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FRA *today*

FLEET RESERVE ASSOCIATION

ASBESTOS

Clearing the Air

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★ ★ ★ ★ TO HONOR MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY ★ ★ ★ ★

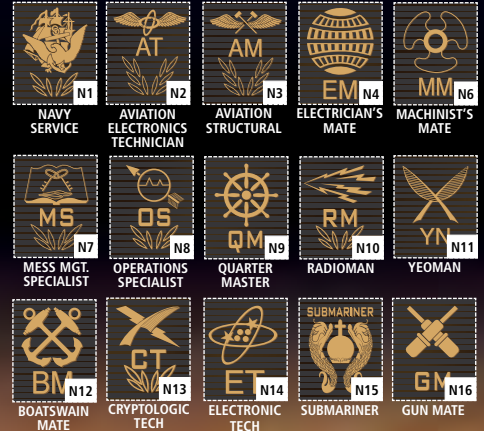
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HONOR RECIPIENTS

may have their medal & ribbon on shank opposite their Career Insignia. See order form for details.



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Please send me my **FREE American Flag Pin.**
CAREER CHOICE: (N1 thru N16), see above: _____ **BIRTHSTONE MO. †(1):** _____

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I PREFER ALL DIAMONDS for an extra \$150* added to my first payment.

Name _____

RING SIZE (Use the ring sizer below or check with a jeweler): _____

Address _____

INITIALS (3): _____ **SERVICE YEARS:** _____ **TO** _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

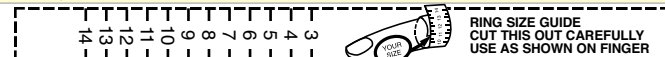
I AM AN HONOR RECIPIENT. Please place my medal & ribbon on the side of my ring opposite my Career Insignia.

Phone # (_____) _____
(In case we have a question about your order)

NOTE: A copy of your DD214 or other authorizing document must be sent with your order. Thank You.

Purple Heart Silver Star Bronze Star

Email _____



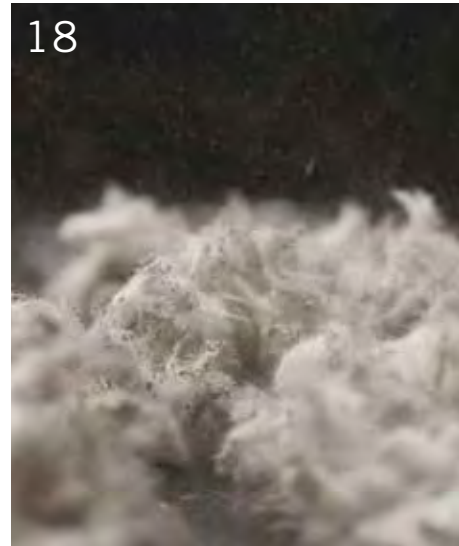
† Diamond Birthstones add \$150.00* to first payment.
* Plus \$19.95 for processing, shipping & handling. PA residents add 6% state sales tax.

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Featured

- 18 ASBESTOS – CLEARING THE AIR**
Asbestos has many industrial uses, including those aboard U. S. Navy and Coast Guard ships. If the microscopic fibers are released into the air, asbestos can cause a variety of severe and disabling health problems, including asbestosis and mesothelioma.



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LOYALTY, PROTECTION AND SERVICE

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

ON THE COVER

These tiny fibers don't conduct electricity and are resistant to heat, fire and chemicals, and they can be used to strengthen concrete or plastics. They can also cause severe health problems when they are inhaled.

New Leaders, New Governance



Lauren Armstrong

ELECTION SEASON IS UPON US! It's hard to escape all the political ads on television, online and in your mailbox. FRA shipmates spent many years of their lives defending citizens' right to choose their elected leaders, so I trust none of our readers need to be reminded how important it is to vote on November 8th. But those of you who are going to be out of the country or away from their legal residence on Election Day may need a reminder to register and request an absentee ballot NOW! If you want to cast an absentee ballot, you must complete a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA), which is available from the Federal Voting Assistance Program at FVAP.gov. Those without internet connectivity can call 1-800-438-VOTE (8683) to request the form or seek assistance.

It is also time for shipmates to elect FRA leaders for the coming year, as well as make decisions about proposed changes to the Association's Constitution and Bylaws. Please read a brief summary (on pages 16 and 17) of the candidates and resolutions that will be considered by delegates at FRA's upcoming national convention.

The FRA Education Foundation proudly announces the winners of \$96,000 in scholarship awards in this issue of *FRA Today*. Shipmates can take tremendous pride in this annual tradition that helps deserving students realize their educational and professional dreams. Many of this year's recipients have a direct connection to the FRA and are now part of FRA's ongoing legacy of Loyalty, Protection and Service.

FRA shipmates can support the FRA Education Foundation by taking advantage of the AmazonSmile program. Shipmates can simply visit smile.amazon.com to shop for items they would traditionally purchase from Amazon. On your first visit, just select the "Fleet Reserve Association Education Foundation" as your charitable organization before you begin shopping and 0.5 % of your eligible purchases will be donated to the Foundation. Amazon will remember your selection, and then your future purchases at smile.amazon.com will add additional donations to the cause.

FRA's fundamental mission is to be our members' voice on Capitol Hill, but it's important for shipmates to remember that they have an individual opportunity ... and a responsibility ... to be heard in our government and in the FRA.

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

FRA today

NATIONAL OFFICERS/BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- National President** Virgil P. Courneya, *High Sierra Branch 274*
National Vice President: Donald L. Larson, *Corpus Christi Branch 94*
National Executive Dir. Thomas J. Snee, *Navy Department Branch 181*
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Junior PNP John D. Ippert, *Honolulu Branch 46*
National Parliamentarian PNP F. Donald Muecheck, *Low Country Branch 269*
National Chaplain Dana Wallace, *Annapolis Branch 24*

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East Coast Penny Collins, *Annapolis Branch 24*
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North Central Marcia Cunningham, *Milwaukee Branch 14*
South Central Donald R. Gibson, *Lone Star Branch 11*
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- Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy** Michael Stevens
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- Force Master Chief of the Navy Reserve** Clarence "CJ" Mitchell
USMC Reserve Force Sergeant Major Anthony Spadaro
Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard Reserve Force
 Eric Johnson

FRA TODAY MAGAZINE

The monthly membership publication of the Fleet Reserve Association

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To some, sunglasses are a fashion accessory...

But When Driving, These Sunglasses May Save Your Life!

Drivers' Alert: Driving can expose you to more dangerous glare than any sunny day at the beach can... do you know how to protect yourself?

The sun rises and sets at peak travel periods, during the early morning and afternoon rush hours and many drivers find themselves temporarily blinded while driving directly into the glare of the sun. Deadly accidents are regularly caused by such blinding glare with danger arising from reflected light off another vehicle, the pavement, or even from waxed and oily windshields that can make matters worse. Early morning dew can exacerbate this situation. Yet, motorists struggle on despite being blinded by the sun's glare that can cause countless accidents every year.

Not all sunglasses are created equal. Protecting your eyes is serious business. With all the fancy fashion frames out there it can be easy to overlook what really matters—the lenses. So we did our research and looked to the very best in optic innovation and technology.

Sometimes it does take a rocket scientist. A NASA rocket scientist. Some ordinary sunglasses can obscure your vision by exposing your eyes to harmful UV rays, blue light, and reflective glare. They can also darken useful vision-enhancing light. But now, independent research conducted by scientists from NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory has brought forth ground-breaking technology to help protect human eyesight from the harmful effects of solar radiation



Slip on a pair of Eagle Eyes® and everything instantly appears more vivid and sharp. You'll immediately notice that your eyes are more comfortable and relaxed and you'll feel no need to squint. The scientifically designed sunglasses are not just fashion accessories—they are necessary to protect your eyes from those harmful rays produced by the sun during peak driving times.

light. This superior lens technology was first discovered when NASA scientists looked to nature for a means to superior eye protection—specifically, by studying the eyes of eagles, known for their extreme visual acuity. This discovery resulted in what is now known as Eagle Eyes®.

The Only Sunglass Technology Certified by the Space Foundation for UV and Blue-Light Eye Protection. Eagle Eyes® features the most advanced eye protection technology ever created. The TriLenium® Lens Technology offers triple-filter polarization to block 99.9% UVA and UVB—plus the added benefit of blue-light eye protection. Eagle Eyes® is the only optic technology that has earned official recognition from the Space Certification Program for this remarkable technology. Now, that's proven science-based protection.

The finest optics: And buy one, get one FREE! Eagle Eyes® has the highest customer satisfaction of any item in our 20 year history. We are so excited for you to try the Eagle Eyes® breakthrough technology that we will give you a **second pair of Eagle Eyes® Navigator™ Sunglasses FREE—a \$99 value!**

That's two pairs to protect your eyes with the best technology available for less than the price of one pair of traditional sunglasses. You get a pair of Navigators with stainless steel black frames and the other with stainless steel gold, plus one hard zipper case and one micro-fiber drawstring cleaning pouch are included. Keep one pair in your pocket and one in your car.

Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed. If you are not astounded with the Eagle Eyes® technology, enjoying clearer, sharper and more glare-free vision, simply return one pair within 60 days for a full refund of the purchase price. The other pair is yours to keep. No one else has such confidence in their optic technology. Don't leave your eyes in the hands of fashion designers, entrust them to the best scientific minds on earth. Wear your Eagle Eyes® Navigators



Studies by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) show that most (74%) of the crashes occurred on clear, sunny days



Navigator™ Black Stainless Steel Sunglasses

Receive the Navigator™ Gold Sunglasses (a \$99 value) **FREE!** just for trying the Navigator™ Black



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with absolute confidence, knowing your eyes are protected with technology that was born in space for the human race.

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Perch Atop, Then Soar!

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF our incoming branch officers and thank you for stepping up to lead. Those officers who are returning deserve additional thanks for their continued service to our Association. Branch presidents hold the gavel and lead the way for their branch's success. Holding a branch office provides a unique opportunity to make 2016–17 a banner year for FRA. Your leadership and the branch's involvement will not only show the Association as a vibrant force in your respective communities, but will also showcase FRA as a group others in your area may want to join. As we **"Head to 100"** and plan celebrations to commemorate FRA's centennial in 2024, this is a special time to be a mover and shaker in our Association.

Becoming a branch officer doesn't have to be a solitary pursuit. There are a variety of resources to support and guide you, including previous branch officers, past and current regional and national presidents. These seasoned leaders can help sustain the enthusiasm and ambition required to make our branches even better. It is truly an exciting time for branches ... and for our Auxiliary units and their leaders, as well.

Becoming a branch officer is also an opportunity to gain skills and knowledge that will help you move up the FRA leadership ladder, if you so choose. Modeling good leadership skills and mentoring those who follow in your footsteps is also an important part of leading others. Each branch (and unit) enjoys the respective accomplishments of their members, but we should always search for new opportunities. Good leaders help

develop those opportunities.

