

# 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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### The Prez Sez:

Shipmates:  
We had a good turnout for our Awards Ceremony for the annual Americanism-Patriotism Winners. These young people continue to

impress me. If you missed this, you should make a point to attend the next one. **Well-Done** to S/M Steve McCulloch and his volunteers.

We're approaching the time of year when we select our Officers for the coming year, nominations are being accepted now. If you're interested or wish to nominate someone for Leadership positions you need to act now. I encourage you all to get involved in your Branch and your FRA.

## Dan Kenney

From the Vice President



We're approaching Mother's Day and Father's Day, if your parents are still with you, take some time to thank them for all they've done for you over the years. If they've already passed away do something in their honor! Don't forget your Spouse or Significant Others. Flowers and a Dinner out are always good but, you could always think of something you could do to make their day a little more enjoyable.

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

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### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

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#### - Membership

#### **New Members:** **Corey Mitchell**

A Warm Welcome to all new members of Branch 99. Come to the next Branch meeting on May 9th 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 1 newly joined, for a total of 669 active members.

#### - TAPS

**Robert Ross AWC/ USNRET**

#### - 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.

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#### - 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.

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#### - 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 Adrian Knight 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

S/M Thumma informed that scholarship deadline is approaching and to have scholarship applications submitted.

S/M Vice President Bailey informed members that he is no

Branch 99 (as well as the FRA in general) continue the decrease in membership, we NEED to do something to stop this trend. If you have any ideas or suggestions please advise me or any of your Officers. There is no such thing as an unsolvable problem, we're just missing the correct approach and maybe You have the answer!

Another item on the agenda for the next month is Election of Officers for the coming year. I encourage you all to step up and volunteer for Leadership roles in Your Branch. Nominations are open now!

## Art Bailey



### Chaplains Corner

Shipmates:

longer at the hospital, he works for Cigna.

S/M President Kenney informed all that a widow has **6 weeks** and not **6 days** to get a new **ID** card from the day of member death. S/M Chaplain Knight informed all that Albert G Horton burial is free and we should get registered now instead of the last minute. We need to make sure our spouses have important information for when we pass away. S/M Wood informed that the VA Hospital can assist with hardware assistive devices if needed.

### Special Drawings:

Lifetime membership:

S/M Ethel Marsh, Not present.

One (1) year membership:

S/M Paula Falu

Results of drawings for Dinner

Certificates: 4

**Congratulations to all!**

### - Coming Events:

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**03 May- Ntional Day of Prayer**

**05 May- National EOD Day**

**05 May- Cinco De Mayo**

**06 May- National Nurses Day**

**09 May- Branch Meeting at Branch 7PM**

**09 May- Auxiliary Meeting at Branch 7 PM**

**11 May- Military Spouse Appreciation Day**

**13 May- Mother's Day**

**15 May- Peace Officer's Memorial Day**

**19 May- Armed Forces Day**

**22 May- Earth Day**

**28 May- Memorial Day**

**06 Jun- D-Day**

**13 Jun- Branch Meeting at Branch 7PM and Installation of Officers**

**13 Jun- Auxiliary Meeting at Branch 7PM**

**14 Jun- Flag Day**

**17 Jun- Father's Day**

**21 Jun- First day of Summer**

**04 Jul- Independence Day and Annual Picnic**

**11 Jul- Branch Meeting at Branch 7PM**

**11 Jul- Auxiliary Meeting at Branch 7PM**

**22 Jul- National Parents Day**

### **27 Jul- National Korean War Veteran's Armistice Day**

In a program initiated by our Past President, Charlie Baldwin, local Restaurants are providing donations of dinner 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-Unit 99**

Since the last edition of the News letter the Ladies have been very very busy. We sent **4** of our members to the Mid-Year Workshop. They not only had a good time but learned a lot about the **LA FRA** and what paper-work needs to be done and when. Since we are a new Unit there Is a lot to learn. Mary, our **VP**, Dorothy, our **Secretary**, plus Cathy & Tressa represented **Unit 99.**

We are working on putting together a cook book which we hope will be ready for sale by Mother 's Day. Gentlemen this will make a nice gift for the wife, mother and/or anyone who likes to cook. Details to come next month.

Our Membership is growing, very slowly, but it is growing. We had the biggest turn out for our April meeting that we have ever had. Thanks to all who attended.

Those who weren't in attendance we hope to see you next month, which will be **09 May** for Election of Officers.

## **Joyce Meeker**

### **SHIPMATES' REPORT**

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Branch **99** members, East Coast Regional Branch Secretaries, and the **FRA** National Executive Secretary. Articles may be reproduced with acknowledgement of the source.

