



NAA&NV NEWS

MARCH 2019

1st QUARTER

Members Publication of the National Association of Atomic & Nuclear Veterans

FROM THE DESK OF OUR NATIONAL COMMANDER



Keith Kiefer
NAA&NV - Commander

My, has our Nuclear family grown.

It all started with the vision/insight of NAAV/Fred Schafer and BNTVA/Alan Owen reaching beyond their respective organizations. Fred started with the Marshall Islanders locally in Portland, Oregon, USA. In the years to follow the reach extended across the states, then across the pond to BNTVA. The following year the reach extended to the French AVEN/ OBSVEN and Polynesians. Alan reached out similarly with NZNTVA, the Australians, Canadians, etc. Now under Alan's leadership and hard work, we have NVW (Nuclear Veterans Worldwide). More on our outreach efforts below.

With all this comes growing pains. I know Alan has experienced this, as well as, myself. We often have to remind/educate individuals or sub groups the issues are bigger than one individual or a subset of the group. Additionally, there is benefit of strength in numbers (size). There is also strength in different contacts, relationships, ideas and approaches. Abraham Lincoln once said "A house divided against itself cannot stand." I believe this was in regards to the Civil War, however, applies elsewhere.

NAAV has started a great year despite having to fill the big shoes of Fred Schafer's past leadership (he is still in leadership just not at the head). It is a blessing that I can lean on him and learn from his experience.

As some of you may know the USA legislative process is such (with few exceptions) that at the end of a legislative session all the hard work gets dumped into the trash can and you have to start over in the next session. To further complicate this, often the leadership, party affiliations, and members change. You may lose advocates in the process and have to find new ones. Legislation has to be reintroduced in both the House and Senate. The current session began on January 3rd of this year. I will cover our progress in another article.

During part of our outreach efforts nature thwarted some of our efforts. Fred and Barbara Schafer planned on representing NAAV on March 1, 2019 in the "Nuclear Survivor's Day" hosted by the Marshallese in Arkansas. They drove near the airport and stayed the night only to find their flight cancelled due to fog, snow and other weather conditions. Despite this, we did have good representation with the NAAV State commander, other Atomic Veterans, and Enewetak Atoll Cleanup Veterans.

Fred was sent kicking and screaming to Hawaii to represent NAAV at a similar event March 9th, titled "We Shall Not Forget". This event was also hosted by the Marshallese. Fred was treated royally, and very moved to witness the various ceremonies and speakers. Needless to say, he was very happy Barb made sure he'd gone.

Please plan on attending the 40th Anniversary/Convention, near Dayton, Ohio, Sept. 11th, 12th and 13th.

Keith (K²)

FROM THE DESK OF THE VICE COMMANDER



Fred Schafer
NAA&NV - VICE COMMANDER

Well the Holidays are over with and time to relax and get back to keeping NAA&NV busy. Here is to a very prosperous year. The Board members wish to thank all of the membership for their help in this past year to keep growing.

We have sold most of the Challenge coins. We will be starting a new Challenge coin this spring. It will be Crossroad shot

Baker. We also have a new patch that you can iron on or sew it to your jackets. It is 6" long and 1½ inch wide. It says **Atomic Veteran ?** This will give you a chance to explain to people what we are. They will cost \$10.00 and include shipping.

Membership continues to grow and the items in the store continue to sell. Also several donations have come in.

Now is the time to start working with you states and Federal Congress to Get July 16th as atomic Veterans day annually. I can send you a copy of what Oregon got passed on July 16th. Also get a section of Highway to become Atomic Veterans Memorial Highway. Work with you members and get member to get current in dues, just \$ 25.00 will get you current. Please update your info. Phone numbers are not current. E-mail or call with that info. When you send in dues let us know of any changes.

Thank you members that send in extra dues ear marked for helping someone that needs help with their dues and other support of NAA&NV.

We have a lot of events planned for this year, and we are here to help any one that wants help. Just let us know.

