

# THE VOICE

Of The Enlisted®

**TREA's 55th Anniversary &  
National Convention**  
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**Bills we are supporting Spring 2018**  
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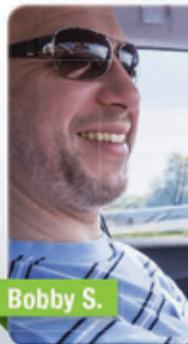
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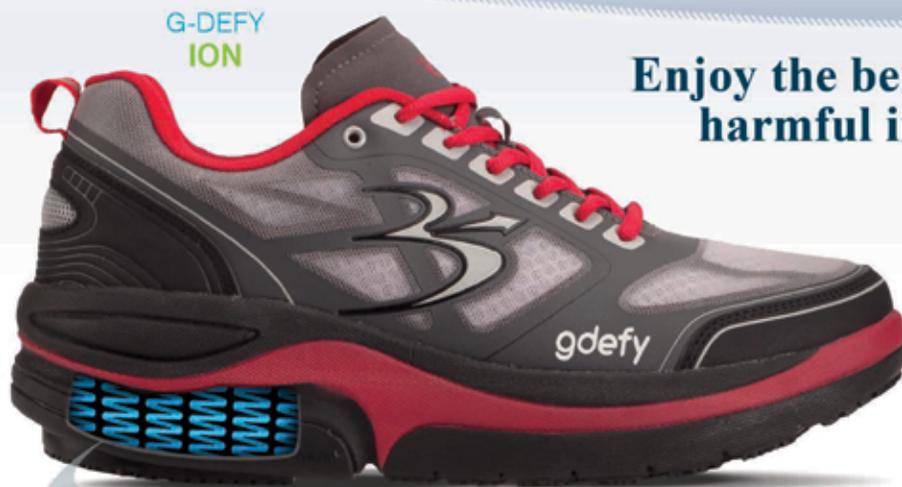
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## The VOICE

is the flagship publication of TREA: The Enlisted Association, located at 1111 S. Abilene Ct., Aurora, CO 80012.

Views expressed in the magazine, and the appearance of advertisement, do not necessarily reflect the opinions of TREA or its board of directors, and do not imply endorsement. The magazine (ISSN 1527-0467) is published quarterly by TREA, a nonprofit organization.



### Magazine Staff

The VOICE is produced by DeCoste & Associates, LLC, a woman-owned small business located in Centennial, Colorado at 8200 Quebec St. #A3-219, Centennial, CO 80112.

The magazine staff can be reached by email at [editor@trea.org](mailto:editor@trea.org). Editor-in-Chief, Kim DeCoste, Graphic Designer, Gabriela Schechter.

### Editorial Office

Please send all written communication to TREA Headquarters at 1111 S. Abilene Ct., Aurora, CO 80012.

### Submissions

The VOICE accepts articles and photographs on a continual basis, but does not pay for submissions. Please send all articles and photos via email to [editor@trea.org](mailto:editor@trea.org) or by mail to 1111 S. Abilene Ct., Aurora, CO 80012. There is no guarantee that all submissions will be published. Photos must be high quality in order to be printed in the magazine. Low quality photos will not be printed. One dollar of member's annual TREA membership dues pays for an annual subscription.

### Deadlines

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By their appearance, ads must not imply or infer any kind of TREA representation, warranty, or endorsement. For ad rates and a media kit, please email us at [editor@trea.org](mailto:editor@trea.org) or call 303-752-0660.

### Postmaster (address change)

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Dean Sorell, 1921 – 2004

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Hello TREA Members!

We hope you are enjoying the beginning of a beautiful new season with Spring springing, baseball back, and the promise of warmer and longer days. We on The VOICE editorial and creative team certainly are!

This issue is a good one, we believe. There are numerous updates for you from TREA leadership as well as legislative news we know is so very important to you. The Chapter news reflects all of the good work TREA's members are doing.

We encourage you to look at the information about the Annual Convention in Walton Beach, Florida this year! The "Emerald Coast" is waiting for us to come together in leadership and fellowship once again. Please note several Board members are seeking leadership nominations and you do not have to be in attendance at the Convention to be elected. You DO have to be present to run for the Board. You can run from the floor, but you DO have to be in attendance. We hope to see many of you there, though, and we are excited for you about the event. Registration is open now!

Finally, the cover story in this issue is a special one. The Cold War Patriots are the brave and honorable men and women who served in the American nuclear and plutonium production industries from the 1940s through the early 1990s. Many of these people were veterans of the US Armed services and many have become ill - or worse - as a direct consequence of their service. The article reveals resources for these workers and their families and is worth reading and sharing, we hope.

Enjoy this issue; please feel free to offer your feedback, as we welcome communication from you, the members of TREA whom we proudly serve!

~The Editorial & Creative Team

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# Letter from the President



As most TREA members and those who use TRICARE for Life (TfL) now know, there were increases in the cost of prescription drugs that we are able to get through the TRICARE Pharmacy Program earlier this year. In our last issue of the VOICE it was stated that there were no changes to TRICARE for Life, even though the other TRICARE programs for under-age 65 retirees had significant changes.

What we said was accurate, because the TRICARE pharmacy program is not part of TfL. It is a separate program that is used by all those who use one of the TRICARE programs. In fact, we also stated in that issue, but in a different article, that there were going to be increases in the TRICARE pharmacy program.

What we failed to realize is that most people did not understand that the TRICARE pharmacy program is separate from TRICARE for Life. This caused great confusion and we are sorry we did not make that clearer to you, our members and readers.

As I have learned since becoming TREA's National President, dealing with legislative and administrative issues in Washington, D.C., is a very complicated business. There are so many details involved with all the different programs that it is very challenging to keep track of them and then try to explain as clearly as possible to our members what is happening. This leads me to another issue we are researching. It is one that could affect each of you very negatively.

Before I continue, let me state very clearly that I am not saying this will happen. I am saying that we are doing research to see if it will happen, or if there may be an attempt to make it happen. But I want you to know we are on top of this and will stay on top.

I am talking about your COLA and the possibility that it could be permanently cut.

The COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) you get is determined by using a formula to measure the inflation rate. If there were no COLA, over time your income from retired pay, Social Security, VA disability payments or other government payments would automatically decline, leaving you much worse off.

During President Reagan's administration, legislation was passed to adjust those payments upward by the amount of inflation in order to make sure you keep the same standard of living. While that has been absolutely critical to the well-being of retirees, it has also cost the government a huge amount of money. So, for a long time now some politicians in Washington have been advocating changing how inflation is calculated using the "chained CPI."

I don't have room to explain it here except to say that it would cut the amount of your COLA permanently. At the same time, it would save the government money.

In the tax bill that Congress passed in December, a change was made in the way inflation is measured when figuring out the various tax brackets each taxpayer is in. That's important because the higher your tax bracket, the more taxes you pay.

Now the government will use what is called the "chained CPI." This will increase taxes on nearly everyone

# Letter from the President (cont.)

over time without Congress ever having to vote to raise taxes. That's because inflation will push taxpayers into higher tax brackets, meaning they'll have to pay more in taxes. In short, it seems that Congress just opened the back door to automatic tax increases so they never have to go home and explain to voters why they voted to raise taxes.

Recently, an article was published in a senior's newsletter stating that the chained CPI will also start being used in 2023 to calculate the COLAs for those of us receiving government payments. We are researching to see if it's really the case, or if new legislation would have to be passed in order for that to happen. Even if it is not in current law, we believe there will be a huge push in Congress in the coming months to pass new legislation and move to the chained CPI.

TREA has long been opposed to, and fought against, using the chained CPI because it would hurt every retiree and retired veteran. You can rest assured we will continue to do so. And if, in fact, the tax law has changed to the chained CPI for government payments, we will fight to repeal that part of the law.

On a separate note, one of the things I have the opportunity to do as National President is to attend the events of some of our chapters. Over the past several weeks I attended 55th anniversary of TREA

**Chapter 1 in Colorado Springs.** One of the pleasant surprises of that evening was the opportunity I had to meet Brandon Adam, an Iraq/Afghanistan veteran who lost both of his legs when he was hit by an IED. He told me about how much he appreciated the treatment he has received from the VA. He said they even provided the equipment for him when he told them he wanted to ski.

There are lots of stories we hear that are critical of the VA but we know that so many veterans are receiving the care they need. I was grateful to learn from Brandon what the VA has done for him. I also attended the 33rd anniversary of TREA Chapter 39 and was honored to be their guest speaker.

On March 14th I went to Washington, D.C., to testify before the joint House-Senate Veterans Affairs Committees. While there I took the opportunity to meet with staff members who deal with veterans' issues for Congressman Doug Lamborn, Senator Cory Gardner, Senator Michael Bennet, and also met personally with Congressman Mike Coffman.

During my trip I was accompanied by TREA 1st Vice President Ed Cates, TREA National Board Directors Aaron Reed and Phil Hilinski, The Senior Citizen's League (TSCL) Chairman Art Cooper and members of his board, as well as TREA's Washington staff and the TSCL staff.

I want to thank all of them for their help and support on this important trip.

A copy of my oral testimony is in this issue of the VOICE. A copy of the written testimony is on our web page.

At the hearing, Minnesota U. S. Representative Tim Walz, a TREA Life Member, commented that he gets a lot of information from the VOICE. By him stating this during the actual testimony means that THE VOICE is mentioned in an official capacity in the Congressional archives. This is Representative Walz's last session in Congress. He will surely be missed in Washington D. C. as a strong advocate for veteran matters.

United We Stand  
John I. Adams

## NOMINATING & CREDENTIAL COMMITTEE TREA



The Enlisted Association is accepting resumes for the 2018-2019 National Board of Directors. The following elected positions are:

**President - Ed Cates, Phil Hilinski**

**1st Vice President**

**2nd Vice President**

**3rd Vice President**

**Treasurer - Deborah Oelschig**

**and two 2-Year Directors - CD Rice, Jr. and Hazel Simeon**

There are also two appointed positions considered-- Parliamentarian and Veterans Service Officer.

You must be a member of TREA and meet the eligibility requirements outlined in Bylaw Article IX, Section 2, and have the time to give to help TREA move forward.

Resumes must be submitted on TREA Form 100-3, which is available on the website at [www.trea.org/forms](http://www.trea.org/forms), or by contacting TREA HQ at 800-338-9337. In order to be highlighted in the Voice and included in the convention packets, resumes must be received, not postmarked, at TREA HQ by June 15, 2018. Qualified members may wait until the Convention and be nominated from the floor. However, it will be your responsibility to provide enough resumes for each delegate to receive one. Chapter Presidents will receive forms for Offices and Convention information at a later date.

TREA URGENTLY suggest Members At-Large (MAL) and NAUS members attend the 2018 Convention in Florida, both as a delegate, and as a candidate for the Board of Directors, and vote on important issues presented.

Anyone who seeks election for the first time should plan to attend the Pre-Convention Board Meeting as a guest. It could be a real learning experience. Also, official photos are taken after the elections. So please bring a Navy blazer/suit coat and gray slacks for the photo should you be elected.

HOPE TO SEE YOU IN FLORIDA!

Cheers!!!

C D Rice, Jr.

[directorrice@trea.org](mailto:directorrice@trea.org)

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## TREA LEADERSHIP WORKING THE HILL

When President John Adams went to Washington DC to testify before the House and Senate VA Committees also visited House members' and Senators' offices to discuss the legislative concerns of TREA: the Enlisted Association. It was a long (and cold) day walking from Congressional Offices Buildings from one side of the Hill to the other.

At every office he along with Board of Director member Aaron Reed, Deirdre Holleman and Mike Saunders from our Washington office spoke about increasing the Dependency Indemnification Compensation monthly payments ((as well as ending the SBP/DIC offset):

reinforcing the creation of Veteran Courts throughout the United States and correcting the unfair limitations put on Guard and Reserves Thrift Savings Plan (similar to a 401K) in the new Military Compensation Plan.

President Adams at every office also added his particular concern that the VA needs to do more for female veterans especially when it concerns healthcare.

It is very interesting who you see when walking this long, marble corridors. When waiting to go into Senator Cory Gardner (R-CO) President Adams and the TREA's other representatives ran into retired Colorado Senator Ben Light Horse Campbell (D-CO) who was also waiting for a meeting. They were able to talk about Colorado state issues as well as federal issues. Senator Campbell returned to Colorado after leading the U.S. Senate in 2005.



### Membership Initiative **THE CALL TO ACTION**

It is a great honor and privilege that I write to you as nominated to serve the remaining term of 3rd Vice President by the National Board of Directors. As an organization we are at a pivotal moment in our association's history. We face one of the largest generational gaps between participating member of the association with those that we seek to recruit and join, becoming the standard bearers of TREA: The Enlisted Association for the future. It is for this reason, a **CALL TO ACTION**.

Historically, our associations pillars have been two parts. One being by legislative actions to ensure generations of veterans retired and still in service have advocates to prevent the degradation of benefits earned in service to this great nation. The second being a fraternal organization where member's associate together to celebrate their bonds of camaraderie made during times of war and peace. It is for this reason, a **CALL TO ACTION**.

Over the past decades of our associations history, we as a veteran service organization (VSO) lost touch with our primary mission of legislative action to prevent the demise of veteran's benefits. This of course was at no fault to one owns. It is for this reason, a **CALL TO ACTION**.

I am of the strong belief as TREA 3rd Vice that it is not too late to implement actions that will correct TREAs trajectory. It will take every able member to participate in some form or fashion for the betterment of the association to ensure TREA: The Enlisted Association remains a vital voice in Washington and among VSOs in the advocacy of veterans. Communicate short and often on the benefits to current service member's that may be yet members of TREA. IT is for this reason, a **CALL TO ACTION is required!!**

Sincerely,  
Justin Jump  
TREA National 3rd Vice  
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# ARE YOU READY?

A message from National Auxiliary President, Irmgard Cates



By the time you read this issue, Summer's warmth will be just around the corner. Our convention will be following not too far behind. Are you ready?

I hope to see many of our members in Ft. Walton Beach Fl. at The Island, by Ramada. Our convention site is a very nice place. The Hotel is right on the beach, just a few steps to the water. A big renovation was going on in the hotel when we were there, and I believe that everyone will enjoy themselves. We have factored in free time for you to enjoy the sights and sounds of the Emerald Coast. Be sure you have sunglasses as the pure white beach reflects the sun much like snow on a bright winter day. Details are located throughout this issue.

Ladies we are in a dilemma, there are not enough volunteers to fill the new BOD positions, even positions that have some people in them now need to have competition of new people willing to fill the position. Competition is the way we progress and without competition, we stand the very real risk of not having an effective Auxiliary. I know there are many of you who are strong leaders and organizers, please consider stepping forward to bring your skills to the Auxiliary. You don't have to be a member of a chapter, we would love to have members at large serve on the BOD. We need all members to consider running for a position on the Board. All positions are currently open.

See you in Florida in September!

UNITED WE STAND

Irmgard

## NATIONAL AUXILIARY LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD MEMBERS

Members: Just a reminder to start thinking now about running for a National Auxiliary Board of Directors (BOD) position. Most offices will need candidates. We hope you will consider running for a BOD position. All you have to do is send in your resume or have someone nominate you from the floor at our September 2018 TREA National Convention. Remember you don't have to be present at the Convention to be nominated. Consider running for an office on the National BOD -- our National Auxiliary needs you! (Nominating Committee Chairperson/1 Year Director Alice De Boer)

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## CHAPTER 1

Chapter 1 and its Auxiliary are still in transition, but we have continued to conduct business as usual with plans to have a new chapter home soon.



*Over 20 Auxiliary members are seen boarding the Ramblin Express for an excursion to Cripple Creek. The day included brunch, shopping/ gambling, and a stage show at the Buttle Theater.*



*Pictured is the Auxiliary Hospitality Committee who organized our Christmas Tea: Kitty Jones, Pat Bulst, Chairperson Lily McCutchen, Ruth Adams, Pat Weaver*



*Two raffles were offered at the Tea; they were won by Gloria Burchfield and Becky Kluck. All Proceeds from the raffle were donated to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.*



### THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE ARE FREE

**When we count our blessings; it isn't hard to see that life's most valued treasures are the treasures that are free.**

*For it isn't what we own or buy that signifies our wealth, it's the special gifts that have no price: our family, friends, and health. (Author Unknown)*

Submitted by: National Auxiliary Chaplain Alice De Boer

# COLD WAR SECRETS REVEALED

By Kim DeCoste

According to Tim Lerew, the Chairperson of the Cold War Patriots Advisory Committee, more than 700,000 people served in the United States in the uranium and nuclear weapons industries during the period beginning with the Manhattan Project during WWII and through the "Cold War" era extending to 1980s and 1990s, all over the country. These secret heroes among us were strictly conditioned not to talk about their work all those years ago, but we find now that we must talk about it. Whereas at its peak from the 50s through the 80s, the United States had approximately 70,000 nuclear warheads, today it is believed that only about 2,000-3,000 are active.



