.’ We don’t do it,” Benson said. “We all have a common ground, and guess what happens every single time we don’t try to bring it up? It always comes out. But it comes out in a good way. It comes out on their terms, and you know what? They vent and ... it’s like a release. No one judges you. No one’s going to judge you. The horses aren’t going to judge you and no one on the team is going to judge you. Most of us have been through all the stuff, and ... we’ll be incredibly vulnerable. But I’ve seen some of the strongest guys you’ve ever seen around just let it loose because their subconscious realizes they’re in a safe environment of nonjudgment.”

On the final day of the program, veterans set goals for how they want to apply what they have learned and experienced at War Horses for Veterans to their lives back home. After participants leave, veteran mentors and members of Benson’s team keep in touch with participants to provide continued mentorship and networking.



Photograph provided by the War Horses for Veterans Foundation.

Veterans can return to the program as many times as they like, as long as on subsequent visits they bring a fellow combat veteran who has not been through the program. Some are specifically asked to return as a mentor. To create a close-knit environment and give each veteran plenty of personal training and attention, though, Benson keeps groups to a maximum of six new participants and two mentors.

An Ever-Growing Program

Last year, War Horses for Veterans began a first responder program to address the lack of support local first responders were receiving for mental health issues during and after their service. Next year, Benson plans to similarly launch a War Horses for SOF program to meet the unique needs of active-duty and veteran members of special operations forces.

2020 also saw the addition of a new indoor facility that now allows the program to run year-round. Despite the restrictions of the pandemic, War Horses

for Veterans was able to work with over 500 veterans and first responders last year, and Benson looks forward to introducing even more people to the healing power of horses as COVID-19 restrictions lift. Some participants have been so impacted by the program that they have gone on to start veterans programs of their own.

“I went out there with a lot of skeletons in my closet and was under the impression that I was this broken man who has nothing left to offer this world,” wrote a 2018 program participant identified only as Jeremy H. on the War Horses for Veterans website. “This experience inspired [me] to come back to Kentucky and form a Vet Org of my own. I left feeling confident, wanting to serve again, and with a sense of purpose I had longed for since getting out of the Army.”

If you or someone you know sound like a good fit for a War Horses for Veterans program, more information and an application for participation can be found at www.warhorsesforveterans.org. **FRA**

Chief petty officer selectees assigned to Pre-Commissioning Unit *GERALD R. FORD* (CVN-78) visit the Washington Monument in Washington, D.C., during a CPO heritage trip. Selectees learn about Navy history throughout their six-week transition from a first class petty officer to a chief petty officer. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communications Specialist Chief Bryan D. Weyers.



The Making of a Navy Chief

By Ann Norvell Gray

Ask experienced Navy noncoms what comes to mind when you say “chief petty officer,” and the first thing you might hear is “effective.” Other characteristics that the question elicits are “disciplined,” “organized,” “dedicated,” “adaptable,” “skilled” and “fearless,” all of which are aspects of the kind of leadership the hardworking CPOs provide. The respect they earn and the loyalty they inspire in their teams don’t happen by accident. They are the culmination of a process of training and education, combined with a willingness always to learn more, to give more and to grow more into mature, thoughtful stewards of the responsibilities handed to them.

The Chief Induction Process

The goal of the chief selection and induction process is to recognize the talents and ambitions of future chiefs and force-feed them the discipline and knowledge necessary to turn them into highly successful servant-leaders with the resources and authority to get the job done. Since the rank of chief petty officer was created in 1893, the Navy has developed and refined their selection process to

guarantee preparation for the men and women who will be recognized as the people who really run the show. An ambitious petty officer first class must put in the time and seek out the challenges to build a “package” to submit for consideration. The pinning of CPO anchors doesn’t happen until those chosen for promotion have gone through their formal induction, completing a set of mental and physical trials under seasoned local chiefs, who will determine if they are ready to wear the anchors of a chief, and to lead like one as members of the Chief’s Mess.

“During induction, we want to instill resilience, perseverance and the highest form of leadership,” the Naval Postgraduate School’s senior enlisted leader, Senior Chief Logistics Specialist Llord von Bainco, said in a February 2021 Navy press release. “We want to impart on them balancing home and work, how to work with any kind of team where one’s in charge, encouraging pride in our history and heritage, and teaching them what right looks like. ... We also touch on the administrative basics, like writing evaluations and coming up with a solid plan to accomplish tasks. ... This is why the induction



The cover photo from "A Tradition of Change: CPO Initiations to CPO 365" by Navy Information Technician Master Chief James L. Leuci,, showing what is involved in a "swim call." Photo from the Naval History & Heritage Command.

season is so very important, crucial even, to a chief's career. This process, though not set in stone, gives a chief a better chance of successfully leading his or her team wherever he or she goes, regardless of the circumstances."

For more than 50 years, the formal process through which the chief petty officer arrives at full status has evolved under the guidance of the master chiefs to reflect shifts in perceptions and sensitivities in the larger culture. There was a time when initiation shenanigans could get out of hand, and changes have come in response to the need for a bit more dignity. The core values, however, have not changed, and CPOs are still prepared for and charged with the planning and execution of every aspect of Navy life and work.

FRA Leaders Reflect on their CPO Experiences

The FRA's immediate past president, Donna Jansky, comes from a military family, most of them Navy. When she joined up in 1975, things were opening up some for women everywhere.

"After I first got put in a secretarial job, which I didn't want," she said, "I was assigned to different divisions, like the chow hall and Pass and ID. Then a billet in the airframes shop opened, and I was able to transfer in."

When she was asked if making chief was always a goal, Jansky said, "Not at first, but when you decide to do the full 20, wanting to make chief develops as you ask more and more of yourself. What they look for is someone who goes beyond what you are told to do — someone who takes that extra step to improve workflows, improve safety, and save time and money. You need to show initiative. Community service is a big plus, also. I was an instructor for the Sea Cadets, for instance. If you think about it, they are looking for our FRA motto: loyalty, protection and service."