Keith is planning a great convention in the middle of September so keep these dates on your calendar clear so you can attend. Thank you!

COMING CONVENTION SAVE THE DATES

In 2019 we will be celebrating NAAVs 40th anniversary. Please mark your calendar. The convention will be Sept 11th to the 14th (check out day). The location is near Dayton, Ohio. More information coming in the next Newsletter. Lets make this Convention have a record attendance. We hope to expand the international presence, as well.

Also we are in need of donations - cash, items for auction to make our coming convention a success. Just call Keith Kiefer if you have items or send your cash donations to Fred Schafer. You can reach FRED at:

541-258-7453



TAPS



- DAVID M. PARKER.....Tulsa, OK
- CHARLES W. HOLEMAN.....Julian, CA
- DAVID PASZAMANT.....Highland Park, NJ
- CARL JOHNSON..... Fortuna, CA
- A. E. "Gene" DOVER.....Springfield, MO
- DENNIS T. OSTERBURHR.....Minden, NE
- CHARLES T. KEATING.....Wheatland, WY
- DONALD D. FORTNAY.....Bellevue, NE
- JAMES F. O'GRADY.....Adams, NE
- ALLAN M. HIDA.....Carmichael, CA
- PAUL LAIRD II.....Otisfield, ME
- HENRY KINGPaw Paw, WV

FRED SHAFER - VICE COMMANDER TRIP TO KONA ATTENDING MARSHALLESE MEETING

As soon as I arrived in Kona, David Anitok and his wife, Lucinda Erine Brokken, rushed me off to Hilo, about 90 miles across the island to meet with the President Hilda Heine of the Marshall Islands. She was landing in Hilo. Then off to supper with their group, and then back to Kona to check in to Hotel.



Next Morning we went to the high school where the event was taking place. Brian Cowden was filming this event. This took a couple of hours from start to finish. I presented President Hilda Heine a NAAV challenge coin, and Talked about what NAA&NV is doing to help the Islanders in other states, from health care to drivers licenses. I also told them about the BNTVA and the French Nuclear Veterans.



Fred meeting Marshallese President Hilda Heine

After the event we had a meal and off to the hotel to settle in. About 6:00 pm I got a call from David. He told me President Hilda Heine and her group had invited us to be at dinner at 8:15 pm. This dinner lasted till about midnight. We had a grand time. We set up for a 9:00 am breakfast meeting with other Marshall Islanders.



After this breakfast, we went to a Marshall Islanders church service at 3:00 pm. Then the event changed to an Enewetak Liberation celebration day, remembering March 10th 1944. This party lasted until about 11:00 pm. The Marshall islanders know how to throw a beautiful party: youth group dancing and singing. The elders of the Marshallese talked, and were presented with gifts to take home with them. David's wife, Lucinda's, grandmother Erine Peter Jatian, was the oldest. She is 84 years young. I was lucky enough to escort her to the events. The islanders thought I was her boyfriend. Brian Cowden was filming this event also.

NAA&NV is inviting President Hilda Heine and her husband Tommy Kijiner to the Dayton, Ohio convention in September.

NEW AT THE "Q" STORE



New Q Store item:

A limited number available. Approximately 3ft x 5ft "STILL ENGAGING AN INVISIBLE ENEMY" flag.

Send \$25.00 with your name and address to Fred Schafer. Shipping is included.

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

BRITISH NUCLEAR TEST VETERANS ASSOCIATION

As some of you may know the USA legislative process is such (with few exceptions) that at the end of a legislative session all the hard work gets dumped into the trash can and you have to start over in the next session. To further complicate this, often the leadership, party affiliations, and members change. You may lose advocates in the process and have to find new ones. Legislation has to be reintroduced in both the House and Senate. The current session began on January 3rd of this year.

