



NAA&NV NEWS

MARCH 2018

1st QUARTER

Members Publication of the National Association of Atomic & Nuclear Veterans



From the Desk of the Commander --

Happy almost spring time. Some of you are still having a bad winter. Ours has been mild.

Here in Oregon we got our "Atomic Veterans Memorial Highway" signs up on I-5. They were put up February 1st. They are 4'X 8' signs between Albany and Salem approximately 20 miles of I-5.

Morgan Knibbe of Denmark made a video "the Atomic Soldiers" It was first shown at the Rotterdam Film Festival. It was then picked up by the True/False film festival in Columbia, MO. It was shown on March 1-4. Morgan has asked for veterans to be present for a Question and Answer session after the showing. I want to thank NAAV's board in sending me to this showing.

This Years convention will be in Portland, OR. September 12th, 13th and 14th, at the Monarch hotel. We will visit the Evergreen Air and Space Museum, where the Spruce Goose is stored. Then off to the Oregon Gardens. More will be in next newsletter.

May 11th, Keith Kiefer and I, along with our wives will be going to the British Nuclear convention in London. We will go to Paris and Meet the Commander of the French Nuclear Veterans and invite them to our convention. Maybe we can have a 3 country get together. Keith and I will be paying for our wives to join us on the mission.

Just back from the FILM FESTIVAL in Columbia, MO. I think it was a worthwhile trip. I think we will get more news coverage in the near future. Morgan is planning a full length film soon. The attendees that we talked to were wanting more news on this. Next time they have a Q&A, we should really consider sending some one again. Maybe get some one closer to the festival. Most questions that were asked could have been answered by any State Commander. I want to thank the board members for allowing me to attend. I will now answer any question about this event.

A REMINDER -- Please update your phone number and e-mail address if you have one. Also if your dues are due please send in \$25.00 to get you current. Send this Info to your State Commander and make contact say HI.

It is beginning to look like we will have a busy summer this year again!

A MESSAGE FROM THE VICE COMMANDER



Life has been busy, a visit to DC, preparing for a number of trips this year (DC, San Antonio, Paris, England. Portland) and Hernia surgery later this month.

I was invited to join three veterans from the Enewetak Atoll Radiological Cleanup in Washington DC. We all drove out separately (my round trip was 2800 miles). The Veterans were John Baenen (WI), Ken Broenell (NY), and Harry Daniel (GA). We averaged eight meetings a day the first three days. On the fourth day I met another eight legislators and the others each met one to two legislators. We concentrated on getting more Republican (since they are in the majority) Cosponsors as well as the VA committee and sub committees. We jointly pushed support for S283 and HR632 "Mark Takai Atomic Veterans Healthcare Parity Act." While we were there, two Senate offices told us their Senator would be signing on to S283. Those Senators were Kristen Gillibrand (D-NY) and Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT). We presently have 12 of the 100 Senators and 233 of 435 Congressmen signed on. The VA (Veterans Affairs) committees stated there was support for the Bills, however they needed to figure out how to pay for the Bill with Pay as you Go provisions. There is some talk of attaching it to the Omnibus Bill. We also had assurance from Senator Smith's (D-MN) office she would be picking up S283 in Senator Franken's (D-MN) absence.

I also pushed S197/HR2049, S1283/HR2754 and HR4675. S197/HR2049 Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) Amendments of 2017 increases the compensation from \$75,000 to \$150,000 includes more Downwinder's and the House version includes the Enewetak Atoll Radiological Cleanup Veterans. I have given Senate testimony in support of S197, however, recommend an amendment to adopt the text from HR2049 to include the Enewetak Veterans and avoid the need for Reconciliation.

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HELP WANTED

Hello, I am a high school student from New Jersey and over the past year I have been interviewing Great Depression survivors, World War 2 and Korean War Veterans. I have been doing this because I love history and one day i would like to write a book on the last men and women from these events. I am seeking your help, I have been trying to find witnesses to the Trinity Test back in 45. I am also seeking witnessed to Tumbler Snapper who were in the Sixth Army Division. The Tumbler Snapper event is more personal to me as my grandfather was in the Sixth Army and was at those tests. However my grandfather passed long before I was born. I would truly appreciate the help.

