



NAVAL ENLISTED RESERVE ASSOCIATION

John D. Wood Chapter 201.066

P.O. Box 16932 • Mobile, Alabama • 36616

The Wood-Pile

October 2002

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Upcoming Events Calendar

October 16th 1900, Chapter Meeting, Anchor & Shield Club
October 23rd, 27th 45th Annual National Conference, Newport, RI
 Info (733) 239-6462

Upcoming Meeting Agenda

- 1900** Call to Order/Salute the Colors
Roll Call
- 1905** Previous Minutes/Treasurer's Report (Update Tax Exemption Status Letter)
- 1910** Raffle Drawing
- 1915** Showing of Korean War Memorial Dedication Video
- 2015** Establish Membership for New Chapter Officers Election Committee
- 2030** Chapter Continuity/Contingency Planning for Mobilization Concerns
- 2100** Unfinished Business/New Business
- 2115** Good & Welfare
- 2130** Adjournment/Fellowship

Message From the President

It is finally here - the premiere of the Alabama Korean War Memorial Dedication & Forgotten War History video will be at the VFW on DIP, Thursday, October 17th at 7:00 p.m. We are very excited! **Don't miss it!** We will preview the video at our Chapter Meeting October 16th.

An election committee will be appointed at the next chapter meeting. **We are actively searching for new officers & a new editor.** This is a great opportunity for you. Please contact any of your officers if you are interested. It is a crucial time for NERA. The organizations strength comes from having active, hard charging officers at the chapter level. **I encourage each of you to consider stepping into a leadership role.**

The 50/50 Raffle Winner Will Be Drawn at the next Chapter Meeting!

You do not have to be present to win! The winner will be announced in the November issue of the Wood Pile

As I come to the end of my role as President let me thank some very reliable, very hard working people who have helped me tremendously, **Paul Matthews, Bill Norris, Lon Heinrichs, Gene Brown, Bob Farrell.** I especially want to thank **CDR Pete Riehm** for his tremendous support & help in making this a great year for our Chapter.

SECNAV Sends Birthday Message to the Navy

The Honorable Gordon R. England, Secretary of the Navy, released the following message for the Navy's 227th birthday:



As we honor the birth States Navy, we are a nation at war. Our Nation's strong and decisive response to the terrorist acts of September 11th has demonstrated America's patriotism and resolve to the entire world. Nowhere has that duty to Country been more evident than in our Navy and Marine Corps.

This month, we also mark the anniversary of those first strikes for freedom in the War on Terror. Last October 7th, brave men and women launched aircraft off the decks of our carriers & fired cruise missiles from our ships and submarines as our Navy and Marine Corps Team began to "terrorize the terrorists."

Today, although the War on Terror is far from over, you, your shipmates & our allies have defeated the Taliban, disrupted the terrorist networks & freed the people of Afghanistan.

President Bush, in his words to Sailors & Marines following those strikes declared, "You were among the first to fight in the first war of the 21st century. You were ready. You performed with skill & honor. And you have made your nation proud."

President Bush had it exactly right – and on behalf of our commander in chief, I salute you.

It is an honor and privilege to serve with you. Around the world, Sailors are answering our nation's call through their service and sacrifice.

Your magnificent performance during Operation Enduring Freedom honors the legacy of naval heroes who for 227 years have sacrificed so much to make America great and ensure the survival of liberty.

Happy Birthday Shipmates! God Bless each of you, your families and the United States of America.

45th NERA National Conference, October 23-27, 2002, Newport Rhode Island



The 45th NERA National Conference is just weeks away. The conference will be held October 23-27, 2002 & will be presented by the Edmund Couto Chapter. The conference will be at the Best Western Mainstay Inn in Newport, Rhode Island. Rooms are \$89.00 per night. We expect a record-breaking attendance since our last conference was canceled due to 9/11. Most events will take place at the Officers Club on the water near the Naval War College. Hope to see you there.

NERA Has A New Bulletin Board http://www.nera.org/bulletin_board.htm

NERA has its own bulletin board. There are quite a few posts already since it came on line. Check it out! Look for Chapter postings in the very near future or visit & post your own. Both text & pictures can be posted.

"Tricare For Life" Celebrates 1st Anniversary

This month, "Tricare For Life" celebrates its first anniversary of providing wraparound coverage to more than 1.5 million Medicare-eligible military retirees, family members and survivors.

"These new health care benefits have dramatically improved the quality of life for our Medicare-eligible retirees and their families," said Dr. William Winkenwerder, assistant secretary of defense for health affairs and director, Tricare Management Activity. "In our first year, we have received over 30 million claims, & paid out more than \$1.7 billion in health care benefits."