As the industry shrinks there is the human legacy of the original pool of workers and their immediate families who are most definitely still impacted by the work and the exposure all those decades ago. They have not done a great job of keeping records, for various reasons. Many of these remaining patriotic Americans have developed disabling and / or fatal illnesses as a direct result of their service.



In a rare moment of bipartisan agreement in 2000, there was a budget surplus in the Federal Government and legislation was passed to address these peoples' needs. In 2001, the act of Congress took effect and a fabulous new acronym was born. The EEOICPA (Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act) grants qualified workers from the industries mentioned both

services and compensation. It is a two-part program that principally addresses four main types of illnesses. There is a two-condition qualification. One is qualifying employment and the other is a qualifying illness.

There are many radiogenic cancers associated with this type of work and there are also illnesses that can be traced back to work with appropriate case development. The example given was, let's say, that of a welder who



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## COLD WAR SECRETS REVEALED (CONT.)

By Kim DeCoste

may have been exposed to fumes as a by-product of his daily work, as opposed to the workers who actually may have directly been in contact with nuclear and or radioactive material. Both could be qualified. In a case such as Parkinson Syndrome, the connection may not be so direct but a case could be made through the work of a claims examiner. Chronic Beryllium Disease, for example, is unique to nuclear workers and is treated at National Jewish Hospital, a leader in respiratory research and science around the country.



The Cold War Patriots are housed in an office building adjacent to the Colorado Governor's mansion in Denver and has a staff of 12 in help centers around the country who direct clients to appropriate resources of many kinds. Through the Department of Labor there are concentrated energy worker resource centers around and near former nuclear and plutonium development sites where there were the highest concentration of workers. There are 400 claims examiners to work on the project and the Department of Labor is an adjudicator.



Approximately one-third of the workers in the industry were once uniformed military service personnel, so veterans are highly impacted across the country and many do not know about the legislation

and its benefits. Benefits can also include travel reimbursement if treatments are specialized and not offered close to where the individual lives. Survivor benefits up to \$325,000 may be paid out to a former worker, his or her spouse, children and grandchildren.

Though we mentioned that CWP is headquartered in Denver, the sites are spread all over the country in places some of us may never have heard of. Places like Oak Ridge, Tennessee; Los Alamos, New Mexico; Hanford, Washington; Lawrence Livermore Labs, California; Piketon, Ohio; Sandia, New Mexico and Golden, Colorado are among the sites where the diverse and dangerous work was done. There was also work done in Amarillo, Texas and Mercury, Nevada all the way up to the 1990s when the Cold War began to finally wind down. Mutually Assured Destruction ensured the ongoing work much longer than many realize.

If you or someone you know might be eligible, Cold War Patriots can be found online at [www.ColdWarPatriots.com](http://www.ColdWarPatriots.com) or you can reach out to the Help Center at 866-449-1595. We all owe a great debt of gratitude to these humble heroes who worked in the shadows and won a cold war, which was a war with its own casualties nonetheless.

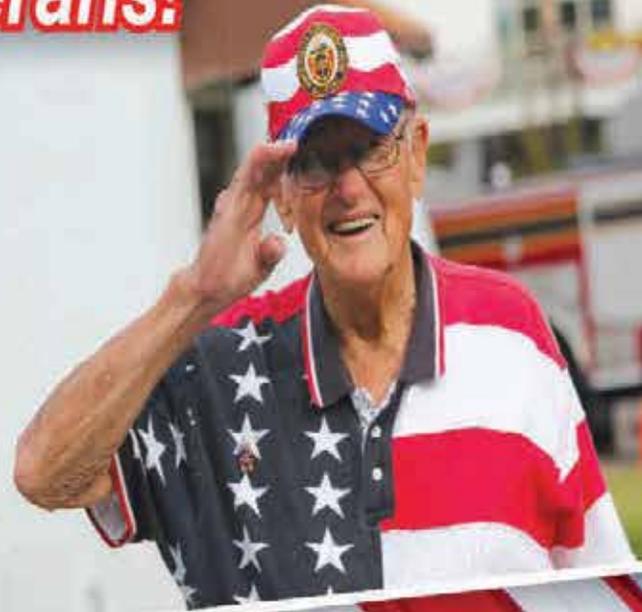


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## BILLS WE ARE SUPPORTING SPRING 2018

By Deirdre Parke Holleman, TREA Washington Executive Director

Below is a partial list of legislation that we are supporting in Congress this year that has been carried over from last year. Of course additional bills will be added. And often we are successful legislative-

ly by folding the substance of a stand-alone bill into an omnibus bill like the NDAA or a large veterans bill.

You can keep track of these (or any other bills you are interested in by going to [www.Congress.gov](http://www.Congress.gov)) You can also call us at your Washington Office at 1-800-554-8732 to get more information, or tell us of your concerns, suggestions etc. Also you may want to talk about writing a resolution for TREA to cover additional matters. Please feel free to call us we would love to speak to you about these matters.

### RETIREE ISSUES

**H.R. 303- The Retired Pay Restoration Act –original sponsor Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL) now with 84 co-sponsors** This is the Republican House bill that will end military retired pay and veterans disability pay offsets for all remaining longevity retirees (10%-40%). This signifies over 25 years for father and son Bilirakis sponsoring legislation to end this offset.

**H.R.333- The Disabled Veterans Tax Termination Act-original sponsor** Rep. Sanford Bishop (D-GA) with 37 co-sponsors This is the Democratic version and includes Chapter 61 medical retirees along with 10%-40% longevity retirees. It has not moved and still has 37 co-sponsors

**S. 66 The Retired Pay Restoration Act original sponsor Sen. Dean Heller (R-NV) still with 11 co-sponsors** This is the new Senate version (now Republican) but still from Nevada since Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid who regularly sponsored this bill retired last year.

### VETERANS ISSUES

**H.R. 299- A bill that would cover Vietnam War Blue Water Navy Veterans with the same presumption of causation of illness due to exposure to Agent Orange. Original sponsor Rep. David G. Valadao (R-CA) with 327 co-sponsors** - This is a bill that we should

be able to get passed before the end of the year. Please read the companion article in this issue of the magazine S422- companion bill to above, original sponsor Senator Kristin Gillibrand (D-NY) with 49 co-sponsors!

**S. 1389 – A bill to allow the CFPB to provide greater protection to service members Sen. Jack Reed (D-RI) with 16 co-sponsors.** Increase consumer protections for service members covered by the SCRA

**S. 1325 – Better Workforce for Veterans Act of 2017 Sen. Jon Tester (D-MT) with 6 co-sponsors** Improving hiring at the VA

**S. 1279 –Veterans Health Administration Reform Act of 2017 sponsor Sen. Mike Crapo (R-ID) improve civilian healthcare provided through the VA. Now with 1 co-sponsor.** He was able to convince his fellow Idaho Senator James Risch (R-ID)

**S. 1277 – Veterans Employment through Technology Education Course Act of 2017 original sponsor Sen John Boozman (R-AR) and 5 co-sponsors.** This bill would require the VA to create a 5-year pilot program that provides “high technology programs of education, which are programs that are offered by entities other than institutions of higher learning, do not lead to a degree, and provide instruction in computer programming, computer software, media application, data processing, or information sciences.”.

**S. 1261 - Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-LA) Veterans Emergency Room Relief Act original Sponsor Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-LA) Bill that would allow the VA to pay for civilian Urgent Care**

**S. 1218 – Empowering Federal Employment for Disabled Veterans Act original sponsor Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND)**

**S. 1209 - A bill to increase the amount of special pension for Medal of Honor recipients original sponsor Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC)**

**S. 1192 - Veterans to Enhance Studies through Accessibility Act of 2017**

**S. 1161 – Veterans Preventive Health Coverage Fairness original sponsor Sen. Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) with 5 co-sponsors**

**S. 1024 – Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017 original sponsor Sen. Johnny Isakson (R-GA) with 31 co-sponsors**

## BILLS WE ARE SUPPORTING SPRING 2018 (cont.)

By Deirdre Parke Holleman

### **S. 946 – Veterans Treatment Court Improvement Act of 2017 original sponsor Sen. Jeff Flake (R-AZ) with 17 co-sponsors has passed the Senate and has been sent to the House of Representatives**

This bill requires the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to hire at least 50 Veterans Justice Outreach Specialists, place each one at an eligible VA medical center, and ensure that each one serves as part of a justice team in a veterans treatment court or other veteran-focused court.

An eligible VA medical center is one that:

- complies with all VA guidelines and regulations for placement of a specialist;
- works with a veteran with active, ongoing, or recent contact with some component of a local criminal justice system;
- maintains an affiliation with one or more veterans treatment courts or other veteran-focused courts; and
- either routinely provides specialists, or establishes a VA-approved plan to provide specialists, to serve as part of a justice team in such a court.

The VA shall prioritize the placement of specialists at eligible VA medical centers that have an affiliation with such a court that: (1) was established after the date of this bill's enactment, or (2) was established before such date and is not fully staffed with specialists.

### **S. 925 - VETS Act of 2017 original sponsor Sen. Joni Ernst (R-IA) with 12 co-sponsors**

### **S. 804 Women Veterans Access to Quality Care Act of 2017 original Sen. Dean Heller (R-NV with) 3 co-sponsors**

### **S. 784 – Sen. Johnny Isakson (R-GA) Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2017 15 co-sponsors** applying yearly COLA to VA payments

### **S. 726 – Sen Jerry Moran (R-KS) Gary Deloney and John Olsen Toxic Exposure Declassification Act** directs DoD to declassify all documents to any exposure to at least 100 people where at least 1 fell in

### **S. 681 – Deborah Sampson Act original sponsor Sen. Jon Tester (D-MT) with 21 co-sponsors** This is the big military sexual trauma healthcare bill pending in Congress that we support. However, it also includes a proposed change in the VA's motto that TREA has not taken a position on.

“This bill directs the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to carry out a three-year pilot program to assess the feasibility of peer-to-peer assistance for women veterans (including those who are separating or newly separated from the Armed Forces), with emphasis placed on women who suffered service-related sexual trauma or who are at risk of becoming homeless.

Additionally, the VA shall:

- expand the women veterans call center to include a text messaging capability;
- establish a partnership with at least one nongovernmental organization to provide legal services to women veterans based upon their 10 highest unmet needs;
- retrofit VA medical facilities with fixtures, materials, and other outfitting measures to support the care of women veterans;
- ensure that each VA medical facility has at least one full-time or part-time women's health primary care provider;
- expand to 14 days VA post-delivery care services for women veterans who are receiving maternity care in a VA or VA-contracted facility;
- ensure that the women veteran manager program is supported at each VA medical center with a program manager and an ombudsman;
- collect, analyze, and publish data on each VA service or benefit program and disaggregate such data by sex and minority status; and
- publish an Internet website that serves as a centralized information source for women veterans' benefits and services.”

### **S. 609 – Sen. Jerry Moran (R-KS) Chiropractic Care Available to All Veterans Act of 2017 Sen. Jerry Moran (R-KS)** This bill directs that all VA medical centers will provide chiropractic care by December 31st 2020

### **S. 591 – Military and Veteran Caregiver Services Improvement Act of 2017 original sponsor Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) and 33 co-sponsors** This bill would enlarge the present Caretakers program coverage to cover those carrying for those who were severely injured during service prior to 9/11.

### **H.R. 1063 – Veteran Prescription Continuity Act** - This bill amends the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 to direct the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to furnish an individual who is transitioning from Department of Defense (DOD)- to VA-furnished medical treatment any pharmaceutical agent not included in the



## **BILLS WE ARE SUPPORTING SPRING 2018 (cont.)**

**By Deirdre Parke Holleman**

joint uniform formulary if a DOD health care provider determines that the pharmaceutical agent is critical for the transition.

The VA shall furnish an individual with such pharmaceutical agent: (1) beginning when the individual enrolls in the VA health care system, and (2) ending when a DOD health care provider determines that the individual does not require the pharmaceutical agent.

### **GUARD AND RESERVE ISSUES**

**H.R.1049 — Department of Defense Emergency Response Capabilities Database Enhancement Act of 2017 Sponsor: Rep. Langevin, James R. [D-RI-2]**

**H.R.3218 — Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017 Sponsor: Rep. Roe, David P. [R-TN-1]**

**H.R.1216 ---- Protecting Veterans From School Closures Act of 2017 Sponsor: Rep. Messer, Luke [R-IN-6]**

**H.R.1379 — To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the entitlement to educational assistance under the Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs for members of the Armed Forces awarded the Purple Heart. Sponsor: Rep. Peters, Scott H. [D-CA-52]**

**H.R.1384 — Reserve Component Benefits Parity Act Sponsor: Rep. Palazzo, Steven M. [R-MS-4]**

**S.667 — Reserve Component Benefits Parity Act Sponsor: Sen. Franken, Al [D-MN]**

**H.R.2103 — Julian Woods Yellow Ribbon Program Expansion Act Sponsor: Rep. Rutherford, John H. [R-FL-4]**

**S.1086 — A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to remove the prohibition on eligibility for TRICARE Reserve Select of members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces who are eligible to enroll in a health benefits plan under chapter 89 of title 5, United States Code. Sponsor: Sen. Hatch, Orrin G. [R-UT]**

**S.143 — Military Spouse Job Continuity Act of 2017 Sponsor: Sen. Casey, Robert P., Jr. [D-PA]**

**S.697 — Tax Relief for Guard and Reserve Training Act Sponsor: Sen. Daines, Steve [R-MT]**

**S.1316 — A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for a one-year extension of the suicide prevention and resilience program for the National Guard and Reserves. Sponsor: Sen. Ernst, Joni [R-IA]**

**S.969 — Supporting Children of the National Guard and Reserve Act Sponsor: Sen. Klobuchar, Amy [D-MN]**

**H.R.4589 — Supporting Children of the National Guard and Reserve Act Sponsor: Rep. Correa, J. Luis [D-CA-46]**

**H.R.1726 — Coast Guard Improvement and Reform Act of 2017 Sponsor: Rep. Hunter, Duncan D. [R-CA-50]**

**H.R.3558 — Improve Access to Care for Our Female Veterans Act Sponsor: Rep. Brooks, Susan W. [R-IN-5]**

### **SURVIVOR ISSUES**

**H.R.846 Military Surviving Equity Act- original sponsor Rep. Joe Wilson (R-SC) with 207 co-sponsors**  
This bill would completely end the SBP/DIC offset. It has 207 co-sponsors but Congress again and again lets it die in Committee

**S. 339-Military Widow's Tax Elimination Act of 2017 original sponsor** Senator Bill Nelson (D-FL) with 36 co-sponsors. This is the Senate version of HR846. It would completely end the SBP/DIC offset for widows/widowers. It is also allowed to die in Committee.

**H.R. 3011 Rep. Walter Jones (R-NC) Military Survivor Comfort Act Rep. Walter Jones (R-NC) with 4 co-sponsors**  
This bill would require the United States to forgive any military retired or retainer pay overpayment for the time between the death of the retiree and the end of the month he or she died in if the payment is electronically deposited in a joint account. It was the last project that our good friend Gunney Mac McKinney was working on before he died.

**S.1990- Dependency Indemnification Compensation Improvement Act original Sponsor** Senator Jon Tester (D-MN) with 4 co-sponsors to make DIC 55% of 100% disable VA Service Connected Compensation monthly payment

## Legislative Committee Report

Aaron Reed, Director & Legislative Committee Chair



This has been another busy year working with the TREA National Washington Office and learning about our exciting and evolving legislative agenda. On March 12th -15th, 2018, I had the pleasure to attend TREA President, John Adams' testimony to the Joint House/

Senate Veteran's Affairs Committee. The hearing was attended by TSCL, MOAA, AUSA, MOPH and others. I also had the opportunity to attend a roundtable on Wednesday morning, hosted by Representatives Jody Arrington (R-TX), and Beto O'Rourke (D-TX). Representative Arrington is the Chairperson of HVAC's Economic Opportunity Subcommittee and Representative O'Rourke is the ranking member of the same committee. Some of the questions and concern I had were regarding the needs of the Homeless Veterans and the Hazelwood Act which provide veterans with tuition assistance in higher education.

I also met with Senators Michael Bennett, and Cory Gardner along with the staff with TREA President John Adams, TSCL Legislative and Chairman Joseph Kluck.

