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# FRA *today*

*The magazine of the Fleet Reserve Association*

JANUARY 2023 / \$3.75

## SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY ABOARD R/V SALLY RIDE

### INSIDE:

- 6** On & Off Capitol Hill
- 18** Fisher Houses
- 25** Health Matters



# Camp Lejeune Toxic Water Contamination Compensation

Many U.S. Marine veterans and their families were exposed to toxic chemicals in drinking water on the Camp Lejeune military base in Jacksonville, North Carolina.

## ► 5 Important Facts:

1. The U.S. Government is now allowing U.S. Marines, their families, and civilians to be compensated for injuries arising from the contaminated drinking water at Camp Lejeune.
2. From 1953 to 1987, contaminated water was used in everyday life for bathing, drinking, and more.
3. Water was contaminated with many chemicals that are linked to serious health issues.
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5. The new law provides many people with a new opportunity to make a claim, even if your loved one passed decades ago. Time limits could still apply, contact us today to see if you qualify.

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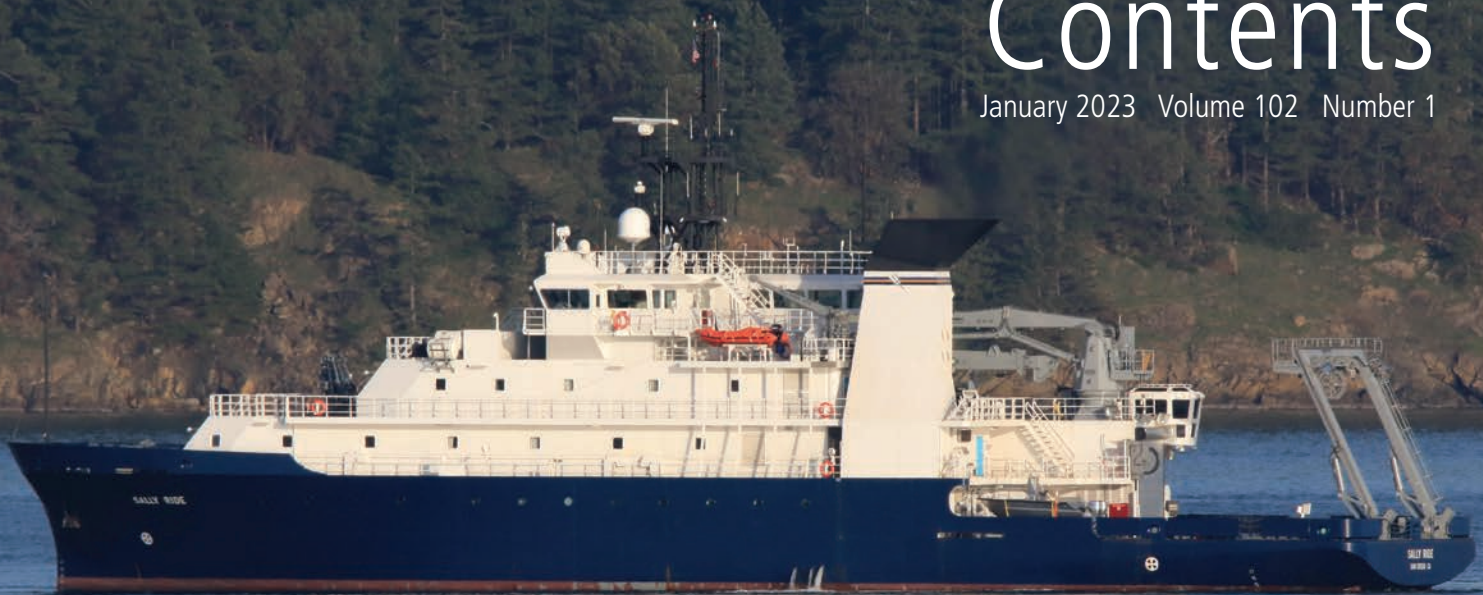
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Cover: Crew members aboard the R/V Sally Ride retrieve scientific moorings located in La Jolla canyon during a science verification cruise designed to test installed systems. U.S. Navy photo by John F. Williams. Above: The R/V Sally Ride (AGOR-28) successfully completed Acceptance Trials on Feb. 25, 2016. The research vessel supports ongoing oceanographic research efforts under the operation of Scripps Institution of Oceanography. U.S. Navy photo by Christopher G. Johnson.

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*After four years of collaboration between the Navy and Scripps to design and build this remarkable ship, it entered the U.S. academic fleet in 2016. R/V SALLY RIDE (AGOR-28) is a cutting-edge research vessel owned by the U.S. Navy and operated by the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in San Diego, California.*

- 18** **Fisher Houses: Healing as a Family**  
*The story of the creation of Fisher House residences adjacent to VA and military medical centers to house the families of ill or wounded service personnel is a fine example of the power of such commitment.*



### 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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## Discovering the FRA Community

### Hello!

I'm Elise Howard, the managing editor of *FRAtoday*, and this will be my fifth year of serving as a writer and editor for the magazine. Although William Stevenson remains at the helm as editor-in-chief, I will be taking on the Communications Column this year. I am honored to have the opportunity to share my thoughts with you each month, and I hope you will enjoy reading this column as much as I will enjoy writing it!

A little about myself: I am the wife of an incredible active-duty sailor who has been serving for nearly 10 years. We have been stationed in Florida, Virginia and California so far, and have loved the unique experiences of each place. Most of all, we have loved making lifelong friends from around the country and from all walks of life. Although the sacrifices of Navy service have been real, neither of us would trade it for a "normal" civilian life.

One day while we were living in Virginia, I sat in the minuscule waiting room of the drive-thru prescription pickup booth on Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story. As I waited, I noticed a stack of magazines next to me and picked up the one on top: a copy of *FRAtoday* donated by Kempsville Branch 99. That was the day I first heard about the Fleet Reserve Association, and I knew I wanted to be part of the team.

As I edit each issue of *FRAtoday*, I keep in mind that it could be someone else's very first glimpse into the FRA. I'm not perfect, but I strive to put the association's best foot forward in the hope that through the magazine, more sea service members will discover this dedicated group of Shipmates. Although some might argue that time is making fraternal organizations irrelevant, there is nothing outdated about the need for community among service members or advocacy on Capitol Hill. This year, it is my hope that *FRAtoday* continues to connect Shipmates to the sea services of the past and present, to relevant issues in Washington and at home, and to Shipmates old and new.

**FRA**

In Loyalty, Protection and Service,  
Elise M. Howard, Managing Editor

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## Shipmates, We Must “listen” to Each Other



National President  
Robbie Robbins

I am deeply humbled to have been elected by my fellow Shipmates of the FRA (Fleet Reserve Association) to the office of national president for the 2022-2023 association year at its 94th annual National Convention held in Birmingham, Alabama. I promise to do my best in representing all Shipmates.

I spent the previous year serving as the FRA vice president and through this experience, I gained insight on the many challenges our organization and other military organizations are having, particularly with membership growth and retention. It is important that those of us in the leadership positions maintain honest communication with all our members. Likewise, it just as important that our membership communicate with our leadership. In communicating with one another we must “Listen” to each other even when we do not agree. We may disagree on the path to our goal but let us work together. As the saying goes, we can “Agree to disagree.” By doing this, it is my hope that our organization will become an even better advocate for all Shipmates.

Even though the following speaks of a sailor, in the FRA we use the word Shipmate when speaking about our members who served in one of the three sea services (Navy, Marine and Coast Guard). I think this may apply to the other services as well.

It was written by Courtland R. “Corky” Johnson NCCM(SW) USN and is called “The Word Shipmate.”

I think of that Sailor who works side by side with me every day. It’s that Sailor who shares the rough times, as well as the good times. It’s that Sailor whose been to general quarters and battle stations with me when tragedy strikes and that same sailor that I have entrusted with my life. True Shipmates are those sailors with who I made lifetime friendships that can never be compared to anything. There is no other job comparable to the U.S. sailor. We have put our

lives in harm’s way for what we believe in. We have sacrificed time away from our families and loved ones when the rest of the world is working from 9 to 5 and going home to their loved ones.

That individual word “Shipmate” means so much to me. So next time you hear a sailor call someone Shipmate, know it is a compliment. He is saying, “We are friends. I take the word Shipmate very seriously. I take it with pride and honor along with all sailors before us who served their country with honor, courage, and commitment. They have passed on this tradition with meaning and sacrifice. Always be proud of who and what you are. Never dishonor yourself or your Shipmates!”

You gotta stop and think about your Shipmates. That’s what makes you a great person and a great leader — taking care of each other. You’ve got to think team. It takes a team to win any battle, not an individual.”

During the upcoming year, I wish to focus on the FRA moving forward. As we close in on 100 years, I want to see the FRA reestablished as a leader for the sea services and its families. I believe that this can be attained by building on the foundation for which our organization was started.

