



Shipmates' 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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AMERICANISM ESSAY CONTEST AWARDS PRESENTATION CEREMONY A HUGE SUCCESS ONCE AGAIN

The annual Branch awards ceremony for the Fleet Reserve Association's Americanism Essay Contest was held Wednesday evening, February 13, at the Roma Lodge. This event was well supported by honored guests from the FRA, the Military and the City. Virginia Beach Mayor, Meyera Oberndorf, a long-time supporter of the FRA's activities, issued a proclamation declaring that day as Americanism Day in the City of Virginia Beach. This proclamation was delivered by Virginia Beach City Councilwoman Rosemary Wilson. The Mayor, Councilwoman Wilson, FRA National President, FRA Regional President and Regional Vice President assisted with the presentation of awards. Captain Thomas Cahill, U. S. Coast Guard was the Keynote speaker.

Attending the ceremony was a full slate of current officers of the FRA. Those attending were: Lawrence Boudreaux, National President; Clair Purdy, President East Coast Region; Ray Santee, Vice President East Coast Region; Norm Gapter, Treasurer, East Coast Region; Bob Washington, National's Outreach Manager and Legislative Healthcare Program Advisor; George Kay, Past National President; James Scarbro, Past Regional President; Jim Campbell, President FRA Branch 40; and Mike Campbell, Vice President FRA Branch 40. Also in attendance was

Arch Walpole, Field Director for Congresswoman Thelma Drake; Farrell Hanzaker, Chief Finance Officer and Freddie Alarcon Executive Assistant to the Superintendent of Virginia Beach Schools; Patricia Stevens, Home School Writing Teacher; Patricia Walters, Teacher St. Gregorys Catholic School; Cynthia Bowen, Language Arts Teacher Star of Sea School; and Mary S. Buchanan, English Teacher Cox High School.

Each of the eighteen winners was presented a U.S. Savings Bond, a certificate and an engraved plaque. All winners received bonds, plaques and certificates. First place bond: **\$500**, Second place bond: **\$200** and Third place bond: **\$100**.

7th Grade: 1st ~ Hannah White
2nd ~ Cody Liner & 3rd ~ Taylor Stoltzfus

8th Grade: 1st ~ Cassondra Jackson
2nd ~ Abigail Putnam & 3rd ~ Taylor Leigh

9th Grade: 1st ~ Gabrielle Harrell
2nd ~ Mark Fitzgibbons & 3rd ~ David Stevens

10th Grade: 1st ~ Eric Belonga
2nd ~ Joshua Stark & 3rd ~ Andrew Stinson

11th Grade: 1st ~ Krupa Patel
2nd ~ Jena Miller & 3rd ~ John Carr

12th Grade: 1st ~ Chastity Hankins
2nd ~ Amanda Premo & 3rd ~ Dena Bryant

The overall winner, Eleventh Grader, **Krupa Patel**, was then announced and presented with another Bond and Plaque. Her essay, along with the other first place winners will be forwarded to the **FRA** East Coast Regional office for further competition.

The meeting was also attended by the proud families of the winners. A social hour with heavy hors d'oeuvres followed. A wonderful strawberry filled cake, with the winners' names inscribed in the icing was served for dessert.

The Chairperson of Branch **99** Americanism Committee, Cindy Hefty; Co-Chairman, Tracey Mangus, along with their members and the volunteers who graded many essays are to be commended for their many hours of effort in managing this whole event. Following is **Ms Patel's** Overall Winning Essay.

Why I am Proud to be an American

By: Krupa Patel

As a first generation child of immigrants to the United States of America, I can tell first hand the greatness our country has to offer. Immigrating in 1980 with minimal wealth and limited education, my parents struggled to survive in a competitive world. From working in factories to owning small convenient stores, my now successful parents have become much more than they ever dreamed of. They continuously stress the importance of taking advantage of the opportunities the United States offer, especially that of education. Although I have not firsthand witnessed the experiences my parents speak of, though their words, I can almost live through their hardships.

Although I have only lived 16 years of my life, I can say I am proud to be a citizen of this country. This nation has provided not only my parents, but more importantly, me, with all the opportunities to succeed as a young adult. Despite living in a melting pot of ethnicities, being a minority has obviously affected my life growing up. When I was younger, I felt as if I stuck out like a sore thumb because the majority of my peers were white. I soon learned that I did not have to prove myself to be as good as everyone around me simply because the color of my skin was different. Despite this, I believe my culture or race has never obstructed my journey towards success.

