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# FRA *today*



A NATIONAL  
CHANGE OF  
COMMAND

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### LOYALTY, PROTECTION AND SERVICE

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

### ON THE COVER

Approximately 5,000 military personnel will participate in a variety of events related to the 2009 Presidential Inauguration. They will proudly represent their respective services and their nation as they salute their new Commander in Chief. U.S. Navy photo by Journalist 2nd Class Mark O'Donald.





Eileen Murphy

## Welcome to 2009

**HAPPY NEW YEAR ONE AND ALL!** This year will certainly bring many changes and some exciting opportunities. Obviously a new Administration is a major change, and the 2009 Inauguration would not be possible without the incredible behind-the-scenes work of the Armed Forces Inaugural Committee. This month Lauren Armstrong takes an in-depth look at this dedicated group of people who have a wide range of responsibilities during the month of January.

January also brings the start of the 111th Congress. With so many new elected officials coming to Washington, the FRA Legislative Team will be very busy introducing our legislative agenda on Capitol Hill and providing the enlisted perspective. Please participate in that process by calling in for our legislative agenda conference call (see below) and using the Action Center on [www.fra.org](http://www.fra.org) to let your elected officials know where you stand on issues. If you prefer to write or call, make sure to contact FRA headquarters for a free copy of the soon-to-be-released *Communicate With Your Elected Officials for the 111th Congress*. This informative booklet is also a great gift to offer a prospective member to help them understand the scope of FRA's work and the importance of increasing membership. The bigger we are, the louder our collective voice is heard on Capitol Hill. To order copies, please call 1-800-FRA-1924 or e-mail [fra@fra.org](mailto:fra@fra.org) and provide your name and address.

## Call In

### LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Join FRA's Legislative Team on 14 January at 1200 EST to discuss FRA's 2009 legislative agenda. Call 1-800-391-1709 and enter bridge number 444143. The call is free, the information is invaluable!

**NOTE:** This is a new number for FRA's monthly teleconferences. This new phone system allows for teleconferences to be recorded and posted to [www.fra.org](http://www.fra.org) so shipmates who are unable to be on the call will have an opportunity to hear the information at their convenience.

### Correction:

In November our FRA calendar fundraising package was mailed out. There was an error in the December photo caption for which I take full responsibility. A last minute picture change was required and the previous caption was left as a place-holder. I did not get the new caption in place before the calendar went to print. The photograph should have been labeled:

"Hospitalman Rommel R. Rabulan, 8th Regimental Aid Station, HM2 Danny L. Douty, assistant leading petty officer, 8th RAS and Religious Program Specialist 1 Beverly L. Bristol, II Marine Headquarters Group, II Marine Expeditionary Force (FWD) sing Christmas carols during lunch time."

The photograph came from the USMC photo gallery on their website. Thank you to the many people who have taken the time to let me know of the error. Please accept my apologies.

**Eileen Murphy** is the Director of Marketing and Communications and serves as the Managing Editor of *FRA Today*. Please contact her at [eileen@fra.org](mailto:eileen@fra.org).

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## FRA TODAY MAGAZINE

**Publisher** FRA  
**Managing Editor** Eileen Murphy  
**Contributing Editor** Lauren Armstrong  
**Design and Art Direction**  
 FIREBRAND, Alexandria, VA [www.firebrandstudios.com](http://www.firebrandstudios.com)  
**Design Director** Scott Rodgerston  
**Production Manager** Sandy Jones

**FRA TODAY** (ISSN 0028-1409) IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY FRA, 125 N. WEST ST., ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314-2754. A MEMBER'S SUBSCRIPTION IS COVERED BY THE MEMBER'S ANNUAL DUES. PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID AT ALEXANDRIA, VA AND ADDITIONAL OFFICES. PUBLICATION OF NON-SPONSORED ADVERTISING IN *FRA TODAY* DOES NOT CONSTITUTE AN ENDORSEMENT BY THE FRA OR ITS REPRESENTATIVES. **POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO: MEMBER SERVICES, FRA, 125 N. WEST ST., ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314-2754.** *FRA TODAY* IS PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF ALL CURRENT AND FORMER ENLISTED PERSONNEL OF THE U.S. NAVY, MARINE CORPS, AND COAST GUARD. ELIGIBLE NON-MEMBERS ARE NOT ENTITLED TO SUBSCRIPTION RATES. ESTABLISHED 1 NOVEMBER 1923. TITLE REGISTERED WITH U.S. PATENT OFFICE.

FRA ADMINISTRATIVE HEADQUARTERS: 125 N. WEST ST., ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314-2754  
 PHONE: 703-683-1400, 800-FRA-1924 • FAX: 703-549-6610 • E-MAIL: [FRAOTODAY@FRA.ORG](mailto:FRAOTODAY@FRA.ORG)  
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VOLUME 88 NUMBER 1





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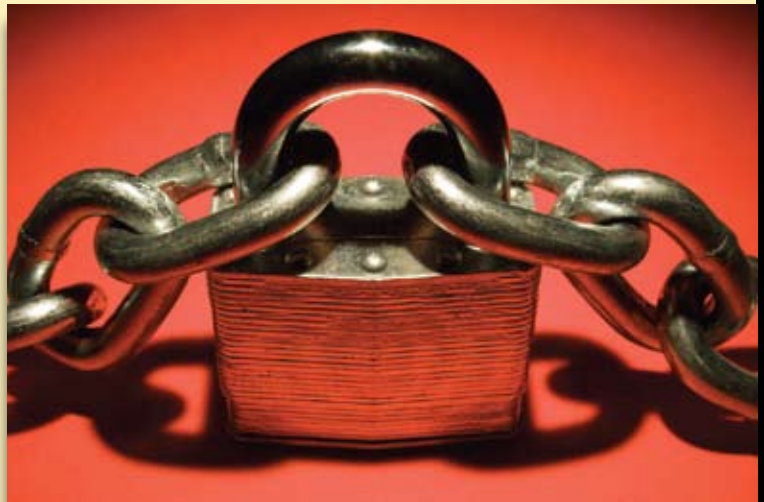
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Joe Barnes

## Focusing on the Future — Action Items

**THIS IS A FOLLOW-UP** to last month's column which detailed principles agreed to by FRA leaders and delegates at a special forum during the Association's 81st National Convention in Branson, Mo. The following action items were formulated during a meeting at National Headquarters on 24 October 2008 attended by NP Don Muecheck, NVP Gary Blackburn and senior staff.

Guiding the discussion was the overriding principle of establishing and maintaining relationships (through outreach initiatives) — something that's especially important to our leadership, Branch officials and full membership.

### SPECIFIC ITEMS:

- Post Branch Reports information (except Alpha lists) in Member News page of FRA's website. (Status: Page is now posted on FRA's website.)
- Revamp application form to include check list of free options (*NewsBytes* subscription, *Communicate With Your Elected Officials* brochure, Your Personal Affairs booklet, committee interest, other information, etc.) (Status: Changes incorporated into new two-page membership form recently distributed to all Branch Secretaries in conjunction with 2009 dues increase. Tracking and reporting processes are being developed and information will be disseminated when finalized.)
- Post death reports form on the FRA website for optional use in reporting same. (Status: Form is posted on the page for Branch and Regional Officers.)
- Develop a list of FRA leadership mentors for Shipmates who are considering running for office and those needing orientation on IMIS functions. (Status: No specifics to report at this time, however, recommendations are welcome.)
- Develop a call program to welcome new members, including questions about how FRA can best serve them at the beginning of their membership commitment. (Status: Master script is written and we anticipate implementing this month as part of the NHQ MAL call program. This will also be added to the Bring 'em Back call program materials available on the FRA website for use by Branches in conjunction with their call programs.)
- Schedule a staff familiarization/training workshop on social media and the communities functions/capabilities on FRA's website — and then adapt this into a presentation for use at meetings and regional conventions. (Status: Information is available for presentation to staff this month followed by print information to be forwarded to Branches via monthly mailing. A briefing package of slides for use at meetings/conventions is also being developed.)
- Provide non-payment of dues lists for individual Branches to NP and NVP for reference during their travels. (Status: Lists are being prepared and forwarded to NP and NVP per their respective travel schedules.)
- Explore establishment of sponsorship of dues for members experiencing hardship at renewal time to include a screening process at the Branch level. (Status: No specifics to report at this time.)
- Review distribution process, outlets listings and associated correspondence for FRA rack cards (handouts) and ensure current order form is posted on the website. (Status: Process is being monitored, contacts called

periodically and updated materials are being forwarded to various outlets as appropriate. Information on additional sites for FRA materials welcomed.)

This list can be expanded and/or adapted at the Branch or Regional levels to support the guiding principles. In short, it's important that this is not perceived as just a list of NHQ initiatives. For example, the NHQ Call Program is focused only on Members-at-Large, which comprise less than half of our total membership.

In addition, NP Muecheck directed NHQ to research the concept of changing the name of the Association; developing a 2009 version of FRA's highly successful 1977 White Hats Panel/Sound Off to Congress presentations at key bases throughout the United States; work to raise awareness on procedure(s) for establishing new Branches (which is the subject of DMD Penny Collins' Membership Matters article this month on page 17); and stressing the importance of greater FRA involvement in support of the Wounded Warrior/Safe Harbor programs at the Branch level.

These initiatives are important to addressing our top challenge — maintaining a strong membership base — and I strongly encourage all of our members, particularly Branch leaders, to implement at least one or more of these action items within their Branches. By working together we can effectively address this challenge and I ask for your help in doing so.

---

**Joe Barnes** is FRA's National Executive Director and Chairman of the National Committee on Legislative Service. A member of Navy Department Branch 181, he is also an advisor to the National Committees on Budget and Finance and Membership and Retention.

## Paid-Up SBP

I'm somewhat confused by the recent enactment of the paid-up Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) benefit. I served 36 years active reserve and seven years in the IRR for a cumulative total of 43 years, retiring in 1996. I've paid into SBP since its inception in 1972, which is a total of 36 years. Because I'm 72 years old, I believed I would receive the benefit.

I was not credited with the benefit in my November retired pay statement, so I contacted DFAS. I was told that they don't start counting my payments until the day of my retirement. This means a man or woman who entered the service with me in 1953, but retired at the end of 20 years service and continued to pay SBP premiums, will now receive the benefit of paid-up SBP. But I must wait till age 90? Does this make sense? Can you help me in this matter?

Robert Timmerman

**FRA Response:** Information at the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) website ([www.dfas.mil/retired-pay/frequentlyaskedquestions/paid-upsbpfaqs.html](http://www.dfas.mil/retired-pay/frequentlyaskedquestions/paid-upsbpfaqs.html)) echoes what you were told by the DFAS representative on the phone: the 360 payments required to reach paid-up status start when SBP premiums begin to be deducted from retired pay. FRA is reviewing legislative remedies for the thousands of Reserve retirees impacted by this policy.

I began making SBP payments when the program first started and made them until my first wife passed away in 1997. I remarried in 1999 and began making payments again to cover my second wife. Do the payments I made during my first marriage count toward my "paid-up" status?

Ira B. Moss

**FRA Response:** In order to be considered a "paid-up" SBP participant, you must be at least 70 years old and have made 360 SBP premium payments. You should receive credit for payments you made while your first wife was the beneficiary, as well as the payments you made to provide for your current spouse. The total number of payments you've made to date appears on your monthly retired pay statement or is available online at <https://mypay.dfas.mil>. If you have further questions, you may contact the Defense Finance and Accounting Service at 1-800-321-1080.

