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FRA *today*



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wears blue

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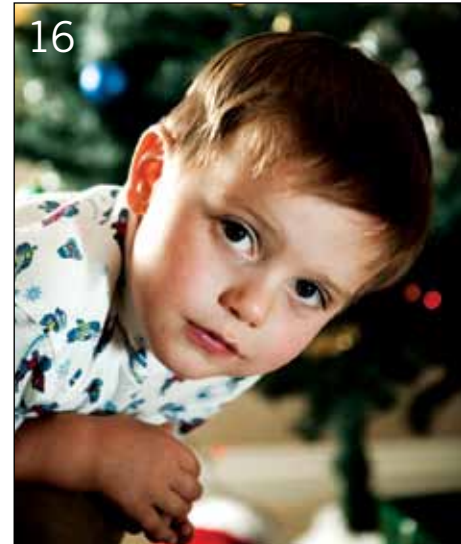
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Featured

16 SOMETIMES SANTA WEARS BLUE

What began as a desire to give a single Christmas gift to a needy child has grown into a nationwide program that now benefits more than 7.6 million children annually. Toys For Tots is directed by the United States Marine Corps Reserve and continues to fulfill its founder's belief that "every child deserves a little Christmas."



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LOYALTY, PROTECTION AND SERVICE

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

ON THE COVER

As the holiday season approaches, thousands of Marine Reservists, retired Marines and civilian volunteers will be particularly busy bringing messages of hope and cheer to millions of children around the country through the Toys For Tots program.

The Importance of Retention



Eileen Murphy

AS THIS ISSUE OF *FRA Today* goes to press, the Shipmates of the FRA and Ladies of LA FRA are gathered at their respective National Conventions in Virginia Beach, Va. The next issue of *FRA Today* will cover the news of the week.

As we prepared for the Convention, the National Headquarters staff pulled together some statistics that are worthy of sharing with all readers. As has been addressed in FRA's Strategic Action Plan and many articles in this publication, membership decline is a concern Association-wide. However, did you know:

- The total of members new to the association increased by 16% from 2006 to 2009
- FRA recruits over 4,000 new or reinstated members each year
- FRA established a new branch in Crossville, Tennessee in 2009. Welcome Branch 294!
- Approximately 870 members participated in the Recruiting Awards Program and received pins for recruiting 1, 2, 3, 10, or 50 members
- 49 branches qualified for FRA's 100% Award this year by maintaining or increasing their total membership number.
- 152 FRA shipmates attained 60 or more years of continuous service this year

These are really exciting statistics, but as always, there is a flip-side. Since 2006, FRA has lost 8,377 members-at-large and 13,315 branch members. Retention is the key issue for the future of FRA. Statistically, we know that shipmates who are actively involved maintain their memberships. NewsBytes subscribers and Action Center users are 70-80% more likely to renew their memberships than non-subscribers, for instance. Those are shipmates who see activity on the Hill, know the hard work and progress of FRA, and are consistently reminded of the legislative importance of their memberships. FRA's principle program is legislative advocacy. Be involved, get your fellow shipmates involved, and retain the members we have.

The coming year can be a wonderful year of positive transition to a growing association!

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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.

FRA today

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- Publisher** FRA
Managing Editor Eileen Murphy
Contributing Editor Lauren Armstrong
Design and Art Direction
 FIREBRAND, Alexandria, VA www.firebrandstudios.com
Design Director Scott Rodgeron
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: FRATODAY@FRA.ORG
WWW.FRA.ORG

VOLUME 88 NUMBER 11

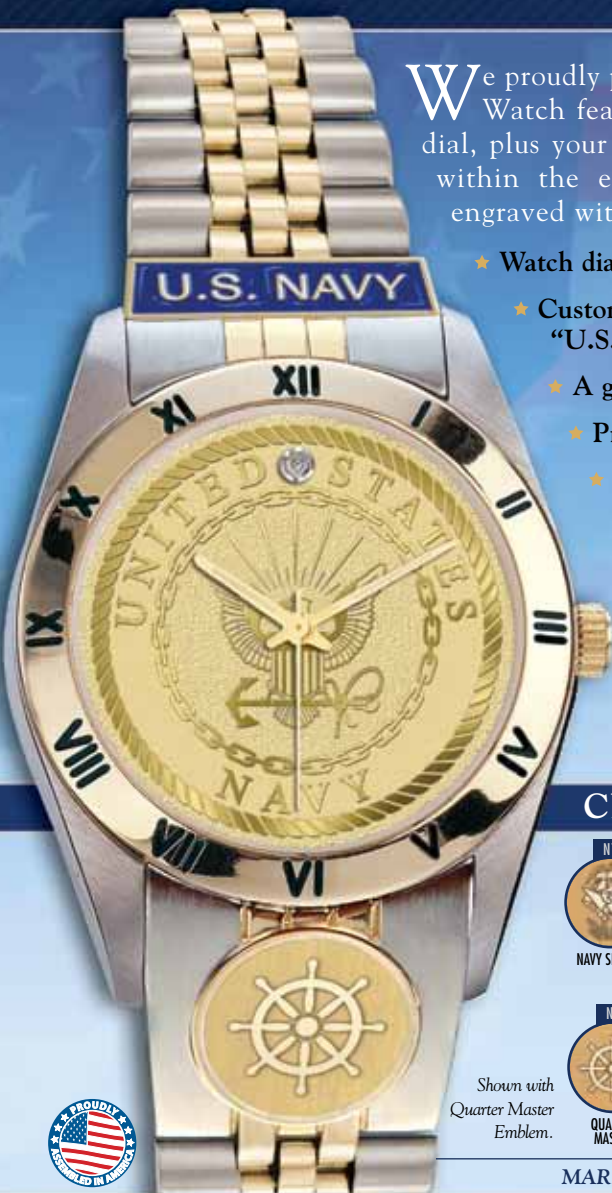


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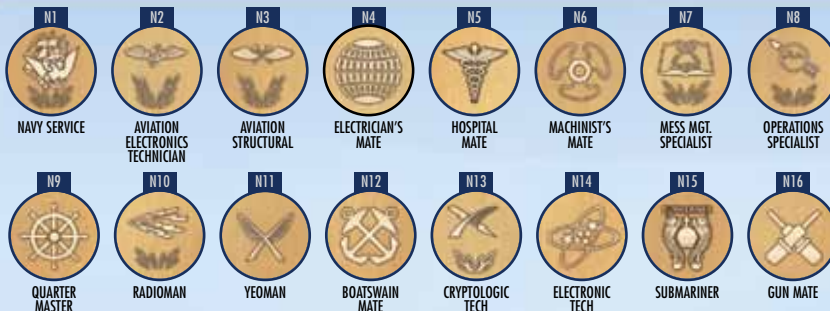
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Joe Barnes

The FRA Education Foundation

FRA'S SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM HAS been helping deserving students reach their educational and professional goals for decades, presenting annual awards of up to \$5,000 to FRA members, their spouses, children and grandchildren who are pursuing college degrees.

The scholarship program began years ago with two awards — the FRA Scholarship and the Schuyler Pyle Scholarship, named for the former FRA National Financial Secretary. The Bureau of Naval Personnel publicized these and various other scholarships and solicited applications from the entire active duty community.

Navy support and involvement in promoting scholarships waned over time, but the Association's scholarship program, which is administered and promoted by the FRA, has evolved substantially over the years. In the past decade alone, the number of recipients has increased by more than 50 percent and the monetary value of the awards has grown by more than 260 percent. Just since 2000, the FRA scholarship program has awarded over 200 scholarships totaling more than \$850,000. These awards are possible through generous contributions from our members, corporate sponsors and legacy gifts.

Helping these scholars reflects a compelling need to support the education of service members, veterans and their family members and also reflects the Association's commitment to improving military and veteran education benefits on Capitol Hill. FRA works tirelessly to advance legislation that ensures maximum education benefits are authorized and funded by Congress. The Association also fought to ensure the new Post-9/11 GI Bill would benefit VEAP-era career service members who previously had no education benefits and to allow transferability of benefits

to family members as a career incentive for longer-serving personnel.

Despite this generous new education program, there are many who don't qualify for the benefit or the transferability option for family members due to their respective periods of qualifying service. As an associated measure of the need for military and veteran education benefits, the national unemployment rate is 9.8 percent; over 11.3 percent for veterans — a sobering statistic related in part to education and training.



With this in mind, FRA is further expanding the scope of its scholarship program this year by launching the FRA Education Foundation in conjunction with its 85th anniversary. This is a separate, tax-exempt 501(c)3 organization whose programs and functions are limited to charitable or educational purposes. Contributions are tax deductible and the Foundation is also applying to participate in the annual Combined Federal Campaign which is administered by the Office of Personnel Management.

Official documentation has been secured through the Commonwealth of Virginia and the IRS, and the Foundation was officially announced during Joint Opening Ceremonies of the FRA's 82nd National Convention and the LA FRA's 77th National Convention in Virginia Beach, Va. on Wednesday,

October 21, 2009. In anticipation of the above-referenced announcement, information/solicitation letters have been sent to various organizations known to support military and veterans programs and a broader list is being developed for future mailings to other corporate, philanthropic and affinity organizations. Donations from individuals are also welcome and a plan for future solicitations is being developed and will be soon be implemented.