I wish to adopt the following: “Stronger as a TEAM; The know how to get things done!” I feel that among our FRA membership we have the know-how, and we can get things done. When we served, we were taught how to do our job and when called upon, we did our job, we got it done. I feel that we can use this same attitude to move our organization forward and I am asking every member to commit to that goal. Shipmates, we just need to work together! We are “Stronger as a team” and I know we have “The know-how to get things done.” **FRA**

I remain in Loyalty, Protection and Service,  
NP Robbie Robbins

Robbie is the national president of the Fleet Reserve Association and may be reached at: [FRANP@FRA.org](mailto:FRANP@FRA.org).

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



## **NDAAs Still Pending and Legislative Victories for 2022**

As *FRAtoday* goes to press, only the House has passed their version of the FY2023 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA H.R.7900). The Senate NDAA (S.4543) has been approved by the committee but is still awaiting Senate passage. After the Senate passes its version of the NDAA a conference committee will soon be appointed to resolve the differences between the two bills and submit a final bill to each chamber of Congress. If approved the final bill will be sent to President Biden to be signed or vetoed. Unfortunately, it does not appear that concurrent receipt will be included in the NDAA, even though the House bill has 333 co-sponsors and is on the House consent calendar. The Senate bill (S.344) has nearly two-thirds of the Senate as co-sponsors (66). FRA will continue to push for concurrent receipt expansion noting that reducing a retiree's retired pay because they are disabled is an injustice.

Congress did enact a comprehensive veterans toxic exposure law (PACT Act). As the FRA Legislative Team prepares for the First Session of the 118th Congress, we would like to display our legislative victories in the second year of the 117th Congress (2022) which include:

- No new TRICARE fee increases in House passed and Senate Committee NDAA's.
- Sens. Jon Tester (Mont.) and Michael Crapo (Idaho) have committed to file concurrent receipt floor amendment

for the Senate version of the FY 2023 NDAA (S. 4543).

- Record number of co-sponsors for concurrent receipt legislation (House 333 and Senate 66).
- Prohibiting reductions in military medical staff until there is an impact assessment provided to Congress (pending in House and Senate NDAA).
- Establishing a presumption of service connection for VA disability claims for 23 respiratory illnesses and cancers related to the smoke from burn pits, used extensively in Afghanistan and Iraq.
- Adding new VA benefits for veterans who faced radiation exposure during deployments throughout the Cold War.
- Adding hypertension and monoclonal gammopathy to the list of illnesses linked to Agent Orange exposure in the Vietnam conflict.
- Expanding the timeline for Gulf War medical claims and requiring new medical exams for all veterans with toxic exposure claims.
- Providing for veterans who served in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Guam during the Vietnam conflict would be covered for the first time under the same Agent Orange presumptive policies as those who served in Vietnam.
- Authorizing the setup of 31 VA medical clinics across America and

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the hiring of thousands more claims processors and health care staff.

- Allowing the VA to determine if a veteran participated in a toxic exposure risk even when records do not provide the data.
- The House passed the FRA-supported “Support the Resilience of Our Nation’s Great (STRONG) Veterans Act” (H.R. 6411) that is a comprehensive mental health bill to improve mental health programs at the VA. The bill will combat veteran suicide by strengthening VA’s mental health care workforce, bolstering the Veterans Crisis Line, and expanding life-saving resources to those veterans who need it. (Pending in Senate).
- The Department of Housing and Urban Development released a report on homelessness on Feb. 7, 2022. This report found a ten percent decrease in sheltered veteran homelessness since 2020 — the biggest single year decrease since 2016.
- The House passed NDAA excludes the 180-day delay for retirees joining DOD as civilian employee if they are healthcare workers.
- The House passed NDAA includes prohibition of forced arbitration clauses in financial contracts for service members.
- Blocking the Asset and Infrastructure Review (AIR) Commission that would have considered closing

or eliminating services at hundreds of VA facilities nationwide.

- Plans to end military postal system privileges for overseas retirees are postponed.
- Introducing the FRA Commemorative Coin Act (H.R. 6663).

These legislative victories would not be possible without FRA member involvement in the legislative process. FRA provides members an online Action Center located on the website ([www.fra.org](http://www.fra.org)) to offer a user-friendly opportunity to contact their elected officials on key issues impacting FRA members. Calendar year 2022 was a great year for members using the FRA Action Center (nearly 56,000). Since starting the program in 2005, usage has increased dramatically. The Action Center provides pre-written messages either supporting or opposing legislation that shipmates can edit and send to their elected officials in Washington. Grassroots advocacy has a direct influence on the Association’s ability to effectively represent your concerns before Congress and appropriate federal agencies. More than 100,000 e-mail messages were sent to Capitol Hill in the 117th Congress, (2021-2022) that ended in December. Legislation that was not passed during 117th Congress is tabled and must be re-introduced in the new 118th Congress that starts in January 2023. So, the Action Center campaigns will be deleted. New legislative campaigns will be added as legislation is introduced.

### **FRA Participates in VA Briefing on Implementation of PACT Act**

DLP John Davis attended a day-long briefing at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) on the recently signed into law “PACT Act,” a comprehensive veterans toxic exposure law (S.3373, P.L.117-168). VA Secretary Denis McDonough addressed the VSO/MSO group on implementation of this Act. In addition, the VA provided subject matter experts from Veterans Benefits Administration, Veterans Health Administration and others.

The VA reported that it has already received nearly 113,000 new disability claims linked to the comprehensive toxic exposure legislation that was signed into law Aug. 10, 2022. A signal of the potential impact on claims backlogs and the work ahead for the VA. Claims can be filed now but will not be processed until January 2023.

The bill would allow for the first time all veterans

who were at risk of toxic exposure, including 3.5 million Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, to obtain immediate and lifelong access to health care from the VA — one of the largest expansions of health care eligibility in its history. The bill would establish a presumption of service connection for 23 respiratory illnesses and cancers related to the smoke from burn pits, used extensively in Afghanistan and Iraq to dispose of various types of waste, many of them toxic. Further, the bill also provides new benefits for veterans who faced radiation exposure during deployments throughout the Cold War, adds hypertension and monoclonal gammopathy to the list of illnesses linked to Agent Orange exposure in the Vietnam War, expands the timeline for Gulf War medical claims and requires new medical exams for all veterans with toxic exposure claims.

### Veterans Toxic Exposure Screening Starts

As a result of the enactment of the comprehensive veteran's toxic exposure act, (PACT Act) all patients visiting the Department of Veterans Affairs health care facilities will undergo new toxic exposure screening. This new effort will look for signs of illness to better inform veterans that they may qualify for new benefits. The five-minute screening will involve a series of simple questions regarding veterans' time in service, possible exposure to toxic substances and current health status. Veterans will undergo the screening during their first visit after Nov. 8, (regardless of the reason for the visit) but will not repeat the questions on follow-up appointments. Officials plan to conduct the screening for every patient once every five years.

### Lifetime Pass to Federal Recreation Sites

Effective Nov. 11, 2022, veterans and Gold Star Families can obtain a free lifetime pass to more than 2,000 federal recreation sites across more than 400 million acres of public land, including national parks, wildlife refuges and forests. For more information and how to obtain pass National Parks website.

### SBP/DIC Offset Repeal Update

On Feb. 1, 2023, surviving spouses will receive their full Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) payment from DFAS and their full Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) payment from the VA. To help spouses who are entitled to both SBP and DIC in 2023 understand the effect of this change, DFAS will mail letters in December with individual estimates of 2023 SBP payments.

The FY2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) was enacted with the FRA-supported repeal of the SBP/DIC offset, often referred to as the Military Widows Tax. The repeal was phased in over three years. In 2023, the elimination of the SBP/DIC offset will be complete and surviving spouses will receive full SBP annuity and DIC. For more information about the offset repeal members can go to <https://www.dfas.mil/RetiredMilitary/survivors/SBP-DIC-News/>.

### DHA Announces TRICARE Costs for 2023

As required by law, the Defense Health Agency (DHA) recently announced TRICARE fees for 2023. Many fees are indexed to the retiree COLA increase, which will be 8.7% in 2023. Every year, TRICARE costs may change based on the law, the federal cost of living adjustment, changes in the cost of health care services and prescription drugs, and other factors. The FRA opposes any indexing of future TRICARE fee increases beyond CPI indexed to COLA increases. The FY2017 National Defense Authorization Act mandates pharmacy and therapy increases every year until 2027. The FRA is working to repeal these arbitrary increases.

Members can find their 2023 rates on the TRICARE website at: <https://newsroom.tricare.mil/Articles/Article/3211342/preview-2023-tricare-health-plan-costs>.

### Election Results

As *FRAtoday* goes to press election results indicate that House Republicans will gain control of the

House of Representatives despite performing under expectations of a "Red (Republican) Wave" predicted by many election pundits. The Senate will remain in control by the Democrats. The Georgia Senate race will require a run-off election in December since neither candidate received 50% plus one vote. According to Military Times, there were 196 military veterans who were candidates for Congress that included 130 non-incumbent candidates.