## In-State Tuition Rates

I read in the latest *FRA Today* that returning military veterans are guaranteed in-state residency at state universities and colleges. I have not seen or heard of anything like this coming down the pike. I work as the VA Director for Veteran Services and Residency Reclassification here at the University of Central Florida, so please let me know of any more information concerning this.

Jim Middlekauff

**FRA Response:** Along with the passage of the Post 9/11 GI Bill, which benefits service members and veterans who served after post 11 September 2001, Congress passed other legislation to enhance educational benefits for active duty service members. The Higher Education Opportunity Act (PL 110-315) has a provision (section 114) that requires states receiving federal funds to provide active duty service members and their family members in-state tuition rates for state colleges and universities. These FRA-supported provisions go into effect 1 July 2009.

## Combat Action Ribbon

In WWII I was in the U.S. Navy Armed Guard. We were teams of 18 to 20 "U.S. Navy" serving as gunners and protection aboard Merchant Marine ships hauling ammunition and combat supplies to U.S. troops.

I am certainly entitled to the Combat Action Ribbon, but I don't know how to go about obtaining it. Can you please help me out?

Harry Hagemann

**FRA Response:** There are two forms that may be useful for you. The DD-149, which can be downloaded from <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/eforms/dd0149.pdf>, should be used to correct military records. You would need to complete and submit this form if you believe your military records do not accurately reflect your combat service. The SF-180 form, available at [www.archives.gov/research/order/standard-form-180.pdf](http://www.archives.gov/research/order/standard-form-180.pdf), should be used if you believe your service record is correct and simply wish to request the missing Combat Action Ribbon.

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**Submissions:** Send *Shipmate Forum* letters to: Editor, *FRA Today*, 125 N. West St. Alexandria, VA 22314. E-mail submissions may be sent to [fratoday@fra.org](mailto:fratoday@fra.org). Please include "Shipmate Forum" in the subject line. FRA reserves the right to select and edit letters for publication. Letters published in *Shipmate Forum* reflect the opinions and views of FRA members. They do not necessarily reflect the official position of FRA as a whole. FRA is not responsible for the accuracy of letter content.



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John Davis

## Will Retirees Take a Hike?

**THE NEW YEAR BEGINS** with a new (111th) Congress, but the old familiar theme of shifting healthcare costs to beneficiaries will undoubtedly arise again — as it has the last three years. Healthcare is extremely important to all FRA Shipmates, regardless of their status, and protecting and enhancing healthcare benefits is FRA's top legislative priority. (See 2009 Legislative Agenda below.) FRA strongly opposes any TRICARE fee increases (as well as increases proposed to VA healthcare fees) until other cost-saving options are exhausted.

The 110th Congress initiated an effort to reduce costs for TRICARE by enacting federal pricing for retail prescription drugs (currently pending in the courts), and enacting pilot programs to provide incentives for preventative care. The programs could result in substantial savings that may ease the pressure to shift healthcare costs to retirees. Federal pricing alone could save TRICARE more than \$700 million next year. These and other efforts are positive steps toward combating the escalating costs of DoD healthcare and should be fully implemented before Congress considers legislation to increase beneficiaries' costs. FRA's Legislative Team is already working to ensure

the reintroduction of legislative proposals in the new Congress that will prohibit fee increases without congressional approval and minimize the impact of any future fee increases on TRICARE beneficiaries.

Shipmates and others who are impacted by the proposed increases can make a difference by getting involved. If military retirees "take a hike" this year and don't get involved in this issue at the grassroots level, then the chances for TRICARE fee increases will raise significantly. It is critical that shipmates communicate their concerns to their elected officials. Even if you contacted your elected officials last year or the year before, you need to remind them that this could have a significant impact on your benefits. The FRA Action Center at [www.fra.org](http://www.fra.org) is an effective tool to easily communicate with your elected official. The site offers prewritten letters on key issues, including healthcare. An effective grassroots program provides large numbers of members speaking with a unified voice. When members contact their senators and representatives through the Action Center, it compliments and strengthens FRA's advocacy efforts on Capitol Hill.

## Paid-up SBP Update

A number of shipmates are still having Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) premiums deducted from their retired pay even though they qualify for "paid-up" status by reaching age 70 or older and having at least 360 SBP monthly premiums deducted from their retired pay. More than 137,000 beneficiaries have achieved paid-up status, but the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) is continuing to update records, and some are experiencing delays before SBP premium deductions cease.

Retiree Account Statements (RAS) have been modified to include a "premium counter" which will track and display the number of monthly premiums credited to a retiree's account. The RAS is issued whenever a retired

pay change occurs (not monthly) and helps retirees monitor their eligibility status. Although the premium counter became available in October, the counter was not seen by most retirees until they received their annual RAS, which was mailed in December. This year-end RAS also reflects information about the annual Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA).

DFAS is working to ensure that everyone receives proper credit for all premiums paid and that the premium counter is accurate. DFAS assures FRA that any beneficiary who is qualified for "paid up" status and had premiums deducted from their retired pay will be provided a full refund. Retirees who believe there are errors will have an opportunity to request corrections

by filing a DD Form 2656-11 during a specified dispute period (1 January 2009 through 30 June 2009). The form is not available at press time, but may be downloaded from DFAS website ([www.dfas.mil/retiredpay.html](http://www.dfas.mil/retiredpay.html)). Instructions for completing and filing a dispute of the premium counter will be provided in a future update in FRA Today and NewsBytes.

For additional information on this issue go to:

- <http://www.dfas.mil/retiredpay/paid-upsurvivorbenefitpaymentsbp.html>
- <http://www.dfas.mil/retiredpay/frequentlyaskedquestions/paid-upsbpfaq.html>



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There is no heat wasted near the ceiling. The unique infrared process virtually prevents the wasteful air layering as with conventional heating systems.

The SUNHEAT requires no installation and can be plugged into any 110 volt outlet. There is a lower purchase/installation cost per heated square foot than any other system. Our zone heater requires no special 240v wiring or expensive, inefficient ducting, piping or chimney. Home or business owners can install the system with no problem. Simply plug it in.

Our zone area heating concept saves money. Using individually controlled units, the SUNHEAT system provides heat only where and when it is needed for more control over area comfort and energy bills.

There is lower operating and maintenance costs than conventional heat systems and the SUNHEAT is virtually maintenance free. There is no unwanted changing of filters or high prices for replacements since our zone heaters have a lifetime washable filter. There are absolutely no burners to adjust or replace. Long-life industrial infrared commercial quartz tubes are replaced easily and inexpensively. A full three-year warranty, including the new commercial quartz tubes, protects the consumer’s investment. The SUNHEAT does not remove humidity from the air! It actually helps maintain desirable humidity levels. Also, water does not readily collect on the windows as with conventional systems.

Due to SUNHEAT’S unique concept, the floors stay warmer since the air is mixed at ground level. This makes the temperature, from floor to ceiling, no more than 2 degrees difference.

This one of a kind system operates as quietly as a whisper! The SUNHEAT’S efficiency is based on the distribution of energized air as well as water molecules which do not depend on high-speed airflow.

Since the outside of the unit does not get hot, you may place this zone heater anywhere you want and not have to worry about problems that space heaters pose. You can set it and forget it! SUNHEAT—never before has safety, comfort and soft heat been packaged together in such a remarkable heater.

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## 2009 FRA Legislative Agenda

FRA will fight to preserve and enhance benefits and quality-of-life programs for active, Reserve, retired, and veteran members of the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, their families and survivors. FRA's legislative agenda for 2009 is listed below.



### EXPAND HEALTH CARE OPTIONS

#### Oppose TRICARE Standard

**Enrollment Fees:** FRA believes that the Defense Department has not sufficiently investigated other options to make TRICARE more cost-efficient as alternatives to shifting costs for TRICARE Standard and other health-care benefits to retiree beneficiaries under age 65.

#### Support Adequate Funding for

**Defense Health Program:** Continue working with Congress and DoD to ensure adequate funding for the Defense Health Program in order to meet readiness needs, fully fund TRICARE, and improve access for all beneficiaries regardless of age, status or location.

#### Ensure Health Care Access for Reservists and Family Members:

Support Equitable Premiums for Reservists Participating in TRICARE Reserve Select and Enhance Awareness of this Benefit.

#### DOD/VA Health Care Resource

**Sharing:** Support adequate funding for Department of Defense (DOD) and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care resource sharing in

delivering seamless, cost effective, quality services to personnel wounded while participating in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, other veterans, service members, reservists, military retirees and their families.

**Expand Health Care Options for Retirees Under Age 65 :** Expand health care alternatives including TRICARE Standard, TRICARE Prime Remote and the Federal Employee Health Benefit Program (FEHBP) as options for active duty and military retirees under age 65 who do not have access to military treatment facilities.

**Expand Military Retiree Access to the VA Health Care System:** Support legislation expanding access to VA Hospitals and Clinics and to adopt VA Medicare Subvention. Also support opportunities to expand DOD/VA joint facilities demonstration projects and ensure that military retirees are not forced to pay for VA care or choose between DOD and VA for care.

#### Managed Health Care Plans:

Continue to monitor current programs to ensure the availability of best care for all beneficiaries.

#### Pharmaceutical Drug Benefit:

Continue to monitor the pharmacy benefit and ensure that the pharmacy program includes a broad uniform formulary. FRA will work with DoD to encourage increased utilization of mail-order prescriptions to reduce co-pays for beneficiaries and reduce costs to the program to forestall increasing fees, and co-payments.

#### Allow Military Retirees to Pay for Healthcare with Pretax Dollars:

Allow military retirees to pay health insurance premiums on a pretax basis and to allow for a tax deduction for TRICARE supplemental insurance premiums.

### PROTECT PERSONNEL PROGRAMS

**Active Duty Pay:** Secure additional annual active duty pay increases that are at least one-half percent (0.5 %) above the Employment Cost Index (ECI) along with targeted increases for mid career and senior enlisted personnel to help close the pay gap between active duty and private sector pay.

**Education Enhancements:** Improve education benefits for active duty personnel and family members,

reservists, and veterans, plus survivors of disabled or deceased veterans who died of a service-connected disability or were killed on active duty. Continue to advocate for personnel who did not enroll in the Veterans Education Assistance Program (VEAP) or MGIB. Encourage DoD to retain schools on military installations to ensure continuation of quality education for our military personnel.

**Dislocation Allowance:** Work to authorize the payment of a dislocation allowance to members of the Armed Forces, with at least 20 years of service, as part of their final compensation package upon retirement.

**Commissaries / MWR:** Oppose privatization and ensure adequate funding for the Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) to preserve the value of the current benefit for all patrons, protect the exchange benefit and ensure adequate funding for MWR programs.

#### **Active Duty and Reserve Component Personnel End**

**Strengths:** Track manpower levels to ensure there are an adequate number of personnel available to meet the demands of OIF, OEF and other operational requirements.

**BAH:** Enhance enlisted housing standards by allowing E-7s and above to reside in separated homes. Track the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) to ensure it remains at the level of payments authorized commensurate with actual housing costs, as required by law. Ensure the housing privatization program remains favorable to military residents.

**Reform of PCS Process:** Track the implementation of the Families First HHG program and other improvements to the PCS process. Ensure adequate funding of the Transition and Relocation Assistance Programs,

and increase the PCS weight limit for the amount of household goods senior enlisted personnel are allowed to ship.

