



GEM STATE GEMS

Gem State Branch 382
Fleet Reserve Association
www.fra382.org
February 2018

News from the Branch President:

January has been busy, but not as busy as December was. Activities for the Branch have slowed down considerably.

The removal of Christmas decorations at the VA Hospital and Veterans Home was well attended and went quickly and efficiently. Thanks to all who participated.

The removal of the wreaths (Wreaths Across America) at the Idaho State Veterans Cemetery was well attended by a large number of organizations. By the scheduled start time of 0900 they were wrapping it up. Thanks to those shipmates and auxiliary members who made the effort to be there to help.

Now to a subject that has been on the table for some time and is moving closer to a reality. "Merger of the Northwest Region with the West Coast Region."

This has been discussed for quite some time with good points on both sides. It has come down to a vote from the Northwest Region and we need your input. We will hold a

vote at our February meeting and need input from our shipmates who are unable to attend the meeting.

Some of the reasoning as I see it are financial. If we combine the two regions into one, that eliminates the cost of running one region. Combining would also give a larger group of members to fill regional offices, both branch and unit.

This brings us to one of the more important reasons for a vote. As I'm sure you all know the LA FRA has no regional officers for the Northwest Region. Therefore, an administrator has been assigned to oversee the region. Without regional officers the region cannot function. Therefore, if we vote to remain the Northwest Region our units will dissolve and the LA FRA members will be moved to Member-At-Large, meaning that all the good work your unit is doing is not recognized by the FRA and LA FRA. Their dues are paid to national and they have no say and not vote on anything.

I know this is a difficult subject, but it is not going to go away.

I personally will vote to support our units and merge with the West Coast Region.

As always, consider volunteering.

Someone out there needs you.

In Loyalty, Protection & Service,
Bill Hall,
President Branch 382

News from the Branch Vice President:

The medical profession has been kept busy lately. Those on the Binnacle List this past month are Shipmate Hazel Bettencourt who had a short stay in the hospital for some cardiac issues. She has recovered nicely and is out and about. Shipmate Lisa Streicher is recovering from hip replacement surgery; we hope to see her up and about real soon. Shipmate Cindy Jones had a heart attack last week and spent a few days in the hospital. She is recovering now and should be good as new very soon. Our thoughts and prayers are with these Shipmates wishing them a speedy and full recovery.

We have added two new members to our Branch roster this month. They are Shipmate Russell Starnes, HTC USN Retired, from Caldwell and Shipmate Thomas (Tom) White, PNC USN Retired, from Boise. Both of these shipmates were Members at Large in the FRA when they were contacted by Shipmate

Chuck Orvis and myself and invited to transfer their membership to Branch 382. This is part of an ongoing effort by Shipmate Orvis and me to bring more members into the Branch. Hopefully, we will be able to convince more of the MAL members to join us here in Branch 382. Thanks, Chuck, for all of your effort. When you see these new members, be sure and give them a warm handshake and cheerful greeting and make them feel as welcome as they are.

The Auxiliary Unit of Branch 382 is working hard to increase their membership, as well. How about you Shipmates bring your wives to the next meeting and let them see what the Auxiliary is all about? This is a family oriented organization; let's continue that tradition.

Till the next meeting or at Wednesday coffee, we look forward to seeing each of you. Keep safe, be well, be happy and be of good spirits.

Good ideas are not adopted automatically. They must be driven into practice with courageous patience. —Hyman Rickover

In Loyalty, Protection, and Service
Danny Hunt
Vice President Branch 382

News from the Branch Secretary:

As stated by the Branch President, a vote must be taken on whether the Northwest Region will merge with the West Coast region. The Branch needs to reach out to all of its members to get an accurate gauge on whether to merge or not. **A Yea vote means that you are in favor of the region merger. A Nay vote means you are against the region merger.** There are three ways you can let your Branch officers know how you want your vote heard. First, you can attend the upcoming meeting and be present for the vote. Second, you can contact the Branch Secretary via email at frabran382@gmail.com. Third, you can mail in the voting slip attached at the bottom of the newsletter. If you receive this newsletter by mail, you will receive a self-addressed stamped envelope. Please detach the voting slip, mark your vote and send your vote back to the Branch using the envelope. **Votes need to be received at the Branch NLT 9 February, 2018.**

Branch and Unit Events:

February

02 – Ground Hog Day
04 – USO Birthday (77 Years)
10 – Branch and Unit Meeting
14 – Valentine’s Day
19 – President’s Day
19 – Coast Guard Reserves Birthday (79 Years)

March

03 – Navy Reserves Birthday (103 Years)
04 – Mardi Gras
10 – Branch and Unit Meeting
11 – Daylight Savings Time Begins
17 – St. Patrick’s Day
25 – Medal of Honor Day

Branch Birthdays:

February

02 – Kevin Lee
04 – Jessie Nichols
09 – Richard Harding
10 – Charles Crook; Julie Ward
15 – Robert Keith
16 – Thomas Flanik
23 – Gary Kelly
26 – Richard Scott

March

05 – Bob Burmeister
07 – Jim Davisson, Robert Day
09 – John Howe
13 – Bruce Wood
18 – Jessie Kirkland
20 – James Doering; John Maltsberger;
Rodney McPherson
24 – Don Boesinger
31 – Gary Plumlee; Bruce Wood

This Day in Naval History:

February 04, 1779 - Capt. John Paul Jones takes command of Bonhomme Richard (formerly Duc de Duras), which was given to the United States by King Louis XVI of France.