FRA's National Board of Directors (NBOD) appoints the Foundation's board of directors and the Foundation will operate with its own governing documents, bank account, accounting and finances. NBOD Resolutions (NBR 17-09, NBR 18-09 and NBR 19-09) were approved on April 25, 2009, regarding composition of the Foundation Board and any changes to the Foundation's Bylaws must be ratified by the FRA NBOD.

A Foundation Web page is being developed at www.fra.org/foundation, where press releases, donation opportunities and other information will be posted as this new initiative takes flight.

Thanks in advance for your support of the new FRA Education Foundation and watch for more information in future issues of *FRA Today* and in other communications.

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.

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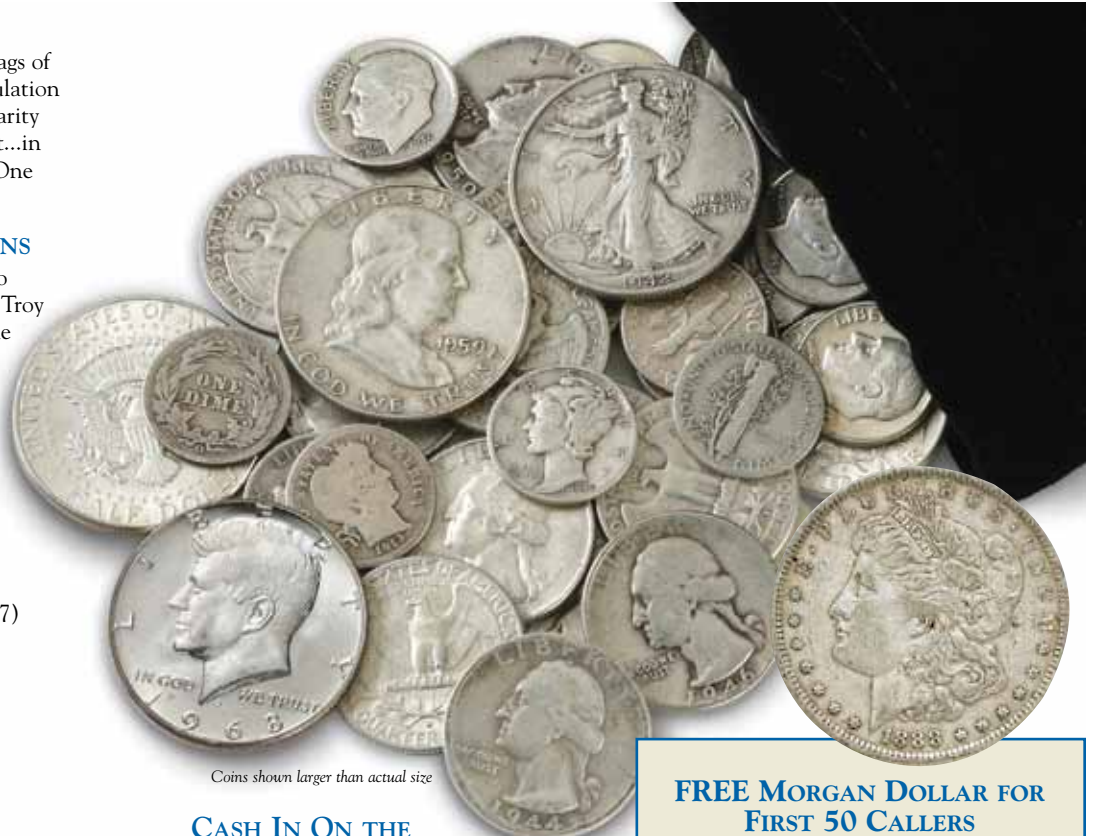
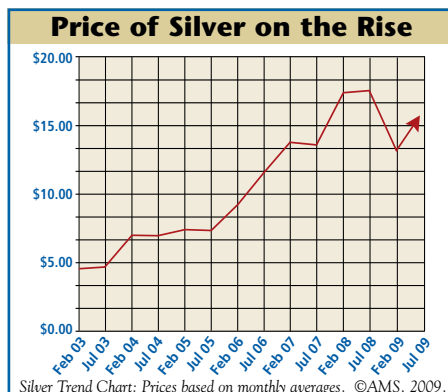
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FRA Today More Readable

My eye-sight is failing and I'd like the print in my FRA Today to be larger. Is that possible?

Alexander Staknis

FRA Response: Firebrand Studios, the graphic design firm that makes FRA Today look so terrific, works hard to make our magazine as reader-friendly as possible, while at the same time, packing in all the information we want to share each month. Although we can't increase the font size for the printed version of the magazine, readers with Internet access can view FRA Today online at www.fra.org (under the Publications tab). The pdf format allows the text to be enlarged on the screen for easier reading.

The Navy's New Service Uniform

During a recent visit to the commissary at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, I spotted a military man in a uniform that I was unfamiliar with. I approached him, and to my surprise, he was a Navy 1st Class Petty Officer.

I was surprised at the khaki and dark blue combination he had on. The new uniform was not, in my opinion, the least bit impressive. I have seldom questioned the "wisdom" of those appointed over me, but this time, I think somebody made a really boneheaded decision.

In the mid-1970's I spent a tour on recruiting duty close to an Army base, and I was sometime mistaken for a soldier when they saw my khaki uniform. If this new uniform is intended to prevent that, well, I guess maybe they succeeded. Beyond that, this (again in my humble opinion) is just another in a long line of [decisions] that have further eroded the proud tradition that others in Navy uniform displayed in years past.

Robert Holmes

FRA Response: The Navy's new service uniform is designed to be a more practical service uniform to withstand day-to-day wear in office and classrooms environments. The black and tan uniform made its debut in February of this year at

Naval District Washington, and will eventually replace the Winter Blue and Summer White Uniforms to become a single, year-round service uniform for enlisted personnel in rates E-1 through E-6. The phase-in of the new uniform should be complete Navy-wide by April of 2010.

Flag Code Questions

I have not seen or read of anything being clearly defined about the veterans' hand salute during the Pledge of Allegiance. Is it proper for retirees and veterans to render the hand salute instead of the hand-over-the-heart as is to be used by civilians?

I am very proud of my 38 years of service in the U.S. Navy and feel that the hand salute is more proper and respectful, and demonstrates a special form of respect from someone who has "been there and done that!"

R.F. Hiteshew, ISCS, USN (Ret.)

Can you clarify the new change to the Flag Code about veterans saluting the flag during the national anthem, raising and lowering the flag, and when the flag is passing in review. I know the new change states that veterans can salute while in civilian attire, but if a veteran is wearing a cap (either a cap with ship, squadron, or other military insignia, just a plain baseball cap or possibly a fedora-style hat) should he salute with his cover on, or does he remove the hat prior to saluting the flag?

Jim Ulle

FRA Response: The recent changes in the Flag Code do not address veterans rendering a hand salute during the Pledge of Allegiance, nor do they indicate whether the salute should be rendered with or without cover. Veterans are left to make their own decision on this matter, but Navy and Marine Corps leaders have issued service-specific statements advising active duty personnel they should NOT render a hand salute when out of uniform or when uncovered.

What do you think? Visit www.fra.org/communities to post your opinion.

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Defense Bill NDAA Blocks TRICARE Fee Increase and Expands Benefits



John Davis

IN TESTIMONY, IN CORRESPONDENCE and in discussions with legislators and staff, FRA's Legislative Team consistently expressed concerns during the past year about the prohibition on TRICARE fee increases that expired at the end of FY2009. Despite assurances from Secretary of Defense Robert Gates that no fee increases would be implemented in FY2010, the prohibition expired on September 30th and DoD unexpectedly announced increases of more than 20 percent for some TRICARE Standard beneficiaries who receive inpatient care at civilian hospitals and inpatient behavioral health services. The cost-share increases took effect on October 1, 2009.

FRA's National Executive Director Joe Barnes shared members' frustration and concerns in a letter to Gates, asking him to "halt implementation of the fee hikes consistent with your commitment earlier this year."

In response to this and the advocacy efforts of FRA's members and other Military Coalition organizations, House and Senate negotiators repealed the increase as part of the FY2010 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA, H.R. 2647), which was approved by the House in early October and is being considered by the Senate at press time. For the fourth consecutive year, military retirees under age 65 are not burdened by drastically higher TRICARE fees increases thanks to strong advocacy work and grassroots support from FRA, its members and others.

Other important health care provisions in the FY2010 NDAA Conference Report include full funding for the Defense Health Program (\$28 billion), and extended eligibility for TRICARE Standard to Reserve Component retirees under age 60 — so called "gray area retirees." The bill also expands TRICARE coverage for Reserve component members and their families from 90 days to 180 days prior to mobilization and provides continued dental coverage for children of service members who die on

active duty. Special compensation for designated care givers who assist service members with catastrophic injuries or illness is also authorized when, in the absence of that assistance, the service member would require hospitalization or institutional care. The legislation also extends family medical leave to employees who are family members of a deploying service member, and requires medical examination before administrative separation for service members with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).

The bill also authorizes a 3.4-percent pay increase for active duty personnel (0.5 percent more than the Employment Cost Index, or ECI), extends the authority for the Defense Department to offer bonuses and incentive pay, and increases the maximum amount of Supplemental Subsistence Allowance from \$500 to \$1100 per month for junior enlisted members with dependents. The bill provides \$49 million to aid schools with large military populations, and also reduces barriers for military overseas absentee voting.