**Predatory Lending Protections:** Ensure that active duty personnel and their dependents have adequate protections against predatory lenders who target military personnel and their families.

**Coast Guard Parity:** Ensure parity with DOD of pay and benefits for Coast Guard personnel with adequate funding within the U.S. Coast Guard budget.

**Support Full Funding for the Impact Aid Program:** Ensure that the Department of Education has adequate funding to reimburse local school districts for educating military children and that the DOD budget includes sufficient funds to provide support for highly impacted school districts and the continuation of the current DoD school system by retaining the school facilities now in its inventory.

**Continue to monitor support for Sea Services recruiters:** And work to ensure that they have unrestricted access to secondary schools, colleges and universities on the same basis as private sector employers.

**Voting Reform:** Continue to monitor and seek support for improved voter participation in Federal elections and expedite the military mail processing of overseas ballots.

#### **SAFEGUARD RETIREE BENEFITS**

**Concurrent Receipt of Military Retired Pay and Veterans' Disability Compensation:** Support legislation authorizing the immediate payment of concurrent receipt of full military retired pay and veterans' disability compensation for all disabled retirees.

**Reserve Retirement Age:** Support extension of authority for reduction (90 days active duty = 3 months reduction) of retirement age for all Reservists who have served since 9/11/01.

**Retention of Final Month's Retired Pay at Time of Death:** Support legislation authorizing the retention of the full final month's retired pay by the surviving spouse (or other designated survivor) for the month in which the member was alive for at least 24 hours.

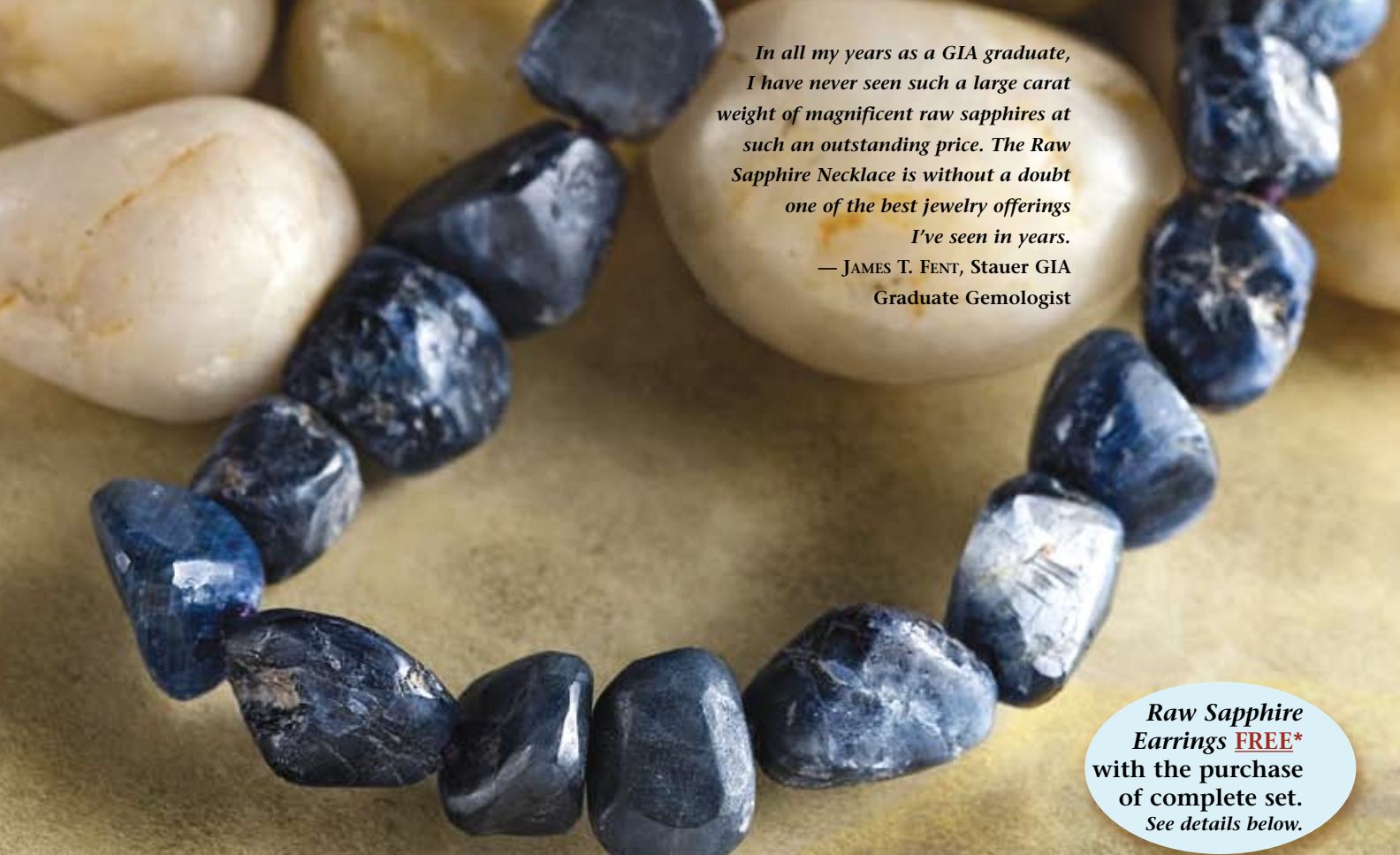
**Base Closures:** Support retention of military treatment and other facilities at BRAC sites that are patronized by sizeable retiree and reserve populations and closely monitor the impact of closures and realignments.

**USFSPA:** Encourage the introduction and enactment of legislation to eliminate inequities in the Uniformed Services Former Spouses Protection Act (USFSPA).

**Military Retired or Retainer Pay COLA Equity:** Fight any efforts to reduce military retired or retainer pay and ensure equitable cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) for all military retirees.

**Monitor Benefits and Programs Administered by the Department of Veterans' Affairs:** Advocate for benefit enhancements for Sea Service and military retirees to ensure equity for these and other beneficiaries in the administration of various VA programs.

**Armed Forces Retirement Home:** Support adequate funding for the operation of the Armed Forces Retirement Home's two facilities and continue to provide adequate care for its residents.



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For centuries, blue sapphire has been known as the stone of destiny and desire. History's most powerful men have used the gem to woo the world's most desirable women. From King Solomon and Queen of Sheba to Napoleon and Josephine, the seductive powers of sapphire are legendary. Today, the presentation of large blue sapphires is still a grand romantic gesture. Each rare gem pulses with the passion of the ages. But it is most likely that few of these great romances have been privy to anything like a stunning 350 carat necklace of midnight ocean blue sapphires.

**That old blue magic.** Look closely into the ethereal blues and you can see why sapphires are just as desirable today as when the ancient Persians believed that they colored the sky. Thankfully, a trusted gemologist discovered a selection of large beautiful uncut sapphires and we bought his entire find. Each naturally mined blue stone is unique, and has the striking color and hardness that make sapphires famous (scoring a 9 out of 10 on the Mohs scale, the sapphire ranks second only to diamonds as the hardest gem on the planet). After polishing, we realized that the gemstones were perfect as they were... as nature intended.

**Naturally uncut, simply stunning.** There's just something absolutely mesmerizing about a polished, uncut rare gemstone that faceted stones can't match. Each raw blue stone is unique. The colors include swirls of milky blue, with accents of deep violet and blue-black midnight.

Pluck any of the high fashion magazines off the rack and you'll see that "polished and uncut" gemstones are popping up on haute couture runways from New York to Milan for prices starting at over \$5000.

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## TRICARE ISSUES

**FRA Participates in GAO Panel on Health Care**

Bob Washington, FRA's Legislative Health Care Advisor, and two other members of The Military Coalition's Healthcare Committee participated in a panel discussion under the auspices of the Government Accountability Office's (GAO) Healthcare Team. GAO is an independent, nonpartisan agency that investigates how the federal government spends taxpayer dollars.

Among the issues discussed was FRA's continuing opposition to TRICARE fee increases proposed by the Department of Defense until all other cost-saving options have been explored and implemented. During the 110th Congress, FRA strongly supported legislation (H.R. 579) that would prohibit TRICARE fee increases unless approved by Congress and (S. 604) that would limit annual TRICARE fee increases to the amount of the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

**Lower TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) Premiums**

The TRICARE Management Activity (TMA) has announced a decrease in the TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) monthly premium for both member and family coverage effective 1 January 2009. The new monthly rates will decrease from \$81 to \$47.51 for member-only coverage, and from \$253 to \$180.17 for family coverage to reflect the actual cost of the program. The reduction was mandated by an FRA-supported provision in the FY2009 National Defense Authorization Act.

Visit [www.tricare.osd.mil/reserve](http://www.tricare.osd.mil/reserve) for further information on the TRS program.

**TRICARE and Other Health Insurance**

Many TRICARE beneficiaries have health insurance coverage from sources other than TRICARE. This "Other Health Insurance" (OHI) may be available through an employer, an association, a private insurer, school health care coverage for students, or a TRICARE supplemental insurance entitlement program such as Medicare. Although there are a few exceptions (such as TRICARE supplemental insurance), federal law requires TRICARE to be the secondary payer to OHI.

Beneficiaries must file with their OHI provider before filing with TRICARE. A copy of the beneficiary's OHI payment determination and a copy of the itemized bill should be included with the TRICARE claim form. If the provider doesn't file TRICARE claims on their behalf, beneficiaries must remember to submit claims to TRICARE after their OHI pays. It is essential beneficiaries understand their OHI so they know how the provider network, referral, prescription and claims processes work. To clarify some specifics on how OHI works with TRICARE, check out TRICARE's web page on OHI at <http://tricare.mil/OHI>.

TRICARE beneficiaries may also choose to purchase a TRICARE supplemental insurance policy offered, for example, by FRA, other military associations and private companies. Unlike OHI, this pays for health care services before TRICARE, these supplemental programs pay after TRICARE.

Knowing OHI policies is critical to making choices in healthcare plans and TRICARE officials urge all beneficiaries to become more familiar with OHI and how it can affect their TRICARE benefit. Beneficiaries with OHI who need more information on how to file claims can visit [www.tricare.mil/claims](http://www.tricare.mil/claims) for details and forms.

**Walgreens Remains in TRICARE Network**

Express Scripts Inc. (ESI) and Walgreens drug store chain announced that they have reached an agreement and Walgreens will remain in the ESI network. ESI is in the process of advising those beneficiaries who received letters announcing the termination of Walgreens from the network. ESI is a Pharmacy Benefit Management (PBM) company that processes TRICARE pharmacy claims and manages TRICARE's Mail Order Pharmacy Program (TMOP).

**TRICARE Implements New Fee Schedule in the Philippines**

A new TRICARE provider fee schedule for medical services and procedures took effect on 1 November 2008 for beneficiaries in the Philippine Islands. TRICARE officials expect the new fee schedule to better reflect actual medical costs. Beneficiaries and providers in the Philippines who filed TRICARE claims during the past two years are receiving letters from TRICARE Management Activity (TMA) notifying them of the fee schedule change. The new allowable charges and inpatient per diem rates are available on the TRICARE Web site at [www.tricare.mil/CMAC](http://www.tricare.mil/CMAC).

TRICARE Standard deductibles and cost-shares will not change for beneficiaries in the Philippines under the new schedule. Annual out-of-pocket caps for an active duty family member costs will remain at \$1,000 and \$3,000 for retirees and their eligible family members. TRICARE beneficiaries living in, or traveling to, the Philippines must use TRICARE-certified providers to receive claims reimbursement. A list of certified providers for the Philippines is available on the Pacific Area Office page in the TMA portal at [www.tricare.mil](http://www.tricare.mil).