Finally, during this visit, I also had a sit down with Representative Mike Coffman to discuss the following concerns and issues:

1. Coordinating a tour of the New VA Hospital (Aurora, CO)
2. Homeless Veterans

Again, during these meetings we were able to keep our concern in the forefront of the current legislators. Other issues/benefits to be aware or listed below:

### **Veteran's Admission to the National Museum of African American History and Culture - Update**



*TSCL Trustee Joe Kluck, TREA Director & Legislative Committee Chair Aaron Reed, Representative Mike Coffman, TREA National President John Adams & Deputy Director of Legislative Affairs Michael Saunders*

(Posted on March 15, 2017 March 28, 2017)



*TREA Director Reed with Representative O'Rourke (D-TX) and Representative Jody Arrington (T-TX)*

The Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture has changed its admission rules: Veterans no longer need to obtain passes in advance. Instead show your ID (active duty, retired, veteran) and you can enter the museum along with two (2) guests

Because you do not need a ticket, you cannot gift this to someone else, and the veteran must be present in order for the guests to get in. All Veterans are included and can get ID cards from the VA, or the Veteran indicator on their Driver's license from the local Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). You may also show your DD214.

<http://www.naavets.org/veterans-admission-national-museum-african-american-history-culture-update/>

### **H.R. Bill 4099**

Rep. Coffman (CO) introduced H.R. 4099, a bill which modifies the calculation of per diem payments the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) makes to homeless grant providers to include partial payment for each of



## Legislative Committee Report (cont.)

Aaron Reed, Director & Legislative Committee Chair

a homeless veteran's minor dependents. This will ensure that a homeless veteran does not have to choose between treatment and keeping her or his family intact.

VA's Homeless Grant and Per Diem (GPD) Program has long been an important source of transitional housing for homeless veterans. In 2016, these programs, generally operated by community providers who receive grant funding from VA, had 13,800 beds devoted to providing supportive housing and/or supportive services for homeless veterans. Veterans may enter these programs to stabilize their medical and behavioral health issues, learn or re-learn independent living and vocational skills and seek VA services and benefits that help them recover from life on the streets. VA notes this is a successful program that in 2016 helped 16,500 veterans move from transitional to permanent housing.

Please support this legislation to assist our homeless veterans and their families. You can use the prepared letter below to ask your Representative to co-sponsor H.R. 4099.

[https://www.votervoice.net/Broadcastlinks/DjiuS0N-Bvt23XOs\\_iO2lig](https://www.votervoice.net/Broadcastlinks/DjiuS0N-Bvt23XOs_iO2lig)

### TRICARE West Region Handoff Not Going Well

Tricare beneficiaries in the West region have been facing widespread issues ever since United Health Care handed off responsibility for managing to the new provider, Health Net Federal Service on January 1, 2018. Families are facing problems getting referrals to specialists, they are having trouble finding area doctors and other medical providers that are in the Tricare network, they are experiencing enrollment delays, and they are waiting sometimes 45 minutes or more when they call customer service.

"The DHA recognizes the issues with backlogs, call wait times and the number of provider choices for beneficiaries in the West Region. We are committed to working with Health Net Federal Service to resolve them in a timely manner," said Ken Cannestrini, acting director of Tricare Health Plan.

The Defense Health Agency has been working with Health Net Federal Services to address the problems. One action the agency implemented was waiving its usual authorization process for Tricare Prime referrals in the West region temporarily. This was effective through March 18.

This means that beneficiaries could get a referral from their primary care provider, download a referral and authorization letter, then seek outpatient specialty care services that are covered by Tricare. These waiver approvals will be valid for services received through June 15.

As of Jan. 1, Tricare in the U.S. shrank from three regions to two. The geographic area of Tricare West didn't change, but the contractor changed to Health Net Federal Services.

Tricare North and Tricare South combined to form Tricare East, with the contractor Humana Military, which previously had the contract for Tricare South.

The TRICARE West Region includes the states of Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa (except the Rock Island Arsenal area), Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri (except the St. Louis area), Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas (areas of Western Texas only), Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

Along with the change in contractors, Tricare has undergone a number of other changes, including replacing Tricare Standard and Tricare Extra with a single plan dubbed Tricare Select. Some beneficiaries will be grandfathered into the system.

Patients waiting to see oncologists, surgeons and other specialists for life-threatening concerns that are forced to wait for referrals to be approved, or they are forced to pay for services out of their own pocket

There has been reported wait times of anywhere from 45 to 93 minutes when providers call to ask about referrals.

A lot of the issues stem from the fact that Health Net has had to create a new network of providers, and is having challenges building that network. United did not transfer their provider network after they lost the con-

## Legislative Committee Report (cont.)

Aaron Reed, Director & Legislative Committee Chair

tract, possibly in an attempt to re-bid on the contract in the future.

The call volume at the contractors' call centers for both the West and East regions has been overwhelming because while beneficiaries have had questions about the new contract, they have also been calling about the new prescription drug co-pays. The East region has been able to roll with the punches more effectively than the West region, at this point in time. TREA has heard that there is a 70,000 call backlog at Health Net's call service center. Health Net is hiring additional temporary staff and cross-training at their call center, according to the announcement.

There was also an enrollment backlog, partly because of the required system-wide three-week enrollment freeze back in December. To address the enrollment backlog, Health Net has allowed beneficiaries in Tricare Prime whose primary care manager isn't in the network, or who haven't yet been assigned one, to see any Tricare authorized PCM. This exception ended March 31st.

TREA: The Enlisted Association will keep beating the drum until these problems are resolved.

### TRICARE DRUG COPAY HIKES CAUSE CONFUSION

Over the last few weeks TREA: The Enlisted Association has heard from many Tricare for Life (TFL) beneficiaries who were surprised that the recent increase to pharmacy costs affected them as well. In case you were not aware, generic drugs that had been completely free if received by mail order are now \$7 for a 90-day supply.

Drug prices increased Feb. 1 for all TRICARE users, including retirees over 65 on TFL.

A 90-day supply of generic drugs received through the system's Express Scripts mail-order pharmacy went from free to \$7. Co-pays on brand-name drugs received through the mail went from \$20 to \$24 and from \$49 to \$53 for non-formulary drugs.

For prescriptions filled at retail pharmacies, a 30-day supply for generic drugs increased from \$10 to

\$11, while brand-name drugs went from \$24 to \$28; non-formulary drugs went from \$49 to \$53.

### Drugs filled at a military treatment facility continue to be free.

Many people had read that changes to TRICARE that happened January 1 didn't affect them. They still don't, but the prescription drug program is actually separate from the TRICARE benefit itself, so TFL users are caught up in any changes to the prescription drug program.

TREA: The Enlisted Association apologizes for the lack of clarity, and we will try to do a better job of communicating what is coming next time.

### 'WE WANT TO CONNECT WITH VETERANS BEFORE THEY KNOW THEY NEED US': VA LAUNCHES CONCIERGE FOR CARE PROGRAM

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has announced the launch of Concierge for Care, a health-care enrollment initiative that connects with former service members shortly after they separate from the service.

As part of Concierge for Care, VA staff members are personally contacting recently separated service members to answer questions, process their health-care enrollment applications over the phone and help schedule eligible Veterans' first VA medical appointment, if needed. Each week, VA receives a list of separating service members from the Department of Defense. The goal is to make contact with them within a month of discharge.

Certain Veterans who served in a theater of combat operations are eligible to enroll and receive cost-free health care for medical conditions related to their military service during the five-year period after discharge. Information about VA health care and the application process can be found at <https://www.vets.gov/health-care/> apply/.

## Legislative Committee Report (cont.)

Aaron Reed, Director & Legislative Committee Chair

### DECISION READY CLAIM

Thinking of filing another VA disability compensation claim? Make sure you file it through the Decision Ready

Claim (DRC) Program. With DRC, you can get a decision on your claim in 30 days or less.

Work with an accredited Veterans Service Organization (VSO) to determine if the DRC Program is right for you and your claim. Your VSO can then help you gather and submit all relevant and required evidence so your claim is ready for VA to make a decision when you submit it.

Learn more about the DRC Program, including eligibility requirements, what medical evidence you need to submit, and how to find an accredited VSO at <https://www.benefits.va.gov/compensations/drc.asp>

#### HR1928

TREA: The Enlisted Association is proud to support for H.R. 1928, the Families of Fallen Service Members First Act. Originally sponsored by Congressman Gerry Connolly (D-VA), it ensures that from now on military surviving families do not experience any delays in receiving death gratuities and elated benefits in event of a government shutdown.

When a service member dies on active duty, his or her family is entitled to a tax free payment of \$100,000

known as the death gratuity. Bereaved military families rely on this money to meet any financial hardships they may incur, immediately following the loss of their loved on. No family entitled to this relatively modest benefit should ever have to experience a delay in payment, simply because Congress temporarily fails to perform its primary duty of funding the U.S. Government.

It is unconscionable that this legislation has been introduced five times now without passing both the House and the Senate. Surviving family members of fallen service members should not be pawns in the games of politicians.

### VA RESUMES ONLINE APPLICATIONS FOR NEW ID CARDS

Veterans can again submit online applications for new identification cards through the Department of Veterans Affairs website. The system is back up after crashing in December due to overwhelming demand.

The purpose of the identification cards is to help veterans prove their military history without having to carry around their DD-214 certificates, which contain sensitive information. The new ID'S do not replace VA medical card or DOD retiree cards, nor do they qualify as official government-issued identification.

Dear Members: We thought we would try a new feature this issue called "From the Shelves". If you would like to suggest a book for your fellow TREA members, please contact the editors at TREA HQ by mail or email and let us know. We will try to publish a few new titles if we can each issue. To start, here are some of our favorites to take on your next vacation for easy reading. See you in Florida!

#### Fiction:

- A Man Called Ove by Frederik Backman
- The Art of Racing in the Rain by Garth Stein
- The Lovely Bones by Alice Sebold

#### Nonfiction:

- The Fine Art of Small Talk by Debra Fine
- A History of the World in Six Glasses by Tom Standee
- Wine and War by Don & Petie Kladstrup

**HAVE A WONDERFUL SPRING AND WE HOPE TO SEE YOU  
AT FT. WALTON BEACH, FL!**

# Drug Companies Fear Release of the New AloeCure

**Big Pharma stands to lose billions as doctors' recommend drug-free "health cocktail" that adjusts and corrects your body's health conditions.**

by David Waxman  
Seattle Washington:

Drug company execs are nervous. That's because the greatest health advance in decades has hit the streets. And analysts expect it to put a huge crimp in "Big Pharma" profits.

So what's all the fuss about? It's about a new ingredient that's changing the lives of people who use it. Some call it "the greatest discovery since penicillin"!

The name of the product is the AloeCure. It's not a drug. It's something completely different. And the product is available to anyone who wants it, at a reasonable price. But demands may force future prices to rise.

## TOP DOC WARNS: DIGESTION DRUGS CAN CRIPPLE YOU!

Company spokesperson, Dr. Liza Leal; a leading integrative health specialist recommends AloeCure before she decides to prescribe any digestion drug. Especially after the FDA's stern warning about long-term use of drugs classified as proton pump inhibitors like Prilosec®, Nexium®, and Prevacid®. In a nutshell, the FDA statement warned people should avoid taking these digestion drugs for longer than three 14-day treatment periods because there is an increased risk of bone fractures. Many people take them daily and for decades.

Dr. Leal should know. Many patients come to her with bone and joint complaints and she does everything she can to help them. One way for digestion sufferers to help avoid possible risk of tragic joint and bone problems caused by overuse of digestion drugs is to take the AloeCure.

**Analysts expect the AloeCure to put a huge crimp in "Big Pharma" profits.**

The secret to AloeCure's "health adjusting" formula is scientifically tested Acemannan, a polysaccharide extracted from Aloe Vera. But not the same aloe vera that mom used to apply to your cuts, scrapes and burns. This is a perfect strain of aloe that is organically grown under very strict conditions. AloeCure is so powerful it begins to benefit your health the instant you take it. It soothes intestinal discomfort and you can avoid the possibility of bone and health damage caused by overuse of digestion drugs. We all know how well aloe works externally on cuts, scrapes and burns. But did you know Acemannan has many of other health benefits?...

## HELPS THE IMMUNE SYSTEM TO CALM INFLAMMATION

According to a leading aloe research, when correctly processed for digesting, the Aloe plant has a powerful component for regulating your immune system called Acemannan. So whether it's damage that is physical, bacterial, chemical or autoimmune; the natural plant helps the body stay healthy.

## RAPID ACID AND HEARTBURN NEUTRALIZER

Aloe has proved to have an astonishing effect on users who suffer with digestion problems like bouts of acid reflux, heartburn, cramping, gas and constipation because it acts as a natural acid buffer and soothes the digestive system. But new studies prove it does a whole lot more.

## SIDE-STEP HEART CONCERNS

So you've been taking proton pump inhibitors (PPI's) for years and you feel just fine. In June of 2015 a major study shows that chronic PPI use increases the risk of heart attack in general population.

## UNLEASH YOUR MEMORY

Studies show that your brain needs the healthy bacteria from your gut in order function at its best. Both low and high dosages of digestion drugs are proven to destroy that healthy bacteria and get in the way of brain function. So you're left with a sluggish, slow-to-react brain without a lot of room to store information. The acemannan used in AloeCure actually makes your gut healthier, so healthy bacteria flows freely to your brain so you think better, faster and with a larger capacity for memory.

**Doctors call it "The greatest health discovery in decades!"**

## SLEEP LIKE A BABY

A night without sleep really damages your body. And continued lost sleep can lead to all sorts of health problems. But what you may not realize is the reason why you're not sleeping. Some call it "Ghost Reflux". A low-intensity form of acid reflux discomfort that quietly keeps you awake in the background. AloeCure helps digestion so you may find yourself sleeping through the night.

## CELEBRITY HAIR, SKIN & NAILS

Certain antacids may greatly reduce your body's ability to break down and absorb



calcium. Aloe delivers calcium as it aids in balancing your stomach acidity. The result? Thicker, healthier looking hair...more youthful looking skin... And nails so strong they may never break again.

## SAVE YOUR KIDNEY

National and local news outlets are reporting Kidney Failure linked to PPI's. Your Kidney extracts waste from blood, balance body fluids, form urine, and aid in other important functions of the body. Without it your body would be overrun by deadly toxins. Aloe helps your kidney function properly. Studies suggest, if you started taking aloe today; you'd see a big difference in the way you feel.

## GUARANTEED RESULTS OR DOUBLE YOUR MONEY BACK

Due to the incredible results people are reporting, AloeCure is being sold with an equally incredible guarantee.

"We can only offer this incredible guarantee because we are 100% certain this product will work for those who use it," Says Dr. Leal.

Here's how it works: Take the pill exactly as directed. You must see and feel remarkable improvements in your digestive health, your mental health, in your physical appearance, the amount inflammation you have throughout your body - even in your ability to fall asleep at night!

Otherwise, simply return the empty bottles with a short note about how you took the pills and followed the simple instructions and the company will send you...Double your money back!

## HOW TO GET ALOECURE

This is the official nationwide release of the new AloeCure pill in the United States. And so, the company is offering our readers up to 3 FREE bottles with their order.

This special give-away is available for readers of this publication only. All you have to do is call TOLL-FREE 1-800-809-0023 and provide the operator with the Free Bottle Approval Code: JC025. The company will do the rest.

**Important:** Due to AloeCure's recent media exposure, phone lines are often busy. If you call and do not immediately get through, please be patient and call back.



## **NEW VISION AND DENTAL PLANS COMING SOON TO MILITARY FAMILIES AND RETIREES**

Larry Madison, Director of Legislative Affairs

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), in partnership with the Defense Health Agency (DHA) and the Department of Defense (DoD), announced the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) will be offered for the first time to TRICARE eligible retirees and their families during the 2018 Federal Benefits Open Season. Active duty family members will be eligible to enroll in FEDVIP vision insurance.

The TRICARE Retiree Dental Program ends on Dec. 31, 2018. Those enrolled in TRDP must choose a dental plan through FEDVIP to have coverage in 2019. Enrollment is not automatic. Today's announcement affects 1.63 million beneficiaries enrolled in TRDP and offers a choice to an additional 1.3 million eligible retired beneficiaries not currently enrolled in TRDP.

Most beneficiaries in a TRICARE health plan may enroll in a FEDVIP vision plan. This comprehensive vision coverage, including eyeglasses or contacts, is in addition to the routine eye examination benefit that many beneficiaries have under TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Select.

The Federal Benefits Open Season enrollment period, Nov. 12, 2018 through Dec. 10, 2018, runs concurrently with the TRICARE Open Season. Coverage will be effective Jan. 1, 2019.

FEDVIP currently serves more than 3 million Federal employees, retirees and their families. FEDVIP enrollees give the program high marks for quality and value. It provides comprehensive dental and vision insurance at competitive group rates with 10 dental and four vision carriers for enrollees to choose from "OPM is thrilled to offer a variety of quality vision and dental plans to our military retirees and their families, and for the first time, an option for vision insurance to active duty family members," said OPM Director Jeff Pon. "We look forward to providing FEDVIP to the military, their families, and retirees." For more information, you can go online to [TRICAREbenefeds.com](http://TRICAREbenefeds.com) to sign up to receive messages, updates, and reminders on the FEDVIP throughout the rest of this year.

