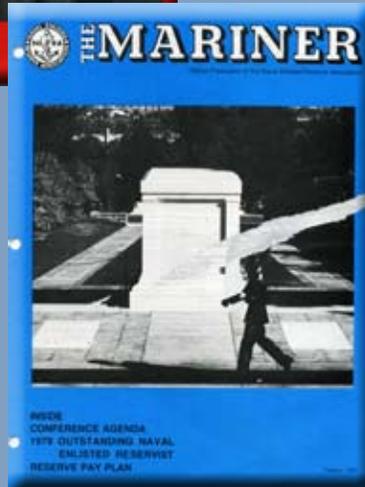
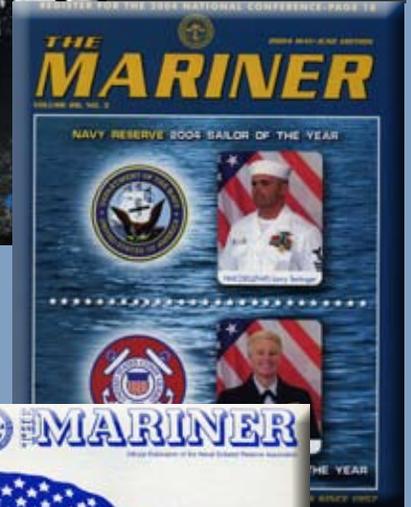
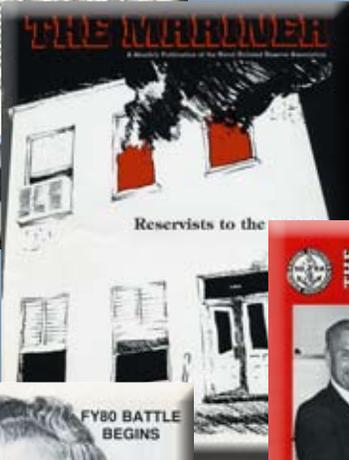
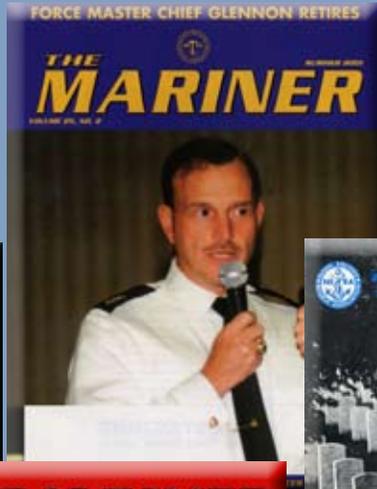


THE MARINER

2009 SPRING EDITION

VOLUME 52, NO 1

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NAVAL ENLISTED RESERVE ASSOCIATION



NERA



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THE MARINER

“Not For Self But For Country”

Sailors from Navy Reserve Maritime Expeditionary Boat Detachment 421 conduct training aboard a 34-foot Sea Ark Navy security boat on the York River. The training was part of the detachment’s “Crewman Boot Camp,” to qualify the newly-formed boat team on basic seamanship, weapons, first aid and small boat operations before an upcoming deployment. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Maddelin Angebrand/Released)



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The Mariner, official publication of the Naval Enlisted Reserve Association, is devoted to the interests and mutual benefit of its members. Regular Membership is open to all enlisted personnel of the Naval Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve and Coast Guard Reserve; others may join as Associate Members. Annual dues in the amount of \$3.75 per member is set aside to defray the cost of publishing *The Mariner*. Single domestic subscription price is \$15 per year. Persons eligible for Regular Membership are not entitled to published subscription rates. Articles, letters, and jpeg photos for *The Mariner* should be submitted to the Managing Editor/DED via e-mail to: MARINEREDITOR1@NERA.ORG or NERA Headquarters, Falls Church, VA. Credit will be given for materials used. Letters may be condensed for publication. Articles and letters appearing in *The Mariner* do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the National Executive Council of the Naval Enlisted Reserve Association or the Editor, or are they to be interpreted as official policy of the United States Navy, United States Marine Corps, United States Coast Guard or the Naval Enlisted Reserve Association. *The Mariner* (ISSN0164-3029), is published quarterly by the Naval Enlisted Reserve Association, 6703 Farragut Avenue, Falls Church, VA 22042-2189. Periodicals postage paid at Falls Church, VA and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address change to *The Mariner*, 6703 Farragut Avenue, Falls Church, VA 22042-2189. For general questions, advertising or to learn more about NERA e-mail: vp@NERA.ORG



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



By National President Joanne Elliott

THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE IN OKLAHOMA CITY IN OCTOBER WILL BE THE MOST CRITICAL CONFERENCE HELD BY NERA.

Make plans now to attend. The attendance at the last few conferences has shown a decided decline. It is important that your voice be heard.

Don't forget to attend the regional conferences in Minnesota and New Jersey in April and May. For more information and to sign up, visit our website at www.nera.org. We have also decided to hold the next NERA meeting at the end of the Northeast/Mid-Atlantic Conference (Saturday morning, May 2nd).

In recent months, I have received numerous calls from Grey Area retirees who are now getting closer to retirement asking what they need to do to before receiving their retirement pay. The first question I ask is: "Have you kept the Navy informed of any change of address? If you haven't kept your DEERS information up-to-date, how do you think the Navy will find you?" Here is some information that will assist you if you haven't received your letter from the Navy detailing your retirement information:

Before you turn 59, ensure that your correct address has been updated in DEERS. You can do this by going to the nearest military facility; call 1-866-827-5672 Monday through Fridays from 0800-1600 (Central Time); or e-mail MILL_RetiredActivities@navy.mil. Make sure your spouse has a dependent ID card.

On Thursday, February 19, Steve and I met with Force Master Chief Wright, Vice Admiral Debbink and Rear Admiral Bayless. We discussed the E-6 and below new reenlistment criteria whereby each enlisted member's record will be thoroughly reviewed prior to each reenlistment. The Navy will be looking

at each Sailor to ensure that they are doing their job, for example, studying for advancement, doing NKO courses, completing drills, etc. Decisions will be made on whom the Navy will retain. Again, it will be based on what you are doing with your career and the needs of the Navy.

At our last conference, we had discussed with Force Master Chief Wright the issue of the Reserve CPO clothing allowance. For years, it has remained stagnant at \$9 per quarter/\$36 per year. We have been advised that the uniform allowance is being revised and we should see the change by November 2009.

During our short conference with VADM Debbink, we discussed travel reimbursement to and from NOSC's. In addition to some reimbursements for travel, it was suggested that Reservists look into performing quarterly, semi-annual drills as well as IDTs. We were also advised that the Navy Reserves would not lose any more personnel.

On another note, as we watch the news and look at the stock market, we know that the next few years are going to be really tough for many of us. If you have a job or are otherwise financially set, please take the time to help those less fortunate. Help someone you know find a job. If you have an extra room in your home, offer it to someone who has lost their job and home.

On March 2, 2009 an article appeared in the Chicago Tribune about a group who is helping veterans get back on their feet. That website is USATogether.org. For more information, please see the Tips and Clips column in this issue.



By National Vice President Nick Marine



WHAT'S NEW?

What is new? We have so many programs right now; it's easier to just go through them one at a time...

Membership Cards

Soon you will be receiving a new (hard plastic) membership card, which not only costs NERA less than the previous (flimsy paper) cards to produce but will also reduce manhours for us as well. A special thank you to Brian Brannon and Jennifer Abbott for spending several months passing back and forth hundreds of emails creating the perfect design.

Webpage

We have a state-of-the-art website, log on to take advantage of its features, one of which includes a calendar listing all upcoming Executive Director events, which are open to all who would like to attend. On our homepage you will see a Facebook link. Log in and chat with other NERA members about local events, changes in policy and any concerns you may have. We need your input! We receive countless calls about TriCare changes; use this site to vent and commiserate with others experiencing the same issues.

Database

Databases seem like they change monthly, which is why we're moving to a new database that is less expensive and has many coveted bells and whistles. Which leads us to some good news for Chapter Officers: This database easily produces expired listings, change/add reports and chapter rosters as well as many other reports. Jennifer will be providing access to all chapter officers. We are also working on a US Map where you will have an appointed State Director for each State listed and all active NOSCs. State Directors/Officers will be able to view/print from home easily as well as making contact updates.

The Mariner

Members love The Mariner and we are getting numerous emails as well as phone calls thanking us for this publication. Your Mariner offers up-to-date/informative news and our distributions have increased by almost 15%

since Ron Naida, Brian Brannon and Rick Swanson have come aboard. They are amazing; they roll up their sleeves and start working on the next Mariner before the present one is even mailed. They are an incredibly dedicated group of NERA members! Thank you all.

Ship's Store

The online ship's store has embroidered NERA goods. This has proven to be very popular and now we are getting complaints that people want more goods... This is a good complaint! The jacket is great quality and the price is right. All goods on this site cater to all services, which is why we selected it. NERA is getting quarterly commission checks for all goods purchased through our NERA webpage link. Buy a gift today!