**Pharmacy Data Security Breach**

Express Scripts Inc. (ESI) announced that a small number of its clients (pharmacies) have received letters threatening to expose the personal information of their pharmacy customers. The letters are believed to be connected to an extortion threat the company made public and ESI is notifying affected members. It is still unclear if any DoD patient information was breached.

Express Scripts immediately informed the FBI and is offering a \$1 million reward for the person or persons who provide information resulting in the arrest and conviction of those responsible for these criminal acts. Anyone with information about the extortion threats should contact the FBI at 800-CALL-FBI.

Although Express Scripts is not aware of any actual misuse of its members' data, the company is offering free identity restoration services for members if they become victims of identity theft because of this incident. Details about the identity restoration offer can be found at [www.esisupports.com](http://www.esisupports.com).

## VETERANS ISSUES

**Former Army Chief of Staff Tapped to Head VA**

President-elect Barack Obama selected retired Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric K. Shinseki as his nominee to be Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). If confirmed by the Senate, Shinseki will succeed retired Army Lt. Gen. (Dr.) James B. Peake in leading the second-largest federal department, with 240,000 employees. The Senate Veterans Affairs Committee has scheduled a confirmation hearing on 14 January 2009.

General Shinseki graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1965 and also holds a Master of Arts Degree in English Literature from Duke University. Since his commissioning, General Shinseki has served in a variety of command and staff assignments, including two combat tours in Viet Nam. He assumed duties as the 28th Vice Chief of Staff for the U.S. Army in November 1998, and assumed duties as the Army's 34th Chief of Staff in June 1999. Shinseki had a well-publicized disagreement with the Bush administration over the size of the forces needed to invade Iraq in 2003. Shinseki told a Senate committee several hundred thousand more troops would be needed than administration officials wanted to use. The disagreement was apparently a factor in Shinseki's retirement in June of 2003.

**Increase in VA Travel Reimbursement**

Legislation (H.R. 2638) authorizing FY2009 Appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs (VA), Defense and Homeland Security includes an increase in the mileage reimbursement for patients' travel to VA facilities for medical care. The change, which raises reimbursements from 28 cents per mile to 41 cents, was strongly supported by FRA during its testimony before the House and Senate VA Committees in the 110th Congress.

The current deductible amounts applied to certain mileage reimbursements will remain frozen at \$7.77 for a one-way trip, \$15.54 for a round trip, and is capped at a maximum of \$46.62 per calendar month. On 9 January 2009, these deductibles will be reduced to \$3 for a one-way trip, \$6 for a round trip, with a maximum of \$18 per calendar month.

**VA Offers Refinancing for Veterans/Retirees with Subprime Loans**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has announced a program to help veterans who have subprime mortgages refinance into safer, lower interest loans as a result of the President signing the "Veterans Benefit Improvement Act" (S. 3023). The new law expands opportunities for veterans and military retirees to refinance up to \$417,000 in most locations and up to \$729,750 in some high-cost areas. Previously the maximum for refinancing was \$144,000.

VA has established a toll-free number 1-877-827-3702 that will route callers to their nearest VA regional office. Information on the home loan program is also available at [www.homeloans.va.gov](http://www.homeloans.va.gov).

**House Panel Discusses VA Shredding Claim Documents**

FRA attended the House Veterans Affairs Committee roundtable discussion that focused on recent allegations that the VA has been shredding claims documents at certain regional offices. These allegations come from an Office of Inspector General report (OIG) that found claims-related material placed in "shred bins" in Detroit, St. Petersburg, Waco, and St. Louis VA Regional Offices. In response, the Veterans Benefits Administration has begun special temporary claims-handling procedures and has developed a plan to strengthen current policies and procedures to safeguard veteran's paper records. Additional measures are in place to prevent future incidents of VA employees inappropriately discarding veterans' paperwork. FRA is closely monitoring these developments and will publish any updates in future editions of *FRA Today*.

**IB Identifies Critical Issues for 2010**

The Independent Budget (IB), created by a group of non-partisan veterans' organizations and supported by FRA, annually makes recommendations regarding the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) annual budget. The group recently released its FY2010 Critical Issues Report, which contains a series of wide-ranging policy changes and recommendations to better allow the VA to care for all veterans.

The seven critical issues are:

- Sufficient, Timely and Predictable Funding for VA Healthcare
- The Challenge of Caring for Our Newest War Veterans
- Maintaining VA's Critical Medical Facilities Infrastructure
- Improvements Needed in Claims Process
- Seamless Transition from DoD to VA
- Human Resources Challenges Facing VA
- National Cemetery Administration

To read the entire report, visit <http://es3.pva.org/independentbudget/index.htm> and click on 2010 issues at the bottom of the page.

The Independent Budget (IB) for FY2010 is scheduled to be released in February 2009 in concurrence with the release of the President's FY2010 budget for the Department of Veterans Affairs. In addition to budgetary recommendations, the IB also offers program recommendations to assist veterans.

**Panel Reviews VA Disability Compensation**

FRA staff attended the first public meeting of the Advisory Committee on Veterans Affairs (VA) Disability Compensation in early December. This committee will advise the VA Secretary on establishing and supervising a review of the VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities (VASRD). The committee will also make recommendations on the possible expansion of VA benefits to address the impact on quality of life, the need for transition assistance, and the potential for successful rehabilitation. FRA's Legislative Team will monitor committee deliberations and provide input on issues of importance to FRA members.

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**WOUNDED WARRIORS**


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## DoD Announces Expansion of the Disability Evaluation System Pilot

The Departments of Defense (DoD) and Veterans Affairs (VA) announced the expansion of the Disability Evaluation System (DES) pilot program to include 19 additional military installations across the country. The program, which began at the three major military treatment facilities in the national capital region in November 2007, now includes Fort Meade, Md., and Fort Belvoir, Va. The remaining 17 installations will be added upon completion of site preparations and personnel orientation and training, which will occur through May 2009.

The DES program is a test of a new process eliminating the duplicative, time-consuming, and often confusing elements of the DoD and VA disability processes. Key features of the DES pilot include one medical examination and a single-sourced disability rating. These reforms to ensure a "seamless transition" between the departments are strongly supported by FRA.

Over the next seven months, the program will be expanded to include:

- Army:** Fort Carson, Colo.; Fort Drum, N.Y.; Fort Stewart, Ga.; Fort Richardson, Alaska; Fort Wainwright, Alaska; Brooke Army Medical Center, Texas; and Fort Polk, La.
- Navy:** Naval Medical Center (NMC) San Diego and Camp Pendleton, Calif.; NMC Bremerton, Wash.; NMC Jacksonville, Fla.; and Camp Lejeune, N.C.
- Air Force:** Vance Air Force Base, Okla.; Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.; MacDill Air Force Base, Fla.; Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska; and Travis Air Force Base, Calif.

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## Foundation Opens Second Fisher House in San Diego

Wounded warriors and their families will have a second "home away from home" during the recovery process now that Naval Medical Center San Diego recently opened Fisher House II in San Diego, Calif.

FRA's strong and continuing commitment to wounded service members and their families includes support for WMAL Radio's 2008 Operation Fisher House. The eight-week campaign encouraged Washington, D.C., residents to donate to Fisher House, a private-public partnership that constructs housing near military hospitals for use by injured personnel and their families.

The Fisher Houses provide respite and accommodations for families of active and retired military patients who have been admitted for medical care. Fisher House II will mark the fifth house donated to the Navy by the Fisher House Foundation and will more than double the number of available rooms for families at Naval Medical Center San Diego. Built adjacent to Fisher House I, Fisher House II is an 8,000 square-foot, two-story house that is fully furnished and accessible under American Disabilities Act regulations. It provides private bedrooms, a common kitchen, living room, dining room and laundry room. In addition, Fisher House II will offer wireless Internet access and cable service. For more information, visit [www.fisherhouse.org](http://www.fisherhouse.org).

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## New Websites for Chemical Exposure

The Department of Defense Force Health and Protection Readiness Directorate (FHP & R) launched the Chemical-Biological Warfare Exposures website (<http://fhp.osd.mil/CBexposures>) to provide service members, military retirees, veterans, their families and the public with information on testing of chemical and biological warfare agents from 1942 to 1975. Veterans or retirees who believe they may have been exposed or who would like more information can contact DoD via email at: [CBWebmaster@tma.osd.mil](mailto:CBWebmaster@tma.osd.mil) or call DoD's contact manager at 800-497-6261, Monday through Friday 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM Eastern Time.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has also set up a website for chemical exposure victims at [www1.va.gov/shad](http://www1.va.gov/shad). Veterans who would like to talk to a VA representative can call the Special Issues Helpline at 1-800-749-8387.

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## CNO Appoints New MCPON

During ceremonies at the Washington Navy Yard, Fleet Master Chief (SS/SW) Rick West became the 12th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON), replacing MCPON Joe Campa Jr. West is a 27-year Navy veteran and career submariner. He was selected by Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. Gary Roughead, who was West's former boss at Fleet Forces Command and Pacific Fleet before the admiral became CNO. West served for 11 years as a command master chief and has seen duty onboard five submarines and one destroyer.

The position of MCPON was created by legislation in 1966 that was strongly supported by FRA. (See this month's History and Heritage article on page 27.) As the senior enlisted person in the Navy, MCPON serves as a spokesperson to the highest positions in the Navy on issues impacting enlisted personnel.

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## MCPON Thomas Crow Dies at Age 74

FRA mourns the passing of Thomas Crow, the fourth Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON), who passed away on 30 November after a long battle with cancer. Crow joined the FRA in 1975 and was a member of Branch 70 (Poway, Calif.) at the time of his death. His tenure as MCPON (1979-1980) was marked by a focus on professionalism among the enlisted ranks and his legacy continues today.

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The FRA Legislative team is Joe Barnes, National Executive Director, John Davis, Director of Legislative Programs, Bob Washington, Health Care Advisor and Outreach Manager, Chris Slawinski, National Veterans Service Officer and Ed Dockery, Assistant Director of Legislative Programs.





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with the incredible details of the scientific process, but will only say that it involves the use of rare minerals heated to an incredibly high temperature of nearly 5000°F. This can only be accomplished inside some very modern and expensive laboratory equipment. After several additional steps, scientists finally created a clear marvel that looks even better than the vast majority of mined diamonds. According to the book *Jewelry and Gems—the Buying Guide*, the technique used in DiamondAura offers, “The best diamond simulation to date, and even some jewelers have mistaken these stones for mined diamonds.”

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Penny Collins

## Recruiting Members for New Branches

**MEMBERS OF THE FRA** are the best source of information on the overall purpose of the Association. You may be familiar with FRA's history, which can be used as an excellent discussion tool to pique the interest of prospective members. This ability will really be put to the test if you want to start a new branch in a local community where there is no current participation. FRA's Constitution and Bylaws (C&BL), Article 3 on Membership and Article 12 on Branches, specifically outlines the process.

### HERE'S A SUMMARY:

- The organizer of a new branch should be a current FRA member. Depending upon the geographic area, the appropriate Regional President or designated membership chairman should assist the organizer. The organizer should contact the Director of Membership Development to discuss the process and obtain a package of information, which will include an application for the branch start-up.
- A request to form a new branch may be made by a group of not less than 25 persons eligible for membership in the FRA who subscribe to and accept the FRA's C&BL. Ten should be new or reinstated members and the remainder may be current members in good standing. If requested, Member Services can provide a listing of Members-at-Large, prospective or terminated members by zip code that may be residing in the area. This list may be used to contact people in the geographic area that may want to affiliate with a new branch. Also, the list of branches within the region will be provided so the organizer can determine what branches, if any, are in the immediate area.

