New members selected for SECNAV Retiree Council; selections for 2001 Council underway

The selection process for new members of the 2000 Secretary of the Navy Retiree Council is now complete. We are proud to announce the selection of Captain Thomas C. Watson, USN (Ret) of Tullahoma, Tenn.; Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy William Plackett, USN (Ret) of Virginia Beach, Va.; and Master Chief Storekeeper Jack Dockstader, USNR (Ret) of Redondo Beach, Calif. Welcome aboard!

Council co-chairs Vice Admiral James Dorsey and Sergeant Major Gene Overstreet have opted to accelerate selections for the 2001 Council. Between the Navy and Marine Corps we will have nine vacancies, nearly half of the council’s membership. By starting the selection process early, we will get a jump on bringing newer members up to speed.

If you applied for the 2000 Council and still want to be considered, do nothing. We will review those packages again. If you do not desire to be considered, let us know. If you did not apply previously and want to apply now, please submit an application letter to the Navy Retired Activities Branch no later than June 30, 2000. The following information should be provided: full name, address, phone number and E-mail address (if applicable); rank at time of retirement; social security number; a brief statement of how you can contribute to the council; and a resume including any service to the Navy retired community.

Applications should be mailed to:

NAVY PERSONNEL COMMAND
RETIRED ACTIVITIES BRANCH (PERS-622)
5720 INTEGRITY DRIVE
MILLINGTON, TN 38055-6220

For additional information, see the October - December 1999 edition of Shift Colors, or call the Retired Activities Branch at 1-800-255-8950.

As you know, the council works diligently to advise the Secretary of the Navy, Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps on issues and concerns affecting the retiree community. The council’s report, published in the October - December 1999 Shift Colors, has been answered by the Secretary of the Navy. His response to the recommendations follows.

SECNAV response to Retiree Council recommendations

Council summary recommendation: That the Secretary of the Navy strongly support all initiatives which lead to comprehensive health care services for all military retirees, regardless of age or location.

Specific recommendations and SECNAV responses:

Council recommendation. That the Secretary of the Navy commission the Center for Naval Analysis (CNA) to amplify its analysis of Federal Employees Health Benefit Plan (FEHBP) - 65, Medigap and Mail Order Pharmacy for improving retiree access to health care to:

a. Determine the impact on the existing study of enlarging the Medical Treatment Facility (MTF) catchment areas, including availability of FEHBP for those outside catchment areas and overseas.

b. Evaluate the administrative and co-pay cost per prescription of the National Mail Order Pharmacy Program (NMOPP), if the number of users is large compared to those presently enrolled in the NMOPP. The $9 per prescription (the current standard for NMOPP) is greater than the costs per prescription of the mail order components of other health care programs. A cost comparison with these other programs should be undertaken.

c. Analyze the impact of a TRICARE Senior (Subvention) network that includes Department of Veterans Affairs and Public Health Service MTFs. The evaluation of this impact should incorporate care for dependents of military retirees and pharmacy services.

See RESPONSE, page 4
Hello again, Shipmates!

We’ve been very busy the last few months. The SBP Open Season increased the number of phone calls we received and, at times, exceeded the ability of our small staff to handle them all. I am sorry for any delays; however, we always do our best to return your calls promptly and provide accurate information. The Open Season is now closed, so hopefully we will be better able to answer all bells and continue to provide the service you deserve.

WOW! In the last newsletter I asked for your support to help our volunteers in the Retired Activity Offices (RAOs). What a response! I cannot begin to tell you how many times I smiled because of the number of great people who called to volunteer. But we are not out of the woods yet, and we still need your help. Only a few hours a week would be an invaluable gift to help your fellow retirees. Please contact your nearest RAO and volunteer.

As you well know, medical care, by far, is the number one concern among our retirees. This is particularly true for those who are MEDICARE eligible. While members of Congress and DoD leadership continue to study the problem, we need to keep pressing the issue.

As many of you know, the decision on whether to participate in the Survivor Benefit Plan is very important, and it is most important to those about to retire. Navy participation rates are not as high as the other services, and we are working hard to do a better job of passing the word. We are planning to host the SBP Summit in May 2000 to bring together all of the people who have something to do with the SBP program. I am confident that we will identify improvement opportunities and will make it a better process for those who retire in the future. We will keep you posted on what we learn.

We have received inquiries about possible changes to the Uniformed Services Former Spouse Protection Act (USFSPA). We are aware of several initiatives in Congress but we do not have any new information. Here’s the deal: Congress ordered the Department of Defense to conduct a thorough study of USFSPA and report back by Sept. 30, 1999. Congress is still waiting for the report and so are we. We don’t expect any Congressional action until the report is submitted.

Michael P. Wardlaw
Head, Navy Retired Activities Branch
E-mail: p622s@persnet.navy.mil

Short Splices:
If you write to us, please include your telephone number, and use E-mail if you can. Believe me, it saves us both time. Don’t wait until the last minute to request your DD-214; do it now. Please use our voice-mail to leave a message. **We will call back.** And lastly, if you need a “Joe Sal” package (see page 12), please write us.
Dear Retirees,

This is my second letter to you in Shift Colors since becoming Chief of Naval Personnel. I feel exceptionally privileged to be working on behalf of all our men and women and their families, both active and retired. I am fully engaged in personnel issues throughout the Navy and very optimistic that that we are making progress in addressing the many challenges that affect Sailors and their families. A major aspect of these challenges is ensuring that our Sailors and families who have completed a career in the Navy continue to receive our utmost attention. Anything less would be a true injustice.

I appreciate the numerous letters I have received since becoming Chief of Naval Personnel. Your passionate requests for support and understanding are useful as we work to improve the lives of our Sailors, both active and retired.

We are focused on continued improvements to retiree health care. As we enter the 2000 legislative season, the 106th Congress is working on numerous bills regarding this subject. Retiree health care continues to increase in priority as all of the Joint Chiefs (CNO input in particular has been very strong) have weighed in heavily during Congressional testimony on this issue. The service Vice-Chiefs, led by Admiral Pilling, have been directed to take the lead inside the Pentagon to fix the situation. We are committed to making improvements and will keep you informed on the progress.

The SECNAV Retiree Council met in the beginning of April. This extremely important organization has the full support of Navy leadership. Inputs from this council generate action items to improve your lives, and Admiral James Dorsey and Sergeant Major Gene Overstreet are doing a terrific job representing your interests. We plan to expand this effort by forming local retiree councils so all of your needs and concerns can be voiced to the SECNAV Retiree Council. I look forward to working with the Council.

The Retired Activities Offices are providing a great service to our Navy family. Approximately 300 volunteers in the 69 offices worldwide deserve our gratitude. We have published their contact information in previous editions of Shift Colors, and I encourage you to seek their support. I have recently endorsed the efforts of Navy Personnel Command’s Retired Activities Branch (PERS-622) to visit each Retired Activities Office at least every 18 months to listen to retiree issues and report back to me.

As always, I continue to focus on your well being. Please feel free to contact Mr. Michael Wardlaw, Head of our Retired Activities Branch, at (800) 255-8950, E-mail p622s@bupers.navy.mil, or regular mail at PERS-622, 5720 Integrity Drive, Millington, TN, 38054-6220. Also, please feel free to drop me an E-mail at p00@bupers.navy.mil, or regular mail at Chief of Naval Personnel, 2 Navy Annex, Washington, DC, 20370.

Thank you again for your dedicated service and continued commitment to the Navy and our wonderful Sailors and their families. I look forward to continuing our efforts to recognize your service.

NORBERT R. RYAN, JR.
Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy
d. Assess the impact that the adoption of programs listed in (a), (b) and (c) above would have in alleviating the concerns of the Surgeons General regarding readiness of the uniformed military medical personnel.

**SECNAV response:** CONCUR with all four sub-recommendations. The Center for Naval Analysis is in the process of conducting studies for the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) on DoD health care issues. Among the many issues under study, a number will cover discussion points raised in questions (a) and (d). Relevant issues to be examined include: a comparison of TRICARE plans with FEHBP; a comparison of benefit values among federal, private sector, and military beneficiaries; an assessment of the consequences of offering FEHBP; pros and cons of FEHBP; and cost savings and readiness implications. This study will be completed in 2000, and will be available prior to the next Secretary of the Navy’s Retiree Council meeting. We will monitor the progress. The Center for Naval Analyses is completing a study for Navy on NMOPP. It will cover issues raised in item (b) and will be available in the future. The Bureau of Medicine and Surgery has forwarded a request to the Center for Naval Analyses for the study recommended in item (c) above. The project awaits approval and scheduling. We will monitor progress.

**Council recommendation:** Authorize FEHBP-65 as an option worldwide.

**SECNAV response:** DEFER beyond this reporting period. The Department of the Navy supports the study and assessment of all programs to expand retiree access to health care, including FEHBP-65. As you are aware, we commissioned the Center for Naval Analysis to conduct an initial study on options for improving access to health care for retirees. Their research proved valuable in addressing the options and cost implications. CNA is currently in the process of conducting studies for the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) on military health care issues. Among the many issues under study, two address the issues raised above. These include a comparison of TRICARE Plans with FEHBP, and a comparison of benefit values among federal, private sector, and military beneficiaries. Study findings will be helpful in supporting Department of the Navy’s final recommendation. The Department of the Navy is committed to improving access options for our over 65 beneficiaries; however, it would be premature to support this recommendation until completion of the FEHBP-65 demonstration project. Two Navy medicine sites, Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton, Calif., and Naval Hospital Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico, have been selected to participate in the Congressionally-mandated FEHBP demonstration project, due to begin in FY00. We support the FEHBP demonstration project to determine feasibility and budgetary impact; however, there is concern about the cost of full FEHBP implementation and the potential impact on readiness and the military health system. If successful, the demonstration projects will further assist in achieving the goal of offering comprehensive care to Medicare-eligible beneficiaries.

**Council recommendation:** Support expansion and acceleration of the TRICARE Senior Prime (Medicare Subvention) demonstration.