Michael **E-MAIL: swaneyb4@aol.com**

TAPS

- William E. Draper**
.....Marion, IN
- William T. Newberry**
.....Morgan City, LA
- Ernest J. Havlovic**
.....Brainerd, NE
- Bob W. O'Brien**
.....Brookfield, CT
- Richard L. Binns**
.....Lakewood, WI
- Dean S. Warren**
.....Altamonte Springs, FL
- Col. James D. Reeves**
.....Littleton, CO
- Rex L. Montgomery**
.....Santa Maria, CA
- Hubert J. Stein**
.....Osburn, ID
- Raymond Drumheller**
.....Potstown, PA
- James C. Meridith**
.....Dallas, TX



Sept 12-15, 2018

SAMPLE

<p>Wednesday 12</p>	<p>Thursday 13</p>	<p>Friday 14</p>	<p>Saturday 15</p>
<p></p> <p>Check in at THE Monarch Hotel \$139 + Tax with Breakfast Included</p> <p>Hospitality Room Open</p> <p>6:00 p.m. Welcome Reception</p>  <p>\$22 Per Person</p>	<p>Breakfast</p> <p></p> <p>Day Trip to Evergreen Aviation & Space Museum \$</p>  <p>Lunch at American Legion in Tigard Or (\$15 PP-Group will pay Fred)</p>  <p>Oregon Garden Tram Tour \$85 pp @ 40 people \$76 pp @ 50 people Return to Hotel Hospitality Room</p>	<p>Breakfast</p>  <p>Business Meeting with Lunch on own 8:30 am – 4:30 pm</p>  <p>6:30 p.m. BANQUET DINNER</p>  <p>\$52 per person</p>	<p>Breakfast</p> <p>Depart</p> <p>ACTIVITY PACKAGE \$159</p> <p>INCLUDES: Welcome Aboard Reception Day Trip to Evergreen Aviation and Space Museum Garden Tram Tour Final Evening Banquet</p> <p>Registration Fee: \$65 Per Member Hospitality Room Name Badges Welcome Packets Convention Website Admin Fees</p>

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DEATH BENEFITS

Department of Veterans Affairs has launched a new program, Veterans Pre-NeedBurial Eligibility Determination that will greatly assist Veterans and their families. This program, which is found at, http://www.cemva.gov/pre_need/

1-Allows Veterans and their families to have peace of mind as to their future burial eligibility in a national cemetery and...

2-Saves Veteran's families valuable time after a Veteran has died. Interested individuals may submit [VA Form 40-10007](#), Application for Pre-Need Determination of Eligibility for Burial in a VA National Cemetery, and supporting documentation, such as a DD Form 214, if readily available, to the VA National Cemetery Scheduling Office by: toll-free fax at [1-855840-8299](tel:1-855840-8299) or mail to the National Cemetery Scheduling Office, P.O. Box 510543, St. Louis, MO 63151 Once VA determines that individuals are eligible, those individuals will be entitled to the same benefits they would receive were a determination made at the time of need (time of death). These include any or all of the following, at no cost to the family:

- Burial in any open VA national cemetery, including opening and closing of the grave
 - Grave liner
 - Perpetual care of the gravesite
 - Government-furnished upright headstone, flat marker or niche cover
- [Burial flag](#)
 - [Presidential Memorial Certificate](#)

Spouses, and eligible dependents, can be buried with their Veteran at a VA national cemetery as well, even if they pre-decease a Veteran.

DID YOU KNOW...

We get many calls asking for information about Veterans Benefits. If you don't have the phone number of your local VA man in your state and your county, I would suggest you go to your phone book and look him up. All states have one or more state representatives and now many counties as well. But you can always go on line and find sites on most anything such as Death Benefits that we put in this newsletter on page 5. But you can look up anythings for housing, for loans, for disability, for education, the list goes on and on. You simply have to apply for each and some are handled quickly but as may of us have found out health claims and go on for years. I'm sure many of you have found that challenges on radiation claims go on forever. So don't give up there are people available for answers.

ATTENTION!



We have a need for more articles and/or pictures as we have finally published all articles we had on hand.

