



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

DAYTIME OFFICE PHONES: 499-6650/499-1155 BRANCH WEB SITE: www.fra99.com

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BRANCH 99 CONTINUES TO THRIVE

This column is for those members who never come to meetings. You get this newsletter, so you are a Branch 99 member. You are not an FRA Member at Large (MAL). You are entitled to enjoy the benefits of belonging to an active Branch - THIS ONE! Coming up is the Veterans' Day parade. As a former service member, you should be marching in that parade. Try it just this once. You will be amazed at the patriotism displayed by the crowds along the streets. THEY come out to honor you. YOU should return the favor by being in the parade. (See events on page 3.)

In December Branch 99 has a Christmas dinner party. A small fee is collected from ticket sales just to keep the process honest and to get an accurate head count. Attending gets you more than your money's worth. Many already know this, because they come every year.

The Branch holds other special events which are publicized in this newsletter. There are Sunday morning breakfasts once each month (Except Nov. & Dec). We have flea markets and large screen TV events, including the Super Bowl. There is fresh coffee in the lounge every weekday morning with friendly members who will gladly share your "sea stories."

Stop missing out on good activities. Just drop by the Branch in the mornings. You will learn all about coming events and enjoy yourself.

RESTAURANT SUPPORT CONTINUES

The local restaurant support program initiated by our President, Charlie Baldwin, has been working for two years. At each meeting a drawing is held for all available "free meal" certificates donated by participating businesses. Some of these are nationally franchised, and some are local. They all have good food and this program offers members an opportunity to try a restaurant that they might not have otherwise visited. The prospect of getting a free meal has increased attendance at Branch meetings.

We want the owners/managers of these restaurants to know that we appreciate their participation. Having a good meal experience is also likely to induce our members to return to these restaurants again.

For our members who "win" these meals it is up to you to ask for the manager and express your appreciation to him/her for participating in our program.

Another benefit in the increased attendance is the opportunity to interact with more members. It also involves more members in the working of the Branch. Many come to the monthly meetings early in order to have time for such visits, as well as finding a good parking place.

MEMBERSHIP

New Member Report

Welcome to all new members of Branch 99. Come to the next Branch meeting on November 14th 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.

Robert D. Arnold, Michael E. Bean, Orville D. Carroll, Andrew Catale, Christopher Cosat, Franklin Duncan, Christopher Ecker, Ralph D. French, Don Giuy, Keith James, Jacob Kailing, Nathaniel Kimis, Peter Koehler-Pfothenh, Robert Koutz, Joseph Lavan, Ragenita Y. McGhee, Domingo Ozoria, Ricky L. Potebaum, Michael L. Quinn, Vincent Scalabrino, Michael B. Spain, Reina Valiente, Jeffrey A Vanden bosch, Shambry Vanwyck, Christopher A. Wallace, Edwin B. West

TAPS

Samuel T. Carpenter, Jr.	TMC	USN RET
Marvin E. Crowe	SK1	USN RET
Joseph J. Landy, Jr.	BTC	USN RET
Robert J. Fefebvre	AMCS	USN RET
Stancil T. Houser	BM1	USN RET
Gene C. Loomis	AFCM	USN RET
Darrel A. Nason	RMCS	USN RET
George E. Vlna	AMS1	USN RET

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Give a man a fish; you have fed him for today. Teach a man to fish; and you have fed him for a lifetime. The Indians taught the Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock how to live off the land, and they celebrated the first Thanksgiving together, grateful to each other and to God for being spared starvation and death in 1620. Ten years later, the Massachusetts colony started the tradition of setting aside a day for being thankful for a good harvest. Though Abraham Lincoln designated the fourth Thursday of November as the official day, Franklin Delano

Roosevelt made it a national holiday. FDR also spoke of the four freedoms: of religion, of speech, of fear, and from want, and these are the freedoms that the enemy exploits. When our armed forces fight the war on terror, they are also fighting the war on poverty. The enemy gives the destitute food for a day then feeds them lies that hate and discontent is the way. Meanwhile, our soldiers teach the poor how to sustain themselves by building homes, roads, stores, churches and schools, and tell them that the truth will set them free from reins of the evil ones. Ben Franklin said, "God helps those who help themselves." Before your Thanksgiving dinner, ask the Supreme Commander to help our armed forces with the fifth freedom, which is to protect the other four freedoms anywhere in the world, and to protect them from harm's way. Amen!

