

Shipmate's Report



FRA Branch 99 Newsletter

SERVING ACTIVE DUTY, FORMER ACTIVE DUTY AND RETIRED MEMBERS OF
THE UNITED STATES NAVY, MARINE CORPS AND COAST GUARD SINCE 1967
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like to invite you all to our next function on March 2nd at the VFW Post 4809 (at 7:00PM) in Norfolk; we'll be giving out Awards for the Americanism/Patriotism contest This is always a very impressive ceremony, so come out and support these young people who are the future leaders of our Country.

Dan Kenney

From the Vice President

The Prez Sez:

Shipmates:

We had a good turnout for our Annual Christmas Party so I'd



the Poor. There are many ways to accomplish this, there are so many people in need. If you need help in determining who and where to give contact me (or your Church) we'll be glad to help.

if you're aware of any Shipmates in ill health or distress please advise me at the soonest.

God Bless,

Rev Adrian

S/M Chaplain, Adrian Knight

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Membership

New Members:

A Warm Welcome to all new members of Branch 99. Come to the next Branch meeting on Mar 14th to meet your new Shipmates. Meetings are held at 1900 on the second Wednesday of each month. Please check your calendar. If you come you may win a **free meal**.

S/M Vice President Art Bailey reported there were 31 past due members, 0 newly joined, for a total of 685 active members.

- TAPS

None Reported.

- Hospital and Welfare

S/M Long is in Norfolk General Hospital, more information as it becomes available. S/M Dan Cheche is in Rehab after suffering a stroke, S/M Bill Griffith is undergoing treatment for cancer, Members urged to contact the President or Chaplain for members hospitalized. There is a board in the Mess that will be used for Hospitalizations, Sick, and Rehab notifications if you

know of someone and haven't heard the word put out please put the information there so that everyone can be informed. Also, S/M Chaplain Knight reminds us all that Shipmates learning of one of our fellow Shipmates illness or need of assistance to please contact him.

- BINGO

Bingo is in dire need of additional managers to allow us to continue. We've been relying on ONE Manager for too long. We're getting close to actually lose our BINGO owing to a lack of a manager. BINGO is our primary moneymaker and we can't afford to let it die. we're always looking for volunteers to help. If you have time, stop by and give them a hand! Thank you to S/M Joe Conner for stepping and volunteering as a BINGO Manager, we still need one more.

- BUDGET and FINANCE

The Budget is balanced and the Branch is in Good Financial Shape.

KEMPSVILLE BRANCH 99

A TWO BELL CEREMONY Was held, by S/M Chaplain (acting) Paul Thompson and S/M MAA Dave Moser, in Honor of our departed Shipmates who have joined the Staff of the Supreme Commander.

GOOD OF THE ORDER.

Comments from Guest/Members ECR President Phelps thanked us for allowing him to visit, He encouraged us to attend the ECR Mid-Year and ECR Convention. He informed us that he publishes the ECR NEWSLETTER and that NED Sneed lost his wife Karen a few weeks ago and that she will be missed. He wanted us to please be mindful of the New Member Applications, make sure that we are using the one that reflects \$40 for Membership

One of my duties as Vice President is to report (monthly) on Membership and I'm always depressed when I give the results- A continuous decline in Membership. I know I seem to keep talking about this but we really NEED to do something differently to change this trend. If you have ANY ideas please share them with me or any of your Officers.

Art Bailey



Chaplains Corner

Shipmates:

This is the Holiest time of the year in the Christian Calendar, (Easter) We are in Lent right now, preparing for Easter, this time of the year are encouraged to Pray, Fast and Give Alms to

for One Year and **NOT** the old one for **\$30** for one year.

Presentation of National Awards for Membership was given to the following Shipmates:

V. CHARLES
P. FALU
D. KENNEY
M. WOOD
D. MOSER
R. MEEKER.

Presentation of Branch Awards Shipmate of the Year from S/M President Kenney, Awarded to: S/M G. WHITNEY

Special Drawings:
Lifetime membership:
S/M William Frye, not present.

One (1) year membership:
S/M **R. Jones**
Results of drawings for Dinner Certificates: **3**
Congratulations to all!

- **Coming Events:**

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02 Mar- Awards Ceremony for Americanism/Patriotism at VFW Post 4809 in Norfolk at 7PM
11 Mar- Daylight Savings time begins
14 Mar- Branch Meeting at Branch 7PM
14 Mar- Auxiliary Meeting at Branch 7 PM
16 Mar- Dinner at the Branch 7PM
17 Mar- St Patrick's Day

01 Apr- Easter Sunday
11 Apr- Branch Meeting at Branch 7PM
11 Apr- Auxiliary Meeting at Branch 7 PM
17 Apr- Tax Day
22 Apr- Earth Day

05 May- Cinco De Mayo
09 May- Branch Meeting at Branch 7PM
09 May- Auxiliary Meeting at Branch 7 PM
13 May- Mother's Day
28 May- Memorial Day

In a program initiated by our Past President, Charlie Baldwin, local Restaurants are providing

donations of dinner meal gift certificates to encourage attendance at Branch General Membership meetings. These certificates are presented as prizes in drawings held at Branch meetings. The restaurants' support of our non-profit veterans association is greatly appreciated. Those that are currently participating are:

Cheeseburger In Paradise
739 Lynnhaven Pkwy. Virginia Beach.