February 07, 1943 - USS Growler (SS 215) fights a desperate night battle with the Japanese supply ship Hayasaki, during which the boat's commanding officer, Lt. Cmdr. Howard W. Gilmore, rams the enemy ship, badly bending Growler's bow. Wounded by machine gun fire and unable to go below, Gilmore gives the order "Take her down!" sacrificing himself so his submarine could dive to safety. For his "distinguished gallantry and valor" on this occasion and earlier in the patrol, he is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor and promoted one rank.

February 13, 1943 - Women Marines were reestablished as the Marine Corps Womens Reserve. Col. Ruth Cheney Streeter, the first Director of the United States Marine Corps Women's Reserve, serves until Dec. 7, 1945.

February 14, 1778 - Continental ship, Ranger, commanded by John Paul Jones, receives the first official salute to a U.S. Stars and Stripes flag by a foreign government (the French fleet) at Quiberon, France.

February 19, 1945 - Following pre-invasion naval gunfire and aerial bombardment, U.S. Marines land on Iwo Jima, securing the island on March 16. Fleet Adm. Chester Nimitz describes the invasion, from which 27 Medals of Honor are given, as one where uncommon valor was a common virtue.

February 23, 1919 - The first ship named for an enlisted man, USS Osmond Ingram (DD 255), is launched.

February 23, 1945 - Four days after landing on Iwo Jima, an invasion where uncommon valor was a common virtue, the United States flag is raised on Mt. Suribachi.

Little Known Tidbit of Naval History

REMEMBERING ONE OF OUR HEROES!
DO YOU KNOW WHO FIREMAN DUANE HODGES WAS?!

January 23, 1968 marks the 50th anniversary of the attack and captured of the USS Pueblo by North Korean Naval Forces. During that attack one US Sailor was killed.... that Sailor was Fireman Duane Hodges.

When the North Korean first attacked the USS Pueblo around noon on 23 January 1968, the ship was serving lunch to the crew. One of the last Sailors through the chow line was Fireman Duane Hodges. FN Hodges loaded up his tray with turkey, mashed potatoes, and corn. FN Hodges had just gotten off a 12-hour shift in the engine room and was hungry. And it was to be his last meal. FN Hodges meal was interrupted when the North Korean ships commenced firing on the USS Pueblo.

After reporting to his General Quarters station FN Hodges went to go assist the CT's in destroying and throwing classified material over the side in jettison bags. FN Hodges was hit by a North Korean shell that exploded in the passageway between the galley and the wardroom. Several other Sailors were injured from the same blast. HM1 Herman P. Baldrige with another Sailor, MS3 Reed, was dispatched to retrieve a stretcher for FN Hodges.

At that time the USS Pueblo was taking heavy fire...so the Commanding Officer, CDR Bucher had ordered all non-essential personnel to take cover below decks. The North Korean commenced firing their machine guns at the USS Pueblo and the bullets were bouncing off the metal when HM1 Baldrige and MS3 Reed reached the wounded FN Hodges. HM1 Baldrige and MS3 Reed put FN Hodges on the stretcher and put him in a passageway between the galley and the wardroom. They kept him quiet and HM1 Baldrige gave him a couple of shots of morphine to ease the pain and make him as comfortable as possible.

After a while the North Koreans stormed and boarded the USS Pueblo. HM1 Baldrige and MS3 Reed was startled to see an armed North Korean Soldier come into the passageway. The North Korean Soldier forced MS3 Reed and HM1 Baldrige by gun point to sit down in the wardroom and refused to allow them to tend to FN Hodges.

The North Koreans then towed the USS Pueblo into Wonsan Harbor which took a while and the crew was beaten.

Once in North Korea, the Soldiers took the USS Pueblo crew off the ship and marched everybody through the town of Wonsan. People were spitting, throwing stuff, yelling and screaming at the American. Sometime during the transit to the port of Wonsan, FN Hodges died.

FN Hodges was the only US fatality during the USS Pueblo incident and was awarded a Silver Star posthumously. When the crew of the USS Pueblo was released on 23 December 1968....the remains of FN Hodges was also turned over to the US Army at the DMZ.

REST IN PEACE SHIPMATE!

To read more about the capture of the USS Pueblo, please visit the following website:

<https://stationhypo.com/2018/01/23/the-time-the-u-s-nearly-nuked-north-korea-over-a-highjacked-spy-ship/>

REGION MERGER VOTE

On the matter of the Northwest Region merging with the West Coast region, I vote the following:

YEA _____

NAY _____

Signature: _____