Tor Evasco



Shipmates, Have you been paying attention to the literature that comes out of National Headquarters? If you have, then you are aware of the numerous times that Branch 99 is mentioned. How many times have we heard mention of the number of Shipmates that attend our General Membership Meetings? As I have said many times, you have made Branch 99 what it is today. Be proud of all the wonderful achievements that Branch 99 has accomplished, and set, as a standard day to day routine. Let us maintain these standards, yet always looking to the future for ideas that will enhance our branch. Shipmates, I am proud of each of you.

Charlie Baldwin

COMING EVENTS

November 3, Saturday, Retirement Seminar, Rockwell Hall, Little Creek. Exhibits, Flu shots, if available, informational seminars.

November 6, Tuesday Election Day. Exercise your right to choose your government representatives. Get out and VOTE.

November 12, Monday, Veterans' Day Parade at the Beach. Meet at the Branch Home at 0800 to carpool. Parade starts at 0900. Come out and march in the parade. Be proud of your service.

November 14, Wednesday, 0800 Maintenance day at the Branch Home. You can help.

November 14, Wednesday, 1900 Branch 99 General Membership meeting at the Branch Home. Win a free dinner.

December 12, Wednesday, 1800. Branch Christmas Party at Roma Lodge. Tickets \$5.00 each for members and family members.

Note: There will be no Branch 99 Breakfasts in November or December.

BRANCH MEETING EXCERPTS

Members have continued to fill the meeting hall at Branch General Assembly meetings. Attendance has averaged 50 per meeting this year.

12 September 2007

RVPEC Ray Santee spoke under Good of the Order. He said that FRA will have a table at the Nov. 3 Retiree Seminar at Little Creek. Volunteers are always welcome to man the table.

S/M George Piggott thanked the Branch and National FRA for the disaster relief he received after a fire at his home.

Shipmates Henry Dean and Chris Ecker each won one year FRA memberships. S/M Servilland Ginon would have won a lifetime membership had

he been present. Attendance was 55 members, plus one guest.

10 October 2007

Shipmate Jim Griffin asked for volunteers to step up for Saturday Bingo and for Branch Sunday morning breakfasts. Even though there are no breakfasts for the next two months, we need people to work the kitchen when breakfasts resume in January.

A Four Bell ceremony was held for shipmates: Crowe, Landy, Lefebvre, Loomis, Nason and Vlna.

The Branch Christmas party will be held at the Roma Lodge on December 12. \$5.00 tickets will go on sale November 1.



Shipmate David L. Andrews receives a Forty-Year pin for continuous membership in the FRA.



Shipmate Joe Conner receives a letter of appreciation for his work around the Branch home.

Meetings (cont.)

Shipmate Bass reported that there has been a reduction in the quantity of aluminum cans collected at the Branch for recycling. Recycling is good for the environment and provides a certain amount of income for the Branch which would otherwise be lost. Just put your cans in a bag or box and bring them to the Branch.

Shipmate Dempsey states that he wants to have more "big screen" sports events at the Branch. If you want more information give him a call at 463-4432.



The usual crowd at monthly meetings.

Twenty-one free meal certificates were distributed for participating restaurants in the area.

One-year memberships were won by S/Ms Ed Filipowski and Bob Meeker. S/M Don Price would have won the lifetime membership had he been present.

There were 51 members present. See you at the next meeting??????

Branch 99, Incorporated Meeting

A corporation meeting was held following the September Branch meeting to report on the Branch financial situation. The Branch is solvent and in good financial standing. Any member who would like to participate on the Corporation Board of Directors is invited to call S/M Norm Gapter at the Branch (499-1155) or home 495-8524. This position need not take up a lot of your time. Give it a try and learn the inner workings of running a successful branch.

BRANCH 99 FIN & FEATHER COOKOUT

In an attempt to have more social affairs a fin and feather dinner was held on September 22 at the Branch picnic grounds. A good size crowd attended, and a good time was had by all. There was room for more people. Come on out for the next event. The food and company are both good.