Here are some tips that I found to be helpful when I've been in leadership positions:

Branch presidents are the presiding officers. **Lead, Learn, and Share.** Empower others to bring new ideas to the table and be the conduit for successful implementation. Learn from your past branch officers, seek guidance from your regional presidents, and always feel free to call upon your National Headquarters' (NHQ) staff for assistance.

Plan ahead. Set up a calendar of exciting activities or themes for the out-months to create anticipation for, and enjoyment of, each meeting. Develop a collegial relationship between your branch and Auxiliary leadership. Togetherness will sustain your members and reflect cohesive teamwork to bring in new members.

Be transparent in all matters. Share your visions of the future. Set benchmarks while seeking others' ideas and advice. If you have neighboring branches/units, consider having joint activities. Community spirit builds camaraderie.

Always ensure financial records are up to date and that incomes and expenses are fully accounted. Checking accounts should **ALWAYS** be balanced on a monthly basis. Outgoing checks and/or cash should **ALWAYS** have supporting documentation with the appropriate signatures. Ideally, financial reports should be compiled and distributed at monthly meetings for all members to review. Finally, all FRA branches should have an Employer Identification Number (EIN) and tax returns should be filed on time.



Tom Snee

Become familiar with FRA directives, i.e., branch constitution and bylaws (C&BL), regional/national bylaws, rituals, and standing rules. They were written for you to stand and act upon. Use good judgment in their application and use.

Be familiar with branch/unit administrative procedures. Set up a tickler system to remind you of deadlines for resolutions, branch/unit reports and other activities that are time-sensitive.

Utilize online resources to ensure program success and stability. National mailing lists, membership reports and manuals are electronically accessible to branch presidents and secretaries. If you are having difficulty obtaining any of these, call NHQ and our capable Member Services staff will walk you through. If you have an idea for change, share it ... with NHQ, your fellow shipmates and your board. Your idea may just be the next step to improving FRA. Together we all benefit.

These are just a few tips to consider during your term as a branch officer. Keep a steady course, use your time wisely and develop a sound financial plan. Encourage an active branch social outreach effort, and watch how your efforts create positive change for our Association. Setting achievable goals keeps branches and unit gatherings fun and moving forward over the long term.

Each of you can help make 2016–17 an exceptional year. I wish you many productive activities, sustained membership growth for your branch and, most of all, have fun.

FRA: Loyalty, First; Protection, Assured, and; Service, Always

Honor, Courage and Commitment

Wall Clock

Acclaimed artwork by Dennis Lyall captures sailors extraordinary service

Unique sculpted stone styling complements any décor

Impressively sized at nearly 1½ feet high!

Traditional golden roman numerals and elegant gold hands add sophistication

Precision timepiece with accurate quartz movement

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Shown much smaller than actual size of 17½ inches high x 8¾ inches wide. Requires 1AA battery, not included.

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Neither the Department of the Navy nor any other component of the Department of Defense has approved, endorsed or authorized this product.

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To Burn or Not to Burn

I was recently given a star cut out of a U.S. flag and a note that says, "I am part of our American Flag. I have flown over a home in the U.S.A. I can no longer fly. The sun and winds have caused me to become tattered and torn. Please carry me as a reminder that you are not forgotten."

The note and star are contained in a small plastic bag and were presented to me by a young lady. She told me her dad was a Green Beret and he did this small tribute in his spare time.

Proper disposal [of an old flag] is to burn it, however, to present the star and note to an American [veteran or servicemember] is not a bad habit. At some point maybe we can save the white and blue stripes and not dispose of anything after the flag becomes tattered.

Your opinions are appreciated.

Bill Whitt

Auxiliary Membership Policy

My wife recently had the opportunity to sign up a member in Auxiliary Unit 294 (Crossville, Tenn.). Her application and money were received without question, but after reviewing her application, it was discovered that her husband (still living) was not a member of the Fleet Reserve Association. He has refused to join the FRA, even though he is retired from the Navy.

This lady's application and money were returned to her and she was told that she could not join because her husband was not a member of the FRA. I was told that if her husband was deceased, or if her father or grandfather was a member of the FRA, then she would be qualified to join the Auxiliary.

In these days of declining membership in the branches/units and closing of branches, I feel this is a terrible policy to have on the books and should be changed.

Richard E. Martin

FRA Response: *Thank you, Shipmate Martin. Your comments have been forwarded to Auxiliary leaders for consideration.*

This is an Auxiliary membership policy that's part of the organization's bylaws. A change of this type would have to be initiated by their members and approved by delegates at the Auxiliary's national convention. The change would then be presented to the FRA for approval.

Correction

A letter featured in the August "Shipmate Forum" column was incorrectly attributed to Shipmate Joe Steranka. The comments about the crew of the USS *Liberty* being abandoned by their country were submitted by Shipmate Daniel Gatlyn. *FRA Today* apologizes for the error.



Breaking the Ice

I just finished reading your "Breaking the Ice" article in the August issue of *FRA Today*. Another superb job of telling unknown (by most) aspects of the Coast Guard mission. Your story was really well done, and brought back a couple wonderful memories for me. In 1992, when I was the CG Pacific Area Command Master Chief, I sailed with *Polar Star* from Seattle to Nome. It was a great trip and liberty in Nome was something else! Right before I retired in 1998, I flew to McMurdo and joined the *Polar Sea* for a few days while she was breaking the resupply channel through the ice. Thanks for stirring my memories!

MCPOCG7 Rick Trent



It was with great pleasure that I read the article "Breaking the Ice" and learning that the USCGC *Polar Star* (WACB-10) was still performing ice-breaking duties in Antarctica. I was in the Navy as part of Operation Deepfreeze with Air Development Squadron Six (VX-6) from 1965 through 1969. I watched the Coast Guard ice breaker *Eastwind* and other breakers open up the channel for supply ships to sail into McMurdo Sound with God-sent food and parts needed to continue our mission. The ice breakers were an essential part of our operation and ensured that our stations were kept clear of large ice floats and ice hazards. When we saw the ice breakers come in, we knew that our summer support mission would soon end and, for most of us, we would be headed back home to NAS Quonset Point, R.I. Thanks for the memories and the upgrade of the outstanding support that the U.S. Coast Guard ice breakers continue to provide.

Cedell Jennings, Jr.

Submissions Send *Shipmate Forum* letters to *FRA Today*, 125 N. West St. Alexandria, VA 22314. Email submissions may be sent to 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.

Time's Running Out!

Call 904-396-5100 before **September 16th** to get the special FRA convention rate of \$89/night at the Lexington Hotel and Conference Center in Jacksonville, Florida. (Be sure to mention the group code "Fleet Reserve.")

FRA and Auxiliary National Conventions
October 11-16, 2016
Visit www.fra.org/nc2016 for more information.

What our clients are saying about Stauer Helenite jewelry:

"My wife received more compliments on this stone on the first day she wore it than any other piece of jewelry I've ever given her."

— J. from Orlando, FL
Stauer Client



This 4-carat stunner was created from the aftermath of Mount St. Helens eruption!

Famous Volcano Has Strange Effect On Women

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On May 18, 1980, Mount St. Helens erupted, sending a column of ash and smoke 80,000 feet into the atmosphere. From that chaos, something beautiful emerged—our spectacular Spirit Lake Helenite Ring.

Created from the superheated volcanic rock dust of the historic Mount St. Helens eruption, helenite has become the green stone of choice for jewelry and fashion designers worldwide. Helenite's vivid color and immaculate clarity rivals mined emeralds that can sell for as much as \$3,000 per carat. Today you can wear this 4-carat stunner for **only \$99!**

Our exclusive design highlights the visually stunning stone with a concave cut set in .925 sterling silver loaded with brilliant white, lab-created DiamondAura®. The classic pairing of colors in a vintage-inspired setting makes for a statement ring that's simply impossible to ignore!

Beauty from the beast. Also known as "America's Emerald," helenite is not an emerald at all, but a brighter and clearer green stone that gem cutters can facet into

spectacular large carat weight jewelry. "It's just recently that luxury jewelers have fallen in love with helenite," says James Fent, GIA certified gemologist. "Clear green color in a stone this size is rarely found in emeralds but helenite has come to the rescue."

Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed. Bring home the Spirit Lake Helenite Ring and see for yourself. If you are not completely blown away by the exceptional beauty of this rare American stone, simply return the ring within 60 days for a full refund of your purchase price. It's that simple. But we're betting that once you slide this gorgeous green beauty on your finger, it will take a force of nature to get you two apart!

Spirit Lake Helenite Ring

Total value with FREE studs ~~\$478*~~

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Rating of A+

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4 carat Helenite center stone • Lab-created white DiamondAura accents • .925 sterling silver setting • Whole ring sizes 5-10

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John Davis

Be Engaged or Pay the Price

AS YOU RECEIVE THIS ISSUE of *FRA Today*, Congress will be returning from their summer recess with a lot of unfinished business still to complete before the end of FY 2016, which ended on September 30th. Since none of the 12 spending bills have passed both chambers and been sent to the President to be signed into law, Congress will likely pass a Continuing Resolution (CR) for the FY 2017 budget to keep the government operating at FY 2016 spending levels after October 1, 2016.

The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) is also a work in progress at press time. Both the House and Senate have passed their respective versions of the FY 2017 NDAA and a conference committee has been

appointed to resolve the differences between the two bills (H.R. 4909/S. 2943).

Budget pressure is mounting for legislators to shift cost to beneficiaries and proposals in the Senate bill to increase TRICARE Prime fees, establish new fees for TRICARE Standard beneficiaries, jack up pharmacy co-pays (they double over the next nine years), cut housing allowances (BAH) and provide a smaller-than-expected active duty pay increase should motivate members to use the FRA Action Center (<http://action.fra.org/action-center/>) to weigh in on all these costly provisions. Shipmates need to stand up and be heard on Capitol Hill. If you don't speak up, who will?

TRICARE ISSUES

TRICARE North and TRICARE South Regions Merge with new Provider Contract

Effective July 1, 2016, TRICARE's North and South Regional Offices combined to form TRICARE Regional Office (TRO) East. Some staff rebalancing was required to eliminate redundancies, but experienced employees from the North and South regions will continue to provide management and support services in their respective geographic areas covering 33 states, and TRO East beneficiaries should not experience any change in service.

Related to this realignment, the Pentagon recently announced that new TRICARE contracts have been awarded. Humana, Inc. has been named to provide claims services for TRO East beneficiaries. Health Net Federal Services will be providing administrative service for TRO West.

United Healthcare, who has managed the TRICARE West region since 2012, wasn't selected to continue as an administrator in the newly-organized TRICARE structure. United Healthcare has filed a formal protest against the Defense Department (DoD) decision to award the next round of TRICARE contracts to two of the company's competitors.