Beneficiaries have written letters of thanks & admiration for the new program. One of Tricare For Life's earliest users, Lucille Rutkowski, said the program gave her the will to go on after being diagnosed with breast cancer. With Tricare For Life, Rutkowski was able to concentrate on getting well while the automatic crossover between her Medicare and Tricare claims took care of the financial aspects of her care.

"The 'behind-the-scenes' story that ensured a successful implementation of this program was the unprecedented cooperation & mutual assistance between the government, the private sector companies that help deliver Tricare benefits & the beneficiary associations who are in regular communication with their members," stated Winkenwerder. Eligibility and claims processing issues were quickly identified by the beneficiary groups, communicated to the government, and resolved.

The Department of Defense conducted a recent survey of Tricare For Life users to find out how they were receiving information about their health benefits and if these sources were helpful. The number-one source of Tricare For Life information was the beneficiary letter that DoD mailed prior to the program start date (according to 85 percent of respondents).

Uniformed services publications were the number-two source for health benefits information, followed by the Tricare For Life telephone help line, civilian publications, beneficiary counseling and assistance coordinators, Medicare and the Social Security Administration, health care providers and the Tricare Web site. The majority of respondents rated most of these sources as "very helpful."

According to Winkenwerder, "The Tricare For Life program and the partnerships it generated are now benchmarks for DoD program success - and perfectly complement the Tricare Senior Pharmacy Program, which was implemented April 1, 2001."

In its first year of operation, the Tricare Senior Pharmacy Program filled 11.6 million prescriptions with low-out-of-pocket costs for prescription drugs for Medicare-eligible DoD beneficiaries age 65 and over. For beneficiary Clarence Creel, who uses both Tricare For Life and the Tricare Senior Pharmacy Program, his annual saving on health care premiums and prescriptions tops \$6,000.

As Tricare For Life enters its second year of operation, Tricare Management Activity is making continued efforts to reach beneficiaries who may not know of the rich benefits and potential savings available to them. For more information on the program, interested parties are encouraged to call 1-888-DoD-LIFE (1-888-363-5433), or visit the Tricare Web site at

www.tricare.osd.mil/tfl.

A Few Minutes

(Partial meeting notes-Executive Meeting-August 27th, 2002)

Next Chapter Meeting will not be held & next newsletter will not be published until October due to 3 Officers to on Annual Training during September. 50/50 raffle winner will be drawn in October. Korean War Dedication Video will be ready in October. Election Committee will be established next meeting.

GI Bill Benefits Increased

As of January 1, 2002, Montgomery GI Bill benefits for active duty service members as well as Reserves and National Guard members have increased. Active duty personnel can now receive up to \$800 a month for 36 months of full-time training, up from the previous limit of \$650 per month. Reservists and National Guard members can now receive up to \$272 a month for education payments.

Retired Reservists eligible for flag presentation

Naval Reservists are eligible for a U.S. flag upon retirement. The National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2000 clarifies authorization for Reservists eligibility for presentation of a flag upon the occasion of their retirement.

In accordance with U.S. Code, upon transfer from an active status or discharge of a Reservist who has completed years of service required for eligibility for retired pay, the Secretary concerned shall present a United States flag to the member. However, a member is not eligible for a flag if he or she has previously been presented a flag under any provision of law providing for presentation of a U.S. flag incident to release from active service for retirement.

The presentation of the flag shall be at no cost to the recipient. BUPERS Instruction 1001.3D offers specific guidance on the presentation and places responsibility on the supporting Naval Reserve Activity for procurement of the flag to Selected Reserve and Volunteer Training Unit members. The instruction is available online at https://buperscd.technology.navy.mil/bup_updt/508/INSTRUCTIONS/100139D/100139D_Chapter_%202020.htm#Section_2023.

ITc Said

It is getting very close to the turnover of leadership in our Chapter. We need some future leaders to step up and take charge. This Chapter is on the move & is well known throughout NERA. Here is just some of what your Chapter has been doing...

We have been involved with Salvation Army Angel Tree Program, The Alabama Korean War Memorial Dedication & have produced the dedication & history video. We were involved with Walk America. We have 2 members who fill National positions & we have nominated a member for the 1776 award. Our chapter had the Chairman & committee that oversaw the Scholarship Awards. We sponsor the SOQ program at Reserve Center Mobile and play a role in their INDOC program. We have gotten on line with our own web page & opened inter-chapter dialogues with many chapters. We were involved with NMCRC ESGR Dining In Event & Awards dinner. We have nominated a member for National Secretary and we will be represented at the upcoming 45th NERA Convention.

We need leaders to step up to continue and expand the role the Chapter plays in being involved with all our Navy family & our community.

One Navy – One Fight