Despite the Administration's unprecedented request to begin lifting the ban on the concurrent receipt of military retired pay and veterans' disability compensation for "Chapter 61" retirees — those medically retired for service-related conditions before they could complete 20 or more years of service — the provision was dropped by conferees. Also excluded were provisions eliminating the Survivor Benefit Plan/Dependency Indemnity Compensation (SBP/DIC) offset and authorization for retroactive retirement credit for mobilized Reserve Component members since September 11, 2001. (Currently Reservists get early retirement credit for service after January 28, 2009.)

The FY2013 cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) reduction was also eliminated from the legislation thanks in part to the nearly 3,000 shipmates who contacted their elected officials on this issue.

2009 Defense Forum Assesses Wounded Warrior Programs

FRA staff attended the one-day "Coping with Unseen Injuries: From Battlefield to Home Front" Defense Forum that examined progress on the care and rehabilitation of our wounded warriors and their families. Admiral Michael G. Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Tammy Duckworth, Assistant

Secretary of Veterans Affairs and Intergovernmental Affairs, were among the speakers during the event. (Ms. Duckworth was also a featured speaker at FRA's 82nd National Convention.)

Key uniformed service and administration leaders, health care providers, wounded warriors and family

members joined other concerned professionals to discuss subjects such as Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and the progress to date on solutions and how to implement them effectively.

VETERANS ISSUES

VA Offers Emergency Checks to Students with Delayed Education Benefits

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) has authorized checks for up to \$3,000 to be provided to students who have applied for Post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits and have not yet received their government payment. The checks will be an advance on each student's education benefit and the amount will be deducted from future benefit payments. VA officials emphasize that \$3,000 is the maximum payment, with many veterans receiving smaller amounts based upon their likely monthly benefit. Distribution of the checks to eligible students began on October 2, 2009, at the VA's 57 regional benefits offices across the country.

More than 30,000 checks (more than \$70 million) were issued in the first week, but the VA was issuing emergency checks so quickly that some checks were filled out by hand. These hand-written checks caused concern at many banks. VA has been contacting banks and university officials to inform them that they can call VA at 1-800-827-2166 to confirm authenticity of the check. Veterans must bring a photo ID and proof of enrollment to receive the on-the-spot payment.

For a full list of the regional offices, please visit <http://www.vba.va.gov/VBA/benefits/offices.asp>.

Students without transportation can request free van service, provided by volunteers, to carry them to the nearest benefits office. Veterans can apply online for the emergency benefits at www.va.gov. Online applicants will receive their emergency payments through the mail after processing.

More than 100 agents are also available to answer questions about the GI Bill via the VA's toll-free hot line at 1-888-GIBILL-1 (1-888-442-4551).

VA Pharmacy Benefits Examined

FRA staff attended a House Veterans' Affairs Health Subcommittee hearing in early October that focused on whether the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) meets the pharmaceutical needs of veterans and retirees registered with the VA. Specifically, the hearing highlighted the VA's national formulary (list of prescription drugs covered by VA), which was created in 1996 to lower drug costs by allowing bulk purchasing.

Witnesses stated that VA's national formulary is too restrictive, limits access to specific essential drugs and that getting prescriptions for non-formulary medications is an extremely time-intensive process. Most veterans get most of the prescription medications they need, however there are concerns that innovative drugs are not added to the list in a timely manner, and witnesses noted that the process used by VA to add drugs to the formulary is unclear and ambiguous. The hearing also addressed patient safety and what VA can do to prevent adverse drug events due to missed doses, drug interactions, and preparation errors.

Subcommittee members pledged to continue to work with VA until the pharmaceutical needs of all veterans have been met.

Patient Care Group Scam

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has received many reports that veterans are being contacted by "Patient Care Group" claiming they are helping administer VA prescriptions. Callers are telling unsuspecting vets that the VA's pharmacy billing procedures have changed and they are therefore requesting veteran credit card numbers for prescription payments in advance of filling their prescriptions. This is false. VA does not call veterans asking to disclose personal financial information over the phone and the VA has not changed its processes for dispensing prescription medicines.

DoD Appropriations Conference Committee Report Pending

As *FRA Today* goes to press, the Senate and House have passed the FY2010 Defense Department Appropriations bill (H.R. 3326), which is awaiting the appointment of conferees to resolve the differences between House and Senate versions of the measure. One of 12 federal spending bills, the legislation totals \$636.3 billion in defense spending and is expected to fully fund the larger-than-requested active duty pay increase (3.4 percent versus 2.9 percent) and the Defense Health Program (\$28.3 billion). It is also expected to include \$307 million to address the estimated TRICARE private sector funding shortfall for FY2010.

Congress has completed the appropriations bill for the Legislative Branch of government, but it is the only appropriations bill completed for the new fiscal year at press time. The House has completed all 12 of its spending bills, but the Senate has passed only five. Therefore a Continuing Resolution (CR) was passed to fund the federal government from October 1 through October 31, 2009, to prevent a government shut down. The CR provides additional funding for veterans' health care and the Census Bureau, but all other federal agencies must operate under FY2009 funding levels until their appropriations bills are signed into law.

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TRICARE beneficiaries who are turning 65 and are eligible for premium-free Medicare Part A must enroll in Medicare Part B to remain eligible for TRICARE benefits.

Exceptions include when the sponsor is on active duty, the beneficiary is enrolled in the U.S. Family Health Plan, or the beneficiary is enrolled in TRICARE Reserve Select. Visit www.tricare.mil/mybenefit/home/overview/Eligibility/WhoIsEligible/MedicareBeneficiaries to learn more.

To become eligible for premium-free Medicare Part A, beneficiaries must have paid into Social Security for at least 40 quarters (10 years of work). To avoid a delay in receiving benefits and to ensure timely reporting of information to the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS), beneficiaries should apply for Medicare benefits three to four months before turning 65. Prompt enrollment allows beneficiaries to avoid the Medicare Part B surcharge for late enrollment (10 percent for each 12-month period they are eligible but not enrolled in Part B).

To sign up for Medicare Part B, call the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213 or visit your local Social Security office.



HEALTH CARE



House Passes Bill to Stop Medicare Part B Premium Increase

Economic data indicates there will be no cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) for various inflation-adjusted benefits in 2010 because there has been no increase in inflation. The Social Security Act prohibits an increase in the Medicare Part B premium (currently \$94.40 a month) for more than 75 percent of Social Security recipients if their COLA is not large enough to cover the increase in their Part B premium.

According to complex regulations, the remaining 25 percent (which include low-income seniors who receive benefits from both Medicare and Medicaid; seniors with incomes above \$85,000 if they are single and \$170,000 for couples; and people who are new to the program) would have to shoulder a Part B premium increase and also pay a portion of the increased premiums the government is not able to collect from recipients who are exempt from the premium increase. According to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), the increase in the monthly Part B premium for the above beneficiaries will be nearly four times the increase that would be required if no enrollees were exempt from the premium increase, unless Congress intervenes.

To address this inequity, the House passed "The Medicare Premium Fairness Act" (H.R. 3631) that would prohibit any Medicare part B premium increase next year. The House voted 406-18 to approve the bill, which is now being considered by the Senate. Media coverage of this issue is causing understandable anxiety among military retirees who are Medicare beneficiaries. FRA's Legislative Team is closely monitoring this issue, and will issue a Legislative Alert if or when it is warranted.

Advanced Funding for VA Health Care

The House of Representatives approved an amendment to the FRA-supported "Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act" (H.R. 1016) that will put VA health care on a two-year budget cycle and fund Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) medical accounts one year in advance. FRA addressed this issue in a congressional testimony and in discussions between members of FRA's Board of Directors and lawmakers in April. Advanced funding will ensure more timely funding for veterans' health care delivered through the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). The new policy will also enhance Congress' ability to develop appropriations bills that provide sufficient funding to meet the best estimate of anticipated demand for VA health care services.

continued on page 12

Coast Guard Authorization Advances in the House

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee approved the U.S. Coast Guard Authorization bill (H.R. 3619) for FY2010 and FY2011 in late September, which provides additional resources to meet the service's ever-increasing workload. The last authorization bill was in 2006 and the current bill provides \$200 million more funding than requested by the Administration, and increases Coast Guard authorized end-strength from 45,500 to 47,000.

The Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee approved its own version of the bill (S. 1194) in July, which increases end strength to nearly 52,500 by FY2011 and provides legal assistance for Coast Guard Reservists similar to that available to Department of Defense Reservists.

FRA submitted statements to both House and Senate committees of jurisdiction, stressing the importance of Coast Guard funding parity with DoD and also noting the continuing challenges within the Coast Guard to adequately fund previously authorized active and Reserve people programs. Both legislative proposals address several important personnel-related issues including:

- Retention of emergency leave for personnel who would otherwise be required to forfeit leave to support response to major disasters;
- Reimbursement for certain medical-related travel expenses when a service member is stationed on an INCONUS island and his/her family member is referred to a specialty care provider off-island;
- Making Coast Guard retirees eligible to live in the Armed Forces Retirement Home; and
- Changing the Vice Commandant position from a three-star to a four-star billet to better align the Coast Guard with the other armed services.