The FRA's current president, Mick Fulton, was reared in upstate New York, and worked the tour boats on the St. Lawrence River when he was in high school. He thought about becoming a veterinarian, but his youthful impatience at the thought of seven more years in school and his natural affinity for being on the water turned him toward the Navy, and



Chief petty officer charge book vessels are displayed on a table prior to a CPO pinning ceremony onboard Naval Amphibious Base Coronado, California, Jan. 29. The ceremony was livestreamed on social media and followed COVID-19 mitigation efforts in support of the Department of Defense's proactive approach to combating the spread of the virus. U.S. Navy photo by Lt. John J. Mike.

he never looked back. His path from undesignated striker to command master chief was guided by his early curiosity about the rates, and he found the right fit as a boatswain's mate. Promotion to chief was always a clear goal of his, and 30 years later, Fulton retired as command master chief of Naval Air Station North Island on the Coronado peninsula in San Diego Bay.

Chief petty officers don't reveal much about the specifics of their initiations, and these two successful retired chiefs went through it at different times. Fulton was deployed in 1984 when his promotion came up, and endured both his shellback and his chief's ordeals while at sea during that same deployment.

"There were only two guys being initiated, and let's just say that they did as they pleased with us," he recalled. Still, he said, he was so much looking forward to this achievement that the indignities were bearable. "During the pinning ceremony and the reading of the pledge, the whole process came into focus, and I understood the strength of our creed of trusting each other."

About her own induction and initiation, Jansky said that her experience in 1995 was less like a crazy fraternity hazing, but it was still very demanding. Now, the emphasis is more on training and on challenging professional abilities.

"You were part of an older model — sort of like boot camp again, but you saw that when you were put in tough situations, you and the rest of your initiates had to come up with solutions and get out of them as a team," she said. "As a chief, you have to be able to do that with your subordinates — never forget where you came from, and make it happen."

The Role of Navy and Coast Guard Chiefs

Several resources, such as www.military-ranks.org, www.navy.com and <https://allhands.navy.mil> describe what is expected of Navy chiefs this way:

"A Navy chief is ... a tried and true leader, training Shipmates in their ratings while guiding and training junior officers to become future leaders. ... Navy chiefs are often considered the backbone of senior enlisted leadership. They are humble professionals who work as advocates for their Shipmates' best



Master-at-Arms Senior Chief Matthew Haylow puts the combination cover on Master-at-Arms Chief Kyle Callahan during a chief pinning ceremony held onboard Commander Fleet Activities Okinawa at the White Beach Naval Facility Jan. 29. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class David R. Krigbaum.

interests. The Navy chief removes barriers and handles adversity to allow sailors to do their jobs to the best of their abilities while demonstrating the humility of taking a back seat when a good job is rewarded. A chief is an example of the importance of the Navy's core values. ... A chief takes honor in doing the right thing, even when it's not popular. A chief has the courage to stand up for what is right, and has the commitment to stay the course, no matter what heavy seas or rough waters lie ahead."

Shortly thereafter, we received a thoughtful reminder from BOSN4 Randy Maxson noting that the Coast Guard's chief petty officers, though fewer in number, play an equally important role. So although we have focused here on the process specific to the Navy, we honor equally the role played by the Coast Guard chiefs, and are happy to share this from Maxson's gracious and informative letter:

"Everything that was mentioned about Navy chiefs applies directly to Coast Guard chiefs as well. ...

"In 1915, the merger of the Revenue Cutter Service and the U.S. Life Saving Service into the modern Coast Guard brought about many changes. ... The

Coast Guard realized there was a need to establish a position of higher authority — the "Chief" then secured a permanent place in the chain of command.

"... Some Coast Guard chiefs (Boatswains Mate) have the distinction of enlisted command by being elevated to the position of Officer In Charge of small cutters or multi mission shore units. ... Because the Coast Guard is a smaller service, the role of a Chief is greatly magnified.

"The Coast Guard rallies around their core values of Honor, Respect and Devotion to Duty.

"We are lucky to have all these Coast Guard and Navy sailors within our ranks."

Bringing CPO Values to Civilian Life

When asked if their years growing into and mastering their responsibilities as chiefs were instrumental in their success in life after retirement from the Navy, both the past and current FRA presidents answered with a firm and immediate "Yes!" Fulton joined his old friend Jack Van Zandt's maritime services company, bringing with him his knowledge of the intricacies of contracting in this niche business. The

Finally . . . a better mobility solution than Scooters or Power Chairs.

The **Zoomer's** versatile design and 1-touch joystick operation brings mobility and independence to those who need it most.

If you have mobility issues, or know someone who does, then you've experienced the difficulties faced by millions of Americans. Simple tasks like getting from the bedroom to the kitchen can become a time-consuming and potentially dangerous ordeal. You may have tried to solve the problem with a power chair or a scooter but neither is ideal. Power chairs are bulky and look like a medical device. Scooters are either unstable or hard to maneuver. Now, there's a better alternative . . . the Zoomer.

***My Zoomer is a delight to ride!** It has increased my mobility in my apartment, my opportunities to enjoy the-out-of-doors, and enabled me to visit the homes of my children for longer periods of time. The various speeds of it match my need for safety, it is easy to turn, and I am most pleased with the freedom of movement it gives me.*

Sincerely, A. Macon, Williamsburg, VA

After just one trip around your home in the Zoomer, you'll marvel at how easy it is to navigate. It is designed to maneuver in tight spaces like doorways, between furniture, and around corners. It can go over thresholds and works great on any kind of floor or carpet. It's not bulky or cumbersome, so it can roll right up to a table or desk – there's no need to transfer to a chair. Its sturdy yet lightweight

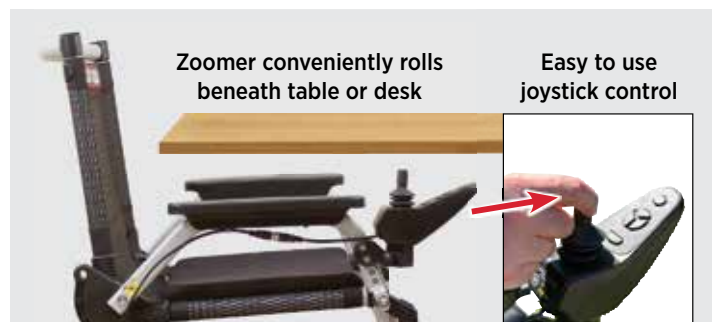


aluminum frame makes it durable and comfortable. It's dual motors power it at up to 3.7 miles per hour



and its automatic electromagnetic brakes stop on a dime. The rechargeable battery powers it for up to 8 miles on a single charge. Plus, it's exclusive foldable design enables you to transport it easily and even store it in a closet or under a bed when it's not in use.