You don't need to take action yet. However, if you would like dental and/or vision coverage next year, effective January 1, 2019, you must select and enroll in a FEDVIP plan during the next Federal Benefits Open Season. Open season is your annual opportunity to sign up for FEDVIP, and this year it runs from November 12 through December 10, 2018. If you're currently enrolled in a TRDP plan, you will not be automatically enrolled in a FEDVIP plan for 2019. You must enroll during open season.

Unfortunately, there is no further information available from DoD on how to enroll if you do not have computer access.

### **ARE YOU IN TOUCH?**

**Do you receive our weekly Legislative Update? How about the VOICE Weekly?**

If you do – GREAT! That's what we want to hear.

If you do not, then please contact TREA Headquarters ([treahq@treahq.org](mailto:treaheadquarters@treahq.org)) and provide us with your e-mail and we will make sure that you do not miss another one.

## Commissaries In Danger of Closing? By Larry Madison, TREA Legislative Director

For the last few years TREA has been warning that the commissary benefit is under major attack. Back in 2011 the Senate Armed Services Committee voted to combine all base exchanges and commissary operations everywhere into one for-profit retail business.

While that did not come to fruition it began the attacks on the commissaries by some key members of Congress who have complained about the taxpayer subsidy of commissaries. Those attacks kept getting stronger until a couple of years ago when DeCA, the Defense Commissary Agency, was forced to take measures to change how commissaries are operated in an effort to try and save the benefit.

The Department of Defense has stated that it expects to reduce government funding for commissaries and exchanges by an estimated \$2 billion (\$1 billion from commissaries and another \$1 billion funding target for exchanges) over a 5-year period during fiscal years 2017-2021. However, a Government Accounting Office report released in November confirms that DoD's plans for commissary and exchange cost savings have no basis in data, merit, or methodical analysis. And DeCA has told Congress that it is not possible to eliminate the subsidy entirely and still save the benefit.

That's why a recent report is so troubling. According to military columnist Tom Philpott, commissary officials have said that on-base sales at commissaries fell six percent last year, which continues a trend that began in 2012. Sales have dropped a total of 21.3 percent since then.

According to Philpott, "The worry is that falling sales leave commissaries open to criticism that they're losing relevancy as a military perk, or becoming too costly for taxpayers to support, given the fierce competition for customers from commercial grocers."

The fall in sales is ironic because surveys have shown that the benefit is the second most popular one after health care, according to Pentagon officials.

In addition to the benefit itself, commissary and exchange programs are a gift that keeps on giving to the military community—spinning off benefits far in excess of resources that are consumed—tens of thousands of jobs for family members; financing hundreds of millions of dollars in base infrastructure improvements;

hundreds of millions of dollars in dividends that support MWR programs; and providing the support and financial base for services and programs for overseas and deployed forces.

Yet as commissary sales fall, so too will sales at the exchanges, gas stations, and the other on-base retail stores. And that will mean less money for MWR programs.

In spite of this, TREA has received word that the new DoD chief management officer recently appointed by President Trump has drafted a memorandum that proposes combining all three military exchange services (AAFES, Navy Exchange, and Marine Corps Exchange), plus the commissary system into one giant retail system. If the memorandum is signed by Deputy Defense Secretary Patrick M. Shanahan "the memo would have the Department of Defense under President Trump reconsider, and likely reverse, an Obama Administration decision of two years ago not to consolidate" the commissary system with the three exchange systems.

This is in spite of the fact that the Defense Department issued a report to Congress in 2016 that stated, "Because of their different approaches to fulfilling their specific mission and delivering their respective benefits the creation of a single resale entity through consolidation is not recommended."

Besides less money for MWR programs the obvious danger is that this consolidation would, in essence, eliminate the commissary benefit by raising prices so that for most people in the military community it would be cheaper to buy groceries at Walmart or some other local grocery store. There would be no incentive to shop at a commissary and this would result in the closing of all commissary stores, and add to the growing list of military benefits that have disappeared.

In the meantime, DoD has set annual targets DeCA must hit to lower its appropriation from \$1.4 billion in 2017 to \$400 million by 2021. Military leaders have testified they want that billion dollars in savings applied to more critical readiness needs.

DeCA's target for 2018 is to lower reliance on appropriated dollars by \$150 million but reaching that goal is likely to be very difficult.

## Commissaries In Danger of Closing? By Larry Madison, TREA Legislative Director (cont.)

TREA is and has been very active in the fight to save the commissaries. Our goals are to:

- Preserve the Commissary benefit as part of the overall pay and compensation package, including high quality products, maintained savings, access, and customer satisfaction.
- Advocate for the necessary appropriations to properly fund the Commissary (and Exchange), to maintain savings, access, quality and satisfaction.
- Oppose consolidations of the Commissary and Exchange systems that degrade the earned benefit.
- Ensure Congressional oversight of all changes impacting the military resale system, overall. Benefits derived from the resale benefit must be preserved, including: quality, savings, and access for patrons; and sufficient MWR dividends to ensure access to quality of life and support programs.
  - Give commissary and exchange patrons an opportunity to provide input before moving forward and urge the creation of a patron advisory council.
  - Engage with DOD on efforts to achieve budget neutrality in operation of commissaries and exchanges.
  - Ensure the Exchange and Commissary systems have sufficient appropriated funding to permit their full operation, savings, customer

satisfaction, high product quality, and profitability of these systems to support the entire military community, including the delivery of MWR dividends.

- Fight for expanded programs and full funding of MWR and other quality of life programs in future years in defense budgets and base operation accounts.
- Monitor Public-Private Partnerships initiatives used as cost-cutting or offset measures to address funding shortfalls in base operation accounts, ensuring any such partnerships result in the improvement and delivery of high-level quality of life programs to military and their families.

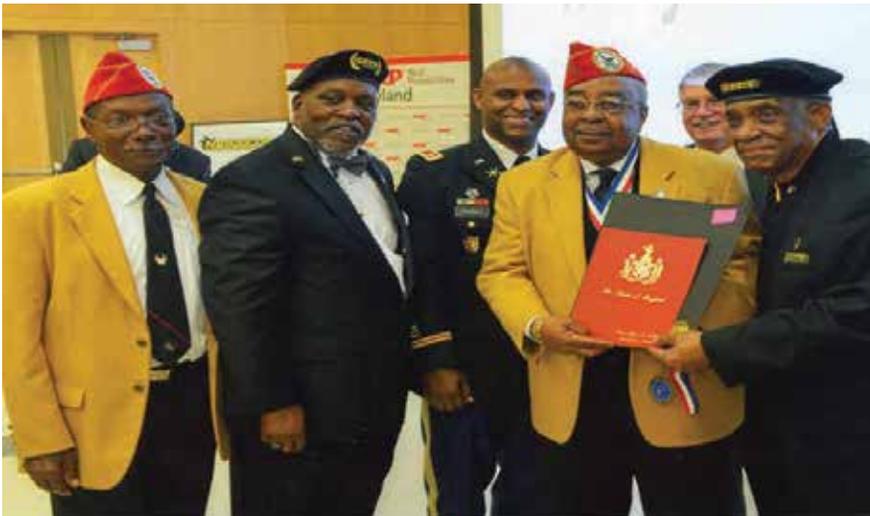
### What can you do to save the commissaries?

First, shop there as often as possible. Congress is watching the sales at commissaries and if they continue to decline, it will be harder and harder to justify keeping them.

Second, contact your Senators and Representative and tell them you oppose combining commissaries with exchanges and that you want the commissary benefit saved.

TREA will keep fighting here in Washington but what you do at home will be the most important thing that determines if commissaries will be saved.

## Mr. Michael Gales Presentation



*Michael Gales, president of TREA Chapter 9 was awarded the Jeffrey Carey Achievement award for his dedicated service to the BOD of TSCL and his years of service to TREA given at the 18th Annual Buffalo Soldiers Memorial Banquet at Morgan State University in Baltimore MD on 17 Feb. 2018 with him is Teddy Holman and members of NEBVETS*

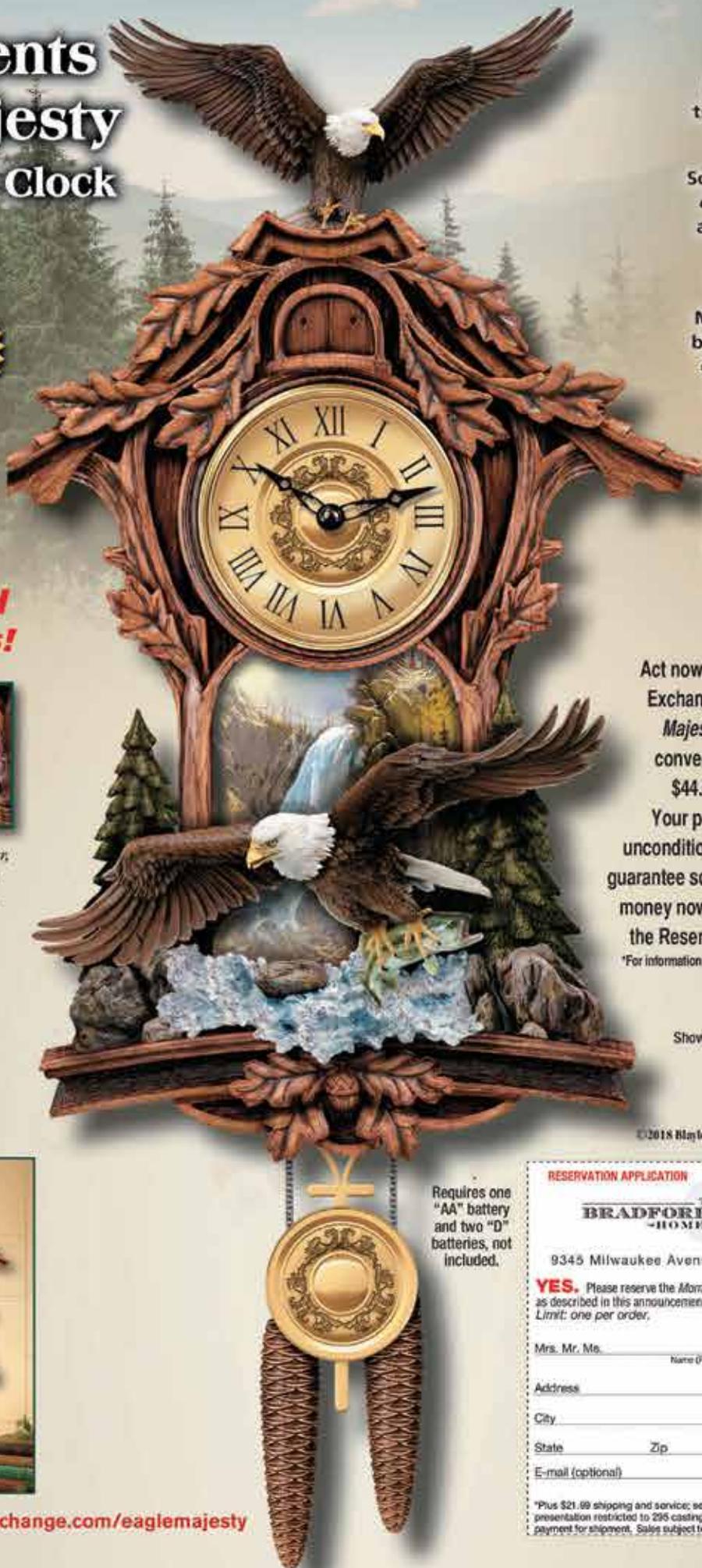
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Hand-crafted in the traditional, Old World cuckoo clock style

Sculpted, hand-painted eagles and waterfall art from Ted Blaylock bring home the majesty of nature!

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Shown much smaller than approximate size of 24 inches high, including hanging pendulum and weights.

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Limit: one per order. **Please Respond Promptly**

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## BLUE WATER NAVY AND AGENT ORANGE

By Deirdre Parke Holleman  
TREVA Washington Executive Director

A TREVA member called the Washington Office and asked if we could write an article on the Blue Water Navy in the Vietnam War and exposure to Agent Orange. We said yes—and here it is. If there is a cause or bill you want us to write about in the summer VOICE please contact the Washington Office.

For years TREVA and other VSOs/MSOs have been working diligently to see that Vietnam War veterans who suffer from an Agent Orange –associated disease receive VA service connected disability compensation and medical care. This has been done, as most of you well know, by creating a presumption of exposure to Agent Orange (TCDD) while serving during the Vietnam War at certain times and places.

As years went by the VA created additional exposure presumptions and increased the number of different diseases associated with Agent Orange Exposure. (These include: acute and subacute peripheral neuropathy, multiple myeloma, AL amyloidosis, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma (NHL), chloracne, Parkinson's disease, chronic B-cell leukemias, porphyria cutanea tarda, diabetes mellitus (type 2), prostate cancer, Hodgkin's disease, respiratory cancers, ischemic heart disease, and soft-tissue sarcoma.)

As years dragged on, the VA covered all veterans who had a boot on the grounds in Vietnam during the war and those who served in the Brown Water Navy. The government then added specific Blue Water Navy ships that entered the inland waterways of Vietnam or having docked in Vietnam at specific times and locations.

But even with numerous Blue Water Navy veterans suffering from Agent Orange associated diseases the VA has not included Blue Water Navy Vietnam War veterans in the service connected for presumptions.

So for several years some members of Congress have introduced bills that would cover Blue Water Navy veterans. In the present session of Congress bills were introduced early in 2017, (indeed the House bill was introduced on January 5th of 2017 just about as early as it could be.) Representative David G. Valadao's (R-CA) H.R. 299 "Blue Water Navy Vietnam Act of 2017, now has 327 co-sponsors!! (that is about 3/4 of all voting members.)

In the Senate, Senator Kristin Gillibrand (D-NY) has sponsored the companion bill S. 422. It has 49 co-sponsors (so 50%). Please note that in the House the original sponsor is a Republican and in the Senate she is a Democrat. When you look at the co-signers you will see that it is bi-partisan in both chambers. This is a very hopeful thing. These are huge, wonderful numbers but it is still not moving. The reason, of course, is money. Last year there was a proposal to cut other veterans programs to pay for this one. But robbing Peter to pay Paul is not acceptable.

At the Joint HVAC/SVAC hearing that TREVA President John Adams testified at in March, House VA Committee Chairman Rep. Phil Roe (R-TN) said that we (meaning Congress) are going to solve the Blue Water Navy problem in this session Congress. Afterwards he said that they had found a way to fund the new costs. He did not say what that was.

So there is clearly energy behind these bill. BUT IT IS FAR FROM A SURE THING. We must not let up. Check to see if your member of the House and Senators have signed on to the bill. If they have; thank them. If they have not; call or email them and urge them to do so. This is a time for a final push. In the meantime, you should check the list on the VA's website and see if a particular Blue Water Navy ship is on their list of qualifying ships. A TREVA member called me about his brother in law who was a Blue Water Navy Vietnam War veteran and was now suffering from prostate cancer. As we went through the list on the phone he found his relative's ship. So he will not need to wait to apply. Remember the VA has continued to add ships to the list since they first created it. It was a thrilling call. We need to try all possible roads to help these brave veterans get the help they need and deserve.

## IT COMMITTEE

Director Hilinski, Committee Chairman



### TREA WEBSITE KICKS OFF 5 NEW ADDITIONS

The TREA Website has 7 connections under the 'Chapters' tab. There are 5 new connections that can be found under this tab on the website, and 2 connections for previous information called 'Chapters by State' and 'Become a Chapter' for your information.

The 5 new areas for posting are:

#1 - 'Chapter Newsletter' connection for posts that can be monthly, quarterly or whenever your chapter puts out a chapter newsletter.

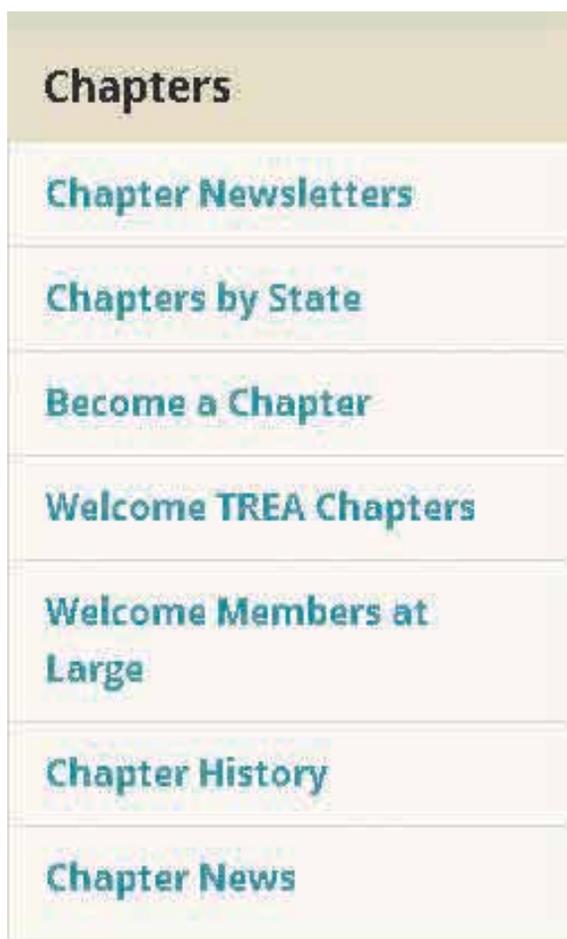
#2 - 'Welcome TREA Chapters' connection where chapters may now post external information such as state/local legislative issues, upcoming activities/calendars and participation at local events.