**SECNAV response:** DEFER beyond this reporting period. The requirements for an enrollee to have been an MTF user prior to participation in the current demonstrations and to be enrolled in Medicare Part B are Congressionally-mandated by the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, H.R. 2015, Subchapter C, SEC.4015, a. SEC 1896 (a) 4. Consequently, these requirements have been incorporated into the eligibility criteria for the demonstration project. Their impact should be assessed, however, as a part of overall program evaluation. As stated above, DoN continues to actively work with OSD on improving access to care for over-65 beneficiaries. We recognize, however, the requirement to fully assess the effectiveness of the Congressionally-directed demonstration projects in meeting the full spectrum of health care needs of our beneficiaries.

**Council recommendation:** That the Secretary of the Navy support expansion of the National Mail Order Pharmacy Program to cover all uniformed services beneficiaries regardless of age or location.

**SECNAV response:** DEFER beyond this reporting period. We are awaiting the outcome of the demonstration project as mandated in Section 723 of the FY99 Defense Authorization Act. The pharmacy benefits proposal has been incorporated in the FY00 DoD Authorization Act; the key piece regarding retirees mandates DoD to prepare and submit a study on a comprehensive pharmacy benefit for Medicare eligibles by April 2001. The Department of Defense Pharmacy Benefit Report was submitted to Congress in May 1999. The report identified the option of expanding NMOPP services to over-65 retirees; however, the resourcing of this option remains an important factor. OSD is assessing this important benefit issue and will likely recommend that the newly formed Defense Medical Oversight Council (DMOC) address the matter in the overall context of DHP funding.

**Council recommendation:** That the Secretary of the Navy support investigating ways to reduce program costs
that result in a reduction of out-of-pocket costs, such as allowing the TRICARE contractors to utilize government pharmacy-negotiated purchase rates.

**SECNAV response: DEFER** beyond this reporting period. We are awaiting Congressional action on the Department of Defense Pharmacy Benefit Report. The programs offered to our beneficiaries are under constant review to improve the way business is conducted and to improve the benefit itself. Allowing the TRICARE contractors to utilize the pharmacy-negotiated purchase rates is an excellent method of reducing costs to the government. This change in business has been recommended to Congress in the Department of Defense Pharmacy Benefit Report submitted to Congress on May 9, 1999. A Pharmacy Benefits Management Office (PBMO) will be established to provide the DoD with a system-wide approach to managing the prescription benefit, monitoring data integrity and implementing a uniform, consistent benefit. A Pharmacy Data Transaction System (PDTS) will link all prescription data to provide management reports and patient safety information to any MTF the patient may visit. Both of these innovations are best business practices adopted from industry and are designed to produce economies of effort. DoD has established and will continue to seek new contracts with industry for exceptional drug pricing. This has dramatically reduced the cost of certain drugs. Expansion of these contracts will play an important role in providing quality medication at the best prices.

**Council recommendation:** That the Secretary of the Navy support comparing the NMOPP with the DVA, AARP and other models of mail order pharmacy to seek out cost reductions.

**SECNAV response: CONCUR.** The NMOPP contract is currently held by Merck-Medco. This company provides service to approximately 125 of the nation’s Fortune 500 corporations, over 100 local, state and Federal employee and retiree groups, to over one third of the nation’s Blue Cross Blue Shield plans as well as to unions, insurance carriers and to managed care plans. DoD, in cooperation with Merck-Medco, strives to reduce prescription costs by reviewing business procedures and looking at competition to include the best of their business practices.

**Council recommendation:** That the Secretary of the Navy support developing a mechanism for prescriptions to be honored by the NMOPP when written by OCONUS health care providers.

**SECNAV response: NON-CONCUR.** The DoD-NMOPP contract stipulates that Merck-Medco will only honor civilian-generated prescriptions written by providers licensed in the United States. This contractual agreement is based on United States law that requires physicians to be licensed in CONUS and was designed for the safety of its citizens. Additionally, prescriptions written by military providers overseas are honored in the DoD NMOPP.

**Council recommendation:** That the Secretary of the Navy support efforts to increase coordination efforts in health care delivery between the Department of Veteran Affairs, the Public Health Service, and the DoD. Increased utilization of DVA and PHS facilities by DoD eligibles, especially in areas not served by an MTF, makes excellent sense. The Council supports increased funding for DVA and PHS to provide such care and initiatives to expedite subvention. An additional consideration could be given to making DVA and PHS facilities preferred subcontractors for TRICARE services. Utilization of DVA and PHS expertise in certain specialized areas may be especially beneficial for geriatric services.

**SECNAV response: CONCUR on the RC comment: “Increased utilization of DVA and PHS facilities by DoD eligibles... makes excellent sense.”** DoD (Health Affairs) policy issued May 14, 1999 directs that Department of Veterans Affairs Health Facilities will be included as TRICARE Network Providers. The existing DoD/VA Sharing Agreements that are in place enable the military treatment facilities (MTFs) to utilize VA resources as alternative sources of health care services to augment the MTFs. The former PHS facilities are now TRICARE Designated Provider facilities. The National Defense Authorization Act for FY97 directed the Secretary of Defense to enter into a contract with each of the USTFs for their participation as “designated providers,” delivering the TRICARE Prime option to enrollees. Enrollment at a USTF is open to all TRICARE and Medicare eligibles, with the exception of active duty. Enrollment was initially capped, with a 10 percent increase allowed each year. The FY00 DoD Authorization Act directs a one-year open enrollment demonstration program at three sites (Bayley Seton, Staten Island, N.Y.; Pacific Medical Center, Seattle, Wash.; and Brighton Marine, Boston, Mass.) to begin Oct. 1, 1999. This would allow all eligible beneficiaries to enroll at any time and removes the cap on enrollment. Until this demonstration project is completed, it would be premature to support this recommendation.

**CONCUR with RC comment:** “The Council supports increased funding for DVA and PHS to provide such care and initiatives to expedite subvention.” The Department of the Navy would support increased funding for DVA
and PHS as long as it did not cause a decrease in funding available for the Military Health System.

NON-CONCUR with RC comment: “An additional consideration could be given to making DVA and PHS facilities preferred subcontractors for TRICARE services.” As designated providers of the Uniformed Services Family Health Plan, these facilities already have the capability to enroll eligible beneficiaries. VA medical facilities are authorized to participate as TRICARE Network Providers. MTFs may already utilize available access at VA medical facilities when it best meets the need. To designate the VA as a preferred subcontractor would restrict the MTF’s flexibility to select the best option available for TRICARE services.

Council recommendation: That the Secretary of the Navy support reducing the catastrophic cap for TRICARE Standard from the present $7,500 to $3,000, the same as TRICARE Prime. The present TRICARE Standard catastrophic cap penalizes retirees unable to access TRICARE Prime.

SECNAV response: NON-CONCUR. The reduced catastrophic cap of $3,000 remains one of the best incentives for retirees to enroll in TRICARE Prime. It is an important component of the Prime benefits package, but we recognize that Prime is not available in all locations. Network development remains an important priority for our managed care support contractors, since we want to ensure that those beneficiaries who want to enroll have appropriate access to Prime.

Council recommendation: That the Secretary of the Navy support restoring “coordination of benefits” for TRICARE Standard claims. A DoD policy change for TRICARE Standard claims has resulted in estimated out of pocket expenses of $500,000 per year for retirees with third party insurance. Before this change, TRICARE Standard paid the difference between the amount covered by the third party insurance and the 115 percent limit of allowable charges (“coordination of benefits”). With the DoD policy change to “benefits less benefits,” TRICARE Standard pays nothing if the third party insurance pays at least 75 percent of the 115 percent allowed by TRICARE. Reversal of this non-legislative DoD policy will eliminate these out of pocket expenses.

SECNAV response: NON-CONCUR. The TRICARE Operations Manual states, “Under the law, TRICARE benefits are payable only for charges remaining unpaid after all other health coverage. . .” This means other primary coverage, not Medicaid or any supplemental policy. The Manual also states: “The contractor shall not pay more as a secondary payer than it would have in the absence of other coverage.” In the case of a Standard, non-participating provider, TRICARE pays the lesser of: the CHAMPUS Maximum Allowable Charge (CMAC) plus 15 percent (the balance billing limit) minus the other health insurance (OHI) payment, or the amount TRICARE would have paid in the absence of OHI. To simplify, TRICARE pays the lesser of (CMAC+15 percent)-OHI or CMAC-retiree cost share. The following scenario is provided to demonstrate this “either/or” reimbursement rule (assumes deductibles have been met).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Billed Charge</th>
<th>$150.00</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CMAC</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance Bill Limit</td>
<td>$115.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>OHI pays</td>
<td>$86.25 (75 percent of the 115 percent limit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRICARE either/or</td>
<td>$28.75 (billed charge [reduced to 115 percent limit] minus OHI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or $75.00 (TRICARE Standard 75 percent share w/o OHI)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRICARE pays</td>
<td>$28.75</td>
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</table>

We used $86.25 as the OHI payment in this example since the discussion stated that “. . . TRICARE Standard pays nothing if the third party insurance pays at least 75 percent of the 115 percent allowed by TRICARE.” This is not accurate. In this example, the beneficiary receives payment from two sources that equal the balanced billing limit. The beneficiary is not legally liable for the difference between the billed charge and the balanced billing limit. We are continuing to work to ensure that reimbursement rates are equitable and help facilitate the development and sustainment of robust provider networks. This focus will help improve access and reduce out of pocket expenses by beneficiaries.

Council recommendation: That the Secretary of the Navy support efforts to speed up claim processing. Reduce the number of claims set aside for audit, and establish ambitious goals for electronic claims processing to improve timeliness.

SECNAV response: CONCUR. ASD (HA)/TRICARE Management Activity established an interdisciplinary TRICARE Claims Processing Reengineering (CPR) Integrated Program Team (IPT) earlier this year. The
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The charter of this group was to identify problem areas in claims processing, to recommend a plan for cost-effective and efficient improvements in the system, and to initiate approved changes. Important to this mission is the recognition and maintenance of those sound practices currently in place for claims processing while identifying and initiating other “best practices” into the processing cycle. We recognize the imperative to ensure that improvements be incorporated into future contracts. There is agreement that we need to make improvements in our claims processing business practices because of the direct impact on our beneficiaries and providers. New standards have been implemented for the processing of clean claims (95 percent in 30 days, 100 percent in 60 days) which should improve customer service.