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### **PDBR Review of Disability Claims Continues**

The Physical Disability Board of Review (PDBR) was created by an FRA-supported provision in the FY2008 Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that reassess the accuracy and fairness of combined disability ratings of 20% or less for service members who were separated from service, rather than medically retired because of medical conditions.

To be eligible for a PDBR review, service members must have been medically separated between Sept. 11, 2001, and Dec. 31, 2009, with a combined disability rating of 20% or less and found ineligible for retirement. According to Military.com only 19,000 of the more than 71,000 eligible have requested a review of their claim. The PDBR claims that more than half of the reviewed claims have been upgraded to a disability rating of 30% or more.

The review panel is authorized to recommend an increase in a disability rating, uphold the previous finding or issue a disability rating when the previous board did not assign one. The board, however, is NOT able to recommend a lower rating. Eligible veterans can request a board review by submitting a Department of Defense Form 294, Application for Review of Physical Disability Separation from the Armed Forces of the United States, which is at: [militarydisabilitymadeeasy.com/pdbr.html](http://militarydisabilitymadeeasy.com/pdbr.html).

### **Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry**

The FRA wants to encourage all veterans who served in eligible areas to complete the Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pits Registry on the VA website, <https://veteran.mobilehealth.va.gov/AHBurnPitRegistry>, or they can call the help desk at: 1-877-470-5947. Participation in the registry is very important as it will allow the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to track burn pit exposure and provide data regarding associated adverse health effects. Exposure to burn pits may be linked to respiratory conditions such as asthma, emphysema, chronic bronchitis, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder. The VA recently added asthma, rhinitis, and sinusitis as presumptive conditions related to particulate matter exposure.

### **Marine Corps' Birthday Celebration**

NED Chris Slawinski and ADLP Theo Lawson attended Mack's Marines "Glory to the Corps" Birthday Celebration on Friday, Nov. 4, 2022. The group celebrated the 247th Birthday of the Marine Corps (November 10) and the 47th gathering of Mack's Marines. The keynote speaker at the event was the 38th Marine Corps Commandant David H. Berger.

### **Veterans' Day/FRA 98th Birthday**

Last November 11 marked the 104th anniversary of the armistice ending the First World War on Nov. 11, 1918. Today, November 11th, is recognized as Veterans Day. It is a long-standing tradition for many FRA Shipmates to participate in Veterans' Day ceremonies across the country. November 11th also marks the FRA's 98th anniversary.

FRA National President James E. Robbins, Jr. attended a White House breakfast. Later, Robbins and FRA Ladies Auxiliary National President Nadine Fulton participated in the ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery where there was a special wreath-laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknowns. NED Chris Slawinski also participated in a ceremony at the Navy Memorial in Washington, DC. The FRA thanks Shipmates for their service in defending our Nation, and for their continued membership.

### **FRA National Committee on Legislative Service**

Past National Chaplin William H. Hall (Branch 382) and Shipmate Richard Hankerson (Branch 94) have recently been appointed to the National Committee on Legislative Service. They will be joined by PRPSE Frederick Bolz (Branch 269), PRPNE/NEng James Brown (Branch 226), and PRPNC Barry White (Branch 161). NED Chris Slawinski serves as Chairman and DLP John Davis is an advisor. The NCLS is authorized by Section 812 of the Constitution and Bylaws to advise the FRA Legislative Team on legislative advocacy.

**FRA**



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A robotic arm aboard the Auxiliary General Oceanographic Research (AGOR) vessel *R/V SALLY RIDE* is used to retrieve a scientific instrument that measures underwater conditions in the La Jolla canyon during science verification cruise designed to test installed systems and ensure readiness for conducting future research missions. The ship has multi-beam bottom-mapping and ocean current profiling sonars, advanced meteorological sensors and satellite data transmission systems, the latest navigation and ship-positioning systems and a specially designed hull that improves sonar acoustic performance. U.S. Navy photo by John F. Williams.



# Scientific Discovery Aboard *R/V SALLY RIDE*

## *Navy-commissioned Vessel Supports General-purpose Scientific Research*

*By Bethanie Hestermann*

**N**amed after the first American woman to travel into space, *R/V SALLY RIDE* (AGOR-28) is a cutting-edge research vessel owned by the U.S. Navy and operated by the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in San Diego, California. After four years of collaboration between the Navy and Scripps to design and build this remarkable ship, it entered the U.S. academic fleet in 2016. But decades before scientists began gathering leading-edge scientific data throughout the world's oceans aboard *SALLY RIDE*, the vessel was a twinkle in the eyes of many who understood the deep intrinsic value of continuously investing in the nation's academic fleet — something the Navy itself has understood for decades.

Purpose-built to be efficient and broadly capable for a range of scientific endeavors, *R/V SALLY RIDE* has a reputation as a desirable vessel with a particularly engaged and competent crew. The late Dr. Sally K. Ride dedicated her life to furthering the scientific community's knowledge of the planet and the universe, and her namesake vessel honors this legacy by serving American scientists who are making new discoveries about the planet via its oceans.

### **Envisioning a New Class of Vessels**

Bruce Appelgate, associate director of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, says the planning for *R/V SALLY RIDE* began decades before any steel was cut on the ship — as far back as the 1990s. The paper trail starts in 2001, when federal agencies with input from the academic community published a long-range renewal plan for the national academic research fleet, including a discussion about a future “ocean class” of vessels. In 2003 and again in 2007, the University-National Oceanographic Laboratory System, or UNOLS, developed science mission requirements that would guide the funding and construction of these Ocean-class vessels.

Based on UNOLS' recommendations, the U.S. Navy came up with a conceptual design for Ocean-class vessels that they would fund through the Office of Naval Research. In 2009, Appelgate says the Navy put out a solicitation for oceanographic institutions to compete to be the operators for the new ships, and Scripps was selected to operate *SALLY RIDE*. The institution then acted in an advisory role to Naval Sea Systems Command, the construction manager, until it took



Dr. Tam O'Shaughnessy, ship's sponsor for the auxiliary general oceanographic research (AGOR) vessel *R/V Sally Ride* (AGOR-28), breaks a bottle across the bow during a christening ceremony at the Dakota Creek Industries, Inc., shipyard in Anacortes, Wash. Joining O'Shaughnessy on the platform are Mr. Dick Nelson, president, Dakota Creek Industries, Inc., Matron of Honor, the reverend Dr. Bear Ride, Matron of Honor, Kathleen Ritzman, assistant director, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California San Diego, Kathryn Sullivan, undersecretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and Rear Adm. Matthew Klunder, chief of naval research. U.S. Navy photo by John F. Williams.

possession of the vessel in July 2016. Scripps has been operating *SALLY RIDE* under a charter agreement with the Office of Naval Research ever since.

*SALLY RIDE* is one of two Ocean-class vessels born from this decades-long process. The other ship, the *R/V NEIL ARMSTRONG* (AGOR-27), is operated by the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in Woods Hole, Massachusetts. Both vessels are 238 feet long, displace 3,043 long tons with a full load, and can reach a maximum speed of 12.8 knots. The vessels each berth 20 crew members and 24 scientists, and offer 2,035 square feet of laboratory space that encompasses a main lab, a wet lab, a computer lab and a staging bay.

### A Purpose-Built Ship

Scripps' Appelgate says oceanographic research vessels have such unique requirements that almost all of them are purpose built for science.

"An oceanographic research vessel in today's fleet needs to be 'broadly capable,' and by that, I mean vessels like *SALLY RIDE* need to support every discipline of science that you can think of, not just traditionally what's thought of as oceanography," he says. "The work that we do on our ships involves looking across these scientific processes and biological systems that extend from the very center — the core of the earth — all the way up through the crust, through the oceans and up through the top of the atmosphere."

From seafloor mapping and seismic profiling to studying how seawater transfers heat around the globe (and how this process impacts Earth's climate and weather) — it's all fair game for the scientists fortunate enough to do their work aboard *SALLY RIDE*.

"Any given week, we can expect to walk aboard our ship and what we're doing this week is completely different than what we did last week," Appelgate explains.



A graduate student at Scripps Institution of Oceanography, downloads data from sensors retrieved the previous day during a science verification cruise aboard the Auxiliary General Oceanographic Research (AGOR) vessel *R/V SALLY RIDE*. The Navy, through ONR, has been a leader in building and providing large ships for the nation's academic research fleet since World War II. U.S. Navy photo by John F. Williams.

“Our ships have to be designed to support all of that, and also do it super economically and efficiently.”

When designing a research vessel, priority goals include capability and efficiency, and it can take a long time to get it right.

“You need to plan for the biologists, the physicists, the atmospheric chemists, the water chemists,” Appelgate says. “That’s why so much planning goes into these things. It takes a decade basically to design a vessel and bring it to life because we try to talk to everybody.”

### Facilitating Science at Sea

Purpose-built research vessels like *SALLY RIDE* make science at sea more possible than ever before. Tom Desjardins, long-time captain of *SALLY RIDE* who recently switched over to *R/V ROGER REVELLE*, says dynamic positioning is key to a research vessel’s success.