Harley Drawing

Our Harley Davidson motorcycle drawing, with better odds than most lotteries out there, still has chance tickets available. Remember only 1000 tickets were printed, once they're sold, they're gone, at only \$100 per ticket don't miss out, buy more than one ticket and increase your odds of winning! Even if you are not holding the lucky ticket on 14 May; remember we have promoted our name all over. We are receiving a lot of phone calls/emails from young Sailors and Marines.

Recruiting Incentives

We have new cash rewards for our top three NERA recruiters each year in addition to the NERA plaques.

Memorial Walkway

NERA's Buy A Brick program is in place to honor those we love. We have bricks being made for any/all occasions; bricks for members and the year they joined, graduation bricks, retirement bricks, sympathy/passing of members and friends and NERA partners/sponsorship bricks. This walkway at NERA National HQ is your walkway. Support this program.

LIFE Benefactor Program

We have over 60 Life Benefactors to date. Can you believe we have over 5800 existing life members who fall into the over 10-year membership category where the money they paid has been exhausted? If you purchased a life membership that is over 10 years old, then I am personally inviting you to join the program today!

Editor's Note:



An ancient Chinese curse goes something like this:
"May you live in interesting times."

Well shipmates, we live in interesting times. The world is changing around us due to the financial market, politics, globalization, new technology, and if the opening up of arctic waterways due to melting ice is any indication, global warming.

But as this issue of *The Mariner* considers seafaring warriors past and present, I am reminded that our Sea Services have always faced great challenges and came out victorious. Some of the founding members of NERA were part of the Greatest Generation on Earth, who fought a two-ocean war, on the Atlantic and Pacific, against an evil empire of axis powers that sought to bend the world to their own twisted ideology.

There weren't many people during World War II who questioned the need to go to battle against the Nazis, Italian fascists or Imperial Japanese warlords. It was literally a fight against the powers of evil to protect freedom, democracy and the American way of life. These days, with a kinder, gentler war on terror, the stakes are no less heated, but they are much more understated. Things are less black and white, but the need for a strong Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard remains.

We honor those who have gone before us and helped make this nation what it is by keeping the sea lanes free. We thank them for continuing to fight when they came home to ensure that Reservists still get the rights, recognition, and compensation they deserve. And as preceding generations begin to fade into the pages of history books, it is our duty to continue their legacy on all fronts, to keep America free and to keep NERA strong.

This is a time of great change in the world and it is as important as ever that we remain vigilant. And in this hard economy we must ensure that Reservists do not get shortchanged for their dual sacrifices on the home front and the front line. That is a mission NERA has always filled, but we cannot rest on our laurels. We must keep adding new members in order to continue that mission. So as we think about the past and present of our organization, let's also consider the future, and reach out to our shipmates to help us in our cause. Together, we can keep NERA the vibrant and potent force that was passed down from those who came before us.

Brian Brannon
Associate Editor



From left: MCC(SS) Steve Vasquez, MCCS Rachel O'Sullivan and MCC Brian Brannon bid farewell and following seas to CMDMC Warren Hendon at his retirement ceremony following 38 years of service to the nation. (U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Maurice Dayao/ released)

Faces of NERA

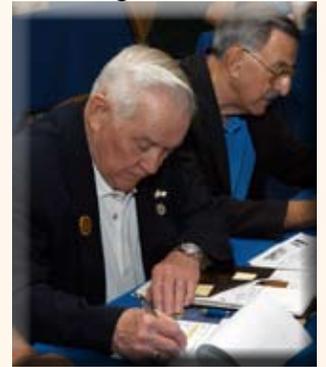
1776 Award Presented to Don Bauman

At the national conference in Orlando last October, Don Bauman, a lifetime NERA member, was the recipient of NERA's prestigious 1776 Award. During the awards luncheon, retired Master Chief Bauman accepted the honor with friends and family present. NERA received many nominations on Don's behalf and in so doing, recalled his numerous accomplishments since he joined NERA in 1974. Don has attended 22 national conferences, served as a chapter president and became chairman of the National President's Advisory Committee. Don Bauman served two years as NERA's national president, and two years as vice-president, eleven years, and served a single term as the national treasurer.

Don has been dubbed a detail-oriented individual who leaves no stone unturned and works diligently and professionally to the highest degree. Future generations will inherit the benefits that members like Don have strongly pursued throughout the years and will be an integral part of NERA's continuance. Undoubtedly, he has earned the honor of being among the chosen few who have received this award. Whether he has served locally with the Minnesota Chapter, or nationally, Don has dedicated much of his life to the important work of NERA. A 'perfectionist' through and through, we are proud to name Donald E. Bauman as the 2008 recipient of NERA's 1776 Award.



Master Chief Petty Officer Don Bauman, USNR (ret) from the Minnesota Chapter receives the NERA 1776 Award at the Naval Enlisted Reserve Association 2008 National Conference. Photo by Ray Robson



Master Chief Petty Officer Don Bauman, USNR (ret) from NERA's Minnesota Chapter. Photo by Ray Robson



A Sailor assigned to the amphibious transport dock ship USS Green Bay (LPD 20) stands at parade rest awaiting the call from ship sponsor Rose Magnus to man the rails and bring the ship to life. Green Bay is the fourth ship of the San Antonio-class. (U.S. Navy Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Jose Lopez, Jr./Released)



Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) Rick West congratulates Religious Program Specialist 1st Class Jennifer L. Woldeselassie, HQ Marine Forces Reserve, with a high-five after pinning on her Fleet Marine Force (FMF) Enlisted Warfare Specialist pin during the Reserve Appreciation Day at the Pentagon Hall of Heroes. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Jennifer A. Villalovos/Released)



Executive Director's Message

As you know for the past couple years Bill Severns has performed an outstanding job as the Deputy Executive Director (DED) for NERA. During the Orlando conference Bill was telling me about his new job with the VA--transporting Veterans to and from their doctor's and/or hospital appointments. He feels honored to be able to assist these folks who have served our Country and now need a "helping hand" from someone who understands. Because of this new position, Bill expressed a desire to be relieved of his duties as the DED.

Several weeks ago I received a call from a member wishing to volunteer his time at National Headquarters. We made arrangements to meet for lunch and shared similar ideas for the success of NERA.

At this time I'd like to introduce and welcome Mike Hughes aboard as the Deputy Executive Director. Here's a brief history of our new DED, Michael P. Hughes, OSC, USNR (Ret).

Mike is a longtime life member of NERA with the Lehigh Valley Chapter. He retired from the Navy Reserves in 1992 with over 23 years of service. He drilled with various Navy Reserve units in Horseheads, NY; Albany, NY; Lehigh Valley, PA; and Anacostia, Washington DC during his career.

During his active duty time in the late 1960's he served aboard the USS Sunbird (ASR-15), USS Sanctuary (AH-17) and the USS Pivot (MSO-463). He currently resides in Columbia, MD with his wife Theresa; he has 2 grown daughters and 3 grandchildren who live in North Carolina and New Jersey.

Mike retired from the Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Health Administration, in September of 2007 with over 33 years of service as a Senior Management Analyst, GS-15. This included experience in health care management, health care planning and medical equipment maintenance and planning.

In the short time since joining NERA Headquarters Mike and I have attended The Military Coalition (TMC) meetings, a Congressional caucus breakfast on the Guard and Reserves and he has assisted with some office functions at NERA Headquarters.

Mike: "I have some time available and want to contribute in some way to NERA. I contacted Steve and we got together. Master Chief Sandy has been great to

work with and I can tell you that NERA couldn't have a better or more competent person as their Executive Director. I look forward to learning more from Steve and hopefully contributing positively to NERA."

On another note: Two Regional Conferences are scheduled in the near future. The conference in Minnesota is scheduled for April 17 through April 19; and the conference in Cape May, New Jersey starts May 15 through the 17th. These conferences are vital in planning the agenda for the National Conference in October held in Oklahoma City. There will be major changes discussed in the way NERA operates. Please plan on attending these conferences or send someone to represent your views and opinions. In addition to the scheduled events at the Cape May conference in New Jersey, the NEC will be holding their annual Spring Conference on Saturday, May 16th; all members are welcome and encouraged to join this meeting.

Stay Connected and Informed: A multitude of bills are progressing through Congress affecting everything from TRICARE to retirement. Go to our website for updates and information regarding these legislative actions.



Your voices are needed to protect these benefits! If you haven't already joined Facebook, you should look into it and join other NERA members, Facebook is a great forum to discuss current issues, to get information from other members or to just socialize.

The Harley Raffle: The Harley Raffle has the potential to be a great fundraiser for NERA, sell tickets to your friends and neighbors. If you need more tickets please contact Laura Martin at lkmartin@nera.org or at the office (703) 534-1329. The drawing will be 14 May, 2009 in Southampton, PA; everyone is welcomed and encouraged to attend. The winner does not need to be present.



NAVY RESERVE

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A recent Navy Message that talks about Performance-Based Boards for continuation of Active and FTS enlisted personnel with greater than 20 years active service (NAVADMIN 030/09) caused some confusion within the SELRES community. Along with wanting to know more about Force Shaping Policy, we asked FORCM Ronney Wright some basic questions to clarify what this means to our Reserve Component Sailors.

1) **Q:** Where is the Reserve at these days in terms of manning FTS/SELRES?

A: Some of our ratings are undermanned while others are overmanned, but overall the manning of FTS and SELRES matches the current strategic and operational needs of the Navy.