I am proud to be American because of the equal opportunities, rights, and liberties given to every individual in the country, regardless of one's race, gender, or economic status. I am proud of the freedoms, unity, and national spirit our country possesses. I am proud of the technologies and resources available for scientific research. I am proud of the medical facilities and assistance readily accessible for the sick. I am proud of police force and firefighters guarding our country. I am proud of the career choices available for both young and old entrepreneurs. I am proud to be called an American.

MEMBERSHIP

New Members

A Warm Welcome to all new members of Branch **99**. Come to the next Branch meeting on March 12th to meet your new shipmates. Meetings are held at **1900** on the second Wednesday of each month. Please make a note on your calendar. If you come you may even win a **free meal**.

Tyrone E. Barlow, Charles W. Beckett, Charles W. Beckett, Michael A. Braswell, Casper J. Broadus IV, Alexander C. Bruce, Andrew C. Cassidy, Genevieve M. Caton, Kellie A. Cook, Sean Cosby, Lucky J. Freitas, Stacy Harper, Valeria Harvey, Mandy Holt, June C. Houston, Robert D. Johnson, Melissa Kort, Paul W. Major, Philip Mark N. Mina, Joel Perez, Joel Perez, Daniel D. Richey, Frederick Smith, Stan A. Suisa, Adolf Timmons, Renia P. Valiente, Richard B. Vandyke, Wanda Webb, Timothy C. Wright,

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The Branch Home is at 357 Edwin Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23462 next to Lake Trashmore.
Telephones: 757-499-6650 and 499-1155.

Internet: www.fra99.com Monthly meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month at **1900** hours.

TAPS

Warren M. FINCH	ADCS	USNRET
Richard L. JAY	GMT1	USNRET
Tommie F. PARKER	GM1	USNRET
John T. SHELBY	SFC	USNRET
Gilbert M. SHIPMAN	SKCS	USNRET
Ralph D STEVENSON	SHCM	USNRET

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

National Anthem Day, Monday, March 3, 2008

If you were watching the opening lap of the Munich Olympics men's 800 meter race finals back in September 1972, you could easily spot American runner Dave Wottle. He was the only one wearing a golf cap and was running in the rear, 20 meters behind the other racers. In the final lap, Dave started his magnificent sprint, passing runner after runner and eventually passed a Russian runner at the finish line to win the race. It was an upset because the Russian had not lost a race in the past 2 ½ years and was a heavy favorite to win the final. Afterward, Dave stepped on the podium to receive his gold medal then listened proudly to the playing of the Star Spangled Banner as the American flag was being raised. When the song was over, Dave seemed to be mobbed by the paparazzi, who asked him ridiculous questions like "Do you hate the United States?" or "Are you protesting?" He asked, "Why would you think that?" They answered, "Because you covered the U.S. symbol on your left breast with your right hand, and you wore your golf cap while the anthem was playing." Dave could understand their ignorance of the American custom of covering your heart as a gesture of respect, but he honestly forgot about taking off the cap. He has apologized since for his inadvertent display of disrespect. He knew that despite his mistake "that our flag was still there" for him and all Americans, stateside and abroad. On March 3rd, wish your fellow patriot, National Anthem Day, for on that day in 1931, President Herbert Hoover adopted the Star Spangled Banner as the official U.S. anthem. God bless Mr. Dave Wottle, our flag, our anthem and above all, America!

S/M PRESIDENT CHARLIE BALDWIN

The Prez Sez, Mar – Apr 2008

Shipmates:

It's hard to believe, that once again, it's time for the next printing of the "Shipmate's Report." This will be the first issue given by the Branch's new Newsletter Editor Michael Quinn. To refresh your memory, Shipmate Walter Hutchison turned the reins over to Shipmate Quinn after the Jan-Feb newsletter printing. Let us all support Shipmate Quinn as we did Shipmate Hutchison. Other news being, nominations for Branch Board of Directors will open in April. Elections in May, Installation in June. Once again, our branch was recognized in the National Magazine FRA Today. Shipmates, **YOU** deserve the credit for all that can be said of Branch 99.

I applaud You.

Charlie

COMING EVENTS

March 17, Monday, 1900, Saint Patrick's Day
Dinner at Branch Home. Cost \$5.00 per person. Tickets go on sale February 1 through March 12. You must buy tickets in advance. **NO** Walk-ins! For information call Ed Adams 490-2910 or the Branch Home 499-6650.