“Dynamic positioning makes it a lot easier to do

science, because the ship will stay where you want it in most conditions,” he explains. “There are limits, but generally speaking, it gives you a lot of flexibility and you can spend time doing stuff other than maneuvering the ship to hold it on station while you’re on watch.”

*SALLY RIDE* is equipped with cutting-edge scientific instruments that, in some cases, are unique within the U.S. academic research fleet. For instance, the vessel’s multibeam sub-bottom profiler, or SBP 29, uses sound to help scientists map the layers of sediment far below the surface of the ocean. Appelgate says the new, high-resolution instrument replaces older generations of echosounders. Better imaging of Earth’s crust will lead to improved understanding of the seafloor, including faulting.

Another notable instrument aboard *SALLY RIDE* is a radar that constantly monitors and collects data about the swell the ship is operating in. This data can be



A graduate student at Scripps Institution of Oceanography monitors computer screens displaying detailed sonar imaging of the ocean floor aboard the Auxiliary General Oceanographic Research (AGOR) vessel *R/V SALLY RIDE*. U.S. Navy photo by John F. Williams.

archived and reviewed later for a variety of purposes. *SALLY RIDE* also houses a special sensor that measures CO<sub>2</sub> in seawater. By measuring CO<sub>2</sub> levels over time, scientists can get a better handle on levels of ocean acidification, which affects the health of marine ecosystems like coral reefs.

“As CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations in the atmosphere go up, they also go up in the oceans. They increase the acidity of the ocean,” Appelgate explains. “So we’re trying to understand how those properties work.”

Scientists and their funding agencies request time on vessels within the academic research fleet through UNOLS. If they’re lucky, scientists get awarded time aboard *SALLY RIDE*. Of course, luck really has nothing to do with it. Appelgate says UNOLS offers a fair and transparent mechanism for getting scientists on the most effective and efficient ship for their projects. Ship operators like Scripps annually review funded projects and create a schedule of nearly back-to-back scientific research trips for vessels based largely

on what makes the most sense logistically. Recent science projects facilitated by *SALLY RIDE* include assessing anthropogenic noise in shipping channels and conducting ecosystem studies off the west coast of the U.S. mainland.

The Navy’s investment in facilitating general-purpose scientific research is an investment in the future. Important discoveries can happen serendipitously, and if no one goes out, that information won’t be discovered.

“Basic research is super important for the Navy, and it’s important for folks to know that science isn’t a transactional deal,” Appelgate explains. “You don’t say, gosh, I’d like to invent the internet, and then you go out and invent the internet. The things that we discover, we usually do so because when you go out, a lot of times you just don’t know what you’re going to find.”

Every discovery, every bit of scientific knowledge has ripple effects. “The value [of Sally Ride] to the Navy is manifest in that, and if you look at our capabilities in areas that the DOD is very interested in for DOD



A graduate student at Scripps Institution of Oceanography, downloads data from the lowered Acoustic Doppler Current Profiler aboard the vessel *R/V SALLY RIDE* which is currently conducting a science verification cruise to test its installed systems and ensure readiness for conducting future research missions. U.S. Navy photo by John F. Williams

types of reasons, the focused research that they're able to do in certain areas builds on general-purpose scientific research that's publicly available," Appelgate concludes. "So, the kinds of stuff that we do in academic institutions where we go out and we study an issue and report broadly and openly and transparently what our results are — whether it's physics or biology or geology or whatever — that builds a broad framework and base of scientific understanding that then you can leverage for other applications."

### The Sally Ride Legacy

*R/V SALLY RIDE* is part of the legacy of Dr. Sally K. Ride, the first American woman to fly into space. Ride was part of the Challenger's STS-7 mission in June 1983 and the Challenger's STS-41G mission in October 1984. Aside from her work as an astronaut, Ride played a critical role in NASA's investigations into the 1986 Challenger and 2003 Columbia explosions. After retiring from NASA, Ride had a successful career in academia.

She taught physics at the University of California San Diego and served as director of the University of California's California Space Institute, also known as CalSpace.

Ride founded Sally Ride Science alongside her life partner, Tam O'Shaughnessy, and three colleagues in 2001. Today, Sally Ride Science continues to operate as a nonprofit organization based out of UC San Diego. The organization offers STEM programs and seeks to promote scientific literacy among young people, particularly girls.

It was in 2013, the year after Ride's death from pancreatic cancer, that U.S. Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus announced that one of the new, state-of-the-art Ocean-class research vessels would be named *R/V SALLY RIDE* in remembrance of the late pioneering astronaut. Through her nonprofit and the Navy-commissioned research vessel named in her honor, Ride's legacy of scientific discovery on Earth and beyond will endure for generations to come. **FRA**



The Fisher House of Alaska post thank you cards and personal letters from military and veteran families who stayed in the Fisher House at no cost while a family member is receiving medical care. In 2016, the Fisher House accommodated 1,636 families. U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Sheila deVere.

# Fisher Houses

## *Healing as a Family*

*By Ann Norvell Gray*

The American cultural anthropologist and social work pioneer Margaret Mead is widely credited with having said, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed individuals can change the world.” The story of the creation of Fisher House residences adjacent to VA and military medical centers to house the families of ill or wounded service personnel is a fine example of the power of such commitment.

It all started in the 1970s, when Pauline Trost, wife of Adm. Carlisle Trost, saw a young family being deposited with their luggage at the Bethesda National Naval Medical Center, realized that the young woman had followed a wounded husband to the hospital, and thought, “Where on earth can they afford to stay?” When her husband became Chief of Naval Operations in 1986, the time was right for her to pursue an idea that had dogged her since that day. She talked it up with some other Navy wives, and then the catalyst appeared in the person of Zachary Fisher.

Fisher had begun as the bricklaying son of a Russian immigrant mason in Brooklyn. He and his two brothers turned their construction experience into a going concern as builders and developers in New York. They used the considerable success of Fisher Brothers to

support their philanthropic impulses, much of it in support of the U.S. Armed Forces. Then in 1990, he heard from his friend Admiral Trost about Pauline’s determination to support the right kind of housing for families faced with this burden, and said, with characteristic simplicity, “I’m a builder. I can get an architect. I know how to do that.” With a \$20 million dollar gift from Zach and Elizabeth Fisher, the project that would become the network of Fisher Houses was up and running.

Thirty-two years later, as of September of 2022, there are 92 houses in the U.S. and abroad, all within walking distance of VA and armed services’ hospitals, with more on the way. Every Fisher House provides free lodging and immeasurable support to the families of service members being cared for in those facilities. The houses are designed, financed, built from the ground up, and fully furnished by the Fisher House Foundation, and then given outright to the Department of Defense and the Veterans’ Administration.

These houses are the core of the Foundation’s responsibility, but there are also a number of programs that have grown up in support of their mission. Notable among them are Hero Miles and Hotels for Heroes.



Chief petty officers from Naval Medical Center Portsmouth pose in front of the Fisher House on base after completing taking part in beautification efforts around the building as part of a community relations project hosted by the NMCP Chief Petty Officer Association. Fisher House Foundation, Inc. is an international, not-for-profit organization established to improve the quality of life for members of the military, veterans, and their families. The foundation builds comfort homes at military and VA medical centers and gifts them to the government. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Donald R. White, Jr.

Both of these programs take donations of airline miles and hotel points, and work with participating airlines and hotels. Hero Miles arranges free air transportation for qualifying veterans and their families. Hotels for Heroes puts them up in nearby hotels when the Fisher Houses they are headed for are already full.

Fisher Houses are not just rooming houses or hostels. Even the largest ones have kept a home-like environment. Every aspect of their designs reflects the commitment to a welcoming, attractive environment where tired, anxious family members can gather in comfort, and be part of a community of people who understand completely what this difficult time feels like. Each bedroom is furnished like a good hotel with a roomy private bathroom. There are well-designed kitchens in every house where three or four families can fix meals at the same time, or community volunteers can cook for

residents, with refrigerators and pantry space for each group. Some houses have outdoor kitchens with grills. The public spaces, both indoors and out, are put together to encourage social interactions, and are furnished with some corners that respect privacy for those moments of overwhelming emotion.

Jessica Allen's husband Chaz was on a dismounted patrol in Afghanistan, and stepped on an IED, which took both of his legs. She met him at Walter Reed Military Medical Center in Bethesda, which was nowhere near their home in Clarksville, Tennessee. "Without Fisher House," she says, "we would have run through our emergency funds, we wouldn't have been able to be together as quickly as we were, and we wouldn't have been able to heal as a family." Hero Miles made it possible for her to look after their two little girls at home, and to fly back and forth to Bethesda, for almost



Master Sgt. Pedro Foster (L) and Mr. Charles Crumpton from the 7th Mission Support Command put away pressure washing equipment following a unit sponsored community service project on June 7, 2022, at the Landstuhl Army Fisher House. Photo by Staff Sgt. Jessica Forester 7th Mission Support Command.

three months. When the time in Chaz's healing was right for the children to see their father, the Allens realized that reintroducing them in the home-like atmosphere of the Fisher House living room was most likely to minimize the trauma. They were right. "It went so well," she says, "that the girls came in, gave their dad a hug, and said, 'Good to see you, Dad. There's a playground outside!' ... We all know that family is the best medicine," says Jessica, "and that having family there helps you heal." It eased their first steps toward what would be their new normal, which is exactly what the Fisher Houses are intended to do.