FRA believes more timely authorizing legislation is critical for congressional budgeting and effective oversight of the Coast Guard and its growing mission requirements.



No COLA in 2010 Could Mean One-Time Payment

Inflation for 2009, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), has taken its sharpest fall since 1947. The overall change in CPI is used to determine the annual Cost-of-living-Adjustment (COLA) for military and federal civilian retired pay, Social Security, veterans' disability and other inflation-indexed benefits. Because inflation is below zero for 2009, there will be no COLA for 2010, and it is important to note there will be no reduction in benefits.

In response, the Obama Administration and some members of Congress are calling for a one-time \$250 payment to seniors, veterans, retired railroad workers and people with disabilities in January. These proposed payments would be similar to the economic stimulus payments made earlier this year, and equal a two-percent COLA for the typical Social Security recipient. Beneficiaries who qualify under several categories would only be eligible for one payment. Congress must approve the payments, which are estimated to cost \$13 billion, before they can be implemented.

Stay Informed!

NewsBytes is FRA's free weekly e-mail legislative update. It's a great way to stay informed between issues of *FRA Today*.

You can subscribe to FRA's free weekly e-mail newsletter by sending an e-mail to newsbytes@fra.org.

Those who do not have e-mail can hear a recorded version of *NewsBytes* by calling 1-800-FRA-1924, ext. 112.

The FRA Legislative team is Joe Barnes, National Executive Director; John Davis, Director of Legislative Programs and Branch 181 President; Bob Washington, Health Care Advisor and Outreach Manager; Chris Slawinski, National Veterans Service Officer and Ed Dockery, Assistant Director of Legislative Programs.

Military Coalition Recognizes Hill Advocates

The Military Coalition (TMC), a group comprised of FRA and 33 other military and veterans associations, presented its highest awards to two legislators and two congressional staffers who have championed the causes of pay, benefits, and quality-of-life improvements for active duty and Reserve personnel, veterans, and retirees, survivors and their families.

Senator Blanche Lincoln (Ark.) and Rep. Joe Wilson (S.C.) received the Coalition's 2009 Award of Merit. Senator Lincoln was recognized for her leadership in sponsoring legislation to improve Reserve component education benefits and provide tax relief for certain disabled retirees and military survivors. Representative Wilson was recognized for his efforts to eliminate compensation inequities for disabled retirees and survivors; restore retirement equity for the Reserve Component mobilized since September 11, 2001; improve military health care; and establish military pay comparability with private sector wages.

TMC also presented its annual Freedom Award to Ms. Allison Witt, Legislative Director for Representative Robert Latta (Ohio) and Mr. Tony McClain, Military Legislative Assistant for Senator Lincoln, for their work in promoting support for military issues behind the scenes.

FRA NED Perspective Joe Barnes serves as the enlisted organization co-chair for the Coalition and members of FRA's Legislative Team co-chair several key TMC policy committees.



\$555 Million DoD Homeowners Assistance Program Details Announced

The Department of Defense (DoD) announced the temporary expansion of the Homeowners Assistance Program (HAP). Using \$555 million in funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), this program is designed to partially reimburse eligible military personnel, surviving spouses, and federal civilian employees whose service to the nation has required them to relocate and sell their primary residence at a loss.

Potential eligible personnel include:

- Active and former service members of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard;
- Civilian employees of the DoD, Coast Guard, and non-appropriated fund activities; and
- Surviving spouses of both fallen service members and civilian employees.

Eligible personnel who have sold a primary home for a loss or are considering selling their home are encouraged to visit the DoD HAP Web site (<http://hap.usace.army.mil>) to check specific program criteria and apply online, if eligible.

The DoD HAP has been providing financial assistance to military personnel and DoD civilians since 1966, mainly at Base Realignment And Closure (BRAC) sites where government action caused a decrease in market home values. While the HAP expansion is not designed to pay 100 percent of losses or to cover all declines in value, it can help protect eligible applicants from financial catastrophe due to significant losses in their home values.

In related news, the House passed the FRA-supported "Service Members Home Ownership Tax Act" that reinstates tax-exempt status for the military Homeowners Assistance Program (HAP) payments for service members, wounded warriors and survivors who are forced to sell their homes at a loss because of military-ordered relocations. The bill, sponsored by House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Charles Rangel (N.Y.), also extends the first-time home buyer credit. The bill now goes to the Senate for consideration.

Supporting military families is one FRA's top priorities and includes administration leadership and engagement by Michelle Obama and Jill Biden.



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Similar rough diamonds sell elsewhere for thousands! Please compare the size and price of our raw diamond in the Stauer Raw Diamond Necklace with those at your local jewelry store.

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Penny Collins

The Navy's Safe Harbor Program

THERE ARE SEVERAL NATIONAL programs that provide assistance to our veterans who have been injured or wounded in combat, especially in Operations Iraq and Enduring Freedom. One such program is the Navy's Safe Harbor initiative. Synonymous with a secure place to weather tough times, the Navy's Safe Harbor provides non-medical assistance for Sailors who are seriously ill or have been wounded or injured in combat, giving them support for recovery.

Established in 2005, Safe Harbor is the Navy's lead organization for coordinating the non-medical care of wounded, ill and injured Sailors, Guardians, and their family members. It is a nationwide program organized under the Vice Chief of Naval Operations and the Special Assistant to CNO for Comprehensive Casualty Care to ensure seriously ill or injured personnel and their families receive the best possible "triad of care" — medical care, medical case management and non-medical care support — while they are dealing with the personal challenges they face from the time of injury through recovery, rehabilitation, reintegration and beyond.

CAPT "Key" Watkins is the commanding officer of the Safe Harbor program and a new member of Branch 181, in Arlington, Va. "Navigating the waters of recovery following a serious illness or injury is often overwhelming and exhausting for a service member and his or her family," said Watkins. "Questions about pay and benefits, housing adaptation, and employability muddy the waters of the recovery process. While providing bedside care for

their loved-ones, families often don't have the resources or time to manage these arising issues."

Every seriously injured or ill Sailor is assigned a nurse case manager at the military treatment facility, as well as a Navy Safe Harbor recovery care coord-

Synonymous with a secure place to weather tough times, the Navy's Safe Harbor provides non-medical assistance for Sailors who are seriously ill or have been wounded or injured in combat, giving them support for recovery.

inator and non-medical care manager. The Safe Harbor team individually tailors support to each enrolled service member's recovery and reintegration needs. Support includes pay and personnel issues, invitational travel orders, lodging and housing adaptation, child and youth care, transportation needs, legal and guardianship issues, education and training benefits, commissary and exchange access, respite care, Traumatic Brain Injury/Post Traumatic Stress support services and much more. Safe Harbor staff members are located at seven major Navy treatment facilities throughout the United States, four

VA polytrauma centers, Brooke Army Medical Center, and the USSOCOM Care Coalition.

CAPT Watkins, who addressed delegates at FRA's 82nd National Convention in Virginia Beach in October, calls the Safe Harbor program a "five-star concierge" service center where Sailors get top-of-the-line assistance for their needs. "This is the right thing to do, in my opinion, for those who have sacrificed so much."

Safe Harbor's goal is to return Sailors to duty and, when that's not possible, work collaboratively with federal agencies including the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Department of Labor, state, and local organizations to ensure successful reintegration of Sailors back into their communities.

"Safe Harbor's support does not end at the medical treatment facilities' door," said Watkins. "The key to Safe Harbor's success is providing service members with a lifetime of care and support."

For more information, visit www.safeharbor.navy.mil or contact the Safe Harbor team by e-mail at safeharbor@navy.mil or call toll-free at 1-877-746-8563.

For More Information

The LA FRA National President's Project for 2009-2010 is the Navy Safe Harbor program. Please read more on page 36.

Penny Collins is a member of FRA Branch 24 in Annapolis, Md. and can be reached at penny@fra.org.





sometimes
santa
wears
blue



As the holiday season approaches, thousands of Marine Reservists, retired Marines and civilian volunteers will be particularly busy bringing messages of hope and cheer to millions of children around the country through the Toys For Tots program. They will raise money, organize collection sites for donated toys, coordinate the pick up and storage of the toys, sort the gifts according to their suitability for each gender and age group, work with various local agencies to identify the recipients, and ensure the gifts reach the designated families before December 25th — no small task when you consider Toys For Tots distributes toys and books to more than 7.6 million youngsters each year.

by Lauren Armstrong

"This is truly a gratifying program," explains Major Bill Grein, USMC (Ret.), vice president for marketing and development for the Toys For Tots Foundation. "It means a lot to know we are helping families who are having a rough time, particularly during the holiday season. We've grown tremendously over the past 62 years, allowing us to help more and more families each year."

From Humble Beginnings

Toys For Tots (TFT) began in 1947, when Diane Hendricks crafted a homemade doll and asked her husband, Marine Corps Reserve Major Bill Hendricks, to deliver it to an organization that would give it to a needy child. After some research, Bill determined that no such organization existed. When Diane suggested he should start one, Bill did just that.