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Vessels and covers of *USS GERALD R. FORD's* (CVN-78) newest chief petty officers are staged in *FORD's* hangar bay prior to the Chief pinning ceremony Feb. 6. At the time, *FORD* was underway in the Atlantic Ocean conducting carrier qualifications. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class William Spears.

two put together their teams entirely by references and word-of-mouth.

"Learning how to lead a successful team, and how to treat people — that understanding was fundamental to our reputation," Fulton said.

For Jansky, "It made me who I am professionally. Before, it wasn't in my nature to speak up, but in the Navy, I learned what I can do. I never would have thought to run for national office in FRA without that confidence." The three words she hears again and again when thinking about her Navy experience continue to carry her on. "Overcome, improvise and adapt!" she said.

If you have more questions about the path up to and through the challenges, accomplishments and lasting impact of this honored rank, just "ask the chief!" **FRA**

The Chief Petty Officer's Pledge

I am a Chief Petty Officer in the United States Navy...
I serve my country and her people with pride and honor.

I seek no special favors.

I make things happen, and do the best I can do.

I am charged with a leadership role like no other in the world.

I develop junior officers and mold my Sailors.

I acknowledge full responsibility for the
actions of my Sailors...

because these Sailors are the seeds of
future chief petty officers.

I live by the Navy's core values of honor,
courage, and commitment.

I set the example.

I establish the standards of performance.

My Sailors are students and I am their teacher.

I guide and influence the lives of these
young men and women.

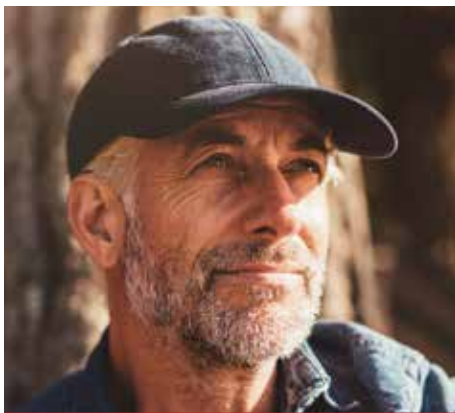
In the final analysis, I will determine the
quality of these Sailors.

They look up to me because I treat them with
dignity and respect.

Because they need a leader, I am there for them.

After all...

I am a Chief Petty Officer in the United States Navy.



Men Over 40 Celebrate Breakthrough Pill

Doctor-developed natural formula supports prostate health, normal urinary frequency, and optimal male health

By S.A. Nickerson, Health Correspondent

Renowned holistic physician David Brownstein, M.D., knows most men feel embarrassed to talk about their prostate.

However, if you're a man over 40 or 50, your prostate is probably talking to you — and it's time to listen.

"With aging, your prostate gland can swell," warns Dr. Brownstein. "This pressure begins to affect urinary control, forcing you to look for a bathroom wherever you go. You may have difficulty sleeping because of multiple nightly bathroom trips."

Rogue Testosterone Starts Attacking Around Age 40

Once you hit middle age, your body begins to secrete the enzyme 5-alpha

reductase. This causes your normal "manly" testosterone to turn into a rogue testosterone compound called DHT (dihydrotestosterone).

The build-up of DHT is a primary reason why prostate size increases as you age — and is associated with the unpleasant urinary symptoms that result.

What you need, says Dr. Brownstein, is something to block the 5-alpha-reductase enzyme so it can't do its dirty work and encourage higher levels of this rogue testosterone.

Collateral Damage

Inflammation, the second culprit contributing to prostate concerns, represents collateral damage. As your body's response to injury, inflammation leads to the release of chemicals that cause fluid to accumulate in and around your prostate.

So you also need a solution that promotes a healthy inflammatory response in your prostate's tissues.

Based on his two decades of research and treating patients, Dr. Brownstein formulated one of the top-selling prostate support formulas available on the

market today. Since 2013, **PROSTATE REVIVE®** has been helping thousands of men across the country.

A Proprietary Blend of 15 Ingredients

PROSTATE REVIVE is truly a male health breakthrough, with 15 powerful, handpicked nutrients working together in a synergistic formula.

Ingredients such as saw palmetto, plant sterols with beta-sitosterol, pumpkin seed powder, and others help reduce the production of DHT.

Additional ingredients, including boswellia extract, pomegranate fruit extract, and pygeum, help promote proper inflammatory response.

Plus, nutrients such as selenium, zinc, and lycopene are essential for the health and function of your prostate.

The Simple Solution

With daily use, **PROSTATE REVIVE** makes it simple to support normal prostate health and function. With better control and fewer trips to the bathroom, you may even sleep better.

PROSTATE REVIVE® Users Speak Out*

Many users write to praise this prostate support formula.

"Had trouble urinating and it took forever. Had to get up 6 times a night. After using **PROSTATE REVIVE** for 2 weeks everything is good. I feel it is perfect. I have used other brands and not one of them worked like yours."

Kenneth F., California

"I'm so happy with **PROSTATE REVIVE**, there aren't enough words to describe it. Fantastic!"

Manuel L., Tennessee

"**PROSTATE REVIVE** keeps my bladder under control, so I don't feel the urgency to urinate anymore. I feel more alert and wake up restful, ready to go ahead with my day."

Luis C., New York

"I took it for 6 weeks and my PSA level went way down." *Ramon G., Wisconsin*

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You'll also receive Dr. Brownstein's detailed special report "**A Doctor's Guide to a Healthy Prostate**" as a **FREE** bonus gift (a \$20 value).

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Trial offer requires enrollment in SmartShip program. See website for details. These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. Testimonials are from actual customers who have used our products. *Testimonials reflect their experience but may not be representative of all those who will use our product.



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applications and rules
or to donate.



Who needs money for college or trade school?

FRA's Education Foundation awards approximately \$90,000 in scholarship funds each year to recipients based on financial need, academic standing, character and leadership qualities. Our scholarship program is open to anyone who has an affiliation with the USN, USMC or USCG, through their own service or that of a spouse, parent or grandparent.

To learn more about the FRA Education Foundation and our scholarships, visit www.fra.org/foundation where you will find descriptions of each scholarship program, lists of past winners and, starting in September of each year, applications for the current year's programs. We encourage all eligible scholars to apply for our scholarships and to share information about them with others.

Questions? E-mail us at scholars@fra.org or call 703-683-1400.