TRICARE Reminds Beneficiaries: Protect Your Personal Information

Fraud against TRICARE beneficiaries is in the news. Protecting your personal information is vital to your privacy and prevents abuse of taxpayer funds. Be safe; don't share your military ID or other personal or family information with an unknown person.

Fraudsters often target TRICARE beneficiaries, including active duty service members. Examples include fake surveys used to collect personal information or offering gift cards to get your information, then billing TRICARE for services you didn't need or never received.

If you think you are the victim of TRICARE-related fraud, you can report it to the Defense Health Agency. You can also report cases in which you think someone is trying to defraud TRICARE. For example, if your TRICARE explanation of benefits shows a bill for a service you didn't receive, tell your TRICARE regional contractor.

TRICARE usually doesn't contact you asking for personal information, such as your military ID number or Social Security number. Only provide that information to a trusted entity, like your doctor, a claims processor, or your TRICARE regional contractor. Be wary of an unknown person offering a gift or reward in exchange for providing a health service. They may be trying to get your information to commit fraud.

For more information about fraud, visit www.health.mil/fraud



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ACTIVE DUTY/RESERVE ISSUES

Pressure Grows to Eliminate BAH Cuts in NDAA

Lawmakers are pressing leaders of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees to drop proposed changes to Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) subsidies as they negotiate a final version of the FY 2017 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). In separate letters to the committee leaders, legislators from both parties in both chambers expressed their opposition to cost-saving provisions in the Senate bill that would mandate a new calculation of the basic housing allowance "that utilizes actual costs" of housing. The Senate bill, which is supported by Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) Chairman John McCain (Ariz.), also revises the calculation of the subsidy for service members who share a residence. The changes would not take effect until FY 2018, and service members' allowances would not be reduced until they change duty stations.

In recommending reform, Senate Armed Services Committee argued, "the benefit now far exceeds the actual cost of housing borne by some service members." But the overhaul, lawmakers argued, would cause financial hardship for military families. "The provision is regressive, discriminatory and costly, and will have negative effects on morale, recruitment, retention, readiness and future budgets," 30 House members argued in a letter. The effort is being led in the House by Reps. Rob Bishop (Utah) and John Garamendi (Calif.). The Senate campaign is being led by Sens. Lisa Murkowski (Alaska), Jon Tester (Mont.) and John Boozman (Ark.), and a similar correspondence was signed by 18 senators from both parties.

FRA successfully opposed similar proposals to limit the housing allowance for dual military couples and service members who live together last year, and the BAH reforms were abandoned in conference. Instead, lawmakers found savings by decreasing service members' share of their BAH by one percent annually over four years. Members can use the FRA Action Center (<http://action.fra.org/action-center/>) to weigh in on this and other NDAA provisions.

Senate Panel Reviews DoD/VA Electronic Health Records

The Senate Military Construction and Veterans Affairs (MilCon/VA) Appropriations Subcommittee recently held an oversight hearing on the progress the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has made in developing a health record system that is usable by both agencies. FRA endorsed increased funding for DoD and VA to share health care resource in order to deliver seamless, cost effective, quality services to personnel wounded in combat, other veterans and their families. The Association has repeatedly called for increased congressional oversight to keep pushing both agencies to make progress on this initiative.

The Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission (MCRMC) final report (January 2015) emphasized the lack of coordination and recommended improved collaboration between VA and DoD. FRA strongly supports the Administration's efforts to create an integrated Electronic Health Record (iEHR) for every service member, which would be a major step toward the Association's long-standing goal of a truly seamless transition from military to veteran status for all service members. This would permit DoD, the VA and private health care providers immediate access to health data.

FRA believes in the importance of fully interoperable electronic medical records and cheered a provision in the FY 2014 NDAA that requires DoD and VA to implement seamless electronic sharing of medical health care data by October 1, 2016. This provision was in response to the VA and DoD shelving plans to jointly develop an integrated iEHR system due to cost and schedule challenges, but it appears this will be another in a long line of missed deadlines. VA and DoD now estimate they will achieve complete interoperability by the end of Fiscal Year 2018. To view a video of the hearing, visit: <http://www.appropriations.senate.gov/hearings/hearing-to-review-the-va-electronic-health-record-network-vista>

Subcommittee Reviews TBI Diagnosis

The House Veterans Affairs Committee (HVAC) Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee recently held an oversight hearing on the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) failure to provide adequate examinations for Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI). Since 2008, Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) policy has required that initial TBI disability examinations be conducted by one of four specialists: neurologists, psychiatrists, psychologists or neurosurgeons. However, an April 2016 review of TBI claims revealed more than 24,000 veterans nationwide received a TBI examination performed by an unqualified examiner.

"We let these veterans down," VA Secretary Bob McDonald said. "That is why we are taking every step necessary to grant equitable relief to those affected to ensure they receive the full benefits to which they are entitled." The Secretary's decision to grant relief will enable VA to take action on any new examinations without requiring veterans to submit new claims. If additional benefits are due, VA will award an effective date as early as the date of the initial TBI claim. VA will contact veterans identified as part of this national TBI review to offer them an opportunity to receive a new examination and have their claims reprocessed.

Several of the subcommittee members claimed that VA sending a letter is not a sufficient response since it was VA's mistake, not the veterans'. In response to those concerns, the VA has created a dedicated phone line for these veterans. This number is for those who have been notified, not for general benefit questions.

In related news, House Veterans Affairs Committee (HVAC) Ranking Member Rep. Corrine Brown (Fla.) and her chief of staff pleaded not guilty to multiple charges of fraud and other federal offenses. Prosecutors allege the two created a phony charity for their personal financial gain. Brown released a statement saying she was temporarily stepping down as HVAC Ranking Member in accordance with House rules. Second term Rep. Mark Takano (Calif.) has been appointed to serve in this post for the remainder of the 114th Congress.

VETERANS ISSUES

Final VA Rule for Camp Lejeune Water Contamination

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently issued a final ruling to increase VA health care eligibility for veterans affected by contaminated drinking water at the Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune (MCBCL). Veterans and their family members may be eligible for VA health benefits if they served on active duty or resided at MCBCL for 30 days or more between August 1, 1953 and December 31, 1987. Eligible veterans will be able to receive VA health care. In addition, care for qualifying health conditions is provided at no cost to a veteran, and eligible family members receive reimbursement for out-of-pocket medical expenses incurred from the treatment of qualifying health conditions after all other health insurance is applied.

A Camp Lejeune veteran does not need to have one of the 15 health conditions to be eligible to receive VA health care, nor do they need a service-connected disability rating to be eligible as a Camp Lejeune veteran for VA health care. See more at: <http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/camp-lejeune/#sthash.FlCgWdlv.dpuf>.

Veterans who are already enrolled in VA health care should contact their local VA health care facility to receive care. Not yet enrolled? Apply online at: <http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/apply/> or call 1-877-222-8387 for help. Inform VA staff that you served on active duty at Camp Lejeune for at least 30 days during the covered time period.

The final rule is a result of an FRA-supported bill that was signed into law in 2012, providing health benefits to service members and family members exposed to the contaminated water from 1957 to 1987.

Bill Seeks VA Accountability and Reform of Appeals Process

House Veterans Affairs Committee (HVAC) Chairman Jeff Miller (Fla.) recently introduced the "VA Accountability First and Appeals Modernization Act" (H.R. 5620) that seeks to reform the VA's disability benefits appeals process – a top priority for FRA. The bill also strengthens protections for whistleblowers and improves accountability for misbehaving employees. Specifically, the bill would:

- Reform the department's broken disability benefits appeals process;
- Shorten the firing/demotion/appeals process for rank-and-file VA employees, from more than a year on average, to no more than 77 days;
- Entirely remove the Merit Systems Protection Board from the firing/demotion/appeals process for VA senior executives;
- Provide VA whistleblowers with a means to solve problems at the lowest possible level, while offering them protection from reprisals and mandating strict accountability for those who reprise against them;
- Give the VA Secretary the authority to recoup bonuses and relocation expenses from misbehaving employees; and
- Give the VA Secretary the authority to reduce the pensions of senior executives convicted of felonies that influenced their job performance.

Improving the appeals process for VA disability claims is an important objective for FRA and members are urged to use the FRA Action Center (<http://action.fra.org/action-center/>) to weigh in on this legislation.

Commission on Care: VA Health Care Still has "Profound Deficiencies"

The Commission on Care recently released its final report that notes that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) generally delivers high-quality health care, but is inconsistent from one site to the next and problems with access remain. Congress created the 12-member panel as part of the FRA-supported "Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014" in response to wait-time scandal, which also revealed that VA employees were covering up chronic delays with false paperwork and secret waiting lists. As many as 40 veterans died while awaiting care at the Phoenix VA hospital, according to a report by the VA's inspector general. Section 202 of the Act created the Commission, charging it to examine veterans' access to VA health care and to examine strategically how best to organize the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), locate health resources, and deliver health care to veterans during the next 20 years. The Commission reports to the President of the United States through the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

VA Secretary Bob McDonald also praised the report, saying he was pleased to see that many of the panel's recommendations are in line with ongoing efforts to transform the VA into what McDonald calls a "veteran-centric organization."

The report states that the VA has a long way to go and singled out the "Choice Program," authorized by Congress to make it easier for veterans to get private care, as significantly flawed. The report recommends replacing the program with community-based delivery networks that it said should improve access, quality and cost-effectiveness. The commission also found that the long-term viability of VA health care is threatened by problems with staffing, facilities, capital needs, information systems and other problems.

Rep. Jeff Miller, (Fla.) chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, said the 292-page report "makes it abundantly clear that the problems plaguing (the) Department of Veterans Affairs medical care are severe. Fixing them will require dramatic changes in how VA does business, to include expanding partnerships with community providers in order to give veterans more health care choices."



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VETERANS ISSUES

Veteran Homelessness Reduced

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness have recently issued a joint statement that indicates the number of homeless veterans in the United States has been cut nearly in half since 2010. HUD and VA have a wide range of programs to prevent and end homelessness among veterans, including health care, housing solutions, job training and education.



Brian Eichhorn/Shutterstock

Helping homeless veterans has been a high priority for the VA, which established a goal of eliminating homelessness among veterans by 2015. Although it isn't completely eradicated, current data shows a 47-percent decrease in homelessness since 2010 and a 17-percent decrease in veteran homelessness between January 2015 and January 2016, which is quadruple the previous year's annual decline. In fiscal year 2015, VA and HUD programs helped 99,000 veterans.

For more information on VA veterans homelessness programs go to: <http://www.va.gov/homeless/>

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

New VA Data on Veteran's Suicide

According to new statistics by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), about 20 veterans commit suicide each day. That figure lowers the department's previous estimate of 22 veteran suicides per day; a figure based on data from only 20 states, and did not contain full military records from the Pentagon.