#3 - 'Welcome Members At Large' connection. The Members At Large (MALs) connection is for TREA MALs to participate by posting as an individual or a group you are connected with; this will be for events or other noteworthy experiences/announcements. All TREA MALs are invited to participate.

#4 - 'Chapter's History' connection to post your chapter's startup and other historical information; see the previous posts for examples.

#5 - 'Chapter News' connection where Chapters can post internal items such as chapter board positions, meeting information, chapter website and location.

For this Chapter Section to be a success we need your participation. If you want your chapter to grow or MALs to have a voice, please advertise by sending us your posts.



Send them to: TREA Headquarters at [treaHQ@trea.org](mailto:treaHQ@trea.org) or or Phil Hilinski at [directorhilinski@trea.org](mailto:directorhilinski@trea.org)  
Make sure you have your Chapter Number or State/Locality for MALs.



# AAFES

## Army and Air Force Exchange Service

### **Military Shoppers are In It to Win It!**

More than \$330,000 in Prizes Awarded to Military Community in 2017

The fun continues in 2018, as the Army & Air Force Exchange Service, together with its vendor partners, offers Soldiers, Airmen, military families and Veterans the opportunity to win prizes in sweepstakes throughout the year.

The Exchange, in partnership with vendors, gave away more than \$330,000 in prizes to service members and their families in 2017, through worldwide sweepstakes. Prizes included a car; several motorcycles; a cruise; trips to Hawaii and NASCAR; TVs; barbecue grills; tools; college scholarships; and more than \$130,000 worth of Exchange gift cards.

“I don’t think people realize the number of prizes the Exchange gives out, and I don’t think enough people enter,” said Staff Sgt. Richard Ziedenbug, a Fort Hood Soldier who won a 2017 Volkswagen Beetle Dune, valued at \$29,395, after being randomly selected among 20,000 entrants worldwide. “Not a lot of places give away that much for free.”

All authorized patrons 18 and older are eligible to enter Exchange sweepstakes online, including honorably discharged Veterans who were welcomed home to their family on Nov. 11 last year with a lifelong online military exchange shopping benefit.

Eligible participants can check for current sweepstakes and enter online at [www.shopmyexchange.com/sweepstakes](http://www.shopmyexchange.com/sweepstakes). Free Friday giveaways are exclusively on the Exchange’s Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/shopmyexchange>.

“The Exchange and our vendor partners love to give away prizes to service members and their families who do so much for all of us,” said Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Luis Reyes, the Exchange’s senior enlisted advisor. “The prizes are fantastic, and seeing our military families win is a win for us.”

Facebook-friendly version: The Exchange gave away more than \$330,000 in prizes last year. You could be the next winner! Read more: <http://bit.ly/2Eq8v3H>

## RISKS TO THE GI BILL COME FROM EDUCATION COMMITTEES

Michael Saunders, Deputy Director of Legislative Affairs

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Congress is now considering legislation that would reauthorize the Higher Education Act of 1965. The veterans' community has not historically engaged with this legislation, which is now in the process of being reauthorized for the ninth time in the last 53 years by H.R. 4508, the Promoting Real Opportunity, Success, and Prosperity through Higher Education Reform (PROSPER) Act.

There are several aspects of the legislation that TREA: The Enlisted Association supports, namely:

- The bill encourages accreditors to focus more time and resources on schools that are struggling, as opposed to forcing them to spend equal time among schools that have no problems as well as problem schools.
- Restricts a school's ability to hide poor student outcomes.
- Increases program funding, along with incentives for schools that successfully graduate or improve graduation potential for Pell Grant recipients.
- Expands the Pell Grant Program with a bonus of up to \$300 for low-income students who take at least 30 credits during a full school year.

Unfortunately, H.R. 4508 fails to protect student veterans in a number of remarkable ways. For years TREA: The Enlisted Association has fought against the predatory and fraudulent practices of largely for-profit institutions that cheat student veterans who use the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill, the Montgomery G.I. Bill, and survivor benefits like the Fry Scholarship. H.R. 4508 would enable "bad actor" schools to use deceptive recruitment practices that emphasize enrollment numbers rather than positive student outcomes.

In our opinion, the most egregious example of this is the fact that the bill eliminates the 90-10 rule—a requirement that for-profit schools receive no more than 90 percent of its revenue from the federal government. This imposes a market test, which means that if the "free market" will supply a school with at least ten percent of its total funding, the other 90 percent of its revenue can come from federal funding sources.

The 90-10 rule is built into the GI Bill to help assure the financial soundness of colleges and universities by curbing abuse within these programs. Unfortunately, military educational benefits currently count in the 10 percent part of the formula, so that bad actor schools already target veterans as a way to skirt this rule. Doing away with the 90-10 rule would mean that schools can exist entirely on federal funding without having to adequately compete in the marketplace for non-federal funds. This is bad for student veterans, and bad for the American taxpayer. If a school can't get 10 percent of its funding from sources other than federal funding, it probably should not be in business.

## RISKS TO THE GI BILL COME FROM EDUCATION COMMITTEES (CONT.)

Michael Saunders, Deputy Director of Legislative Affairs

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The PROSPER Act repeals the gainful employment rule, which protects students from poor quality educational programs that are overpriced and lead to low-paying jobs. Making sure that schools actually provide their students with the means to attain high-paying jobs that provide veterans, and our country, a positive return on their investment is a common-sense position. The bill also eliminates the existing borrower defense to repayment regulation and puts in place new rules that make it more difficult for students defrauded by their educational institution to have their loans discharged.

Repealing the borrower defense regulation is a big deal, even in the veterans' community, because studies have shown that roughly 25 percent of all student veterans take out loans while advancing their education.

That is why reducing access to education by increasing the cost of college for service-affiliated students and discouraging them from continued service when they enter the workforce is such a problem. H.R. 4508 eliminates the subsidized Stafford Loan, which does not accumulate interest while a borrower is in school. This would increase the size of the average student loan burden by 44% - by the time that student, veteran or not, graduates.

Repayment also becomes more difficult under H.R. 4508 as borrowers and their families would be placed on a more stringent income-driven repayment plan, and for low-income borrowers with average debt loads, loan repayment could become a lifelong burden.

Finally, H.R. 4508 proposes to eliminate the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF), which enables borrowers to enter public service careers and give back to their communities by working in areas of high need for low pay. After 10 years of creditable service to the country the loans are forgiven. The US Naval Institute (USNI) News reports that almost 6,800 active duty military personnel are enrolled in the PSLF program, and the program's elimination will likely have a substantial impact on efforts to recruit veterans into advanced degree programs and continued service in military jobs.

This legislation makes it harder to enter public service. It makes student loans bigger. It reduces repayment options that allow graduates to raise families and save for retirement. And it makes it harder to prevent bad actor schools from defrauding student veterans or to repair the damage that is done when schools defraud student veterans. These are not the type of policy prescriptions that TREA: The Enlisted Association can support. We call on Congress to do better, and not to serve the interests of the for-profit school industry over student veterans.

The Senate has no official companion legislation at the moment, but they are working behind the scenes. TREA: The Enlisted Association is fighting to prevent this legislation from becoming law and will report back with any updates.

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## FINANCE COMMITTEE



I would like to remind you that TREA continues to see decreased fundraising, sponsorship, and advertising due to declining membership numbers. Even though we are well-aware that we are losing money, we continue to spend at the same rate.

I am not going to give detailed financials at this time as the National Board is waiting for the 2017 annual audit to be completed. The August VOICE magazine will provide all of the information for 2017 and the budget for 2019.

I encourage each of you to become engaged and plan on attending the convention in Florida where you can be a participant in the decision-making progress and be a part of the solution!

Sincerely,  
Deborah Oelschig - TREA National Treasurer



## Tax Bill Fails to Fix Social Security Solvency

Voice Legislative Update – Spring 2018 By Jessie Gibbons, Legislative Director

Late last year, lawmakers in the House and Senate wrote and passed sweeping legislation to overhaul the entire tax code in just under two months. Their bill, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, adds \$1.5 trillion to the federal deficit over ten years, it permanently reduces the tax rate for corporations, and it temporarily reduces tax rates for individuals.

TSCL advocated against its adoption because several of its provisions jeopardize the health and financial security of older Americans. For instance, the bill repeals the Affordable Care Act's individual mandate – a move that experts predict will result in a loss of health insurance coverage for 4 million individuals, many of whom are older Americans who are not yet eligible for Medicare. Those who

remain insured through the individual market will likely see premium increases of 10 percent or more, which will make health insurance unaffordable for many.

The bill also indexes the individual tax brackets and the standard deduction to the slowly-growing “chained” CPI, which means Americans will hit higher tax brackets faster than they would under current law or a greater share of their income would be taxable. The change will result in tax increases for most individuals over time, and it increases the likelihood that lawmakers will apply the inadequate “chained” CPI to other government indexes that grow with inflation, like the Social Security cost-of-living adjustment (COLA).

TSCL's legislative team was also disappointed that Congress failed to address the solvency challenges facing the Social Security program through tax reform last year. These simple tax-related changes would extend the life of the program for decades to come while providing middle-class seniors with a critical tax break...

1. Increasing the Social Security payroll tax rate. Social Security is currently financed by a 12.4% payroll tax, split evenly between employers and their employees. Increasing the rate very gradually to 14.4% – just 1% more for both workers and employers – would dramatically improve the financing of the program while costing the average worker just 50 cents per week.
2. Increasing the amount of wages subject to Social Security taxes. Under current law, the Social Security payroll tax is applied only to the first \$128,400 in annual income. People who earn more than that pay zero Social Security taxes on the rest of their earnings. Increasing or eliminating this “payroll tax cap” would significantly improve the program's solvency without cutting benefits.
3. Eliminating income taxes on Social Security benefits. Millions of middle-income retirees currently pay income taxes on a portion of their Social Security benefits. Adjusting the income threshold for taxation – which currently sits at just \$25,000 for individual filers – or repealing the tax on Social Security benefits altogether would provide millions of middle-income seniors with much-needed financial relief.

TSCL advocates tirelessly for these three policy solutions and did so during last year's tax reform debate. We will continue to support them in the months ahead, until they are signed into law. For more information about legislation that would strengthen and improve the Social Security program responsibly, without cutting benefits for older Americans, visit our website at [www.SeniorsLeague.org](http://www.SeniorsLeague.org).

## CHAPTER 1'S VETERANS DINNER/DANCE

In honor of our heroes and celebration of their service, Chapter 1 held a Veterans Day dinner/dance at the Peterson Air Force Base on Saturday, November 4, 2017. Nearly 100 people turned out for the event with guests including Debbie Osborne, Director for Operations, Headquarters TREA along with her husband Doug; also Sherry and Lanny Eller, Chapter 113. Chapter 1 President Rey Garate welcomed all. After the presentation of colors, Lewis Jackson read the POW/MIA Ceremony with Roger Delosh at the presentation table.

After a wonderful dinner, Vice President Lonny Barrett, Chapter 1 Vice President and Emcee, presented awards to Bill De Boer and Dan O'Connell, both outstanding long-time Chapter 1 members. 84 year old Bill was able to attend the ceremony along with his family. Unfortunately, 87 year-old Dan was not able to attend, however, his loving wife, Jolene, graciously accepted his award. Bill and Dan received a long overdue tribute for their tireless volunteer work. The history of both individuals is truly impressive in what they have accomplished over the many years for Chapter 1 and TREA.

### On February 24th, Chapter 1 celebrated its 55th Anniversary



*Chapter 1 Presidents, Lonnie Barrett and Kitty Jones and National Presidents, John Adams and Irmgard Cates cut the Anniversary cake*



About Bill DeBoer: Bill was born and raised on a farm in Grand Rapids, Michigan. After high school graduation, he enlisted in the Air Force. He began his Air Force career in the Control Tower and then went in Logistics until 1974, when he was selected as a Command Chief at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii. The majority of his overseas time was in the Pacific. He began his career at the end of the Korean War. He spent 1968-1969 in Vietnam and was awarded the Bronze Star and the Vietnam Medal. He retired in 1980 from the Air Force and went to work for Martin-Marietta (now Lockheed Martin) as a Contracting Officer. After again retiring, he began volunteering for

Chapter 1; first as Treasurer for several years and as Chapter 1 President in 1998. He also was the Chapter 1 Bingo Manager for many years. He was named Chairman of the TREA Memorial Foundation in 2003, and continued in that position until retiring in 2015, due to health problems. He managed the Foundation's fundraiser program; the Armed Forces Aid Campaign, which provided both financial and other support to veterans and their families of the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars. The program was later extended to support all veterans needing assistance. During his tenure, the Foundation raised over a million dollars and helped over 2,000 wounded warriors and their families. Bill started the POW/MIA Ceremony at Chapter 1. Organizations in Colorado Springs and high schools asked Bill and his Presenter Gil Lewis (later Ed Cates) to perform the Ceremony at the events and later requested copies. The Ceremony is now performed all over the city and USA. It is also performed every year at the TREA National Convention as well in all TREA Chapters. After a horrendous hail microcell hit the Chapter 1 Building in 2014, Bill and member Roger Ehrkle were asked by the Chapter President to work with the contractor responsible for over one million dollars in repairs to the building and equipment. When completed, the building looked like it was newly-constructed. Bill also volunteered at the Peterson Air Force Base Pharmacy for over 25 years until he was no longer able to continue due to health problems. In June 2017, Bill and Alice celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. They have four children, six grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

## CHAPTER 1'S VETERANS DINNER/DANCE



*Chapter 1 Pres. Lonny Barrett, presents Certificate of Appreciation to Guest Speaker, Brandon Adam. USA Retired*

fulfilling his obligations, not without some controversy, as he may have told some of you. He was discharged four days prior to the start of the Korean War in June 1950, and worked for a time in the Pharmacy field. He then joined the Air Force because he had received a Draft Notice in December 1950. He completed his first enlistment with the intent of returning to the Pharmacy business with the promise of a paid education from his previous employer, however, that employer passed away prior to his discharge and changed his plans. He then made the Air Force his career, serving his country. His career included a wide variety of duty stations all over the world, to include Germany and Taiwan, and various state side assignments. He retired in 1980, after 30 years of serving his country as a Chief Master Sergeant. It wasn't long after his retirement, he found himself again serving his country, this time as a Government Services Employee. This career rapidly brought him up through the ranks culminating as the Director of Protocol for the Air Force Space Command, US Space Command and NORAD, becoming the first civilian to hold that position. During this time, he became actively involved with Chapter 1 and TREA, serving on several Boards and Committees as well as the Chapter 1 President. Dan also served as Chairman for the TREA Memorial Foundation in the 1990s while he was still working at Peterson Air Force Base. Dan was a member of the TSCL BOT when Ralph McCutchen was Chairman. Dan succeeded Ralph as Chairman for three years. Most notable was the purchase of TSCL's facility (which they just recently sold) as Dan was a driving force. He also served as a Director on the National BOD in the 90s. He also was the Club Manager for several years after being Chapter 1 President. He served on numerous committees over the years before his health began failing. The history of both individuals is truly impressive in what they accomplished over the many years for Chapter 1 and TREA.



It is now time for our younger members to take the reins and keep Chapter 1 and TREA growing in membership and being recognized in Colorado Springs and all over the USA for its support and dedication to our veterans. Many thanks to Chapter 1 Entertainment Committee for an outstanding evening honoring all our veterans. (Chapter 1 Auxiliary Alice De Boer)

## CHAPTER 16 MEMBERSHIP MEETING SALINE COUNTY SENIOR CENTER, BOARD ROOM



*Guest Speaker Joe Kracik (standing), Fire Prevention Office Salian Fire Department talks to chapter members: left to right Shirley Wagner, Roland Gallant, Gary Keil, Charles Delaney, Jim Price, and Duane Snyder about an emergency Rapid Access Systems device for homeowners and commercial businesses.*

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## CHAPTER 29

**Written by Mike Gray, a Chapter 29 local Native American. Mr. Gray is a valued member of the chapter Honor Guard.**

“Paying Tribute”.