Selected excerpts from the Branch Meeting Minutes

09 January 2008

NEW BUSINESS: A motion to endorse Shipmate Gapter for RTEC fourth term 2008-2010. This motion was seconded and passed.

Shipmate President Baldwin informed the assembly to move \$500 from 105E Annual Picnic to 105H Fund Raisers.

“HOPE FOR HEROES”

The following information was received from the Director of Public Relations of **Air Compassion for Veterans**, a Charitable Organization in our local area (Virginia Beach, VA).

We all recognize the value of our Veterans and their contribution to the security of our Nation. We know that we are losing our **WWII** Veterans at the rate of **1000** per day- What we are also losing is the stories of their time in the service of our country. And all too soon, the Korean War Veterans’ stories will also be lost.

As a charitable organization which provides medical air transportation for a large constituency of Veterans, and because of their strategic location here in the Military Community, they want to participate in the preservation of the priceless stories of the men and women who served in these two Wars. So they have developed a Public Service Project called “**A Second Glance**” and are asking for our participation.

Their Goal is to gather and publish stories of the **WW II** and **Korean War Veterans** living in the Hampton Roads area. They have made arrangements for these heroes to be interviewed by Local Students. Their stories will be published, and along with a photograph of each Veteran, will be distributed in booklet form, with all publication costs absorbed by **Air Compassion for Veterans**.

What they are asking from us is to invite members of Branch **99** who have served in **WW II** and/or the **Korean War** to sign up for interviews. They will start interviewing and writing the stories of these men and women from now until May of this year. Once the names of willing Veterans have been collected we will coordinate with the Director of Public Relations who will schedule and coordinate times for the interviews. They anticipate the booklet with photographs will be printed and distributed in conjunction with Halos and Heroes to be held on October 4th 2008 in Virginia Beach, an event that highlights Air Compassion for Veterans.

If you are interested in participating or know someone who might be interested, please contact the Branch Secretary, Historian, this Editor or the Branch President. This sounds like a very worthwhile project which we can all be proud of.

SBP PAID UP PROVISION

-What is **Paid-Up SBP**? Paid Up **SBP** refers to a provision of the Survivors Benefit Plan Law passed by Congress in October **1998** and which is due to take effect in October **2008**. This change in the Law applies to qualified members who will no longer be required to pay **SBP** premiums once they satisfy certain age and premium payment requirements.

-Who is eligible to have their **SBP** premiums stopped? Any retiree who is age **70** or older and whose retired pay has been reduced for **SBP** costs for at least **360** months will qualify to have their **SBP** costs terminated.

-Are Retirees with Reserve Component **SBP** coverage eligible? **Yes**.

-Is a Retiree who has paid **SBP** premiums for **360** months or more but has not reached age **70** eligible to have premiums terminated? **No**, in order to qualify for the termination of **SBP** premiums, a Retiree must satisfy **both** requirements of the Law.

-Does the termination of premium payments also apply to Retirees with **RSFPP** coverage? **Yes**, Congress amended the Law in October **1999** to include Retired Serviceman’s Family Protection Plan (**RSFPP**) participants. Any Retiree who is age **71** or older and currently enrolled in the **RSFPP** is eligible to have their **RSFPP** costs terminated.

-When does **Paid Up SBP** begin? The earliest effective date that a qualified Retiree may stop paying **SBP** premiums is **01 October 2008**. The first Retired Pay affected will be the payment dated **01 November 2008**.

-What if the Retiree has paid more than **360** months of premiums before **01 October 2008**, will there be a refund? **No**, there will be no refund of excess premiums paid prior to the **01 October 2008** effective date.

-When will **SBP** premiums stop for retirees who reach age **70** and have paid **360** months of premiums after **01 October 2008**? Retirees who fall into this category will not be charged **SBP** premiums beginning with the month they reach age **70** and have paid **360** months of premiums.

-Notification letters will be mailed to all member s over age **68** and have been paying **SBP** premiums for **27** years.

TWO BELL CEREMONY: A Two Bell Ceremony was held for Shipmate Leo Milam, BMC, USN. (Retired); Shipmate Richard J Louis, EMT1, USN, (Retired) and Shipmate Robert M Gardner, E7,USN.(Retired)

GOOD OF THE ORDER: Fourteen Restaurant Certificates were passed out. Shipmate Richard Dempsey reminded everyone about the Super-ball Party. It is pot luck bring your own dish. Shipmate Bob Long asked for volunteers for the breakfast for January. The Branch Corporation meeting will follow immediately after the General Assembly meeting.