The new data shows that the risk of suicide for veterans is 21 percent higher when compared to civilian adults. Veteran suicides increased by more than 32 percent from 2001 to 2014, compared with 23 percent for civilians. In 2014, veterans accounted for 18 percent of suicides nationwide, despite making up less than nine percent of the population.

The risk was found to be more acute for female veterans, whose suicide rates rose to 85 percent of veteran suicides during that time, compared with 40 percent for civilian women. Among veteran suicides, 65 percent were committed by those 50 years or older, who spent little or no time fighting in the recent wars.

"One veteran suicide is one too many and this collaborative effort provides both updated and comprehensive data that allows us to make better-informed decisions on how to prevent this national tragedy," said Dr. David J. Shulkin, the VA's undersecretary for health.

FRA believes that suicide prevention is a high priority. The Association supported the "Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act" (H.R. 203/S. 167) that was signed into law (P. L. 114-2) last year. The measure was sponsored by Rep. Tim Walz (Minn.) and Sen. John McCain (Ariz.), respectively, and had bi-partisan support. It requires the VA and DoD to allow for an independent third-party evaluation of veterans' mental health care and suicide prevention programs on an annual basis.

VA Opioid Legislation Passes

Congress voted to pass the "Jason Simcakoski Memorial Opioid Safety Act" (S.1641) and President Obama signed it into law. The measure, sponsored by Sen. Tammy Baldwin (Wisc.), seeks to improve treatment programs for those addicted to heroin and pain-killers. The bill attempts to strengthen the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) guidelines for prescribing opioids and improve pain management services by putting the following reforms in place:

- Requiring stronger opioid prescribing guidelines and education for VA providers, including stricter standards against prescribing dangerous combinations of opioids with other drugs and for prescribing opioids to patients struggling with mental health issues;
- Increasing coordination and communication throughout the VA with medical facilities, providers, patients and their families surrounding pain management, alternative treatments for chronic pain, and appropriate opioid therapy; and
- Holding the VA system accountable for appropriate care and quality standards through GAO reviews and VA reports to Congress.

In addition to improving opioid therapy and pain management, the Senate bill strengthens the VA's patient advocacy program by ensuring advocates are independent and truly work for veterans, expanding access to complementary and integrative health and wellness programs, and enhancing VA hiring practices to help prevent bad doctors from treating veterans.

In June 2016, the House passed similar legislation, the FRA-supported "Jason Simcakoski Promoting Responsible Opioid Management and Incorporating Scientific Expertise (PROMISE) Act" (H.R. 4063), sponsored by Rep. Gus Bilirakis (Fla.). This legislation was listed on the FRA Action Center and FRA thanks the many shipmates who weighed in on this issue.

Both the House and Senate bills are named in honor of Marine Corps veteran Jason Simcakoski, who died of mixed-drug toxicity while he was an inpatient at the Tomah, Wisc., VA Medical Center. A VA investigation found that hospital staff improperly prescribed his medications.

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The Rewards of Fundraising

IT'S HARD TO OPERATE any organization without a little capital to support programs and activities. Fundraising doesn't have to be hard or tedious and can pay dividends beyond the cash it adds to the branch coffers. It's sometimes helpful to employ fundraising ideas that also strengthen relationships within your community or directly support one of FRA's ancillary programs, like the Americanism Essay Contest, FRA-sponsored youth activities or our Hospitals, Welfare and Rehabilitation initiatives. Such efforts can generate revenue and also help promote the FRA and its important work to members of your community. Here are a few fundraising ideas you might consider.

Yard Sales: Schedule a yard sale at your branch, home, or some other place where veterans will gather. Most members have items that could be donated just collecting dust in their garage. Some of those things we all have such as books, DVDs, CDs, pictures, paintings, prints, pottery, ceramics, tools, hats, collectible pins, and more can be sold to raise funds. Sometimes you can charge a shipmate to set up a table if they have items of their own to sell.

Selling a Product: Another idea for is to offer a unique item or collectible

for sale, such as coins, shirts, hats, pins or other wearables. Items that demonstrate military or patriotic pride are often well-received. A good example of this kind of fundraising can be seen at both regional and national conventions, where branches set up tables and display their items for sale. Branch and Unit 4 (Washington, D.C.) has had good success with wooden wrist bracelets from Wrist Story Products. The expandable bracelets, which can have up to twelve colorful wooden symbols of interest (American Veteran, Cancer Awareness, American Pride), are sold at a small profit. For more information visit www.wriststory.com or contact Lee Morrison at 1-800-544-5138 (select option 1) or by email at leemorrison@wriststory.com.

A Coin Drop: Members of Branch 13 (Atlantic City, N.J.) position themselves on street corners and ask passers-by to drop their loose change into buckets. Their recent coin drop netted the branch more than \$4,000! Before you have an event like this, you need to research your local laws governing this type of activity. You may be required to purchase liability insurance and/or a license or permit. I highly recommend wearing your FRA hat, shirt

or vest to identify yourself as an FRA shipmate during the event. Also, showing an FRA banner and handing out a thank you cards after a donation is made goes a long way to help promote FRA in the community. Proceeds from the Branch 13's recent effort are earmarked to provide scholarships to students at local colleges and universities. Some of the recipients are veterans, which enhances



Penny Collins

the branch's membership programs.

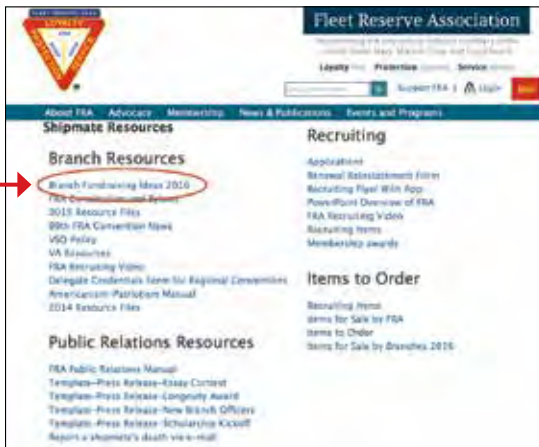
Games of Chance: Several branches hold games of chance as fundraisers. Twice a year, Branch and Unit 24 (Annapolis, Md.) schedule Las Vegas Night at the branch home. Branch 99 (Virginia Beach, Va.) sponsors a weekly bingo game for their members and other veterans. The proceeds are used to help fund branch programs and support local charities.

Some other examples of fundraising projects include sponsoring 5K runs or walks; holding silent auctions at events; sponsoring sporting tournaments such as basketball, baseball, golf or volleyball; having a "battle of the bands;" doing chores for charity like Habitat for Humanity, food sales like a chili cook-off or bake sale, holding a fashion show, or offering game nights, just to name a few.

To find a list of more than 50 fundraising ideas, log into the FRA website (www.fra.org) and click on "Membership" in the blue band near the top of your screen. Under the heading of "Member Resources" on the top left of your screen, click "Branch Fundraising Ideas for 2016." You can also contact HQ and someone can help you.

Please let me know if you have some successful fund raising ideas and I'll be happy to share them with other branches. Fundraising can provide financial support to members, their families, veterans in need, youth activities and more. If we continue to promote the fundraising ideas, we can all help promote FRA and our branches within our own communities.

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





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DELEGATES AT FRA'S UPCOMING national convention in Jacksonville, Fla., will be voting on a variety of resolutions, each of which is summarized below. These resolutions have been promulgated to FRA branches and the full content is available on the FRA website (www.fra.org/2016resolutions). Shipmates are encouraged to read the justification and enactment details of each resolution and be prepared to vote on them in October.

Nominating Resolutions

Candidate for National President:

Shipmates from Branch 94 (Corpus Christi, Texas) have nominated **National Vice President Don Larson** to serve as FRA's National President. NVP Larson has been an FRA Shipmate since 1992 and earned his Life Membership in 2009 through his recruiting efforts. He's demonstrated exemplary leadership at the branch level, chairing multiple committees and serving as branch president (five terms) and secretary/treasurer (four terms). Shipmate Don has also chaired several regional committees and has served as treasurer, vice president and president of the South Central Region. He is currently the Regional Parliamentarian. At the national level, he has chaired multiple national committees, including the 87th National Convention Committee. He is also well known at convention for his role as an eight-time facilitator of the Convention 101 workshop held before the opening of national convention for first-time attendees.



Candidate for National Vice President:

Shipmates of South Jersey Branch 57 have nominated **Past Regional President Northeast Bill Starkey** for the post of National Vice President. PRPNE Starkey joined the FRA in 1994 and has been a Life Member since 2003. He has served as branch secretary (eight years), treasurer (12 years), parliamentarian (13 years) and as branch vice president and president, as well as chairman and member of multiple committees. In addition to his two terms as Northeast Regional President, Shipmate Bill has served as



regional vice president (two years), treasurer (three years) and parliamentarian (eight years). He has also served on the Northeast/New England Region's Bylaws Committee, parliamentarian and is currently serving his third term as the region's treasurer. He chaired the 1999 national convention held in Cherry Hill, N.J., and has served as national parliamentarian in 2011-2012 and currently chairs FRA's Constitution and By-Laws Committee.

Candidate for National Executive Director:

Shipmates of Branch 181 (Arlington, Va.) have nominated **National Executive Director Tom Snee** to serve a second three-year term as FRA's top executive. An FRA member since 1992, NED Snee is a Life Member and has served as a branch president and on numerous boards and committees at the branch, regional and national levels. Shipmate Tom served on the National Headquarters (NHQ) staff in several capacities from 1996 to 1999: as a disabilities/compensation counselor for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), membership director and director of branch development. During his current tenure as NED, he oversaw the renovation of NHQ, revisions to the FRA website, the development of processes for shipmates to track FRA-related legislation and was instrumental in getting FRA Today distributed to Navy and Coast Guard recruiting stations. As a Vietnam veteran, Snee is passionate about advancing legislation to support "Blue Water" veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange and is also an avid supporter of FRA's legislative initiatives to advance veteran education programs and reduce veteran homelessness.



In addition to electing national officers, convention delegates will also consider changes to FRA's Constitution and Bylaws, Standing Rules and Rituals.

General Resolutions

The Veterans Service Committee unanimously supports the establishment of a Veterans Service Foundation to provide broader and more direct support for veterans. Creating a new 501(c)3 foundation will allow for an ongoing program to train veteran service officers to assist shipmates and other veterans in filing claims for VA benefits, accept tax-deductible donations from corporations and individuals, and apply for grants and corporate donations to help fund these vital services.

Standing Rules (SR) Resolutions

SR 1 (by Low Country Branch 269) seeks to amend Standing Rule 6(c) and 6(i) to reference the Auxiliary as the

Auxiliary of the Fleet Reserve Association (AFRA) as outlined in C&BL Resolution 13 (on page 17). This particular rule covers representation on Time and Place Committee and National Convention Committee.

