

# The "ANCHOR"

A Newsletter of FRA Branch, Auxiliary Unit 261 and  
Club 261 of Kings County

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JUNE – AUGUST 2014

## Branch/Unit/Club 261 News & Events

### REOCCURING EVENTS

**BINGO** Every Sunday beginning at 1:50 PM (Unless otherwise noted)

**CLUB BOG MEETINGS** Held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month beginning at 5:00 PM

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
BRANCH & UNIT  
MEETINGS** Held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of each month, unless otherwise noted – Assembly Meeting at 5:30 PM. Come on out and support your Branch and Unit.

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### JUNE

Saturday, 21st	<b>PHILLY CHEESE STEAK SANDWICHES</b> - w/Chips, from Noon to 2:00 pm, \$8.00 each. Stop by the Club and join the Shipmates and Ladies for Lunch!!
Sunday, 22nd	<b>BINGO</b> – 1:50 pm
Saturday, 28th	<b>MEMBERS COLD SALAD POT LUCK LUNCHEON</b> - Beginning at 12:30 pm. Let's all get together and share some of our favorite salads for lunch. Don't be afraid to be creative or try a new recipe. See you there!
Sunday, 29th	<b>BINGO</b> – 1:50 pm

#### JULY

Friday, 4th	<b>MEMBERS POTLUCK</b> - Bring a dish to share. Beginning at 12:30 pm.
Sunday, 6th	<b>BINGO</b> – 1:50 pm
Wednesday 9th	<b>BOARD of GOVERNORS</b> – Meeting beginning at 5:30 pm
Friday, 11th	<b>BOD/BRANCH/UNIT</b> – Meeting at 5:30 pm. Light snacks at 5:00 pm.
Sunday, 13th	<b>BINGO</b> – 1:50 pm
Saturday, 19th	<b>BUILD YOUR OWN SUB SANDWICH LUNCH</b> – Lunch from 12:30 to 2:30 pm. Sandwich, Chips and a Fountain Soda. \$8.00 per person...

JULY cont'd	
Saturday, 19th	<b>UNIT YARD SALE</b> – Contact Pat Flotten @ 559-212-5569 for more information
Sunday, 20th	<b>BINGO</b> – 1:50 pm
Sunday, 27th	<b>BINGO</b> – 1:50 pm

## **AUGUST**

Sunday, 3rd	<b>BINGO</b> – 1:50 pm
Wednesday, 6th	<b>BOARD of GOVERNORS</b> – Meeting at 5:00 pm
Friday, 8th	<b>BOD/BRANCH/UNIT</b> – Meeting at 5:30 pm. Light snacks at 5:00 pm
Sunday, 10th	<b>BINGO</b> – 1:50 pm
Sunday, 17th	<b>BINGO</b> – 1:50 pm
Sunday, 24th	<b>BINGO</b> – 1:50 pm
Saturday, 30th	<b>HALL RENTED</b>
Sunday, 31st	<b>BINGO</b> – 1:50 pm

### ANNOUNCEMENTS, NEWS and VIEWS

**SICK CALL:** Our thoughts and prayers go out to our sick and home bound. We pray you all will get well soon, so you can attend the Branch and Unit meetings, be out and about having fun and do the things you like doing.

**BRANCH/UNIT GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETINGS** – The Branch and Unit General Assembly meetings are held on the 2nd Friday of each month beginning at 1730. Light munchies are served prior to the meeting at 1700.

**CLUB 261 BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETINGS** – The Club Board of Governors' (BOG) meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month beginning at 1700.

**BINGO:** Bingo is in need of volunteer help urgently. We have a need for caller(s), cashier(s), a Head Table card seller for Sunday afternoon rotation, and also a Side-table helper(s) for Rapid-fire, and Bonanza for Sunday afternoon rotations. Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age. Branch/Unit or family members preferred but not required. Please contact Shipmate Don Johnson during Bingo Sessions on Sundays or call (559) 732-4440.