NEW NEWSLETTER EDITOR

My name is Michael Quinn, I've been a member of the **FRA** for years (Member at Large while on Active Duty, Branch **60** since I Retired (more than **20** Years and recently with Branch **99**). I'm a Retired Master Chief Electronics Technician with more than **33** years Active Duty, I'm also a Retired Engineering Manager with the State of Virginia (Department. of Public Safety and currently operate my own Consulting Engineering Firm in Virginia Beach, I'm a "**Triple Dipper**") My experience with Writing and Editing Newsletters includes the Public Safety Department's Monthly Newsletter, A Quarterly Newsletter for my Church (In Virginia Beach) and now the **FRA** Branch **99**. I look forward to keeping everyone informed as best I can. If you have something that you feel is important enough to be included please don't hesitate to contact me. - Mike Quinn

BRANCH 99 LOGO DESIGN CONTEST

A **proposal** has been made to adopt a unique logo for Branch 99 that would identify and promote the branch. This logo could be used on artifacts, shirts, jackets, caps, etc. It would not be an official FRA logo and therefore cannot display the FRA shield nor the "swoosh" design. A poll will be taken to determine if members are truly interested in having such a logo. If the response is positive the contest will go on to solicit design ideas to be judged by a committee and be presented to the General Assembly for approval as our official logo. Producing products with the logos is expensive and the program would have to be supported by members purchasing logo products. The promoter of this idea, Winn Johnson, believes that the logo would become a source of pride for the Branch and promote recruiting as it is displayed more over time. Since it may be displayed as a patch (small) or on a tee

shirt (large) the content must be relatively simple so that the design is clearly visible no matter what the size may be. Deliver or mail proposals to the Branch, attention Winn Johnson.

Local Restaurants continue to provide dinner gift certificates to encourage attendance at Branch General Membership Meetings. Those certificates are presented as prizes in drawings held at Branch Meetings. Their support of our non-profit veterans' association is greatly appreciated. Participating restaurants are:

Aberdeen Barn Steak House
5805 Northampton Blvd. Virginia, Beach, Va. 23455
A ~ J Gator's Sports Bar & Grill
3908 Holland Road, Virginia Beach, Va. 23452
Applebee's (Kempsville)
1426 Kempsville Road, Virginia Beach, Va. 23464
Applebee's (Loehmann's Plaza)
4040 Virginia Beach Blvd. Virginia Beach, VA
BUBBA'S DELI & BBQ
3600 Dam Neck Rd. Virginia Beach, VA 23453
Carrabba's Italian Grill
1217 Battlefield Blvd. N, Chesapeake, Va 23320
FRANKIE'S
408 Laskin Rd. Virginia Beach, VA 23451
Golden Corral
400 S. Independence Blvd. Virginia Beach, Va.
Holiday Inn (Shirley Coleman)
5655 Greenwhich Rd. Virginia Beach, VA 23462
Kelly's Tavern
4586 Va. Beach Blvd. Virginia. Beach, Va. 23462
Kelly's Backstage Tavern
at The NorVa, Granby St. Norfolk, Va.
Kelly's Tavern
1830 Kempsville Rd. Virginia Beach, VA 23464
Kincaid's Fish, Chop & Steak House
300 Monticello Ave (McArthur Center) Norfolk, VA
Max & Erma's Pembroke
4512 Va. Beach Blvd., Virginia Beach, Va. 23464
Olive Garden / Red Lobster
Local Area Restaurants
Smackwater Jack's
3333 Virginia Beach Blvd. Virginia Beach, VA 23452
Smokey Bones Barbeque & Grill
4590 Va. Beach Blvd., Virginia Beach, Va. 23462
Texas Road House
1546 Sam's Circle, Chesapeake, Va. 23320
The Raven Restaurant
1200 Atlantic Ave. Virginia Beach, Va. 23451
TGI FRIDAY
796 Lynnhaven Pkwy, Virginia Beach, VA 23452
TGI FRIDAY
110 Volvo Pkwy, Chesapeake, VA 23320



**Sailor of the Quarter
Naval Amphibious Base, Little Creek
Presentation by FRA Branch 99**



**Junior Sailor of the Quarter
Naval Amphibious Base, Little Creek
Presentation by FRA Branch 99**



**Bluejacket of the Quarter
NAB, Little Creek
Presentation by FRA Branch 99**