

# *THE* **MARINER**

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AZ1 James Laughlin, OSC Dejuan Giochrist, Admiral Danial Cooper US Department of Vererans Affairs, Under Secretary, SKC Donna Childre, SK3 Zachary Standridge, Chris Glennon Previous FORCE MC

# NERA



*SERVING ENLISTED RESERVISTS OF THE SEA SERVICES SINCE 1957*

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# THE MARINER

*“Not For Self But For Country”*

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**WE NOW HAVE NERA COINS FOR SALE.** THE PRICE IS \$10.00 EACH (INCLUDING SHIPPING AND HANDLING). IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN PURCHASING ANY FOR YOURSELF OR YOUR CHAPTER, PLEASE CALL NERA NATIONAL.

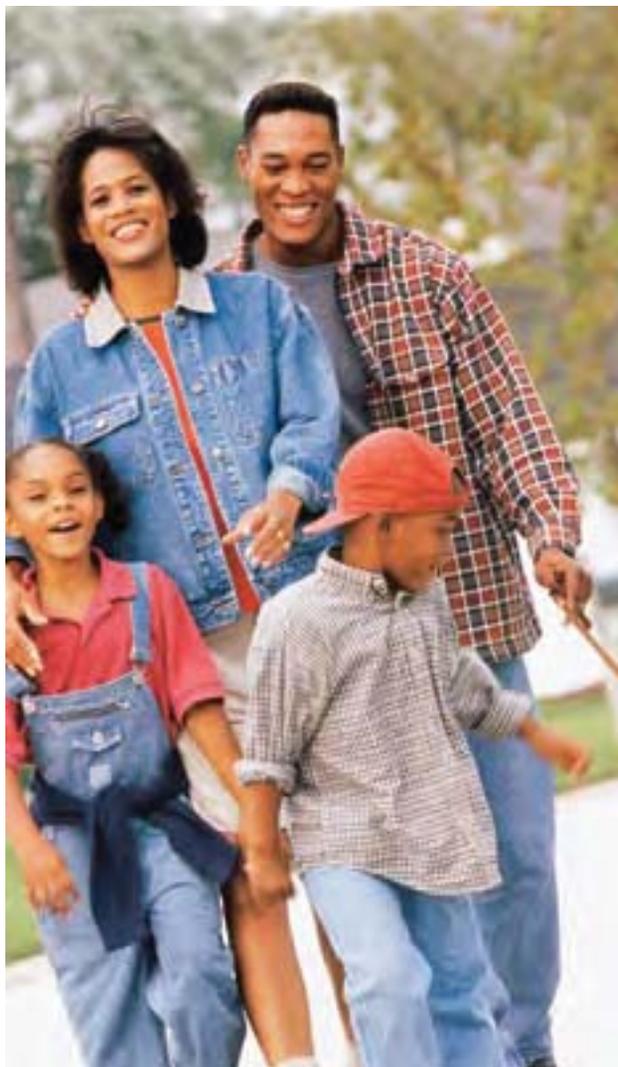
*All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence. Martin Luther King*

*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: NERADEPUTY@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: NERADEPUTY@NERA.ORG

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Message from the President

By National President Joanne Elliott

I hope all of your holidays were wonderful and we at NERA are looking forward to a bright and promising new year. Over the past few months, Steve and Jennifer have been actively working on getting the website up and running. If you have anything you wish to post on the website, please contact Jennifer. She and Vince Diemert will be handling the changes as we move forward.

Steve has been busy attending meetings with the TMC and networking with the MCPON on issues such as the government requiring repayment of portions of a member's bonus if he was unable to complete his enlistment due to injury while on active duty. We have been advised by the MCPON that this is not true.

We now have a team of people who are willing to assist Steve and I in attending the various meetings and functions scheduled for the upcoming year. If you are interested in becoming a part of this team, please call Steve at the office.

For those of you who missed the Atlanta Conference this year, you missed a great time. Nick Marine and his crew made the Conference a seamless event. One of his brilliant moves was to have the Senior Enlisted Panel held at the NOSC in Atlanta. We bused our group over and joined with the sailors and marines drilling that weekend. Force Master Chief Pennington, SGT MAJ Cummings (USMC) and Master Chief Smith (USCG) were phenomenal speakers, who all spoke highly of NERA's mission.

The following people have been appointed to the following positions:

LMIF Committee: Vincent Diemert, Dutch Leonard, Bill Brown  
Conference Director: Hans Keller  
Conference Committee: Jack Quigley  
Awards Committee: Lou Pagano  
Historian: Dick Schriener  
Resolutions Committee Chairman: Dick Schreiner  
C&BL Committee: Ed Whiteside, Jim Premeske, and Dutch Leonard  
Nominations & Credentials Director: Jake Kreibel  
Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman: Bill Severns  
Regional and State Committee Director: Gene McCarthy

Thank you all for your dedication and service to NERA.

Looking forward to the year ahead and to hearing from all of you.

Joanne M. Elliott

*Have we not come to such an impasse in the modern world that we must love our enemies - or else? The chain reaction of evil - hate begetting hate, wars producing more wars - must be broken, or else we shall be plunged into the dark abyss of annihilation. Martin Luther King*

# FROM THE VP



I would like to say that I had a great time at the 50th National Conference.

It was a pleasure sitting down and talking to each and everyone of you. This is the first time in many years I actually witnessed everyone communicating and working together as one NERA team. Everyone discussed important matters and voted on tough topics, but at the end of the day we all danced and had a great time, which is the way it should be. I would also like to personally THANK the following members who worked very hard in making the 50th Annual National Conference a reality:

ETC Bill Bradshaw – SKCS Gene and Maggie McCarthy – MGYSGT Frank Goalen, PSCS Terrence Jefferson – DTCM John and Janice Hood – SK1 Peggy Eastis, PNC William Anderson- SKC William Duda – SKC Donna Childre – Darlene Nickelson , ITC Ron Underwood – AZ1 James Laughlin- SK2 Zachary Standridge, OSC Dejuan Gilchrist – MAC Dale Tice – CMDCM Ken Cook – Jerry Padour Steve Sandy – Jennifer Abbott- Robbie Davis- Chet Burks- Chris Waldman

Now let's switch gears and discuss the new Life Benefactor Program. This program is on our new website and is up and running. We have 13 new members since the conference and the checks keep coming in. (We realized, as does our membership, that after 10 years the Life membership is no longer producing income and actually becomes a financial burden based on paying rebates, mailing Mariners, etc...)