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veterans and their families.**



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FRA Education Foundation Announces 2021 Scholarship Recipients



Joe Barnes,
Education Foundation
Executive Director

The FRA Education Foundation proudly announces its scholarship recipients for 2021. Funded through private donations, corporate sponsorships and established trusts, the foundation will present \$93,000 in scholarships to 25 deserving students who are pursuing their dreams of a college degree in the 2021-2022 academic year.

The Selection Process

Scholarship recipients are selected based on need, academic proficiency and character. Established in 2009, the FRA Education Foundation works to advance the FRA's long-standing tradition of helping students reach their educational and professional goals.

Our scholarship program continues to be a great source of pride for the foundation and we're especially proud of this year's award recipients. For the first time, we're awarding two scholarships to applicants attending trade schools or community colleges based on the expansion of our program for the 2021-2022 academic year. Since 2000, we've disbursed nearly \$2.1 million in awards and we're grateful for the great support from the FRA, many FRA branches and Shipmates, and other contributors who make these awards possible.

Who Qualifies?

All current and former members of the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard, their spouses and their dependent children are eligible to apply for foundation scholarships. Members of the FRA and their spouses, children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren qualify for a broader range of awards, several of which are funded through member legacy donations.

Although applicants are not required to have a connection to the FRA to apply for a foundation

award, it is important to note that 18 of the 25 2021-2022 recipients are, or are related to, FRA Shipmates. Our scholarship program is a high-interest issue to prospective members. Shipmates should mention these scholarship opportunities when interacting with Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard personnel.

2022 Deadline

Applications for the FRA's 2022-2023 scholarships will be available at www.fra.org/foundation after Sept. 1, 2021. **FRA**

NEDE Joe Barnes is executive director of the FRA Education Foundation.

Scholarship Awareness Recommendations:

The foundation board recommends that FRA leadership and individual branches continue supporting the FRA Education Foundation by providing information about the foundation and its scholarship awards during regional meetings, leadership visits to branches, and other association and sea service-related functions.

The foundation board recommends including detailed information on the foundation as part of annual leadership training to expand awareness and help support the foundation's mission, which is directly related to the FRA's mission and cardinal principles.

The 2021-2022 scholarship winners are on the next page.

The Recipients of Education Foundation Scholarship Awards for 2021

Glenn F. Glezen Scholarship (\$5,000)

- (1) Danielle P. Lamson, Austin, Texas, spouse of Shipmate Ryan O. Lamson, Member-at-Large

Robert W. Nolan Scholarship (\$5,000)

- (2) Erryn A. Smith, Corvallis, Ore., step-granddaughter of Shipmate Lloyd L. Schrier, Member-at-Large

Joseph R. Baranski Scholarship (\$5,000)

- (3) Shipmate Valerie S. Welk, Sacramento, Calif, Member-at-Large

FRA Education Foundation Awards (\$5,000 each)

- (4) Wyatt A. Sutherland, Ann Arbor, Mich., Grandson of Shipmate William E. Sutherland, Branch 382
 (5) Keegan E. Bales, Knoxville, Tenn., Grandson of Shipmate Paul E. Arnwine, Member-at-Large
 (6) Joseph W. South, Owingsville, Ky., Grandson of Shipmate Joseph C. Straten, Member-at-Large
 (7) Tanner L. Curnow, Fallbrook, Calif., Grandson of Shipmate Harold L. Pofahl (deceased), Member, Branch 70
 (8) Shailynn M. Williams, Gales Ferry, Conn., Granddaughter of Shipmate Joyce M. Harris, Branch 20
 (9) Serena I. Pasquino, Goose Creek, S.C., Granddaughter of Shipmate William F. Heilig, Branch 53

FRA Education Foundation Awards (\$2,500 each)

- (10) Elizabeth H. Becker, Lexington, Va., Spouse of Lee Becker, Non-FRA Member
 (11) Andrew L. Hartle, Cedar Hill, Mo., Son of Craig A. Hartle, Non-FRA Member

FRA Education Foundation Awards (\$1,000 each)

- (12) Kayla C. Kaye, Sumner, Mo., Granddaughter of Shipmate Raymond E. Brown, Jr., Member-at-Large
 (13) Jaidah L. Clowers, League City, Texas, Granddaughter of Shipmate Michael W. Wasuck, Member, Branch 44

Robert M. Treadwell Annual Scholarship (\$5,000)

- (14) Adam B. Reingold, Boise, Idaho, Grandson of Shipmate Harold E. Pinson (deceased), Member, Branch 382

Stanley A. Doran Memorial Scholarship (\$5,000)

- (15) Joseph M. Jeffcott, II, Loveland, Ohio, Son of Shipmate Joseph M. Jeffcott, Member-at-Large

The Donald Bruce Pringle Family Scholarship (\$5,000)

- (16) Keilani M. Kavanagh, Winden Way, Minn., Granddaughter of Shipmate Dale A. Kittleson, Member, Branch 136

MCPO Ken E. Blair Scholarship (\$5,000)

- (17) Erika F. Crews, Hoboken, Ga., Daughter of Shipmate William E. Crews, Member, Branch 210

James C. Bowen Memorial Scholarship (\$2,500 each)

- (18) Desiree T. Ramus, Choctaw, Okla., Daughter of Rachelle L. Roberts, Non-FRA Member
 (19) Reegan E. O'Brien, Wakefield, Mass., Step-daughter of Richard H. Burditt, Non-FRA Member

Angelo and Mildred Nunez Scholarship (\$5,000 each)

- (20) Brady A. Jeffcott, Loveland, Ohio, Son of Shipmate Joseph M. Jeffcott, Member-at-Large
 (21) Cole M. Thomas, San Antonio, Texas, Son of Shipmate Kirsten Thomas, Member, Branch 94

Navy Department Branch 181 Scholarship (\$2,000)

- (22) Austin D. Alanis, Quantico, Va., Non-FRA Member

Col. Hazel Elizabeth Benn, USMC, Scholarship (\$2,000)

- (23) Emma R. Ditman, Suffolk, Va., Daughter of Shipmate David R. Ditman, Member, Branch 37

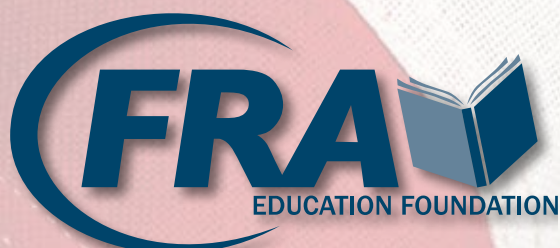
Rosemary Posekany Memorial Scholarship (\$1,000)

- (24) Dillon J. Bahr, Baton Rouge, La., Non-FRA Member

Judy Scanlon Memorial Scholarship (\$1,000)

- (25) Damon R. Marin, Colorado Springs, Colo., Non-FRA Member

2021 Education Foundation Scholarship Winners



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Navy Turns to Virtual Shipboard Training to Prevent Real-life Accidents

By Mike Glenn

Reprinted with permission from *The Washington Times*. Originally published July 29, 2021.