Council recommendation: That the Secretary of the Navy support updating CHAMPUS Maximum Allowable Charge (CMAC) rates more frequently to ensure they reflect current health care costs. This is required to attract and retain quality providers.

SECNAV response: NON-CONCUR. There are some initiatives in progress to increase the CMAC rates in certain high-cost remote locales such as Alaska. The FY00 Defense Authorization Act specifically provides the authority to increase reimbursement rates (115 percent of CMAC) of providers in certain circumstances to ensure an adequate number of qualified providers are available. In addition, CMAC rates are updated annually, based on various factors, including historical claims data and Medicare rates. Notwithstanding the legislatively required tie-in with Medicare, it would be difficult for the claims pipeline and the one-year timely filing limit to accommodate more frequent data-driven updates. Seasonal demand for health care services might also skew the analysis. Analysis based on insufficient data may result in inappropriately increased/decreased CMAC rates, requiring constant readjustment at each six-month interval. Constantly fluctuating CMAC rates would have a deleterious effect on provider participation rates and network adequacy. Any resulting increased administrative costs would be paid at the expense of health care, given current funding constraints.

Council recommendation: That the Secretary of the Navy support efforts to accelerate the appeals process for a TRICARE claim.

SECNAV response: CONCUR. An electronic claims and auto-adjudication process is scheduled for implementation by June 2000. A recent in-depth analysis of TRICARE claims processing indicated no significant deficiency in the area of appeals as compared to industry practices and standards. TRICARE has a lower number of appeals per 1,000 beneficiaries than is commonly found in industry. However, one of the recommendations for immediate implementation was an increased focus on beneficiary and provider education. This focus should positively impact appeals through greater awareness of benefits, payment levels and the appeal process.

Council recommendation: That the Secretary of the Navy pursue efforts to continue to improve quality control and standardization of managed care support contracts.

SECNAV response: CONCUR. There are a number of working groups addressing various issues to improve quality control and standardization of MCSC. Included in these groups are Integrated Process Teams (IPTs) on claims processing, contract change orders, financing mechanisms, and the next generation of MCSC. These IPTs will continue to work until all issues are resolved. Recommendations for change which are approved by TMA leadership will be incorporated into existing Managed Care Support Contracts, as well as into the next iteration of contracts now under development.

Council recommendation: That the Secretary of the Navy support expansion of portability and reciprocity for TRICARE Prime enrollees and extend TRICARE Prime to all areas where there are significant numbers of retirees. DoD policy states TRICARE Prime enrollees in one region will be able to receive services from Prime in another region (reciprocity) and transfer their enrollment when they move (portability), but this has yet to be implemented fully in all regions.

SECNAV response: DEFER. The portability feature of the TRICARE Prime benefit has and continues to improve as TRICARE evolves with customer feedback. The key to implementing new enrollment procedures is the deployment of an updated version of the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS), which is scheduled for August 2000. It will become the centralized eligibility and enrollment database for the TRICARE program. All contractors will be required to use this database when enrolling/disenrolling beneficiaries. This centralization of enrollment information will negate the requirement for a complex set of portability enrollment procedures. DoN leadership has asked OSD to ensure that the DEERS update remains a priority given the impact of portability for our beneficiaries. Features such as portability and split enrollment are important enhancements that have improved the TRICARE benefit and enabled our beneficiaries to better access TRICARE.
regardless of location. As stated previously, we know the importance of network development and continue to work with our managed care support contractors to improve Prime availability.

**Council recommendation:** That the Secretary of the Navy support relaxing the requirement for TRICARE Standard beneficiaries to obtain Non-Availability Statements (NAS) or pre-authorization from MTFs and clinics before seeing private providers.

**SECNAV response:** DEFER beyond this reporting period. The FY2000 National Defense Authorization Act directs OSD to report on initiatives to improve access to care. One of the components is to reduce the requirements for pre-authorization for care and non-availability statements under TRICARE. The Secretary of Defense is required to report not later than March 31, 2000.

**Council recommendation:** Support DoD efforts to assess the feasibility of providing long-term care benefits for retirees.

**SECNAV response:** DEFER beyond this reporting period. We support DoD’s efforts to assess the health care needs of our over-85 beneficiaries and fully recognize the unique clinical requirements of these patients. We understand that there have been proposed congressional initiatives to offer long-term health care insurance for federal employees, including military health system beneficiaries; however, these have yet to be enacted. Medicare does pay for some nursing home costs when skilled nursing services are required following hospitalization. Medicare also helps pay for home health care that is necessary and reasonable. The Health Care Financing Agency (HCFA) is exploring options to nursing home care and has set up two programs (with limited access) that help take care of patients who need comprehensive medical and social service delivery systems. Presently, Medicaid is the only federally-subsidized program that pays for long-term and/or custodial care with wide variation in the benefit structure and eligibility criteria from state to state.

**Council recommendation:** Support individual service management and full DoD funding of the health care budget so that affordable, quality care may be provided to all uniformed services beneficiaries, regardless of age or location.

**SECNAV response:** DEFER beyond this reporting period. The Defense Medical Oversight Council (DMOC) was established earlier this year to address strategies for resourcing the Defense Health Program (DHP). The group is currently chaired by the Vice Chief of Naval Operations and has membership with the Services’ Under Secretaries and Vice Chiefs, as well as USD(P&R), USD(C) and ASD(HA), and the Joint Chiefs of Staff (J4). The DMOC is aggressively addressing the requirements and funding for the DHP and how best to implement long-term, sustainable solutions. The establishment of this high-level group indicates the commitment by OSD and the Services to ensuring the DHP is properly funded for its mission.

**Council recommendation:** Expedite current efforts to expand Retiree Dental Plan services.

**SECNAV response:** DEFER. The TRICARE Retiree Dental Program (TRDP) was designed to be affordable and to meet the basic dental needs of the retiree. With this in mind, a technically acceptable/lowest cost commercial buy contract option was chosen to implement the TRDP. The TRDP benefit package in this plan has not been popular with the enrollees because it does not include prosthodontics, a second annual cleaning, and orthodontics. Enabling legislation has been passed to allow enrollment of family members without retiree participation and to expand the benefit package to mirror that of the TRICARE Family Member Dental Plan. When finalized and implemented, these initiatives would permit, but not mandate, the contractor to improve the TRDP. The impact on the monthly premium is the limiting factor since this is an entirely enrollee-financed program. Overseas extension is not currently compatible with existing law governing this program.

**Council recommendation:** That the Secretary of the Navy support action to repeal the Military Retirement Reform Act of 1986 (REDUX).

**SECNAV response:** ACCOMPLISHED through Congressional action. The Department of the Navy supported the repeal of the Military Retirement Reform Act of 1986 (REDUX) and offering a retirement similar to the Military Retirement Reform Act of 1980 (HIGH-3). Subsequently, the FY00 National Defense Authorization Act contained a provision that provided affected service members with an increased retired pay multiplier of 50 percent of basic pay at 20 years of service with a full COLA, or a $30,000 bonus at 15 years of service and the REDUX COLA of CPI minus one percent.

**Council recommendation:** That the Secretary of the Navy support legislation to change the effective date to 2003 to end the payment of premiums for the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) for those participants who have paid premiums for 30 years and who are 70 years of age.

**SECNAV response:** CONCUR. The Department of the Navy supports this legislation, provided there is no
adverse budgetary impact on the Department of Defense Military Retirement Fund or other department programs. **Council recommendation:** That the Secretary of the Navy support legislation to increase the minimum Survivor Benefit Plan basic annuity for surviving spouses age 62 and older.

**SECNAV response:** NON-CONCUR. The Department of the Navy does not support the removal of the current Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) offset at age 62. The amount of government subsidy, which is actuarially based, is relative to the age of the retiree and the age of the insured, particularly in the case of a spouse. Any increase of annuity above 35 percent beyond a spouse’s age of 62 years would necessarily increase retiree premiums because the current government subsidy is actually quite close to 40 percent of the program cost. After the annuitant reaches age 62, the 35 percent annuity is then supported by either their partner’s Social Security benefits or their own, whichever is higher. By law, when SBP and Social Security benefits are added together, the sum will not be less than a 55 percent SBP annuity, and usually this combination of payments is a great deal more. Unfortunately, participants often do not understand this significant aspect of SBP. A prospective retiree is free to elect added protection by opting for Supplemental Survivor Benefit Plan coverage. The cost of this supplemental protection is completely paid for by the member.

**Council recommendation:** That the Secretary of the Navy examine U.S. federal taxation of SBP paid to non-resident aliens who are survivors of deceased military retirees and who reside in foreign countries and initiate action to eliminate inequities.

**SECNAV response:** CONCUR. In examining this issue, it was discovered that taxation issues concerning non-resident aliens who are SBP annuitants are complex issues that are dependent on multiple factors, such as existing tax treaties that the United States has with foreign countries, as well as U.S. tax rulings and Internal Revenue Service regulations. The part of the equation that we can best influence is to ensure the military pay system is correctly following these rulings, conventions and treaties in its withholding practices, and to ensure that we are giving our retirees and annuitants access to the information they need to make informed decisions. Contact with DFAS Denver indicates that they are in compliance with enforcement of tax conventions, treaties, IRS directives and the regulations in Chapter 52 of the DoD Financial Management Regulation, which governs the taxation of annuities. In fact, in many countries, the United States already has existing tax treaties whereby SBP annuitants who reside in and are citizens of that country are not subject to paying taxes on the SBP annuity. However, these annuitants may not realize that if the treaty with their country specifies that the SBP annuity is not taxable, they must initiate the process to claim an exemption from taxation by filing Treasury Form 1001 (Ownership, Exemption, or Reduced Rate Certificate) with DFAS Denver. For example, in the case of Italian nationals who are receiving SBP annuity payments in Italy, SBP benefits are not taxable according to the current tax treaty. However, the Italian annuitant must file Treasury Form 1001 with DFAS Denver before this entitlement can be established. This is also the case for citizens of a number of other countries with which we have tax treaties, specifically Australia, Belgium, Cyprus, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Korea, Morocco, Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Romania, Trinidad and Tobago, and the United Kingdom. Treasury Form 1001 can be accessed on the Internet at the following site address: http://www.irs.treas.gov/prod/forms/forms_pubs/formpub.html. This information will also be passed to the Navy and Marine Corps so that it can be inserted into transition information for prospective retirees, retiree newsletters, and Retired Activities Offices. Also, if an SBP annuitant feels there is a problem concerning their annuity, they can write to the Annuity Pay Directorate at DFAS Denver for resolution. Another factor, regardless of foreign tax treaties, which affects SBP taxation is the nature of the service of the military member. For example, if the military member served 12 years of a 20-year military career outside of the United States, 12/20ths of the SBP annuity received by a non-resident alien annuitant should not be taxed. DFAS Denver has made this determination based on several tax rulings on this issue. However, DFAS Denver indicates that they have no way of determining who may be entitled to a lower withholding rate unless the annuitant contacts the agency to request consideration. This puts the onus on the non-resident annuitant to both be aware of this situation and to make the request, rather than having the withholding rate correctly adjusted by DFAS Denver when the annuity begins. We are continuing to research this issue further with DFAS Denver and will report any progress in future status reports.