SR 2 (by the Veterans Service Committee) proposes that Standing Rule 7 be amended to include reference to the branch Veteran Services Committee as outlined in C&BL Resolution 10 (above).

SR3 (by the Veterans Service Committee) also recommends amending Standing Rule 7 by establishing a national "Shipmate of the Year" award for National Veterans Service.

Constitution and Bylaws (C&BL) Resolutions

C&BL Resolution 1 (by the National Committee on Membership & Retention) proposes to open FRA membership to service members who receive a “General Discharge” from the military. The services’ have varied categories of non-judicial punishment that might lead to a General Discharge, including discharges for unacceptable military behavior, failure to meet military standards or even honorable conditions. The resolution would still prevent those with Bad Conduct and/or Dishonorable Discharges from becoming FRA shipmates, but would provide a more lenient view of General Discharges.

C&BL Resolution 2 (by the National Committee on Membership & Retention) seeks to provide a greater role in the Association for Members-at-Large (MALs). Approximately one third of FRA’s membership is comprised of MALs (versus members of an FRA branch) and, even though these shipmates pay the same amount of annual dues, they do not have a voice in FRA matters. This resolution proposes to provide representation of MALs at regional and national conventions (through their regional president) and allow MALs to have a voice when considering changes to the C&BL. MALS would remain ineligible to hold office in the FRA.

C&BL Resolution 3 (by the National Committee on Budget & Finance) proposes to increase FRA membership dues (from \$30) to \$40 per year, with discounted rates available in certain circumstances. A one-time introductory rate of \$20 would be available for active duty or Reserve personnel who join for one year as a Member-at-Large. After the first year, the shipmate’s dues return to the \$40/year rate and he/she may elect to align with a branch or remain on the MAL rolls. A 6-percent discount would be offered to shipmates who elect to pay for two years in advance (for a total of \$75) and a 10-percent discount would be available for those who elect to pay five years in advance (for a total of \$180).

C&BL Resolution 4 (by the National Committee on Budget & Finance) seeks to increase annual FRA membership dues to \$40 and offer similar multi-year discount as those outlined in C&BL Resolution 3 (above). This resolution, however, does not include the one-year introductory rate for active duty and Reserve personnel.

C&BL Resolution 5 (by the National Committee on Budget & Finance) proposes to establish a more streamlined schedule for FRA Life Membership dues. It has been seven years since the Life Member dues have been increased and financial audits have revealed the current administrative structure creates an unsustainable financial liability for the FRA. This resolution proposes that fees for Life Membership be based on the shipmate’s age within eight broad categories.

C&BL Resolution 6 (by the National Committee on Constitution and Bylaws), 7 (by the National Board of Directors), 8 (by Low Country Branch 269) and 9 (also by Low Country Branch 269) all relate to the dissolution of the National Committee on Employee Pension Committee. All monies from the Employee Pension Fund were paid out to participants in 2013 and there is no further financial or legal liability to FRA. Resolutions 6, 7 and 8 all recommend that the National Committee on Employee Pension be terminated and that related language in the C&BL be rescinded. Resolution 9 proposes that language be added to the C&BL that would define the Budget and Finance Committee’s role in overseeing the operation of employees’ 401(k) Retirement Plan.

C&BL Resolution 10 (by the Veterans Service Committee) recommends that branch presidents may appoint a Committee on Veterans Service, that would report annually on activities and outstanding shipmates to the National Standing Committee on Veterans Service for consideration of recognition at national convention.

C&BL Resolution 11 (by Groton Branch 20) and 12 (by Low Country Branch 269) both relate to FRA C&BL Article 13, which references the Auxiliary of the Fleet Reserve Association. Currently, if an FRA branch’s charter is suspended, revoked or voluntarily surrendered, the associated Auxiliary unit is authorized to conduct business under the sponsorship of the FRA regional president. Because the FRA has no legal authority over the Auxiliary and such an arrangement would create a conflict of judiciary oversight for an FRA regional president, FRA’s legal counsel has recommended that units not be allowed to operate once the branch ceases to be active. That is the aim of both these resolutions.

C&BL Resolution 13 (by Low Country Branch 269) seeks to eliminate confusion regarding the name and references to the Auxiliary. Formerly known as the Ladies Auxiliary of the Fleet Reserve Association (LA FRA), the Auxiliary voted to allow males to join their ranks and do business as the FRA Auxiliary. Since that decision, the organization has also been referenced as the Auxiliary of the Fleet Reserve Association, causing confusion. This resolution seeks to clarify and unify these references, by calling the organization “the Auxiliary of the Fleet Reserve Association (AFRA)” in all FRA documents.

Rituals Resolution

Rituals Resolution 1 (by Low Country Branch 269) seeks to amend FRA Rituals Section 2508(b)(2) to reference the Auxiliary as the Auxiliary of the Fleet Reserve Association, as proposed in C&BL Resolution 13 and SR Resolution 1.

ASBESTO

Clearing the A



S ur

Asbestos, a naturally occurring mineral, has been mined and used in the U.S. since the late 1800s. Its fibers can be separated into thin, durable threads that don't conduct electricity and are resistant to heat, fire and chemicals. It strengthens cement and plastics and has tremendous insulation value, which made it ideal for roofing, fireproofing and sound absorption applications. It was used to insulate boilers, steam and hot water pipes aboard ships and is a key component in automotive and aviation brake shoes and clutch pads. This ubiquitous material has been used in floor and ceiling tiles and virtually everything in between; paint, adhesives, coatings, gaskets, textiles, electric hairdryers and crayons. This remarkable material is also relatively inexpensive to produce, so it's no wonder it was the go-to industry standard for a variety of purposes.

Unfortunately, those aren't its only properties: Asbestos is cheap, strong, heat-resistant ... and deadly.

If asbestos is undisturbed, it's relatively benign. The problems arise when the microscopic fibers are disturbed and released into the air. This can occur when asbestos insulation is being ripped out of a building during renovation or demolition, damage control crews pull asbestos insulation away from pipes to make repairs, telephone cables are pulled through a pipe made of asbestos concrete, asbestos non-skid covering is ground off the deck of a ship, or a wire brush is used to clean an asbestos gasket. When these tiny fibers are inhaled by those living or working in the area, it can lead to a variety of serious health problems.

Asbestos-Related Illnesses

Breathing asbestos primarily causes problems in the lungs and the membrane that surrounds them. Two of the major health problems related to asbestos exposure are asbestosis and mesothelioma.

Asbestosis (az-bes¹-tō-səs) is a chronic respiratory disease caused by prolonged exposure to asbestos. The inhaled asbestos fibers cause lungs to scar and stiffen, which makes it difficult for patients to draw full, deep breaths. It is most often found in workers exposed to asbestos in workplaces before the federal government began regulating asbestos use in the mid-1970s. Asbestosis can be difficult to diagnose because its symptoms are similar to many other respiratory diseases, and a variety of diagnostic tests may be required to make an accurate diagnosis, including chest x-rays, computerized tomography (CT) scans, and pulmonary function tests. The effects of asbestosis cannot be reversed, but the progression of the disease can be slowed with treatment and the symptoms can be relieved through the use of supplemental oxygen. Asbestosis increases the risk of lung cancer, so patients are encouraged to avoid (or quit) smoking or smoke-filled areas. Patients are also advised to get vaccinated against flu and pneumonia to reduce the risk of lung infections. If symptoms are severe, patients may be candidates for lung transplants.

Mesothelioma (me-zo-thee-lee-o¹-muh) is cancer of the mesothelium, the protective membrane that lines most of the body's internal organs and is almost exclusively caused by exposure to asbestos. Three out of every four cases of mesothelioma disease begin in the chest cavity, but it can also begin in the lining of the abdominal cavity and the heart. Mesothelioma is a very rare form of cancer, with about 3,000 new cases diagnosed in the U.S. each year. The primary symptoms of mesothelioma of the lungs are shortness of breath and chest pain, which are also symptoms of many other conditions. It's critical to see a doctor to determine the source of the symptoms.

While there is currently no cure for mesothelioma, there are vastly varying experiences with the disease and the prognosis is much more optimistic than it was 25 years ago. While some victims become acutely ill and their health deteriorates rapidly, others have a high quality of life for years after diagnosis. There have been many medical advances and, through surgery, chemotherapy and ongoing drug trials, many patients are able to live longer and with a high quality of life.

EXPOSURE BY ASSOCIATION

It's not only those who work with and around asbestos who are affected. Family members and others living with persons who are exposed to asbestos at work are also at risk for developing mesothelioma and other asbestos-related diseases. These family members are exposed to asbestos dust brought home on clothing and hair of those working with the material. Those affected by household exposure are also eligible to make legal claims for damages.

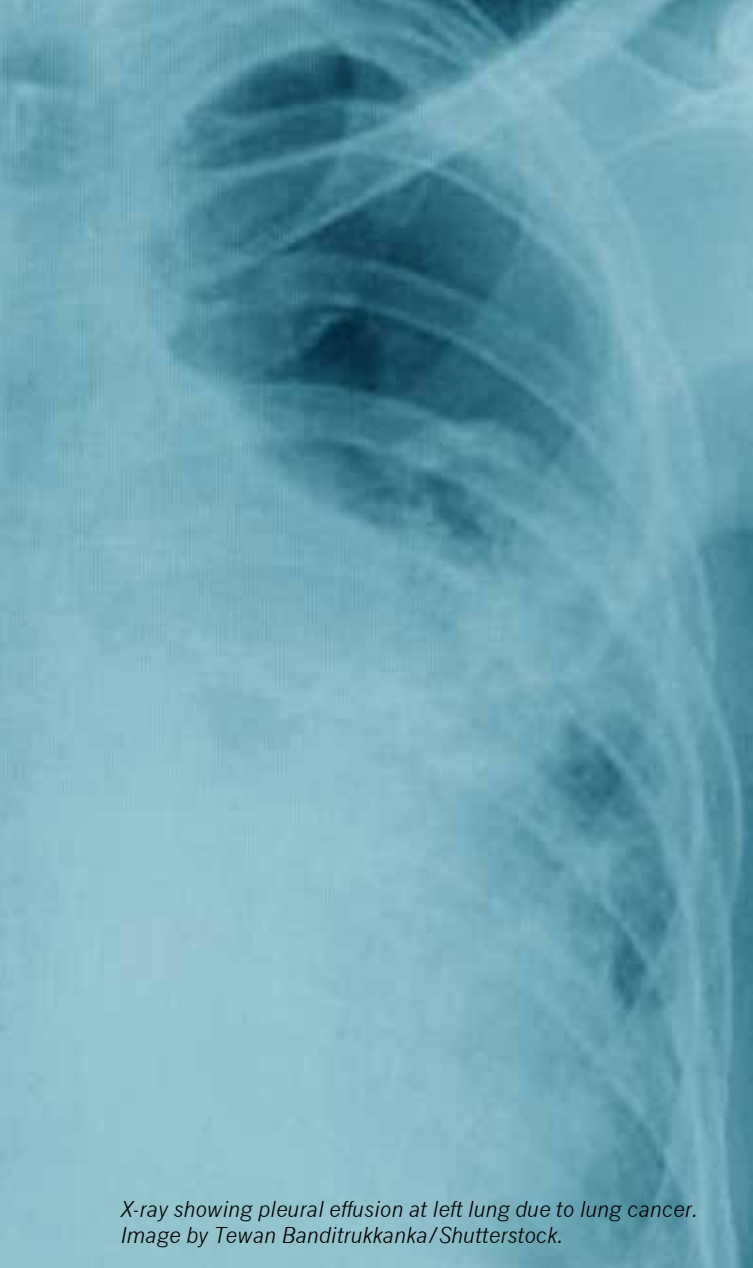
"We sometimes represent spouses and children of workers who were exposed to asbestos," explains Ruckdeschel. "We call this 'household exposure,' because sometimes the only contact the family member had was by hugging their husband or father when they came home from work or by laundering the clothes he wore at his workplace — a shipyard or automotive garage or anywhere they were exposed to asbestos. The family member becomes sick from their contact with the worker, even if the worker may not get sick at all. It's really a mystery of science, but it happens where the spouse develops the disease, but the worker shows no evidence of it."