NORFOLK NAVAL STATION, Va. — The sky was dark and the sea was calm on June 17, 2017, when the guided missile destroyer USS Fitzgerald crashed into the ACX Crystal, a Philippine-flagged cargo ship off the coast of Japan. The collision killed seven sailors and caused extensive damage to the destroyer. No injuries were reported aboard the merchant vessel.

Two months later, the USS John S. McCain, another Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, turned into the path of the tanker ship Alnic MC while both vessels were passing through the congested Singapore Strait. As a result of the Aug. 21, 2017 collision, 10 sailors aboard the McCain died and 48 were injured. The destroyer sustained more than \$100 million in damage. No one was injured aboard the Alnic MC.

The collisions that killed 17 sailors sent a shock wave through the Navy and caused a reckoning in the service's surface warfare community after investigations revealed that, along with fatigue and chronic maintenance problems, a simple lack of basic seamanship was a leading factor in the accidents.

The Navy is working to address those issues with its Mariner Training Centers in Norfolk and San Diego. Part of the regular training is to put bridge crews through their paces in life-sized simulators so they can practice maneuvering a warship through a variety of scenarios.

"We want to make sure our junior officers are going to sea with the knowledge of how to handle the ship. How do we get that? We get it through simulations," Vice Adm. Roy Kitchener, commander of Naval Surface Forces, told *The Washington Times* in an interview.

Capt. Chris Marvin, commander of the USS San Jacinto, brought some of his officers to the training center in Norfolk to practice an underway replenishment, a method of transferring fuel and



The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer *USS FITZGERALD* (DDG-62) sits in Dry Dock 4 at Fleet Activities in Yokosuka for repairs sustained from its June 17 collision with a merchant vessel. U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Leonard Adams

munitions from one ship to another. The maneuver can be tricky because both ships must maintain the same course and speed with sufficient distance between them.

"There is no substitute for the real world, but this is pretty close," Capt. Marvin said as Lt. j.g.

Within minutes, the ship on the movie screen changed from a dot on the horizon to a full-sized computer simulation. Lt. Drake adjusted his speed and sent orders for the warship to come up alongside the merchant craft. Suddenly, a mechanical problem sent it veering toward the Navy vessel.

"I wish I could have had these simulators when I was his age," Capt. Marvin said as Lt. Drake ordered the ship to pull away, safe from the out-of-control cargo vessel. "When you're driving a no-kidding 8,000-ton ship, there's only so much rope the boss is going to give. In a simulator, I don't have to worry about bending metal."

Lt. Drake, who graduated from college in 2019, had more than 90 hours of training on a simulator under his belt before he reported to the San Jacinto.

"It makes everything on the bridge go smoothly

because you're not getting yelled at because you don't understand something," he said. "That was really helpful to me."

Lt. Elizabeth Pecsok's job as navigator aboard the USS San Jacinto is to ensure that the guided missile cruiser goes safely from point A to point B. She said regular training in the simulator is crucial.

"My priority is safe navigation, and when we're closer to land, that's when it's that much more important," Lt. Pecsok said.

The Navy's surface warfare community may be the heart of the service, but it often has funding cuts before its peers in aviation and the submarine force. In a cost-cutting move, the Navy in 2003 eliminated the Surface Warfare Officer School division officer's course, an intense five-month program for new officers.

The instruction was replaced with computer-based training via a container of CDs and whatever

maritime skills an ensign or lieutenant (junior grade) managed to pick up after being assigned to a ship.

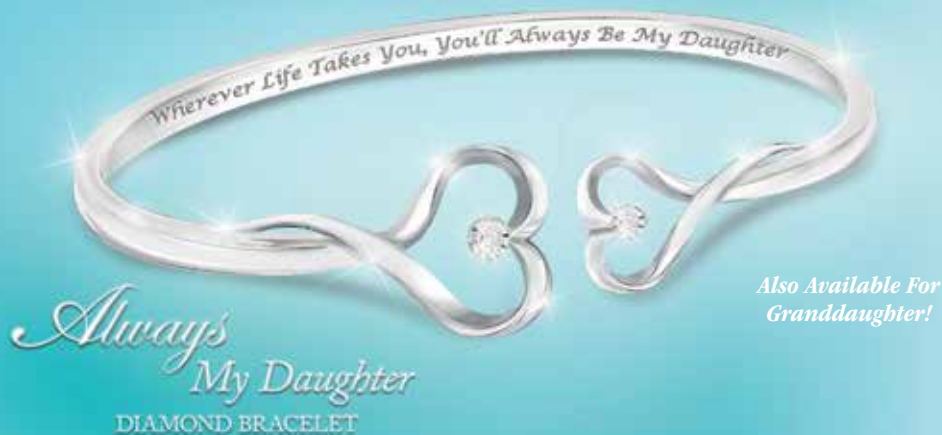
"That was not a good idea. It didn't work very well for us," Adm. Kitchener said.

After 2017, the Navy went through a comprehensive review of training for surface warfare officers to provide them with weeks of intense training long before they report to a ship.

"People do need a basic foundation of knowledge. They also need time in a trainer," said Cmdr. Nicole Schwegman, a Navy spokeswoman and surface warfare officer. "There needed to be a focus on the basics: seamanship, navigation and ship handling. They're all starting from the same baseline."

The jury may be out on the Navy surface warfare community's "back to basics" emphasis on shipboard training, but Capt. Marvin said he notices the difference when junior officers report aboard the San Jacinto.

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"Right away, you can tell there's someone who's got some experience under their belt because [the simulators] are there," he said. "They're doing the right thing on the bridge."

Retired Rear Adm. Mark Montgomery, a veteran surface warfare officer now with the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, said the Navy is on the right track with its renewed emphasis on preparatory training. Still, he said it is only one piece of the puzzle.