- Eligibility for membership in the FRA is restricted to personnel who have served or are now serving in an enlisted status in the United States Navy, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard, including those serving in the Reserve components. The organizer should verify service of eligible members by asking to view a copy of their most recent DD-214.

**A request to form a new branch may be made by a group of not less than 25 persons eligible for membership in the FRA who subscribe to and accept the FRA's C&BL.**

- The organizer should locate a place for the first meeting of prospective branch members. A flyer or e-mail can be mailed announcing the date, place, time and purpose of the meeting. Member Services can provide packets of literature to the organizer, which can be distributed to prospective branch members. We also have an excellent DVD on the history of the FRA, which can be shown to the members as well. The organizer should be familiar with the structure of FRA branches, including the role of officers and the purpose of branch committees. New branch members may be interested in serving as one of the officers or working on one of the committees.
- If there is a minimum of 25 members who are committed to starting a branch, the organizer will be

required to complete the appropriate application. In addition, the prospective branch members who are not currently members of the FRA must complete an FRA membership application and submit payment for dues (\$30 per year or \$ 48 for two years for first-time members). The organizer will forward the branch and member applications, dues payments and Roster of Applicants to the Director of Membership Development. The branch application package will be reviewed and submitted to FRA's Board of Directors for consideration.

- Upon approval, a charter for the new branch will be prepared and forwarded to the appropriate Regional President. A newly-chartered branch must be instituted within three months of the authorization date, or it will become null and void.

If you would like to start a branch or receive further information on the process, please send me an email at [penny@fra.org](mailto:penny@fra.org) or call 1-800-FRA-1924, extension 123.

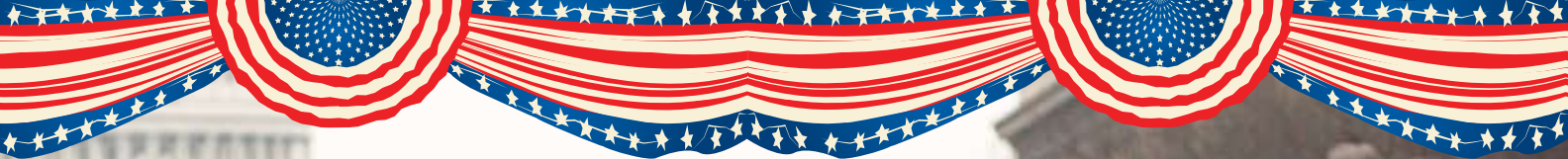
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**Penny Collins** is a member of FRA Branch 24 in Annapolis, Md. and can be reached at [penny@fra.org](mailto:penny@fra.org).

### BRAVO ZULU

Thank you to members of Branch 20 for their great help during the annual USCG Recruiter of the Year Awards Ceremony in Groton, Conn. The event, which took place on 18 November 2008, included an FRA award presentation to the Coast Guard's top recruiters. Please see picture on page 24.





*1 do so*







# A NATIONAL CHANGE of COMMAND

Managing the logistics of any armed forces ceremony requires precision coordination of personnel, equipment, and information against the backdrop of time-honored military traditions. Imagine the challenges of organizing the largest military change of command ever.

As many as 4 million people are expected to descend on Washington, D.C., to witness Barack Obama take the oath of office to become the 44<sup>th</sup> president of the United States. Millions more will watch the televised coverage of the swearing-in ceremony and associated events that are cloaked in history and follow time-honored rituals and prescribed protocol. And in one of the oldest traditions of our country, approximately 5,000 military personnel will play a key role in marking the peaceful transition of power in the greatest nation on earth.

The military's participation in the 2009 Inauguration began months ago, with the establishment of the Armed Forces Inaugural Committee (AFIC). Like its counterparts — the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies (JCCIC) and the Presidential Inaugural Committee (PIC) — the AFIC is established every four years, and is responsible for providing military ceremonial support and communications for all facets of the 10-day inaugural period that extends from 15 to 24 January.

The JCCIC plans and conducts the numerous inaugural activities that take place at the Capitol, including the swearing-in ceremony and luncheon that follows the inaugural address. The current JCCIC was established in February of 2008 and is chaired by California Senator Dianne Feinstein.

*"I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."*

The Presidential Inaugural Committee (PIC), a private entity appointed by the president-elect, determines the size and scope of the inaugural festivities. The PIC organizes, approves and funds many of the events associated with the inauguration, such as the opening ceremony and balls.

"Inauguration Day is really the crescendo to the inaugural period," explains ETCM Tat Huen, AFIC's Navy liaison officer. "But the planning begins nearly a year in advance."

## Starting From Scratch

Even before the presidential campaigns are in full swing, the joint operations of the Armed Forces Inaugural Committee begin. And even though there are a lot of recurring requirements, the whole process begins anew every four years. Office space must be secured and communications established. Manpower from each of the military services must be selected, screened and assigned to fill AFIC's billets. Furniture, computers, office equipment and supplies must be acquired and maintained.

SK2 Stephany Sersen, a Navy Reservist from Maryland who shoulders supply clerk and billing office bookkeeper responsibilities for the AFIC, has been on the AFIC staff since March 2008. "We truly started from scratch. When I arrived, we had a shell of an office. We had no furniture, no computers, no phone lines," describes Sersen. "Part of my responsibility was to get things set up."

Once a physical base of operations is established, it must be staffed. Assignments to AFIC are filled by members of all branches of the armed services, and by Inauguration Day, approximately 5,000 military personnel – primarily Reservists, some active duty personnel and even a few retiree recalls – will be assigned to support inaugural ceremonies in one form or another.

Each service is responsible for screening and assigning AFIC personnel, and according to Maj. Maureen Schumann, USAF, chief of operations for the Public Affairs Directorate, "Each service screens for the sharpest folks to best represent them and the military as a whole for the inaugural."

As AFIC's Navy liaison officer, Huen is responsible for filling the Navy's billets.

Between August and October 2008, approximately 200 Navy personnel were assigned temporary duty in AFIC, all of whom were volunteers for the assignment. Tour length varies by billet and can be anywhere from 3 weeks to a maximum of 15 months.

"We've done the pre-screening and we're pleased to be getting the right fit,

not just filling the slots," says Huen. "The Navy is prepared to provide up to a total of 865 active duty, reserve, and academy personnel in support of the inaugural events. The final number will depend on the president-elect's requirements and requests from the Presidential Inaugural Committee."

Most on the AFIC staff are volunteers, but even those who didn't request the assignment appreciate the opportunity to be a part of history and share the experience with members of other service branches.

ETC Michael Axton, USNR, the NCO-in-charge of telecommunications for AFIC, is responsible for implementing the communications plan for the AFIC office and parade route, which will include 14 command posts, 102 analog lines and digital sublines. "This is a challenging assignment, but it's great to work in a joint environment where we learn about the different services' command structure. We have respect for one another's mission and support each service's requirements."

LT(jg) Karen Love, USCG, works in the Public Affairs Directorate and feels fortunate to be assigned to AFIC. "This is a very sought-after tour in the Coast Guard," says Love who applied for the position and arrived at AFIC in August. "I had the privilege of marching in a previous Inaugural Parade [as a USCG Academy cadet], and it's an amazing feeling to wait for that 'eyes right' command. This is an opportunity to see this historic event from a different perspective."

PA1 Kyle Niemi, USCG, was finishing up an advanced education program when he received his assignment to AFIC. Although not a volunteer, he's happy to represent the Coast Guard in this joint environment. "I'm often the first member of the Coast Guard many of my AFIC colleagues meet," says Niemi. "It's nice to be that ambassador and remind people that the Coast Guard is one of the Armed Services."

"In AFIC and in the military in general, we put our political ideology aside and focus on a common goal," adds Niemi. "We wear different uniforms, but we're all on the same team and have the same purpose. Our political views don't matter; we all strive to make the inauguration go smoothly. There's truly a non-partisan mindset here. Our job, in AFIC and as service members, is to support the structure of American democracy and the position of the Presidency, regardless of who's sitting in the Oval Office."

Like any other temporary assignment, each service must provide per diem and other support services for its personnel. But unlike other deployment-type duty, AFIC personnel are not backfilling those who've previously held their positions. Members of the last AFIC finished their work four years ago and have moved on to other

George Washington's second inaugural (4 March 1793) was the first to take place in Philadelphia, where he delivered the shortest inaugural address ever—135 words.

**INAUGURAL TRIVIA**

The theme for the 2009 Inauguration Ceremony and other Capitol Hill events is "A New Birth of Freedom," commemorating the 200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth.

**INAUGURAL TRIVIA**



assignments. And like those before them, a large part of the AFIC staff's responsibility is documenting their work and constructing a continuity manual for their successors.

"The document pass-down is really important," explains Love, "because there's no opportunity for a verbal turn-over. And this year's inaugural is also different because it's a change of command; not a reelection situation."

"There's a steep learning curve," adds Schumann. "We read the continuity books and those are a big help. Each time I go through them, something new clicks for me."

### Lots of Moving Parts

The military is involved in virtually every aspect of the inaugural festivities, including escorting the first and second families and cabinet members to and from official events, providing photojournalistic coverage and media support throughout the inaugural period, as well as organizing and participating in the Inaugural Parade. The AFIC makes recommendations to the JCCIC and the PIC, and is also responsible for responding to requests from their Inaugural Committee counterparts.

"The Secretary of Defense sets very specific guidelines for what and how military personnel and resources are used to support inaugural events," explains Cmdr. Andrea Palermo, USCG, chief of the Support Request Division. "For example, military bands may march in the parades and perform a patriotic opening at the balls, but they cannot provide musical entertainment at the balls. We wouldn't supply a truck if the PIC needed to move something. But if they wanted a tank or other piece of rolling stock in the parade, we could support that. But they might be charged for fuel, the delivery and return of the equipment, rehabilitation of the military equipment, if necessary or whatever else might be outlined in the SecDef guidelines. If the request is for something that's normally available through private-sector channels, the requestor must provide written certification that commercial sources are unavailable. The military doesn't want to compete with commercial enterprises."

The five days before January 20th and the four days following are full of inaugural events, This Inaugural Period traditionally includes an opening ceremony complete with fireworks and a star-studded cast, youth events, a salute to the military, and other various gatherings to honor the new president, vice president and cabinet members. AFIC coordinates with members of the JCCIC and PIC, and other senior advisors to provide needed support throughout the inaugural period.

"It's more work this time because it's a full change-out; not a reelection situation," explains Huen. "For example, new cabinet members may be unfamiliar with the ins and outs of Washington. AFIC personnel will provide escorts for them, as well as the first and second families, to and from various

events. We work to ensure the White House and the military are presented in the best and most appropriate light."

### Game Day

Once the viewing stands are erected and the bunting unfurled, it's show time for members of the AFIC, many of whom will be at work in the wee hours of Inauguration Day.

Capt. Scott Decker, USCG, will open the central command post around 2:00 AM on 20 January. "I'll be on hand to address any challenges that arise," explains Decker, who is the deputy director of the Ceremonies Directorate. "I've been on the AFIC staff since this summer and will continue to coordinate with our federal, state, local and DoD partners to make Inauguration Day go as smoothly as possible. There are an awful lot of moving parts," Decker chuckles. "In the last inaugural, there was a task list of about 1,200 line items for the parade alone. By mid-November of this year, we were already up to 850 line items and the list is growing daily."