Putting the right Sailor with the right skill set in the right job. We are continually working to ensure our Sailors FIT in the requirements needed today and in the future. The Navy requirements are constantly changing. The enterprises continually scrub all their AC/RC billets to ensure requirements reflect what the needs of the Navy are in order to accomplish our missions. Ten years ago there may have been a need for a specific rating, but today that requirement has changed. Staying in a rating just because a Sailor wants to hold a title is not the way we should guide our Sailors. We need to guide Sailors with the use of Career Development Boards into career paths they are interested in, have the academic ability to succeed in, and that meets Navy requirements today.

2) **Q:** What are some of the force stabilization tools being used to mold the force to meet current needs FTS/SELRES?

A: When we talk about Force Stabilization, we are really talking about Total Force Stabilization. The Navy Reserve has the same Force Stabilization concerns as those experienced by the active component. So when we've done the in-depth research to show that any Force Stabilization initiative makes sense, we'll move forward to implement similar policies within the Reserve Component. The following NAVADMINS apply:

- 369/08 ENLISTED EARLY TRANSITION PROGRAM
- 370/08 SENIOR ENLISTED TIME-IN-GRADE WAIVER POLICY
- 007/09 CONTROL OF CONDITIONAL SHORT TERM EXTENSIONS
- 017/09 PERFORM TO SERVE (PTS) UPDATE AND ZONE B IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES
- 030/09 PERFORMANCE-BASED BOARD FOR CONTINUATION OF ENLISTED PERSONNEL WITH GREATER THAN 20 YEARS ACTIVE SERVICE
- 073/09 PHYSICAL READINESS PROGRAM
- 075/09 SELECTIVE REENLISTMENT BONUS (SRB)

For SELRES, we look to align policies that possibly include similar Force Stabilization tools to manage our communities.

3) **Q:** How will these force stabilization tools affect advancement FTS/SELRES?

A: Well, force stabilization tools are not necessarily meant to directly affect advancements. Regardless, our Enlisted Community Managers and staff at Chief of Navy Reserve attempt to maintain consistent advancement opportunities each cycle. The last thing we want to do is to have advancement cycles flow like a roller coaster. A steady and stable path to advancement is what we strive to achieve and I believe we are doing the best we can to ensure our Sailors have opportunities to advance.

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Avoid Problems before they Happen: A “How- to” for The Mariner

Cpl. Timothy Johnson of the Marine Forces Reserve remembered hearing a briefing about Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) but he wasn't thinking about mobilizing just then. Besides, he thought the law only applied to large businesses, not the small family run bread bakery that he worked for. When his unit was alerted, he knew his employer wouldn't be happy about it; so he didn't tell him until two weeks before he left for his deployment. His employer was mad, not only because he was leaving, but because there was no time to hire a replacement. When Johnson returned from mobilization he didn't even try to go back to the bread bakery and was out of work for a long time.

Senior Chief Yeoman Joel Sampson saw the layoffs happening in his construction company and figured it was just a matter of time before it happened to him too. To avoid a layoff, he volunteered to deploy with a unit that was going to Iraq thinking he would be safe for a year and that his company would have to rehire him once he got back. Upon return he learned that the law was not on his side; he felt betrayed and confused and blamed ESGR for not helping him.

Both of these scenarios are typical of the cases reported to ESGR. “If we could eliminate just one of these misunderstandings the number of cases reported to ESGR would be significantly reduced,” said Curtis Bell, Director Ombudsman, National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (NCESGR). Members of the Reserve Components must understand the law and how it applies to them. Only then can they protect themselves from potential problems.

Reserve personnel must provide notice to their employers in advance of their deployment. ESGR recommends that the notice be provided “in writing” and if possible at least 30 days in advance of the deployment. To assist service members with this task, ESGR posted a sample Deployment Notification Letter and Military Leave of Absence Form on www.ESGR.mil under the resources section. Service members complete the blanks and provide the completed documents to their employer. These documents provide the employers with need-to-know information, to include ESGR contact information. The Notification letter also functions as a tool to start the sometimes-difficult communication process between the military employees and their employers. Typically, it is a lack of communication, especially in the initial stages, that leads to late notifications and increased friction between military member and employer. “The employer may be angry that the member is leaving; but waiting to tell the employer only makes things worse,” Bell says. “By starting the process early and by providing timely written notification, the military member can reduce the chances for problems later on.” Both documents also provide employers a resource should they have USERRA related questions. It is important that the service member and the employer sign and retain a copy of these documents should the need arise to substantiate facts later.

Despite the recent economic situation, service

members must know that they are not protected against economic problems and resulting effects. If a company conducts lay-offs, closes a branch, or goes bankrupt, service members may lose their job as a result. USERRA does not protect service members from this type of job loss. Conversely, employers must ensure that their decision to lay-off the employee is not solely based the employee's association with the military.

Equally, service members must consider the impact on their employer when volunteering for military duty. Unit commanders should monitor for repeated or frequent requests to volunteer for military duty. Eventually the service member will return to their civilian employment and should therefore strive to maintain a positive relationship with their employer. Commanders may consider requiring their troops to provide their employers with timely notification documents. As such, military members would comply with the advanced notification rule and the military unit would have the added benefit of conducting positive employer outreach.

A Department of Defense (DoD) organization based in Washington, D.C., NCESGR encourages military members to create “win-win situations.” Service members should consider their employers as a strategic partner who supports their efforts to serve our nation. One effective way to bring employers into the partnership is to encourage them to sign an ESGR “Statement of Support.” Another way would be to link the company or business website to the ESGR site. This link would then provide company management and supervisors with easy access to the employer resources offered and to ensure their company is in compliance with the law. These two very easy steps let the employer know they are doing their part in support of the nation by supporting their military employees.

The mission of Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve is to develop and promote a culture in which all U.S. employers support and value the military service of their employees. ESGR does so by recognizing outstanding employer support, increasing awareness of USERRA and by resolving conflict through mediation.

One of the objectives to support the ESGR mission is through employer recognition programs such as the Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award. This annual award is the U.S. Government's highest recognition given to employers who provide outstanding support to their employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve Forces.

For additional assistance with employer-related questions relating to ESGR or USERRA, visit Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) at www.esgr.mil, or call 1-800-336-4590.

Maj. Gullotta is an Army National Guard Public Affairs Officer assigned to NCESGR.

All names and locations referenced in this story are based solely on data collected from the ESGR call center. No real names were used.

VA Medical Centers Host 31st National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans

On February 13, grateful citizens across the nation thanked deserving veterans for their service during the Annual National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Week.

Held at all Medical Centers across country, the purpose of the National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Program is to pay tribute and express appreciation to hospitalized veterans; increase community awareness of the role of the VA medical center; and encourage citizens to visit hospitalized veterans and to become involved as volunteers.

This annual celebration is an opportunity to say thank you to the more than 98,000 veterans of the U.S. armed services who are cared for every day in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical centers, outpatient clinics, domiciliaries, and nursing homes.

*God Bless America and God Bless Veterans . . .
without them, we wouldn't be here today!*



On February 13, a group of current and former servicemembers gathered for the 31st National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans at the Veteran's Administration Medical Center, Decatur, Georgia. From left: Chief Personnelman William A. Anderson, USNR-Ret; former Marine Gene Smith, from MCL Woodstock #1311; NERA National Vice-President Senior Chief Storekeeper Nick Marine, USNR-Ret; Marine Corps League Detachment 1196 Commandant Major Russ Vermillion (MOH)/1st Marine Division/Bravo 1/1 (1968-1970); Senior Vice Commandant R. "Moon" Mullins; GACNERA President Chief Equipment Operator Tony Little, USN-Ret; Master Gunnery Sergeant Frank Goalen, USMCR-Ret; NERA National Counselor Senior Chief Storekeeper Gene McCarthy, USNR-Ret; Lt. Col. Roni A. Meyerhoff, USMC, Inspector Instructor Marine Corps Training Center Atlanta; and Sergeant Major William Burton, USMC, Inspector Instructor from Marine Corps Training Center Atlanta. Photo by Timm Duckworth.



Join the Legacy. Become a Part of History!

Purchase a Brick to memorialize a shipmate, a family member, yourself or a significant period in your military history. For more information go to www.nera.com



Valentines together during the 31st National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans at the Veteran's Administration Medical Center, Decatur, Georgia, February 13, 2009.

Photo By: Timm Duckworth 2009.

Did you know?

DoD will begin to remove SSNs from DoD ID cards

SSNs will no longer be printed on cards and should not be relied on as a unique ID number.

These changes are being made by the Department to protect the identity information of cardholders.

Changes to ID cards will occur when the cardholders' expired cards are renewed.

The removal of SSNs will occur in three phases, all of which will occur upon ID card renewal.

Removal will Occur in Three Phases

Changes to cards will be made upon ID card renewal.

Phase One: Remove Dependent SSNs
To begin by end of calendar year 2008

Phase Two: Remove printed SSNs from all cards*
To begin by end of calendar year 2009

Phase Three: Remove SSNs embedded in barcodes
To begin during calendar year 2012



*Geneva Conventions ID cards will retain the last four digits of the SSN.

Who Does This Affect?

All DoD ID cardholders.

Should I Go Now?

No, go when you need to renew your card.