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Monthly meetings are held on the Second Wednesday of the month

### **News of Interest to Veterans**

#### **FRA Storms Capitol Hill**

The **FRA** National Board of Directors and other Association leaders "stormed" Capitol Hill this week. *Storm the Hill* is designed to bring the enlisted perspective to Capitol Hill as members visit their elected officials in Washington, D.C. These Shipmates shared the Association's position on priority legislative issues with their senators and representatives. They asked their legislators to extend veterans disability benefits to "Blue Water" Vietnam veterans exposed to the Agent Orange while serving off the coast of Vietnam. Additionally, requests were made to pass concurrent receipt reform and to exclude Defense from sequestration. **FRA** would like to thank members who used the **FRA** website to weigh in on these and other issues.

#### **FRA Honors Congressman Mike Coffman**

For the past **22** years, **FRA** has presented its highest award to a member of Congress who goes above and beyond in advancing **FRA's** Legislative Agenda. **FRA** presented its prestigious annual Pinnacle Award to Congressman Mike Coffman. He was first elected to Congress in 2008. He currently serves as Chairman of

the House Armed Services, Military Personnel Subcommittee. Under his leadership, the Subcommittee has blocked **TRICARE** fee increases (last year's **TRICARE** fee increases were proposed in the Senate Defense Authorization bill) and authorized a larger than requested active duty pay increase. Coffman is the only veteran in the Colorado delegation and the only member of Congress to have served in both Iraq Wars. His military service include, serving in the Marine Corps, the Marine Corps Reserve, the Army and Army reserves.

#### **Acting VA Secretary Urges Congress to Pass VA Choice Reform**

Acting Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs (**VA**) Robert Wilkie requested that Congress pass the bipartisan "Caring for Our Veterans Act" (S. 2193). This Act is designed to reform the **VA's** health care system by providing easier access for veterans to meet with private-sector doctors. Furthermore, it expands the **VA's** caregivers assistance program. The bill includes **\$3 billion** in additional funding for the current **VA** Choice Program and was strongly supported by former **VA** Secretary David Shulkin. Robert Wilkie's letter to House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Chairmen as well as Ranking Members, states "America's veterans are looking to Congress and **VA** to come together now to provide them the best possible solutions for their care."

**FRA** supports this legislation and members are encouraged to use the [FRA Action Center](#) to weigh in on this issue.

#### **Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Changes**

The Senate announced Senator Richard Shelby (Ala.) as the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Appropriations for the

remainder of the calendar year. Shelby is concurrently serving in his sixth term as senator, and taking the place of Senator Thad Cochran (Miss.), who retired from office earlier this month due to failing health.

Like Cochran, Shelby will serve as both the Chairman of the full Committee and the Chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense. Senator Shelby said he was, "proud to take on a larger role, helping to secure funding to strengthen our military."

White House and congressional negotiators have already set a spending outline for **FY2019** defense spending at **\$716 billion**. However, the Defense Subcommittee will be responsible for outlining the spending specifics in the next few months.

In addition, Senator Jerry Moran (Kan.) is stepping down as Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs (**MilCon/VA**) to serve as Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies. The new Chairman of the **MilCon/VA** will be Senator John Boozman (Ark.), who also serves on the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee.

#### **FRA-supported Bill to Expand Commissary Access Introduced:**

Representatives Daniel Lipinski, D-Ill., and Walter Jones, R-N.C., introduced H.R. 5467, the Purple Heart and Disabled Veterans Equal Access Act of 2018, which is endorsed by the **FRA** and other Veteran Service Organizations (**VSOs**) and would allow veterans with a service-connected disability, Medal of Honor recipients, veterans formerly held as prisoners of war, and veteran caregivers to use commissaries and **MWR** programs.



**Our Newest Member:  
S/M Corey Mitchell with  
S/M President, Dan Kenney  
S/M VP Art Bailey  
and S/M Secretary Paula Falu**



**Our LA FRA Unit 99 Officers**



**LAFRA Unit 99 at Midyear  
Workshop for training.**



**More of LA FRA Unit 99 at  
Midyear Workshop.**



**Americanism/Patriotism  
Essay Contest Award  
Ceremony**



**More of Award Ceremony**



**All of the Winners of the  
Americanism/Patriotism  
Essay Contest**



**Overall Winners**

**1st Place Winner:**

**Reagan Johnson \$1000**

**2nd Place Winner:**

**Lily Grace Tomlinson \$500**

**3rd Place Winner:**

**Alfredo Mercado \$250**

**Well Done to all of these  
impressive young people  
who will be our Leaders of  
tomorrows.**

**The Overall Winners are  
also eligible for Regional  
and National Prizes. More  
to follow at a later date.**

**We also need to thank S/M  
Steve McCulloch, Chairman  
of the Americanism and  
Patriotism Committee of  
FRA Branch 99 and his team  
of Volunteers who had the  
extremely difficult task of  
reviewing and grading all of  
these Essays.**

**Well Done!**

**These Ceremonies and the quality of the Students just seem to get better each year.**