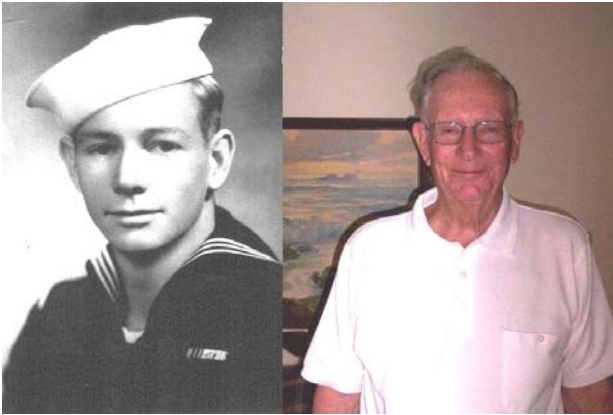
It takes volunteers



And hungry people.

KNOW YOUR SHIPMATE

By S/M Chris Ecker



Richard Gary, then and now.

S/M Richard Gary is a 30 year retired Navy Chief Gunners Mate, and a 50+ year member of the FRA. He was born in Richmond, VA in 1925 and raised in Newport News. He enlisted in the Navy in Philadelphia, PA in 1942 and attended Boot Camp in Newport, RI. Richard's most memorable achievements in the Navy center around his first command, USS COLUMBIA (CO 56). Reporting onboard to 5th Division as an Apprentice Seaman in '42 to commission COLUMBIA, he would finally decommission her as a GM2 in '46, but not before making some incredible WWII memories on three battle cruises in the Pacific. A few of their major operations included: the Capture and Defense of Guadalcanal, the Consolidation of the Solomon Islands, escorting GEN Douglas MacArthur and being the first US ship in the Leyte Operation, Anti-Shipping Sweeps in the East China Sea and in the Yellow Sea, and Okinawa Defense Operations. Several close calls and damaging Kamikaze attacks are etched well in Richard's memory, and he's chocked full of dates and facts about COLUMBIA. She was awarded an unprecedented two NUC's for her actions during the Battles of Augusta Bay and Surigao Straight where she shot down 27 enemy aircraft, sunk two battle ships, two cruisers and two destroyers. On one battle cruise, he, his mates and the good ship COLUMBIA spent one and one half years at sea with only one liberty port! If you get the chance you'll have to ask Richard about drinking (green!) ACME beer ("2 beers, per man, per day, perhaps"), "Running the Slot", the Sydney jinx, and the slew of ship's mascots, including one Scottie named SN MacTabish (complete with Dress Blues and ribbons), Charlie, Duckett and the running man, and certainly Richard's close brush with death in Luzon, PI.

Richard's others commands included Atlantic Reserve Fleet in Mobile, AL and later Green Cove, FL, back-to-back sea tours on USS SARSFIELD

(DD 837) Key West, FL, USS McCALLA (DD 488), sailed to Korea with USS PORTER (DD 800) from '49 to '52, USS BALTIMORE (CA 68) Boston, MA, and USS NORTHAMPTON (CLC 1) Boston, MA. After attending 5th/54 Mark 42 school in GLakes, IL, he reported to commission the USS BARRY (DD 933) from '58-'62. (DD 933) is now on static display for tours at the Navy Yard, Washington D.C. During this tour, Richard fell ill with infectious hepatitis, and was hospitalized for 96 days. After his convalescence, he was transferred to USS DAVIS (DD 937). Following these sea tours, he reported to Fort Campbell, KY to work with Special Weapons, assisting the DoD atomic weapons program and design work for the Lockheed P2V *Neptune* aircraft. After his shore tour Richard returned to sea aboard USS JOHN KING (DDG 3) out of Norfolk, VA, then reported to USS BARNEY (DDG 6) conducting cruises in Viet Nam between '66 and '68. A short lived shore duty "reward" as a Company Commander in GLakes, IL was better culminated in Richard's twilight tour in Dam Neck, VA as a Gun School instructor. The best peace time cruise Richard ever had was onboard the BALTIMORE. They made port of calls in Sweden, Denmark, Norway, England and several others. Ironically, Richard's father Charlie worked as a pre-commission Fire Control Electrician on both Richard's first and last ships (COLUMBIA and BARNEY).

After retiring from the Navy, he worked in the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard for 11 years doing jobs similar to his Navy career work. In addition to his involvement in Branch 99, Richard and his wife Alice of 53 years (a USN WAVE for three years) enjoy their children Richard Jr. in Springfield, OR and Renee in Virginia Beach, three grandchildren and four great grand children, and stay actively involved with the USS COLUMBIA annual reunions.