So if you have an item you would like published get to to me. I will check it over and especially look for items with a picture or two. BOB

A HELICOPTER MECHANIC'S MEMORY of ENIWETOK, MARSHALL ISLANDS

I was teaching Rotary Wing Mechanics at James Connely AFB, San Marcos, Texas, in 1955. The Air Force announced the closing of the Base, with transfer of the Rotary Wing mechanic School to Big Spring, Texas. Several of us decided we would rather travel to "Foreign Shores", instead of going to Big Spring, Texas.

And to address the issue, the Air Force had a request from Germany for helicopter mechanics. This fit the bill, nicely, and several of us applied for transfer to Germany. In fact most all of the Instructor group applied for transfer to Germany. So many, that the Air Force Command canceled all transfers. They needed the Instructors for the State Side School in Big Spring.

However, I was in a group that would have been discharged early, instead of transferring to Big Spring. Of course, I didn't know that, and had extended my enlistment in order to qualify for the tour in Germany. Ha, was I surprised. With the cancellation of the German requirements, I was prime for assignment to a "needed" area - Eniwetok, Marshall Islands, where Atomic Bomb Tests were under way.

I received orders for Eniwetok in May, 1956, with departure in June. The assignment was to the Rotary Wing Maintenance Squadron on Eniwetok, to service H-19D Sikorsky S-55 Helicopters; in support of the scientists that were conducting Atomic Bomb tests on the Eniwetok Atoll.

We were assigned as part of Joint Task Force 7, and had a fleet of about six (6) H-19D helicopters. Previously the squadron had H-19 A's, which were not suitable for the mission.

On arrival in Eniwetok, we were issued "film badges" to determine exposure to the potential radiation hazard from the Atomic tests. When conducting taxi services for the scientists, we were issued daily film badges to account for the radiation exposure on the test islands.

Our mission was to taxi the scientists to the test islands where they set up the particular test

experiment. This was a relatively easy mission, with the furtherest Island about 35 miles away. Also, when on a mission, we were able to dine at the civilian Island - where there was fresh meat and fresh milk, and lots of fruit.

The atoll is beautiful, about 37 miles across, and the highest point is about 10 feet above sea level. The coconuts and the fish were not safe to eat, as they were contaminated from the exposure to the atomic and hydrogen bomb testing. The coconuts were mutated - shaped like bananas, but hard shelled like coconuts. When a test was conducted, all personnel were accounted for and staged on the beach. We were instructed to sit on the sand, backs to the blast site, and heads on our knees, arms folded under our heads, on top of our knees. When the Bomb exploded, one could see the bones in one's arms from the electromagnetic shock - like a giant X-Ray ! We experienced about 10 tests. These tests were very small, about 10 kilotons. After the initial blast shock wave passed (picking up gravel and sand from the beach), we were allowed to turn around and view the Atomic Cloud. (One had to have dark glasses to view the cloud). It was an awesome sight!

The cloud was mushroom shaped, with the top of the cloud, white . The shaft was Crimson and Black. The cloud was growing upward at a very high rate - upwards through 30,000 feet or more. Very Awe Inspiring to a young bunch of service men.

I once tried to go to Bikini for a test being held there. I had been relieved of duty, awaiting orders to go home, but was not allowed to go. I did rise early on the morning of the test, and awaited the countdown over the Public address system. I looked into the dark night sky, in the direction of Bikini Island at the zero hour. Bikini is about 180 miles away from Eniwetok. When the Bomb went off, I could see flashes of light - like lightning in the sky, and several minutes later could hear rumbling like thunder - all from 180 miles away.

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A HELICOPTER MECHANIC'S MEMORY CONTINUED

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WOW! That is like seeing flashes and sound of an atomic blast occurring in Norfolk Va., from Washington, D.C. The power released is almost impossible to describe. I wish the leaders of all countries could experience this revelation of power, so they could better decide on NOT USING ATOMIC WEAPONS. If an Atomic War is Ever Started, that will be the end of Civilization as we know it to be. Controlled Atomic Warfare is not a viable choice. Seeing a test blast is a humbling experience.