"Until you get the balance between operations, maintenance and training right, you're going to have a challenge," he said. "The minute there's budgetary pressure, it seems benign neglect gets applied to the surface warfare community. This is not a place to take risks. People are going to die, and we've seen that."

Under the post-2017 guidelines, surface warfare officers will go through regular simulator training to hone their "boat driving" skills.

"Even if you've commanded a [guided missile

destroyer] before and you're going to command a cruiser, you still have to pass an assessment before we let you go out to that ship," Adm. Kitchener said. "If you fail it, you don't go."

The Navy plans eventually to have ship-handling simulators at several major bases such as Pearl Harbor, Hawaii; Rota, Spain; and Yokosuka, Japan.

Adm. Kitchener said the goal is to ensure that every Navy ship will have access to a reliable place to solidify the crew's mariner skills as a team by rehearsing in realistic scenarios until they can "perform like an orchestra, perfectly in tune."

"Our mariner skills training resources are invaluable. With those strong programs in place, we can expand our training focus to the high-end fight," he said. **FRA**

Mike Glenn is an Army veteran who served in the Cold War and Gulf War before beginning a career in journalism. He is a staff writer at The Washington Times.

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"What Is the FRA?" Donald Lape's Story: Part Two

This is the second story of a three-part series submitted by Shipmate and Member-at-Large Donald Lape.



Christina Hitchcock

The Windy City is known for "Chicago style" pizza. Tradition dictates that every pizza joint owner show their love for their mom by naming the joint for their mom: Mama Luigi's, Mama Guiseppes, etc.

After my service with the Bees in Vietnam, my wife and I settled down in a neighborhood where a pizza joint named Courage opened up. I'm not sure whether the name came from what it took to enter, since the building looked like it would collapse at any time, or what it took to eat the greasy pizza. Either way, it was the only place to get anything that loosely could be called food. The pizza joint was like a lot of pizza joints: green walls with red and white tablecloths. There was a sign on the wall by the cash register that said "Join the FRA." Again, I wondered, "What is the FRA?"

"Hey what is the FRA?" I asked the guy behind the counter. He said he didn't know. Some guy asked if he could put a flyer up. "Call the number if you want to know more would be my suggestion," he said. I scribbled the number on the pizza box and started home. The midnight watch with my young son was waiting.

Taking out the trash, I spotted the number, and thought, "What the hell, I'll give it a call."

"Hello, this may sound weird, but I saw your flyer about the FRA in Courage's and thought I'd find out what the FRA is."

"Our phone number is on the flyer, but I haven't had much contact with them since my husband John passed," said the voice on the telephone. "I think they have a meeting this Saturday at noon at the pizza parlor. If you want, I can meet you there and introduce you to some of the people John and I knew."

I thought that was a great idea so Saturday I was there at Courage Pizza. I remember how the place reminded me of a place you don't want to stay in for a long time. I tried to get a seat near the

door, but the meeting was in a room to the right of the kitchen, which was oceans away from the front door. Maybe they had a rear entrance. The room had an American flag in front and the sign said "FRA Meeting."

This must be the place. There were only six or seven people in the room. Six or seven people for a meeting. Why bother?

"BANG" went the hammer on the gavel and the meeting was called to order. After the usual Pledge of Allegiance and the reading of last month's minutes, I thought, "Why did I come? Is this the FRA?" If it is, I could find the woman I was supposed to meet and then make an excuse to get home.

The main part of the meeting was called history. I might stay for a little bit since I always loved history. My dad always said if you don't learn from history you have to repeat it until you get it right. He was an electrician's mate on the USS TERCELL, which patrolled the east coast right after WW2.

George Carlin founded the FRA with the idea of monitoring all legislation impacting all enlisted personnel, according to the speaker. Dad was right. Everybody knew that George Carlin was a famous comedian banned for his seven words routine. He couldn't have founded the FRA. Was FRA a joke or just opening remarks for tonight's real presentation?

The FRA was chartered in Philadelphia on November 11, 1924. This was six years after WW1 and was one of the first attempts to organize for the rights due to the seafaring individuals. Shipmate representation in veterans bureau hearings, exempting enlisted personnel from depression-era pay cuts, and commissary privileges for widows of military veterans. These were just a few of the things that the FRA did for its members.

I learned some history from this. Now that I had learned a little bit about what the FRA was, the next question was "Where is the FRA going and what can I do to help?" **FRA**

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1. BRANCH 268, OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA.

Danny Thomas of the Marine Corps League Sooner Detachment presents certificates to USS OKLAHOMA (BB-37) Memorial Branch Shipmates Jessie Whitney (L) and Les Arnold (R) for participating in the reading of the names of Oklahoman service members who had died in the line of duty. The tribute ceremony included comments by U.S. Rep. Stephanie Bice of Oklahoma.

**2. BRANCH 182, BETHESDA, MD.**

Branch President Keith Kaider (L) presented PRPEC Randy Phillipp (R) his 25-years continuous membership branch certificate and pin during the branch meeting that was held in May.

**3. BRANCH 130, INDIANAPOLIS, IND.**

Members of the USS INDIANAPOLIS Memorial Branch went to Evansville to visit the Landing Ship Tank. (L to R) Joe Lanning, Tom Gilliam, Charlie Perry, George Dow, Nate Robe, Jim Sattler, Jerry Bennett, James Hayes, Charles Cleveland and Hank Jacoby.

**4. BRANCH 112, BIRMINGHAM, ALA.**

(L to R) Branch President Odell, William Fite and Jane Bowden each received a certificate for representing the FRA at a Belk store event.

**5. BRANCH 214, SCHENECTADY, N.Y.**

Branch President Dan Miller (L) with Hubert Hubo (R), a ninth grader from Christian Brothers Academy who won second place in the Northeast/New England Region in the Americanism Essay Contest.

**6. BRANCH 295, SAN ANGELO, TEXAS**

The San Angelo community held a ceremony to rededicate its statue to the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military. The ceremony honored USAF Tech. Sgt. Richard Meyers, a veteran who retired in San Angelo and died in 2015 of causes related to his service in Vietnam.

**7. BRANCH 242, DAVENPORT, IOWA**

Branch VP Larry Hartman (L) with Karli Roth and Branch President Don Devore (R). Roth is the seventh grade branch winner, first place North Central regional winner and second place national winner of the Americanism Essay Contest.

