



Scuttlebutt

Branch/Unit 269 Goose Creek, South Carolina

You can read all newsletters at [269 Branch/Unit 269 Newsletters](#)



Fleet Reserve National: [FRA National Home \[https://www.fra.org\]](https://www.fra.org)

Auxiliary National: [Ladies Auxiliary of the Fleet Reserve Association \[https://la-fra.org\]](https://la-fra.org)

Southeast Region: [frasoutheastregion.org \[https://frasoutheastregion.org\]](https://frasoutheastregion.org)

Branch 269 website: [FRA Low Country Branch & Unit 269 \[www.fra269gc.org\]](http://www.fra269gc.org)

FRA Branch and Unit 269 | Facebook [\[https://www.facebook.com/groups/FRABRANCH269/\]](https://www.facebook.com/groups/FRABRANCH269/)

Branch President's Corner

February meeting was very busy. We inducted a new member, Malik Pratt. The Americanism Essay winners were awarded their certificates. We were also fortunate to have two of our entries receive awards from the South East Region.

The Youth Activity chairman requested \$650 to support the Goose Creek Athletic Program. The membership also approved \$1825.00 for the essay awards.

Lastly, I would like to request that all our current members continue to recruit new prospects for membership.

Yours in Loyalty, Protection and Service
Don Barton
Branch 269 President

Tidbits from the Unit President:

Just a reminder that our Unit Meeting will now start at 5:30 on the same Tuesday of each month as current.

Our February meeting was brief. I am happy to say that we initiated Laurie Douty and Eva Sollo as our new members.

We also draped our charter for Arleen Hemmingway PNP and said a prayer for shipmate John (Jack) Medford.

Dates to remember

- March 8th Daylight Savings Time
- March 14th Golf
- March 17th Lunch at the home
- March 17th-St Patrick's Day also our Meeting

Night at 5:30pm

- March 20th—Set up for Yard Sale
- March 21st—Indoor Yard Sale

Unit Yard Sale will be March 20/21. Let Debbie Breeze know if you plan to participate

#843-343-6852 / email patsycline95@gmail.com

A letter was received from the Charleston-Ralph Johnson VAMC (534) thanking all for the food pantry donation of groceries. Please continue to donate.

Marilyn Tharp reported that she had contacted the Victory House in Walterboro. We will try and set a date for a visit in August or September.

Their resident capacity is 194, but actual numbers vary. In addition to the lap robes, we have already been planning to take, she also mentioned the need for t-shirts, pajama bottoms, gripper-type socks, and word search books. The Director also mentioned the residents really love anything where their branch of service is noted (either by color or name) on an item – they love the camaraderie of saying their branch is best.

Congratulations and best wishes to all who have a birthday, anniversary or membership milestone and may those in need of prayers feel the strength of those around you and the entire Auxiliary family.



In Loyalty, Protection & Service
NFS Pat Suckow, PNP
Unit 269 President
Auxiliary of the FRA

WEEKLY DRAWING AT THE HOME

2/3: Darryl Watson [Branch], NOT Signed
2/10: Larry Larkins [Branch], NOT Signed
2/17: Jacqueline Rohrssen [Unit], NOT signed
2/24: David McCann [Branch], NOT Signed

The winner must be a member of the Branch or Unit in good standing and must be signed in the log. You can sign up until 1800 on the day of the drawing. The drawing is held every Tuesday night at 2000.

Branch Treasurer's Report

December 28 — January 27, 2026

Cash in Bank – Checking	\$ 3,825.45
Cash in Bank – Convention Checking	\$ 0.00
Cash in Bank – Savings	\$ 5,197.52
Cash in Bank – Certificate of Deposit	\$12,236.11
TOTAL	\$21,259.08

BRANCH MEMBERSHIP/RETENTION

Membership and Retention: Ken Wallace

Total active members: 708

Transfer Out [9]: Gary Arquisola, Oscar Diano, Jimmie Gambrell, Dan Heath Jr., Richard Nolan, Lyndon Porter, Garry Radwick, Jay Rowland III, Guy Travaglio

New Join/Reinstated [1]: Malik Pratt

Past Due [14]: Matthew Aguilera, David Aldrich, Elizabeth Baker, Elijah Cales, Raymond Cotton, Dominador Jimenez, Roger Little, Willie McDonald, Timothy McNally, Ray Phillips Jr., Edward Stank, David Taschner, Jason Tatge, William Trotman

Ready to Renew [46]: John Aguilera Jr., Bryan Alfaro, Mariela Anderson, Darryl Barrickman, Robert Bear, Jennifer Beilstein, Ginger Bevis, Thomas Brown, Richard Davies, Donald Detwiler, Terrie Ehlich, Francis Evans, James Evans, Larry Fowler, Jeanette Gombash, Marion "Wayne" Hall, Robert Hedin, Charles Humbard, Sammy Jackson, Francis Jones, Gavin Karelitz, Allen Katen, Robert Koscianski, Larry Larkins, James Lewis, Alan Lincoln, Joe Lunn, Verne Merrill, Larry Mole, Eugene Morris, Donald Moseng, Charles Moss, Patrick Murphy, Robert Newton, Steven Nogle, Don Ort, Kevin Patton, Savannah Sellers, Wayne Stella, Jody Sutton, Earnest Sweat Jr., William Teague, John Tharp, Joe Travis, Mervin Wiands Sr., Gary Williams