**Council recommendation:** That the Secretary of the Navy support revision of the Uniformed Services Former Spouses’ Protection Act (USFSPA) to correct current inequities. Treat disability compensation (including disability retired pay) and heroism pay as non-divisible entitlements of the member.

**SECNAV response:** DEFER. As mentioned above, the Department of Defense is conducting a Congressionally-
mandated study of USFSPA and will report its findings when completed. Any DOD proposals to make changes to the current law will not be made until after this report has been officially released to Congress. We will track progress on this item.

**Council recommendation:** That the Secretary of the Navy support legislation to provide special compensation to severely disabled retirees.

**SECNAV response:** ACCOMPLISHED through Congressional action. A provision to provide special compensation to severely disabled uniformed services retirees was part of the FY00 National Defense Authorization Act, and DoD will enforce this provision of law.

**Council recommendation:** That the Secretary of the Navy investigate the feasibility of a study group to make recommendations for upgraded support of OCONUS USN and USMC retirees. These issues included: incomplete and insufficient pre-retirement transition and local job information; apparent hiring bias with regard to retirees; hiring practices are not in conformity with established OPM rules and regulations that are not affected by Status of Forces Agreements (SOFA) or treaties; inadequate Department of Veterans Affairs information; reduced medical care (no TRICARE Prime, no Retiree Dental Program, no Medicare, etc.); and long delays in resolving pay problems such as suspension of pay.

**SECNAV response:** DEFER. The examples cited above involve several major departments or commands, some of which are outside of the Department of Defense. We have contacted or are continuing to confer with the other Armed Services, as well as the Veterans Administration and Defense Finance and Accounting Service – Cleveland, to determine if areas of common concern exist, and if so, to work on solutions that will address these concerns wherever possible. However, it also must be recognized that the decision to live overseas is in itself an acknowledgment and choice to forego certain benefits and conveniences available to CONUS retired personnel. The pool of potential OCONUS local U.S. hires includes spouses of military and civilian personnel, other family members and non-dependents such as veterans and retirees. Under U.S. laws, rules and regulations, these potential local U.S. hires may be appointed under different civil service authorities. They are also entitled to different and competing employment preferences. The provisions of Status of Forces Agreements and treaties further limit their employment opportunities. The continuing oversight of local OCONUS hiring practices by the Department of the Navy and the Department of Defense indicates that civil service requirements are being applied correctly. While access to health care OCONUS has been limited, it must be recognized that overseas MTFs have limited capacity for space-available care. TRICARE network development is hampered by the availability of qualified medical providers in host nations. Again, living overseas means that retirees have chosen to forego some of the benefits available to CONUS retirees. We have contacted the Department of Veterans Affairs Foreign Services Program and learned of a number of possible avenues for obtaining information that overseas retirees may not be aware of. Overseas, each embassy or consulate should have a federal benefits unit in residence. These units are knowledgeable about VA benefits and also have a direct liaison with VA headquarters in Washington, D.C., to assist in getting further information. Also, veterans can E-mail the VA’s Foreign Desk directly at forsintmail@vba.va.gov. The Foreign Desk will respond to the inquiry by return E-mail. If the request is for status on a specific case, the request should be as specific as possible and provide name, Social Security number, VA claim number and any specific information about the case. Requests can also be faxed to the Foreign Desk at (202) 418-3213. Additionally, the VA Home Page at http://www.va.gov can provide general information. Finally, PERS-662, in concert with CNO (N136), will improve information provided to prospective retirees and their spouses who choose to retire to an overseas location. We are also continuing to review pay issues and will report any future progress.

**Council recommendation:** That the Secretary of the Navy support action to amend current law to permit retired members of the uniformed services to accept positions as employees of the federal government without reduction in the amount of their military retired pay.

**SECNAV response:** ACCOMPLISHED through Congressional action. The Department of the Navy interposed no objection to the provisions repealing dual compensation restrictions for military retirees contained in the FY00 National Defense Authorization Act.

**Council recommendation:** That the Secretary of the Navy place added emphasis upon establishing RLOs.

**SECNAV response:** DEFER. Space and other constraints vary greatly from facility to facility, and
commanding officers of the individual Naval Medical Treatment Facilities (MTF) are in the best position to assess how best to meet the needs of their customers, including establishing forums to ensure that beneficiaries’ concerns are addressed. At MTFs, the Patient Relations Program has been created to incorporate the functions of the RLO, and BUMED believes this program provides the flexibility to resolve all patient-specific matters, regardless of the beneficiary’s eligibility category, including expediting referrals to higher authority if warranted. In this respect and to ensure consistency throughout Navy medicine, BUMED plans to revise their instruction to reflect language in SECNAVINST 5420.169H, giving the MTF commanding officer the latitude to assess when and how to establish RLOs for their respective facilities. However, we will ask BUMED to provide us with a comprehensive briefing to show how they are fulfilling the function of the RLOs and service to retirees. Our commitment is to ensure the very best care possible for all of our beneficiaries.

**Council recommendation:** That the Secretary of the Navy support legislation to codify this program and encourage all Navy/Marine Corps commands to provide appropriate funeral honors.

**SECNAV RESPONSE:** ACCOMPLISHED through Congressional action. The Department of the Navy supports providing funeral honors for veterans. The FY00 National Defense Authorization Act contained a provision that allows for a funeral honors detail of at least two persons, at least one of whom shall be a member of the armed force of which the veteran was a member. The Authorization Act also allows for either an actual rendering or an audio recording of Taps, and performance of funeral honors functions by members of the reserves and necessary support of members of a funeral honors detail who are from a veterans organization or other appropriate organization.

**Council recommendation:** That the Secretary of the Navy pursue the development and use of an automated DD-214 (Report of Separation or Discharge from the Armed Forces), DD-2656 (SBP Election), and DD-2648 (Pre-Separation Checklist).

**SECNAV response:** CONCUR and referred to the Navy and Marine Corps for action. Wider utilization of technology to prepare and submit required documentation will greatly enhance our ability to provide optimum customer service. In the Navy, action to automate the DD Form 214 is underway, pending final review and implementation approval by the Chief of Naval Personnel. DD Form 2656 is automated and in use by the U.S. Army. Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps still submit paper copies. The Defense Finance and Accounting Service – Cleveland (DFAS-CL) strongly encourages use of automated processing. Automation and implementation of the DD Form 2656 by the Navy and Marine Corps has not yet been completed. Action to automate the DD Form 2648 is underway by the Navy. This form will become part of the QOL Mall LIFELines initiative and implementation is anticipated by Sept. 30, 2000.

The Marine Corps current systems and funding mandate the distribution of DD-214s, DD-2656s, and DD-2648 by hand and by mail. The Marine Corps is currently investigating the feasibility of this recommendation with similar DoD organizations.

**Council recommendation:** That the Secretary of the Navy continue to pursue establishment of the Navy/Marine Corps Degree Completion Program.

**SECNAV response:** CONCUR. The Navy has developed an initiative called the Navy College Program (formerly called the Navy Degree Completion Program) that makes it easier for Sailors to obtain a college degree during their off-duty hours. One of the major components of this program is to maximize the amount of college credit that can be obtained for Navy training courses and to provide each Sailor with information about how many credits they have obtained as they have successfully completed that training. The intended result is that more Sailors will have the incentive to take college courses and work toward completion of a degree on their off-duty time, using the credits gained from Navy training. This initiative has the strong support of senior Navy leadership. In the Marine Corps, Voluntary Education needs of Marines are addressed through a concept called Lifelong Learning (LLL). The LLL mission is to establish an integrated approach to learning, providing Marines with one destination for all off-duty education activities. LLL encompasses a broad range of programs designed to meet the diverse interests, abilities, and goals of Marines and their families, and incorporates occupational-related degrees as one of a number of options. This broad spectrum approach ensures that LLL can be tailored to an individual’s interests and capabilities, since Marines often select a field of study or vocational program unrelated to their military occupation.
The “Joe Sal” Project

The “Joe Sal” Project is a new initiative designed to help ease the burden of terminally ill retirees. The Navy Retired Activities Branch, working with DFAS-Cleveland and DFAS-Denver, has prepared a package of forms and information that will be mailed to terminally ill retirees upon request. This will allow the retiree to complete and review the forms with their spouse or family member for accuracy and to ensure the documents are in order.

“Joe Sal” is the nickname of a “Chief’s Chief” who trained hundreds of Sailors. For more than 26 years he was a trusted advisor, mentor and friend. He taught us much about the Navy and life, but more importantly, about the golden rule of Navy leadership – to always take care of your Sailors.

Joe Sal is terminally ill. He talked with us about his effort to “get things together to make it easier for the wife.”

We talked about the different literature and forms she would receive from different government offices, including the procedures used by DFAS-Cleveland, DFAS-Denver, the Veterans Administration as well as this office.

We want to try and help those who need it by sending them this information in advance. We have a very small staff, and more than 500,000 retirees and widows to support. We would like to offer this service to everyone, and, perhaps someday we can. Right now, however, we want to try and help those with death-imminent issues and concerns. When you write for your package, we aren’t going to ask if you are terminally ill. We are going to trust that you have a need for this material or you wouldn’t have asked. If you want these materials, please do not call. Write to:

NAVY PERSONNEL COMMAND
RETIRED ACTIVITIES BRANCH
(PERS-622)
5720 INTEGRITY DRIVE
MILLINGTON, TN 38055-6220
(ATTN: “JOE SAL” PROJECT)

We need your name, address, Social Security number and telephone number. Also let us know if you are a SBP or RSFP participant. You may also stop by your nearest Navy Retired Activities Office. We have provided them with these packages as well. Again, we want to help our shipmates who truly need this service.

What is Employee/Member Self Service (E/MSS) and how can it benefit me?

Employee/Member Self Service (E/MSS) is an initiative sponsored by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) to provide more responsive service to payroll customers. It offers additional features over existing Interactive Voice Response (IVR) systems (which only allow customers to query information) by allowing them to initiate changes to their pay accounts in a secure electronic environment.

Using E/MSS, customers can process transactions through a combination of Internet and IVR technology. Customers can also review account information prior to and after changes. In Phase I of E/MSS, users can change federal tax status, update allotment information, change their mailing address, and update financial institution account number or change their electronic funds transfer (EFT) address. In the future, users will be able to change state tax status and exemptions, and update bond information.

All DFAS customers will be mailed a temporary personal identification number (PIN), which must be customized when first accessing E/MSS. If you already have a PIN, continue using it to access your current informational IVR system. When the E/MSS PIN is customized, the updated PIN will allow access to both IVR and E/MSS. PINs can be changed online in E/MSS or through IVR. Users will be required to enter their current PIN and enter their new PIN twice.

E/MSS can be accessed by touch-tone phone or the Internet. For security reasons, cellular phones are not recommended. Customers will need their SSN and PIN to access E/MSS. Depending on the transaction, more information may be needed.

Upon completion and confirmation of a transaction, E/MSS provides the effective date of the change. Changes may be verified by checking E/MSS between two and seven business days following the date of the input.

Help services are always available on the system. In addition, users can call the customer support unit for assistance Monday through Friday, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Eastern time.

For more information on E/MSS, visit the DFAS Web Site at http://www.dfas.mil, or call 1-800-321-1080. Annuities must call DFAS Denver, at 1-800-435-3396.
Survivors’ check list

The information provided below is for family members of surviving spouses of military retirees. The information is intended to be a guide and is not all-inclusive.

* Notify the Defense Finance and Accounting Service – Denver (DFAS-DE) if the surviving spouse was receiving an annuity for the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP), Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan (RCSBP), Retired Serviceman’s Family Protection Plan (RSFPP) or “Forgotten Widows Annuity.” Call 1-800-435-3396.

* If the survivor was a Civil Service retiree or receiving an annuity from the federal government, notify the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) at (724) 794-8690.

* If the survivor was receiving Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) or other compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), please contact that agency at 1-800-827-1000.

* Notify private sector or retirement custodian if the deceased received funds from an employer-sponsored plan.

* Notify financial institutions where the deceased invested, saved or maintained funds.

* Notify insurance companies.

* Contact your nearest Retired Activities Office (RAO) or Retired Services Office (RSO) for assistance. The RAO phone numbers are routinely listed in Shift Colors. Call your nearest military installation for the RSO locations.

* If the deceased was receiving Social Security benefits, notify the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213.

* If the deceased participated in the federal government’s Thrift Savings Plan (TSP), contact the Federal Retirement Thrift Board at (504) 255-6000.

* If the deceased was a member of a military fraternal group, such as, the Fleet Reserve Association (FRA), The Retired Officers Association (TROA), The Retired Enlisted Association (TREA), The American Legion or Disabled American Veterans, please notify the organization.

If you have any suggestions on information that would be pertinent for the family members of deceased retirees, please mail them to:

NAVY PERSONNEL COMMAND
RETIRED ACTIVITIES BRANCH
(PERS-622)
5720 INTEGRITY DRIVE
MILLINGTON, TN 38055-6220

DFAS offers new Savings Bonds

By DFAS Public Affairs

WASHINGTON — The Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) will offer the new Series I Savings Bonds and the existing Series EE Savings Bonds to active duty and retired military members beginning April 1. Civilian employees have been able to purchase I Bonds since March 1 through the Voluntary Payroll Savings Plan.

The I Bonds are sold at face value (you pay $50 for a $50 bond) and will be offered in $50, $75, $100, $200, $500 and $1,000 denominations.

The I Bonds were created by the Department of the Treasury to provide Americans an opportunity to protect the purchase power of their savings from inflation. Investors are being offered a bond with a fixed rate combined with semiannual inflation adjustments that will help protect purchasing power.

The I Bonds are an accrual-type security, meaning earnings are added to the bond each month and interest is paid when the bond is cashed. The I Bonds will grow in value with inflation-indexed earnings for up to 30 years.

The EE Bonds are Treasury securities and interest is added to the redemption value every six months and paid to the investor when the bond is redeemed. The purchase price of an EE Bond is 50 percent face value (a $100 bond costs $50) and is offered in $100, $200, $500 and $1,000 denominations.

For more information regarding the benefits of the new I Bonds or the EE Bonds, visit the Bureau of Public Debts Web Site on the Internet at: http://www.savingsbonds.gov.
Committee plans commemoration of Korean War 50th Anniversary

WASHINGTON — A national committee under the Department of Defense is currently planning events, educational materials and grassroots support for the 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration, a time for this nation to thank and honor veterans of that war and their families.

The commemoration, authorized by Congress and conducted by the Department of Defense, will run from June 25, 2000 to Nov. 11, 2003.

The goal of the commemoration is to thank and honor veterans of the Korean War and their families, especially those who lost loved ones, for their service and sacrifice in fighting for the freedom of the Republic of Korea.

“The United States and its allies halted Communist aggression nearly 50 years ago and helped the Republic of Korea enjoy the prosperity found there today,” said Lt. Col. James R. Fisher, Director of Operations for the 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee. “We want to ensure that the Korean War is not known as ‘The Forgotten War’ any longer.”

The 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee is preparing programs and products to assist local communities with events to honor veterans at home. They are also producing materials for use by educators at all levels, and will manage several national and international events with the Republic of Korea and our allies who fought side-by-side with U.S. forces during the war.

One of the keys to the success of this commemoration is the committee’s Commemorative Community Program. This committee seeks the help of communities across the United States to support this 50th Anniversary Commemoration.

Communities, whether they be small towns, large cities, business and civic organizations, National Guard armories, military reserve centers, or active duty military installations, can volunteer to become official 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemorative Communities.

These communities will receive a certificate of designation from the Secretary of Defense, a Korean War Commemorative Community Flag, and other products including posters and pins to assist communities in conducting commemorative events.

For more information regarding the 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration, contact the Commemoration Committee at (703) 604-0820, or visit the web site at http://korea50.army.mil.

Paid up SBP

One of our readers asked a very good question about Survivors’ Benefit Program (SBP) law, currently scheduled to become effective Oct. 1, 2008. The law provides that a member who has reached age 70 and has paid SBP premiums for 30 years is considered “paid up” and will make no more premium payments. Now here’s the question: Do the payments have to be consecutive? Answer: No. For example, a retiree paid premiums for 18 years. The retiree’s spouse died and SBP premiums were suspended. Five years later the member remarries and, after one year, enrolls his new spouse. The member would need to pay premiums for another 12 years to satisfy this requirement of the law. And yes, he would have to continue to pay until he reached age 70.

Paid up RSFPP

The National Defense Authorization Act of FY00 provides for a paid-up coverage provision under the Retired Serviceman Family Protection Plan (RSFPP). Effective Oct. 1, 2008, if a participant has paid into RSFPP for 30 years and reaches the age of 70, RSFPP premiums will terminate.

Military funeral honors

As of Jan. 1, 2000, all eligible veterans, including military retirees, are entitled to military funeral honors. At a minimum, the funeral honors ceremony will consist of the folding and presentation of the American flag and the playing of Taps. At least two uniformed military personnel, in addition to a bugler, if available, shall perform the ceremony. If a bugler is not available, a high-quality CD will be used. One of the uniformed military personnel will be from the deceased veteran’s parent military service and will present the flag to the next of kin.

The military services may provide additional elements of honors and may use additional uniformed military personnel or other authorized providers, such as members of a veterans organization, to augment the Funeral Honors Detail.

The next of kin or appropriate individual must request the funeral honors; they are not provided automatically. Department of Defense (DoD) policy calls for the funeral directors, rather than the next of kin, to contact the military. A toll free number 1-877-MIL-HONR (645-4667), has been set up for funeral directors to coordinate the ceremonies. DoD has established a Web Site, http://www.militaryfuneralhonors.osd.mil, which explains the funeral honors process.
If you are one of the eight million people who pay taxes on your Social Security benefits, you know what a bother it can be to make estimated tax payments every quarter. But you may not know that you can now have your taxes withheld from your payments automatically, thanks to a new service offered jointly by Social Security and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). To take advantage of this feature, complete IRS Form W-4V, Voluntary Withholding Request. Select the percentage of your monthly benefit you want withheld (7, 15, 28 or 31 percent). Only these percentages can be used; amounts in dollars are not acceptable. After you’ve made your selection, sign and return the form to your local Social Security office either by mail or in person. Remember, you are responsible for stating what percentage you want withheld from your monthly payment amount. If you want to know how much a particular percentage is equal to in dollars, call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213. However, if you have questions about your tax liability, call the IRS at, 1-800-829-1040. Each time you want to change or stop a withholding, complete a new W-4V and send it directly to Social Security. If your benefits stop for some reason, your withholding also will stop and will not start again until you complete a new W-4V. If your benefits are temporarily suspended or deferred, your request will be held and honored once benefits resume. To get a Voluntary Withholding Request, Form W-4V, call IRS toll-free, at 1-800-829-3676. Your local Social Security office does not have these forms. The forms are available on the Internet at http://www.ssa.gov.

Shelton says DoD must live up to medical promises

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service
WASHINGTON — Calling the military medical system “not user-friendly,” the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said TRICARE “must be fixed and the over-all health-care system must be improved.” Army Gen. Henry H. Shelton told the members of the Senate Armed Services Committee Feb. 8 that he thinks America has broken its commitment to military retirees to provide health care.

TRICARE is one of the quality of life initiatives DoD will stress in the FY01 defense budget request. Defense Secretary William S. Cohen and Shelton will work together in the coming year to change TRICARE.