For those among us who have never had the

experience of a sudden, catastrophic injury to one of the people we love most in the world, the level of stress is difficult to imagine. When it happens halfway around the world, and our husband or brother or daughter is delivered to a hospital nowhere near where we live, our lives are entirely upended, and will probably be changed forever in ways we can't predict. But what we are in at that moment is an emergency that wipes everything else from the slate, and we are urgently needed somewhere else. This is what a Fisher House is for, for however long it takes, alleviating the need to figure out what to do when we get there, situated within walking distance of the hospital,



Seventh Mission Support Command's Command Sgt. Maj. Craig Hyson pulls weeds and clears debris from the grounds of the Landstuhl Army Fisher House during a unit-sponsored community-service project at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center. Photo by Staff Sgt. Jessica Forester 7th Mission Support Command.

adding nothing at all to our financial obligations, and depositing us in the heart of a community that completely gets it.

Ken Fisher (not to be confused with the Fisher Investments founder of the same name) is a great-nephew of Zachary Fisher and one of four third- and fourth-generation Fishers who serve as the managing partners of Fisher Brothers. He has inherited the family dedication to improving the lives of the nation's armed forces and their families, and also serves as Chairman of the Fisher House Foundation. His determination arises from his realization years ago that we as a nation do not fully comprehend the level of

commitment made, not just by the officers and enlisted personnel of our armed services, but by their families as well. Making a difference in the way the nation's civilian population supports those family members drives his support for the Fisher House enterprise. Ken describes the philosophy that guides the design of every Fisher House in a short video on their website. As he talks about how the houses are laid out and furnished to support their purpose, the value of the company's experience becomes apparent. Fisher Brothers' sophisticated understanding of carefully planned real estate development, their resources in the architectural and construction industries, and the financial strength



(L to R) Colleen Vonderharr, Fisher House acting manager, Tom Brewerm State Senator, Don Bacon, United States Congressman, Don Burman, Veteran Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System director, Barb Yllescas Vorthmann, Nebraska Gold Star Mothers vice president, David Coker, Fisher House Foundation president, Deb Fischer, United States Senator, Jennifer Kogert, VA Fisher House & Family, Patrick Dawson, VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System assistant director, Rob Norrie, Lead Engineer, poses for photos during the groundbreaking ceremony Aug. 07, 2019, for the Fisher House project at the Veteran Affairs Medical Center in Omaha, Nebraska. U.S. Air Force photo by Charles Haymond.

and commitment to support the quality creation of each house guarantees that every Fisher House is of the same quality and succeeds equally in its mission. “The one thing that we just did not want to have happen,” he says, “and ... really fought [for] is to keep the feel of the Fisher House small, even though the house had grown. It never, ever, gravitated into a hotel environment ... the house is like its own community. It’s absolutely incredible to watch.”

Beyond the physical comfort of the houses themselves and the freedom from the crushing stress of impending financial catastrophe, there are more subtle benefits that can arise more slowly from the companionship of other families who share the experiences that got them there. Being able to be part of the support system for other people whose trauma is like your own may restore a sense of your own value beyond the hospital room, and give you strength for what lies ahead. When plans will need to be made for what is likely to be a future that is very different from the life before, being with more people who face the same difficulties can mean more ideas and more solutions than working things out by yourself. And as the mother of

one wounded sailor discovered, the one thing she dreaded most, which was being an object of pity in the midst of crisis, evaporated when she stepped through the front door of Fisher House and was welcomed, not with pity, but with understanding.

It is difficult to talk about the role of Fisher Houses in the lives of veterans and active duty service personnel without sounding like a salesman. But the evidence is everywhere that this really is a remarkably worthy enterprise. The more you learn, the more entitled you feel to those positive impressions. One particularly strong bit of evidence is that the 2022 recipient of the Sylvanus Thayer Award was Ken Fisher. Thanks to the dedication of everyone connected to the Fisher House Foundation, Zachary Fisher’s commitment to the Fisher House idea is very much alive. The founding family, the international network of donors at every level, the families whose lives have been changed, and the local chapters and volunteers are determined to keep its founder’s dream firmly in sight, until they have raised a Fisher House at every major Veterans hospital in the country. **FRA**

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## Groundbreaking Study on Trauma-related Sleep Disorder

A team of military and civilian researchers has identified a new sleep disorder that's been disrupting the lives of trauma survivors for decades, if not centuries.

The Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine published the groundbreaking study, titled "Clinical and polysomnographic features of trauma-associated sleep disorder," on its site in August.

While there have been related studies, this was the largest to date and identified trauma-associated sleep disorder, or TSD, as a distinct sleep-related disorder, or parasomnia, explained U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Matthew Brock, M.D., the study's lead author and chief of the San Antonio Market Sleep Disorders Center at Wilford Hall (<https://wilfordhall.tricare.mil/>) Ambulatory Surgical Center at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas.

"We believe trauma-associated sleep disorder is the first adult sleep disorder and rapid eye movement (REM) parasomnia identified since Rapid Eye Movement Sleep Behavior Disorder (RBD) was identified more than 35 years ago," he said.

### Dream Enactment

The study, which spanned five years, included 40 service members who had experienced trauma, mainly from combat, and were experiencing dream enactment. That is when someone acts out dreams physically or verbally. The study comprised a clinical interview and video-recorded sleep study.

"We watched all eight hours of video on each sleep study, which is not typical," Brock said, noting that many sleep centers record eight hours but rarely watch the video recording in its entirety. "Our key finding was that most of these patients had parasomnia behavior, or movements and vocalizations in REM sleep. This is groundbreaking because traditional wisdom is that parasomnia behavior is almost never captured in the sleep lab but is frequently cited by patients as a symptom they're experiencing at home."

"Dream enactment behavior can include punching, kicking, defensive posturing, yelling, and movements," Brock said. "This is disruptive, and often scary, not only for the patient, but for his or her bed partner as

well."

### Distinguishing TSD from Other Sleep Disorders

A key focus of the study is to distinguish TSD from other diagnoses, such as RBD, post-traumatic stress disorder and nightmare disorder, Brock said.

For example, TSD symptoms are often associated with PTSD. However, PTSD includes daytime and nocturnal symptoms, while many TSD patients only experience nocturnal symptoms.

Additionally, nightmare disorders typically don't include dream enactment or repeating nightmares about a trauma experience, Brock explained.

### TSD Symptoms and History

Although they had not been given a name, TSD symptoms have been studied for many years.

By having TSD officially recognized as a distinct, novel parasomnia, "We are hoping to encourage future research into the disorder as well as treatment-related studies," said Dr. Vincent Mysliwiec, a retired Army colonel and co-author of the study. He noted that goal would best be accomplished by larger studies at both military and veteran health care facilities. Additional research also would be beneficial for people with non-combat-related trauma.

"Evaluating and studying TSD in the civilian population would help provide an enhanced understanding of this disorder," Mysliwiec said.

The goal is to have better awareness and treatment to help improve trauma survivors' quality of life, Brock said.

"People who suffer from TSD are not getting quality sleep and their bed partner is not getting quality sleep," he said. "Many are afraid to go to sleep. They're having to go back to battle or trauma at night in their sleep, then, during the day, dealing with a lack of quality sleep. Each morning is like the morning after they experienced the trauma, but for them, it's every day. My greatest hope is that we can help make a positive impact for anyone suffering from TSD."

### FRA

This article was provided by the Military Health System & Defense Health Agency Communications Division

**1. BRANCH 89, ATLANTA, GA.**

Branch President Ernie Rose introduced guest speaker Commissioner of the Georgia Dept. of Veterans Service Patricia Ross. She spoke about some issues and problems with navigating the VA system. She also explained how the Georgia VSOs will assist all veterans with filling and fixing VA claims.

**2. BRANCH 15, WALHALLA, S.C.**

The Oconee Veterans Appreciation Fest was held on October 8, at South Cove Park in Seneca, SC. Jim Jones (L) and retired USN Captain, NC, Lena Jones (R) staff a tent during the event that drew 300 people. The Veterans Last Patrol provides Honor Ceremonies for veterans in hospice care.

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

Camp Lejeune Branch celebrated the 247th Birthday of the United States Navy. The Continental Congress established the Continental Navy, which later, on October 13, 1775, became the United States Navy.

**4. BRANCH 263, COCOA, FLA.**

Shipmate Richard Allfrey (center) receives his 40-Years Continuous Membership Certificate from Branch President William Pollock (L) and Branch Secretary/Treasurer David Clayton (R).

**5. BRANCH 104, PUYALLUP, WASH.**

Shipmate Ernie LaChapelle (R), received his 50-Year Continuous Membership Pin and Certificate from Northwest Regional President Rex Faubion (L).

**6. BRANCH 192, FALLON, NEV.**

Silver Dollar Branch President Larry Briggs (L) presented Jerry Beicher (R) with his 55-Years Continuous Membership Certificate.

**7. BRANCH 162, NEW ORLEANS, LA.**

(L to R) Back row: Jarrae Holland (15 years), Teresa Conley (10 years), John Neal PRPSC/PNC (15 years) Dolores Caso PRPSC (50 years), Carolyn Montreuil (5 years), Joe Neal (15 years), Vickie Martello (35 years) and Alana Riley (5 years), Front row: Libby DeLeo (45 years), Barbara Durkovich (40 years), Marlene Kinghorn (44 years) and Thanh Mead (35 years). The picture was taken during the 50th Anniversary of the Unit.





### 8. BRANCH 13, ATLANTIC CITY, N.J.

(L to R) CEO of Homecoming 250 Navy Marine Corps Joseph M. McColgan, PNP Donna Jansky, Bob Campbell and Frank Dillon attended a reception for the committee organizing the celebration of the 250th Anniversary of the birth of the Navy and Marine Corp at the Union League in Philadelphia on October 3rd. The FRA presented a check for \$1,000 toward the celebration.



### 9. BRANCH 298, GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.

Wolverine Branch President Gene Reed (L) presented Shipmate Richard Kosters with his 5-Years Continuous Membership Pin.

### 10. BRANCH 185, OGDEN, UTAH

Golden Spike Branch and Unit 185 donated 100 pairs of socks to the Ogden Rescue Mission. (L to R) Howard Schlutter, Judy Wilson, Don McCoach, Vyron and Diane Dowdle, Ann Schlutter and Rescue Mission Volunteers. Photo by Jim Towery.



### 11. BRANCH 316, SPRINGFIELD, MO.

Ozark Empire Branch Shipmate Bobbie Combs was presented with his 50-Years Continuous Membership Pin and Certificate by Branch Secretary Chuck Ewy.



### 12. BRANCH 146, JOHNSVILLE, PA.

Three Continuous Membership Awards and Pins were presented to Shipmates during the branch's annual awards dinner on October 15. (L to R) Branch President Carroll Hamilton, Branch VP Bob Opett (35 years), Tony Giovannangelo (5 years) and Bill Severns (30 years).

Submit a photo for Shipmate News by email as a high-quality attachment in jpeg format to [FRAtoday@fra.org](mailto:FRAtoday@fra.org). Please include a brief description and include the names of those pictured.



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# In Memoriam

Name	Rating	Branch	Name	Rating	Branch	Name	Rating	Branch
Ahrens, Dennis E.	CTOC, USN	188	Head, Charles M.	AFCM, USN	MAL	Reed, Thomas	STSCS(SS), USN	MAL
Anderson, James H.	ADJ1, USN	MAL	Herzog, Godfrey O.	NCC, USN	MAL	Rickman, Jewel F.	CPO, USN	MAL
Ashley, William	USN	290	Hodge, Kenneth D.	CTMC, USN	22	Rives, Joseph M.	OS1, USN	MAL
			<b>Hoffine, Paul E.</b>	<b>TMC, USN</b>	<b>MAL</b>	Rogers, Virgil	HMC, USN	MAL
			Hoffman, John	USN	MAL	Roozen, Joseph N.	MM2, USN	29
Ball, Charles L.	EMC, USN	MAL	Hudson, Thomas	USN	24	Rose, Gerald M.	STCM, USN	244
<b>Boggs, Lawrence L.</b>	<b>ABC, USN</b>	<b>MAL</b>	<b>Hunter, William C.</b>	<b>YNCS, USN</b>	<b>126</b>	Rose, Vernon R.	Hon. Member	105
Bongiovi, James V.	USN	60				Roth, Robert G.	EMCM, USN	MAL
Brabham, Roy	E-8, USN	MAL	Jacob, Frank E.	LCDR, USN	182			
Brozovich, Joseph M.	IMCS, USN	290	Johnson, Ronald A.	TMC, USN	170	Sassman, Edward H.	ET1(SS), USN	MAL
Bryant, Douglas A.	ENCS(SS), USN	MAL				Shamus, Michael J.	YNCS, USN	181
Byrd, Henderson H.	BT1, USN	194	<b>Kessler, Joseph W.</b>	<b>ABEC, USN</b>	<b>MAL</b>	Shearl, James C.	RMCS, USN	60
			King, Robert J.	YNCS, USN	MAL	Shores, John E.	POC, USN	72
Campbell, Irvin H.	AXC, USN	91	Kirsten, Gordon E.	RMC, USN	MAL	Silva, Manuel P.	AVCM, USN	261
Carlson, Meg	USCG	251	Kitchens, Billy J.	HTCM, USN	20	Smith, James C.	POC, USN	MAL
Carter, Kenneth M.	BM1, USN	161	Kravitz, George A.	SGT, USMC	290	Starkey, Marvin L.	EMC, USN	MAL
Clark, Mackey L.	QMC, USNR	MAL	Krumlauf, David	CWO4, USN	MAL	Stover, David E.	HT1, USN	MAL
Collier, Everett	BMCM, USN	57				Swentek, Raymond H.	USN	MAL
Conti, Charles W.	CWO3, USN	MAL	Langmuir, James S.	AD1, USN	91	Szemeczko, Richard M.	BMC, USNR	MAL
Craigie, John B.	AFCM, USN	22	Lewis, James O.	ICC, USN	MAL			
Cross, Donald F.	OSCM(SW), USN	MAL				Temples, Marshall W.	CTTCM, USN	24
			<b>MacKenzie, Duncan A.</b>	<b>AMCS, USN</b>	<b>MAL</b>	Thomasson, James C.	YNC, USNR	32
D'Agostino, Richard R.	IVC, USCGR	MAL	Marciano, Arthur R.	ADC, USN	70	Thurman, Robert D.	SK1, USN	11
<b>Dermont, Francis</b>	<b>HMC, USN</b>	<b>49</b>	McCaghy, Vincent A.	SK1, USCG	276	<b>Toler, Raymond L.</b>	<b>EMCS(SS), USN</b>	<b>MAL</b>
			McCormick, William D.	AN3, USN	101	Tomlin, Robert L.	AGC, USN	MAL
<b>Elefante, Gregorio M.</b>	<b>MS1, USN</b>	<b>01</b>	McGee, William D.	PNC, USN	18	Toth, Joseph	MMCM, USN	115
Feiler, Edward	FTMC, USN	MAL	McKenna, Alfred C.	AEC, USN	72			
Ferrington, David D.	CS1, USN	161	McLeod, Billy L.	LCDR, USN	MAL	<b>Via, Jerry L.</b>	<b>AMSC, USN</b>	<b>MAL</b>
Fezer, Bernard W.	PO1, USN	61	Meier, Ronald P.	ETCS(SS), USN	55			
Furrow, Robert D.	PHCM, USN	MAL	Mellendorf, Wayne H.	LTJG, USN	MAL	Welsh, Terrance E.	EMCS(SS), USN	276
			Montgomery, Edwin E.	PNC, USN	60	Wickham, Perry E.	EN3, USN	41
Gatlin, Irvin H.	YNC, USN	311	Muir, Terence	ITC, USN	290	Wong, Jimmy M.	YNC, USN	163
<b>Gese, Theodore F.</b>	<b>DKCS, USN</b>	<b>MAL</b>				Wood, Donna K.	FC1, USNR	89
Giefer, Charles	CPL, USMC	382	Painter, William F.	POC, USN	MAL	Wright, Daniel G.	POC, USN	MAL
Gilmer, Jerry F.	AEC, USN	MAL	Paul, Lindberg W.	OSC, USN	MAL			
<b>Grappone, Alfonso M.</b>	<b>AMSC, USN</b>	<b>MAL</b>	<b>Peckham, Frederick S.</b>	<b>BTCS, USN</b>	<b>MAL</b>	Zane, Lynne E.	BM2, USCG	162
			<b>Powell, Walter W.</b>	<b>NCC, USN</b>	<b>MAL</b>	Zboch, Robert A.	BT2, USN	94
Hall, Thomas E.	ATCS, USN	91						
<b>Hartop, Donald F.</b>	<b>ADCS, USN</b>	<b>MAL</b>	Rainville, Frederick L.	RMCS(SS), USN	137			

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.

# Something worth protecting



## MilicarePlus® TRICARE Supplement Insurance Plans

FRA provides valuable coverages at economic rates with the MilicarePlus TRICARE Supplement Insurance Plans. These supplemental insurance plans, available to both active and retired members, can help to reduce unexpected medical costs by covering the cost-shares for doctor visits, hospital stays and prescription drugs. Excess charges up to 15% above the TRICARE-allowed amount may also be covered, once any applicable TRICARE or MilicarePlus deductibles have been met.



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## REUNIONS

### USS BLUEFISH (SSN-675)

4/20/2023 – 4/23/2023  
Myrtle Beach, S.C.  
Contact: John Wittenstrom  
Telephone: 910-638-1716  
Email: jwittenstrom@nc.rr.com

### MCB-11 & MCB-8 Association

4/24/2023 – 4/27/2023  
Charleston, S.C.  
Contact: Larry Hagler  
Telephone: 512-796-2834  
Email: mcb11.2023@earthlink.net

### USS CONSERVER (ARS-39)

4/26/2023 – 4/30/2023  
Mesa, AZ.  
Contact: ETCS Dale E. Hower, USN (Ret.)  
Telephone: 619-449-4499  
Email: dcwoodworking1@yahoo.com

### Camp Lejeune Retired Navy Downeast'r

4/28/2023 – 4/29/2023  
Jacksonville, N.C.  
Contact: Ron Cozzolino  
Telephone: 910-330-7713  
Email: Cozz20@aol.com

### USS SAM RAYBURN (SSBN-635)

5/22/2023 – 5/27/2023  
Mobile, Ala.  
Contact: Winston Dunn  
Telephone: 228-623-0451  
Email: n5phms@gmail.com

### USS AJAX (AR-6)

6/4/2023 – 6/8/2023  
Sioux City, S.D.  
Contact: Dick Kujawa  
Telephone: 763-757-9201  
Email: rkujuawa@comcast.net  
www.USSAjaxreunionassociation.org

## LOOKING FOR

Looking for DM2 Glenn Tatom. We served together at Enlisted Personnel Management Center (EPMAC), New Orleans, Louisiana, during the period from 1980 to 1982. Please contact YNCS D.R. Schreiber, USN (Ret.) at 504-931-7212.

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



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There are 2 versions,  
the Fleet Reserve  
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of the FRA version

### FRA Branch 192

#### Silver Dollar Branch

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[frabranch192@yahoo.com](mailto:frabranch192@yahoo.com)



# LA FRA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



**ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION:** Founded in 1930, the LA FRA is a federally chartered organization. LA FRA Units are located throughout the United States and the Philippines. Eligible persons may also become Members-at-Large (MAL) who do not have access to, nor desire to join a Unit. The LA FRA has a proud standing tradition and heritage that supports this great nation and recognizes the sacrifices, past and present, of those who kept us strong and free.

**WHAT WE DO:** The LA FRA plays an active role in our communities. Local units sponsor youth programs, welfare projects, social and patriotic activities to benefit the communities at large, veteran programs and the active duty community. The organization provides annual scholarships to outstanding students each year.

**WHO CAN JOIN?** All applicants must be at least sixteen (16) years of age. Membership in the Ladies Auxiliary of the Fleet Reserve Association is limited to spouses, parents, grandparents, sisters, brothers, children, stepchildren and grandchildren not less than 16 years of age of members of the Fleet Reserve Association and widows, widowers, parents, grandparents, sisters, brothers, children, stepchildren and grandchildren not less than 16 years of age of persons who were members at the time of death or eligible to be members of the Fleet Reserve Association at the time of death.

**HOW CAN I JOIN?** Members fall into two categories. Members who belong to an LA FRA Unit or Members who do not but join as "Members-at-Large."

## Join the Ladies Auxiliary of the FRA (DBA Auxiliary of the FRA)

Name in Full: \_\_\_\_\_  
(First) (Middle) (Last)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip + 4)

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_



*The following service member information validates this application:*

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Serviceman's Full Name) (Rate/Rank) (USN/ USMC/ USCG)

☐ Certify that the information is true and accurate and that my sponsor is a member of FRA Branch \_\_\_\_\_ or is MAL

☐ Certify that the information is true and accurate and that my sponsor was eligible for membership at the time of death.

Unit Preference \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Recruiter \_\_\_\_\_ Member # \_\_\_\_\_ Unit/Branch # \_\_\_\_\_

Verified by \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_ Unit/Branch \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



I am the:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Wife	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mother
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sister	<input type="checkbox"/>	Father
<input type="checkbox"/>	Daughter	<input type="checkbox"/>	Widow
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stepdaughter	<input type="checkbox"/>	Widower
<input type="checkbox"/>	Husband	<input type="checkbox"/>	Granddaughter
<input type="checkbox"/>	Brother	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grandson
<input type="checkbox"/>	Son	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grandmother
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stepson	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grandfather

Annual Membership Dues:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$25.00 for 1 Year
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$50.00 for 2 Year
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$75.00 for 3 Years
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$100.00 for 4 Years
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$125.00 for 5 Years

**Make all checks or money orders payable to LA FRA.**

Along with signed application and payment, mail to:

National Financial Secretary  
PO Box 3037, Carson City, NV 89702

## A Message from the LA FRA National President



As we take a deep sigh and look back at the last few years and how the pandemic affected all our lives, we also need to look at the toll that was taken on the auxiliary membership.

Necessity forced us to add new terms to our vocabularies such as Zoom meetings and FaceTime. Our phones and computers became our lifelines to connect with friends and family. We did our best to stay connected with our fellow members but unfortunately, we were unable to maintain the numbers we had at the start of this period of isolation. Several units that struggled before the pandemic were unable to hang on and eventually had to admit defeat. Members not connected by the fellowship of the Branch Clubs felt it was no longer necessary to keep a membership that was not being used due to temporary closures. As each unit turned in their charter, the remaining members transferred to member-at-large (MAL) status only as a transition to discontinuing their membership because of that loss of connection.

The auxiliary is here to support the Shipmates of the Fleet Reserve Association — community support is an important function of the members. The auxiliary offers scholarships to local students, sponsor youth programs, welfare projects and patriotic activities. We offer assistance to fellow members of the branch and units that are having short- or long-term difficulties.

There are quite a few branches that do not have a unit attached. Section 1309 of the Constitution & By Laws of the FRA gives direction to the branches on the procedure to begin the process of instituting or reinstating a unit.

It only takes fifteen members, five which

must be new or reinstated to create a new or reactivate a unit. The other ten members can be transfers from existing units or the members-at-large roster. Qualifying unit members are parents, grandparents, spouses, children, grandchildren, stepchildren, step grandchildren and siblings of FRA-eligible members. Recruiting LA FRA members first can bring in new FRA members. In my case, I had to recruit my father so I could join.

There are current members in all parts of the country willing to help in any capacity needed to foster and guide new units. Anyone is welcome to contact me to connect with someone in the area to help with the organization and maintenance of a unit.

There is more information on the LA FRA website: [LA-FRA.org](http://LA-FRA.org). A brochure is available to anyone to download and print for aiding in recruiting efforts. Also available are the LA FRA Constitution & By Laws, under Article 13, FRA Authority to Organize – LAFRA, Unit Instructions and Rituals, and membership applications. The FRA has issued a new mandate concerning eligibility presented at the 2022 Convention. More information is available in the LA FRA Triangle on the website's home page. The LA FRA National Parliamentarian Cindy Rodham Tuck will be providing a clear understanding of the mandate in future Triangle publications.

If there was a time for us all to work together, it is now. **FRA**

Yours in Loyalty, Protection and Service,  
Nadine Fulton, National President, Ladies  
Auxiliary of the Fleet Reserve Association.

Nadine is the national president of the LA FRA and may be reached at: [LAFRANPFulton@gmail.com](mailto:LAFRANPFulton@gmail.com)

## Member benefits include:

- A legislative team fighting for your pay and benefits on Capitol Hill
- Use of the Action Center at [www.fra.org](http://www.fra.org) to share your opinions directly with Congress
- Eligibility for you and your family to apply for the FRA education scholarships
- Access to expert staff to answer your legislative questions
- Representation on disability or other VA claims
- Discounts on products and services
- Camaraderie with other service members

**Your dues include a subscription to the association magazine. *FRAtoday*** is your most reliable source of association information. Topics covered are: military pay, health care, and benefits. Some great association information and items of interest to you and your family are included.

## In addition to the magazine, please choose to receive any or all of the following member benefits:

- ☐ **NewsBytes:** the weekly email newsletter update of legislative and association activities
- ☐ **Personal Affairs:** a booklet to assist in organizing your most important documents

☐ I certify that I took the Oath of Enlistment and meet the FRA eligibility requirements of being a current or former enlisted member of the Navy, Marine Corps or Coast Guard.

Service: ☐ USN ☐ USMC ☐ USCG

Status: ☐ Active ☐ Reserve ☐ Retired ☐ Veteran

NAME

PHONE

RATE / RANK

DATE OF BIRTH (MM/DD/YY) SSN (optional)

STREET ADDRESS

SPOUSE'S NAME

SUITE / SPACE / LOT

☐ Closest Branch ☐ Member-at-Large

CITY

☐ Branch # \_\_\_\_\_

STATE

ZIP CODE

SPONSOR'S NAME & MEMBER ID#

Are you a previous FRA member?

EMAIL ADDRESS

☐ No ☐ Yes, previous member # \_\_\_\_\_

## MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS

All memberships includes a subscription to *FRAtoday* magazine, a \$45 value.