The Life Benefactor program provides an opportunity for previous life members to refresh life memberships with some added recognition. The LIFE Benefactor program (for lifetime members only) assists NERA in improving and expanding its support of Navy, Coast Guard and Marine Corps programs spanning the US. In the past, Life members have donated thousands of dollars and we have never recognized them. A large plaque, to be placed at

National Head Quarters, is now being created to HONOR THEM! For years, NERA has supported various programs for military organizations and provide staffing as well as printed material, but these things cost money. Without the assistance and continued support of our LIFE Benefactors this would be impossible.

## Life Benefactors:

SKCS Nick Marine - AVCM Steveon H. Hall - CWO4 Shirley Barlow, ETCM Louis Pagano - YNC Joanne M. Elliott - SK1 Alvin H. Wright SKCS William J. Severns - CWO2 Wayne R. Wicks -SKCS Norma B. Von Dohren, SK2 Joyce Thompson - SKCS Gene McCarthy -AMCS James Edfors, LNC John McCormick

Please note that we have several advertisers in our Mariner (**USAA- MET LIFE- Bank of America- USBA**) who are paying for ads. They offset the Mariner costs by almost 50%. We need YOUR HELP in supporting them by buying their products and services so they will continue to SUPPORT NERA in the future.

Finally, as your newly elected National Vice President, I will work hard to increase membership by working closely with our National Counselor, Regional directors and Chapter Presidents. More next quarter! Enjoy the holiday season with your family and be safe out there!

*Nick Marine*

*Change does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability, but comes through continuous struggle. And so we must straighten our backs and work for our freedom. A man can't ride you unless your back is bent. Martin Luther King*



# Letters to NERA

## ■ Dear NERA Scholarship Committee:

It is a pleasure to receive an educational scholarship from NERA. Your generous contribution means a lot to me.

This scholarship will aid in my success of achieving a Bachelor's Music Education degree at California State University Northridge (CSUN).

I am thrilled that your organization helps college students accomplish their educational goals.

Thanks so much for your generosity.

*Sincerely,*

ET2 (SW/SCW) Rose Iliev

## ■ Dear Pres. Padour and NERA Scholarship Committee:

Please accept my sincere appreciation for selecting me as a recipient of this year's scholarship. I want you to know what a great relief it is to reduce my student loans. Now I can enjoy being a student and focus on success with less worry.

*With respect and appreciation,*

Laura Peren

# Letters

■ October 12, 2007

**Dear Friends,**

On behalf of the University of Arizona, please accept this letter as an expression of our sincere gratitude for your check in the amount of \$2,500. As requested, the scholarship will be awarded to Laura Perez.

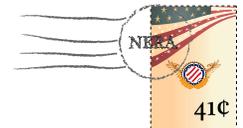
Your support continues to play a vital role in the lives of students at the University of Arizona and your generosity is deeply appreciated. If I can be of assistance in any way, please contact me at (520) 621-1029 or by email at kbacher@al.arizona.edu. Thank you again.

*Sincerely,*

Ken Bacher, Director

Office of Scholarship Development

University of Arizona



*"Government is not reason; it is not eloquence; it is force! Like fire, it is a dangerous servant and a fearful master." George Washington*



## FROM THE *Executive Director*

The other night my wife Mary and I arrived home and as we got out of the car we noticed that our dogs Sadie and Titus were chasing something (mouse, squirrel, opossum, who knows) around the garage. In a moment they cornered the critter and the next scene was somewhat comical. Titus our 4-year old chocolate lab stepped out from behind the corner where he had chased the thing into a six inch flexible hose used to vacuum the yard leaves. We stood there watching in amusement for a moment, as he thrashed about with five feet of hose stuck on his head bouncing from side to side looking somewhat like an elephant. We soon realized he couldn't get his head out of the hose, his breathing began to labor and he was in serious trouble. I approached Titus, took hold of the hose and calmed him. I then reached to my side for the tool that I'd used many times over the years as a firefighter, to free an entrapped victim from his seatbelt or cut a small child's knotted laces from their shoes, the simplest of tools, my knife! Instead what I found was one of the most modern tools made by man, a technical marvel, an ingenious invention,---- my cell phone, totally worthless for the job at hand. Mary quickly joined me and took over calming our dog while I searched the garage for a pair of snips and in a few minutes Titus was free to pursue a new adventure. Later I thought of this incident as I read the Navy Times and wondered -- was this a metaphor for our military: Computer systems that are not reliable; Aircraft grounded for breaking in half; Billions of dollars paid to contractors, who spend millions on advertising to convince us that we should rest easy knowing that they are designing our military of the future. I then turned the page and found a note of frugality, "there are limits to how much should be spent on military pay and benefits." Cutting edge technology in abundance while reducing the numbers for an invaluable basic tool. As we've come to realize, People are our most basic and important resource and we cannot win a war without boots on the ground. Will there come a time when we reach to our side for this finely honed tool and find only a worthless electronic gadget,----- just a thought. Remember visit our web site for legislative updates.

## Happy Holidays

*Steve Sandy*

*"Unlike any other nation, here the people rule, and their will is the supreme law. It is sometimes sneeringly said by those who do not like free government, that here we count heads. True, heads are counted, but brains also . . ." William McKinley*



# TIPS & CLIPS



By Joanne Elliott  
NERA President

We receive emails daily about opportunities for ADSW and recalls. If you are interested in applying, please contact us and I will forward the contact information to you.

There is a new bill that the President is scheduled to sign which will offer forgiveness of Federal Direct Loans to a broad category of public servants, including military service members, federal workers, first responders, law enforcement officers, firefighters, etc. For each year of service \$1,000 of a borrower's loans would be forgiven up to a total of \$5,000. The bill also forgives public servants for outstanding loan amounts after 10 years of payments while in public service. Loans that would qualify for forgiveness include the Federal Direct Stafford Loan, the Federal direct PLUS Loan, the Federal direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan and the Federal Direct Consolidation Loan. The Bill would also increase the maximum Pell Grant to \$5,400 over the next 5 years (up from \$4,050), cut interest rates in half on need-based student loans and would guarantee that borrowers would not have to pay more than 15% of their discretionary income in loan repayments. To see more, go to: <http://edlabor.house.gov/micro/ccraa.shtml>.