I had the opportunity to fly over the remains of Island "Mike", where the first Hydrogen Bomb was detonated in 1954. There is no Island Mike there anymore, just a hole in the coral reef, where Island Mike was. The hole is large enough to accommodate Eleven Pentagon Buildings! It is over two miles in diameter! The ocean color is similar to deep water - dark blue. It is difficult to comprehend that so much material was vaporized from the explosion. Military and Civilian personnel were taken off the atoll during this test, and remained at sea for several weeks until the radiation count was low enough for them to return. On return from a mission, we turned in our daily film badge, so it could be read and entered into our exposure record. If one approached the exposure limit, then one was relieved of duty and sent off the island. I never knew anyone who was given alternate duty and sent to another location, due to excess radiation exposure.

Daily routine was to do periodic maintenance on the H-19's, and to assist Base Maintenance personnel in annual and major maintenance issues. In Base Maintenance we had a very good - excellent - welder, who could repair intake manifolds on the H-19 (which were prone to crack). The intake manifold is made of magnesium. He had successfully repaired several cracks, using inert gas welding. Once when he was off duty, another welder attempted to repair a crack, with disastrous results. One must be very careful when welding aluminum or magnesium as the critical temperatures are very close to the welding temperatures. This fellow exceeded the critical temperature, and all of the sudden we had a 6 inch

hole, instead of a small crack. Wow, what a mess, requiring a new manifold.

The H-19's were scheduled for "re-manufacture" in Japan. We disassembled the choppers, removing the rotor blades, tail cone, etc., and boxed up the entire aircraft in three plywood boxes. We carefully mounted the chopper into the giant boxes and loaded them on freighters for Japan. Several of them were lost along the way, with boxes mixed up, and some left on Docks throughout the Far East. We finally received the ships back at Eniwetok. I couldn't see they had accomplished anything, in that the re-manufactured machines looked just like the ones we hadn't sent. Ha.

When the Joint Task Force 7 project was over, we remained to give further taxi service to the scientists evaluating the past experiments. Now most service personnel were transferred back to the States, but the Helicopter Squadron became a Detachment from Far East Air Force. This presented little problem, except that we had to establish a supply of parts necessary for daily maintenance of the helicopters.

We set up a disposable parts listing and inventory so that we didn't have to visit base supply for a single bolt or cotter pin. I volunteered to set up this system, knowing about the different systems that required routine maintenance. This worked pretty well, but excluded me from further flying missions.

When my tour was due to be up - 12 months - my orders became lost in the red tape with information coming from the Far East Air Force. Seems they had lost all records of the Eniwetok Detachment 5. I was due to come home, and had no orders. Finally, after 12 months and two weeks, I got a set of orders to return to San Francisco. There I waited another two weeks for final orders relieving me of duty and Discharge on June 22, 1957.

It was an experience I would not have missed, but I have had concern about the radiation exposure. As of now there seems to be no problem for me or in my children. Only time will tell. I can only hope these tests were effective in determining that

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A HELICOPTER MECHANIC'S MEMORY CONTINUED

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Atomic Warfare is an impossible method of confrontation . Since many nations have atomic weapons, none of us can afford to use them. Use would only destroy the world.

Submitted \ by Harry L. Francis

HONORABLY DISCHARGED VETERANS NOW HAVE ONLINE EXCHANGE SHOPPING PRIVILEGES

Some 18.5 million honorably discharged veterans now have a lifetime benefit enabling them to shop online at **ShopMyExchange.com**, marking the first expansion of military exchange privileges since 1990.

“The Exchange is honored to open its virtual doors to millions of deserving veterans,” said Tom Shull, the **Army and Air Force Exchange Service’s** director and CEO, a Vietnam-era Army veteran.

To verify eligibility and begin shopping, Veterans can visit **ShopMyExchange.com.veterans**.

COMBAT RELATED SPECIAL COMPENSATION

Combat compensation restores VA pay offset.

Combat-Related Special Compensation is designed to restore military retirement pay that has been offset by Veterans Affairs compensation when evidence exists to confirm the associated disabilities are combat related.

For example, veterans currently rated for a disability of 10 percent with the VA, receive a check from the VA for \$133 each month, but their retired pay is reduced by that same amount. If the disability is found to be combat-related by the CRSC Review Board, they would continue to receive the monthly check from the VA for \$133 along with the remainder of the retired pay, and begin receiving an additional monthly check from CRSC for \$133.