The sun peeks through the clouds;  
A small wisp of wind chimes in, causing the grass to dance to and fro; Meadowlarks begin to sing their song, as a ray of sunshine reaches for the ground;  
It's a pleasant day, people are gathering for a loved one;  
Someone's Mother, Sister, Brother, Grandma, or Grandpa, a family member; Most of all they are part of us;  
So we stand steady fast, and proud;  
We are honored to pay tribute to our fallen comrade;  
The leader belts out the commands;  
Our rifle shots echo throughout the valley;  
The bugler sounds taps one last time;  
TODAY we send another hero home.

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## TWO TAMPA BAY CHAPTER 58 MEMBERS HONORED AT PEARL HARBOR CEREMONY

Two Tampa Bay Chapter 58 members were honored for their World War II service at a National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day event in Tampa, Florida.

Past President Louis A. Arana Sr. and chapter 1st Vice President Leonard Black sat front and center during the Dec. 7, 2017, ceremony at the Veterans Memorial Park. Chapter President Louis A. Arana Jr. and TREA national auxiliary member Luz E. Arana also attended.

The two retired U.S. Air Force chief master sergeants and longtime TREA members were among about a dozen veterans—including two Pearl Harbor survivors—honored. Arana and Black both served with the U. S. Army Air Forces in Germany, and said the recognition was an honor.

The event was also the official opening of the memorial park's World War II Memorial and Veterans Resource Center. Black, honorary chairman of the World War II memorial committee, received more accolades for his work to help fund and build the monument.

## TWO TAMPA BAY CHAPTER 58 MEMBERS HONORED AT PEARL HARBOR CEREMONY (CONT.)



Chapter 58 donated \$2,000 to the memorial park to help build the World War II monument. Now the chapter has two 18-inch by 18-inch laser-etched granite plaques displayed on the memorial's wall. One plaque lists the TREA mission, chapter founders and the members of the last chapter board. The other honors chapter World War II vets: Arana, Black, Carlos Barradas and Geoffrey Parker.

Besides several war memorials, the park is also home to the Rear Adm. LeRoy Collins Jr. Museum.

Tampa Bay Chapter 58 Past President Louis Arana Sr.,(right), shares a laugh with fellow World War II veteran George Kondas, a 101-year- old Pearl Harbor survivor. Both were honored for their war service at a National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day ceremony at the Veterans Memorial Park in Tampa, Florida, Dec. 7, 2017.

Tampa Bay Chapter 58 1st Vice President Leonard Black, (left), in black hat, received praise for his World War II service and for raising funds to help build the World War II Memorial at the Veterans Memorial Park in Tampa, Florida, during a National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day ceremony there on Dec. 7, 2017.



Tampa Bay Chapter 58 Past President Louis Arana, left, and 1st Vice President Leonard Black (left) were honored during a National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day ceremony at the Veterans Memorial Park in Tampa, Florida, Dec. 7, 2017.

National Auxiliary member Luz Arana, left, Tampa Bay Chapter 58 Past President Louis Arana and 1st Vice President Leonard Black, viewed the chapter plaques displayed on the wall of the World War II Memorial at the Veterans Memorial Park in Tampa, Florida. Chapter 58 donated \$2,000 to help construct the memorial.



*All photo by Louis A. Arana Jr.*

## CHAPTER 72 GETS BUSY!



*Change of Command: (photo left) New Chapter President – Harry Blackwell, 1stVice – Charles White, 2nd Vice & Recording Secretary – Mark Mayo, Treasurer John Durbiano & Past President – Bill Seifert*

## CHAPTER 72 GETS BUSY! (CONT.)



### **Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church – Veteran Appreciation Day -**

*(Photo right): Chapter President Harry Blackwell, Father John Touloumes & Auxiliary Member Georgia Blackwell*



**Hidden Hero** (photo left): Elizabeth Doyle with past Chapter President, Charles White

### **Recruiting 11 Armor Cavalry Reunion**

*(photo right): L-R: Chapter President Charles White, Walter Mazuchowski, Jr., Jerry Coleman, Robert Gambert, John Protheroe, Darryl Wolfe, Buckley Riggs, Rob Clayton, Joe Coleman, Scott Harrison, John Byers & Eric Trainer*



**Santa visits Veteran Hospital** (photo below left): L-R, bottom row: Edith White, Harry Blackwell, Charles White, L-R back row: Amos Lawson, Elliott Shorter, Lewis Hillard, Rev. Richard Payne, Daryl beard, Gerald Boykins, Ernest Rivers.



**Chapter members** (right) L-R: Charles White, Belinda Johns, Isabella Allen, Georgia Blackwell, John & Linda Durbiano, Gerald Borkins & Harry Blackwell prepared and cooked for 2 days to provide delicious home-cooked pork ribs, turkey ribs, fried fish, baked beans, cole slaw, chitins and much more to over 80 convention attendees. Everyone had a great time!

## CHAPTER 80

### Pride in One of Their Own

Chapter 80 member Richard M. Jackson was appointed the new Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army (CASA) during a December 11 investiture ceremony at the Pentagon. He was appointed by the Honorable (Dr.) Mark T. Esper. Mr. Jackson will represent New Mexico.

“As a retired soldier and current businessman, I look forward to working with each community and the state to assist in the growth and wellbeing of our war fighters, families and veterans. Making a positive difference will always be a priority” stated by Mr. Jackson

### In a galaxy far, far away.....

Elaine Moreland and Juanita Higginbotham pose with a Star Wars character while passing out Valentines at the Murphy VA Salute to Veteran patients.





## CHAPTER 94

TREA Chapter 94 presented a Veteran's Certificate of Appreciation to Warner Robins Mayor Randy Toms. Pictured are L-R: TREA 94 President and TREA National Past National President Rick Delaney, Chapter 94 Director and Chaplain John Mobley, and the Mayor of Warner Robins, The Honorable Randy Toms.



A fine example of a RAD table - Looks good!



Chapter 94 Past President James Harkins (left) and current Chapter President and National PNP Rick Delaney (far right) present the TREA JROTC award to Cadet William Payne Robinson (middle)

## CHAPTER 98 OFFICERS TAKING OATH OF OFFICE & WELCOMES A NEW MEMBER



*(Back Row): Larry Keslar, Chuck Long, Dennis Klepsky, Carl Kovacs, Barry Brooks, Jim Cain, (Front Row): Miles Crago, Ed Shallenberger, Mario Santa Columbio & Jim Hall*

*Chapter Auxiliary President Shirley Shallenberger and Chapter President Dennis Klepsky (right)*



*Chapter 98 Auxiliary Officers - Gwen Klepsky, Cathy Long, Sue Dye, Barb Kovacs, Mary Jane Mance, Shirley Shallenberger & Sue Brooks*

**CHAPTER 98 (CONT.)**

*(Photo below): TREA Chapter 98 welcomes new member Frank Cross at luncheon at Hoss's in Bel Vernon, PABR L-R Jim Cain, Jerry Dye, Jack Dugger, Ed Shallenberger, Frank Cross, Don Pospisil, Barry Brooks, Chuck Smith and Don Ulery. Front row L-R Mario Santo Colombio, Jim Hall and Carl Kovacs*



**CHAPTER 110 - LAKE SUPERIOR**

After the National Convention, the chapter hosted the RAD at Black Bear Casino on September 29th. Approximately 175 Retirees and Spouses attended to learn about the updates since last year.

President Liebaert and his wife Cheryl did the presentation of the POW/MIA Table at the Military Ball at Barkers Island Hotel in Superior on October 28th



*On November 10th, Wascott held a Wascott Veterans Memorial Dedication Ceremony at Wascott Kreide Cemetery. (Pictured left is L-R: Butch Liebaert, Jim Boughner - Wascott Chairman, Jan Jensen - Wascott Town Board Member, Karl Moe and Jim Potthier)*

*On November 11th, the chapter helped provide the Color Guard with other military organizations for the Elks Veterans Day meal. Honor Flight Northland which provides flights to Washington D.C. for Veterans gave a presentation. After the presentation, Chapter 119 and the Elks Lodge Veterans Committee each gave the Honor Flight a check for \$500.00. (Pictured, right – L-R: Troy Magnuson - Exalted Ruler, Honor Flights Representatives Karin Swor and Gerry Herrterington, and Chapter President Butch Liebaert.*



*On November 29th, the Chapter volunteered to help out at the Bentleyville Tour of Lights, pictured are Chapter members and family members before going to assigned places for the evening.. Pictured left is the Banner that Bentleyville made to show that TREA members were the only volunteers for the evening*



# The Enlisted Association Store Clearance Items!

Order your scarf or tie today for Memorial Day and Independence Day!  
**50% off original price (for a limited time only!)**



**Patriotic Scarf**

Scarf is silky material at  
44" long x 10" wide.



**Patriotic Tie**

Tie is 54" total length.

Both items designed exclusively for TREA.

**SPECIAL PRICE OF ONLY \$12.50 EACH**  
**(INCLUDES SHIPPING)**

Go to [www.trea.org](http://www.trea.org) and  
click on Store for all merchandise/sale items.  
at 1-800-338-9337 for availability and ordering.

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## VA AND U.S. DIGITAL SERVICE LAUNCH NEW WEB TOOL TO HELP VETERANS TRACK THEIR BENEFITS APPEALS

Department of Veterans Affairs News Release

Recently the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the U.S Digital Service announced their launch of an improved Appeals Status tool to increase transparency and enable Veterans to track the progress of their benefits claims appeals.

“It’s important that our Veterans have the opportunity to track their appeals process in a timely and efficient manner,” said VA Secretary David Shulkin. “For the first time ever, Veterans can see their place on the Board of Veterans’ Appeals’ docket, including the number of appeals that are ahead of them.” The tool, which went live March 21 on VA’s Vets.gov website, allows Veterans to access detailed information about the status of their benefits appeals and will include alerts about needed actions, as well as estimates of how long each step of the process takes.

Some Veterans who have previewed the new tool said it had given them hope and helped them understand that the process might take longer than expected.

## UPDATING YOUR MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

**Did you know that you can update your mailing address on the TREA Website?**

**Did you know that you can update your phone number and email address also?**

**Lots of updates to the website have been done recently and we invite you to check them out!**

### HERE IS HOW YOU DO IT:

**STEP 1:** Look for “Attention Members!” Then “Click Here”

Put in email address and if it is found click on “This is Me”

If your email address is not found please contact us at 303-752-0660 or 800-338-9337 or go to the “Contact US” link on the home page and send us an email with all of your information and we will add your email address to our database within 48 business hours.

**STEP 2:** If and when your email is in the database then you will click on “Forgot User Name”. Your user name is always your email address.

A box will appear called “Retrieve User Name”. Put in your email address.

A message will be sent to that email address (BE SURE TO CHECK YOUR JUNK FOLDER IF IT DOES NOT APPEAR IN YOUR INBOX). There will be a link that you will have to click on (or copy and paste into the URL search field), this link is only active for a limited time so check right away. When you have activated the link it will automatically redirect you back to the log in on the TREA website. Continue logging in by going to the top right corner where it says “Sign In” and you will see your membership page with your personal information. You, as a TREA member, will be able to update your address, phone #, email address, add a photo, etc. Only you have access to this page once your personal account is created. Any updates to address, phone, email will take 48 hours to be updated.



## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

- **Regular Membership:** Any enlisted person – retired, active duty, National Guard or Reserves – shall be eligible for regular membership. Any active duty enlisted person shall enjoy the privileges of regular membership including attending conventions, making motions and holding office.
- **Veteran Membership:** Any honorably discharged person (as noted on a DD214 or NGB-22) may apply for membership. They may attend conventions, vote and make motions. They must be a member in good standing for three years to be eligible to run for National office. The term “regular member” encompasses both charter and life members of TREA.
- **Associate Membership:** Widows/Widowers of members and non-members, who were eligible for membership at the time of their death, are eligible to join TREA: The Enlisted Association as associate members. Associate members shall enjoy the privileges of regular membership, except the right to make motions, vote or hold office. Associate members are not eligible for life memberships.

New Member       Renewal      Membership Number: # \_\_\_\_\_

Recruiter: \_\_\_\_\_ Recruiter Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_ Your Grade/Rank: \_\_\_\_\_ Years in Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Service:     Air Force     Army     Navy     Marines     Coast Guard     Guard/Reserve

Membership Type applying for:     Regular     Veteran     Associate

If disabled, what is your rating: \_\_\_\_\_

I acknowledge that I am a U.S. Armed Forces Veteran (who is/was Enlisted and if discharged, was done so HONORABLY) and as such qualify to be a member of TREA: The Enlisted Association

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Applicant, please sign here)

### Membership Fees (Does not include Chapter dues, if applicable)

- One Year - \$30  
 Two Years - \$55  
 Three Years - \$75  
 Life Membership (under 70) - \$400       paid in 10, \$42 quarterly payments: \$420 total  
 Life Membership (over 70) - \$350       paid in 10, \$37 quarterly payments: \$370 total

### Payment:

Visa Master      Credit Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Card  
Discover      Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Check (Make checks payable to: TREA)

Please return your completed application to:

TREA: The Enlisted Association 1111 S. Abilene Court Aurora, CO 80012  
303-752-0660 800-338-9337  
www.trea.org



# THE SURVIVAL BENEFIT PLAN – (SBP) AND DEPENDENCY INDEMNITY COMPENSATION (DIC) OFFSET- THE SITUATION NOW

By Deirdre Parke Holleman, TREA Washington Executive Director

Recently I have been repeatedly asked about the present SBP/DIC Offset and how it works. As we continue to push to get the SBP/DIC offset abolished and we often get small improvements rather than a total abolition; the program gets more difficult to understand. But here goes.

There are 2 types of SBP/DIC beneficiaries. First are widows and widowers of service members who served a full career in the military and paid into SBP as a retirement. The second groups' sponsors died while on active duty and qualify for SBP by statute.

First, we will discuss the retiree. If he or she dies of a full or partial service connected disability or had been 100% service connected disabled for 10 or more years, regardless of what caused his death, the survivor would indeed be entitled to DIC.

There is a dollar per dollar offset of SBP payments for DIC payments. Many people have asked me if it would really be worthwhile to file for DIC if their servicemember spouse dies and they are already receiving or going to receive SBP. The answer now is almost always yes.

This is because we have been working for years to end the SBP/DIC offset; just as we have worked to end the military retired pay/ VA disability pay offset. We have not yet had the same degree of success but we have made some progress.

The DIC payment became a flat payment regardless of rank in 1993. It is presently a tax free monthly payment of \$1,283.11. Every year it receives a COLA adjustment. If the SBP is 55% of the retired pay the offset will probably completely offset the SBP. Only the very highest ranks in the officers or enlisted ranks would receive more. However, there is the advantage of it being tax free while SBP is taxable.

Then if the DIC completely wipes out the SBP payment a beneficiary would be qualified to have all the monthly SBP payments returned to him or her. That could be a large lump sum. (It would be taxable.)

Additionally, to partially correct the offset, Congress passed a SSIA (Special Survivor Indemnity Allowance) payment bill. It started in 2008 at only \$50 a month and through additional increases and modifications has reached \$310 a month. Last year the SSIA was made permanent and a COLA was added.

Next is the servicemember who died in the line of duty – In this case, the survivor is entitled to the present SSIA payment of \$310 a month + COLA which is nontaxable. (No return of premiums since they did not make any). In addition - if there are minor children in the family, they too will qualify for DIC. Presently a surviving spouse with children under the age of 18 will also receive \$317.87 a month per child + a 2 year transition for the parent of \$250 a month The benefit for the child runs out when he/she turns 23.

If a child is permanently disabled they may continue to be eligible into adulthood. Call our DC office to go over these detailed requirements.

We are still working to end the SBP/DIC offset completely. In the House H.R. 846 has 237 co- sponsors while the Senate's S. 339 has 38 co-sponsors. So you can see there is wide bipartisan support. But it is very unlikely that we will get the bills passed this year. If not, we will start again next year. We are not giving up on this issue.

Finally, there are also 2 special programs A&A (Aid and Attendance) which presently pays an additional \$317.87 a month and Homebound which pays an additional \$148.91 a month which a parent might be eligible for if he/she is suffering from certain disabilities.

To sum this up; even if you are eligible for SBP if your servicemember's death was in the line of duty OR service connected you may qualify for DIC. It's definitely worth filing for. I would be very happy to discuss this matter with you and answer any questions you might have on the phone or by email.



## TREA NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S ORAL TESTIMONY MARCH 14TH 2018

Chairmen Isakson and Roe, Ranking Members Tester and Walz and distinguished members of both Committees, Good Morning, my name is John Adams. I am President of The Retired Enlisted Association (TREA) and I am proud to be here today to present our veterans legislative goals and concerns for 2018. We were founded in 1963, and chartered as a VSO by Congress in 1992, to be "The Voice of the Enlisted<sup>®</sup>" of American's armed forces and to their families. It has been our honor to be doing this for over 50 years.

Before I turn to policy questions I want to say that we are going to greatly miss Ranking Member Tim Walz from the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, a TREA Life Member, when he leaves Congress at the end of this session. He has been and hopefully will continue to be a leading force on veterans' issues. He will be sorely missed in DC. I ask that my full written statement be made part of this hearing. It includes bills that we hope will become law this year. But what I wish to discuss in the short time I have here is the continuing mismanagement at the VA.