If you are a retiree with an indefinite expiration date and wish to replace your card with one without an SSN, the earliest you may do so is January 2010.

Where Should I Go?

Visit the RAPIDS Site Locator www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl/owa/home to find a location near you. Updated CAC cards and Teslin cards will be issued at over 1,500 RAPIDS ID card centers worldwide.

What Should I Bring?

Two forms of ID from the OMB I-9 document list. One must be a federal or state issued photo ID. Visit www.formi9.com for more information.

For more information regarding the SSN Reduction Plan, visit www.dmdc.osd.mil/smartcard

Letters to NERA

BZ to NERA

After taking a long, analytic look at the NERA Web site, I give it a 4.0 for appearance, content and ease of navigation. There's also some very helpful current information for the members. Whoever put this together did a super job and deserves a BZ. Very happy to see such a professional Web site—excellent step in the right direction to draw new members and keep current members up to date—very professional! Also, the latest Mariner magazine is excellent—layout, design, color and content—again a winner.

Please log me in. Let me know what I need to access the Web site in the future. Thanks to all—job well done!

MCPO Jim Stephens, USN Retired
Former volunteer NED, NERA

Congratulations!

Hello Chief Brannon,

I just discovered tonight that you had been promoted to Chief. Hearty congratulations!

Last year I sent a photo and cut line to MCPO Naida and at that time complimented him on the improved look and content of The Mariner. Now on the occasion of your promotion, I have the opportunity to offer congrats for your part in this. It looks much better and the quality of the stories has been elevated. Keep up the great work.

Again, congratulations on your promotion. The Chief ranks are very special, as you now know.

JOCM Dave Machtel, USNR (ret.)
Grand River Valley Chapter NERA



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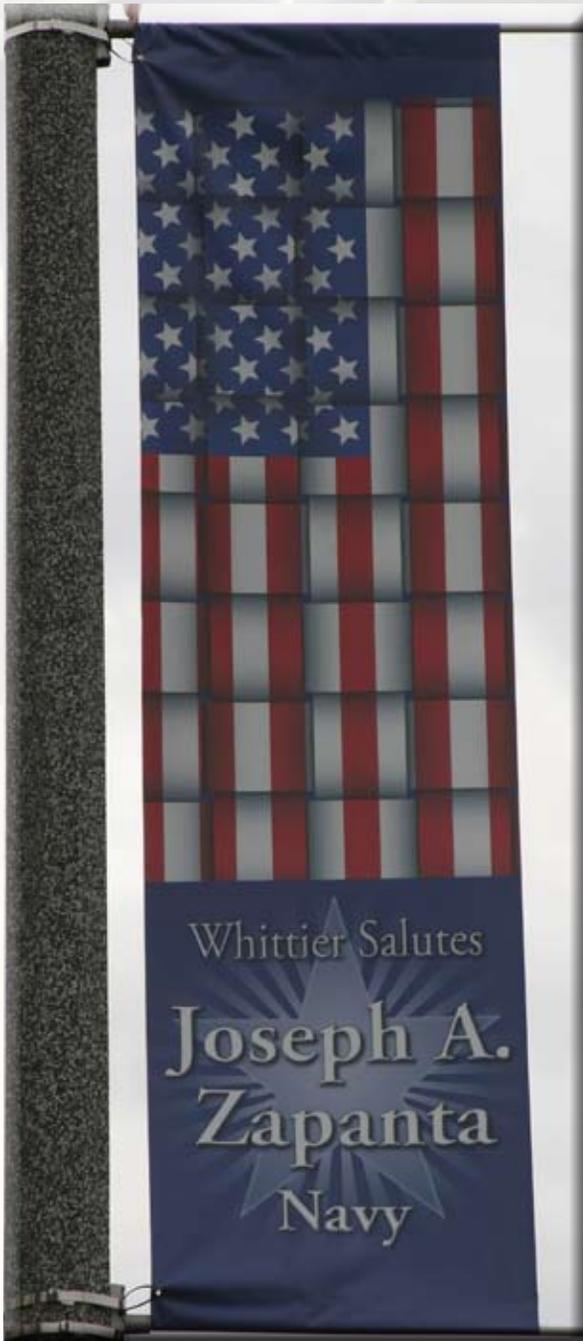
To all service members and veterans,
thank you for your service and sacrifice.



Shatynski Joins Whittier in Honoring Wounded Warriors

By MCC Brian Brannon

-- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE --



Silver Star Banners, such as the one honoring Operations Specialist Seaman Joseph A. Zapanta, line the City of Whittier streets. Zapanta is currently serving aboard the nuclear powered aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69). The City of Whittier currently has 30 banners hanging from posts along Whittier Boulevard, each with the name of a resident actively serving in the Armed Forces. (Photo courtesy of Fran Shields)

WHITTIER, Calif. - Rear Adm. Mike Shatynski, Vice Commander, Naval Surface Forces joined the Whittier City Council February 24 in proclaiming the first of May as Silver Star Banner Day, recognizing local combat-wounded veterans.

Shatynski said the sacrifices that military members continue to make every day ensure the safety and security of the nation.

"It's that sense of service to our country that makes us strong," he said. "They're just carrying on a legacy passed to them by our veterans."

The Silver Star Banner program, like the Blue Star Banner program, began during World War I. Blue Star Banners were hung in homes where a family member was away serving in the Armed Forces. Each blue star signified one son or daughter in the service. A silver star represented a wounded family member, and a gold star signified a family member killed in action.

The practice of displaying Service Flags continued through World War I, World War II and



Rear Adm. Mike Shatynski, Vice Commander, Naval Surface Forces, joins the Whittier City Council and American Legion veterans in celebrating the city's proclamation naming May 1 Silver Star Banner Day to honor America's wounded combat veterans. (U.S. Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Brian Brannon)

continued on page 19

- 4) **Q:** NAVADMIN 030/09 hit the streets recently and caused some confusion within the SELRES community. Does this pertain to Reserve Component (RC) enlisted sailors or is this only for the Full-Time Staff (FTS) and Active Component (AC) enlisted?

A: The NAVADMIN is for AC and FTS only. The requirement for a SELRES continuation board is in the discussion phase. It's important that our RC Sailors understand the Continuation Board process is not based on any quotas that would reduce our end-strength. It is based on performance. As we stabilize our reserve component and become more involved as an operational Navy Reserve, it becomes imperative that we retain our best performers. Our senior enlisted within the Reserve Force are exceptional leaders who are more than capable of tackling any assignment given to them. However, we can't afford to have one Chief, Senior Chief, or Master Chief think they can sit back and coast to high year tenure. Complacency will not be accepted in our Reserve Force today.

- 5) **Q:** Is it true the high-year tenure numbers are being reduced? How does this affect the Reserves-FTS/SELRES?

A: First, I'll answer the HYT issue for FTS. HYT has not been reduced for FTS, As for SELRES HYT, and like any other policy in place that is continuously reviewed to ensure it meets our current needs, we are in the process of determining the impact that reducing HYT gates will have on the SELRES enlisted force. Before making any dramatic changes to personnel policies, a few of the challenges for our team is to ensure we maintain rating health and advancement consistency. The last thing we want to do is to damage the health of any rating, paygrade or community for a long period of time. They are only proposals that must be looked at when managing Congressionally mandated end strength requirements.

- 6) **Q:** Chiefs and above on the Active side with more than 20 years in are going up for Continuation Boards to see if they should be retained. Is this something that the Reserve is looking at doing?

A: Although the NAVADMIN includes FTS, it does not include SELRES. I believe I answered this in question 4.

- 7) **Q:** Are all E7 and above going to be moved to a retired list after 20 years of service?

A: If I understand correctly, the question is in reference to a proposed SELRES Continuation Board for E7 and above. If that's the case, the answer is no. Any such board would be based on performance standards set by a precept similar to an AC Continuation Board. If such a Continuation Board is approved and implemented for SELRES, I'm confident that our team will develop a policy that is fair and consistent.

- 8) **Q:** MCC (SS) Steve Vasquez heard you speak in San Diego. He said you had some great things to say. One of the things he mentioned was how it doesn't do anybody any good to keep a non-performing Sailor in a billet. Not only does it hurt the command, but it also keeps junior Sailors from advancing. Can you expand on this a bit?

A: One reason why we keep non-performers around is because we fail to properly document counseling. As we focus on performance in the future, it will become critically important that our Chiefs provide honest evaluation input to their Commanding Officers. If one of your Sailors is not performing and you have counseled and documented throughout the evaluation period, it will be much easier to make a recommendation for non-retention in the Navy Reserve. Our junior enlisted Sailors are depending on senior leadership to retain only the best performers and make the tough decisions that will allow them the opportunity to advance.

- 9) **Q:** What advice would you give a Sailor who wants to serve the maximum amount of time in the Reserve?

A: Today, as a member of the Navy Reserve you are expected to be Ready Now. Anytime, Anywhere. Challenge yourself to be the best! Communicate with your chain of command, family and employer. If you take this approach, I'm sure you'll perform better at your job, increase your advancement exam scores, receive the recognition you deserve, and have opportunity to Stay Navy with the support of your family and employer.