When I was a kid my dad and I had a running joke. If anyone asked what he did for a living, I was to reply, "He's a sports mechanic. He fixes boxing matches and horse races." Once, I answered a teacher this way. She flipped out and summoned my parents. Dad calmed her down by explaining it was a joke. So what DO YOU DO? she asked. Dad, a sales rep for a pharmaceutical company, said, "I sell drugs."

SHIPMATES' REPORT is published bi-monthly by Kempsville Branch 99, Inc. Fleet Reserve Association. It is distributed free of charge to 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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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.

LOCAL RESTAURANTS' SUPPORT

Local restaurants are continuing to provide dinner meal certificates to encourage attendance at our Branch meetings. These certificates are raffled to members attending meetings. This support of our non-profit veterans' organization 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

Carrabba's Italian Grill 1217 Battlefield Blvd. N, Chesapeake, Va 23320

Frankies 408 Laskin Rd. Virginia Beach, VA 23451

Golden Corral 400 S. Independence Blvd. Virginia Beach, Va.

Holiday Inn (Shirley Coleman) 5655 Greenwich 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

O'Sullivan's Wharf 3644 Va. 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

COAST GUARD STATION LITTLE CREEK LOSES LONGTIME MASCOT

The beloved mascot of Coast Guard Station, Little Creek in Virginia Beach passed away last month following a distinguished career in the Coast Guard.

"Mayday" arrived at Little Creek in the winter of 1993 and "enlisted" as E-1 Mascot. He was a AKC registered Dalmatian, guard dog and boat crew member. He had an operation facilities code (OPFAC) for a social security number and his next of kin was listed as the officer-in-charge and executive petty officer of Station Little Creek.

When he was still a pup, he was involved in a Coast Guard recruiting commercial "Being Part of the Action," showcasing his dog determination and K-9 expertise. He participated in countless parades and static displays at the Old Coast Guard Station in Virginia Beach. With all the wonderful things Mayday did for the Coast Guard and the community, he still found time to bite the officer-in-charge and receive a negative page 7 in his records. After a fourteen year career, he was advanced to Chief Petty Officer and retired to the quiet countryside of North Carolina where he lived with the family of MT1 Bryan Ralston. Upon his demise he was officially buried at sea on August 31, 2007.

(Excerpted from a feature story release by USCG 5TH District Public Affairs)

OLD TURTLE

"Tiger" is one incredible critter in Overland Park, Kansas. He is a 49 cent dime-store turtle that's still going strong more than 40 years after Mike Conley brought him home. "he's the old age champion by far," says Joseph Collins, Professor Emeritus of Herpetology at the University of Kansas Natural History Museum. Before Tiger, the oldest life span for a Red-Eared Slider was recorded at 307 years and 9 months. Tiger has that beat and is still in good health. "He was about the size of a half-dollar when I bought him," says Conley. Now he's about 8 by 10 inches, and still growing slowly.

Litter is bad for the environment and makes yours and others' properties look bad. Keep a plastic shopping bag in your car for use as a litter bag, and USE IT!

**BRANCH 99 CONTINUES SUPPORT OF
LOCAL SAILOR RECOGNITION
PROGRAMS**

NAVY MEDICAL CENTER PORTSMOUTH

S/M Jr. Past President Ralph Preston regularly attends local Sailor of the Year, Sailor of the Quarter and related junior programs. Branch 99 provides each honored sailor with a one year FRA membership and various memorabilia. A retired U.S. Marine officer, Ralph has a special connection to the Navy Medical Corps.



S/M Ralph gets his turn to speak



S/M Ralph Preston presents FRA awards to SOQ HM1 Joel Imbody and BJOQ HN Tatiana Dondelinger.

COAST GUARD STATION LITTLE CREEK



SOQ SK1 Michael B. Spain accepts his certificate from Captain Anderson as YNCM Paris and YN2 Fanchen observe.



S/M Preston presents FRA awards to JSOQ HM2 Samasuel Wilson as HN Dondelinger looks on.

Supporting area sailor recognition programs has become an ingrained program at Branch 99. Not only does this honor the recognized sailors, but provides our Branch 99 with recognition that is otherwise hard to obtain. If you would like to become a part of this program please see Charlie or Ralph. It only takes a few hours each month. The greater the contact we have with active duty personnel the more chances we have of recruiting new members. And let's not forget our very reliable, earnest photographer, Paul Thompson. If there comes a day when he just can't be there, we can use a photographer. You are welcome to come along and see how it works.