For years TREA and our brother and sister organizations have given the VA our full-throttle support. And we continue to do so. We know what an enormous task they have serving America's veterans, their families and survivors. We understand how hard it is to operate an organization of almost 400,000 employees spread out across the country. We are also mindful of the work you and your dedicated and skilled staffs do to try and provide proper oversight of the VA as it attempts to provide first rate service for those who have served.

But we continue to see inconsistent procedures and mismanagement throughout the system. In the last few years your Committees, the VA and the VSOs have tried to deal with healthcare access issues, fraudulent reporting and backlogs, and improper billing at VISNs (Veterans Integrated Service Networks) all over the country.

Just last week, a devastating IG report was released concerning the VA hospital here in DC. Among other things, it said that the hospital lacked consistently clean areas for medical supplies, did not have proper financial controls "to make sure purchases were necessary and cost-effective" and it said that anesthesia was administered before staff realized that they did not have the necessary surgical instruments available.

The report concluded that for years, DC's VA Medical Center "suffered a series of systemic and programmatic failures to consistently deliver timely and quality patient care," and which heightens the potential for waste, fraud and abuse of government resources. If this can happen in Congress' own backyard, it can happen anywhere. And we know it does. Since 2014, and the Phoenix wait-list scandal, your two committees and the VA have been working on the design and funding of a permanent "Choice Program" to ensure that veterans receive timely, high-quality healthcare.

It is crucial that the permanent program guarantees that the VISN management, qualifications for care in the civilian market, and treatments be consistent throughout the country.

While we support allowing veterans access to private medical care when they need but cannot get timely access to VA medical care, we oppose any program that would provide access to more private-sector care while diminishing VA-provided care. We are concerned that if not designed correctly providing more access to private care, will erode or erase existing veteran-friendly VA services by spending VA funds outside of the VA instead of improving VA's own internal programs and keeping the care coordinated and directed in the VA.

To all of us in this room VA healthcare is not a mere insurance plan. This is a lifeline for the heroes who love this nation and who we love in return.

As you formulate veterans' legislation, we also ask that you keep in mind the members of the Guard and Reserve. Those individuals are a key component of our Armed Forces and will be called upon for regular deployments for the foreseeable future. Yet, they still do not have all of the benefits and rights that active-duty personnel have. And when legislation was formulated in the past, such as the new military retirement system, the Guard and Reserve have been short-changed because of a failure to fully consider them in the legislation. I discuss this at greater length in my written testimony.

Again, thank you for the honor of appearing before you and thank you for the dedication you and your staffs have shown working to guarantee that America's veterans and their families are treated as they deserve. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

## TREA'S 55TH ANNIVERSARY & NATIONAL CONVENTION

Ft. Walton Beach, FL. Everything that you need to know –

**Date:** September 18th – 21st, 2018

**Place:** The Island, by Ramada (formally known as the Ramada Beach Plaza)  
1500 Miracle Strip Pkwy E., Ft. Walton, FL 32548

**Room Rates:** Standard room - \$109+, Poolside room - \$129+, Beachfront room - \$159+

**Reservations:** call 813-849-4118 directly – our group rep is Sarah

**Deadline for EVERYTHING (registration, discounted rooms, tours, fishing trip): August 1st, 2018**

Ft. Walton Beach is known for its beautiful emerald green waters – it isn't called the 'Emerald Coast' for nothing. Beautiful weather can be expected during our stay. Highs during the day of 87 and nighttime lows of around 69. September does see quite a bit of rain, but it doesn't last long. A refreshing daytime shower can be expected 2 out of every 3 days. We'll see if we can 'schedule' it for when we are in meetings.

The beaches are simply gorgeous. I have been to many beaches and walked many miles through what I thought were beautiful beaches, but I was in for a shock as soon as I felt the luxury of the signature sugary-soft white sand that runs up and down 24 miles of beach. The beautiful quartz sand was deposited by way of the Appalachian River, courtesy of the mountains of the same name, after the last ice age. Over time, as the deposit built, the coastline was formed. The quartz sand that remains beneath the water reflects the area's abundant sunlight back through the waves to create the emerald hue of the Gulf of Mexico.

You have to walk on it to fully understand the depth of its elegance. Simply amazing.



The hotel, The Island, by Ramada is literally right on the beach with breathtaking views of the Emerald Coast, the Ramada Plaza Beach Resort is a favorite of guests from all over the country, thanks in part to its expansive Polynesian-style grotto pool, two restaurants and a host of family-friendly amenities. The Ramada Plaza's signature attraction is the outdoor Polynesian grotto pool with its waterfalls, seasonal swim-up bar and outdoor dining at the seasonal BBQ Hut. The seasonal splash garden will keep the kids entertained. Guests can also relax and watch TV indoors at the lobby bar. Two on-site restaurants let guests experience delectable dining without leaving the resort. The resorts 335 rooms have high-speed Internet, refrigerators, microwaves, coffeemakers and cable TV with HBO. Private balconies are available. The laundry room lets guests travel light. Parking is free. Facing the Gulf of Mexico, the Ramada Plaza is a short walk from Gulfarium and Okaloosa Island Fishing Pier. Several restaurants are within walking distance. Northwest Florida Regional Airport and Eglin Air Force Base are 11 miles away. The hotel is older but is going through an almost complete renovation as we speak. The meeting rooms and common area will be complete by late-April, the guest room renovation will begin in late Fall. The photos that are within this article are of course, the photos before the remodel – to give you a reference. I will be posting new and updated photos on the website and in the August issue of the VOICE. But for now, here is the information that I want to share. The rooms will not change so this information will be good for our stay.

There are five room options: - Please note that ALL rooms have a refrigerator, microwave, coffeemaker, personal safe, TV with HBO and free wireless Internet. Also keep in mind that all room prices are quoted without the 11% room tax – make sure that you add this into your calculations. This will help you budget for the trip.



1. The standard room (photo right), offers both a 'no-view' and a 'garden-view' and feature two double pillow-top beds. The regular price for these rooms is \$169 on weekdays and \$179 on weekends. We have negotiated a TREA special rate of \$109/night-that is a \$70 per night savings!



2. The Poolside rooms open to a view of the Grotto waterfall pool and the tropical gardens. They include a private balcony and two queen pillow-top beds.

The regular price for these rooms is \$194 for weekdays and \$204 on weekends, but once again, we have negotiated a fantastic deal of only \$129 a night. Since the rooms are all very similar, I have shown a photo of the outside of the poolside rooms so you can get a better idea of what you will be looking at. The first photo is looking up at the rooms from the pool area, the second photo is looking from the room down onto the pool and garden area.



3. Beachfront rooms (photos below) have a private balcony or patio facing the Gulf of Mexico. These rooms have two queen pillow-top beds. The regular price for these rooms is \$204 on weekdays and \$214

on weekends. TREA's special pricing is only \$159. The views are amazing! Shown is a view from the balcony and one from the beach looking up to the rooms.



4. There are a limited number of swim out poolside rooms (photo left) where you can open your sliding patio door and enter the pool. These rooms are normally \$204 but with TREA's special pricing, these are offered at only \$159+. If you want one of these, make your reservation TODAY – there are only 10 of them and they are sure to go fast!



## SOME THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN BOOKING YOUR ROOM

1. The property has multiple buildings that house the guest rooms. Only one building has an elevator – and that is the 6-story beach front/poolside building. If you make reservations for a standard room, it is very important that you book a ground floor room, unless you are willing to walk up a flight of stairs.

2. You will be required to give a credit card to hold your room. The amount will be held on your account but not actually charged. You can cancel without penalty up to 24 hours prior to arrival.



## CONVENTION AGENDA (subject to fine tuning)

\*Registration will be open on Tuesday from 7AM – 5PM

The TREA Store will be open on Tuesday from 7AM – 5PM and at various times until the close of the convention. The store will have some great discounted items – make sure that you stop by to see what's new!

### Tuesday, September 18th –

- 9AM – 4PM TREA Pre-Con meeting, EMPIRE Room, Auxiliary pre-con meeting FORUM room
- 6PM Opening Ceremony, EMPIRE room
- 6:45/7:00 Welcome Reception, FORUM room – 2 hours of Beer & Wine (cash cocktails) & snacks

### Wednesday, September 19th –

- 8:30AM TREA 1st Business Meeting in the EMPIRE room  
Auxiliary 1st Business Meeting in FORUM room \* Meet-N-Greet Breakfast
- Noon Information Luncheon featuring TSCL & TREA's Legislative Office in the AMBASSADOR room.  
Meal choices are: Hot French Dip Sandwich or Turkey & Swiss Croissant– both choices come with a tossed salad, chips and peach cobbler (please make sure to note your meal choice on your registration form)
- 2PM Business meetings resume
- 5PM Business meetings end for the day
- 6PM President's Dinner on the beachfront patio – Seafood Beach Boil (Florida onions, Smoked Pork Sausage, Potatoes, sweet corn, garlic, Florida Pink Shrimp, Blue Crab, Cedar Key Clams-sea sonings & spices) – YUM! (If you are allergic to shellfish, we have arranged for a limited number of kitchen prepared chicken plates, please make note of this on the registration form. These are available by pre-order ONLY and are limited in quantity.)

This event will also feature free wine & beer (special thank you to TSCL), cocktails will be available for cash.

Of course we will have a DJ for music and dancing and lots of fun give-aways!

### You won't want to miss this fun event. – PROMISE!

The hotel is offering our special discounted rates for a full week before and a full week after our convention dates – take this great opportunity to plan a vacation with family or friends – or both!

### Thursday, September 20th

- 8AM TREA 2nd Business Meeting in the EMPIRE room Auxiliary 2nd Business Meeting in the FORUM room
- Noon Joint Award Luncheon in the AMBASSADOR room  
The meal choices are: Mojo Marinated Breast of Chicken served over Coconut Rice & Stir Fried Vegetable Medley OR a Salad Plate, which has both tuna and chicken salad with fresh fruit. Both choices will come with strawberry topped cheesecake for dessert. Note your meal choice on the registration form.
- 2PM Business Meetings Resume
- 4PM Business Meetings end Post Con Meetings begin
- 5PM Board Photos

The rest of the evening is free for all attendees.

We have arranged for free transportation to and from Destin's Harbor Walk for the evening. This a great way to experience the local area, not just it's food and drink, but also it's culture. There is more on the Harbor Walk in a different article in this issue of the VOICE.

## CONVENTION AGENDA (subject to fine tuning)

### Friday, September 21st

The day is free for attendees – we have organized a historic tour of the island, to include the Armory – if this is something that you might be interested in, make sure that you read about it at the end of this article. There will be an additional fee for this and it is not a part of the registration fee.

5PM Installation Reception in the FORUM room. Again we can thank TSCL for sponsoring the beer and wine for this social event.

6PM Installation Banquet in the EMPIRE room. Cash bar will be available for the evening. Meal choices are: Stuffed Grouper (broiled Grouper with Crabmeat Stuffing, topped with Bearnaise Sauce, Roasted Red Potatoes & Green Beans) OR Roasted Pork Tenderloin (topped with Jamaican Relish served with Roasted Red Potatoes and Green Beans) Chocolate Lava Cake will be served for dessert. Make sure to note your meal choice on the registration form.

10PM Official end to the 2018 National Convention



### Saturday, September 22nd

While the convention is officially over, the fun doesn't have to end. There is so much to do and to see in the area that we couldn't help ourselves in helping you enjoy it all.

We have made arrangements for a Fishing Charter to take those who want to experience the thrill of Gulf Fishing. Make sure that you read all about it in the separate article that follows this one. Pre-registration and pre-payment is required. This event is not part of the convention.

We have also arranged for some top-notch golfing. For those die-hard golfers in the group, this is definitely up your alley. More information will be posted on the website as it becomes available. Pre-registration and pre-payment will be required. This event is not part of the convention.

Aside from these two events, we have arranged for discounted tickets for the dolphin tours, the pirate boat tour as well as other area attractions and restaurants. A complete list of discounts and specials will be available on-line and will be published in the August VOICE.

The hotel is offering our special discounted rates for a full week before and a full week after our convention dates – take this great opportunity to plan a vacation with family or friends – or both!

**YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS THIS FUN EVENT. – PROMISE!**

## GOING TO FT. WALTON BEACH?

The following are some of the fun and exciting events that you can take part in while you are there. Some events are scheduled and will require reservations and prepayment; others are a do-on-your-own. Please read each one carefully to know what is required.

**HISTORICAL TOUR OF FT. WALTON** – scheduled for Friday, September 21st

For \$59.00 (plus lunch, on-your-own) TREA members (and guests) can enjoy an air-conditioned motor coach tour of Ft. Walton Beach and surrounding areas. The bus will pick you up in front of the hotel at 10AM and return you back to the hotel at approximately 2:30PM. The tour is guided by a local area expert and will include a visit to:

- THE AIR FORCE ARMAMENT MUSEUM
- HISTORICAL DOWN TOWN Ft. Walton Beach
- Okaloosa Island
- Destin History & Fishing Museum – Harbor Walk Village
- Destin Commons
- Henderson State Park
- Destin – Back Porch Restaurant – Lunch On Your Own



*This is a reservations and payment required event --- payment is due to TREA HQ by August 1st. (See information on back page of this magazine). This trip requires 35 attendees, if there are not 35 reservations, the trip will be cancelled, and all funds refunded.*

**CHARTERED FISHING TRIP** – Scheduled for Saturday, September 22nd

“Just sit right back, and you’ll hear a tale, A tale of a fateful trip, That started from this tropic port, Aboard this tiny ship.” Just kidding!

Seriously though – for those who have a yearning for adventure and some serious fun – this day trip is calling for you. The Pescador III will be your ‘home away from land home’ for 4 hours of fun and exciting gulf fishing. Expect to catch Grouper, Red Snapper, Mahi Mahi and possibly Tuna. Your Captain, Mike Whitley is a veteran, so you can feel good knowing that not only are you having a once in a lifetime experience (possibly), but that you are supporting a fellow vet. Captain Whitley, and his crew will assist in every way possible to ensure that our group not only has fun, but also brings home the best catch of the day. They will clean and fillet the catch and the plan is to bring it back to the hotel where us land-lubbers are eagerly awaiting a delicious fish BBQ (other food will also be available). The evening will end with friends and food on the beach – seriously, can it get any better than that? The cost is estimated to be \$125 per person (all inclusive). The actual price is dependent on how many people sign up for the event. The more we have, the cheaper the price. The trip is limited to 16 people, if we get all 16, then the cost per person would be \$100, plus taxes but MINUS our military discount. If we only get the minimum of 6, then the cost will be \$150 (all inclusive). Unfortunately, we won’t know the exact cost until closer to the date. The deadline for signing up is either August 1st, or once the 16 slots are full – whichever happens first --- don’t risk losing out on this, who knows when you will get another chance. The boat will leave the dock at 6 am (sharp) – all passengers need to present 1/2 hour prior to departure. Transportation will be arranged to/from the hotel and the dock – it will only cost you a share in your catch of the day

*This event does require a reservation and payment - see the inside back page of this magazine for reservation information.*

**FORE! CALLING ALL TREA GOLFERS** – golfing on Eglin AFB – scheduled for Saturday, September 22nd – If you don't have sea legs and want to stay securely grounded to mother Earth, this day trip is for you. Spend the morning golfing on the beautiful grounds of Eglin Air Force Base. If you are interested in this event, please e-mail PNP Charlie Flowers at [charflow@comcast.net](mailto:charflow@comcast.net).



## **A PIRATE'S LIFE FOR ME!** An on-you-own event

Embark on the adventure of a lifetime aboard the Buccaneer Pirate Cruise located at HarborWalk Village in Destin, Florida and take to the seas of the pristine, emerald-green waters of the Emerald Coast. Entertainment and interaction create adventure and excitement for the young and young-at-heart as we unlock the treasure of your heart and let your dreams come true!

The Buccaneer Pirate Cruise is a 100-foot U.S. Coast Guard approved motor vessel that comfortably accommodates up to 149 passengers. The boat is equipped with two restrooms, a covered quarter deck, and galley that features a variety of snack items, adult beverages, and gifts.

The captain is a skilled sea dog who runs a tight ship, but the only rule aboard is to have fun! The tour interactively entertains passengers with sword fights, water gun battles, storytelling, singing, dancing, and treasure hunts. Parents can join in the merriment with the scallywags and little buccaneers. However, if you're not keen to plundering and swabbing the decks, simply kick back, relax, and take in the scenery while you watch your lads and lasses have the time of their lives.

