

The West Coaster



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West Coaster Editor Jeff Hatcliff

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RPWC Musings Joe Nash Branch 192

Welcome to 2023, as I get older time sure does move faster. I hope this letter finds everyone safe with all the bad weather and power outages caused by the Atmospheric River that is affecting most of the West Coast Region.

I reported that at last year's National Convention there were going to be budget cuts at the National level affecting all membership. The first of these has taken effect with the January issue of "FRA Today" this is the first month that the magazine will only be published electronically and will not be mailed to Shipmates. If you have Shipmates in your branch that have not entered the computer era, please pass on any information you can. For your members that have computers check out the National website at FRA.org. You can update your

information, see what is happening in the association and if you want to attend some of the virtual meetings, the schedule can be found there.

Remember we will be meeting for the Mid-Year convention March 11th in Modesto. The 1st Newsletter has been distributed. We will be conducting business during the morning session and holding training during the afternoon session. Branch197 will not be working with a local hotel and will leave it up to the individual Shipmates to select their own accommodation. I have already made my reservations at the Comfort Inn Modesto. I encourage as many shipmates to attend as possible.

Once again it is time to pull out the membership soapbox. Everyone needs to think about membership and ways to recruit new members. I challenge every Shipmate to recruit one new member. For you recruiters out there that are getting new members please pass on how you do it.

Many of you might remember the quarterly newsletter "On Watch" that showed up in your work centers on the ship. We would read them and pass them around and if like my work centers, they went in the circular file during "Field Day". I am hoping to find a Shipmate or two that might have kept a copy and have it tucked away in your memorabilia from your Navy days. If any of you have a copy or copies and can scan it, I would like to have them for a project I am currently working on. If you don't have the ability to scan, please contact me. In Loyalty, Protection and Service Joe Nash RPWC 2022-2023

Update from the RVPWC Pat LeClair Branch 192

Greetings Shipmates, I hope that your transition from 2022 to 2023 was a smooth one and that you handled it safely in your customary way, with an early restful sleep or an old fashion shindig get together with lots of hullabaloo.

I'm still working monthly with the National Membership and Retention Committee as well as the FRA Staff member assigned to us. Getting the younger shipmates to join the FRA is the number one issue with all the regions. Some of the regions if they get on a base or set up a booth at an event, they don't do it as a recruiting effort but as an informational booth for those who stop by the table. I had the WCR Secretary send out a letter that could be used as a tool to get shipmates whose dues lapsed to get them back into the branch. I heard positive feedback from one branch. Again, I urge you to try the letter as it suits your thoughts or branch retention effort and get some of these members back again.

It's time to think about the Mid-year Convention, make sure when you get your delegate forms, you get them completed with one or two Proxies to ensure that your branch has a vote at the convention. Also, your secretaries and/or Branch Committee people should be collecting the information needed for your annual reports. Things like events, meetings or letters written or received, man-hours involved, number of shipmates attending, amount of funds spent and photograph as much as you can for documentation. Speaking from experience at the regional and national level, it's more interesting to read a well-done report than to read "no report submitted, or negative report submitted".

In Loyalty, Protection and Service, Pat LeClaire, PRPWC and PNC

WCR Officer's Thoughts

Regional Secretary – Jeff Hatcliff Branch 049

The branch secretary is responsible for the maintenance of pertinent files and records for the branch. Items that should be retained for historical purposes are minutes of branch general membership meetings, branch board of directors' meetings, branch financial records, branch newsletters, and any important incoming and outgoing correspondence. It is highly recommended that branch records and files be saved digitally.

In Loyalty, Protection and Service, Jeff Hatcliff RSWC

Regional Chaplain Jim Laird Branch 137

The Lord is good to those who depend on Him, to those who search for Him. Lamentations 3:25

As we all need to help other Shipmates, in good or tough times. It would be much appreciated with heart felt by all. God Bless

Please continue to send me names of shipmates (and family members) who have passed, and those who are ill or in the hospital. When sending notifications of passing's, I need the Next of Kin name and address. God be with all during this time.

In Loyalty, Protection and Service, Jim Laird WCR Chaplain

One day, while an old Sailor was cutting the branch off a tree high above a river, his ax fell into the water.

When he cried out, the Lord appeared and asked, "Why are you crying?"

The Sailor replied that his ax had fallen into water, and he needed the ax to supplement his meager pension.

The Lord went down into the water and reappeared with a golden ax. "Is this your ax?" the Lord asked.

The Sailor replied, "No".

The Lord again went down and came up with a silver ax. "Is this your Ax?" the Lord asked.

Again, he replied, "No Lord."

The Lord went down again and came up with an iron ax. "Is this your Ax?" the Lord asked. The Sailor replied, "Yes." The Lord was pleased with his honesty and gave him all three axes to keep, and he went home happy.

Sometime later the Sailor was walking with his wife along the river bank, and his wife fell into the river. When he cried out, the Lord again appeared and asked him, "Why are you crying?"

"Oh Lord, my wife has fallen into the water!"

The Lord went down into the water and came up with Jennifer Aniston. "Is this your wife?" the Lord asked. "Yup that's her," cried the Sailor.

The Lord was furious. "You lied! That is an untruth!"

The Sailor replied, "Oh, forgive me Lord. It is a misunderstanding. You see, if I had said 'no' to Jennifer Aniston, You would have come up with Cameron Diaz. Then if I said 'no' to her, you would have come up with my woman. Had I then said 'yes,' you would have given me all three. And Lord, I am an old man not able to take care of all three women in a way that they deserve, that's why I said yes to Jennifer Aniston."

And God was pleased.