A New Mission, Vision and Strategic Focus for the Navy Reserve

On March 3, 1915, an act of Congress combined seventeen separate naval militias and established the Navy Reserve. With that, Reservists have served in every conflict since. More than 2 million Sailors—four out of every five Sailors during World War II—were Naval Reservists. Since Sept. 11, 2001, more than 54,300 Reserve Sailors have been called to active duty to serve as Individual Augmentees (IAs) or in units, including 8,515 serving twice.

Reserve Sailors currently fill 48 percent of all IA billets in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom and Joint Task Force Horn of Africa, ranging from explosive ordnance disposal, medical, special operations, customs inspections, intelligence, riverine squadrons, training, airborne electronic countermeasures and much more. Today, there are 5,617 Reserve Sailors on the ground in theater

On its 94th anniversary, Chief of the Navy Reserve Vice Admiral Dirk Debbink restated the mission and vision of the Reserve force. Echoing the traditions and heritage established by almost a century of service, Debbink reaffirmed the time-honored vision of the Navy Reserve: “Ready Now. Anytime, Anywhere.”

Navy Reserve Mission

The mission of the Navy Reserve is to provide strategic depth and deliver operational capabilities to our Navy and Marine Corps team, and Joint forces, from peace to war.

Navy Reserve Vision

Our vision for the Navy Reserve is to be a provider of choice for essential naval warfighting capabilities and expertise, strategically aligned with mission requirements and valued for our readiness, innovation, and agility to respond to any situation.

- We provide the Navy with strategic depth by maintaining unsurpassed individual, command, and force readiness. We are ready to surge forward—anytime, anywhere—from peace to war.
- Our flexibility, responsiveness, and ability to serve across a wide spectrum of operations clearly enhance the Navy Total Force; act as a true force multiplier; and provide unique skill sets toward fulfilling Navy’s requirements in an increasingly uncertain world.
- We deliver timely, cost-effective operational capabilities, through our people and equipment, which are relevant and valued by the Navy. We serve alongside active component Sailors and deliver capabilities that are unmatched for quality.



Members of a Navy Reserve unit march along Pennsylvania Avenue during the 2009 Presidential Inaugural Parade in Washington. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Derrick Ingle/Released)

- As Navy’s standard for on-demand expertise, we deliver full-time excellence through part-time and full-time service. Our contributions to national security are enabled by policies, processes, and administrative systems that are transparent and seamless, making it easy for Sailors and their families to serve.



TIPS & CLIPS



By Joanne Elliott NERA President

CAMPLEJUNE – TOXIC WATERS (PRIOR TO 1986): For information and assistance with filing a claim for injury, death or potential future illnesses that may have been caused by being exposed to the toxic water at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, go to www.Form95Help.com. Anyone exposed to the highly toxic waters of Camp Lejeune prior to 1986 should file a claim. You can also file a claim on behalf of a relative who died and had any illness related to the contaminated waters of Camp Lejeune.

Remember, never settle a case without having it reviewed by an experienced FTCA lawyer. There is no dollar limitation on liability under the FTCA and once you agree to settle your claim, your claim is over even if the amount you received was unfair. For further information about the water contamination at Camp Lejeune, visit www.tftptf.com.

ESGR and You: The op tempo of the Guard and Reserve is reportedly having a dramatic effect on employers' willingness to comply with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act. According to an article by Karen Jowers of the Navy Times, some employers would rather reach a monetary settlement than rehire service members. As we have said in the past, it is important to call the ESGR if you have any questions regarding your reemployment rights. For more information see ESGR article in this issue.

Replacement of DD214s, Service and Medical Records, and Award Information: If you retired prior to 1995, visit www.vetrecs.archives.gov. If you retired after 1995, contact Navy Personnel Command, PERS-312-5720 Integrity Drive, Millington, TN 38055-3120. Fax requests to 901-874-2664. Gray-area Reservists, call 866-827-5672.

Burial Information: 800-827-1000 or www.cem.va.gov

Burial at Sea Information: 866-787-0081 or www.npc.navy.mil

CompTIA Education Foundation. Provides free IT training and certification through its Creating

Futures Program. It provides training, mentoring, courseware, practice exams and certification vouchers at no cost to veterans. You can apply for training (or make a donation) by logging onto: www.comptiaeducationalfoundation.org.

USATogetherHelps Injured Vets: Wounded warriors can find help meeting their needs from USATogether, a non-profit group based in Silicon Valley. The site brings together patriotic Americans who want to help with veterans who can use a little assistance. To find out more visit www.USATogether.org.

Free Tuition in Pennsylvania: Robert Morris University in Moon Township, Pa., announced that it will give veterans free tuition for graduate and undergraduate degrees. With its newly created RMU Military Service Award, the private university will cover the difference between its full-time tuition and a federal tuition subsidy offered to veterans under the Post- 9/11 GI Bill. The offer is open to all veterans, not just Pennsylvania residents. The university is also opening a Veterans Education and Training Center to help veterans and their families with transition services and to assist with enrollment. For more information, visit www.rmu.edu or call Heather Jericho at (412) 397-3933.

Suicide Prevention Hotline Saves Lives: Help is only a phone call away for military veterans considering suicide. Nearly 100,000 veterans, family members or friends of veterans reached out for help by calling the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) suicide prevention hotline at 1-800-273-TALK since the hotline was launched July 2007. The hotline operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and is staffed by trained mental health professionals prepared to deal with an immediate crisis. Also, suicide prevention coordinators are on hand at each VA medical facility and outpatient clinic. Troubled veterans, whether they call the suicide prevention hotline or walk in, receive follow-up care almost immediately. For more information, visit www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention.

Background photo of cannon at Gettysburg National Park by Ron Naida

continued from page 15

the Korean War, though it fell out of favor during Vietnam. The Silver Star Families of America is currently encouraging cities and states to adopt May 1 as Silver Star Day. To date, 46 states and more than 200 cities have signed proclamations adopting the date.

During the adoption of Silver Star Banner Day in Whittier, former Navy Interior Communications Electrician Fireman Art Castro, now commander of American Legion Whittier Post 51, expressed his thanks to the city council for its efforts to pay tribute to its wounded warriors.

“We appreciate, as members of the American Legion, what the city of Whittier is doing in recognizing all military personnel,” he said.

As part of its previous adoption of the Blue Star Program, the city currently has 30 banners hanging from posts along Whittier Boulevard, each with the name of a resident actively serving in the Armed Forces.

Whittier Mayor Joe Vinatieri said the proclamation of Silver Star Day in Whittier is just another way to honor its veterans.

“Part of Whittier’s values is patriotism and making sure we say thank you to our vets,” he said. “This is a way of saying thank you to them and remembering them and thanking their families.”



Rear Adm. Mike Shatynski, Vice Commander, Naval Surface Forces, joins Whittier Mayor Joe Vinatieri in honoring the Shields family with a Blue Star Banner recognizing the service of their son, Army Specialist Sean Shields, in his deployment in support of the global war on terror. (U.S. Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Brian Brannon)

continued from page 17

- We are the Force that others want to join and our diversity reflects the face of the nation. We give Sailors options that allow them to achieve a true life/work balance while they “Stay Navy” and continue contributing to our warfighting effectiveness.

Our actions and resources are fully aligned to achieve this vision. We are committed to supporting the Fleet and Combatant Commands, ready and fully integrated. We value the contributions of each and every reservist, recognizing service can and does vary from a few days per year to full-time service. Within our lifelines we provide support to our Sailors,

individually and proactively. We stand ready to assist service members’ families, whenever and wherever they need our help. And finally, we recognize, respect, and honor the civilian employers whose support enables our Navy Reservists to serve our Navy and our Nation.

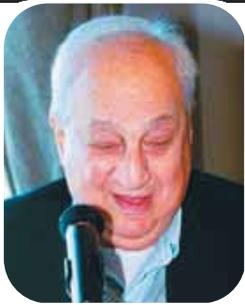
Strategic Focus Areas

- Deliver a Ready and Accessible Force
- Provide Valued Capabilities
- Enable the Continuum of Service



YEARS AGO IN NERA

By Manny Ratner



HOW IT ALL BEGAN

By Manny Ratner

Reflection & Tributes

Over 50 years ago in December, 1956, two inactive duty Naval Reserve Chief Enginemen from N & MCRTC, Washington, DC were on AcDuTra together aboard USS Orion (AS-18) in Norfolk. These two ENDCs were your past National Executive Directors and

NERAGRAM editors, Joe WASSON and Tom PATTEN.

It was then that NERA was conceived. In the next three months a Constitution and By-Laws were drawn up, membership cards were printed, office supplies were purchased, and plans for the first NERA meeting were made. Notices were placed in Washington area newspapers and announcements were made by local radio stations inviting all enlisted Naval Reservists to attend. By the date of the meeting, 25 March 1957, we had a grand total of 15 members and we were in debt to WASSON, PATTEN, and the Acme Printing Co. The first NERA meeting was held at the Moose Hall in Washington. WASSON, PATTEN, and a Wave YN2 named Barbara YOUNGHANS spent a quiet evening waiting for a quorum that never did materialize. Disappointed but undaunted, these three made plans for a second meeting to be held on 12 April 1957 at the American Legion Club on 3rd Street, N.W., D.C. with free beer to be provided. That was the night we got a quorum—deeper in debt—but we did elect officers and we did drink all the beer. The 3 May 1957 meeting was held in the Directors Room of the Citizens Building & Loan Association in Silver Spring, Md., on a Sunday afternoon with the quorum present despite reports of wives moaning and groaning about grass not getting cut, painting neglected, etc. We all sang “We Shall Overcome” and the word went back to the wives that another meeting would be held anyway.