The only event that *must* take place on Inauguration Day is the oath of office. "All the rest is really ceremonial, but the oath is the essential part. President Bush's term ends at noon on 20 January, so the swearing-in ceremony must take place before then to ensure we aren't without a president, even for a moment," explains Schumann.

President William Harrison delivered the longest inaugural address (4 March 1841) — 8,445 words. He was also the first president to arrive in Washington by railroad.

**INAUGURAL TRIVIA**





As President-Elect Obama's motorcade travels to the Capitol for the ceremony, the streets along his route will be lined with military personnel. Approximately 1,500 service members will stand 15 feet apart, facing the guests of honor and parade route. They are not assigned to provide security and will remain in place for the president's return to the White House after the ceremony and throughout the Inaugural Parade.

According to tradition, the oath of office takes place on the Capitol Steps, where first the vice president and then the president swear (or affirm) their faithful execution of the duties of office. Following the oath, the President's Own (the U.S. Marine Band) plays Hail to the Chief and a 21-gun salute is rendered by the 3<sup>rd</sup> U.S. Infantry Regiment, also known as the Presidential Salute Battery or The Old Guard. The new president then addresses the nation, outlining his vision for the country and his term of office.

Similar to other military change-of-command ceremonies, the outgoing leader quietly fades from the picture, allowing the new Commander in Chief to assume his rightful place in the spotlight. Following the inauguration ceremony, the outgoing president and first lady, as well as the outgoing vice president and his wife, leave the Capitol with little fanfare. In recent years the new president and vice president have escorted the departing leaders through a military cordon to a helicopter, which takes them to Andrews Air Force Base (AFB), where a low-key reception usually takes place.

2Lt. Georganne Schultz, USAF, will be one of many military members positioned at Andrews AFB on January 20th. "It's AFIC's responsibility to coordinate with Andrews, provide escorts and arrange interviews with members of the media who will be there to cover the presidential departure," explains Schultz. "Another big part of our job is to document the historical events related to the end of the Bush presidency."

Once the outgoing presidential party has left the Capitol, the new Administration goes inside for the Inaugural Luncheon, a tradition that dates back to 1897. The luncheon is hosted by the JCCIC and often features a menu that reflects the home states of the new president and vice president. The military plays a relatively small role in this Inauguration Day event, with the exception of military escorts for the first and second families and cabinet members.

Following the luncheon, a military team will escort the new president and vice president back to the White House.

African-Americans marched for the first time in Lincoln's second Inaugural Parade (4 March 1865). Women participated in the Inaugural Parade for the first time on 5 March 1917 for Woodrow Wilson's second inaugural.

### INAUGURAL TRIVIA

"Many people believe this is the start of the parade, but it's really a separate event," says Decker. "There are about 350 military personnel involved in the escort detail, plus the cordon personnel. The military contingent leads the motorcade back to the White House and traditionally includes the Army Old Guard in colonial uniforms, fife-and-drum units, the Army Band, and several other groups. The presidential motorcade follows behind."

## The Parade

The start time of the Inaugural Parade is orchestrated around the president's arrival at the White House. "The parade usually starts about 10 minutes after the motorcade leaves the Capitol. We have to allow time for the president to get to there and make his way to the reviewing stand," explains Cmdr. Craig Kujawa, USN, officer in charge of the Parade Division. "We can't have the parade going by an empty viewing stand, nor do we want the president waiting too long before the parade reaches him."

The Parade Division is the largest division in AFIC and is responsible for coordinating the involvement of approximately 12,000 participants, including 2,100 military personnel. "The Inaugural Parade is one of AFIC's primary responsibilities," says Kujawa. "Bands and other groups that want to march in the parade must submit their requests to AFIC. Then it's up to the PIC to select which groups will march and in what order they will appear." The AFIC and PIC Public Affairs team also work together to supply background and script information to the television crews who will be broadcasting the parade and providing commentary for the viewing audience.

While most AFIC personnel are new to the whole inaugural experience, Kujawa is serving a rare third AFIC tour. As a result, he has a unique perspective on this year's events. "There aren't a lot of differences in AFIC's operation from inaugural to inaugural. The one difference I've noticed this time is the increased level of interest in the parade. It's skyrocketed since the elections."

The tradition of the Inaugural Parade dates back to the first inaugural in 1789, when local militias joined President George Washington as he journeyed from Mount Vernon to New York City. The first organized parade honored President James Madison (1809) and the tradition has evolved to include marching bands (both civilian and military), floats, and such unusual additions as an Alaskan dog sled team and a shopping cart drill team.

"The parade route is approximately two miles long and the participants travel at about two-and-a-half miles per hour," explains Kujawa. "There's no stopping along the way. Nobody stops to do a demonstration or perform for the president. They all just keep moving."

The parade and all the balls and galas are paid for by the Presidential Inaugural Committee (PIC) and are funded through ticket sales, contributions and volunteered services and talent.

### INAUGURAL TRIVIA

Only Franklin Pierce chose to "affirm" the faithful execution of his presidential duties. All other presidents have used the word "swear" when taking the oath of office.

### INAUGURAL TRIVIA

Like most of the inaugural events, there is a great deal of behind-the-scenes action before and during the parade. "People who watch the parade live or on television won't see all the things happening before the parade starts," says Kujawa. "They won't see the preparation of all the horses, for example. Most of the equestrian groups that participate arrive the day before and stay just outside the city. On January 20th, they will be brought into the city and traditionally have been staged right outside our offices here on C Street."

Viewers also won't see all the security screenings that will be required for parade participants as well as the millions of spectators expected for this historic event. The Secret Service is the lead security agency and coordinates with other federal law enforcement agencies, the Capitol Police, the Metropolitan D.C. Police and a variety of other federal and local agencies. "It will be like a major sporting event," explains Kujawa, "with bag searches, etc."

## Balls and Galas

The Inaugural Parade is the largest part of AFIC's responsibility and when it's over, there's a collective sigh of relief and exhaustion. However the day isn't over for AFIC personnel. In addition to coordinating military escorts and musicians' appearances at the official inaugural balls, AFIC is also responsible for coordinating visual documentation at the numerous social events on Inauguration Night. Official balls are planned by the PIC and military involvement is permitted as long as the duties remain within the Secretary of Defense's guidelines. There are numerous

The longest parade (President Eisenhower's inaugural in 1953) lasted more than four-and-a-half hours and included 73 bands, 59 floats, military vehicles, horses and elephants.

### INAUGURAL TRIVIA

unofficial balls and parties during the inaugural period, which do not warrant military participation.

## The Post-Game

The majority of military personnel assigned to participate in the inauguration will return to their permanent duty stations shortly after 20 January, but a contingent of the AFIC staff will remain in place until March. There will be thousands of photographs to caption, catalog and preserve. And just as they relied upon their predecessors' insights, they will document their efforts in detail as a starting point for the AFIC staff of 2013. And all the materials and supplies SK2 Sersen helped secure nearly a year ago must be reallocated before AFIC turns off the lights.

"Once the inauguration is over, we'll be involved in redistributing all the non-consumables, such as furniture and computers," explains Sersen. "There's definitely more to the inauguration than what people see on January 20th."

Throughout all the hard work of planning and executing the Inauguration Day festivities, AFIC staff members are keenly aware of the historic significance of their efforts. When the dust settles and they return to their permanent assignments or civilian jobs, they will recall their AFIC duty with pride.

"It's such an honor to serve and be here representing the military, particularly those who are on the front lines and can't be here to witness our nation's largest change of command," says Decker.

Axton agrees. "The transition of power in the United States is like no other nation.

It's an honor for the military to support and honor the new Commander-in-Chief

and pay tribute to the outgoing president. Our role on Inauguration Day is to set the tone for the nation. We're the face of our citizens, the faces of our hometowns."

"Nobody gets rich being in the military," adds Maj. Andra Higgs, USAF, "but the military lifestyle provides a wealth of rich experiences. Being part of this inauguration is certainly one of those experiences."



**Lauren Armstrong** is Contributing Editor and LA FRA Member at Large.





**AS PART OF ITS** ongoing commitment to recognizing excellence among the enlisted Sea Service force, FRA recently honored top recruiters in the Coast Guard and Marine Corps, as well as other outstanding USMC personnel. FRA was instrumental in establishing the Navy's Recruiter of the Year (ROY) and Sailor of the Year (SOY) programs in the early 1970s and expanded its support to include the Marine Corps and Coast Guard's recruiting and other recognition programs.

In mid-November, FRA honored the Coast Guard's Recruiters of the Year at a ceremony in Groton, Ct. Penny Collins, FRA's director of Membership Services, attended the event where the service's top recruiters were acknowledged for their outstanding work in expanding and maintaining USCG manpower. Captain Steven Vanderplas, commanding officer of USCG Recruiting Command, hosted the award ceremony, which included an overview of FRA's work to preserve and enhance the quality of life for Sea Service personnel and their families.

For the eleventh consecutive year, FRA continued its long-standing tradition of recognizing excellence among Marine Corps personnel by participating in two award ceremonies at Quantico MCB, Va. John Davis, FRA's director Legislative Programs and a retired Marine Reservist, attended a ceremony and reception on 4 December 2008 to honor the USMC 2008 Staff Non-Commissioned Officers in Charge and Prior Service Recruiters Staff Non-Commissioned Officers in Charge of the Year for their tremendous service. Marine Corps leadership was represented by Brigadier General R. E. Milstead Jr., Commanding General of Marine Corps Recruiting Command.

Davis praised the enlisted leaders for their dedication to their mission and the future of the Corps. "The Marine Corps has a great tradition of meeting and exceeding its recruiting goals and filling its ranks with committed

men and women. The contributions made by the outstanding individuals being recognized today will pay dividends for the Corps and for our nation for decades to come," said Davis, who presented each honoree with the Association's National President's Award on behalf of National President Don Muckeck.

On 5 December, FRA's National Executive Director Joe Barnes presented awards to other Marine Corps' top performers during the 2008 Combined Awards Program. The annual ceremony, also held at Quantico, recognizes the Marine Corps' top Recruiters, Drill Instructors (DI), Marine Corps Embassy Security Guards (MSG), Career Retention Specialists and Combat Instructors (CI). General James Amos, Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, and Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Carlton Kent were in attendance.

Barnes congratulated the honorees and also acknowledged the contribution of the family members and loved ones who've supported their Marines and the Corps. "The Corps is built on a rich tradition of Marines supporting one another, and that also extends to the spouses and family members of these outstanding Marines."



Joe Barnes, FRA's National Executive Director, congratulates Sergeant James M. Foley on his nomination as the Marine Corps' top combat instructor for 2008. Foley, who represents the Corps' School of Infantry West (Camp Pendleton, Calif.), received the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal during a ceremony cosponsored by FRA.

Member's of Branch 20 (Groton, Conn.) played an important role in the 2008 USCG Recruiters of the Year ceremony. Shown (l to r, in dark jackets) are Branch Chaplain Ed Lace, RPNEng Paul Loveless, Branch President Rick Aiken, Secretary Billye Serabian, and Shipmate Will Nelson with USCG recruiters and Penny Collins, FRA's director of Membership Services.