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#### **FRA Newsbytes**

*FRA is the oldest and largest association representing the interests of current and former Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard personnel. If you are not a member and are eligible, please join FRA at [www.fra.org/join](http://www.fra.org/join). The larger the membership base, the louder your voice is heard on Capitol Hill!*

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#### **The "ANCHOR"**

*Shipmates, trying to get our publication going again (at least quarterly). If you have any suggestions, things you'd like to see published, please send ideas, etc. to me @ [arthur.archer@sbcglobal.net](mailto:arthur.archer@sbcglobal.net).*

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#### **VA Audit is Released and Legislation Moves Forward June 13, 2014 - FRA**

A nationwide audit of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) was released this week. It indicates that 57,000 veterans have waited more than 90 days for an appointment at VA medical facilities and 64,000 requested medical care but did not even get onto a waiting list. The audit also found that 13 percent of schedulers were told to falsify appointment requests to make the wait times appear to be shorter than they actually were.

Sloan Gibson, acting VA secretary, said in response to the audit findings, "These problems demand immediate actions." The acting secretary said further that VA would spend additional \$300 million to pay for extra hours for VA medical staff and contract with private clinics to get veterans prompt medical care. Gibson also eliminated the 14-day scheduling goal for initial VA appointments by veterans, a policy that was unrealistic and caused persistent cheating among medical bureaucrats whose annual bonuses were connected to reaching that goal.

The House unanimously passed HR 4810 that requires VA to let veterans who have waited for an appointment to be sent to health care providers outside of the VA. The bill also prohibits bonuses for senior VA officials through FY 2016. The House had earlier passed a bill (H.R. 4310) that provides authority for the VA Secretary to discharge senior management staff for misconduct. Both bills are sponsored by House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Jeff Miller (Fla.). The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is now investigating criminal misconduct at the VA.

The Senate amended H.R. 3220 with the provisions of the "Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act" (S. 2450), and passed the bill (93-3). The amended bill now goes back to the House to concur with the Senate amendment and send it on to the President to be signed into law. The amended bill intends to provide veterans with quicker access to health care by allowing VA-enrolled veterans who have been on waiting lists and enrolled veterans who live more than 40 miles from a VA facility to receive a "Choice Card" that allows them to go to Medicare providers, Military Treatment Facilities (MTF) and federally qualified health care centers. VA already spends about \$5 billion a year on private sector health providers. Eligibility for such care is complex and varies by veteran status and condition. The bill would make it easier for VA to use outside providers and the bill further provides:

- An additional \$500 million to the VA to hire more doctors and nurses;
- Authorizes 26 new VA medical facility leases;
- Enhances authority for the VA Secretary to fire senior VA executives;
- Creates a new independent commission to review patient scheduling problems;
- In-state tuition for veterans using GI Bill benefits; and
- GI Bill benefits transfer to spouses of fallen troops.

Members are urged to use the FRA Action Center ([action.fra.org/action-center](http://action.fra.org/action-center)) to ask their U.S. Senators to support S. 2450 and to ask their Representative to support H.R. 4310. For additional information on this issue, members can read the June 12, 2014 Military Update on the FRA website.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed within this article are the views of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of FRA.

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### **FRA Wants your Views and Experiences with VA**

FRA shipmates can be part of the VA scandal solution by participating in efforts to improve care for our nation's veterans. Sharing your views, experiences and time can all make a difference in handling this crisis. The best way to start is to participate in FRA's online survey: [www.fra.org/survey](http://www.fra.org/survey).

FRA is conducting this online survey to gather data about shipmates' experiences with the VA healthcare system. Please take our five-minute survey today to share your perspective on seeking and receiving care at VA medical facilities. The results will help focus our legislative efforts on fixing and/or reforming those aspects of the VA that present the greatest challenge to the people who need it most.

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### **Many "THANKS" and "ATTABOYS"**

Many THANKS and ATTABOYS are in order to Shipmates Dave Moore, Dave Nikles and John Gross for doing the cooking honors for the "Father's Day Breakfast". Job "Well Done". Also to the Cub Scouts from NASL for their help.