Hendricks, who was the director of public relations for Warner Brother Studios in his civilian career, leveraged his Marine and Hollywood connections to get the ball rolling. With the help of his fellow Marine Reservists, approximately 5,000 new and used toys were collected for needy children in the Los Angeles area. This local effort was so successful the Marine Corps adopted Toys For Tots in 1948, expanding the program to each community in which a Marine Reserve Center was located. Hendricks convinced a number of celebrities to support and endorse the program, including Nat "King" Cole, Peggy Lee, and Vic Damone. He asked his friend Walt Disney to design the poster for the organization's first nationwide campaign, which included the train that's still used as the TFT logo.

The program has continuously grown and evolved over the years. For more than three decades, TFT collected both new and used toys. Reserve Marines would spend their drill weekends during October, November and December refurbishing the used toys. But as the Reserve component began to play a greater role in the nation's defense, it became increasingly difficult to devote time to renewing toys. Public awareness of the health and safety aspects of toys also made it legally inadvisable for the Marines to distribute used toys. Beginning in 1980, the Marines began collecting only new toys, which also advanced their goal

of delivering a message of hope to less fortunate children. According to the TFT Web site (www.toysfortots.org), "a shiny new toy is the best means of accomplishing this goal."

In 1991, the Toys For Tots Foundation was formed to be the fundraising and support organization for the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve's (USMCR's) Toys for Tots Program. As a non-profit entity, the Foundation can operate in ways the Marine Corps Reserve cannot. For example, the Foundation can accept tax-deductible donations from individuals and corporate sponsors and conduct promotions to raise funds and awareness.

The Foundation also coordinates each year's campaign at the national level, facilitates the operation of five TFT regions and provides toys to supplement local donations.

"Marines are very good at generating excitement. And they're good at getting the job done, but they can't ask people for monetary donations. The Foundation can," explains Grein. In its 18-year history, the TFT Foundation has supplemented local toy collections with more than 81.3 million toys valued at more than \$487 million.



"a shiny new toy
is the best means
of accomplishing
this goal."

National Success is Determined Locally

While the Foundation oversees the administrative and financial aspects, the TFT program is directed by the Commander of the Marine Forces Reserve. And although it is a national campaign, TFT is really a grassroots operation. "When a person takes the time to select a toy and travel to a specific location to drop it off, they want to know their donation is benefiting someone in their local community," says Grein. "The same holds true if they're making a cash donation through a local TFT campaign." According to Grein, cash donations are used to purchase toys to ensure there is a balance of gender-specific toys, and that gifts for all age groups are available.

Local campaigns are conducted in approximately 650 communities across the United States and in Puerto Rico. A network of approximately 180 USMCR units and seven Marine Corps Bases/Air Stations cover 46 of the nation's 50 states. To cover the remaining states and more local

communities within each state, the Foundation selects Marine Corps League (MCL) detachments and Local Community Organizations (LCOs) to conduct localized TFT campaigns. A single individual — either a Marine, member of an MCL detachment, or member of the LCO — is designated as the TFT Coordinator for that community. He or she is responsible for planning, organizing and conducting the local campaign. Marines considered for the position must have a security clearance and civilians must undergo a background check.

FRA Branch 59 in Cheyenne, Wyo., partners with the community's Eagles Lodge to serve as Cheyenne's LCO. Branch President Jim Marshall was the coordinator last year. "Our branch and unit have been involved with TFT for the past five years, ensuring the Marines had the support personnel they needed to make the program work," explains Marshall. "Last year, the Marine coordinator and his unit were deployed to Iraq during the holiday season, so we stepped

in and ran the campaign for our area. The coordinator has a lot more responsibilities than I realized. Besides ensuring our toy inventory, cash donations and fundraising efforts are all triple-checked, properly logged and reported to the Foundation, the coordinator also works with local sponsors and media outlets to promote the TFT campaign. We host a kick-off event, which includes an on-site radio broadcast and a visit from the mayor, who cuts a cake and donates the first toy of the season."

The ultimate success of each annual campaign is determined by the support and generosity of the local community. Members of the LCO, local businesses and other individuals assist the coordinators by providing collection sites, offering free warehouse space for storing and sorting the toys, providing vehicles to collect toys from drop-off sites, sponsoring toy-raising events, and arranging local media coverage of the TFT campaign.



Clockwise: U.S. Navy photos by Mass Communication Specialist James E. Foehl; Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Shawn Graham; Mate 3rd Class Aramis X. Ramirez



"It's a big job and our branch couldn't do it without the support of our LA FRA unit," adds Marshall. "Branch and unit members are assigned a drop-off location for which they are responsible. They monitor the collection boxes and bring the donations to a central location, where the toys are inspected [to ensure they aren't broken or missing parts], counted and inventoried. As we get closer to distribution, we use the cash donations we've received to purchase toys to fulfill the requests. For example, we might have 200 8- or 9-year old boys identified who need toys, but we might only have 150 toys that are appropriate for that age group and gender. We use the cash donations to fill in the gaps. Last year we collected \$18,000 in cash donations, in addition to 2,200 toys. Any leftover toys are retained to fulfill last-minute requests or as our 'seed toys' to start the following year's inventory."

One of the most difficult aspects of Grein's job is working with Marines and other coordinators who feel they've fallen short of their personal goals for the program. "Hearing Marines talk about the unmet needs in their community

can be really tough," shares Grein. "Gunnys are generally the toughest people on the planet, but it hits them hard when there are more less-fortunate children than toys. I try to become a cross between Dr. Phil and a Dallas Cowboy cheerleader, assuring them they've made a difference. I try to help them understand they can't be more generous than the community has been."

Since its inception, TFT's sole objective is to "bring the joy of Christmas to America's needy children." TFT Coordinators work with local service agencies, such as the Salvation Army or church groups or councils, to identify families who will receive toys and the toys may be disbursed in a variety of ways. Some agencies give the eligible family a letter authorizing them to come to a toy storage area and select gifts for their children. Other agencies send the coordinator a list of needy children, including age and gender information, and allow the Marines and other volunteers to select the toys for each family. Sometimes the toys are delivered to the agency and other times the gifts are delivered directly to the family.

"When Toys For Tots began, the local Marines knew of needy families in their community," explains Grein. "But as the program grew, the Marines needed help identifying families that needed assistance. Today, it's more difficult to determine who's deserving, so we now require proof of need, which is usually handled by the referring agencies."

"As our program continues to grow, we're able to include toy delivery to more remote areas," adds Grein proudly. "We've delivered toys to Native American children who live at the bottom of the Grand Canyon, for example. In recent years, we airlifted toys and snowmobiles to a remote area of Alaska to deliver gifts to a group of Eskimo children."

The Toys For Tots Foundation

On the national level, the Toys For Tots Foundation works with national sponsors and corporate donors, and handles the contractual and financial aspects of these partnerships. The Foundation also coordinates the national bookkeeping and administrative functions, public relations efforts and legacy giving.



The Foundation's partnerships with corporate sponsors have generated millions of dollars in toys and cash contributions over the years, and offer a variety of ways for individuals to support the TFT mission. Toys R Us, for example, offers its stores as drop-off sites for local toy donations, donates an extensive array of toys to the program, and asks patrons to add a dollar for TFT to their tab at check-out — all of which totals about \$3 million per year for the TFT program.

Coca-Cola, another corporate sponsor, takes a different approach, using its "My Coke Rewards" program as a vehicle for its customers to donate to TFT. "The numbers under bottle tops or on the inside of Coke product cartons can be redeemed for points on Coke's Web site. During the holiday season, patrons are invited to donate their points to the TFT Foundation. After Christmas, these points are redeemed for toys, which will be distributed the following year. Last year we anticipated about five million points, but we actually received 11 million, which equates to \$600,000 in toys. We often have a shortage of gifts for teens and pre-teens, so programs like this allow us to select gifts that fill specific voids in our donation inventory. This year we redeemed the Coke points for backpacks and iPods."

"We work very hard to be good stewards of the gifts we receive, whether they come from individuals or corporations," adds Grein. "We keep our staff small, we limit travel and we don't advertise, thanks to helpful television and radio stations that broadcast our PSAs (public service announcements). We're audited once a month to ensure that our financial books are in order and above board. Because of the structure of the Foundation, we've also been able to operate more efficiently, which helps us manage our program-to-services support ratio. This ratio is very important and I'm proud to

say the TFT Foundation uses 97 percent of its revenue to advance the mission of our organization."

In addition to its toy program, Toys For Tots recently established a Literacy Program to provide books to needy children. "For the past 11 or 12 years,

Scholastic Books has been very generous, donating books which we began distributing as stocking-stuffers," explains Grein. "The establishment of our Literacy Program in 2008 allows us to supplement this generosity. By partnering with Scholastic, The UPS Store and Mail Boxes Etc. franchise network and their patrons, we expect to give away one to two million books each year."

Another of Grein's responsibilities is fielding complaints, which are relatively few and far between. "In my 24 years with TFT, I can count on one hand the numbers of calls or letters I've received questioning our focus on Christmas. Whether it's considered a religious or secular celebration, more than 90 percent of our country celebrates Christmas, so our message resonates with a large segment of our population.

And in all honesty, we give gifts during the holiday season, but we don't ask what holiday a family is celebrating. If a family is in need in December, we do our best to help."



How Can You Help?

Shipmates and branches can support the Marine Toys For Tots (TFT) Foundation in a variety of ways:

- **Call your local TFT coordinator and offer to help raise money, toys and awareness.** In addition to their work collecting and distributing toys, Branch and Unit 59 also pull a Toys For Tots float in a variety of Cheyenne parades.
- **Donate time and energy to collect and sort toys.** You don't have to be a member of the Local Community Organization (LCO) to participate, but your branch might consider becoming an LCO.
- **Provide food and drink to support TFT volunteers.** Pizza and soft drinks are always welcome by those working at TFT storage facilities.
- **Let Toys For Tots help with your holiday gift giving.** The Foundation will send a personal letter to your friends and relatives, letting them know you donated to TFT on their behalf. You can do this by going to the TFT Web site (www.toysfortots.org) and making a credit card donation.



DISCOVERED: THREE KINGS' SILVER COIN FROM THE TIME OF JESUS' BIRTH



Certified to be Authentic and Dated between 35 BC to 5 AD

Imagine holding in the palm of your hand an ancient silver coin minted by one of the three kings who sent their emissaries to witness the birth of the baby Jesus. Imagine owning a coin that was touched by the people who walked among Jesus during his years on earth. Today, through an exclusive release by GovMint.com you can own an authentic silver Drachma, saved from destruction and preserved for over 2,000 years!

MIRACULOUS FIND GARNERS WORLDWIDE ATTENTION

Finding an ancient Silver Drachma coin anywhere in the world is a noteworthy event. Finding one issued by one of the "Three Kings" of the Bible, a coin produced by the King of Persia from 35 BC to 5 AD and used throughout the life of Jesus Christ, is cause for true excitement. Intricately designed, it is a miniature work of art. In ancient times the Silver Drachma was struck by hand, one at a time, so no two are exactly alike. This was a coin that could have easily been used to purchase the gifts presented to the Christ Child and has been historically proven to have circulated in Jesus' lifetime.

A GIFT THAT WILL BE TREASURED!

THE PARABLE OF THE LOST DRACHMA

The Silver Drachma was a coin well known to Jesus and his followers. In one of his parables Jesus says, "Or what woman, having ten drachmas, if she loses one, does not light a candle and sweep the house and look diligently till she finds it? And after she has found it, she calls in her friends and says, Rejoice with me, for I have found the drachma that I lost!" (Luke 15:8-9).

A PRECIOUS CHRISTMAS GIFT

Your Silver "Kings" Drachma from the time of Christ will arrive housed in a deluxe presentation album together with historical information detailing this coin's amazing journey. A signed Certificate of Authenticity guarantees the coin is from the time of Christ and is sure to be cherished by friends and family.

Prices and availability subject to change without notice.

Quantity strictly limited at this price. Orders filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Sold out orders will be promptly refunded. Note: GovMint.com is a private distributor of worldwide government coin issues and is not affiliated with the United States Government. Facts and figures were deemed accurate as of June 2009. ©GovMint.com, 2009

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This special offer of Ancient Silver Drachmas from the time of Christ is made possible by a recent discovery. The quantity is strictly limited and once they are gone, there is no telling when, or if, any more will ever be found. This coin has sold nationally for \$129.95, but while our supply lasts you can own this Ancient Silver "Three Kings" Drachma for just \$49.95. Additional savings are available for multiple coin orders (see details).

SPECIFICATIONS

YEARS OF ISSUE: 35 BC — 5 AD
COMPOSITION: SILVER
DESIGN: KING AZES II ON HORSEBACK
WEIGHT: 9.65 GRAMS (APPROX.)
DIAMETER: 15 MM

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There's No Feeling Like It

Every Toys For Tots volunteer has a different motivation for participating, but each will tell you it's a satisfying experience. Bill Grein has been involved for 24 years — first as an active duty Marine and now as a staff member of the Toys For Tots Foundation. "It's just a good feeling to help people, and for me, it's an added bonus to continue working with Marines after I retired from the Corps."

Jim Marshall explains how the TFT program is just a part of Branch 59's relationship with Marine Corps and Navy personnel in the Cheyenne area. "We have a great relationship with the Navy and Marine Corps recruiters in our area, as well as those who serve at the Navy Operational Support Center. We invite them to participate in parades with us and sponsor a chili feed afterwards. While they were deployed, we hosted a barbeque for the families left behind and made videos for the families to send to their deployed loved ones. We also send goodie boxes to deployed service members every couple months. In return, these Marines and Sailors get involved in our other branch activities."

"It's a two-way street," adds Marshall. Several shipmates in Branch 59 served as corpsmen assigned to Marine units during their Navy careers. "Being involved with Toys For Tots is their way of giving back to the Marine Corps. Some even still wear their Marine uniforms during the TFT campaign, even though it might be 20 years since they were on active duty. Last year was particularly gratifying because we also felt like we were directly supporting the Marines deployed to Iraq."

But the best part, according to Marshall, is knowing you've helped make Christmas special for a family in need. "It's hard to describe. When a parent picks up toys for his or her children and gives you a big hug and you can feel their tears of gratitude on your cheek, it's like a warm blanket being wrapped around you. There's no other feeling like it."



Lauren Armstrong is the Contributing Editor and an LA FRA Member at Large. She can be reached at lauren@fra.org.

"When a parent picks up toys for his or her children and gives you a big hug...it's like a warm blanket being wrapped around you."





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Thank You For Your Generosity!

The September issue of *FRA Today* included an opportunity for readers to send donations to FRA, and a promise to publish the names of donors at the following levels. Thank you to all who participated in the campaign. Donations at every amount are gratefully accepted and assist FRA in continuing the mission of representing the enlisted Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard perspective on Capitol Hill. Future donations received will be published as space permits, and all are listed on www.fra.org.

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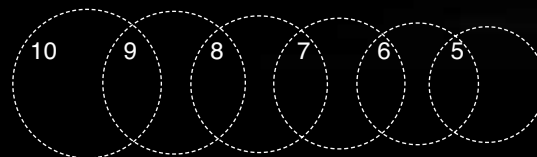
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BRANCH 99 VIRGINIA BEACH, VA.

Pearl Harbor Survivors Shipmates Eugene Gorman and Frank Chebetar present a framed picture of the Pearl Harbor Memorial to Branch 99.



BRANCH 226 STATEN ISLAND, N.Y.

Shipmate Sam Heyman (formerly of Branch 2 in Brooklyn, N.Y.) receives his 40-year Continuous Membership pin and certificate from RPNE Jim Brown.



BRANCH 136 MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

Shipmate Richard Garty presents a flag and Certificate of Achievement to Jamie Chapman during his Eagle Scout Court of Honor.



BRANCH 178 MONTEREY, CALIF.

Branch President Abel Quinones plays Taps for LCDR Frank Ivie, a 30-year Navy Veteran who passed away July 29, 2009. Ivie, whose strong leadership kept the branch active during tough times, had been a FRA member for 58 years.



BRANCH 182 BETHESDA, MD.

Shipmate Mark Allen welcomes Donald Kaider to the branch as Branch President. Randy Phillip speaks from the podium.



BRANCH 50 CHARLESTON, S.C.

FRA National President Don Muechek presents a plaque and Certificate of Appreciation to Branch Secretary/Treasurer Emeritus Harvey Taylor in recognition of his many years of dedicated service to the branch.



BRANCH 382 BOISE, IDAHO

Branch President Jim Doering holds a symbolic mortgage as Past Branch President Lloyd Thies and Past Unit President Fern Lynskey do the honors in a "mortgage burning" ceremony for their branch and unit home. Thies and Lynskey were charter members when the branch and unit were founded in 1982.



BRANCH 207 DALE CITY, VA.

RVPEC Chris Slawinski congratulates Shipmate Ralph Adolph on his 40-years of continuous FRA membership by presenting a certificate and pin at a branch meeting.



BRANCH 29 BREMERTON, WASH.

Branch President Otis Robinson Sr. and Vice-President Frank Duncan wave to the crowds attending the Armed Forces Day Parade in Bremerton. The parade car is owned and driven by Shipmate Randy Warren.

BRANCH 210 MILTON, FLA.

Sea Cadets (l to r) Katelin Holt, Brad Correll, Ashley Meredith, and Orion Rollins present colors at Branch and Unit Officer Installation ceremonies.



To submit a photo for *News From the Branches*, please e-mail a photo as an attachment in jpeg format to 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.

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Fodor, Francis J., ADRC	009	Pettigrew, Vance M., SHL3	MAL
Freeman, Eligah, SDC	062	Poe, Marvin F., AO1	MAL
Gamble, Lorie S., AT3	MAL	Polensky, Gerald J., BT1	040
Garland, Clary F., AD2	089	Powell, Kenneth R., SKCS	166
Gaskins, Jobie A., USN	047	Price, William F., AEC	194
Gause, Delone C., RMCM	050	Quick, Chester J., SKC	092
George, Michael W., Sr., AMS2	051	Ramos, Augusto C., CPL	089
Gilmore, Carl R., ATCM	MAL	Remer, James, CWO4 USN	194
Girard, John A., YNC	MAL	Retzer, Edward B., Jr., USN RET	MAL
Goodroe, Donald T., CPO USN	MAL	Richards, Jack G., HMC	227
Gosdeck, Robert A., ASCM	292	Ritzer, Larry, MM2	MAL
Grudzinski, M. S., AVCM	276	Roberts, Howard J., MSGT	197
Gustafson, William R., YNC	MAL	Roethemeyer, Paul H., PO1 USN	003
Hanson, Keith D., FTC	136	Roque, Cenen, SDCM	084
Harlan, Carl R., HMC (DV)	MAL	Sarquilla, Felipe M., SD1	084
Hartwick, Buford C., SHC	MAL	Satcher, Joe H., EMCS	009
Hawkins, Joseph H., ETCs	024	Schmitz, George J., DCC	MAL
Henderson, Richard M., YNC	MAL	Scruggs, Robert E., ADR2	MAL
Jackson, Virgil, MS1	MAL	Senn, William J., BM1	MAL
Johnson, Harry A., FTCS	106	Sexton, Charles V., Jr., ADJ1	MAL
Johnson, Wesley J., Sr., LCDR USN	MAL	Shaifer, Paul L., MM2	010
Jones, Mallie C., ENC	030	Sharpe, Lannie F., MM1	202
Kennedy, Frank E., Jr., SK1	219	Snelling, David E., PO1 USN	091
Kettenring, John E., QMCM(SS)	018	Snyder, Edwin E., GMC	168
Knapp, Roy D., MSGT	141	Stigler, William D., FTCS	MAL
Kuzniar, Joseph F., CDR USN	136	Stracener, Don L., PN1	MAL
Langston, Frank, Jr., GMMC	142	Streeter, Harold C., BMCM	276
Law, Joe F., AVCM(AW)	261	Stroud, James L., YNC	MAL
Leblanc, Joseph A., Jr., CTA1	MAL	Sweat, Everett D., Jr., PNC	179
Lentini, Michael A., HMC	106	Tangeman, Stewart, LCDR USN	MAL
Lewis, John, Jr., SGT	105	Tatum, Albert S., HMC	009
Lewis, Joseph P., BMC	179	Taylor, James R., LCDR USN	203
Lindquist, Robert E., LICS	MAL	Teufel, George R., CAPT USN	MAL
Mancini, Zachary, SKC	MAL	Thiessen, Sanford A., DKCS	MAL
Mathers, William, RMC	292	Thomas, David Richard, CWO4 USN	MAL
May, Robert V., CWO2 USN	MAL	Thomas, John H., MMC	147
Mell, Frank E., Jr., GYSGT	313	Thorpe, Elijah T., AEC	099
Meyers, Joseph T., CSCS	042	Trotter, Carl G., CS1	068
Miller, Frank D., ENCS	317	Vernon, Zehner L., Jr., ASC	101
Mitchell, James M., PHC	068	Walker, Charles E., BTCM	046
Morrison, Glenn, PO1 USN	267	Watts, Robert C., ADR2	177
Moye, Paul R., ENC	166	Welch, William R., GYSGT	282
Murphy, Michael J., GMCS	346	White, Edgar A., QM1/C	MAL
Nelson, Bert L., GMMC	320	Whitney, Thomas H., TM2	MAL
Neumann, Richard M., EMCM	365	Williams, Harrison L., HTCS	234
Newsom, Frank A., HMC	268	Williams, Jerry R., PO1 USN	022
Nichols, James R., HMC	MAL	Williams, Leon B., Sr., MSGT	001
Nichols, William T., QMC/LT USN	070	Willis, Martin J., Jr., AOC	093
Niece, Fred G., Jr., GMGC	009	Wilson, Ralph B., DSCM	MAL
Orbeck, Godfrey J., HMC	136		
Patti, John A., POC USN	MAL		

NAME	BRANCH
Adams, Donald E., AWC	126
Aery, Carl, Jr., BMCS	MAL
Arnold, John G., Jr., GYSGT	060
Atienza, Servillano B., LNCM	MAL
Attencio, William A., MMC	175
Bailey, Robert J., EMCS	186
Baird, Theodore E., CPO USN	015
Barts, Walter W., CSCS	052
Bimer, Charles E., GMMC	009
Bonham, George E., YNC(SS)	MAL
Bowers, Samuel L., PO1 USN	324
Brackett, Harold G., HMC	MAL
Brandon, James F., RMCS	061
Britton, Robert, ETC	MAL
Brophy, Joseph T., AC1	086
Brown, Jerry M., EN1	MAL
Bull, Frank S., AFCM	091
Canales, Armando, YN1	MAL
Canter, Francis M., Jr., MCPO USN	MAL
Cenosky, Stephen, MCPO USN	MAL
Chambless, John J., ADRC	MAL
Champlain, Robert W., ADR1	MAL
Cheever, Glen E., PNC	161
Collins, Jess R., AEC	126
Compton, Billy, Sr., ADJC	MAL
Conley, David P., CSC	022
Cormier, Clifford A., EN1(SS)	156
Cornwell, Jerry C., ADR1	MAL
Crawford, Felder N., SKC	037
Croughwell, George E., ADJ1	MAL
Davidson, John T., SN USN	170
Davis, Delroy, CPO USN	MAL
Davis, Thomas E., SCPO USN	MAL
Davison, William J., AE1	MAL
Dickman, Bernard K., ADRC	018
Eggert, Robert D., PO1 USN	324
Erickson, Eugene S., AFCM	MAL
Eubanks, Lynwood G., UTCM	217
Farmer, Donald E., CTRCS	018
Finch, Robert D., TMC(SS)	269
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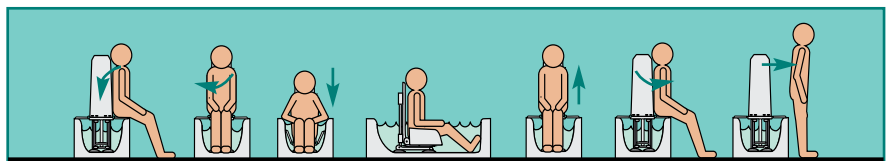
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Contact Douglas (Smitty) Smith 3835B
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(360) 377-4763, dbfrider@comcast.net.

USS Carpenter (DD-825)

April 22-26, 2010, Norfolk, VA. Contact
Ed Nolan, (770) 476-9698.

USS James K. Polk (SSBN/SSN-645)

July 15-18, 2010, Gatlinburg, TN.
Contact Steve Springer 1424 River
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ussjameskpolk.com.

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Contact Craig Bernat, 135 Zurenda Lane,
Mineral Point, PA 16942-4505, (814)
322-4150, dguts@usslawrence.com.

USS MacDonough (DLG-8/DDG-39)

May 2-6, 2010, Savannah, GA.
Contact Bill Landry, (727) 945-8422,
wtlandry1@msn.com.

USS Manley (DD-940) Association:

June 24-28, 2010, Cincinnati, OH.
Contact Joe Dennison, (386) 767-8068,
reunionplanner@ussmanleydd940.org.

**USS Ponchatoula (AO-38,
AO/TAO-148)**

May 2-6, 2010, Ponchatoula, LA.
Contact Rodger Smith 5818 Wyngate
Drive Bethesda, MD 20817, (301) 530-
1915, tworms43@hotmail.com.

USS Robert H. McCard (DD-822)

May 19-22, 2010, Cocoa Beach,
FL. Contact Wendell Mcelwee 4132
Brandonmore Dr., Cincinnati, OH
45255-3702, (513) 509-1482.

USS Triton (SSRN/SSN-586)

April 7-11, 2010, New London, CT.
Contact Henry Jackson 1110
Delcove Way, Greensboro, GA 30642,
(706) 999-1637, henry.jackson@
plantationcable.net.

USS Yosemite (AD-19)

April 28-May 2, 2010, Colorado Springs,
CO. Contact Stan Galloway 4603 Castor
Dr., Pueblo, CO 81001, (719) 544-9267,
mcpo@earthlink.net.

VAH-21/TRIM

June 17-19, 2010, Branson, MO.
Contact Gerald L. Tripp 495 Casper Dr.,
Hemet, CA 92545, (951) 926-6047,
trippg748@roadrunner.com.

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Ira Weintraub

Richard Wetherell

William Williams

James Wilson

Hampton Wolfe

In memory of my wife, Vivian Wolfe

Cary Wright

Frank Young

Richard Zinser



“Henry Philip Hope would be impressed with the superfine deep blue of the Stauer *Eternal Hope* Necklace. Ever since the original first surfaced centuries ago, it has been shrouded in legend and mystery.”

**— JAMES T. FENT,
Stauer GIA
Graduate Gemologist**

This colossal, brilliant cobalt blue stone is enlarged to show details.

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Stauer introduces a scientifically created tribute to the legendary Hope Diamond!

It’s a wonder that the *Hope Diamond* survived the 20th century. In the hands of eccentric millionaire heiress Evalyn Walsh McLean, the 45½ carat deep blue diamond was treated more like a fancy plaything than a precious gem. McLean wore it on rollercoasters, while swimming and when doing yard work. She hid it underneath couch cushions and from time to time, even kept it inside her toaster!

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Science recreates a legend of luxury. We challenged our gemologists to reimagine the largest and most perfect blue diamond in existence. They came back with the magnificent *Eternal Hope Necklace*, a lab-created beauty inspired by the \$350 million original. Using the legendary *Hope* as their guide, they carefully cut lab-created blue spinel to match the color, shape and geometric angles of the world famous stone. And, because of our advanced science, our lab-created stone’s clarity is superior to the original.

The *Hope Diamond* remains one of the world’s most unattainable treasures, but we’ve set the price of our *Eternal Hope Necklace* at an unbelievably accessible \$195!

When being called a “jewel thief” is a badge of honor. The final product is so convincing that it will surely have museum curators double checking their vault. Our update keeps the allure of the original, the magic that captivated Maharajahs, kings and queens.

The custom-cut stone is brilliant cobalt blue lab-created spinel. Spinel is considered the greatest impostors in gemstone history. One of the most valuable gemstones in the world, the *Black Prince* in the British Crown Jewels, was only recently discovered to be a spinel. They are favored by jewelers because of their brilliance and hardness. And the structure of a spinel is similar to a diamond—they both have the same high symmetry (4/m bar 3 2/m).



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Add the world’s most famous rock band. Enhance the look of your stunning Necklace with the *Eternal Hope Ring*, a gorgeous ring version of the pendant stone, prong-set on a .925 sterling silver band. Flanked by 10 dazzling, lab-created *DiamondAura*®, the Ring perfectly complements the Pendant.

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aboard ship, impressions of Barcelona, or related photographs, please contact Xavier Theros at xavier.theros@gmail.com.

ICC Jimmy Johnson

He and I were B School classmates at Great Lakes, Ill., in 1965. It would be great to hear from him. Please contact ICC S(SS/DV) K. C. Owen, USN (Ret.) at KCUSNretired@yahoo.com.

MAC Michael Hickey

I am a Ministry of Defense Police Officer who served at the U.S. Naval Support Facility in Holy Loch, Scotland, between 1987 and 1993, when the USS Simon Lake (AS-33) left the area. My friend, Michael Hickey (MA1 then and later promoted to MAC), transferred to Ewa Beach, Hawaii, and I lost track of him. I believe he's left the Navy and may be living in San Francisco. If you can help me locate him, please contact Fraser A. Hunter at fraser.hunter@blueyonder.co.uk.

Shipmates from 1968 WestPac cruise aboard USS St. Paul (CA-73)

I transferred from the ship in October

of 1968 before the cruise books were available and just prior to her return to San Diego in November 1968. If you have a copy of the 1968 ship's cruise book please contact SKCS Harold E. Brooks, USN (Ret.) at 5323 W. Modoc Ave., Visalia, CA 93291, 559-713-0838, or brooksh@wans.net.

SMC/CWO John Richard Langston

Last seen in 1953. He was a plank owner on USS Glennon (DD-840). Please contact R. A. Davis at 657 Liberty Bell Rd., Virginia Beach, VA 23462, 757-497-1227.

Shipmates from Fighter Squadron VF-31

Cecil Field, Jacksonville, Fla., from 1954 to 1957. Contact Jeff Easterling, 1713 Lancelot Loop, Tampa, FL 33619-5629, 813-628-8190.

Crewmembers of USS Gen. W. A. Mann (T)AP-112

Crew and passengers from November 1943 to December 1965. Contact Joe Anthony at 610-873-6304 or mjanth@webtv.net.

Crewmembers from USS Marias, USS Aucilla and USS Altair

I'm working on a book about U.S. Navy personnel who visited Barcelona between 1951 and 1987. If you are willing to share your recollections of life

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Numquam Navigare Solus

FIRST OF ALL, I want to express my sincere gratitude to the entire membership of the Auxiliary for the honor of serving as the National President 2009-2010. My father, Robert Hazlett PRVP New England, was a member of Branch 3 and he would come to Rhode Island to attend functions at Branch 42 with assistance from a chauffeur. PNP Barbara Sherwood recruited me in February 1983, I rarely, if ever attended meetings. My Dad said that in order for me to “hat” him for Regional President, I should become active. Sadly, he passed away while he was Regional Vice President, but I was already hooked. Who knew that some 25 years later, I would become National President! So, this is for you Dad. I wish you were here to place my hat.

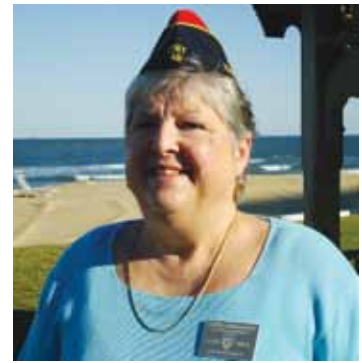
During those 25 years, the Auxiliary has seen many changes, some good and some not. We have lost so many Units and Members, unfortunately, as with so many military organizations, our membership is aging and many of the younger generation are not joining or becoming active. Most Units do not have a meeting place to call their own which makes it difficult to organize functions like dances or dinners that encourage that close bond. A lot of Units are lucky if 5-10 members attend a meeting. I wish I knew a solution to this problem. If we could only find a way to “hook” members, old and new, they would become addicted like I did.

This year, I would like to visit as many of you as is feasibly possible. Having spoken to so many of you on the phone or through email, it will be great to finally put a face with the name. At this time FRA NP Gary and I are mapping out a schedule, if you would like me to attend a Regional or Unit function, please let me know. I will make every attempt to be there. It is definitely my desire to leave New England during those cold, snowy, wintry days!!

The National President’s Project for this year is Navy Safe Harbor. The tagline they use is “Taking care of our Sailors and their families.” The guiding principle is *Numquam Navigare Solus* (Never to Sail Alone). When I attended the East Coast Regional Convention, the key note speaker was the commanding officer, Captain Key Watkins. Safe Harbor is the Navy’s lead organization for coordinating the non-medical care of wounded, ill and injured Sailors, Coast Guardsmen and their family members. There are facilities located in many areas of the country to help those who have served our country. In the coming months, you will be hearing more about Navy Safe Harbor and I ask that you support this worthy project.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for all the love and support that you have all shown me. The FRA and the LAFRA have been a significant part of my life and I cherish all of you – and I mean all of you. I will do my best to make you proud.

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



CINDY RODHAM TUCK
National President

At the LA FRA and FRA Joint Opening Ceremonies



Getting advice and a laugh from LA FRA PNP Linda Merten



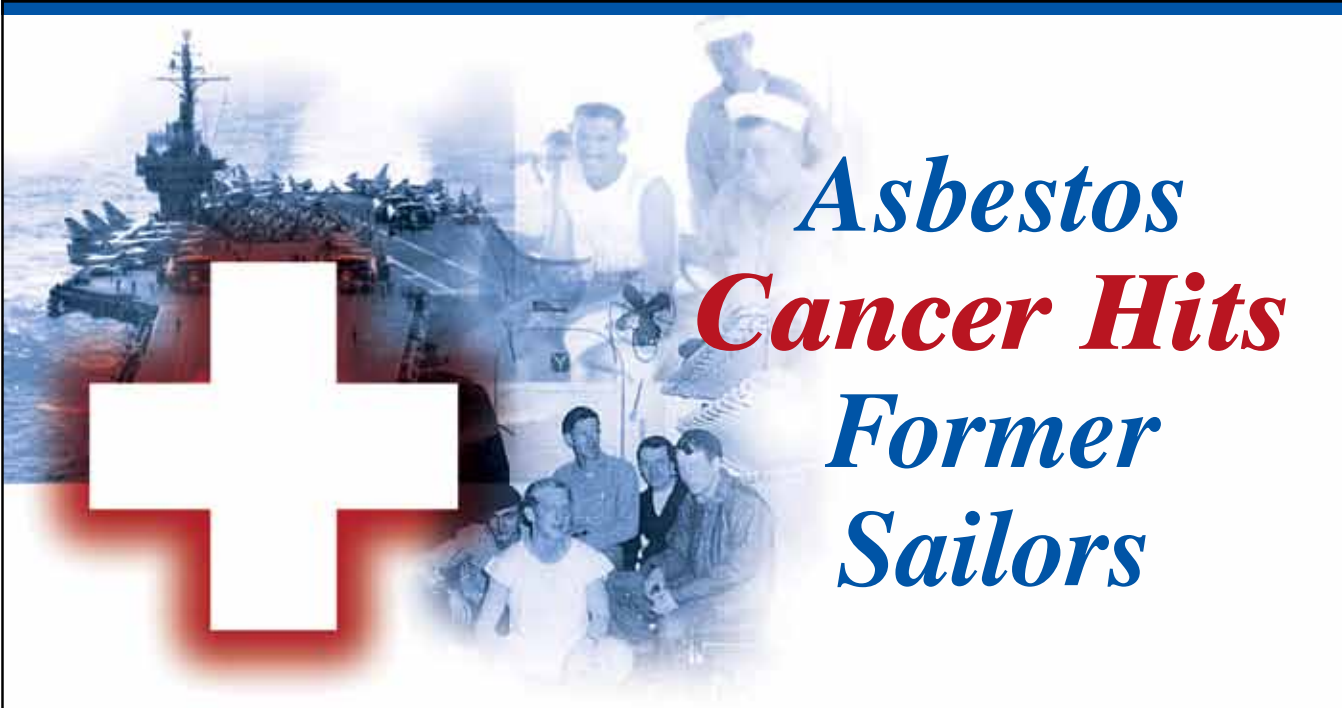
Having the opportunity to meet Capt. Oakley Key Watkins



The LA FRA and FRA National Boards of Directors and VIPs



With FRA PNP George Hyland



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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