- ☐ 1 Year / \$40.00
- ☒ **2 Years / \$64.00 SPECIAL OFFER FIRST TIME MEMBERS**
- ☐ 2 Years / \$75.00 (for renewing or reinstating FRA members)
- ☐ 5 Years / \$180.00
- ☐ Life Membership \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## PAYMENT OPTIONS

- ☐ Master Card ☐ Visa ☐ Discover
- ☐ American Express ☐ Check-enclosed
- ☐ Life Membership (1st payment is \$50 + 11 equal monthly payments automatically debited from a credit/debit card.)

CREDIT CARD NO.

EXP. DATE

SIGNATURE (REQUIRED)

DATE

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Ages 41 to 50.....	\$425
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Ages 81 to 99.....	\$200
Ages 100 and older.....	FREE

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January 2023

## Seven Actions to Consider Before Leaving Your Job



Carl M. Trevisan, CFP®



Stephen M. Bearce

**B**efore you make the decision to move on from your job, review this checklist of important financial considerations. Some involve making sure your personal finances are in order, while others can help you explore all the implications of leaving your current job.

### 1. Review your current retirement benefits.

Check the schedule for your employer's 401(k) and profit-sharing contributions to see how long you have to work to claim any matched funds. If you're close to being fully vested (meaning you're entitled not just to the dollars you contributed but also to the dollars your employer did), it may be worth sticking it out a little longer.

Keep in mind that some plans require that you be employed on the last day of the plan year to get employer contributions for that year, even once you are vested. You may want to wait until after the plan year ends before you terminate employment so you don't lose those contributions.

**2. Make a plan for your employer retirement account.** If you have an employer-sponsored retirement plan, such as a 401(k), 403(b), or governmental 457(b), understand your options for your account. You may decide to take your money out and pay the associated taxes. And if you are younger than age 59½, there may be additional tax penalties for early withdrawal.

Another option is to roll over your account into your retirement account at your new employer (if they allow it) or into an individual retirement account (IRA) that you set up.

Some company plans allow you to keep your money in their plan; however, you will continue to be subject to the rules of that plan regarding investment choices, distribution options, and loan availability. If you have any concerns about the future viability of the company you are leaving, you may want to move your money out of that plan into an account that you manage and control.

**3. Manage your health insurance.** If you don't already have a new position lined up or if your new employer's health plan has a waiting period, figure out where you will get coverage to fill the gap.

If your current company has 20 or more full-time employees, you'll be able to keep your current plan for 18 to 36 months after you stop working under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA). (The length of time depends on a variety of factors.) You'll likely have to pay more because you will pay both your share of the premium and what your employer used to pay. If that's the case, you may want to compare costs to coverage available on the government's health insurance marketplace.

Another thing to consider is that if you live in a state with a health insurance mandate and you do not purchase coverage, you may have a tax penalty (depending on your income).

**4. Spend your flexible spending account (FSA) money.** If you put pretax money into FSA to pay for health care or child care, try to spend all the money in the account before you resign because FSAs typically operate on a use-it-or-lose-it basis (though you may be able to extend it with COBRA). In contrast, if you have money in a health savings account (HSA), that money is yours to keep.

**5. Consider a group life and disability insurance conversion.** If you have life or disability coverage through your employer, you may be able to convert your group policy to an individual policy that you can take with you. Check with the insurer to see if that's the case. Often you have a short window after your resignation to apply for continued coverage. This can be an especially good option if insurers consider you a risk because of your age or medical condition.

**6. Check your employment contract and noncompete agreement.** If you signed any legal documents when you were hired, have a labor attorney evaluate their terms and enforceability.

Some contracts may require you to pay back relocation money, education grants, or bonuses if you don't stay for a certain period. Others include "golden handcuffs" that may indicate you will lose unvested options, restricted stock, deferred compensation, and other benefits upon resignation.

Still others may require waiting for a specified length of time before taking a job with a competitor.

**7. Check the terms of stock options, restricted stock, or other forms of nonsalary compensation.** The vesting schedule is key because you may want to delay your departure if a valuable number of options will vest in the near future. If you're already vested, find out if you're still subject to the same trading windows and how much time you have to exercise your vested options once you resign. In many cases, options expire if they aren't exercised within a certain time frame — typically 90 days after your departure. **FRA**

*Wells Fargo Advisors does not provide tax or legal advice. Please consult with your tax and legal advisors before taking any action that may have tax or legal consequences and to determine how this information may impact your own situation.*

*Please keep in mind that rolling over your qualified employer sponsored retirement plan (QRP) assets to an IRA is just one option. You generally have four options for your QRP distribution: Roll over your assets into an individual retirement account (IRA); leave assets in your former QRP, if plan allows; move assets to your new/existing QRP, if plan allows; or take a lump-sum distribution and pay the associated taxes. Each of these options has advantages and disadvantages, and the one that is best depends on your individual circumstances. You should consider features such as investment options, fees and expenses, and services offered. Your Wells Fargo Advisors Financial Advisor can help*

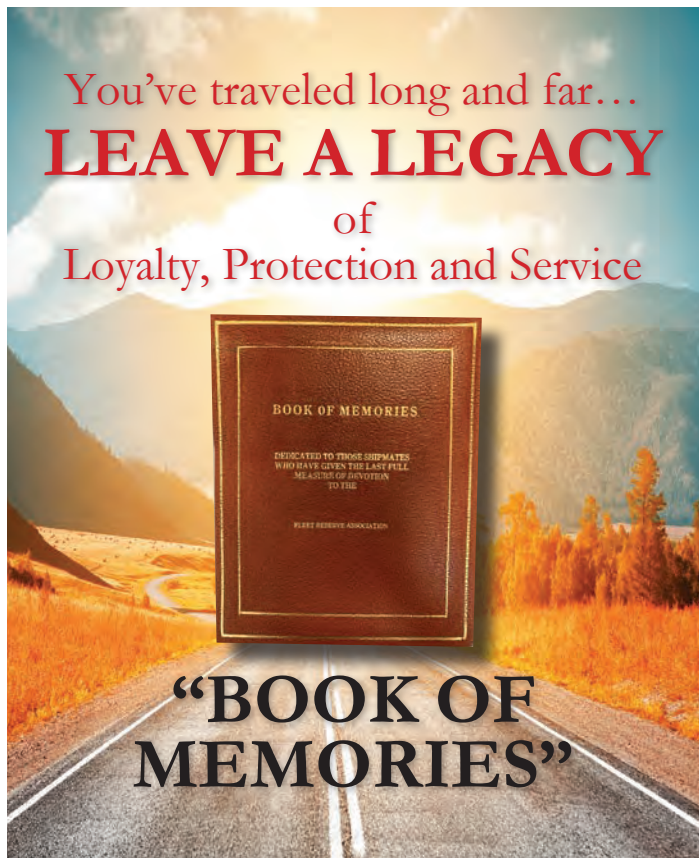
*educate you regarding your choices so you can decide which one makes the most sense for your specific situation. Before you make a decision, read the information provided in this piece to become more informed, and speak with your current retirement plan administrator and tax professional before taking any action. When considering rolling over your assets from a QRP to an IRA, factors that should be considered and compared between QRPs and IRAs include fees and expenses, services offered, investment options, when you no longer owe the 10% additional tax for early distributions, treatment of employer stock, when required minimum distributions begin, and protection of assets from creditors and bankruptcy. Investing and maintaining assets in an IRA will generally involve higher costs than those associated with QRPs. You should consult with the plan administrator and a professional tax advisor before making any decisions regarding your retirement assets.*

*This article was written by/for Wells Fargo Advisors and provided courtesy of Carl M. Trevisan, Managing Director-Investments and Stephen M. Bearce, First Vice President-Investments in Alexandria, VA at 800-247-8602.*

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The “**Book of Memories**” was instituted in 1959 to perpetuate the memory of Shipmates and Ladies who have joined the Staff of the Supreme Commander.

Originally, the donations received were placed in a special fund established to pay the mortgage on the National Executive Offices building. The mortgage was paid in full by the date of the 1961 national convention. However, the Shipmates decided that memorializing their departed members in this manner was most fitting and the program was continued.

Create a lasting tribute and perpetuate your commitment to the guiding principles of our organization.



To learn more, contact FRA National Headquarters at 1-800-372-1924 or email at [phillipr@fra.org](mailto:phillipr@fra.org).



## ***FLEET RESERVE ASSOCIATION 2024 ORAL HISTORY PUBLICATION***

To commemorate our **100th Anniversary**, our upcoming engagement campaign will compile a unique oral history archive, uniting Fleet Reserve Association members across generations, professions, geography, and life experiences.

We have partnered with Publishing Concepts (PCI) to help collect stories from as many members as possible and produce the **Fleet Reserve Association 2024 Oral History Publication**.

By sharing your memory, you'll ensure that the rich history of Fleet Reserve Association will be preserved for generations to come.

PCI will soon be contacting you via mail and email asking you to participate and updating your contact information.

Thanks for your participation!