Combat-related disabilities are those incurred with documented proof:

- In the performance of duty under conditions simulating-war (exercises, field training)
- While engaged in hazardous service (flight, diving, parachute duty)
- Through an instrumentality of war (combat vehicles, weapons, Agent Orange)
- As a direct result of armed conflict.

Many disabilities that resulted from conditions during peacetime may meet the criteria for CRSC, said Tess Hatcher, CRSC office section chief at the Air Force Personnel Center.

As examples, Hatcher cites an aircraft mechanic who works on the flight line and begins to lose his hearing while in-service; a personnel technician who dives for cover during a simulated air raid and injures her shoulder; and a para-rescue Airman who makes a peacetime parachute jump and breaks his ankle upon landing.

There are a few prerequisites to consider before submitting an application. To meet the basic eligibility criteria to be considered for CRSC, veterans must:

- Be in a retired status
- Be entitled to retired pay that is offset by VA disability payments
- Have at least a 10 percent VA disability rating

“Please note that if you waive your military retirement for civil service credit, you are not eligible for CRSC,” said Hatcher.

For a claim form and more information, contact the CRSC office at:

HQ AFPC/DPFDC
550 C Street West
JBSA Randolph, TX 78150-4708

People can also call the Total Force Service Center at 800-525-0102, send email to afpc.afersc@us.af.mil, or visit the [CRSC website](#) for a form and information.

COMBAT RELATED SPECIAL COMPENSATION (CRSC)

Combat Related Special Compensation (CRSC) is a program that was created for disability and non-disability military retirees with combat related disabilities. It is a tax free entitlement that you will be paid each month along with any retired pay you may already be receiving.

Eligibility to qualify for CRSC you must:

- Be entitled to and/or receiving military retired pay
- Be rated at least 10 percent by the Department of Veteran's Affairs VA
- Waive your VA pay from your retired pay
- File a CRSC application with your Branch of Service

Disabilities that may be considered combat related include injuries incurred as a direct result of:

- Armed Conflict
- Hazardous Duty
- An Instrumentality of War
- Simulated War

Retroactive Payment:

In addition to monthly CRSC payments, you may be eligible for a retroactive payment. DFAS will audit your account to determine whether or not you are due retroactive payment. An audit of your account requires researching pay information from both DFAS and VA.

If you are due any money from DFAS, you will receive it within 30- 60 days of receipt of your first CRSC monthly payment. If DFAS finds that you are also due a retroactive payment from the VA, we will forward an audit to the VA. They are responsible for paying any money they may owe you.

Your retroactive payment date may go back as far as June 1, 2003, but can be limited based on:

- Your overall CRSC start date as awarded by your Branch of Service
- Your Purple Heart eligibility
- Your retirement date
- Your retirement law (disability or non-disability)
- Six-year barring statute

Disability retirees with less than 20 years of service will be automatically limited to a retroactive date of January 1, 2008 as required by legislation passed by Congress. All retroactive pay is limited to six years from the date the VA awarded compensation for each disability

.If you have questions about your CRSC eligibility, please call us at 800-321-1080 or contact your Branch of Service.

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S197/HR2049 have 4 and 36 cosponsors respectively.

S1283/HR2754 Atomic Veterans Service Medal Act. I continued to push for cosponsors and a

possible Executive Order from President Trump. S1283/HR2754 have 0 and 9 cosponsors respectively.

HR4675 Low Dose Radiation Research Act of 2017 has passed the House. We now need the Senate to introduce a Bill with the same text and Pass it. HR4675 has 4 cosponsors.

I've also asked for a Congressional investigation into DTRA (Department of Threat Reduction Agency) Enewetak Atoll Radiological Cleanup

Fact Sheet. We need all to call our Senators and Congressmen to support all of these pieces of legislation. Myself, David English (OH) and David Crawford testified in favor of HRC-21 and HB414. HRC-21 is an Ohio State resolution supporting the Federal legislation S283 and HR632. HB414 is a Bill designating July 16th as "National Atomic Veterans Day" in Ohio. Ohio State Representative Tim Schaffer (OH HD77) is spearheading this effort. Keep pressing on.

Keith (K^a)





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