We were able to get the Mark Takai Atomic Veteran Healthcare Parity act introduced in both the House and Senate on the same day (26 Feb., 2019). This was referred to the two committees (House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees). To date, we have 21.6% (94) of the House and 15% (15) Senate members as Authors or cosponsors of the Bills. These Bills recognize the Enewetak Atoll Radiological Cleanup Veterans as Atomic Veterans for medical coverage of 22 diseases. The Bill numbers are HR1377 and S555 for the 116th session. In the House, Congresswoman Grace Meng authored the Bill and in the Senate, Senators Tina Smith and Thom Tillis authored S555.

HR1628 was introduced by Congressman Gregory Steube. Its title is; To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to seek to enter into an agreement with the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to conduct a study on radiation exposure relating to the cleanup of Enewetak Atoll, and for other purposes. To date three Congresspersons are sponsors of this Bill. A Senate version has not been introduced. NAAV has yet to decide if they will support this Bill since it has the potential to delay the passage of HR1377 and S555.

We are still working hard to get the Atomic Veteran Service Medal, the RECA amendment, and the Low Dose Radiation Research bills introduced. You can support our efforts by contacting your Congressmen and two Senators to cosponsor and support the various bills that would help our Atomic Veterans.



Alan Owen
BNTVA - Chairman

The British Nuclear Test Veterans Association (BNTVA) are proud to be associated with NAAV and to share information across the world. It has been a hard time for the UK at the moment, Brexit is taking all of the Governments attention and our fight for recognition via a medal for our servicemen is awaiting the setup of a new advisory committee

which will look into our request and decide on whether the Veterans meet the criteria of risk and rigour. Unfortunately, the UK Government has removed from public access all documents relating to the Nuclear Testing program for a 'security review'. This is in response to a number of documents published on-line in support of our campaign. We have raised awareness via our Facebook pages and groups and on our website www.bntva.com.

The BNTVA have created a new on-line resource for the Nuclear Community. This new resource brings together organizations from across the world into one place so that the world can see the effects of the Nuclear Testing, not just on the Veterans and inhabitants of the islands, but on the ecosystems and climate change. The site contains organizations and individuals who are working within the Nuclear Community, with links to Facebook & Twitter feeds, websites and for the first time, research material relating to the testing programs across the world. A weekly blog will also be produced which will tackle various topics. Previous posts have already tackled the Human Experimentation and Enewetak Cleanup topics. Guest bloggers from around the world will be participating. Visit www.nuclearvets.com.

Our Annual Conference will be held on the 18th May 2019 and we are delighted to have your National Commander attend to provide our Veterans with an update on your struggle for recognition. This event will be streamed live around the world via Facebook and Twitter to enable anyone who cannot attend to be part of the Conference. We have speakers from

BNTVA - CONTINUED

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around the world participating, including Australia. Our theme this year is 'Descendants'. We need to ensure that as many descendants as possible become part of the Nuclear Family. As the Veterans age, it is time for the Children, Grandchildren and Great-Grandchildren to become involved.

We will be launching a number of initiatives to ensure that the generations continue the work of the BNTVA. We must continue to work together to ensure that the world knows about the Nuclear Veterans, the inhabitants of the testing sites and the struggles of the Veterans and their families. This is a worldwide problem which needs as much attention as we can possibly get. We must never let the world forget about our Nuclear Veterans and their families.

Alan Owen FBCS CITP - Chairman - BNTVA

CHALLENGE COINS ARE GOING FAST!

Limited edition Challenge Coin is a 1.75 inch 10 Gauge Bright Bronze Coin. A picture is worth a thousand words. Briefly, one side has the color filled NAAV logo and the other side is dedicated to the founder with a general Mission Statement. The edge is stamped "MADE IN USA". This would be a great gift for; Father's Day, an Atomic Veteran, Widow, Children, a collector or your legislators (State and Federal). Legislators cherish Challenge Coins and collect them. We have about 25 left. Anyone wanting a coin send \$25.00 (this includes shipping) each to NAAV C/O Fred Schafer, 130 Cleveland St., Lebanon, OH 97355-4505. First come first serve on the availability of these coins.



LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT

February 8th, 2019

To my president, Donald Trump,

On behalf of the National Association of Atomic Veterans, I ask you to help us by approving the following. First, we want July 16 in 2016 and each succeeding year to be designated and recognized as National Atomic Veterans Day in all 50 states (BILL #377). This bill was approved by Ronald Reagan in 1983 but he did not add it in succeeding years. Second, I feel as if the remaining Atomic Veterans should be awarded a medal of honor (BILL #2747). Third, we feel it is just to put a bill in place extending from 1962 and each succeeding year that makes any veteran exposed to ionized radiation an Atomic Veteran. The veterans exposed to ionized radiation, whether it is from atomic testing, site cleanup, any nuclear ships or subs that have a leak problem, or a veteran that operates a vehicle or tank or handles weapons and bullets using depleted uranium, should be automatically recognized as an Atomic Veteran. As our president, anything you can do to help make this happen would be appreciated by all the Atomic Veterans that deserve it. All of the bills you choose to approve should not have a cutoff date. As long as veterans are exposed they should be protected by these bills. They didn't cause this danger to mankind, our government did. The government should take responsibility for these veterans.

As the Director of State Commanders of the National Association of Atomic Veterans, I address this letter to President Donald Trump. I, as well as all Atomic Veterans, would greatly appreciate your consideration of the bills I have requested in the attached letter. Also, as my job is to speak on behalf of all the Atomic Veterans, I would appreciate tremendously to sit down and meet with you to discuss what can be done to help solve issues regarding these Atomic Veterans. Thank you in advance for your time and I look forward to hopefully meet with you soon.

Gillie Jenkins
Director of State Commanders
National Association of Atomic Veterans

GOVERNMENT ARTICLE

Good News!! We have now started the process in the 116th session to get our Enewetak Atoll Radiological Cleanup Veterans recognized as Atomic Veterans. Call you Congress person and two State Senators and ask them to support the Bill. I will get and post the Bill numbers soon.

U.S. Rep. Grace Meng (D-NY) and Senators Tina Smith (D-MN) and Thom Tillis (R-NC) reintroduced the bipartisan Mark Takai Atomic Veterans Healthcare Parity Act which would bring critical health care benefits to “Atomic Veterans” who were exposed to high levels of deadly radiation when assigned to clean up nuclear testing sites in Enewetak Atoll on the Marshall Islands during the late 1970s.

“I’m pleased to reintroduce the bipartisan Mark Takai Atomic Veterans Healthcare Parity Act this Congress,” said Rep. Meng. “I want to also thank Senators Smith and Tillis for their leadership on this issue and for introducing the Senate version. This common sense bill will provide much needed care to the veterans who participated in nuclear cleanup of Enewetak Atoll. These veterans served our nation with honor and distinction. It is long past time that we address the failure of our system to help them; it is simply the right thing to do. This bill is named after my good friend, the late Congressman Mark Takai, who passed away in 2016, and I hope this bill will quickly move through Congress.”

“One of our most solemn duties is to take care of the men and women who serve in our armed forces,” said Senator Smith. “And a big part of that means ensuring they can get the health care they need both during and after their service. The Americans who cleaned up the radiation-exposed Marshall Islands—where more than 40 nuclear tests took place in the 20th century—have been fighting for proper care for a long time, and it’s past time we stand up for them. I’m standing up by continuing to work on this common sense, bipartisan fix that’s long overdue.”

“In the 1970s, thousands of courageous service members were tasked with the unfathomable mission of cleaning the fallout and debris from nuclear tests in the Marshall Islands without protective gear, causing countless health issues among those involved,” said Senator Tillis. “This

bipartisan legislation will recognize those veterans and ensure they are able to receive access to the medical treatment for which their service should have entitled them to long ago.”