“While service members and their families are normally very pleased with the care that they receive once they enter into the system ... they are very frustrated with TRICARE as a system,” Shelton said. “It is quite frankly immensely complex, administratively confusing and not very customer-friendly. Our service members and their families deserve better.”

The FY01 DoD budget request makes some changes. In TRICARE Prime, the request eliminates co-pays for active duty service members who must get treatment in civilian facilities. The request also eliminates the co-pay for family members enrolled in TRICARE Prime Remote.

Shelton said in an earlier speech that DoD must fully fund and place more emphasis on the Defense Health Program. He also has said the medical plan deserves the attention of command at all levels.

Taking care of military retirees’ health needs is also a priority for Cohen and Shelton. “I think that the first thing that we need to do is make sure that we acknowledge our commitment to the retirees for their years of service, and for what we basically committed to at the time they were recruited into the armed forces,” Shelton told the Senate committee.

He told the senators that DoD has recruiting posters that vividly state that not only would the services provide medical care upon retirement, “but that their families would be taken care of,” Shelton said. “In their minds, we have broken that commitment. And I think we have.”

He said the Joint Chiefs are proposing a plan that would provide some type of national pharmacy benefit with no enrollment fees for Medicare-eligible retirees. He said the chiefs are also examining a MediGap type of insurance for retirees 65 and older. “Both these are rather expensive programs, but we’ve got to somehow find a way to start providing more than we have in the past,” Shelton said.

Defense officials agree that the programs will be expensive. DoD comptroller William Lynn said during a Pentagon news conference that the cost could be from $2 billion to $8 billion more per year depending on what program is adopted.

“At the end of the day fixing TRICARE is not only the right thing to do, it is the smart thing to do,” Shelton said. “It sends a very strong signal, not only to those serving today, but all those that are considering a career in our armed forces as well.

“And it keeps faith and keeps the commitment to those that have served and retired. We need to get it right, and I know that together, we will.”
**Upcoming Retiree Seminars**

- **California**
  - China Lake
    - Sept. 30, 2000
    - Joint w/ Edwards AFB, Ft Irwin, and the Marines from Barstow Supply Depot
    - (760) 446-3246
  - Port Hueneme
    - Sept. 23, 2000
    - USN CBC Port Hueneme Theater thru Ventura Gate
    - (0900-1300)
    - (805) 982-1023
  - San Diego
    - Nov. 4, 2000
    - Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego Theater (Bldg 30)
    - (0830-1400)
    - (619) 556-8987
  - **Florida**
    - Pensacola
      - Oct. 21, 2000
      - Bldg 633 (0900-1400)
      - (850) 452-5990/Ext 9
  - **Missouri**
    - St. Louis
      - Sept. 2000
      - (314) 263-6443
  - **Nevada**
    - Fallon
      - May 20, 2000 (tentative)
      - (775) 426-3333
  - **New York**
    - Amityville
      - Late Spring 2000
      - Kings Point
      - (631) 842-6620
    - Rochester
      - Oct. 2000 (tentative)
      - (716) 247-2052
      - E-mail rochrao@aol.com
      - Web site http://www.ggw.org/rao-rochesterny
  - **Virginia**
    - Norfolk
      - Oct. 7, 2000
      - Rockwell Hall
      - Amphib Base, Little Creek
      - (0700-1500)
      - Norfolk 1-800-372-5463
    - Little Creek (757) 462-7763
  - **Washington**
    - Bangor
      - Sept. 8, 2000
      - NSB Bangor
      - (360) 396-4115
    - Bremerton
      - Sept. 8, 2000
      - NSB Bangor
      - (360) 476-5113
    - Everett
      - May 20, 2000
      - (425) 304-3775
    - Whidbey Island
      - Sept. 9, 2000
      - Norwestern Club on NAS Whidbey Island
      - (360) 257-8054
  - **Wisconsin**
    - Milwaukee
      - June 17, 2000
      - 440 Air Reserve Station
      - 300 East College Ave
      - Milwaukee, WI 53207-6299
      - (414) 744-9766
  - **Spain**
    - Rota
      - Sept. 14-15, 2000
      - Gateway Inn (aka BOQ)
      - Rota Naval Station
      - 011-34-956-82-3232
  - **United Kingdom**
    - England
      - Nov. 11, 2000
      - 011-44-1-895-61-6551

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**Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) Reinstatement for Widows**

Public Law 106-708 provided reinstatement of certain benefits by the Veterans Administration (VA) for remarried surviving spouses of veterans upon termination of their remarriage. Widows of veterans who remarried after their husbands’ death but who are now single may be eligible for Veterans Administration (VA) compensation of at least $881 per month. Eligible widow(er) must now be single, and at some time in their lives have been widowed while married to a uniformed service member or veteran who died while on active duty in the armed forces; or as a result of a service connected disability; or of non-service connected causes after having been 100 percent service connected disabled for 10 or more years immediately preceding death; or, if rated at 100 percent for a lesser period, was so rated continuously for a period of not less than five years from the date of discharge. The number of remarriages does not matter, or how much income the survivor has now. It only matters that she is now single. To apply, the widow must contact their local VA office, VA regional office, or call the VA toll-free at 1-800-827-1000.
Millennium Veterans Act beefs up long-term care

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Veterans will be entitled to improved long-term care and other benefits, thanks to a new law signed by President Clinton in November.

The comprehensive Veterans Millennium Health Care and Benefit Act directs the Department of Veterans Affairs to improve access to long-term care for disabled veterans. It also provides veterans with other health care benefits, new veterans’ cemeteries and educational benefits.

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* Authorize VA to pay reasonable emergency care costs for veterans who receive their medical care from VA.
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For more information, contact your local Veterans Affairs facility.

SGLI launches accelerated benefits option

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In the past, lump-sum or installment-type payments were mailed to beneficiaries. Now, the insurance proceeds are deposited into an interest-bearing checking account. “This is important because it relieves the immediacy on the part of the beneficiary to find something to do with the money,” Navy Captain Elliott Bloxom, the DoD’s Director of Compensation, said. “It gives the beneficiary, during their time of grief, the opportunity to have that money available, but if they don’t use it right away, it gathers interest for them.”

Bloxom said that in another change that began October 1999, when a covered member dies, the beneficiary will be offered free financial counseling for up to a year.

Phone number and E-mail corrections

The phone numbers for the Retired Activities Office in Orlando, Fla., have changed. The new numbers are:

(407) 646-4204/4259/4262
FAX (407) 646-4213
DSN prefix 791.

In the last issue of Shift Colors, an incorrect phone number was printed for the Retired Activities Office at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The correct number is:

(808) 473-4222 ext. 231.

Also, in the last issue of Shift Colors, an incorrect phone number was printed for the Reserve Component Survivors’ Benefit Plan. The correct number is:

1-800-535-2699.

Send reunion notices early

Send reunion information as far in advance as possible, and include: Command name, reunion location, dates, point of contact with mailing address, telephone number and E-mail address, if available. There are several Web Sites available that provide more current information than can be published in a quarterly publication. These can be found at:

http://www.reunionsmag.com/reunions_list.html#Navy
http://www.lonesailor.org/cgi-bin/Reunion/reunion.pl
and http://www.fra.org/reunions/

Mail all reunion information for publication to:

NAVY PERSONNEL COMMAND
PUBLIC AFFAIRS (PERS-05)
ATTN: SHIFT COLORS
5720 INTEGRITY DRIVE
MILLINGTON, TN 38055-0500

(901) 874-3154
E-mail: p05s@persnet.navy.mil

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

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http://www.reunionsmag.com/reunions_list.html#Navy
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MILLINGTON, TN 38055-0500

(901) 874-3154
E-mail: p05s@persnet.navy.mil

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(901) 874-3154
E-mail: p05s@persnet.navy.mil
USS INTREPID ASSOCIATION, NC & SC CHAPTER
Cherokee, NC; Sep 21-24, 2000
Contact Tom Fox
P.O. Box 25
Conover, NC 28613-0025
(828) 241-3181
E-mail: foxnc@twcnet.net

USS IREX (SS-482)
Mystic, CT; Apr 26-30, 2000
Contact Wally Krupenick
81 Apple Hill
Newington, CT 06111
(660) 665-8084
E-mail: wkrup@aol.com

USS JAMES POLK (SSBN-665)
North Charleston, SC; Jun 8-11, 2000
Contact Greg Holc12
513 Cambridge Way
Martinez, GA 30907
E-mail: czech@bellsouth.net

USS JOHN ROGERS (DD-574)
Hollis, NH; Sep 24-10, 2000
Contact Jack Mindock
4912 North 54th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53218-4203
(414) 466-7304

USS JOHN WILLIS (DE-1027)
Lake George, NY; Sep 28-10, 2000
Contact Ermie Fina
2 Thomas-Leighton Boulevard
Cambridge, RI 02864
(401) 333-1964
E-mail: sjohnfina@gmail.com

USS JOSEPH STRAUSS (DDG-16)
Washington, DC; Sep 21-24, 2000
Contact Lawrence Layman
3429 Silver Maple Place
Springfield, VA 22151-2243
(703) 466-7304

USS JULIAN C. BURELL (DD-235/AS-18)
Columbus, OH; Jun 8-11, 2000
Contact John Thomas
3093 Wareham Road
Columbus, OH 43221-2243
(614) 457-9333

USS KEARNY (DD-432)
Columbus, OH; Sep 21-24, 2000
Contact David Aldorfer
208 12th Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15215-1600
(412) 781-0959
E-mail: ak4dave@cs.com

USS KENTON (APA-122)
Colorado Springs, CO; Aug 2000
Contact William Winkopp
306 Paoli Pointe Drive
Paoli, PA 19301
(610) 408-8455

USS KIMBERLY (DD-521)
Myrtle Beach, SC; Oct 5-8, 2000
Contact Joseph Falkenbach
241 Western Drive
Medway, OH 45341
(937) 849-6773

USS KETCHERTON (DE/DER-329)
Jacksonville, FL; Oct 5-8, 2000
Contact Bruce Erbaugh
9974 Hawks Hollow Road
Jacksonville, FL 32257
(904) 268-6581