By the time the 21 June 1957 meeting rolled around, we had 32 paid up members but no quorum. Apathy was our cross to bear but the two Enginemen were determined, and besides, we had already spent the dues of those other 30 members. Thus we were committed. In July 1957, the first edition of the NERAN, predecessor of your NERAGRAM was published—on the strength of PATTEN’s blarney and the trust of a trusting printer. In the ensuing years, many people have put a lot of time, thought, talent, and money into the Naval Enlisted Reserve Association. They recognize that we know who they are and that their efforts continue to be appreciated. WASSON had been NERA National Treasurer for seven years when he inherited the position of National Executive Director and responsibility for the NERAGRAM from Tom PATTEN. To quote WASSON, “There were times when I was on the brink of buckling under. There has always been the endearing faith of enlisted Naval Reservists to give me the perseverance, the encouragement, and moral obligation to carry on.”

Forty Years Ago

Three new chapters were formed early in 1969. The SPA SPINNAKERS in Hot Springs, Ark., with 25 new members while the SAGINAW VALLEY Chapter came on board with

33 new members, plus 28 MALs signed up over the last few months. HM3 Bonnie Lou JONES deserved a well done for handling the correspondence until elections were held. Two more West Coast chapters were in the works—SKCM John I. PALMER was signing up new members in the San Diego area and DCCS John GROO was busy getting new members as MALs in the San Francisco Bay area... DCC Charles A. GRIER, past National President as well as Past President of our DELAWARE VALLEY Chapter was pictured in NAVY TIMES.

Twenty Years Ago

Recently appointed MCPON, Duane BUSHEY, accepted the ADELPHI’s chapter invitation to keynote the Mid Atlantic Regional Conference in April, 1989. NERA life membership was climbing up to the 4,000 mark. In an interview with CAPT. David L. WOODS, RADM Bud SPARKS*, USCGR, one of the last known World War II participants still in active military status, shed his secrets for rising from E-1 to O-8.

* Bud Sparks joined the Coast Guard Reserve on December 14, 1942, with the rank of E-1. When he retired on July 8, 1989, he had obtained the rank of O-8. In 46 years of service to the United States, Bud Sparks was a leader. During his distinguished career, he rose from enlisted man to rear admiral. Bud Sparks was the first/last Coast Guard Reserve commodore and the first Coast Guard national president of the Reserve Officers Association.



Photos reprinted with permission by U.S. Coast Guard Reservist Magazine. Photo courtesy of RADM Bennett S. “Bud” Sparks, USCGR(Ret.)

Top: RADM Bennett S. “Bud” Sparks
Bottom: Seaman Bennett S. “Bud” Sparks

If your sixteen-year-old is sprouting wheels. If you get in a fender bender. If you finally bought that convertible. If the hail really was softball-sized. If you like country drives. If you have a lot more cars than family members. If you've been eyeing a new model car. If you inherited your granddad's sedan. If you're ready to go hybrid. If you park under a sick tree. If some thief likes your taste. If your ragtop meets a low branch. If it was their fault. If it was your fault. If some Sunday driver was out on Monday. If the rogue pebble chose your windshield. If that curb was way too high.

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Marine Marquee

Marines use resources to locate, properly honor first sergeant major of the Marine Corps

By Gunnery Sgt. F.B. Zimmerman

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Marines take care of their own. It's a mantra every Marine learns in recruit training, and a proud declaration of devotion passed along from generation to generation. The Inspector-Instructor staff here recently kept true to the saying, by taking care of a Marine who died 37 years ago.

As the Marine Corps' Birthday drew to a close last year, 1st Sgt. David Lee, I&I first sergeant, knew his staff was responsible for a wreath laying ceremony at the gravesite of the first Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, Sgt. Maj. Wilbur Bestwick. The Marine Corps Casualty Procedures Manual mandates that wreaths be laid at the graves of all former commandants and sergeants major of the Marine Corps on the Corps' birthday.

"We knew we had to [render honors] about a month and a half out, so we started preparing for it," Lee said. "About two weeks out we looked up the listed cemetery to confirm that's where he was buried and they didn't have any record of him. Once we realized he wasn't there, we began searching for where he was buried, and it took about a week to find."

The cemetery listed as the burial site on Bestwick's official bio is Alta Mesa Memorial Park in Palo Alto, Calif., but they had no record of him. Lee said the cemetery staff called surrounding cemeteries, but the result was the same — no record of Bestwick anywhere.

Lee contacted his predecessor to see if he knew where the sergeant major was buried, but he too was never able to find the grave. That Marine had even gone so far as to hire a genealogist, but had no success at locating the grave or family members, Lee said.

One Sunday, only a month prior to the Corps' birthday, Lee and his Commanding Officer, Capt. Brandon Boers, were brainstorming while watching football. Lee was a prior recruiter, and Boers asked him how he was able to locate vital records on those he was recruiting. That's when it clicked that the answer may be at the county records office.

So, the next day, Boers and Gunnery Sgt. Antonio Uriegas, made a trip to the county records office to see what they could find. When they received the certified true copy of Bestwick's death certificate, they finally had the information needed — his burial place was listed as Skylawn Memorial Park in San Mateo, Calif. A quick call confirmed Bestwick was there.

"I knew we could find it because I knew there was a record of it somewhere," Boers said. "We just had to figure out where to find the record. Within about 15 minutes of finding the actual burial site, we were able to find exactly where the gravesite was."

Bestwick is buried in the Veterans' section in lot 74, section A, space two.

A week prior to the birthday ceremony, Lee said a trip was made to the cemetery to scout the location. He said the marker was weathered and overgrown with weeds. A tree root underneath Bestwick's headstone caused the marker to slant.

While the cemetery staff told Lee he could request to have the site cleaned up, he wanted to make sure it was done by the ceremony, so a small working party was sent to take care of it. The Marines cleaned up the area, and even leveled the headstone.

"It now sits a little higher than the others," Lee said.

On Nov. 10, 2008, Boers, Lee and their Marines from the I&I gave proper honors to Bestwick, for what Lee thinks was the first time. Since honors had never been rendered, Lee said they wanted to do something extra, so in addition to laying the wreath and playing Taps, a rifle detail gave a 21-gun salute.

Lee said it was an honor to be able to finally locate and pay respects to Bestwick, but what made it more special, is Bestwick was the first Marine to serve as the I&I San Jose first sergeant. Lee said he has even jumped on board with his predecessor's idea of naming their building after Bestwick, and is going to work to get that approved.

"It was great ... it was like solving a mystery," said Boers of the challenge of locating Bestwick's gravesite. "It was a huge honor. I think it's important for us to remember where we came from and honor those who came before us."

During a recent visit to the I&I, the 16th Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, Sgt. Maj. Carlton W. Kent, made a special trip to the cemetery. Despite heavy winds and driving rain, Kent, in his Dress Blue Bravos, paused for a moment of silence before laying a wreath to pay tribute to the first sergeant major of the Marine Corps.

"It was an honor for me to be able to honor Sgt. Maj. Bestwick at his gravesite," Kent said. "Not only is his warfighting legacy an important part of Marine Corps history, but he's also important since he was the first sergeant major of the Marine Corps."

"I would just like to thank the Marines from I&I San Jose for being persistent in locating the gravesite of Sgt. Maj. Bestwick. What the Marines have done just echoes what Marines have been doing since the founding of our Corps in 1775, and that's to ensure we take care of our fellow Marines."

Sgt. Maj. Carlton W. Kent, 16th Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, bows his head in a moment of silence at the gravesite of the first Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, Sgt. Maj. Wilbur Bestwick, at Skylawn Memorial Park. Official USMC photo by Gunnery Sgt. Frederick Zimmerman



COASTIE CORNER



New York Waterway Ferry System's First Female Captain Helps Rescue US Air Flight 1549 Passengers

By BMCS Karl Brobst, Station Barnegat Light, N.J., USCGR

MK3 Brittany Catanzaro reported aboard Station Barnegat Light, N.J., in March 2008 as a Coast Guard Reservist fresh from school. When reporting aboard, it was apparent she was familiar with the marine environment and the operation of vessels. Little was known of the accomplishments she would make within the next year. Catanzaro is employed by New York Waterway, one of two ferry systems linking New Jersey and New York. The ferry operates on 12-round trip routes and provides passage to and from New York City for an estimated 30,000 people per day. At 20, Catanzaro, is New York Waterway's first female ferry captain, and the youngest ever. She takes commuters from Weehawken and Hoboken, N.J., to Manhattan. She has earned her Master's License and is responsible for her crew of two deckhands. Her ferry is 78.5-foot long, is propelled by four jets, and has a maximum capacity of 149 passengers.

Although significant, these accomplishments are overshadowed by her actions on Thursday Jan. 15, 2009. On that day, US Airways flight 1549, an Airbus A320 en route to Charlotte from LaGuardia, was involved in an accident in New York at approximately 3:03 p.m. Eastern Time. Shortly after take off, both of the plane's engines failed due to birds entering and obstructing the engines. The pilot, Chesley B. "Sully" Sullenberger, made an emergency landing on the Hudson River.