TRICARE Beneficiaries are Saving Time and Money by Making the Switch to Mail Order Pharmacy

FALLS CHURCH, Va. - Nearly 20,000 TRICARE beneficiaries are saving money on their prescriptions after making the switch to mail order through the new Member Choice Center.

To view the full release, please visit: <http://www.tricare.mil/pressroom/news.aspx?fid=348>

Telephone Counseling Hotline Begins

Active-duty service members, mobilized reservists, and family members now can get free non-medical professional consultations from Military OneSource over the phone, said Mike Hoskins, DoD official for military community and family policy. An individual who calls might receive a consultation as early as

the day of the call, but at least within three days. The caller can then obtain up to six consultations for each issue. Consultants have at least a master's degree in social work, psychology or a similar field. Sessions are confidential and anonymous, unless a counselor believes the caller might harm himself or others. Call Military OneSource toll-free any time at (800) 342-9647. If overseas, call toll-free at (800) 3429-6477, or overseas collect at (484) 530-5908.

**SOCIAL SECURITY: SPECIAL EXTRA EARNINGS FOR MILITARY SERVICE.** Under certain circumstances you may receive additional social security for periods of active duty service from 1940 through 2001. For service from 1978 through 2001 you can receive \$100 for every \$300 in active duty basic pay for a maximum of \$1,200 a year. If you enlisted after September 7, 1980 and didn't complete at least 24 months of active duty or your full tour, you may not be able to receive the additional earnings. For service from 1957 through 1977 you are credited with \$300 in additional earnings for each calendar quarter in which you received active duty basic pay. For service from 1940 through 1956, you did not pay into social security however your social security record may be credited with \$160 a month in earnings for military service from 9/16/40 through 12/31/56. For more information, take your DD-214 to your nearest Social Security Office.

President Bush is seeking Lifetime TRICARE for medically "unfit" Vets. The Dole-Shalala commission report, which was released in July, only advocated the benefit for those who were separated for combat-related disabilities. The White House has asked Congress to extend lifetime TRICARE coverage to all medically discharged veterans. However, because most members are separated with less than 30% the commission (according to Bob Dole), they recommended lifetime TRICARE coverage for any member found unfit for continued service as a result of injuries "acquired in combat [while] supporting combat or preparing for combat." Shalala believes that the White House is going to go even further and "recommend that everyone who is declared unfit for service for health reasons - that they will cover the individual and their family's healthcare forever." We will wait and see what the New Year brings with this report.



# YEARS AGO IN NERA

By *Manny Ratner*



**40 YEARS AGO:** Naval Reserve Policy Board Report -- five out of seven submitted to the Secretary of the Navy by NERA were approved and three out of five to the CNO were also reported favorably. Among the five approved were: assignment of additional conventional type submarines for NAVRES training as they are replaced by nuclear types or as soon as committees would allow; steps to replace naval air Reserve Training Command inventory with more modern aircraft; SecNav recommendation that the SGLI program include reservists on inactive duty training, ACDUTRA, and TAD of less than 31 days on a portal to portal basis. Approved by the CNO was a study to determine the number, type, birthing, and estimated cost of NAVRES Training ships and craft on inland waters, rivers, and lakes as such ships and crafts become available. The Gateway chapter was formed in the St. Louis area with 19 new members in November and 10 more in December and they elected officers and welcomed the Chapter charter. Also in another Mid-West area, Grosse Ile Naval Air Reserve Training (near Detroit) the lead recruiter ADRC Edward L. MARZEC in his letter to NERA Headquarters sent in applications and dues for 51 new members

and in a following letter he sent in 57 more applications and dues-so now they had 108 members to choose a name for their charter and chapter. Dues were only \$5.00. The Harrisburg Chapter had chosen Susquehanna Valley as the name for their new NERA group. The excellent NERAGRAM (bi-monthly newsletter at that time) was instrumental in Chief MARZEC signing up all those members, who were elated at the great information that NERA was putting out. New chapters were also formed in Cedar Rapids, Iowa with 38 members; Toledo, Ohio (Glass City Chapter) came on line with 38 members, and in Omaha, their group started with 27 members. The NERA publication carried many items of interest to Naval Reservists in regard to advancements, ten year members, Chapter officers, etc.

**30 YEARS AGO:** The Naval Air Reserve recruiters at NARDET, Los Alamedas, and CA may have scored the biggest single NERA attainment of the decade when they “enlisted” comedian TV star DON RICKLES as an honoree CPO in the Naval Reserve. The program was presented before a live audience on the “CPO SHARKEY” set just prior to the filming of the TV show and film star, Naval Reservist CAPT JACKIE COOPER swore RICKLES in as an Honorary Chief and presented him with a Bronze CPO hat. RICKLES was uninformed of the coming presentation and when his good friend CAPT. COOPER appeared in uniform, he was really surprised. Over 200 Navy men and women in uniform from all over the Southern California representing REDCOM Region 19 Naval Air Reservists from units at PT MUGU, North Island, Miramar, and Los Alamedas, as well as a contingent of 50 patients from the regional medical center at Long Beach were on hand for the festivities. At the 1977 National Conference, the following were elected: President – Lindell CLYMER; Vice-President – Ray VAUGHAN; Secretary – Dave BROCK; Treasurer –Herald YULE; and Counselor – Matt GUTMAN. The Floyd Bennett Chapter, the Greater New York Chapter, and the Nassau-Suffolk group all came in with specially designed chapter banners which were proudly displayed throughout the Conference. Bob ROLFSEN, Editor of the NERAGRAM, wrote a great conference report and here are some excerpts: “What a feeling of tremendous personal satisfaction at having experienced my first NERA National Conference—highlights are too numerous to mention but listening to RADM Paul W. ROHRER, Deputy Director of the Naval Reserve and the standing ovation given to him; meeting EN1 (now ENC) William VIGIL, the Outstanding Naval Reservist, the remarks by RADM Edward S. BRIGGS, and the presentation of the Outstanding Chapter Award to the Nassau-Suffolk Chapter, the Thursday afternoon seminars and the business meetings that showed the need to strengthen our membership and give us a greater voice in regard to needed improvement to establish realistic manning requirements and the need to provide modern equipment for training, not the obsolete units at most NAVRES sites. Listening to RADM Paul W. ROHRER, Deputy Director of the Naval Reserve as he stated what problems we have and that it will take real direction and funding to improve. There was no doubt that this was one great presentation.

**20 YEARS AGO:** ENC Joseph W. WASSON, JR., Co-Founder of NERA was called to be on the Staff of the Supreme Commander on November 3, 1987. Joe was still involved and working for NERA just prior to entering the hospital on October 30, 1987. Upon learning of Joe’s death, past National president, Jim DUFFY summed it up for all of us when he said: “If I could, today I would say to Joe – ‘we are all richer for having known you. Your Navy, and it was his Navy, is certainly stronger and more prepared because of you. And most of all, we all miss you Chief!’” The Navy Senior Enlisted Academy was located at the Naval Education and Training Center, Newport, RI established to assist the Navy in its efforts to provide better leadership and enlightened management within the senior enlisted ranks. The SEA’s nine week curriculum helps senior and master chief petty officers to deal more effectively with the problems facing today’s Navy. A full page article discussed applying to the Academy and also covered all the subjects that it taught. This was a very fine article written by a TAR, YN2 Walt ROUXEL. We also had a full page informative article entitled “I AM A SAILOR” written by Force Master Chief Larry L. SORENSON, USNR, and delivered at the Conference. His article concluded with “As the Force Master Chief I thank you, NERA, for your strong support and your valued yearly invitation to me to address you at your annual conference and I hope to see many of you at drill weekends.” At the 20th Annual NERA Conference in Allentown, PA, the following officers were elected: President – BMCM Ed COUTO; Vice President MMC Larry DiPASQUALE; Treasurer – RM1 Pam POWERS; Secretary – SKCS Joan GARDOM; and SMCS Glen KOLHOFF as Executive Counselor. GARDOM also took on the task of preparing the 1988 Conference Booklet. Another interesting full page article was written by Master Chief Larry D. RHEA, who was the Senior Enlisted Advisor for the 1.1 million enlisted men and women of the Seven Guard and Reserve Components of the Military Services. His is the highest ranking reserve enlisted position in the Department of Defense and he fully explained using topics such as “Where Am I? Where Am I Going? And How Do I Get There?” He also covered what was needed in order to advance in the military reserves. RADM D. O. SMART, USNR took command of approximately 18,000 Seabees during a formal change of command at Naval Air Station, Atlanta. This was another of the outstanding articles, photos, and information in the 1987 November-December issue of the Mariner.

*There are risks and costs to a program of action. But they are far less than the long-range risks and costs of comfortable inaction. John F. Kennedy*

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# Marine Marquee

**40 years later, missing Marine to be buried**  
**By Ryan J. Foley - The Associated Press**  
**Posted : Monday Nov 19, 2007 11:41:10 EST**

**MADISON, Wis.** — A Marine who disappeared during the Vietnam War will be buried next week after his remains were recently identified with DNA testing.

Lance Cpl. Richard W. Fischer, 20, was declared missing in action in January 1968 while conducting military operations in Vietnam's Quang Nam Province. His remains were recovered in 1994 but they weren't positively identified until earlier this year, the Marine Corps said Thursday. The remains are expected to arrive Friday at the Milwaukee airport from Hawaii, where a military laboratory works to identify missing soldiers and Marines. They will be driven to Madison, where Fischer's family has scheduled a memorial service for Monday. Fischer is expected to be buried later Monday with full military honors. Glen Reichelderfer, a pastor at Christ Presbyterian Church who is helping plan the service, called the identification "really quite an amazing thing."

"It's the diligence of the military that has allowed this to happen," he said. "They did an incredible job in finding his remains. It was sort of 'CSI.' It's a very interesting story." Reichelderfer would not elaborate. Marine spokesman Capt. Brian Ahrens said the remains were identified using DNA testing but he had no other details. The military has increasingly used DNA samples from maternal relatives to identify remains in recent years, said Ann Mills-Griffiths, executive director of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia. The Hawaii laboratory identifies about 100 missing U.S. personnel from various wars every year, she said. She said Fischer's family had long been members of her group "It's the uncertainty that motivates people and getting an end to that uncertainty is very important for each of these families," she said. "I know what this means to the family so it's good news, even though it can be very emotional like it just happened." Some 1,767 soldiers, Marines and civilians remain missing in Southeast Asia from the Vietnam War era, according to statistics from the Defense Department. The remains of 817 Americans have been returned since the end of the war in 1975, Mills-Griffiths said. Fischer enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1966 after one year of college at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, according to his obituary. "Dick" Fischer had worked as a lifeguard at Madison's beaches and enjoyed sailing on the city's lakes. He went to Vietnam in October 1967 and was declared missing in action as a result of hostile fire just months later. While he was missing, Fischer was promoted to the rank of gunnery sergeant. He was classified as presumed "killed in action" in 1978.

Fischer's father had died in 1958. His mother died in 2002, never learning for sure whether her son was killed. He is survived by his sister, Ann Fischer, who did not respond to an interview request made through Reichelderfer. Reichelderfer acknowledged next week's memorial service would be "very unusual."

"But our faith is one that says there is hope and there is life after death," he said. "And for the family, there is a time for mourning and a time for celebrating a life. That's true of every memorial service. This one will be a little bit different, though, as you can well understand."

Marine Corps News

Toys for Tots program expands giving boundaries By Lance Cpl. David Rogers, MCB Camp Butler

**CAMP FOSTER, OKINAWA, Japan** — Staff Sgt. Suzette Smith puts her office phone number on a sign meant to attract volunteers and donations on a newly constructed toy drop box made by volunteers for Okinawa's 2007 U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program collection drive Oct. 26 on Camp Foster. This year, the program's officials added Thailand and Guam to their area of responsibility. Smith is the program's coordinator.