"It's horrible," says Ruckdeschel. "Every living room I've ever been in where this conversation happens, the worker would absolutely change places with his suffering loved one if he possibly could. It's just heartbreaking."

Lasting Effects

According to the American Cancer Society, the harmful effects of breathing in asbestos fibers became evident in the early 1900s, but only minimal strides were made in reducing exposure levels until the mid-1970s, when alternative insulating materials were developed and the use of asbestos became effectively regulated in the U.S. Unfortunately, asbestos still exists in older structures and is still used in some of today's products. It's also still being heavily used in some countries around the globe.

It generally takes 20 to 50 years after exposure for the effects of asbestos to surface. Bans on asbestos use began in the 1970s, but they are not total and have been instituted incrementally and at various times. Even after the partial bans were implemented, ships containing asbestos were refitted



*X-ray showing pleural effusion at left lung due to lung cancer.
Image by Tewan Banditrukkanka/Shutterstock.*

and buildings containing asbestos were renovated or torn down, and asbestos brakes, clutches and gaskets continued to be used, so there may have been exposure as recently as the 1980s or 1990s. And even though the use of asbestos has been significantly reduced and stronger protections are now in place, today's service members and younger veterans are not immune from exposure. Veterans who served in Iraq and other nearby countries may have been exposed to asbestos when older buildings were damaged or demolished and the contaminant fibers were released into the air.

Support Through the VA

As previously mentioned, mesothelioma and asbestosis are caused almost exclusively by exposure to asbestos. They are not the result of smoking

or other cause. If a veteran can prove he/she was exposed to asbestos and has a disease or disability related to that exposure, he/she is eligible to receive healthcare services and disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

According to the VA, service members who worked in mining, milling, were involved with shipyard work, insulation work, the demolition of old buildings, carpentry and construction, and the manufacture or installation of products such as flooring or roofing are more likely to have been exposed to asbestos.

"Given the numerous places on ships and military installations where asbestos can be, or could have been, present, there are some specific military occupations or ratings that have a higher probability of being exposed," explains Chris Slawinski, FRA's national veterans service director. "Boiler techs who worked around asbestos-coated pipes and damage control folks who might have had to dismantle that insulation to do repairs would have a higher likelihood of exposure. Seabees who performed construction and demolition of buildings that may have contained asbestos could also be at a higher risk, as are automotive and aircraft mechanics who worked on asbestos-containing brakes. There are numerous ways for folks to be exposed, so even if veterans didn't work in those particular fields, their asbestos-related illness may still be the result of their military service."

There are a few basic requirements to file a claim for asbestos-related VA benefits. The veteran must have been discharged under conditions other than dishonorable. (Those with bad-conduct and other-than-honorable discharges are still eligible to apply.) He/She must have been exposed to asbestos and prove they have an asbestos-related disease or disability related to that exposure. The vet must also prove there is a causative link between the disease/disability and their military service.

"The key to receiving VA benefits is proving the exposure is related to the claimant's military service," explains Slawinski. "It's critical to prove the exposure happened during, and as a result of, a veteran's time in service."

A veteran's military service record is a good place to start, but because many of these claims are based on things that happened decades in the past, it's helpful to have as much documentation as possible. "A DD-214 is critical as it proves at which bases and on which ships a veteran served," continues Slawinski. "But things like performance evaluations

and other ancillary documents are also valuable, as they are more likely to describe specific job descriptions and duties. It might, for example, describe his/her outstanding performance during a demolition or installation project that would indicate a direct source of asbestos exposure.”

It's also important for veterans to understand they needn't have served in combat or during wartime to be considered for any VA benefit. All veterans are eligible to register with the VA and seek VA medical services, but filing a claim for disability benefits does not mean the veteran must seek medical attention from a VA physician. Veterans with service-connected illnesses and/or disabilities can receive medical treatment at a VA facility at no cost. If a veteran chooses to go outside the VA system to seek care, they may have to pay for those services out of pocket or seek coverage through their private insurance carrier.

“The VA doesn't traditionally pay for services provided at non-VA facilities, but veterans enrolled in the VA healthcare system may be eligible for the VA Choice program. This program covers services and care provided at a non-VA medical facility in the veteran's local community,” explains Slawinski. “Each case is different, but in general, the requirement for the Choice program is that the veteran lives 40 or more miles from a VA healthcare facility and/or they have been (or will be) waiting longer than 30 days to be seen at a VA facility.”

The VA Choice program is an option for all veterans. More information is available at www.va.gov/opa/choiceact/ or by calling 1-866-606-8198.

Disability versus Damages

When an employee is injured in the civilian world, he/she can seek workman's compensation. When veterans are physically harmed as a result of their military service, they go to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to seek medical coverage and disability compensation. In the case of asbestos disease, there are additional avenues for financial compensation.

“Under Workman's compensation and VA benefits, the employer pays benefits, which are generally for loss of income and medical expenses,” explains Jon Ruckdeschel, primary partner in the Ruckdeschel Law Firm in Ellicott City, Md. “Victims of asbestos exposure can also seek damages from companies that have legal responsibility, including damages for



Asbestos chrysotile fibers. Image by farbled/Shutterstock.

pain and suffering, in addition to lost wages, medical expenses and other economic loss. It's important to understand that, under the law, the military or VA aren't solely responsible in these cases.”

According to Ruckdeschel, because asbestos was cheap and effective, the manufacturers chose to use it even after they knew of the dangers. More to the point, they chose not to warn the end users about this potentially deadly substance.

“The dangers of asbestos were well known and well documented in medical journals, and it was known as early as the 1930s to cause fatal diseases. The full extent of the danger was known by 1970. We understand the manufacturers can't make everything 100-percent safe, but there is an obligation to warn users of the threats that aren't obvious,” Ruckdeschel says.

SUPPORT FOR SURVIVORS

It's important to remember that a surviving spouse or dependent child can file a claim for benefits even if the exposed worker is deceased. If the victim was exposed as a result of his/her military service, surviving family members may be eligible for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC). This is a tax-free benefit paid to eligible survivors of service members who died in the line of duty or whose death resulted from a service-connected injury or disease. As with all asbestos-related claims for VA benefits, there must be proof that the veteran's exposure was a result of military service and that his/her death was related to that exposure. There are some other specific stipulations (outlined at benefits.va.gov/compensation/types-dependency_and_indemnity.asp) and a veterans service officer or representative at a VA regional office can assist in filing the claim paperwork.

Regardless of military service or lack thereof, if the exposed worker is deceased, his/her heirs can also pursue compensation through civilian legal channels by filing claims against the various trusts that have been set up and/or by bringing a traditional lawsuit against the companies that harmed them.

“Many of these manufacturers will claim the Navy, Coast Guard [and other military services] knew that asbestos was harmful. The [military] relied on the manufacturers to provide manuals on the proper installation, use and repair of the pumps, valves, etc. they supplied. The manufacturers were the experts and the military relied on their expertise. The pumps used on Navy ships, for example, were often the same as those used on civilian tankers, and the Navy wanted the same manuals the manufacturer provided to the civilian users. Those manuals were full of warnings about electrical dangers, the use of solvents in confined spaces, etc., but were silent on the dangers of asbestos,” he continues. “The companies sometimes try to blame the Navy or other military service. They argue that the military wouldn't have let them warn the service members for fear that it would compromise military discipline

and the service members would simply refuse to do the work.”

Ruckdeschel finds this argument offensive. “Our service members face deadly dangers every day, particularly in war time. The point we try to make is that the manufacturers never asked the military to warn the end users. By comparison, they suggested cleaning solvents be used in a well-ventilated area and they warned of the dangers of inhaling the fumes. But they didn't even suggest wearing a mask or any other protective procedures when they recommended taking flanges apart and using a wire brush to scrape off the deteriorated gasket that contained 80 to 90 percent asbestos. These companies gambled with service members' lives and it's our job, as asbestos lawyers, to make sure the companies are held accountable for their share of the blame,” he adds.

Sources for Compensation

There are two primary legal channels to pursue financial compensation for people who have been harmed by exposure to asbestos. It doesn't matter where or how the exposure occurred, it's about the exposure itself, explains Ruckdeschel. “Military service is irrelevant to the potential of recovering some sort of financial benefit for our clients.”

Asbestos Trust Funds

Many of the companies that made or installed asbestos products, including thermal insulation, gaskets, floor tiles, brakes and machines that required asbestos components to work were found to be liable for damages caused by exposure to their products in court cases filed by sick workers. When the financial liability became too great, many of these companies were forced to file for bankruptcy. The terms of bankruptcy code require that companies who file for bankruptcy due to asbestos liabilities have to establish a trust fund to compensate the workers sickened by their products or negligence. There is no national trust fund – rather, each company that files an asbestos bankruptcy sets up its own trust.

“You don't need a lawyer to make a claim against these trust funds,” says Ruckdeschel, “but as a general rule, it's advantageous to be represented by a lawyer with experience in the asbestos arena. As in any legal case, there needs to be proof of exposure. It's not surprising that memories get fuzzy after a several decades and firms like ours can help orient



Asbestos refers to six unique substances that belong to the serpentine and amphibole mineral families. Chrysotile was most commonly used type of asbestos in the United States. It can be found in roofs, ceilings, walls and floors of homes and businesses. Chrysotile asbestos also was used in automobile brake linings, pipe insulation, gaskets and boiler seals. Image by Asbestos Hunter/flickr.com

the events from 40 or 50 years ago. For former military personnel, we research the specific ships or duty stations where the veteran served and what machinery he operated. We can examine maintenance schedules and figure out where and when exposure occurred. All of these things can help identify which of the many trusts are appropriate for making a claim.”