“On behalf of the National Association of Atomic Veterans (NAAV), its members, and all Enewetak Atoll Radiological Cleanup Project personnel, I thank Congresswoman Grace Meng, Senator Tina Smith and Senator Thom Tillis and their respective staff for introducing this responsible, common sense legislation,” said National Association of Atomic Veterans National Commander Keith Kiefer. “I would also like to thank more than eleven veterans organizations and other veteran advocates that support this legislation. The Enewetak Atoll Cleanup Veterans have been denied recognition as Atomic Veterans, as well as, being Occupation Exposure Veterans too long. The Mark Takai Atomic Veterans Healthcare Parity Act recognizes these veterans as Atomic Veterans, providing the healthcare coverage needed and promised. Despite the fact that the mission was titled ‘Enewetak Atoll Radiological Cleanup Project,’ and the mission was to remediate the islands so the native islanders could safely return to their homeland, and this mission failed, the VA (Veterans Administration) and DTRA (Defense Threat Reduction Agency) in concert deny these veterans ionization radiation exposure status. Despite contamination of the islands with Plutonium, Strontium, Cesium and other toxic materials from years of testing 43 atomic bombs, the veterans did not have proper PPG (Personal Protective Gear) or monitoring during removal and transportation of approximately 110,000 cubic yards contaminated soil, these bureaucracies continue to deny any exposure and proper care associated with that. About 4,000 veterans were part of this project. Of these, we have found about ten percent alive. Most of the survivors have cancer(s); at least one suffers with six unique cancers. These men are in their late 50s to 60s.”

“Each veteran exposed to nuclear radiation deserves equal treatment and equal access to the veteran health benefits they’ve earned,” said Association of Mature American Citizens President Daniel Weber. “For too long, service members who cleaned up the Enewetak Atoll have been neglected by the VA and been forced

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GOVT. ARTICLE CONTINUED

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to pay out of pocket for several radiation-related medical expenses. AMAC's 1.7 million members are pleased to support Senator Tina Smith (D-MN), Senator Thom Tillis (R-NC) and Representative Grace Meng (D-NY-06) as they seek to ensure every veteran gets the healthcare access they deserve."

The legislation is named after the late Rep. Mark Takai—a veteran of the U.S. Army and Hawaii Army National Guard who passed away in 2016—who originally introduced the bill in the 114th Congress. Since the 114th Congress, Meng has fought for passage of this bill. She reintroduced the Mark Takai Atomic Veterans Healthcare Parity Act, H.R. 632, in the 115th Congress, where it received 238 cosponsors.

Enewetak Atoll in the Marshall Islands was the site of more than 40 nuclear tests between 1946 and 1958. The service members who participated in its nuclear cleanup between 1977 and 1980 suffer from high rates of cancers due to their exposure to radiation and nuclear waste, but are currently unable to receive the same treatments and service-related disability presumptions that other "radiation-exposed veterans" receive. The Mark Takai Atomic Veterans Healthcare Parity Act would tackle this issue by extending key VA benefits to those who helped clean up the Marshall Islands, which remain partly uninhabitable due to high levels of radiation.

"Q" STORE

REMEMEBER -- lots of things in the Q-Store like this shoulder patch, shown below. Contact Fred Schafer for prices and what items are available. He has the info on flags, caps, shirts and their prices. Just call 541-258-7453.

Atomic Veteran?

NUCLEAR SURVIVORS DAY



Front left to right: William Walker and Victor Czarnecki
Back left to right: Ray Hampton, Jr, Harold Rumzek, Tim Tippit,
Jim Sigmon, Ronald Weber

The Arkansas Mashellese Consulate hosted a "Nuclear Survivors Day" March 1, 2019 in Springdale Arkansas. Pictured are Enewetak Cleanup Veterans and advocates. Not pictured is NAAV State Commander(s) and other members. Several groups spoke memorializing the day. All reports supporting it being a very successful event. News media was present and subsequent coverage should emerge.



Front row left to right: William Walker and Victor Czarnecki
Middle row left to right: Te Fitz, Tim Tippit
Back row left to right: Ray Hampton, Jr, Dr Harold Rumzek,
Ronald Weber.





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