While departing from New York City's Pier 79, Catanzaro looked over her shoulder and saw a jet floating in the water. She was headed in the opposite direction, toward Lincoln Harbor in Weehawken. Immediately, she said, she turned around and steered toward the plane.

"It looked like a little kid was playing in the bathtub, and just set the plane down in the water," said Catanzaro. "The thought in my head was, the plane's going down quickly. We have to get over there." Catanzaro then piloted her ferry, following the guidance and commands of her trusted crew, to the fuselage of the aircraft, and recovered 24 passengers. Additional ferries from New York Waterways, and vessels from New York City Harbor Patrol, New Jersey State Police and local fire departments joined in the rescue operation. New York Police Department dispatched aircraft equipped with deployable scuba divers.

Coast Guard Activities New York assumed control of the rescue effort. Stations New York and Sandy Hook sortied small boats. Coast Guard aircraft responded from Air Stations Atlantic City and Cape Cod. With the overwhelming response, all 155 people aboard the aircraft were rescued.

A few short hours after the rescue, Catanzaro appeared on Larry King Live and did an interview with CNN's

Campbell Brown. Catanzaro, in the spirit of teamwork and admiration, states none of her actions and the successful recovery of the passengers would have been possible without her crew. She further stated the real praise should fall upon her crew.

"We conduct man overboard drills almost everyday, we have to do these drills monthly according to Coast Guard regulations," said Catanzaro. "I believe they are important so we conduct them more often. I cannot say enough about my crew, they are the heroes, they pulled the people onboard."

MK3 Catanzaro embodies the traits of a true Guardian.



MK3 Brittany Catanzaro, USCGR, second from right, is congratulated by ADM Thad Allen, left, and Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano and U.S. Rep. Albio Sires of New Jersey. Catanzaro was honored at a Good Samaritan mariners awards ceremony at New York's Waterway terminal in Manhattan Feb. 18, 2009 for assisting with the rescue of US Air Flight 1549. Photo by PA3 Annie Berlin, D1 Public Affairs South

Manny Ratner: A Legacy of Leadership

By Jennifer Naida

It is said that the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. Many of our readers have walked a few of those miles with Manny Ratner. If you have had the privilege of working alongside Manny, you have been witness to the qualities of a great leader. We would like to honor his incredible journey of something far greater than it may appear to be.

Master Chief Hospital Corpsman Emanuel S. Ratner was born and grew up in Brooklyn, NY. After graduation from Thomas Jefferson High School in 1934, he entered the City College of New York. As the storm clouds of war grew black in the early 1940s, Manny worked a full-time job, went to classes, and was involved with a swim team known as the Night Owls. To round out his busy schedule, Ratner enlisted in the Naval Reserve. He was called to active duty in the summer of '41. Thus began his

There he met Ensign Beatrice (Bea) Bailey, a Navy nurse, and they were married in September of the same year. Bea passed away in 1991 after a long, courageous battle with metastatic breast cancer. In 1993, the Bea Ratner Award (Nurse Corps Junior Officer of the Year) was established in her memory to honor outstanding Navy nurses. The award hangs on the walls of the Bureau of Medicine (BUMED) building in the old Navy Observatory in Washington D.C.

On his discharge in 1948, Manny joined the Reserves, making \$7 a drill, serving in the Detroit area. During this time, Manny became the aquatic director and swim coach for the Detroit Jewish Community Center, where he developed many national caliber swimmers. While continuing to serve in the Navy Reserve, Ratner returned to New York in 1952 to establish his own retail food business. In 1958, Manny organized and acted as personnel administrator for the Hospital Corps Division, Naval Hospital, St. Albans, NY, where he remained until 1964.

He continued to advance through the ranks of the Navy Reserve and in 1960, Ratner became one of the first hospital corpsman to achieve the rank of Senior Chief. Manny was recalled to Active Duty in 1961 at COMTHREE. He became a Master Chief just one year later, in December 1962. In '66 he received permission from the Chief, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, to institute the only training course in the nation for Reserve hospital corpsman. In all, he managed eight courses through 1972, with up to 75 corpsmen enrolled in each class. Ratner received several commendations and gained national recognition for his efforts.

His leadership skills placed Manny as the number one Naval Reserve recruiter in 1974 (1st, 3rd, and 4th Naval District) and a national runner-up for the 1975 Naval Reserve Recruiter of the Year. Since 1968, Manny has been involved with NERA and the Greater New York Chapter. He served as the chapter's president from 1970 through 1976 and contributed to its massive growth to nearly 1,100 members; the largest in the nation. He served as NERA's national membership director from 1974 to 1982. During this time, his efforts produced membership growth from 6,600 members to over



36-year career in the United States Navy. Manny saw action in the invasion of Guam with Lion Six, though his unit was initially trained for the invasion of Italy. He remained on Guam for the duration of the operation. He recalls sending home letters to his mother from various islands in the Asiatic/Pacific corridor. He also saw duty in a variety of stateside hospitals and training centers. His drive and dedication, hallmarks of his character, ushered him through the ranks. In March 1946, Manny, a Chief Pharmacist's Mate, was assigned to the Naval Hospital, Sampson, NY.

Continued on page 27

Naval Enlisted Reserve Association

LIFE BENEFACTORS

A distinguished group of NERA lifetime members whose outstanding dedication and support fortifies the legacy of the Naval Enlisted Reserve Association thus inspiring future generations to absolute greatness.

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In addition to being listed above, benefactor members will have their names engraved on a large plaque with all other benefactors recognizing their continued LIFETIME support of NERA. This plaque will be prominently displayed at the NERA National Headquarters. Benefactor names will be published in every annual National Conference Book on a dedicated Benefactor page. Benefactors will also receive recognition at ALL National Conferences during the opening ceremonies. There are a few ways to join: Go online at www.nera.org, call in credit card info to Jennifer at (800)776-9020, or mail in a check for \$250 to National HQ.



Questioning Veterans' Benefits

by Dan Sickman

It is both remarkable and a travesty that veterans are entitled to many benefits that they do not receive and do not seem to even know about. The purpose of this article is not to determine who is to blame for this. Rather, it is to stimulate the veteran to always question whether he or she is entitled to benefits and then seek out the answer.

Even if you first developed symptoms many years after you were discharged, and if the problem more likely than not came from your service, you are covered. Legally, the only thing you have to prove is that the condition is service-connected. The VA owes you the benefit of the doubt. They are not giving you anything—you earned it with your service to this country.

Do not be your own doctor or lawyer and make this determination yourself. Many times medical problems that result in a disability have no obvious connection to your service. For example, any veteran who served in Vietnam, or the waters around Vietnam, between January 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975, are automatically entitled to benefits for prostate cancer or lung cancer as well as Type 2 diabetes because of Agent Orange. Another example of a less than obvious condition covers children born to Vietnam veterans with Spina Bifida who are automatically granted benefits. They can begin receiving these benefits at any age, even as an adult. Again, unless you checked, you might not assume after being diagnosed with such conditions that they had anything to do with your service. Therefore, it is always best to ask.

Even if you are receiving social security you are entitled to benefits. This is true whether receiving SSI or SSD. Again, turn to a professional for advice.

There are other benefits besides medical benefits to which you are entitled and there are benefits that a family member, because of your service, may be also be entitled. For example, as a veteran, you are entitled to a VA loan. This is a special type of mortgage for veterans only. Today, when the criteria for a loan may make it impossible for a non veteran to obtain financing, you may be able to do so. Additionally, as a veteran, you may be able to finance 100% of your mortgage. Lenders usually require a buyer to put down five to twenty percent of their own money.

As stated, there are other benefits that may be used for family members as well as for the veteran. A very important benefit which usually goes unused is called Aid and Attendance. This benefit pays for the care of the veteran or a family member if either is in a nursing or assisted living facility or is homebound requiring regular care for things such as dressing, bathing, feeding, etc. This provides additional sources of income for the care of the veteran or family member. There are two mistakes that veterans continuously make. One is that after submitting an application, the veteran assumes that the VA must be correct if their claim is denied. The second mistake is, after a claim is allowed, that the percentage of disability assigned by the VA is correct. Many veterans will accept whatever decision the VA makes without complaint. The veteran has one year from the date of the decision to file a Notice of Disagreement, but rarely does. Do not let this happen to you. After you receive any decision, make sure it is the correct decision. If you have any doubt, consult a professional. Many professionals do not require a fee for this advice.

The motto of our organization is “You served, now get what you need and deserve.” It falls on you to take the first step towards helping yourself. The law pertaining to veterans’ benefits is vast and very complicated. You may be amazed to discover that your particular circumstances can result in benefits for you or a family member whether it comes in the form of money, medical care, or loan guarantees. It is up to you to find out.

Dan Sickman served with the Marines from 1967-1969 (Tet Offensive) and with the Naval Reserve from 1974 to 1976. In 1984, he became a volunteer with the Philadelphia Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund and helped to raise over two million dollars to build and dedicate the Memorial. Since then he has coordinated services to veterans in need of medical care, employment and job training, counseling services that includes social/psychological counseling and human services related assistance through the Philadelphia Veterans Multi-Service & Education Center, Inc., in Philadelphia, PA. Contact him at the Pointman Law Group at 877 764 6812 or visit www.pointmanlaw.com.