Traditional lawsuit

If the company responsible for the exposure has not filed for bankruptcy, injured parties can seek compensation directly from the manufacturers, sellers and installers of the products that contained asbestos or that required asbestos containing components to work. Compensation can also be sought from companies that designed and operated the factories where exposure occurred.

“Just like in claims against the trust fund, proof of exposure is still critical and we help our clients establish where, when and how they were exposed to asbestos. Another important part of our job is to prove the defendant knew, or reasonably knew, their product was dangerous and didn’t warn users of that danger. We have to prove this for each defendant, be it the boiler manufacturer, the company that made the jeeps, or the gasket company — whoever it may be.”

Ask for Assistance

Military veterans afflicted with asbestos disease have several avenues through which they can seek help. The VA can offer medical treatments that may prolong and improve the quality of their lives. Although no amount of money will restore their health, victims of service-connected asbestos exposure can also seek disability compensation through the VA. Additionally, victims of asbestos disease

can pursue damages through legal channels. These financial benefits can help cover out-of-pocket medical costs and also provide some level of financial security for the victims and their families.

“In the military arena, asbestos is considered a ‘hidden danger,’” says Slawinski. “Just like Agent Orange, atomic exposure, contaminated water at Camp Lejeune [Marine Corps Base], burn pits in the Middle East ... being exposed to these and other hidden dangers is a very real part of military service. And sometimes, as in the case of asbestos, the consequences aren’t known for years to come. While the Department of Veteran Affairs has an obligation to help service members who’ve been exposed, veterans also has a responsibility to be their own advocate. The VA can’t help if the veteran isn’t registered in the VA healthcare system or if he/she hasn’t filed a claim for benefits. The same holds true for pursuing compensation through legal channels. If a veteran has an asbestos-related disease or disability, they need to request the support and resources they’ve earned.”



Lauren Armstrong is the Contributing Editor and Member of the FRA Auxiliary. She can be reached at lauren@fra.org



Mesothelioma Representation For Veterans and their Families

Jonathan Ruckdeschel and The Ruckdeschel Law Firm, LLC have been providing legal representation to veterans and other individuals suffering from mesothelioma and asbestos-related diseases since 2004. We only practice in the field of asbestos disease litigation. There are never any fees or expenses unless we obtain compensation for our clients. Contact us for a free consultation.

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- All entrants shall be students in grades seven through 12 (or equivalent).
- Entrants must be sponsored by a member or branch of the Fleet Reserve Association or a unit of the Auxiliary of the Fleet Reserve Association.
- The essay shall be on the theme designated and shall not exceed 350 words.
- The essay shall be legibly written or typed on one side of the paper.
- A student may submit only one entry each year.
- Each entry must be accompanied by a separate sheet stating: the entrant's name; address; zip code; telephone number; school grade (or equivalent); name of school or the words “home schooled;” number of words in essay; and the sponsoring shipmate/branch/unit. A parent or guardian must also sign the cover sheet.
- Entries submitted to branches shall be submitted to the Branch Americanism-Patriotism Committee and postmarked not later than December 1 for judging at the branch level.
- Entries sponsored by members-at-large shall be submitted to the national chairman and forwarded to an appropriate branch for judging in their respective grade group. All entries shall be postmarked not later than December 1, 2016.
- All entries become the property of the Fleet Reserve Association.

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Martin, Dennis M, AD3, USN	040		
McGarry, Patrick K, ABH1, USN	070		
Melton, Franklin L, GMTC, USN	MAL		
Mitchell, Norman A, AWCS, USN	162		
Morefield, Richard L, PHC, USN	339		
Mungin, Louis J, QMCS, USN	099		

Names in **red** indicate 50 year continuous members.
Name in **bold** indicate a past national officer.



*The toll of the ship's bell
reminds us of the reverence
we owe to our departed Shipmates
and to those who guard the honor
of our country
upon the sea,
under the sea,
in the air
and upon foreign soil.
Let it be a reminder
of the faith they
confide in us.
Let us who gather here
not forget our obligations
and in silence
breathe a prayer
for our absent Shipmates.*

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FRA Education Foundation Announces 2016 Scholarship Recipients

THE FRA EDUCATION FOUNDATION proudly announces its scholarship recipients for 2016. Funded through private donations, corporate sponsorships, established trusts and the FRA, the Foundation will present \$96,500 in scholarships to 22 deserving students who are pursuing their dreams of a college degree in the 2016–2017 academic year.

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

"Our scholarship program continues to be a great source of pride for the Foundation and we're especially proud of this year's award recipients," says Joe Barnes, President of the Foundation's Board of Directors and FRA National Executive Director Emeritus. "Students from 15 states will benefit from these scholarships. Since 2000, we've disbursed nearly \$1.6 million in awards and we're grateful for

the strong and continuing support from FRA, many FRA branches and shipmates, and other contributors who make these awards possible."

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

Although applicants don't have to have a connection to FRA to apply for Foundation awards, it is important to note that 14 of the 22 recipients are, or are related to, FRA Shipmates. "Our scholarship program is a high interest issue to prospective members. Shipmates should mention these scholarship opportunities when interacting with Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard personnel," suggests Barnes.

Applications for FRA's 2016–2017 scholarships will be available at www.fra.org/foundation after September 1, 2016.

THE RECIPIENTS OF FRA EDUCATION FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS FOR 2016

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

(1) **Ryan P. Todesco**, Southwick, Mass.; grandson of Shipmate Hal Tatlow (FRA Member-at-Large)

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

(2) **Joshua M. Simonsen**, Blufton, S.C.; grandson of Shipmate James Campbell (Branch 172)

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

(3) **Erica S. Sill**, Wartburg, Tenn.; granddaughter of Shipmate Douglass Spangler (Branch 294)

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

(4) **Erin C. Ward**, Virginia Beach, Va.; daughter of Shipmate Jonathan Ward (FRA Member-at-Large)

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

(5) **Kaitlyn R. Sands**, Gravette, Ark.; granddaughter of Shipmate James Sands (FRA Member-at-Large)

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

(6) **Rebecca L. Ray**, Burlison, Texas; daughter of Shipmate Gregory Ray (FRA Member-at-Large)

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

(7) **Samantha K Gray**, Green Cove Springs, Fla.; granddaughter of Karen Gray (FRA widow)

GEICO Scholarship (\$5,000 each)

(8) **Jamie L. Morgereth**, Kingsville, Md.; granddaughter of Shipmate Edward Morgereth (FRA Member-at-Large)

(9) **Elijah B. Bowers**, Santa Rosa, Calif.; great-grandson of Shipmate Joe Maynard (Branch 296)

Fleet Reserve Association Awards

(10) **Amanda L. Fitzharris**, Desert Hot Springs, Calif.; granddaughter of Shipmate Charles Jenkins (FRA Member-at-Large) (\$5,000)

(11) **Ian Marshman**, Chula Vista, Calif.; FRA member (Branch 61) (\$5,000)

(12) **Delaney R. Cohen**, Englewood, Fla.; great-granddaughter of Shipmate Charles Bond (Branch 102) (\$5,000)

(13) **Braxtyn M. DeGolyer**, Dunbar, Nebr.; grandson of Shipmate Wilbur DeGolyer (FRA Member-at-Large) (\$2,000)

(14) **Bridget M. Simmons**, Hamilton, N.J. (\$2,000)

Colonel Hazel Benn Scholarship (\$2,000)

(15) **Kaitlynn L. Newcomb**, Gray, Tenn.; daughter of Shipmate Riley Newcomb (FRA Member-at-Large)

Tom and Karen Snee Scholarship (\$5,000)

(16) **Shelby N. Bonomo**, Mesa, Ariz.

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

(17) **Emily A. Wollard**, Greensboro, N.C.

(18) **Kaitlynn H. Himmelreich**, Jacksonville, Fla.

Mercer Scholarship (\$5,000)

(19) **Thaddeus A. Bacon**, Cedar Hill, Texas

Express Scripts Scholarship (\$4,000 each)

(20) **Gabriella C. Mixan**, Glenwood, Iowa

(21) **Naomi R. VanderLey**, Virginia Beach, VA

Pharma Scholarship (\$2,500)

(22) **Samantha A. Carter**, East Boothbay, Maine

FRA EDUCATION FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS RECIPIENTS FOR 2016



The FRA Education Foundation

The FRA Education Foundation provides academic scholarships to deserving students based on financial need, academic standing, and demonstrated leadership qualities. The Foundation is a Combined Federal Campaign-authorized charity and partners with military and education professionals to promote life-long learning opportunities that help scholars reach their educational, professional and personal goals. To learn more, visit www.fra.org/foundation or call 703-683-1400.



Visit www.fra.org/foundation for the 2017 scholarship applications.



Who needs money for college?

FRA's Education Foundation awards over \$100,000 in scholarship funds each year to recipients based on financial need, academic standing, character and leadership qualities. Our scholarship program is open to anyone who has an affiliation with the USN, USMC or USCG, through their own service or that of a spouse, parent or grandparent.

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

Questions?

Email us at scholars@fra.org or call 703-683-1400.

Educating our service members, veterans and their families.



125 N. West Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
800-FRA-1924 • 703-683-1400
scholars@fra.org



All reunion notices must be submitted in writing. Members are authorized one free reunion posting/year and can post reunions online at www.fra.org, submit via email to VictoriaD@fra.org or in writing to FRA Reunions, 125 N. West St., Alexandria, VA 22314. Please include your FRA member number and a daytime phone number. Questions regarding reunion submissions should be directed to 1-800-FRA-1924, ext. 124.



Members of VFP 63 DET 43 (on USS America cruise of 1969-1970)

After the incident of the #2 elevator dropping, a detachment deployed to Da Nang, to service an RF8-G. If you know of or were one of the sailors in that detachment, please contact AMS1 Alfred Gokey at tookkay58@aol.com or 2953 Chandler St., Abrams, WI 54101. Or call 920-785-1993 or 920-826-5888.

American Association of Navy Hospital Corpsmen (AAONHC)

September 20–24, 2016, San Diego, CA. Contact Chuck Kraut at 817-229-5194.

Escort Carrier Sailors & Airmen Association

September 18–21, 2016, Mobile, AL. Contact Anthony Looney, 1203 Greenway Drive, Allen, TX 75013, 214-738-5949, anthony.looney@ecsaa.org

Tin Can Sailors

October 28–29, 2016, Virginia Beach, VA. Contact I. C. Smith, 1021 Montague Rd., Laneview, VA 22504, 804-445-1510, ISeasmith@aol.com

USS Concord (AFS-5)

September 7–11, 2016, Norfolk, VA. Contact Sherry Mills, P.O. BOX 25806, Colorado Springs, CO 80936, 719-380-1412.