**8. BRANCH 261, LEMOORE, CALIF.**

West Coast Regional President Bill Hanzel visited during the monthly branch meeting on June 9. (L to R) Branch VP John Heger, RPWC Bill Hanzel, Raymond Fratus, Steve Taylor, RVPWC Jose Vizcarra, Branch Secretary Donald Johnson and Branch Second Vice President Ike Payne.





9. BRANCH 15, WALHALLA, S.C.

(L to R) Jim Jones and retired Navy Capt. Lena Jones hold flowers and an American flag, which were presented to the firefighters at the Six Mile, South Carolina, fire station during the Memorial Day services.

10. BRANCH 37, PORTSMOUTH, VA.

Shipmate Abraham Thomas (seated) celebrated his 100th birthday on June 3. His family and church members honored him with a drive-by birthday celebration at his home. Branch Chaplain Clyde Toler attended the ceremony on behalf of Branch 37.

11. BRANCH 91, JACKSONVILLE, FLA.

Branch President Lawrence Odom and Unit President Linda Moore present a wreath during the Memorial Day ceremony to honor those who served.

12. BRANCH 382, NAMPA, IDAHO

The Nampa Branch received the Best Theme Award in the 4th of July parade. (Back, L to R) Marianne Healea, PRPNW Tom Flanik, Jim Murrell, Jena Shadwick, Donna Dotson, PRPNW Hazel Bettercourt. (Front, L to R) Larry Carson, RPNW and Branch President Dan Hunt, Chuck Crooks, PRPNW Bill Hall, Unit President Rose Hall.

13. BRANCH 227, SPRINGDALE, ARK.

Ozark Branch President Victor Walker (R) and Branch Secretary Bill Epperson (Ctr.) present Hannah Wyler from Central Junior High in Springdale, Arkansas with checks for best essay in the ninth grade division. She won first place at the branch and South Central regional levels.

14. BRANCH 112, BIRMINGHAM, ALA.

(L to R) Matt Monson, first place; Sage Wytch, first place; Branch President Odell; Chiamaka Okfor, second place; Tommie Estes; Branch VP Rosalind Fazel; Branch Chaplain Leon Cowden (seated); and Branch Sec./Tres. Juan Bowden (kneeling).

15. BRANCH 146, JOHNSVILLE, PA.

Shipmates participated in the Doylestown Memorial Day Parade. (L to R) Dave Mullins, Branch VP Bob Opett, Dick Murphy, bulldog "Leatherneck" and his two handlers, Tom Svenningsen, Branch President Otto Blavier, and Guy Hurrell.

16. BRANCH 264, MERIDIAN, MISS.

Retired Navy AZCS Philip A. Lee turned 91 years old on July 31. He joined the FRA while in Naples, Italy, in 1959 and then transferred his membership to Branch 264 in 1962 while in Meridian, Mississippi. He was awarded a 60 years continuous membership certificate and pin in 2019.



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In Memoriam

Name	Rating	Branch							
Annunziata, Ralph P.	RM3, USN	115	Hampton, Donald	OSCS, USN	MAL	Plessinger, Donald T.	CPO, USN	334	
Armstrong, David L.	FCCM(SW), USN	MAL	Harden, Charles D.	BMC, USN	29	Ponikvar, Vernon R.	1STSGT, USMC	MAL	
Avelino, Servillano P.	SKC, USN	89	Harper, Grady	GMCS, USN	302	Pool, Delbert K.	BTC, USN	MAL	
			Harrison, William W.	CTC, USN	159	Porter, Billy M.	ICCS(SS), USN	47	
			Harwood, Dielon C.	SH1, USN	244				
Barrett, Carl R.	UTC, USN	117	Havens, Richard	MSC, USN	MAL	Rasmus, Merle H.	CSC, USN	230	
Bauman, Don	AVCM, USN	136	Herron, Michael J.	OS1(SW), USN	60	Respass, William R.	GYSGT, USMC	162	
Bischoff, David A.	EMCS, USN	130	Hickman, Gerald B.	POC, USN	342	Reynolds, Jay S.	MKC, USMC	382	
Blount, Earl C.	CAPT, USMC	269	Houser, Benny V.	ADJC, USN	316	Richter, Todd A.	AVCM, USN	91	
Booth, Charles A.	RMCM, USN	MAL	Huff, Leslie G.	AWC, USN	MAL	Robinson, Edward	ENC, USN	MAL	
Boyd, Frank W.	LT/O-3E, USN	103							
Branstrom, Harold	SH1, USN	MAL	Johnson, Byron W.	RMCM(SS), USN	382	Seely, Joseph R.	ACCS, USN	126	
Brevold, Curtis L.	PN1, USN	136	Jones, Robert W.	QMCS, USN	22	Sinning, Virgil	BTCS, USNR	276	
Browning, Michael I.	CSC, USN	MAL	Jones, William K.	PO1, USN	MAL	Solis, Eduardo	HMCS	22	
Brunsvold, Kenneth T.	LT	24				Smith, John D.	MACS, USN	99	
Bush, Jerl K.	RMC, USN	89	Keays, Tony D.	BM1, USN	61	Stroup, William E.	CWO4, USN	311	
			Keeping, Kenneth A.	ADRC, USN	MAL	Swindall, Victor A.	CAPT/MSC, USN	12	
Cattell, Douglas J.	EM1, USN	269	Kibbey, Edward C.	YNCS, USN,	MAL				
Center, Rick C.	CPO/SKC, USN	MAL	Kramer, Henry H.	BT2, USN	42	Thomas, James L.	MGYSGT, USMC	208	
Cheney, Robert D.	AK1, USN	166				Thompson, John W.	AM2, USN	86	
Culver, Guy E.	AOC, USN	MAL	Laferte, Albert R.	MMC, USN	214	Tripp, Gerald L.	ATCS, USN	289	
			Lewis, Richard W.	SK1, USN,	MAL				
Dibble, Lyn R.	OSC, USN	MAL	Limle, Roger W.	ATCS, USN	367	Varner, Michael T.	PO1, USN	104	
Dietz, Billie	EN1, USN	42	Lowry, Herald E.	AX1, USN	328	Vogel, John A.	HMCS(SS), USN	115	
Duckwall, Carl J.	PO1, USN	94							
Duplessis, Tony	SK1, USCGR	70	Matthews, Frank A.	YN1, USN	136	Wade, Michael B.	HMCS, USN	MAL	
			McCelvey, Gene	MMC	MAL	Wagner, Samuel E.	CTAC, USN	99	
Evans, James D.	CPO, USN	70	McGeary, Felix S.	DTC, USN	57	Walker, Coy J.	EM3	23	
Exum, Oscar	POCS, USN	MAL	McMichael, David L.	ADJ2, USN	22	Wikoff, David L.	LT, USN	60	
			Merten, Lawrence	LCDR, USN	MAL	PRPEC, Willis, John J. ETCS, USN	60		
Fay, Edmund K.	RMCM, USN	MAL	Mina, Antonio C.	SH1, USN	84				
Fitzpatrick, Edward P.	YNC, USCG	MAL	Morin, Raymond B.	IC1, USN	MAL				
Flick, Richard H.	CAPT, USN	223							
			Nelligan, James L.	ADJ1, USN	156				
Godbey, Ralph	ADC, USN	MAL	Nys, Donald R.	HMC, USN	53				
Greenwood, Alvin H.	CTC, USN	298							
Grishaber, Theodore J.	ETC(SS), USN	136	Pacheco, Lupe	BMC, USN	22				