Background photo: Kuwait Coast Guard base, Provided By: John M. Duran Jr. YN1, USS Constellation Chapter

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Continued from page 24

16,500, and the formation of more than 25 chapters across the country. Manny was bestowed NERA's highest honor in 1972 and became the first recipient of the 1776 Award.

Senior Chief Storekeeper and NERA National Vice President Nick Marine says that Manny's dedication and service demonstrate the very embodiment of great leadership. "Most spend a lifetime learning what it is to be a Chief," Marine said. "Manny Ratner has been a Chief his entire life!"

Manny has gone to bat for NERA by testifying before the Defense Manpower Commission and the Secretary of the Navy's Advisory Committee of Retired Personnel (ACRP) to increase benefits for retired personnel. In 1981, he was the first enlisted Naval Reserve retiree to be appointed to the ACRP, where he served a three-year term.

Chief Yeoman and NERA President Joanne Elliott says that not only does Manny's reputation precede him, the standard he's set is one that every NERA member should strive for. "When I joined NERA over 30 years ago, Manny was already a

legend," she said. "His drive, along with the other founders, has ensured and will continue to ensure that our enlisted personnel will receive the benefits that they deserve. His articles in *The Mariner* over the years keep us educated as to what NERA has done in the last 50 years. He has been the glue that has held us together. Manny was, is, and always will be NERA!"

Manny is that rare individual who is willing to devote time and energy to being an effective leader, and still inspires our members in the present. Manny continues to write articles for *The Mariner* and his column, "Years Ago in NERA," is a much-anticipated regular feature. With the exception of 2008, Manny has attended every NERA National Conference since 1968.

When we think of the significance of a leader and the imprint he leaves, the words trust and fortitude ring true. Perhaps being a leader is not easily learned, but more of an instinctual quality few purely possess. Manny Ratner holds these qualities in their most concentrated form. A thousand miles later: a legacy indeed.

Happy 94th Birthday to your Navy Reserve! Force Master Chief Ronney Wright

Were you aware that the Navy Reserve has been part of our nation's defense since March 3, 1915?

To provide a little history about the Navy Reserve; The Navy's plan was drafted by Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Franklin D Roosevelt. This plan called for three categories of ships, including armed combatants and gunboats, and limited personnel to enlisted men who had left the naval service after no more than eight years. Initially 176 men joined the reserve. In 1917 officers were recruited via direct commissions.

The Navy Reserve, through time and historical events, has gone from a humble beginning of 176 enlisted men to a wartime manpower high during the WWII with 271,000 officers and 2,600,000 Sailors serving during the conflict to now, where we have 67,700 Sailors attached to the Navy Reserve Component.

Who are these great Americans and where do we find them? Today's Navy Reserve is made up of sailors who have served as a member of the active component just like you and have made the decision to attend college, start a business, take care of family issues or just want to experience civilian life but continue to serve in the USN as a member of the reserve component.

We find these outstanding sailors all across America; these Sailors take care of administrative and medical requirement at the Navy Operational Support Center (NOSC) that they are assigned to, but ultimately report to support the global operational requirements of Fleet Commanders and COCOMs.

What Operational Contributions has the Navy Reserve made since 9/11 as part of the Total Force? Leveraging valuable military and civilian skill-sets and capabilities, Navy Reservist currently operate on all corners of the world.

To meet the global requirements, the Navy continues to mobilize thousands of Selected Reservist (SELRES) RC personnel. Missions have extended beyond normal core requirements into new capability missions (Civil Affair units Provincial Reconstruction Teams, Detainee Operations, and Custom Inspection Battalions). Mobilized SELRES Sailors have sustained their largest footprints in Iraq (1,700 personnel), Kuwait (950 personnel), and Afghanistan (350 personnel). Currently, at the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center the Navy's RC has provided over 90% of the 380 requirements during this rotation.

Here is one of many examples of the Navy's RC capabilities; through its lead role in the critical Customs inspection mission, RC Navy currently provides virtually the entire deployed footprint of over 500 RC Sailors on Individual Augmentee assignments that will continue in 2009. Mobilized Customs Inspectors during this mobilization include; 36 police officers, 15 corrections officers, 13 state police/sheriffs, 13 full-time students, 6 engineers, and 3 small business owners. Others include teachers, postal clerks, carpenters, nurses, emergency medical technicians, auto technicians, and fire fighters. These Customs personnel were drawn from 96 NOSC's representing 38 states and territories, including Puerto Rico and Guam.

What do you know about the Shipmates who are currently serving beside you as we fight the GWOT? Are they part of the active or reserve component? Does it matter? Your only concern is that you have a professional, dedicated sailor who can and will accomplish the mission. Ask your Shipmate about their career, you may be impressed with what you learn.

To learn more about how you can remain a "Sailor for Life" visit <http://www.navyreserve.navy.mil/Public/Staff/WelcomeAboard/default.htm>.

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Membership Application Form

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



BRANCH OF SERVICE:

- Navy
- Marine Corps
- Coast Guard
- Other
- Civilian

MEMBERSHIP TYPE:

- Active
- Associate

DUES PAYMENT AMOUNT:

- \$30 - 1 Year
- \$57 - 2 Years
- \$84 - 3 Years
- \$300 - Life
- \$100 - Life (PayPlan)*

**Partial Pay Life to be paid within 6 months*

DUTY STATUS:

- A - Active Duty
- I - Inactive Duty (SELRES, IRR, VTU)
- R - Retired

Payment By: Check (enclosed) VISA MasterCard

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Expiration Date _____/_____/_____

Signature Required:

Name _____

Rate/Rank _____ Date of Birth _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail Address _____

Phone _____

Who is NERA?

Established in 1957, The Naval Enlisted Reserve Association (NERA) is the only military/ veterans organization representing the ENLISTED RESERVE members of the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard. We include retirees, Full-Time Support (FTS), drilling reservists, IRR, VTU, Retired as well as others joining as associate members supporting our enlisted sea service reservists. For more than 50 years, NERA has been responsible for many of the pay and benefits gains reservists enjoy today and take for granted. Why NERA? Today, more than any other time, Reserve Enlisted members are called upon to mobilize to serve our nation. The challenges are many - strain on families, strain on civilian careers and a higher operational tempo that exceeds what was the norm 10 years ago.

Strength in numbers. As a member of the Military Coalition, NERA has been on Capitol Hill, the Pentagon, and other policy making committees, working hard for legislation to protect your benefits,

your family, your health care and your retirement. Join us and ensure your voice is added to the many. Join us to continue the success and the fight to keep your benefits strong. We are your shipmates - your fellow veterans. NERA is about you - the working Sailor, Marine and Coast Guardsman.

Some of NERA's Goals include

TRICare(Prime-Extra-Standard-Prime remote and Plus)

Working with TRICARE to ensure faster processing of claims, adding more physicians, and adding chiropractic care coverage.

SGLI Insurance- Servicemans Group Life Insurance

To provide increased coverage and lower rates.

Cut Here

Cut Here



Fold Here

NERA
6703 Farragut Avenue
Falls Church, VA 22042

Place
Stamp
Here

Fold Here

Exclusively representing the enlisted
(sea going) reservists of the Navy,
Marine Corps and Coast Guard.



Why Join NERA?



If you want to protect the rights and benefits you and other enlisted Sea Service Reservists are working so

hard to earn, you must join NERA. NERA is not only a prominent member of a powerful Coalition of military advocacy groups dedicated to fighting for service members in the Nation's Capitol... NERA is the only association whose guarantee to you is that we will give voice to your special interests as a Sea Service Reservist. You can count on NERA to be there to protect the individual rights, benefits and privileges you have earned with your commitment to military service.

Visit us at: www.nera.org

TAPS

Last Updated: 03/26/2009

MK1 Joseph Battaglia
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BMC Matthew H. Conlon
SK1 Peggy Eastis
MSCM James W. Freeburger
RMCS Dennis L. Ferguson
RADM Edward S. Grandin III
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BTC Stanley M. Kittredge
BU1 James P. Nordone
DTCM Charles Stropoli
BUC Harry Terrill
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Delaware Valley
Washington State MAL
Greater New York
Tall Corn
Edmund Couto
Greater New York
Floyd Bennett
Pagoda Chapter of Reading
Greater New York
John D Wood
Grand River Valley
John D Wood



Many

NERA members are inquiring on how they can support NERA now and in the future? The answer: **Planned Giving.**

What is **Planned Giving**? The most frequent option for Planned Giving is through a direct bequest in your will. A direct bequest can be through a specified monetary amount or percentage of your estate. With either, NERA can provide you

with basic language that you can 1) place into a current will OR 2) make it part of a new one.

Why should you support NERA through planned giving? Not only will you receive a tax benefit for your estate but you are securing that the future needs of NERA will be met for another 60 years.

Please remember that you should always consult your tax, legal and financial professional for a complete explanation of potential benefits.

For additional information or to discuss your options, please contact Laura Martin at NERA Headquarters 703/534-1329. or lk martin@nera.org.



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