*"Nothing brings out the lower traits of human nature like office seeking." Rutherford Birchard Hayes*



**CAMP FOSTER, OKINAWA**, Japan (Nov. 2, 2007) -- Coordinators and volunteers with the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program on Okinawa will be working overtime during the holiday season to extend the reach of the 60-year-old charity in the region.

Reserve Marines, activated specifically for Toys for Tots support, are scheduled to begin their 2007 toy collection drive during ceremonies at post exchanges on Camp Foster and Kadena Air Base Nov. 3.

This year, program officials added Thailand and Guam to their area of responsibility, according to Staff Sgt. Suzette Smith, a coordinator with Okinawa's Toys for Tots. The volunteers and reserve Marines collected toys for needy children in Okinawa Prefecture and the Philippines in previous years.

Smith hopes Marines will be able to personally deliver donations to Thailand and Guam as done in Operation Goodwill, which delivers toys and clothes to children of the Philippines during the holiday season.

"The primary goal of Toys for Tots is to deliver, through a shiny new toy at Christmas, a message of hope to needy youngsters that will motivate them to grow into responsible, productive, patriotic citizens and community leaders," according to the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation Web site.

Last year the organization collected approximately 10,500 toys, according to Sgt. Shamala Henson, a coordinator for Okinawa's Toys for Tots. She hopes the collection drive can collect at least 11,000, especially since they want to provide for children in two more countries this year.

"I want to break last year's goals and make sure every child gets four toys like last year," said Henson.

Program coordinators also want to raise awareness of the Ho Ho Express, a campaign-closing event intended to collect as many donations as possible during the final moments of the toy drive. The Ho Ho Express is scheduled for Dec. 15, the last day of the drive. A bus will visit each collection box on island and program personnel will collect all remaining toys. The event doubled the amount of collected toys in 2005 with help from American Forces Network radio broadcasters, who constantly aired updates on the bus' location and upcoming stops.

The program needs toys for all ages of children. Toys for pre-teens and young teenagers are typically in short supply.

"People should remember that there are kids that are 13 and that's usually the age group we lack the most," Smith said.

Coordinators running Okinawa's program have a lot of events for this year's drive and need plenty of volunteers to help them. Volunteers can help with tasks such as sorting toys or promoting donations by making an appearance in public with their dress blues.

Maj. Bill Hendricks and a group of fellow reserve Marines in Los Angeles collected and distributed 5,000 toys to needy children during the first Toys for Tots program 60 years ago. Officials plan to continue the mission as long as there are needy children around the world.

*"The man who can look upon a crisis without being willing to offer himself upon the altar of his country is not for public trust." Millard Fillmore*

# HOW IT ALL STARTED!!

The following article about the formation of NERA was written in May-June 1967 issue of the "NERAGRAM."

Over 10 years ago, in December, 1956, two Naval Reserve Chief Enginemen from N & MCRTC, Washington, DC were on Acdutra together aboard USS Orion (AS-18) in Norfolk. These two ENC's were your present and past National Executive Directors and NERAGRAM Editors, Joe Wasson and Tom Patten. It was then that NERA was conceived. In the next three months our 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 the 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 16 members and were in debt to Wasson, Patten and the Acme Printing Company. That first NERA meeting was held at the Moose Hall on 20th Street, N. W. in DC. Wasson, Patten, and a Wave YN2 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 NW, DC with free beer to be provided. That was the night we got a quorum - and went deeper in debt - but we did elect officers and we did drink all the beer. The 3 May, 1957 meeting was held in the Director's Room of the Citizens Building & Loan Association in Silver Spring, MD, on a Sunday afternoon with a quorum present despite report of wives moanin' and groanin' 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 (and still is), 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 of '57 the first edition of The NERAN, predecessor of your NERAGRAM was published - on the strength of Patten's blarney and the cuff of a trusting printer. In the ensuing years a lot of people have put a lot of time, thought, talent, and money into the Naval Enlisted Reserve Association. They know that we know who they are and that their efforts continue to be appreciated. I had been NERA National Treasurer for 7 years when I inherited the position National Executive Director and responsibility from Tom Patten 3 years ago this month. There were times, during those past ten years, when I was on the brink of buckling under but there has always been the enduring faith of enlisted Naval Reservist to give me the perseverance, the encouragement, and, yes the moral obligation to carry on.

*By Joe Wasson*

*"Some people call me an idealist. Well, that is the way I know am an American. America is the only idealistic nation in the world." Thomas Woodrow Wilson*



# 50th National

## Awards



HM1 Dula receives the Service to Reservist Award presented by LT COL Kyle Nickel



Steve Sandy, HM1 Dula, Penny Padour



LT COL Nickel, Mr. Dula, HM1 Dula, MSGT Ken Howe



Penny Padour , Admiral Daniel Copper

## Swearing In



Chuck Sherrick, Joanne Elliott, Nick Marine, Mike Hayes, Vincent Diemert, Gene McCarthy, and Penny Padour

## Presidents



Penny Padour , Steve Sandy, Joanne Elliott

# Conference Photos





# Faces of NEIRA





# Faces of NERA



## Navy reservist, Air Force civilian deploys to Africa

by Mike Molina  
Air Reserve Personnel Center Public Affairs

10/26/2007 - **DENVER** -- After serving 14 months in the dangerous Iraqi Anbar province, Chief Petty Officer Robert Orton said his visit to Madagascar was about as good as a deployment can get.

"This was about partnership and friendship," Chief Orton said. "It was the kind of tour you write home about."

The Navy reservist and personnel manager in the Air Reserve Personnel Center's Directorate of Assignments deployed to Diego Suarez, Madagascar for three weeks in September as a part of the Navy's mission and contributions to the newly created U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM).

Chief Orton served on a three-person advance team and shore element for the USS Normandy, a Navy guided missile cruiser that was preparing to visit Madagascar on a humanitarian and diplomatic mission.

"There were lots of moving parts, different languages and different government agencies," Chief Orton said. "A U.S. Navy ship hadn't visited Madagascar in more than 20 years."

The team assessed the Malagasy ports' ability to accommodate a Navy war ship and ordered goods and supplies for the ship's arrival.