**FRA WISHES FORMER MASTER** Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) Joe Campa all the best as he retires from the military. Prior to his retirement, he spoke with FRA about his tenure as the Navy's senior Sailor and his plans for the future. Here are his comments:

**What has been most gratifying about your tenure as MCPON?**

The opportunity to interact with Sailors and influence the policies that impact them and their families has been extremely rewarding. We've made great strides in programs such as our Fleet and Family Support Centers and have developed a strong network for outreach with our Ombudsman program.

We've also been able to bring the focus back to the enlisted force and a more traditional brand of leadership. That leadership has always been there, but I'm pleased that we've reestablished a link to the past and our rich heritage.

**You've had many successes during your tour as MCPON. Of which are you most proud?**

I'm pleased with the development of our Mission and Vision Guidelines and our ability to align them with training and evaluations for our chiefs. Helping chief petty officers understand what's expected of them and then evaluating them on how well they meet those standards benefits Sailors and strengthens the Navy as an institution.

We've also formalized the expectations for first class petty officers, which complements the Mission and Vision Guidelines for chiefs. There's always been a great deal of talent out there, but we've never defined these expectations. Now they're part of the selection board precepts for petty officers, and our Sailors are absolutely stepping up to the challenge.

**Is there anything you wish you could have accomplished that you didn't?**

We're in the process of redoing the evaluation requirements for E-6s and below and I don't think that will be completed and approved before my departure. I look forward to seeing the outcome of that.

**What advice do you have for your relief?**

Obviously, the next MCPON will do things in their own way. My only advice is this: Don't forget who you are. Don't forget you're a chief petty officer.

A MCPON can't lose sight of a chief's responsibility to Sailors. Those guiding principles I mentioned earlier apply to the MCPON as well as the newest chief in the Navy. We all have a shared responsibility and I encourage my successor to not lose sight of that. The rest is up to them.

**How can FRA assist your successor to support Sailors and their families?**

I'd like to thank FRA for all they do to support our Sailors and their families,

many of whom don't even realize the role FRA plays in improving their quality of life. We often get caught up in the day-to-day operations, and organizations like FRA keep Sailors and their families at the center of all they do. They're a beacon for any leader and have been a strong reminder to me of our responsibilities in that realm. Navy leaders and the FRA have a lot of shared interests; we complement one another's work. I hope that continues with the next MCPON.

**What parting message would you like to share with deckplate Sailors?**

It's been an incredible honor and privilege to serve and represent them. Seeing them conducting missions around the world is truly an inspiration. No matter where I visited them, I was constantly inspired by them all. Their spirit is something I'll never forget and the seagoing culture I've grown accustomed to over the course of my career will stay with me forever.

**Can you tell us what you'll be doing after you leave the Navy?**

I'm looking to continue my service to the nation in a different capacity. After a lifetime of service, I can't just turn that off, so I'll be looking for ways to continue that service.



MCPON Campa and NED Joe Barnes discuss DoD policies that impact Sailors' quality of life.



Shipmate Wilho "Tommy" Tommila chats with MCPON Campa during the Senior Enlisted Forum at FRA's 81st National Convention.



Campa is one of several MCPONs who've signed Shipmate Bob Rutherford's Blue Jacket Manual.

Australia's Gold Koalas are here! They traveled halfway across the globe to reach America—and now you have the opportunity to make the new 2008 Gold Koala coins from “Down Under” part of your collection!



### FIRST-EVER, Exclusive U.S. Release

Thanks to an exclusive agreement with Australia's world-famous Perth Mint, New York Mint has secured the rights to the first coins struck of this first year of issue. This is the first-time this offer has been released in the United States. Plus, each legal-tender coin is struck in .9999 pure 24-karat gold and has been certified in

Gem Proof condition by Professional Coin Grading Service (PCGS).

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Featuring an engaging vignette of a Koala mother and her cuddly cub clinging to her back, each 1/25 oz. coin has also been certified by the Mint Master at the prestigious Perth Mint to be one of the first coins struck. The combination of this one-year-only design and its gold purity as well as the pristine condition and desirable “First Strike” status has collector interest running sky high. Like its Panda counterpart, the Gold Koala coins will feature a new design each year, and this 2008 issue is sure to please collectors worldwide!

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## FRA's Role in Establishing the "Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy" Post

Although the Marine Corps created the senior enlisted position of Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps in 1957, the other services were not authorized to establish an equivalent enlisted post until legislation was passed in 1966.

According to *The Brotherhood of the Sea* (Nolan, 1993), Navy leadership wasn't overly enthusiastic about the billet, but on 13 January 1967, Master Chief Gunners Mate Delbert D. Black, USN, was appointed as the "Senior Enlisted Advisor of the Navy." Black came to Washington with little fanfare and was given an "office about the size of a broom closet." Although his counterparts in the Army and Air Force were introduced to leaders of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees by their parent services, Black received no such introduction by the Navy.

Upon learning that Black had not met House Armed Services Committee Chairman L. Mendel Rivers, FRA's National Executive Secretary at the time, Bob Nolan, took action. He arranged and attended a meeting between Rivers, Black and the Committee's Chief Counsel John Blandford to discuss the challenges of the new position. The title of Senior Enlisted Advisor, for example, was not a military designation and could be confused for a civilian employee at the Pentagon. FRA believed Black's title should be "Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy" to reflect his military status and rate. FRA also expressed its belief that the senior-most enlisted persons in all services should have their own pay grade and receive



1st Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) Delbert Black

more basic pay than any other enlisted member. Additionally, FRA noted inequities in the treatment of the four senior enlisted advisors, and lobbied for standardized privileges and honors.

A letter was drafted the same day to the Secretary of the Navy asking for the changes FRA recommended. The Navy balked at the title change (the stationery had already been printed), but after diplomatic intervention by FRA, the title was changed to Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) only a few days later. The other inequities were corrected in short order and a new pay grade (E-10) was legislated.

FRA continued to acknowledge the importance of the MCPON billet by including Black in all its communication with the Bureau of Naval Personnel, and requesting Black's presence at all its appointments with Navy officials. FRA was



12th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) Rick West

integral in helping to establish the MCPON as a relevant member of the Navy's leadership structure, and continues to work closely with the MCPON and his staff to improve the quality of life for Sailors and their families.

Fleet Master Chief (SS/SW) Rick West became the 12th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) on 12 December 2008, replacing MCPON Joe Campa, Jr. West will continue the MCPON tradition forged by his predecessors who have shaped the Navy's enlisted force. FRA congratulates MCPON West and looks forward to a close working relationship.

What are your recollections of the MCPONs who led during your Navy career? How did you benefit from their leadership? What advice would you offer to MCPON West as he begins his tenure? Visit [www.fra.org/history](http://www.fra.org/history) to share your insights.





**BRANCH 1 PHILADELPHIA, PA.**

Shipmate Myron Stemple (center) is recognized for his 50 years of continuous FRA membership by Branch President Patrick Larose (left) and PRPNE Charles Raney, Sr. (right).



**BRANCH 72 FALL RIVER, MASS.**

Five shipmates receive continuous membership awards: (l to r) William Fonseca (40 years), Branch President John Buzzi (30 years), Donald Bernardo (10 years), Branch Secretary Allen Given (25 years), and Richard Wallace (40 years).



**BRANCH 287 LIVERMORE, CALIF.**

Shipmate Lloyd Busbee (right) accepts his 40-year continuous membership certificate and pin from Branch President Steve Wilson, as Busbee's son Roger looks on.



**BRANCH 259 FAYETTEVILLE, N.C.**

Branch President Gerry Campbell presents a U.S. Savings Bond and certificate to Emily Updegrove. Emily is an 11th grade student who placed first at the branch and regional level in FRA's 2008 Americanism Essay Contest.



**BRANCH 229 NEWBURGH, N.Y.**

Dan McHale (left) and Joe Tuddeo (right), both students at Marlboro (N.Y.) High School, gained new perspective on history and patriotism after learning of their grandfathers' heroic actions in WWII. Both students participated in FRA's Americanism Essay Contest, honoring their grandfathers' as Silver Star recipients in their respective submissions.

**BRANCH 256 FT. LAUDERDALE, FLA.**

Branch members honored former Branch Secretary Thomas Weil (second from right) with a farewell dinner. Shipmates (l to r) Don Stone, Al DeCamillis, Branch President Lawrence Williams, Stuart Litman, Secretary/Treasurer Kevin Smith, Weil and Don Burroughs were on hand for the event.

**BRANCH 178 MONTEREY, CALIF.**

Branch Secretary Edgar Kloth mans an FRA booth at a retiree seminar. The branch recruited one new member and will follow-up with the many prospective members who asked for more information.

**BRANCH 281 REDDING, CALIF.**

Members of the local NJROTC detachment presented a rifle drill demonstration during the branch's annual picnic. The branch also contributed \$548 to the unit's push-up challenge, paying a penny for each push-up completed during the school year.

**BRANCH 136 CRYSTAL, MINN.**

Shipmate Richard Garty, chairman of the branch's Youth Activities Committee, presents a flag to Scoutmaster Don Peterson of Troop 84 during the scouts' Rum River (Minn.) campout.

**BRANCH 317 LOS ALAMITOS, CALIF.**

Branch President Bill Wulf (with gavel) poses with Branch officers for the 2008-2009 Association Year.

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



**Naval Cryptologic Veterans Association**

9–12 September 2009, Portland, Ore.  
 Contact Graydon A. Lewis, 541-689-0721, portland2009@usncva.org.

**USS Begor APD-127**

30 Sept.–3 Oct. 2009, Portland, Ore.  
 Contact Rich Parady, USN (Ret.) 315 W. Evans Creek Rd. # 50, Rogue River, OR 97537, 541-582-1761, rogriv@q.com.

**USS Inchon Association**

22–26 April 2009, Herndon, Va.  
 Contact David Fix 1868 Pool Forge Lancaster, PA 17601-4627, 717-203-4152, fixie5659@gmail.com.

**USS SCAMP SSN588**

6–9 May 2009, Charleston, S.C.  
 Contact Lou Minor 2233 E Boones Trail Sierra Vista, AZ 85650, 520-732.1750, lou@uss-scamp.com.

**USS SPIKEFISH (SS404)**

15–17 June 2009, Groton, Conn.  
 Contact Fred Young 3202 Hartnett Blvd Isle of Palms, SC 29451, 843-886-8447, iopfredpenny@aol.com.

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



LOOKING FOR...

**CPO Brickey**

We were stationed together at Dam Neck, Virginia in the 1960s as instructors. Contact Bobby Boeneke, 1923 Oak Grove Circle, Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250.

**PH2 Mike Delamore**

On 31 August 1966, PH2 Delamore photographed the rescue of LCDR Tommy Tucker out of Hiaphong Harbor from an HS-6 SAR helicopter. Former HS-6 Pilots and Aircrewmen want to invite him to join our 6 May 2009 reunion in Pensacola, Fla. Contact Don Leland Stanford at [nvysrchief@yahoo.com](mailto:nvysrchief@yahoo.com).

**Signalman with his light off**

In the late 1950s, I was a signalman on USS Carter Hill (LSD-3). We were on a small landing operation a few miles north of San Diego when I spotted a Sailor calling our ship. His light was not on, but I could read the reflector as the sun was shining on it. My striker acknowledged the call, and I receipted the message. Then I told him to turn on his light. He seemed quite perplexed. Somewhere there is a signalman who remembers this situation and, if he's still around, I'd be proud to hear from him. I'm nearly 74 years old and I imagine he has a few years on him, too. Contact J.C. Bonham, 408 Chaucer Road, Riverside, OH 45431, 937-253-1678.