### **Americanism Essay Contest for Grades 7 – 12**

**2014-2015 Theme: Why I Am Proud to Be an American: The essay contest's grand national prize is \$5,000 with addition prizes of \$2,500 for first place, \$1,500 for second place, and \$1,000.00 for third place in grades seven through** 3

twelve. Each winner will receive an attractive plaque citing his or her achievement. Every entrant judged at the national level receives a certificate of recognition. Additional prizes may be awarded to students winning at local branch and regional levels of competition. FRA's Essay Contest is open to all students grades 7 through 12 (including those who are home schooled). Branch 261, Lemoore, CA is a local sponsor of this contest. Please contact Shipmate Donald Johnson of Branch 261 at (559) 732-4440 or 311 N Carl Drive, Visalia, CA 93291-5433 for contest rules and information.

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### **58TH WCR Convention, Carson City, NV, 21-23 August 2014**

The Silver Dollar Branch 192 and the Minden Unit 137 cordially invite the Shipmates and Ladies of the West Coast Region to attend the 58th West Coast Regional Convention to be held on Thursday, Friday and Saturday 21-23 August 2014 at the Gold Dust West Hotel/Casino, 2171 E. Williams Street, Carson City, Nevada 89701.

The Gold Dust West is well known to the WCR Convention Delegates and their spouses for its many amenities like the large bowling alley with its snack bar and lounge, it's newly remodeled first class and comfortable rooms, its hospitality, two dining room facilities, the Grille to serve your dining needs 24hrs. a day and the Ole Ole Restaurant and Cantina, a full size swimming pool, spa, exercise room, sports book and plus Nevada style gaming.

Hotel accommodations and rate quotes will be honored for early check in and extended stay over nights. With a large Good Sam RV Park for back in or pull thru RV's at \$29 a night plus tax. Deluxe King or Double Queen rooms Sun- Thurs. \$65 plus tax Fri. and Sat. \$75 plus tax King Jr. or Double Queen Suite rooms Sun- Thurs. \$85 plus tax Fri. and Sat. \$95 plus tax There are a limited number of handicap accessible rooms available for those who have mobile aids. Early registration is requested for those delegates or spouses. Hotel Reservations may be made by calling toll free (877) 519-5567, locally (775) 885-9000 then dial 1 and ask for West Coast Regional room block. The block of rooms has been reserved for the convention from Wednesday thru Sunday. The rooms will only be held until 22 July 2014, this hotel fills up fast, rooms and rates cannot be guaranteed after that date. To go on line and reserve your room go to ([www.gdwcasino.com](http://www.gdwcasino.com)) click on Carson City, click on hotel reservations, enter your stay request and use the group code: FRACONV08.

**Bowling Tournament:** This years bowling tournament will be hosted once again by Jim and Trijlia Laird (Br./Unit 137) who will set the bowlers up on their lanes, keep track of the scores and announce the winners at the Convention banquet. Early registration with the shoe size needed will ensure your spot in this fun and highly competitive tournament as past delegates can tell you. If you don't pre-register and change your mind at the convention to get in on this evening of great entertainment (watching each other bowl is the entertainment) it will cost you \$15.00 at the door. There is a snack shop and the Ten Pin Lounge is a full bar inside the bowling center. If you're not a bowler, well, fans are welcome and encouraged as there is plenty of seating available for those who want to watch.

For further information on the convention please contact Art Archer @ [arthur.archer@sbcglobal.net](mailto:arthur.archer@sbcglobal.net) and a copy of the Convention Newsletter will be sent to you.

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### **Join FRA for the 87th and LA FRA for the 82nd National Conventions in Corpus Christi, Texas**

Plan now to attend FRA's 87th and LA FRA's 82nd National Convention in Corpus Christi, Texas, October 13 through 19. Join your fellow shipmates and ladies to renew friendships and make new ones!

For those wishing to attend please contact Shipmate Archer @ [arthur.archer@sbcglobal.net](mailto:arthur.archer@sbcglobal.net) and a copy of the newsletter will be forwarded to you.

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### **Hangtown Branch and Unit Anniversary/Charter Member Dinner**

Hangtown Branch and Unit will be celebrating their 35th Anniversary on Saturday 12 July 2014. No Host cocktails will be at 1200 and dinner at 1300. The menu will consist of Bar-B-Que Ribs, Baked Beans, Cole Slaw Salad, and Desert. Reservations are a MUST, in order that we have ample food for everyone. The cost will be \$10.00 per person. You may either mail in the Reservation Form, enclosed in this newsletter or call Larry Boudreaux at (530) 677-3925. Reservation form follows: