

NAVY DEPARTMENT BRANCH 181
Thursday, June 4, 2015, 1800

OPENING CEREMONIES: Meeting convened at 1803 hours.

Attendance: Stephen Tassin, President; Orin Hatton, Vice President; PRPEC Chris Slawinski, Sec/Treasurer; PRPEC Robert Washington, Sr., Junior Past President; Al Thompson (BOD); NEDE Joe Barnes (BOD); NED Tom Snee (BOD) (excused); John Davis, (BOD); Benjamin Young (BOD); Honorary Shipmate James Short.

April Minutes distributed. Minutes stand approved.

BOD Recommendations: None

Appointments: Chaplain: Honorary Shipmate Jimmy Short
Master at Arms: Shipmate Ben Young

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

Americanism Essay Contest:

PRPEC Bob Washington stated that the Branch's one Regional winner received her certificate and \$25 gift card.

Audit, Budget & Finance:

PRPEC Chris Slawinski stated that the Branch is in a new year and working under the budget approved by the assembly in April.

Hospitals, Welfare, and Rehabilitation:

None to report.

Legislative Service: Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) Chairman John McCain (Ariz.) announced that this week and much of next week has been reserved for Senate debate and voting on floor amendments to the Senate version of the FY 2016 Defense Authorization bill (S. 1376). Anticipated amendments that may be considered next week include:

- Rolling back TRICARE pharmacy co-pay increases;
- Providing comprehensive concurrent receipt reform;
- Increasing the annual pay increase from 1.3% to 2.3%;
- Restoring Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) benefits;
- Extending SCRA mortgage protection from nine months to one year; and
- Providing veteran status to those members of the Reserve Component who served 20 years or more but were not activated.

Many of the above referenced amendments are listed on the FRA Action Center (action.fra.org/action-center) and members are urged to contact their senators to ask for their support on these critical amendments.

FRA National Executive Director (NED) Tom Snee testified before the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee (SVAC) at the invitation of SVAC Chairman Johnny Isakson (Ga.) to discuss the problem of veteran homelessness. Snee congratulated the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) laudable goal of eliminating veteran homelessness, and stressed that we must improve and re-authorize the VA reintegration program. This program provides job training, counseling and placement services to expedite entry into the labor force. Snee also noted the importance of a seamless transition from the Department of Defense to the VA. FRA's written statement dated June 3, 2015 addresses homelessness and other legislative issues, and is available on the FRA website at www.fra.org/testimony.

The House Veterans' Affairs Committee (HVAC) Subcommittee on Health held a hearing assessing the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) ability to promptly pay non-VA providers. A March 2014 GAO report indicates that some non-VA providers experienced "lengthy delays" in the processing of their claims that, in at least one case, took years to resolve. Despite efforts to expedite reimbursement across the VA health care system, reports of delinquent and delayed payments to non-VA providers across the country continue. As a result, some health care providers are hesitant, unwilling or unable to provide care to veterans due to fears they will not be paid for the services they provide. The fact that many veterans are being held responsible for these outstanding bills in the absence of VA payment is even more disturbing. The Subcommittee examined the ability of VA to comply with the Prompt Pay Act, reviewed the barriers that are preventing reimbursement timeliness and accuracy, and assessed VA's efforts to expedite payments to non-VA providers.

FRA National Executive Director (NED) Tom Snee attended a Commemoration of the Battle of Midway at the Army-Navy Country Club in Arlington, Virginia on Thursday, June 4, 2015.

The Battle of Midway was a crucial and decisive naval battle in the Pacific Theatre of World War II. The battle occurred between 3 and 6 June 1942, only six months after Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor. It was a decisive American victory that changed the tide of war in the Pacific. Read the story of one FRA Shipmate who survived the sinking of the USS Yorktown in this year's summer issues (June - August 2015) of FRA Today magazine.

Central Liaison Committee:

The Central Liaison Committee meeting was on Saturday, April 25, 2015 at 1400, hosted by Branch 4, FACC, 7500 Livingston Rd, Oxon Hill, MD. Branch 4 was a great host for the meeting. The Branch has received tickets to sell for a chance to win season tickets for the Washington Redskins football team. Tickets are \$5 each.

The next CLC meeting is on Saturday, July 18, 2015 at 1400, hosted by Branch 93, Pax River, MD.

Membership and Retention:

Current members as of May 31, 2015	<u>290</u>
Past Due	<u>2</u>
Members in Good Standing	<u>288</u> (<u>+2.86 %</u> / 280)

Installation/Holiday Brunch:

PRPEC Slawinski thanked all that attended the Installation banquet. The Branch Corporation took care of the additional expenses of the banquet in recognition of the Branch's 60th Anniversary, April 15, 2015.

Next event is the Branch Christmas Brunch; Secretary will contact Spates Community Club to secure a room in early December.

**Treasurer's Report:
As of May 31, 2015**

PCT	4/15/2015	April PCT	\$332.00
	5/18/2015	May PCT	\$412.75
TOTAL INCOME			\$744.75
PREVIOUS BALANCE (BUDGET - EXPENSES + INCOME)			\$9,463.73
TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME			\$744.75
TOTAL MONTHLY EXPENSES			\$1,351.12
ENDING BALANCE			\$8,857.36
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)			\$507.36
CASH IN THE BANK	As of 6/4/2015 (Online)		\$4,069.39
CHECKING BALANCE	As of 6/4/2015 (Online)		\$2,559.94
PCT. BUDGET EXPENDED	\$6,211.90		74%

Correspondence:

- 4th Quarter Membership Report/ Voting Strength
- NED Memorandum 4-15 Appointment of NVP
- NED Memorandum 5-15 Nominating Resolution NVP – PRPSC Don Larson, Branch 94 (Motion approved to defer to BOD)
- Membership Newsletter for May
- NED Memorandum 6-15 Nominating Resolution NVP –PRPWC Richard Fetro, Branch 101 (Motion approved to defer to BOD)
- NED Memorandum 7-15 Nominating Resolution NP – NVP Virgil Courneya, Branch 274 (Motion approved to defer to BOD)
- NP letter Credentials and registration Committee Appointments
- Memorandum for the Record – National Winners Americanism-Patriotism Essay Contest
- Financial Report of the 87th National Convention
- Items for sale by Branches
- Membership award for Shipmate John Davis

Unfinished or Deferred Business:

Work has begun on the Public Service Announcement for the Branch. The software is to be purchased and as soon as a “draft” is completed, it will be shown to Branch members.

New Business:

None

Good of the Order:

Shipmates and Protocol guests were given the right to speak on any topic.

NEDE spoke that the Foundation is working on applications for scholarships. The numbers of submissions are down from last year and all winners will be notified.

Reminder to the Branch, there will be FRA night at the Navy Band performance at the Navy Memorial on June 12th at 1900. Please attend if you can.

Time and Place:

Next Branch meeting will be Thursday, July 2, 2015 @ 1730 for BOD meeting for resolutions to be considered for the ECR Convention. The regular meeting will be at 1800, Thursday, June 4, 2015 at The American Legion Post 139, 3445 North Washington Blvd., Arlington, VA.

Meeting adjourned at 1845 hours.

Stephen M. Tassin
FRA Branch 181 President

Christopher J. Slawinski
FRA Branch 181 Secretary/Treasurer