"I got a ticket and an authorization to spend money," he said. "My team assessed all available port services and potential hazards relating to our warship's visit. We also acted as purchasing agents for fresh fruits, vegetables and canned goods for the ship, as well as arranging water taxi service and land transportation for the ship's crew. The ship's captain gave us a big shopping list and we made sure it was ordered and delivered."

Along with preparing for the ship's arrival, Chief Orton's team helped serve meals and refurbished a public park during the deployment.

The team put a fresh coat of paint on the gazebo in the city's music park and put lights up so it could be used at night.

"This was a great opportunity to help people and establish a strong relationship with another nation," Chief Orton said.

In 2005 and 2006, Chief Orton deployed to Al Qaim, Iraq. During his tour in western Iraq, he led a team of logistics and equipment specialists serving more than 1,200 Navy construction battalion Sailors.

In August 2006, Chief Orton shared his experiences in Iraq as the guest speaker at ARPC's Warrior Day.



Navy Chief Petty Officer Robert Orton stands aboard a Malagasy naval tug boat as the USS Normandy, a U.S. Navy guided missile cruiser, anchors in off shore. Chief Orton, a Navy reservist and personnel manager at the Air Reserve Personnel Center, recently deployed to Madagascar as part of the Navy's Maritime Partnership Program. (Courtesy photo)

*"Some people call me an idealist. Well, that is the way I know am an American. America is the only idealistic nation in the world." Thomas Woodrow Wilson*

# COASTIE CORNER



## USCGC MACKINAW TO LOAD 1,000 CHRISTMAS TREES ON DECK

CHEBOYGAN, Mich. - As part of the annual Christmas Tree Ship, the USCGC Mackinaw will be loaded with more than 1,000 Christmas Trees, here, on Monday at 11:00 a.m., at Millard D. Olds Memorial Moorings.

The trees will be loaded by the Mackinaw crew, crewmembers families, and the Ogemaw Heights High School Navy JROTC Cadets.

Two hundred trees will be presented to the local Salvation Army in Cheboygan. The Salvation Army, along with the local police and fire departments, will accept them for distribution to deserving resident families.

The trees were purchased from Cheboygan-area tree growers by Chicago's Christmas Tree Ship committee. This annual event is a culmination of efforts by the Chicago Christmas Tree Ship Committee, working together with the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, the Sea Partners Program, Chicago Navy Pier, and the generous boaters of the marine community to help make Christmas special for deserving Chicago families.

Upon arrival to Navy Pier the trees will be distributed through Ada S. McKinley Community Services to deserving families.

The sailing vessel Rouse Simmons was the original Christmas Tree Ship in the early 1900's. Her annual arrival on the Chicago waterfront with freshly cut trees from the Michigan Upper Peninsula was a highlight and, to many Chicago-area residents, a sign of the arrival of the Christmas season. The USCGC Mackinaw (WAGB 83) began the re-enactment event in 2000 and her legacy is being carried on by USCGC Mackinaw (WLBB 30) for the second year.

During the transit to Chicago, the 1,000 Christmas trees will share the deck space of Mackinaw with navigational buoys, some weighing as much as 12,000 lbs. Mackinaw will continue to conduct seasonal Aids to Navigation operations in Southern Lake Michigan along the approaches to Gary, IN and Calumet Harbor, IL.

The media is invited to attend the loading of the trees. For further information please contact Ensign Erin Chlum at (231) 597-2030.

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## COAST GUARD, GOOD SAMARITAN RESCUE

Petty Officer Sara Francis

ANCHORAGE, Alaska -- The Coast Guard and the fishing vessel Heritage rescued the master of the fishing vessel Pacific Lady shortly after 1 a.m. this morning 70 miles southwest of Kodiak Island in Shelikof Strait.

The Coast Guard received an Electronic Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) signal registered to the 42-foot Pacific Lady out of Kodiak at about 9:30 p.m. Personnel from the Coast Guard Command Center in Juneau contacted the wife of the master, Alan Ryden, and discovered he was piloting the vessel from Sand Point to Kodiak and was the only person on board.

The Coast Guard launched a C-130 and an HH-60 Jayhawk helicopter from Kodiak. The Coast Guard Cutter Hickory was diverted from an Aids to Navigation mission about 35 miles away from the scene.

The C-130 arrived on scene first. "We arrived on scene and it was so dark we couldn't see anything," said Lt. Steve McKechnie, aircraft commander of the C-130. "We located the flashing strobe and lit off a flare. We could still see the strobe on his gummy suit so we dropped a life raft. The weather was 45-knot winds gusting to 60, 16-foot seas and freezing spray."

The fishing vessel Heritage responded to the UMIB. "They were 11 miles away when we dropped the life raft so we worked with the Heritage to get them on scene. We had to depart due to fuel and the HH-60 took our place," said McKechnie.

The HH-60 began a search for Ryden and during that time the Heritage located two empty life rafts from the Pacific Lady and then located Ryden in the third life raft, the one dropped by the C-130.

"The Heritage did awesome," said McKechnie. "After they took the guy on board they spoke with the swimmer on the 60 and determined he was in good condition."

The Heritage is currently en route to Kodiak with an estimated arrival time of 1 a.m. Sunday. In the dark conditions the Pacific Lady was not sighted. The Coast Guard Marine Safety Detachment in Kodiak will investigate the incident.

*"My God, this is a hell of a job! I have no trouble with my enemies . . . but my damn friends, they're the ones that keep me walking the floor nights." Warren Harding*



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# RECRUITING – WHAT WORKS FOR ME

ACCM Delores J. V. Rucker, NERA National Counselor

Everyone can recruit. The first step is to ask if a person has heard about NERA and then explain how NERA has helped and is helping make life better for reservists in the Marines, Coast Guard and Navy. If the individual is military, I explain that by joining NERA they are taking a stand to support their benefits. Individuals that want to take a stand and show support for their own benefits are the first to join.

Most of my gain in NERA membership is a result of my Informational Visits to Navy Operational Support Centers (NOSC). The following is a guide that I made for myself.

## **MAKE CONTACT WITH THE COMMAND CHIEF**

A month before a visit to a NOSC, I call the Command Chief and ask for the opportunity to visit, introduce myself to the troops at Saturday morning muster and set up a table with NERA information material. I request that the Command Chief confirm my visit with the Commanding Officer. If there is General Military Training being held, I ask if I may have 5-10 minutes to explain some of the benefits of NERA and answer questions. I also offer my services to teach classes for units in Leadership, Communication Skills and Professional Development.