USS Conserver (ARS-39)

April 20–22, 2017, San Diego, CA. Contact Dale E. Hower, 10407 Santana Street, Santee, CA 92071, 619-449-4499, dcwoodworking1@yahoo.com

USS Dixie (AD-14)

October 2–6, 2016, Las Vegas, NV. Contact J.T. Smith at jts912@att.net or 615-513-2440

USS Eaton (DD/DDE-510)

September 13–18, 2016, Baltimore, MD. Contact Dave Engelbrecht, 815-234-5296, daveengelbrecht@hughes.net

USS Guam (LPH-9)

September 12–16, 2016, North Chicago/Great Lakes, IL. Contact Al Getter, 5430-29 Baltimore Dr., La Mesa, CA 91942, 619-857-5992, g2121@cox.com

USS Hanson (DD/DDR-832)

October 18–20, 2016, Newport, RI. Contact Roy Ridderbusch, 3910 Maple Rd., Lynwood, WA 98037, 425-742-6591, rridder@msn.com

USS Saratoga (CV-3, CVA/CV-60)

October 18–22, 2016, Branson, MO. Contact Ed McCready, 447 Land Or Drive, Ruther Glen, VA 22546, 804-589-1170, emc0853@yahoo.com

USS Saufley (DD-465)

September 11–15, 2016, Annapolis, MD. Contact Richard L Bonnett, 301-674-0181, RichardLeoBonnett@gmail.com

LOOKING FOR...

NAS Kaneohe Bay Boat House Crew

I would like to contact any members who served as an Air Sea Rescue Boat Crew 1947 until the base closed. Gene Walker at 386-439-0558 or endlesummer@cfl.rr.com

CAPT Daniel K. Pope, IV, USN (Ret.)

CAPT Pope was C.O. of VS-24 (1969-1971). Last known duty station was on the Staff of COMAIRPAC. Last address was somewhere in Michigan. Anyone with knowledge of his whereabouts, please contact CDR Richard J. Oliver, USN (Ret.), at sastree@comcast.net, 301-437-3542 or 727-726-0637.

Members of S-7 on USS Wasp (CVS-18)

Looking to reach anyone who was a member of the original S-7 division on the USS WASP (CVS-18), 1966 - June 1967. Contact DPC Paul Walker, USN (Ret.), at pwalker6977@gmail.com or call 540-216-8624.

A complete sets of Navy Officer or Chief's Uniforms, size 46 Short. Whites, Dress Blues, Khaki and NWU's needed for Sea Cadets.

Willing to negotiate and pay for shipping. Contact Philip Justin at pajusnret@me.com or 401-475-3028 or (cell) 401-741-8342.

All *Looking For* ... notices must be submitted in writing. Members can submit requests via email to Lauren@fra.org or in writing to FRA Looking For, 125 N. West St., Alexandria, VA 22314. Questions regarding *Looking For*... submissions should be directed to 1-800-FRA-1924, ext. 126.

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BRANCH 166 VIRGINIA BEACH, VA.

As part of the branch's support for local JROTC units, the WKQA 1110 AM broadcast featuring Cadet Lolla will be archived on the branch website. Lolla has been accepted to Emory Riddle where he plans to pursue his life's dream of becoming a pilot in the Marine Corps.



BRANCH 104 PUYALLUP, WASH.

Four branch members travelled from Puyallup to Centralia (60 miles) to present a 40-year membership pin and certificate to Shipmate Robert Simesen. Other shipmates were also recognized for their long-standing commitment to the FRA. Shown (l to r) are Rex Faubion (25 years), Len Barrett (20 years), RVPNW Mark Thompson (presenter), Simesen (40 years), and Shipmate Tom Shriver.



BRANCH 29 BREMERTON, WASH.

Shipmates represented FRA well in Bremerton's 68th annual Armed Forces Day parade. Shown here are Shipmate Frank Duncan (left); Caleb Rogers, Branch 29's Americanism Essay Contest winner; and Shipmate Glenn Wahlbrink (right) in front of Wahlbrink's original 1967 Ford Mustang.



BRANCH 22 PENSACOLA, FLA.

Branch President Jim Richmond (left) presents Pensacola Catholic High School 9th Grader Kevin Harmon (right) with his 2nd Place National Certificate and check during the school's Spring Awards Ceremony.



MEMBER AT LARGE S.C.

The Hughes Navy family spans three generations beginning in 1943 through today, with a combined total of more than 60 years of active duty service. Shown (l to r) are MAC(EW) Ronald D. Hughes Jr. USN (Officer Selectee); Ensign Lee Ann Hughes USN JAGC; Captain R. Douglas Hughes, USN (Ret.) and YNC Thomas E. Hughes, USN (Ret).



BRANCH 137 MINDEN, NEV.

Surrounded by Branch 137 Honor Flight participants Jack Delaney, Bud Harris, Bob Stevenson and Don Bailey; Branch President Rick Athenour and Unit President Jan Solberg presented Honor Flight Nevada, Vietnam Tour Project representatives Shipmate Frank Reynolds and Unit member Tom Spencer each a check for \$2,000.

BRANCH 324 AKRON/CANTON, OHIO BRANCH 17 CLEVELAND, OHIO

Ohio shipmates worked together to erect and dedicate a memorial at the Ohio Veterans' Memorial Park. Shown (l to r) are Chaplain Sam Vechter, Branch 324 President Joe Prusacik and Branch 17 Vice President Ed Blind.



BRANCH 276 OMAHA, NEBR.

Branch members were recognized for their long-standing membership in the FRA. Shown (l to r) are Shipmate Frank Schrotberger accepting for Eric Schrotberger (5 year), Branch President Carl Burnham, Shipmates Clifford "Gene" Hatfield (25 year) and Clarence Sauer (50 year). Congratulations, Shipmates!



BRANCH 260 GOLDEN VALLEY, ARIZ.

RPSW Don Kelley congratulates Shipmate John Hand for his 50 years of continuous FRA membership.

BRANCH 77 GREEN VALLEY, ARIZ.

Fleet Reserve Association Branch 77 president Lenny Viccaro and Vice President Carl Sonsa present Angela Bell of Peoria, Arizona with a plaque and a check for \$7500.00 for being the winner on the local level, Southwest Region level, and Grand national winner in the Fleet Reserve Association Essay contest for 2015-2016.

To submit a photo for *Shipmate News*, please email 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.

Message from the South Central Regional President

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK the South Central Region for the honor serving as their regional president. It has been an honor to be a part of the unit meetings. The year has flown by and it is now time for the regional conventions. Then it will be time for our national convention in Jacksonville, Florida, in October.

The South Central Region has many interesting and colorful units. The flavors of the cooking are as varied as the people who make up the region. There are no two units alike. This is just one of the things that makes the South Central Region such a special group of individuals. Just when you think you have heard everything, someone comes up with a unique approach to solving a problem. Each unit has its own unique set of problems; but, all problems can be solved. It takes an open mind, a willingness to listen, and an ability to compromise to solve any problem.

If you have never been to the Auxiliary Pilgrimage, you might think about going to this Washington, D.C., event in 2017. This year was my second time making the trip. We stormed Capitol Hill with the shipmates and had lunch with the recipient of FRA's Pinnacle Award. We had a tea before we went to the Mast of the Maine in Arlington National Cemetery and, after a brief history of the USS Maine, we walked to the Tomb of the Unknowns. There Auxiliary National President Helen Courneya placed a wreath on the tomb. I would like to thank PNP Diane Hoover for the Hospitality suite. The Pilgrimage is a great time and a great place to learn about history.

The Auxiliary National Convention is right around the corner. I would like to ask the units to send in their delegate sheets early; because, it takes a while to get the registration sheets in order according to regions. If your unit is not going to Jacksonville, make sure that you send in the delegate sheet with an identified proxy. We want every unit voice to be heard. The National Convention will be at the Lexington Premier Riverfront Hotel, 1515 Prudential Drive, Jacksonville, Florida, 32207 and you can make room reservations by calling 904-396-5100 or visiting riverwalkjacksonville.com. Please use code "Fleet Reserve" to get the group discount when making reservations.

I am available to any and all members by phone (at 504-715-1467, USPS (2566 Holiday Drive, New Orleans, LA. 70131-5118), and email (nola249@cox.net). I work with power tools and ladders, and safety is paramount. Therefore, I don't scramble to catch a ringing phone. If you get voice mail, leave a message and I will return your call ASAP.

Yours in Loyalty, Protection, and Service,




JOHN P. NEAL
South Central Regional President

Guaranteed the most comfortable pillow you'll ever own!™

How Well Did You Sleep Last Night?

Did you toss and turn all night? Did you wake up with a sore neck, head ache, or was your arm asleep? Do you feel like you need a nap even though you slept for eight hours? Just like you, I would wake up in the morning with all of those problems and I couldn't figure out why. Like many people who have trouble getting a good night's sleep, my lack of sleep was affecting the quality of my life. I wanted to do something about my sleep problems, but nothing that I tried worked.

The Pillow Was the Problem

I bought every pillow on the market that promised to give me a better night's sleep. After trying them all, with no success, I finally decided to invent one myself. I began asking everyone I knew what qualities they'd like to see in their "perfect pillow." Their responses included: "I'd like a pillow that never goes flat", "I'd like my pillow to stay cool" and "I'd like a pillow that adjusts to me regardless of my sleep position." After hearing everyone had the same problems that I did, I spent the next two years of my life inventing MyPillow.



Mike Lindell
Inventor & CEO
of MyPillow®



In the early days, Mike and his family spent countless hours hand-making each MyPillow. This hard work and dedication to "doing it right" helped MyPillow become a classic American success story.

MyPillow® to the Rescue

Flash forward eleven years and MyPillow, Mike Lindell's revolutionary pillow design, has helped 12 million people improve the quality of their sleep. MyPillow has received thousands of testimonials from customers about how MyPillow has changed their lives.

"Until I was diagnosed with various sleep issues, I had no idea why my sleep was so interrupted throughout the night. I watch Imus each morning and heard endless testimonials about MyPillow. I took his advice and ordered a MyPillow. Now I wake up rested and ready to conquer the day ahead. Thank you for helping me remember what it's like to sleep like a baby!" - Jacqueline H.

Lindell has been featured on numerous talk shows, including *Fox Business News* and *Imus in the Morning*. Lindell and MyPillow have also appeared in feature stories in major magazines and newspapers across the country. MyPillow has received the coveted "Q Star Award" for *Product Concept of the Year* from QVC, and has been selected as the Official Pillow of the National Sleep Foundation.

MyPillow's patented interlocking fill allows you to adjust the pillow to your individual needs regardless of sleep position.



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Michael Lindell



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