Texas Road House
South Independence Blvd,
Virginia Beach

Waffle Town USA
Pleasure House Road at Shore Drive, Virginia Beach

Virginia Steakhouse
620 First Colonial Rd, Virginia Beach

Golden Corral
Independence Blvd, Virginia Beach, VA

Pembroke Pizza
633 Independence Blvd

We appreciate the support of these participating restaurants, so when you are dining out, patronize them. And if you go to one of them with a free meal coupon, remember to tip the waiter for the full value of the check, before the discount. (he/she is working hard for a living and is not the one donating the free meal.) Remember to thank the manager on your way out, on behalf of Kempsville Branch **99, FRA.**

Other Merchants supporting this program are:

Priority Ford, North Military Hwy, Norfolk, VA

News from the LAFRA Unit 99



President LAFRA-99

We've had very good first year and we continue to grow membership and develop new programs to improve our function. We're actively working on fund raising efforts to help our organization.

I encourage you all to attend our next scheduled meeting on **March 14th**

We're also collecting aluminum cans, medicine bottles and newspapers.

If you have any ideas please advise

Joyce Meeker

News of Interest to Veterans

Statement on the State of VA:
The news media over the past few weeks has reported on the disingenuous actions of a few political appointees in Washington who are attempting to undermine the support and confidence of America's veterans in their Department of Veterans Affairs, as well as in the secretary and deputy secretary who lead it, Let there be no mistake that veterans and this Administration can lay claim to a host of successes ranging from increased accountability and transparency to a beefed-up

education package and increases in overall funding and patient satisfaction. As reported in the press, the acts of these individuals have become a cancer inside this Administration. They sow doubt, they create turmoil, and their ideological agenda clearly puts outside interests ahead of the care and well-being of millions of wounded, ill and injured veterans. We now call on President Trump to clean house of these distractors. We need a fully functioning VA, not distractions or self-inflicted headlines. That's what veterans of today and tomorrow expect and definitely deserve.

WWI Memorial Sculpture Unveiling: Recently, the World War I Centennial Commission held an unveiling ceremony of the sculpture that will be the focal point of the National WWI Memorial. The ceremony was intended to give veterans' advocates and other stakeholders a rare opportunity to see a 3-D rendering of what the final sculpture will look like. VSOs were in attendance along with other members of the veterans' community and members of Congress. The sculptor, Mr. Sabin Howard, provided remarks concerning his own connection to WWI, and explained the underlying story behind the sculpture. The sculpture, dubbed "A Soldiers Journey," is comprised of five distinct panels and highlights the key events that embodied the journey to war that millions of Americans made beginning in 1917: departure, initiation, ordeal, aftermath, and return.

Forever GI Bill Education Benefit Restoration: VA recently updated their website on opportunities for veterans to potentially restore and utilize their education benefits. A provision was added to the **Forever GI Bill** to allow student veterans whose benefits were wasted at schools that abruptly

closed to seek restoration of those benefits. Also added was an extension of benefits for students pursuing **STEM** degrees, full eligibility for Purple Heart recipients, removal of the expiration date for veterans who left service **after January 2013**, and many other provisions for veterans, families and survivors. The **FRA** strongly supported these additions and worked closely with Congress and our veterans' community partners on this legislation.

TRICARE West Transition Delay: The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 directed many changes regarding the **TRICARE** program, including the consolidation of three **TRICARE** service areas into two, and a change in managed care support contractors overseeing those regions. The Defense Health Agency (**DHA**) published an update regarding some of the challenges that beneficiaries are experiencing in the **TRICARE** West Region, such as referral backlogs, call wait times, enrollment backlogs, and expanded provider network delivery. **DHA** and Health Net Federal Services (**HNFS**) are actively working to mitigate many of these challenges by waiving the standard authorization process for **TRICARE** Prime referrals in the West Region until March 18, 2018, hiring additional staff for **HNFS** call centers, expediting the enrollment of beneficiaries, and updating the network provider directory for the West Region. If you are currently in the **TRICARE** West Region and are experiencing any of the issues mentioned, please visit the **TRICARE West** website.

MIA Update: The Defense POW/ MIA Accounting Agency has announced the identification of seven American service members who had been missing in action from **WWII** and

Korea. Returning home for burial with full military honors are:

Navy Gunner's Mate 2nd Class William F. Hellstern was assigned to the **USS Oklahoma**, which was moored off Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when Japanese aircraft attacked his ship on **Dec. 7, 1941**. Hellstern was one of **429** crewmen killed in the attack. Interment services are pending

Navy Seaman 1st Class Henry G. Tipton was assigned to the **USS Oklahoma**, which was moored off Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when Japanese aircraft attacked his ship on **Dec. 7, 1941**. Tipton was one of **429** crewmen killed in the attack. Interment services are pending.

Marine Corps Reserve Pfc. Joe Lukie was assigned to Company K, 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division. On **Nov. 20, 1943**, Lukie's unit landed on the small island of **Betio** in the **Tarawa Atoll** against stiff Japanese resistance. Lukie died on the first day of the battle, one of approximately **1,000** Marines and sailors killed in the intense fighting. Interment services are pending.

SHIPMATES' REPORT

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Monthly meetings are held on the Second Wednesday of the month



ECR President Phelps Addresses Branch 99 General Assembly



National Awards for Membership Presented to S/Ms Kenney, Charles, Falu, Moser, Wood and Meeker



S/M President Kenney presents The Shipmate of the Year Award to: S/M G. Whitney



Christmas Partygoers Enjoying the Party!



More Christmas Photos



More Christmas Party Pictures



Branch Home Decorations
A lot of work went into this effort!



Branch Home Decorations
Well done!



Branch Home Decorations
Well Done for Branch Home
Committee Decorations Team