## **INTRODUCTION AT QUARTERS AND TABLE SETUP**

I plan to arrive 30 to 45 minutes before morning muster. I check in with the Command Chief and Commanding Officer. I get my NERA Information Table setup in a visible hallway and meet some of the reservists as they arrive. I go to muster with them and when I am introduced by the Commanding Officer, I give the reservists a brief summary of NERA and a pep talk about having a Great Navy Day!

## **FREE DRAWING**

I have found that if you have an extra interest item, like a free drawing, more reservists will visit the table. While the reservists sign up for the free drawing, I take the opportunity to give them a brief overview of what NERA has done for me and can do for them.

My free drawings are for patriotic items, such as flags, flag ties, car magnets, etc. Several times, I have offered a special item for new members only. The information necessary for the drawing is their contact information. I periodically use their contact information to send them two NERA applications, one for themselves and one for a friend. Drawings are held between 1400 – 1500 hours on the day I leave. Any items from the drawings not picked up before I leave are turned over to the staff for presentation.

## **APPLICATIONS AND NEW MEMBERS**

I plan to visit for the entire weekend because reservists don't usually bring their checkbooks to drill. Most of the reservists that I share NERA information will bring their membership payments to me on Sunday. For the reservists that live out of town, I have them fill out an application, which I keep, and I call or send emails to remind them to send me their check for their NERA membership. I also provide a self-addressed envelope to mail their checks to me.

## **CHALLENGE TO NERA MEMBERS – EARN A NERA COIN**

For all NERA members who recruit at least five (5) new members by 1 May 08, I will send you a NERA COIN. The NERA COIN costs \$10 and can be ordered from NERA National, but why pay for one when you can get one for free. South Carolina also has State Coins. For those of you that recruit ten (10) new members, I will send you both a NERA Coin and a South Carolina State Coin. I will check with NERA National periodically to check your progress.

*“My God, this is a hell of a job! I have no trouble with my enemies . . . but my damn friends, they're the ones that keep me walking the floor nights.” Warren Harding*



## The uninvited guest: Chinese sub pops up in middle of U.S. Navy exercise, leaving military chiefs red-faced

By MATTHEW HICKLEY

When the U.S. Navy deploys a battle fleet on exercises, it takes the security of its aircraft carriers very seriously indeed. At least a dozen warships provide a physical guard while the technical wizardry of the world's only military superpower offers an invisible shield to detect and deter any intruders. American military chiefs have been left dumbstruck by an undetected Chinese submarine popping up at the heart of a recent Pacific exercise and close to the vast U.S.S. Kitty Hawk - a 1,000ft supercarrier with 4,500 personnel on board. By the time it surfaced the 160ft Song Class diesel-electric attack submarine is understood to have sailed within viable range for launching torpedoes or missiles at the carrier. According to senior NATO officials the incident caused consternation in the U.S. Navy. The Americans had no idea China's fast-growing submarine fleet had reached such a level of sophistication, or that it posed such a threat.

One NATO figure said the effect was "as big a shock as the Russians launching Sputnik" - a reference to the Soviet Union's first orbiting satellite in 1957 which marked the start of the space age. The incident, which took place in the ocean between southern Japan and Taiwan, is a major embarrassment for the Pentagon. The lone Chinese vessel slipped past at least a dozen other American warships which were supposed to protect the carrier from hostile aircraft or submarines.

And the rest of the costly defensive screen, which usually includes at least two U.S. submarines, was also apparently unable to detect it. According to the NATO source, the encounter has forced a serious re-think of American and NATO naval strategy as commanders reconsider the level of threat from potentially hostile Chinese submarines. It also led to tense diplomatic exchanges, with shaken American diplomats demanding to know why the submarine was "shadowing" the U.S. fleet while Beijing pleaded ignorance and dismissed the affair as coincidence.

Analysts believe Beijing was sending a message to America and the West demonstrating its rapidly-growing military capability to threaten foreign powers which try to interfere in its "backyard". The People's Liberation Army Navy's submarine fleet includes at least two nuclear-missile launching vessels. Its 13 Song Class submarines are extremely quiet and difficult to detect when running on electric motors. Commodore Stephen Saunders, editor of Jane's Fighting Ships, and a former Royal Navy anti-submarine specialist, said the U.S. had paid relatively little attention to this form of warfare since the end of the Cold War. He said: "It was certainly a wake-up call for the Americans.

*"Always give your best, never get discouraged, never be petty; always remember, others may hate you. Those who hate you don't win unless you hate them. And then you destroy yourself." Richard Millhouse Nixon*



NERA MEMBER OF THE QUARTER: ENS JON D. BURROW



MEMBER OF THE QUARTER



In 1987 ENS Burrow enlisted in the United States Navy and then transferred three years later into the Naval Reserve as a Gunner's Mate Third Class Petty Officer. He spent over ten years with operational units including Assault Craft unit-One DET 1813 at Naval Station Great Lakes, where he rose from P03 to Chief Petty Officer. He then spent six years with the Naval Special Warfare community assigned to various SEAL Teams, Special Boats Teams and Logistic Support Units. He was deployed to the U.S. Southern Command Area of Operations as the Naval Special Warfare Liaison Officer at the U.S. Embassy, Bogota, Columbia from April 2004 to July 2005. He then returned to Commander Navy Region Midwest Regional Operations Center as the N3/ATFP Officer.

He joined NERA in 1998 and is the Illinois State Director for NERA. Until his recall in 2004, he was often seen at our National Conferences. As a civilian, Jon is employed as a Military Market Specialist with ITW Military Products in Des Plaines, Illinois.

Currently, ENS Burrow has been recalled for 540 days to Central IRAQ. His current mission is on the Advisory Support Team for Multi-National Forces – Iraqi National Police Force. He is assigned as the M240B gunner, located on top of the HMMWV (High Mobility Multi-Purpose Wheeled Vehicles). The picture on the top right of this page is of his convoy getting ready to roll out. The balaclavas (ski masks) have SKULL designs for the gunners. It is used as an intimidation factor. His team will be there to assist the Iraqi Minister of Interior develop their own organizational structure, strategies, logistics, training, and mission planning so they can sustain their own security.