**YNC Kenneth Collier (wife Myra Palmer Collier)**

Stationed at BUPERS, Washington, D.C., in 1960s and 1970s, and retired there. Last known address was in New Orleans in the late 1970s. Contact John E. Adams, 23878 Mt. Olivet Road, Easton, KS 66020, 913-773-5749.

**EM1 Donald J. Adams**

On 9 October 1966, EM1 Adams assisted Indian Gal 66, a rescue helo dangerously low on fuel, by attaching a fuel hose to the helo's rescue hoist cable and tending it during the refueling operation. For his actions under these dangerous circumstances, he was awarded a special letter of commendation from the Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Fleet. Former HS-6 Combat SAR Aircrew would like to acknowledge his contribution to our efforts, make him an Honorary Redskin and invite him to join us at our 2009 Reunion. Contact Don Leland Stanford at [nvysrchief@yahoo.com](mailto:nvysrchief@yahoo.com).

**Shipmates of Alfred Sweet**

who served aboard the USS Samuel Chase during the invasion of Sicily and Normandy. Contact Alfred Sweet at 1 Oakland Ave., Rockaway, NJ 07866-1910, 973-627-4734, or [mmec25@aol.com](mailto:mmec25@aol.com).



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Alexander, Robert L., ENC	MAL		
Amster, Max, DTC	061	Hale, George B., Jr., LTJG USN	MAL
Andersen, Robert, GMCS	061	Hamilton, Lynn R., CPO USN	166
Anderson, John W., MMC	MAL	Harand, Robert W., HMCS	037
Andre, Richard W., ADJC	MAL	Harding, James E., PN1	067
Arnold, Thomas, CAPT USN	024	Helmerich, Mack W., AMSC	177
Asby, Larry, MGYSGT	060	Henry, Charles D., AFCM	101
Ayala, Jerry R., LIC	290	Hess, James P., HMC	142
		Hester, William L., SFC	117
Bain, Walter A., RMC	MAL	Huffman, Fon B., BTC	263
Bartlett, Henning F., MMC	293	Hughes, Robert H., ADRC	101
Batchelder, Robert K., POCM USN	061		
Bautsch, Bill T., RMC	MAL	Ironside, James, ADR1	162
Bell, Earl C., LCDR USN	249		
Berg, Reuben, ADJ1	241	Johnson, Jeter C., Jr., DTC	052
Blackwelder, Earl, GYSGT	313	Johnson, John H., EMC	130
Bonner, Gaines W., LIC	264	Johnston, William F., LT USN	144
Bowery, John A., Jr., BUC	256	Jones, James R., LCDR USN	091
Brown, Charles W., Jr., AFCM	024		
Burgess, James N., AMHC	MAL	Keller, William B., 1STSGT	MAL
Butterfield, Richard S., SKCS	186	Kizer, Johnnie W., CS1	126
Buzard, George W., YNCS	MAL	Kluttz, Thomas S., CSC	077
		Koppen, Henry B., RMC	061
Campanelli, Rocco T., CPO USN	MAL	Kutch, Fred, USNR RET	MAL
Canniff, Daniel J., Sr., GMGC	181		
Castagnola, Vincent A., SKCM	MAL	Lankford, Charles J., ATC	126
Cayou, Mylo R., EQCM	120	Lemasters, Paul S., ADRC	068
Chase, Bertram P., LCDR USN	022	Luedke, Robert, AC1	MAL
Chase, Christopher S., CSC	MAL	Lynch, Norris, RT3	382
Cheek, Thomas E., ADJC	126		
Clark, Charles F., FTC	053	Maiden, Earl C., PO1 USN	005
Colclessor, Kenneth A., 1STSGT	MAL	Mantle, Kenneth R., AVCM	022
Coleman, Dean V., ADJC	022	Marhul, Joseph A., EH1	003
Conlon, Matthew H., BMC	226	Markowski, Edward J., RMCS	024
Cozine, Richard H., PO1 USN	091	Maroldy, Thomas M., CDR USN	024
		Mayes, James W., ETC	MAL
Davis, Leslie D., AS/CDR USN	163	McCubbin, William G., SSGT	099
DeAngelis, Jeffry Thomas, MM2	290	McDermott, John R., EO2	MAL
Dent, James F., MUC	024	McDonald, William H., Jr., AOC	091
Disher, Greg, LTC	238	McNulty, Cornelius C., PFC	132
Doll, David C., HTC	050	Michael, Paul, ADC	MAL
Dolliver, Reginald F., SKCS	099	Middleton, James, USN VET	094
Drager, Martin H., EMCS	MAL	Miller, Forrest V., PRCM	146
Dunaway, Grover, BMC	024	Miner, Paul, PO1 USN	MAL
Duncan, Reginald W., ETC	MAL	Mixon, Alkus E., BM1	346
Dupre, Anthony J., MMC	008	Mock, Robert, ADC	MAL
Dupy, Marvin O., ADR2	375	Mohler, Phillip S., GSCS	290
Duzan, William O., TDCS	097	Montague, Stanley A., HMC	342
		Morgan, Edward B., FTCS	057
Eles, J., 1STLT USMC	MAL	Morich, Petral, LT USN	MAL
Elliott, Joe B., CPO USN	178	Morris, Harold L., BM1	282
Eubank, Ralph, PN1	159	Mulkey, Howard R., YN1	MAL
Evans, Everett D., BM1	022	Murphy, Thomas J., BMC	MAL
		Murray, Charles E., AOC	MAL
Fisher, Evered N., ADR1	MAL	Musgrove, James C., ABHC	MAL
Fleming, John P., SCPO USN	181	Mussler, Allan, CWO2 USN	018
Goodwin, Lee R., IC1(SS)	053	O'Brien, Walter T., HTC	030
Greene, Donald F., Sr., RMC(SS)	156	O'Connell, Wm. F., CWO USN	003
Gvist, Eugene T., QMC	MAL		



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Peterson, Cleo E., BMC	230
Poddig, George F., QMC(SS)	316
Potter, Nathan A., SN USNR	091
Pugh, Thomas W., Sr., ADR1	MAL
Reaser, Robert E., DCC	091
Redd, Eldred T., MSC	104
Richards, Charles M., LT USNR	MAL
Rieth, Gerald N., ATC	MAL
Rizza, Joe, ALC	093
Roberts, Marcus C., BTCS	MAL
Roderick, Donald D., MSC(SW)	053
Rowan, Regina O., SKC	022
Rushing, Lee R., BM1	MAL
Sabourin, Mary, SGTMAJ	208
Sandstrom, Frank, GMC	060
Sandusky, Lloyd J., ADC	008
Savage, Marion W., SD2	126
Schuldt, Charles E., ADCS	166
Schullt, Robert D., YNCS	085
Sgambati, Salvador J., EOCS	MAL
Siemonsma, Daniel J., RMCS(SS)	276
Sigmund, Edward, ADJC	MAL
Smith, Benjamin F., SKCM	005
Smith, Harold F., AEC	MAL
Smith, Robert, LCDR USNR	MAL
Smith, William R., FCCS(SW)	026
Spence, James E., QMC	MAL
Sprouse, Jay O., CPO USN	MAL
Stalsberg, Ronald G., GMGC	203
Stecher, Edwin H., AEC	049
Stephan, Roland C., LT USN	MAL
Sulpacio, Joaquin C., MSC	302
Swafford, Robert F., HMC	047
Sykes, Leon, MSGT	159
Takac, Richard E., CPO USN	201
Tallmon, Harvey E., SSGT	175
Testman, Alvin E., ADRC	022
Thomas, Lawrence R., POC USN	MAL
Totten, Carl O., HMC	104
Tovar, Trinidad, BM1	MAL
Trueman, Thomas A., AVCM	091
Udart, William B., Jr., GYSGT	181



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*TAPS continued from page 32*

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Warren, James F., AEC	094	Yarbrough, Godfrey B., MMCM	316
Watson, Wayne F., GYSGT	091	Youngberg, Vernon, DPC	017
Wellons, A. G., Jr., CAPT USN	091		
White, David E., GMTC	MAL	Zinsmeister, Oliver C., MSGT	024
Whitworth, Russell A., MCPO USN	090		
Williams, Richard L., HMC(DV)	MAL		
Wilson, Richard, POCM USN	MAL		
Woods, Everette G., GMG1	060		

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## Message from the New England Regional President

**THANK YOU TO THE** members of the New England Region for the honor of serving as Regional President once again. It is hard to believe twenty-two years have passed since I served in this capacity. The Auxiliary has seen many changes over the years, but the devotion to our principles of "Loyalty, Protection and Service" keeps our Auxiliary strong and proud.

It was only fitting my first "official" visit as Regional President was to my home Unit 66, South Shore in South Weymouth, Massachusetts. It was wonderful to view the excitement of the members receiving the certificates earned for their efforts at the National Convention.

Our New England Region is small but the Units strive to maintain the principles of the Auxiliary by working closely with the Veterans Hospital through visits and donations of toiletry items, books and handmade lap blankets. They also support our "Armed Forces" through provision of "Care Packages". Unit members place wreaths at the National Cemetery in Bornne, Massachusetts, on Veterans Day and during the holiday season. They work closely with the youth in their communities by promoting patriotism and providing flags to students and sponsoring scholarships. Several Units contribute time and money to local shelters and Hospice.

All of our Units are collecting and earning monies to donate to Georgia Gallagher's National President's Project, "St. Jude Children's Research Hospital".

I look forward to my term ahead and visiting all the New England Units. It is my wish to each of you reading this article, "A Healthy, Happy, New Year," filled with peace and love.



**KATHIE POTTER**  
*Regional President New England*

---

**Fran Hoadley** is the editor of *LA FRA News* and the *FRA Today* Liaison.



**Unit 363, Lower Columbia, Longview, Wash.**

A 50 year pin and certificate was presented to Jan Morris (on the left) by Patsy Hite, Unit 363 Secretary on November 14, 2008. Jan joined the LA FRA on February 1, 1955, at the age of 16.



**South Shore Unit 66 receiving their certificates of merit awarded at the National Convention presented by Kathie Potter, Regional President New England.**

Left to Right: Clare Payne, Unit Secretary; Mae Roy, Member; Marjorie Pitcher, Jr. Past Regional President New England; Kathie Potter, Regional President New England; Grace Smith and Peg McPherson Past Regional Presidents, New England; and Mae Cowland, Member.



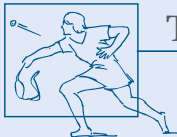


# *Asbestos Cancer Hits Former Sailors*

Many sailors who served their country proudly aboard ships in the World War II, Korean, and Vietnam War eras, are now being **diagnosed with asbestos-related cancers.**

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# MESOTHELIOMA AND RETIRED SAILORS

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

## FREE INITIAL LEGAL CONSULTATION

If you or a loved one has been diagnosed with MESOTHELIOMA LUNG CANCER, please call us immediately to find out about the compensation you may be entitled to recover.

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Your legal claims must be filed within the time period allowed by law or you and your family members will lose all of your rights to recover against the corporations that are responsible for your injuries. **CALL NOW!**

*"These guys sure  
helped me out after  
I got diagnosed"*

**LeRoy Riddell**

U.S. Navy Retired

Member VFW, DAV, American Legion  
and the Fleet Reserve

Former National President of the  
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\* Past successes cannot be an assurance of future successes since each case is decided on its own merits.



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