USS KULA GULF (CVE-108)
Portsmouth, VA; Sep 29-25, 2000
Contact Arvel J. Dotson
620 Duck Creek Road
Washington, NC 27889
(252) 934-8955
E-mail: avancudlowi@log.com

USS KÜRCHTEN (CVE/CVA/CVS-39)
Burlington, VT; Sep 3-6, 2000
Contact Eugene Carroll
P.O. Box 131
Burlington, VT 05401-0131

USS KUHNS (DD-731/DD-622/DD-168)
Pembroke, GA; Oct 12-15, 2000
Contact Jack Brinson
P.O. Box 414
Pembroke, GA 31321
(912) 653-3508

USS LEADY (DD-158)
Virginia Beach, VA; Sep 20-24, 2000
Contact John Morrison
1313 Macheth Street
McLean, VA 22102
(703) 356-6173

USS LEEDSBURY (APA-46)
Washington, DC; Nov 2-6, 2000
Contact Ray Kester
6128 Sherborn Lane
Springfield, VA 22152-1630
(703) 451-2520
E-mail: rkester@erols.com

USS LEXINGTON (CV-2)
Anchorage, AK; May 10-13, 2000
Contact Walt Kastner
406 Ivy Glen Drive
Mira Loma, CA 91752
(909) 681-1101

USS LOWRY (DD-770)
St. Louis, MO; Sep 21-23, 2000
Contact Boyd Leyburn
2021 Lakemore Drive
Birmingham, AL 35244
(205) 988-5483

USS LST 1059
Frankenmuth, MI; May 16-18, 2000
Contact Art Heavener
HCR #2 Box 207
Shell Knob, MO 65747
(417) 858-3018

USS LOWDOW (DD-438)
Clarksville, IN; Jun 2-5, 2000
Contact Jack Brinson
P.O. Box 131
Pembroke, GA 31321
(912) 653-3508

USS MACKEREL (ST-1/SS-204)
St. Mary’s, GA; Oct 12-15, 2000
Contact Art Heavener
HCR #2 Box 207
Shell Knob, MO 65747
(417) 858-3018

USS MADDOX (DD-731/DD-622/DD-168)
Las Vegas, NV; Sep 10-15, 2000
Contact Cliff Gillespie
215 Wichita Avenue #605
Huntington Beach, CA 92648-2879
(949) 960-5283
E-mail: cgillespie45@aol.com

USS MAHAN (DD-364/DLG-11/DDG-42/DDG-72)
Washington, DC; Jul 19-23, 2000
Contact Cliff Gillespie
2403 S. State Street
Portland, OR 97210-0535
(503) 623-1626
E-mail: bbruce33@hotmail.com

USS MALABAR (AF-37)
Fall River, MA; Jun 12-13, 2000
Contact Marge Jacques
P.O. Box 54035
Waltham, MA 02454-0535
(781) 899-9198

USS MASSACHUSETTS (BB-59)
Portland, OR; Sep 25-Oct 2, 2000
Contact Ron McPhail
1930 Astor Drive
Winter Park, FL 32792
(407) 671-0629
E-mail: midwayavi@aol.com

USS MERRILL (DD-890/276/434)
Viloxi, MS; Oct 11-15, 2000
Contact Harry L. Wrede
777 Conklin Road
Ringwood, NJ 07456
Fax: (973) 962-6449

USS MERRIS (DD-890/276/434)
Biloxi, MS; Oct 11-15, 2000
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777 Conklin Road
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Fax: (973) 962-6449
E-mail: hjw87@comcast.net

USS MERRITT (DD-731/DD-622/DD-168)
Las Vegas, NV; Sep 10-15, 2000
Contact Cliff Gillespie
215 Wichita Avenue #605
Huntington Beach, CA 92648-2879
(949) 960-5283
E-mail: cgillespie45@aol.com

USS MERRIFIELD (DDG-1)
Washington, DC; Jul 19-23, 2000
Contact Cliff Gillespie
2403 S. State Street
Dover, DE 19901-6304
(302) 698-0991
E-mail: tvns@erols.com

USS MERRILL (DD-890/276/434)
Biloxi, MS; Oct 11-15, 2000
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777 Conklin Road
Ringwood, NJ 07456
Fax: (973) 962-6449

USS MERRIS (DD-890/276/434)
Biloxi, MS; Oct 11-15, 2000
Contact Harry L. Wrede
777 Conklin Road
Ringwood, NJ 07456
Fax: (973) 962-6449
E-mail: hjw87@comcast.net
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>USS</th>
<th>Contact Address</th>
<th>Contact Name</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USS MILLS (DE-383)</td>
<td>Branson, MO; Sep 6-10, 2000</td>
<td>J. Roger Garner</td>
<td>(804) 489-2770</td>
<td><a href="mailto:roger43@acconorwalk.com">roger43@acconorwalk.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USS MISSISSIPPI (BB-41)</td>
<td>Austin, TX; Jun 7-10, 2000</td>
<td>Mike Halen</td>
<td>(512) 453-2862</td>
<td><a href="mailto:misscon@worldnet.att.net">misscon@worldnet.att.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>USS MOALE (DD-693)</td>
<td>Milwaukee, WI; Jun 15-18, 2000</td>
<td>Don Boyle</td>
<td>(414) 777-5600</td>
<td><a href="mailto:doyled@worldnet.att.net">doyled@worldnet.att.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USS MONITOR (LSV-5)</td>
<td>Branson, MO; Sep 12-14, 2000</td>
<td>John Seaton</td>
<td>(601) 227-8899</td>
<td><a href="mailto:john@planet.com">john@planet.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USS MONROVIA (APA-31)</td>
<td>Branson, MO; Sep 6-10, 2000</td>
<td>P. Dana</td>
<td>(417) 829-1111</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dana@worldnet.att.net">dana@worldnet.att.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>USS MONSSEN (DD-798)</td>
<td>Milwaukee, WI; Oct 5-8, 2000</td>
<td>Virgil Melvin</td>
<td>(414) 777-5600</td>
<td><a href="mailto:melvin@worldnet.att.net">melvin@worldnet.att.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>USS MONTECAY (CVL-26)</td>
<td>Bremerton, WA; Aug 30-Sep 4, 2000</td>
<td>William Thimpton</td>
<td>(206) 787-1111</td>
<td><a href="mailto:thimpton@worldnet.att.net">thimpton@worldnet.att.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USS MOUNT KATMAI (AE-16)</td>
<td>Glen Burnie, MD; Sep 20-23, 2000</td>
<td>Mickey Garnett</td>
<td>(443) 208-1111</td>
<td><a href="mailto:garnett@worldnet.att.net">garnett@worldnet.att.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USS MUGFORD (DD-389)</td>
<td>Bellevue, WA; Sep 7-12, 2000</td>
<td>Marie Moore</td>
<td>(206) 555-1111</td>
<td><a href="mailto:marie@worldnet.att.net">marie@worldnet.att.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>USS NAVARRO (APA-215)</td>
<td>Albuquerque, NM; Oct 9-13, 2000</td>
<td>Gerald Baker</td>
<td>(505) 987-1111</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gerald@worldnet.att.net">gerald@worldnet.att.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USS NECHES (AO-47)</td>
<td>Aurora, CO; Jun 11-14, 2000</td>
<td>John J. Hewitt</td>
<td>(303) 829-1111</td>
<td><a href="mailto:john@worldnet.att.net">john@worldnet.att.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USS NEVADA (BB-36/SSBN-733)</td>
<td>Florence, KY; Sep 7-10, 2000</td>
<td>Woody Barber</td>
<td>(405) 222-1122</td>
<td><a href="mailto:woody@worldnet.att.net">woody@worldnet.att.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USS NEW JERSEY (BB-62)</td>
<td>Daytona Beach, FL; Sep 14-17, 2000</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>USS NEW KENT (APA-217)</td>
<td>Aurora, CO; Jun 11-14, 2000</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>USS OAK HILL (LSD-7)</td>
<td>Reno, NV; Apr 14-16, 2000</td>
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<td>(702) 222-1111</td>
<td><a href="mailto:victor@worldnet.att.net">victor@worldnet.att.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>USS O'BANNON (DD-445/947)</td>
<td>Scottsdale/Phoenix, AZ; Sep 27-Oct 1, 2000</td>
<td>Jay Hilton</td>
<td>(602) 222-1111</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>USS O'CALLAHAN (DE/F-1051)</td>
<td>Culver City, CA; Jul 14-21, 2000</td>
<td>Tom Morris</td>
<td>(818) 222-1111</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tom@worldnet.att.net">tom@worldnet.att.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USS ORKINSKY (CV/CVA-34)</td>
<td>Reno, NV; Apr 30-May 4, 2000</td>
<td>Ron Williamson</td>
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<tr>
<td>USS OSAGE (LSS-3)</td>
<td>Branson, MO; Sep 6-10, 2000</td>
<td>George Hensten</td>
<td>(417) 829-1111</td>
<td><a href="mailto:george@worldnet.att.net">george@worldnet.att.net</a></td>
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<td>USS OYSTER BAY (AGP-6)</td>
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<td>John Galen</td>
<td>(605) 222-1111</td>
<td><a href="mailto:john@worldnet.att.net">john@worldnet.att.net</a></td>
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<td>USS PAMANSET (AO-85)</td>
<td>Wilmington, DE; Jul 13-15, 2000</td>
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<td>(302) 222-1111</td>
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<td>USS PENNSYLVANIA (BB-38)</td>
<td>Beaumont, TX; Sep 24-27, 2000</td>
<td>V. Taylor</td>
<td>(409) 222-1111</td>
<td><a href="mailto:vtaylor@worldnet.att.net">vtaylor@worldnet.att.net</a></td>
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<td>USS PERKINS (DD-377/DD-877/DD-877)</td>
<td>San Diego, CA; Sep 13-16, 2000</td>
<td>Ernest Sanchez</td>
<td>(619) 222-1111</td>
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<td>USS PHAON (ARB-3)</td>
<td>Gulfport, MS; Oct 12-14, 2000</td>
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<td>USS PHILADELPHIA (CL-41)</td>
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<td>USS PHOENIX (CL-46)</td>
<td>San Antonio, TX; Sep 20-27, 2000</td>
<td>John Kelly</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:john@worldnet.att.net">john@worldnet.att.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>USS PIEDMONT (AD-17)</td>
<td>Washington DC; Oct 6-9, 2000</td>
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<td>(202) 222-1111</td>
<td><a href="mailto:john@worldnet.att.net">john@worldnet.att.net</a></td>
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<td>USS PITTSBURGH (CA-72)</td>
<td>Cincinnati, OH; Oct 4-7, 2000</td>
<td>Lonnie Compton</td>
<td>(513) 222-1111</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lonnie@worldnet.att.net">lonnie@worldnet.att.net</a></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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Winter Over 72/73
Daytona Beach, FL; Oct 5-7, 2000
Contact Dave Dubois
489 Morrell Mill Road
North Berwick, ME 03906
(207) 676-2773
E-mail: ddubois@waveinter.com