Jon is looking forward to being a part of something that is bigger than all of us and is looking forward to do his part in providing a better life for human beings in another part of the world, while also ensuring our own continued safety and Freedom.

**CONTRIBUTORS TO THE BUILDING FUND/MAINTENANCE FUND - TOTAL AMOUNT -- \$1,311.50**

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Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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# Holiday Greetings!

**From the DED (Deputy Executive Director) /VA Director,  
SKCS Bill Severns, USN (Ret)."**



Congratulations to the Atlanta National Conference planning committee on a well organized, fun and business-filled Convention! BZ to all involved who never take the credit so well deserved!

As your appointed Deputy Executive Director and Veterans Affairs Director (Reporter), I'd like to welcome all to this first edition covering news & views, from many reliable sources, that are in the headlines concerning the myriad developments within the Veterans communities.

First a few facts about the Administration of Veterans Affairs-- often maligned, but one must realize the magnitude of responsibility which saddles its very existence before being critical of any merits or detractions: whereas, the VA home loan guarantee (often with "0" money down-payment) provided many returning WWII and Vietnam veterans the opportunity to purchase their first homes, many also utilized the available GI educational assistance programs to garner college degrees... I, am a product of these two mentioned benefit packages; although, working evenings as a bartender also helped finance extra expenses.

As meaningful and righteous as these two programs played out, more often than not, the VA traveled a less successful road in the maintenance of a viable Health Care system for many less fortunate veterans returning home with many a physical and/or mental incapacitation. The Good and Bad of the VA was exposed and the military veteran felt betrayed as ridicule of the health concerns for he/she became popular and ugly.

Before we discuss current VA concerns with the Veteran population, think of these statistics most of which are accurate as of 30SEP07:

1. Projected U.S. Veteran population: 23,532,000, of which, 7% (or 1,745,000) are female.
2. Number of LIVING WWII veterans : 2,795,000, with 1000 passing away each day.
3. Percentage of Veteran population over age 65: 39%
4. Number of Veterans receiving VA disability compensation: 2.8 million.
5. Number of Veterans rated 100% disabled: 249,904.
6. Number of Veterans receiving VA pension: 323,012
7. Number of Enrollees in VA Health Care system (FY-06): 7.9 million.
8. Number of Educational beneficiaries (FY-07): 523,344
9. Number of Home loans guaranteed by VA: 2.2 million

About the VA:

Number of VA employees: 254,183  
Number of VA Medical Centers: 153  
Number of VA Outpatient Clinics: 724  
Number of VA Vet Centers: 208  
Number of VA National Cemeteries: 125  
FY-06 Appropriations: \$73.6 billion (actual)  
FY-07 Appropriations: \$80.2 billion

*"Discourage litigation. Persuade your neighbors to compromise whenever you can. Point out to them how the nominal winner is often a real loser - in fees, expenses, and waste of time. As a peacemaker the lawyer has a superior opportunity of being a good man. There will still be business enough." Abraham Lincoln*

FY-08 Appropriations: \$86.4 billion (requested)

Impressive figures that really put the awesome responsibility portion of the VA's responsibility into focus.

More Good items: As of this writing, the VA has secured rights to a NEW Veterans cemetery in Bucks County, PA. Looking out over historic Washington's Crossing soil, approximately 580,000 vets and their families may eventually rest in tranquil peace. Expected to open in 2009, those choosing cremation may actually be interred in late 2008; however, on 27NOV07, a suit was filed by the citizens of surrounding Newtown and Upper Makefield Townships against the local school district that selling the tract of land for such usage. The battle continues. FYI: Veterans with a discharge, OTHER than dishonorable, are eligible (along with their spouse & children) for burial in a National cemetery.

### **Some Bad Items: Two items are very "hot" right now.**

1. Returning Navy Reservists from the "desert" wars, collectively called the "sand-box", continue to face a difficult fight, if wounded, with Medical releases back to their respective Reserve Units. Denied the proper time to "mend" while on active status then being found "un-fit" to continue drilling. Our NERA President, YNC Joanne Elliott, along with civilian-advocate Patty Hicks, have spearheaded a concerted drive to remedy this problem for many years...their efforts are to be commended, and we believe the tide is about to change for the betterment of those who answer their Country's call and return so dismayed!

2. On 07NOV07, a case involving "Haas v. VA" (formerly VA director Nicholson) was heard by a presiding Judge, to determine whether the VA should recognize Veterans serving on ships that sailed in "Blue Water" off the coast as being exposed to Agent Orange. The position of the VA is that only "boots on ground" are recognized as "presumed" victims of the insidious and toxic de-foliate that has caused a variety of skin diseases and fatal cancers of every bodily organ. The inhabitants of Vietnam still suffer and the air-water borne contaminant has been the study of both Australian and Canadian governments--both Countries acknowledge the fact that waters supplied by evaporative equipment merely contaminates the crews of ships operating in waters around Vietnam, whether "brown" or "blue" in color, as long as the source is derived from estuarine origin. The VA recognizes Type 2 diabetes as presumptive with service "in country" only. The association known as "Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Association" is fighting back by supporting the "Haas" position. A ruling is expected in the near future.

In closing, may your Holidays be safe and rewarding! Embrace the words of my good friend and fellow-Vietnam veteran, Paul Sutton, who tirelessly supports the entire Veteran community...

**"If you don't Stand BEHIND our Troops, please, feel free to stand in FRONT of them!"**

*Human kindness has never weakened the stamina or softened the fiber of a free people. A nation does not have to be cruel to be tough. Franklin D. Roosevelt*

# TAPS

Last Updated: 12/07/2007

## TAPS-MARINER WINTER 2007

**NAME**

**CHAPTER**



<b>YNCS ANNA MARIE ANDERSON</b>	<b>CHUMASH</b>
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<b>SENATOR CRAIG THOMAS</b>	
<b>CEC CARL C WURST</b>	<b>GREATER PITTSBURGH</b>

*In the beginning of a change, the patriot is a scarce man, and brave, and hated and scorned. When his cause succeeds, the timid join him, for then it costs nothing to be a patriot. ~Mark Twain, Notebook, 1935*



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