\$36/regular ticket, \$32/Senior (60+)



## **DOLPHIN CRUISES** – an 'on-your-own' event

There are many different boats and options to choose from – most offer a 2-hour long cruise and begin with a narrated tour of the Destin Harbor where the captain will give you some history about the area and point out some of the local spots along the harbor. You will normally head out to the Gulf of Mexico through the East Pass, and if it's calm enough, we will cruise just off the beach to find the dolphins. If the Gulf is too rough, we cruise in the Choctawhatchee Bay under the Destin Bridge where we can also find the dolphins. Once dolphins are spotted – you can sit back and enjoy their 'forever young' frolicking while the experts continue to discuss and educate their passengers on local pods. Cost is typically \$25 (Senior) per person, but we are working on group discounted tickets --- stay tuned!



**GULFARIUM** – (so close you can walk to it from the hotel) – a ‘do-on-your-own’ Gulfarium Marine Adventure Park is dedicated to educating, entertaining, and inspiring our guests to respect and preserve wildlife by providing unique and memorable experiences for visitors of all ages to connect with marine life. General Admission to the park is \$23.00 per person, but we are in the process of getting special discounted rates for TREA Members. You can get up close and personal with dolphins, turtles, sea lions & stingrays – click on the link below to find out all about the different options --- so many to choose from! [https://www.gulfarium.com/animal\\_encounters](https://www.gulfarium.com/animal_encounters)



**SILVER SANDS OUTLETS** – a ‘do-on-your-own’ A picturesque 20-minute drive from the hotel For a full list of all the stores, go to: The world’s finest shopping! Save 25% to 65% every day on designer and name brands including Coach, Gap, Nike, and Polo Ralph Lauren.

**SEAFOOD, SEAFOOD AND MORE SEAFOOD!**

<p>Of course, Seafood is top on the list – after all, we are in Florida – right! The following restaurants offer a military discount:</p>	<p><b>Crab Island Cantina</b> - 15%  <b>Boshamps Oyster and Seafood House</b> - 10%  <b>Floyds Shrimp House</b> - 15%  <b>Anglers</b> - 10% set military discount</p>
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So, enjoy the delicious local fare while you save a few bucks! Also check out the EGLIN tours & ticket site – they have discounted tickets on many restaurants and events. <https://www.eplinlife.com/itt/index.html>  
 Al’s Beach Club Burger Bar - 15% set military discount (alcohol excluded)

\*\*\* Take note - 4-6 pm everyday \$11.99 will buy you ‘all you can eat’ fried shrimp and fried grouper. Many more will be added so make sure that you check out our website ([www.trea.org](http://www.trea.org))

**Secret of the Emerald Coast Sand**

The sands that comprise the beaches of Santa Rosa Island Destin • Fort Walton Beach • Okaloosa Island - are among the whitest, cleanest and most similar in size and shape throughout the entire world. The perfect oval shape of each grain of sand makes the beach “squeak” when you walk on it. The reasons for their uniqueness are many. However, while it may not be immediately apparent, the Apalachicola River, 130 miles east of Fort Walton Beach, is possibly the most important factor controlling the type of sand found on Santa Rosa Island beaches today.

Through time, small quartz particles were deposited offshore in the Gulf of Mexico in a delta fan type formation. Sea level continued to rise rapidly and in doing so reworked these quartz grains across the continental shelf toward our present shoreline.

This process of reworking continued until the rate of sea level rise began to level off. At that time, the beaches of Santa Rosa Island began to form. The quartz-sand material, delivered to the Gulf of Mexico from the Appalachians by the Apalachicola River, were deposited along the shores when Santa Rosa Island began to extend like an arm from Destin. This extension continues today as these small, white quartz sands move to the west before reaching their final destination at Pensacola Pass. No one knows why the quartz is sugary-white instead of the normally rosy-pink tint, but in its journey it has lost its coating.





Jean S Aldrich, USA  
Chapter 38  
South Carolina

Duncan Conway, USN  
Member at Large  
Oklahoma

Andrew Grass  
Member at Large  
Mississippi

Henry Kellogg, USAF  
Member at Large  
Michigan

Dominic Aloï, USAF  
Member at Large  
Vermont

John Corley, USAF  
Member at Large  
Mississippi

James Gray, USAF  
Chapter 39  
Colorado

Don Kelly, USAF  
Member at Large  
Tennessee

William Appling, USCG  
Member at Large  
Maryland

Herman Dahl, USMC  
Chapter 90  
Illinois

William Greene, USAF  
Chapter 1  
Colorado

Meredith Kesler, USAF  
Member at Large  
Colorado

Robert Banks, USAF  
Chapter 3  
Colorado

Michael Darnell, USAF  
Member at Large  
Florida

Frederick Harrid, USA  
Chapter 9  
Maryland

Stanley Kesler, USA  
Member at Large  
Mississippi

Paul Bargeman, USAF  
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Marion Davis, USA  
Chapter 9  
Georgia

Joseph E Harvin  
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Lawrence Dorr, USN  
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Member at Large  
Nebraska

Wilfred Berard, USAF  
Member at Large  
California

Wilbur Ferris, USAF  
Member at Large  
Florida

Roger Jackson, USMC  
Member at Large  
Ohio

Robert Kukua, USAF  
Member at Large  
Hawaii

James Bissett, USAF  
Member at Large  
Kentucky

Watkins Fisher, USA  
Member at Large  
Virginia

Otto Jander, USAF  
Member at Large  
Texas

Octave LaCaze, USAF  
Member at Large  
Louisiana

Keith Brauer  
Member at Large  
North Carolina

Lonnie Franks, USAF  
Member at Large  
Texas

Harry Janson, USAF  
Member at Large  
California

Sammy Landreth, USAF  
Member at Large  
New Mexico

Anderson Buie, USA  
Chapter 9  
Maryland

William Franzen, USN  
Member at Large  
Nebraska

LaWayne Janssen, USAF  
Member at Large  
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Billy Langston, USA  
Member at Large  
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Member at Large  
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Member at Large  
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Member at Large  
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USAF  
Member at Large  
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Richard Jensen, USAF

Donald Jones, USAF  
Chapter 34  
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Clifford Campbell, USAF  
Member at Large  
Washington

Kenneth Garner, USAF  
Member at Large  
Texas

Merriweather Jones, USA  
Member at Large  
Oregon

James Leslie, USA  
Chapter 3  
Colorado

Quester Campbell, USA  
Chapter 9  
Maryland

Gus Gebauer, USA  
Member at Large  
Maryland

Ralph Jones, USAF  
Member at Large  
Georgia

Osborne Lewis, USAF  
Member at Large  
Missouri

James Cessna, USAF  
Member at Large  
Oregon

Jacob Gilmore, USAF  
Chapter 3  
Colorado

James P Keenan, USN  
Member at Large  
Arizona

Rod Lewis, USAF  
Member at Large  
Colorado



Clyde Light, USAF  
Member at Large  
Arkansas

Richard Lorenzini, USAF  
Member at Large  
California

Edward Lubereski, USAF  
Member at Large  
Utah

Andrew Lundberg, USN  
Member at Large  
Michigan  
Erick Luoma, USN  
Member at Large  
California

Duane Martin, USAF  
Chapter 39  
Colorado

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Member at Large  
Kentucky

James Mattison, USAF  
Member at Large  
Arkansas

Hiram McCall, USAF  
Member at Large  
Florida

Thomas McGibbons, USAF  
Chapter 80  
Florida

Russell Mears, USAF  
Chapter 125  
Oklahoma

Milton Mechura, USAF  
Member at Large  
Colorado

John Mellor, USAF  
Member at Large  
Texas

Harry Menius  
Member at Large  
Georgia

Charles Menz, USA  
Member at Large  
California

Lloyd Meyers, USAF  
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Oregon

Frederick Miller, USAF  
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California

Robert Moxcey, USAF  
Member at Large  
Florida

Bob L Mull, USAF  
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Pennsylvania

John Myatt, USAF  
Member at Large  
North Carolina

Donald Nauman, USAF  
Member at Large  
Michigan

Roy Nichols, USAF  
Member at Large  
Florida

Dale Ogden, USAF  
Member at Large  
South Carolina

A L Rick Padilla, USAF  
Member at Large  
Idaho

Jessie Parker, USAF  
Chapter 9  
Maryland

Ronald Paynter, USAF  
Member at Large  
Florida

Robert Peebles  
Chapter 98  
Pennsylvania

Lloyd Peterson, USAF  
Chapter 29  
South Dakota

Gordon Porter, USAF  
Member at Large  
California

Raymond Pricer, USNG  
Chapter 37  
Oklahoma

James Reiter, USAF  
Chapter 98  
Pennsylvania

Robert Roberts, USA  
Member at Large  
Tennessee

Raymond Robinson  
Member at Large  
New Mexico

Phillip Rood, USAF  
Member at Large  
New Mexico

Edward Sabourin, USNR  
Member at Large  
Florida

Earl Schaeffer, USAF  
Chapter 16  
Kansas

William Scheck, USAF  
Member at Large  
New Mexico

William Shives Jr., USAF  
Member at Large  
North Carolina

Ray Shubert, USN  
Member at Large  
South Carolina

John Skopayko, USA  
Member at Large  
Mississippi

Heywood Smith, USA  
Chapter 20  
Colorado

Roy Southern, USA  
Member at Large  
North Carolina

Earnest Sowder, USAF  
Member at Large  
Texas

Juddie Still, USAF  
Member at Large  
Texas

Frank Stretz, USAF  
Member at Large  
North Carolina

Gerald Tallant  
Member at Large  
Missouri

Doehrel Thomas, USAF  
Member at Large  
California

Serbando Torres, USAF  
Member at Large  
Maryland

Dodd Tremaine, USN  
Member at Large  
Washington

Robert Tufts, USAF  
Member at Large  
Arizona

David Tyrrell, USAF  
Member at Large  
Florida

Bernard A. Underwood,  
USAF  
Chapter 1  
Michigan

John Vaughn, USAF  
Member at Large  
Oklahoma

Warren Victor, USAF  
Member at Large  
Arizona

Robert Vise, USA  
Chapter 3  
Colorado

Robert Wharton, USAF  
Member at Large  
Texas

Herbert White, USA  
Member at Large  
Michigan

Jesse Whitfield, USA  
Chapter 90  
Illinois

Melvin (Ted) Whitlock,  
USAF  
Member at Large  
Florida

Wilbert Williams, USAF  
Chapter 34  
Arizona

Ralph Zabriskie, USAF  
Member at Large  
Florida

## THE HISTORY OF THE DOG TAG –

Almost all of you have worn one – some of you still do, but how much do you really know about the military ‘dog tag?’



The Civil War provided the first recorded incident of American soldiers making an effort to ensure that their identities would be known should they die on the battlefield. Their methods were varied, and all were taken on a soldier's own initiative. In 1863, prior to the battle of Mine's Run in northern Virginia, General Meade's troops wrote their names and unit designations on paper tags and pinned them to their clothing. Many soldiers took great care to mark all their personal belongings. Some troops fashioned their own "ID" (identification) tags out of pieces of wood, boring a hole in one end so that they could be worn on a string around the neck.

The commercial sector saw the demand for an identification method and provided products. Harper's Weekly Magazine advertised "Soldier's Pins" which could be mail ordered. Made of silver or gold, these pins were inscribed with an individual's name and unit designation. Private vendors who followed troops also offered ornate identification disks for sale just prior to battles. Still, despite the fact that fear of being listed among the unknowns was a real concern among the rank and file, no reference to an official issue of identification tags by the Federal Government exists. (42% of the Civil War dead remain unidentified.)

The first official advocacy of issuing identification tags took place in 1899. Chaplain Charles C. Pierce, who was tasked to establish the Quartermaster Office of Identification in the Philippines, recommended inclusion of an "identity disc" in the combat field kit as the answer to the need for standard identification. The Army Regulations of 1913 made identification tags mandatory, and by 1917, all combat soldiers wore aluminum discs on chains around their necks.

By World War II, the circular disc was replaced by the oblong shape familiar to us today, generally referred to as "dog tags."



Since then, some myths have arisen in connection with the purpose of the identification tags. One of the more common myths involves the reason for the notch on the tag issued between 1941 and the early 1970's. Battlefield rumor held that the notched end of the tag was placed between the front teeth of battlefield casualties to hold the jaws in place. No official record of American soldiers being issued these instructions exists; the only purpose of "the notch" was to hold the blank tag in place on the embossing machine. The machine used at this time doesn't require a notch to hold the blank in place, hence, today's tags are smooth on all sides.

The sole purpose of the identification tag is stated by its designation. Tags found around the neck of a casualty, and only those tags found around the neck, stay with the remains at all times tags found any place besides around the neck are made note of in the Record of Personal Effects of Deceased Personnel, and placed in an effects bag. They are not removed unless there is a need to temporarily inter the remains. If there is only one tag present, another is made to match the first. If the remains are unidentified, two tags marked "unidentified" are made. One tag is interred with the individual, the other placed on a wire ring in the sequence of the temporary cemetery plot. This enables Graves Registration personnel to make positive identification of remains during disinterment procedures; when the remains are disinterred, the tag on the wire ring is removed and placed with the matching tag around the neck.



The Department of the Army has developed and is currently testing a new tag, which will hold 80% of a soldier's medical and dental data on a microchip. Known as the Individually Carried Record, it is not intended to replace the present tag, but rather to augment it as part of the "paperless battlefield" concept.

The Armed Forces make every possible effort to eradicate discrepancies and remove doubts about casualties, not least those doubts that families may hold concerning the demise of their loved ones. In recent years, a near perfect record of identifying service members who have died in the line of duty has been achieved, a far cry from the 58% rate of identification that stood during the Civil War. The ID tag has, been and remains a major part of the reason for this record.

This article was written CPT Richard W. Wooley was Chief of Individual Training, Graves Registration Department (now the Mortuary Affairs Center), U.S. Army Quartermaster School, Fort Lee, Virginia.



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## DEFENSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN IN THE SERVICES RELEASES 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Department of Defense News Release

The Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services has released its 2017 annual report on matters relating to women serving in the Armed Forces of the United States. DACOWITS provides the Department of Defense with advice and recommendations on matters and policies relating to women in the Armed Forces. The committee provides these recommendations to the Secretary of Defense via a comprehensive annual report, based on information gathered throughout the year.

For 2017, DACOWITS studied 13 topics. The committee gathered information from multiple sources including briefings and written responses from DOD, service-level military representatives, and subject matter experts; data collected from focus groups and interactions with service members during installation visits; and peer-reviewed literature. DACOWITS collected qualitative data during their visits to multiple installations representing the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, Navy and Coast Guard.

Based upon the data collected and analyzed, the committee submitted 17 recommendations to the Secretary of Defense on the following topics: accession and marketing, recruiting strategies, propensity to serve, mid-career retention, dual-military co-location policies, gender integration, key opportunities and assignments, gender integrated boxing, physiological gender differences, parent leave policies, childcare resources, family care plan policies, and the impacts of social media and sexual harassment online. The report is available online and includes detailed reasoning supporting each recommendation addressed by the committee.

Established in 1951, DACOWITS is one of the oldest DOD federal advisory committees. The committee was created following the signing of the 1948 Women's Armed Services Integration Act. The law enabled women to serve as permanent, regular members of the Armed Forces in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force. Over the years, DACOWITS has been instrumental to the DOD and has made significant contributions on topics including opening career fields, specialties, schooling and training to women; developing gender neutral occupational standards; improving to the health of deployed servicewomen; and increasing marketing, accessions and recruiting.

### THE SEARCH IS ON..... Are you a Professional Photographer? An Experienced DJ?



We will be hiring a Professional Photographer and an Experienced DJ for our upcoming Convention in Ft. Walton Beach this September and wanted to invite all TREA Members the opportunity to bid on the contract You must be licensed, bonded and insured.

If you are interested, please go to the TREA website to view and print the request for proposal. All the important information will be available for you to reference.

There is a deadline of May 30th for all proposals, so don't delay – check it out today. If you have questions please send an e-mail to [treaHQ@trea.org](mailto:treaHQ@trea.org).

# REGISTRATION FOR HISTORICAL TOUR AND/OR CHARTERED FISHING TRIP

Both trips require pre-registration and pre-payment.  
In the unlikely event that the event is canceled, a full refund will be given.

The deadline for both trips is August 1st, 2018 --- spaces 'MAY' be available after August 1st, but there is no guarantee

## #1 - HISTORICAL BUS TOUR OF FT. WALTON BEACH ( see page # -- for full details)

Cost is \$59.00 per person

This trip will have a scheduled lunch break - lunch will be on your own

## #2 - CHARTERED FISHING TRIP - (see page # -- for full details)

Cost to register and hold your spot is \$150 -

Once the total number of participants is confirmed, a refund of up to \$35 may be given.

I am reserving \_\_\_\_\_ spaces for the **GUIDED HISTORICAL TOUR**

Total Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
(\$59 per person)

I am reserving \_\_\_\_\_ spaces for the **CHARTERED FISHING TRIP**

Total Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
(\$150 holds your spot)

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