Names in **red** indicate 50-year continuous members. Any names in **bold** indicate past national officers. To report a Shipmate death, email: mserfra@fra.org or call 703-683-1400, ext. 1.

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Contact: Nathan Miranda

Telephone: 626-824-0727

Email: assocminemen@yahoo.com

USS CONSTELLATION (CV/CVA -64)

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Louisville, Ky.

Contact: Bob Beese

Telephone: 386-299-4166

Email: gdgyfrsw@aol.com

USS REMORA (SS-487)

11/3/2021 - 11/7/2021

St. Marys, Ga.

Contact: Robert Sharpe

Telephone: 860-501-6161

Email: ussremora@yahoo.com

A list of reunions is at: www.fra.org/Reunions. Looking For/Reunions must be submitted online, via email to reunions@fra.org, or in writing to FRA Looking For/Reunions at 125 N. West St., Alexandria, VA 22314.

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SEPT 2021

A Message from the West Coast Regional President



Hello, FRA family! As I am writing this article, I am feeling both positive and anxious that after this crazy pandemic, things are finally coming to some kind of normalcy. Not being able to meet face-to-face for so long has taken a great toll on our unit's membership numbers. Not being able to have our events also affected membership, since the only time we saw certain members was when there was an event. However, some of us learned that through our great technology we were still able to communicate. I thought I would never participate in a Zoom meeting myself, but that quickly changed after I knew the pandemic was not going away anytime soon.

I am looking forward to being able to see our FRA family soon at both regional and national conventions.

I would also like to share with all of you that during the pandemic, I changed my job. Last year, I started working for the Palo Alto Veterans Hospital. During my 34 years of employment at several hospitals, I am proud to now work and take care of veterans every day. I can't speak about the quality of past facilities, but I can speak for the present: the VA facilities provide great care these days. If you have not signed up for your local VA facility, I encourage you to.

All the crazy things you saw happening on the television during COVID-19 with the pandemic nightmares didn't happen at the Palo Alto VA hospital. I experienced this firsthand as the spouse of a veteran who was admitted twice due to COVID-19 complications. Things went more smoothly for him at my hospital than at any other hospital that I have experienced. As a member of the COVID-19 vaccine team at the VA, I hope that all of you are vaccinated. If not, I encourage you to do so for the protection of you and your loved ones.

I would like to add one more thing: I invite any and all of you to attend the West Coast Regional Convention in Carson City, Nevada, this year from



PRP Mary Ann Frank (L) and NFS Brenda Horton (R) present a 50 years continuous membership certificate and pin to Hazel Godager from Unit 230.



(L to R) NFS Brenda Horton and PRPWC Mary Ann Frank visiting with long-time member Grace Stanley from Unit 230.

Aug. 19 to 21. The convention is being hosted by Branch 192 and Unit 137. We would love to see you there! **FRA**

In Loyalty, Protection and Service,
Kelly M. Pena

Kelly is the LA FRA West Coast regional president.

Charitable Giving Considerations for 2021



Carl M. Trevisan, CFP®



Stephen M. Bearce

If the COVID-19 pandemic's far-reaching impacts have you looking to enhance your charitable giving, be sure to remember these tax-related considerations for 2021:

Cash Gifts

A special rule for this year allows taxpayers who do not itemize deductions to claim up to \$300 (\$600 for joint filers) for gifts to qualifying charities.

If you do itemize, cash contributions to qualified charities in 2021 might be used to offset up to 100% of your adjusted gross income, or AGI, (60% of AGI for cash gifts to a donor-advised fund or 30% for cash gifts to a private foundation).

This means that if you're in a position to make generous gifts, you may potentially offset all of your taxable income. In addition, cash gifts could be used to offset Roth IRA conversion income or capital gains realized upon the sale of real estate or a large position in a single investment.

If you're unable to itemize but would like to, evaluate the possible impact of bunching several years' worth of charitable contributions into one year. This may increase your itemized deductions above the standard deduction threshold so you can potentially receive a tax benefit for those gifts. Review your income and deductions for the current year and the next few years with your tax adviser to determine what the best timing is for those bunched contributions.

Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs)

For taxpayers age 70½ or older, a QCD allows you to gift up to \$100,000 per year directly from your IRA to qualifying charities.

QCDs are tax-free distributions and count toward satisfying your required minimum distribution, or RMD. Remember that, while RMDs were waived for 2020, they must be taken for 2021.

No deduction is allowed for a QCD since the distribution is not taxable. This strategy is beneficial if you will not itemize deductions this year. It could also help you control your AGI, which is used to determine many tax-related limitations.



Stock image from Depositphotos.

Note that the amount of the QCD you are able to exclude from your income is reduced by any deductible IRA contributions you make in the year you reach age 70½ or after.

Stock Gifts

Gifting stock directly to charity rather than selling it and contributing the proceeds provides a current tax benefit if you itemize deductions. In addition, it lets you avoid capital gains taxation on the stock's appreciation if it increased in value while you owned it. Deductions for stock gifts are limited to 30% of AGI when contributing to public charities.

Before employing any of these strategies, please contact your tax and financial advisers to help provide the best outcome. **FRA**

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