The moral of this story is: Whenever a Sailor lies, it is for a good and honorable reason, and only for the benefit of others!

WCR Committee Chair Insights

Hospital, Welfare, Disaster Relief and Rehabilitation Harold Hayek Branch 230

Many of you may not be aware of what this committee does. The mission of the FRA Hospital, Welfare & Rehabilitation committee is to foster and maintain good relations between the Fleet Reserve Association and the hospitals, to extend praise and commendation to those units that have rendered outstanding service, and to investigate allegations that shipmates and dependents are not receiving full benefits of existing laws and regulations. This committee exists to serve you. We can't do that if you don't communicate with us. My email address is haroldhayek@yahoo.com In Loyalty Protection and Service Harold Hayek

Time and Place: Larry Briggs PRPWC Branch 192

2023 Mid-Year March 11, 2023, Modesto, CA Branch and Unit 197 Hosting.

2023 Regional Date 17-19 August 2023 Cheyenne, WY Branch and Unit 059 Hosting

2024 Mid-Year Location and Host Branch To Be Determined

2024 Regional Location and Host Branch To Be Determined

Loyalty Protection and Service Larry Briggs PRPWC

Veteran Service Steve Matthews Branch 197

Branch VSO and VAVS Annual Reports: The first half of the annual reporting period has ended. Please start working on your VSO and VAVS reports now to identify what you can accomplish before the end of June.

VSO training and support: National Veterans Services Committee members Tom Flanik and SD Martin have created a new free VSO training program that you can sign up for. The training is broken into scheduled live ZOOM training sessions during 2023. Each session includes PowerPoint slides and a test after each session. When you have completed all the sessions and the final test you may apply to be sponsored by FRA HQ and certified by the VA to serve as a Veterans Service Officer, This is a great way to give back to the local veteran support effort.

VAVS support: FRA headquarters can nominate a Branch member to serve on the VA Volunteer Services Committee at your local VA Medical Facility, if it has a Volunteer Services Committee. This is another great way to provide support to local veterans.

Please contact me if you have any questions on either program or the annual reports.

To get started training to be a Veterans Service Officer Go to the NVLSP link for Publications/Training
<https://nvlspbasictrainingcourse.com/product/online-basic-training-course/>

Order the course and complete the required web-based lessons

Contact me for a copy of the FRA VSO Guidelines, which has additional information about VSO's and the application process.

I stand ready to assist you as needed.

In Loyalty, Protection, and Service, W.S. "Steve" Matthews PRPWC

West Coast Region 50/50 Jeff Hatcliff Branch 049

The WCR 50/50 Drawing is one of the two means of generating income for WCR. I will be sending out order forms to branches for the WCR 2023 50/50 raffle. This year I am offering electronic payment as an option for payment. Instructions will be detailed in the order form and invoice. My goal is to have 100% sales prior to WCR Mid-Year conference in March 2023! In Loyalty, Protection and Service, Jeff Hatcliff

Good of the Order

Joe Maez Best of the West Annual Award

The criterion for the award focuses on three areas, (1) 50% membership and retention as determined by the March report. (2) 25% public relations, i.e., parades, events, or functions the branch sponsors or participates in (not just attend!) (3) 25% TIMELY and ACCURATE submission of annual reports.



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BETTER THAN THE SMALL ONES.
AND YOU DON'T EVEN NEED MILK.**



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Become an ESGR volunteer!

Our dedicated volunteers come from all walks of life. We are business executives, civic leaders, and patriotic citizens. Some volunteer activities include:

Employer Outreach: Develop relationships with employers to promote advocacy for service in the Guard and Reserve.

Ombudsman: Work with employers and Service members to prevent, reduce, or resolve misunderstandings regarding employment rights and responsibilities.

Public Affairs: Work with military and civilian media organizations to promote public understanding of the ESGR mission.

Military Outreach Inform and educate members of the Guard and Reserve regarding their employment rights and responsibilities under USERRA.

Members of the Guard and Reserve and their civilian employers form an alliance essential to the security of our Nation. These brave men and women perform critical roles in disaster relief efforts at home and abroad and continue to serve around the world to ensure our freedom. They could not perform their critical mission without support from people like you. Your involvement, in whatever capacity you choose, can improve the relationships our brave men and women have with their employers while they continually place themselves in harm's way, leave their families, and put their careers on hold to preserve our way of life.

How to Volunteer: visit www.esgr.mil

In LP&S Steve Matthews PRPWC

West Coast Branch secretaries and those responsible for doing annual reports are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity to gather and make copies of events in which they participated during the past six months. Putting them in a folder or binder now will give you a head start and make things easier for you when the deadline approaches on June 30, 2023. In LP&S Leonard Churilla Branch 197



Golden Spike Branch & Unit 185 Donating 100 Pairs of Socks to Ogden Rescue Mission L to R are Howard Schlutter, Judy Wilson, Don McCoach, Vyron & Diane Dowdle, Ann Schlutter and Rescue Mission Volunteers. Secretary Jim Towery not shown is taking the Photograph.



Branch 197 placed over 78 wreaths at San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery as part of the Wreath Across America campaign. L-R .PRPWC Steve Matthews, Br 197 President Bob Huffman, Neil Davis and his wife Debbie



National Park Service Lifetime Passes Now Available: With the passage of the *Alexander Lofgren Veterans in Parks (VIP)* Act that passed into law last December as part of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022, service members, veterans, and Gold Star Families are now eligible for the National Park Service Lifetime Pass. The passes provide access to U.S. national parks and other federal recreation areas, include access for up to three guests, and may cover some parking fees. [Learn more.](#)



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