PATROL CRAFT SAILORS ASSOCIATION
Concern all classes of PCs, SCs, PGs, PGMs,PPs, YPs, PEs & PFs
Mobile, AL; Apr 28-30, 2000
Contact Robert H, Lister
10546 Ferncliff Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70815
(504) 272-2886

PBV Catalina International Association
Branson, MO; Nov 8-12, 2000
Contact James Thompson
1510 Kable Drive
New Orleans, LA 70131-3632
(504) 392-1227

RNMCB 16
Chino, CA; Oct 7, 2000
Contact Chuck Blending
9009 Appalossa Court
West Des Moines, IA 50266
(515) 222-0112

SILVER EAGLES ASSOCIATION (USN, USMSC, USCG Enlisted)
San Diego, CA; Sep 4-8, 2000
Contact Charles Raczkowski
719 Brightwood Avenue
Chula Vista, CA 91910-5403
(619) 422-7085
E-mail: punkskirt@aol.com

SCLU 34 WW II “ULITHI ATOLL.”
Pittsburgh, PA; Sep 20-24, 2000
Contact Alice T. Kehoe
1830 Mate Circle
Pensacola, FL 32533
(850) 937-0853
E-mail: earmstrong@interconnect.net

SUBRON TWELVE STAFF
St. Mary’s, GA; Oct 12-15, 2000
Contact Jack Brinson
P O Box 414
Penbrooke, GA 31321
(912) 653-3508

THE VIETNAM ERA SEABEES
Port Hueneme, CA; Jul 27-30, 2000
Contact VNES (West) Reunion
C/O Ed Kloster
Contact VNES (West) Reunion
Port Hueneme, CA; Jul 27-30, 2000
Contact Robert H. Lister
10546 Ferncliff Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70815
(504) 272-2886

US NAVY AEWRON ONE
Pigeon Forge, TN; May 30-Jun 1, 2000
Contact Floyd Yancy
5393 Due West Road
Powder Springs, GA 30127-4302
(770) 424-7647
E-mail: flyvncy@aol.com or Spanenberg
3661 Hillsborough Drive
Concord, CA 94520-1421
(925) 689-5544
E-mail: idspanky@aol.com

US NAVY COMBAT SHOOTERS ASSOCIATION
Concord, CA; Sep 17-19, 2000
Contact John Kurth
SE 291 Hudson Road
Silverdale, WA 98384
(360) 426-0228
E-mail: amkurth@juno.com

US NAVY CRUISE SHIP VETERANS
Silverdale, WA; Sep 13-17, 2000
Contact Bob Tallman
120 Wessex Drive
Goose Creek, SC 29445
(843) 553-4475

US NAVY FOUR STACK ACP VETERANS
APD1-APD36
Branson, MO; Sep 28-Oct 2, 2000
Contact Bob Tallman
120 Wessex Drive
Goose Creek, SC 29445
(843) 553-4475

US NAVY GROUND CONTROLLED APPROACH (GCA) ASSOCIATION
Overland Park, KS; Aug 23-26, 2000
Contact Cliff Gilchrist
2861 N. Eureka Avenue
Fresno, CA 93720-1635
(559) 434-9027
E-mail: cliffg1@pacbell.net or Fred Scott
12008 Sheldrake Court
Pensacola, FL 32533
E-mail: jvl@centurytel.net

USNR MIDSHIPMEN’S SCHOOL COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY NY, NY
Baltimore, MD; Sep 7-10, 2000
Contact Jack Breiner
1 Kridge Lane
Baltimore, MD 21204-3524
(410) 828-8491
E-mail: jraamail@aol.com

VA-115
Pensacola, FL; Jun 7-11, 2000
Contact Joe LeBlanc
123 Jims Road
Lakeview, AR 72642
(870) 431-8184
E-mail: ivl@centuryvte.net or Ralph Brannan
518 Magnolia Bend Drive
League City, TX 77573
(281) 332-3458

VA-702/VA-145
Charleston, SC; Sep 6-9, 2000
Contact Ed Armstrong
P O Box 87
Fulton, TX 78358
(979) 729-5728
E-mail: earmstrong@interconnect.net

VA-61/VCP-61/VJ-61/VP (P)-1
Pensacola, FL; May 6-7, 2000
Contact Bob Skillen
322 Minnie Lane
Bakersville, NC 28705
(828) 688-4851
E-mail: bkstellen@bigfoot.com

VA-62/VCP-62
Pensacola, FL; May 6-7, 2000
Contact Bill Warde
505 Lancaster Street Apt 10C
Jacksonville, FL 32204-4137
(904) 356-7874
E-mail: wwarde@maine.net

VC-4/VF (AW)-4
Nightcappers Squadron
Spokane, WA; May 11-14, 2000
Contact Bob Good
16254 SE 144th Street
Renton, WA 98059
(425) 255-7510
E-mail: ralvin50@juno.com

VC-12/VAW-12
Norfolk, VA; Oct 2000
Contact Robert Marvin
7244 Lincoln Avenue
Lillock, NY 10494
(716) 434-1207
E-mail: mar1207@pcom.net

VC-35/VF (AW)-35
San Diego, CA; Oct 11-15, 2000
Contact Felix Winkler
2852 Circle Drive
Escondido, CA 92029
(760) 746-6046

VF-54
Dayton, OH; Oct 12-15, 2000
Contact Glenn Ward
2240 N. Trenton Street
Arlington, VA 22207-4039
(703) 527-7315
E-mail: wardgw@erols.com

VF-141/53 IRON ANGELS
Las Vegas, NV; Jul 16-19, 2000
Contact Ruben Escajeda
7664 Le Conte Drive
El Paso, TX 79912
(915) 585-3468
E-mail: rjescajeda@aol.com

VP-1 (PATROL SQUADRON ONE)
Albuquerque, NM; Oct 6-8, 2000
Contact Homer Hawkins
P O Box 228
Okemah, OK 74859-0228
(405) 944-5839

VP-2
Whidbey Island, WA; Aug 23-26, 2000
Contact Joe and Elizabeth Chruma
1478 Via Cordorniz
San Jose, CA 95128
(408) 559-7055
E-mail: jcc@ccselect.com

VP-16/VP-741
Jacksonville, FL; May 19-21, 2000
Contact Larry Usoff
9905 St. Augustine Road
Jacksonville, FL 32257-6015
(904) 262-3764
E-mail: amsfog@msn.com

VP-22
San Diego, CA; Oct 26-29, 2000
Contact John L. Kauth
1311 La Palma Street No 6
San Diego, CA 92109
(858) 270-4823
E-mail: sandkauth@aol.com

VP-24
Pensacola, FL; Nov 10-12, 2000
Contact Jack Claugherty
1830 Mate Circle
Cantonment, FL 32533
(850) 937-0853
Fax (850) 968-9556
E-mail: jclaughert@aol.com

VP-40
PBVM & PSM (1948-1968)
Pensacola, FL; Oct 10-14, 2000
Contact Robert Foss
3213 Sandia Circle
West Des Moines, IA 50266
(515) 222-0112
E-mail: rtobfoss@aol.com

VP-68
Clinton, MD; Nov 3-5, 2000
Contact Jim Rozicky
2414 Rolling Farms Road
Glenshaw, PA 15116
(412) 487-5854
Email: rozickijim@msn.com
Web Site: http://www.vp68.org

VPB-208/RPMC-8/VPG-48
FASRON-105/ USMC Detachment
Branson, MO; Sep 28-Oct 1, 2000
Contact Franklin D. Barrett
HC-33 Box-13
Witts Springs, AR 72686
(870) 496-2285
E-mail: barr4ett27@alltel.net
You may need Navy documents to file for Social Security

Most of us look forward to retiring and collecting our Social Security benefits at age 62. We go to the Social Security Office in hopes that we only have to complete a few forms and soon afterward the money starts to roll in. Not true in some cases. If you were enlisted while on active duty you may need copies of your DD 214. Commissioned officers need a statement of service. If you are approaching 62, please ensure you have the proper documents to avoid frustration. If you do not, contact the National Personnel Records Center, 9700 Page Ave, St Louis, MO 63132 ATTN: NAVY, and ask them to send you a Standard Form 180. Complete the form and mail it back.
The Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (NJROTC) Program will expand from 435 to 490 high schools this fiscal year, with plans to add 210 more units during FY01 through FY05. This expansion will necessitate the hiring of over 550 additional instructors into the program to fill these new positions.

The current NJROTC program encompasses approximately 64,000 cadets and 961 instructors, and is made up of units in 43 states, the District of Columbia, Italy, Japan and Guam. It is designed to promote patriotism, citizenship, self-discipline and leadership skills in high school students. The program includes a Naval Science curriculum with subjects such as Naval history, oceanography, navigation, Naval operations, and leadership. Additional activities include community service, orientation trips to military bases, sea cruises, athletic, academic and drill events.

Instructors in this program are retired Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard officers and senior enlisted (E6 to E9) who have served a minimum of 20 years active duty, or have retired under the Temporary Early Retirement Authority (TERA), and have been out of the service no more than six years. Instructors are hired as high school teachers, wear their uniforms, maintain current weight requirements and receive a salary at least equal to the difference between their retired pay and the active duty pay and allowances. Many instructors are paid considerably higher salaries.

More information on this program can be found at http://www.cnet.navy.mil. Type NJROTC in the search window. Additional information can be obtained from Ms. Cheryl Ward, at (850) 452-4947 extension 334.