Active Unit Members: 195

UNIT MEMBERSHIP/RETENTION

- 30 days past due [1]: Robert Home
- 60 days past due: [3]: Sandra Beilstein, Karen Hightower, Brenda Kraus
- 90 days past due [1]: Elfriede Campbell, Tammy Cappadona, Justin Highberger, Elizabeth Mullins
- Active Members: 195

BRANCH CHAPLAIN

Hospital/Welfare/Rehabilitation:

- The Branch conducted a Two-Bell for Shipmate MMCM(SS) Jay Miller Rowland III on Jan. 29 during his Memorial at the Home
- Conducted a Two-Bell for Shipmates STS2(SS) Charles Spencer Wood and CSCS Jimmie Vance Gambrell
- Tim Bailey is at Summerville Hospital
- Cecil Rash is in the VA Hospital.
- Bob Sollo is recovering from shoulder surgery
- Robert Bailey is recovering from spine surgery
- Rick Wise started a 3rd round of chemo
- Jerry Stout had surgery on 20 Feb
- Roger Rader is recovering from broken ribs
- Tom Lawson is on home hospice care
- Ken Curtis is on home palliative hospice care

Shipmates or Unit members please contact:

Branch Chaplain S/M Bobbi Sutton @

843.541.2823 or 843.879.9473

Unit Chaplain Theresa Milligan @

843-535-2757

MEAL HOURS FOR THE HOME

Lunch Hours Mon-Fri 1100-1330.

Dinner Hours Mon-Fri 1700-2000

Home Committee Report

Cash Audit as of **14 February 2026** is:

Checking Account balance	\$ 14,760.30
Savings account	\$ 50,479.62
Credit Card account available	\$ 8,113.65
Pending Check/Cash for deposit	\$ 1,865.50
Registers/Cash Funds	\$ 11,500.00
Total funds	\$ 86,719.07
Net Profit (Loss): approx. JAN	\$ 7,000.00

Building and Grounds/Special Events/and

Manager's Report: (full report in minutes at the end of the newsletter)

- Super Bowl part was a success

- Next golf tournament is March 14
- Will be hosting a Comedy Show Apr 18 in conjunction with the Marine Corps League
- All insurance premiums have been paid
- The floor tiling bill has not been received yet

Old Business:

- FRA 269 hosted the 2026 Mid-Year on Feb 7
- Will be starting a chess club at the Home

Upcoming Events:

- St Patrick’s Day 17 Mar will raffle off a cooler. Menu corn beef and cabbage.
- Easter 5 April
- Kentucky Derby Party 2 May

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN JOINING AN FRA CHESS CLUB?

Want a good challenge with no rules, prizes or dues, just play chess?

Shipmate Frank Strunk is seeking individuals who are interested in playing chess or want to learn how to play. Meeting will be once a month at the FRA Home for a couple of hours.

If you want to be included, let him know at frank.strunk1943@gmail.com and if there is enough response, he will step forward with setting up day and time.

Americanism/Patriotism - PNC Laurie Bailey

(full list in the Home minutes at the end of the newsletter)

Dates in American History:

- 3 Mar: USCG Reserves Birthday [1941]
- 4 Mar: US Naval Reserve Established [1915]
- 5 Mar: US Navy Band Established [1925]
- 8 Mar: US Navy Seabees Birthday [1942]
- 13 Mar: National K9 Veterans Day
- 17 Mar: St. Patrick’s Day
- 18 Mar: National Supreme Sacrifice Day

Newsbytes: The Fleet Reserve Bulletin

The Newsbytes are sent during the month from National to all FRA members via email. A direct link to Newsbytes is on the FRA269 Home Page

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Newsbytes January 30, 2026

- ◇ Coast Guard in Limbo
- ◇ Veterans Win on Toxic Exposure
- ◇ TRICARE Waives Pharmacy Copayments
- ◇ VA’s Community Care Under Scrutiny
- ◇ Senate Examines VA RISE Initiative
- ◇ VA Delays Annual Suicide Report

Newsbytes February 6, 2026

- ◇ FRA 2026 Survey Highlights
- ◇ Coast Guard Funding Still In Limbo
- ◇ HVAC Legislative Hearing
- ◇ VA Annual Veteran Suicide Report
- ◇ Rising Obesity Rates Letter to SecWar
- ◇ VA Transportation Services
- ◇ Marine Corps AI Fellowship

Newsbytes February 13, 2026

- ◇ Protect Coast Guard Pay
- ◇ Golden Dome Panel
- ◇ Senior Enlisted QOL Hearing
- ◇ VA Community Care Contracts
- ◇ Marine Lost at Sea
- ◇ 2026 Veterans Day Poster Contest

Newsbytes February 20, 2026

- ◇ Outcry Halts VA Rule
- ◇ Coast Guard Pay At Risk
- ◇ Marine Corps Barracks 2030
- ◇ VA to Expand Dental Care
- ◇ VA Delivery of Survivors' Benefits
- ◇ Arizona Disabled Veteran Law

Newsbytes February 27, 2026

Will be printed in March

BRANCH/UNIT 269 WEBSITE - fra269gc.org !!!!

Get your current and past newsletters and see upcoming events. To stop your current printed copy contact webmaster@fra268gc.org

Use the Branch and Unit Membership Boxes outside the office for new member and renewal applications. When you recruit a new member ensure all of their information is correct on the application. Place the new application/renewal in an envelope (available at the box) and place inside the “Membership Box”. Nothing concerning membership will be placed in the pass down log.

Life Membership ages and dues

Active duty: \$400.00 Ages up to 40: \$450.00
 Ages 41-50: \$425.00 Ages 51-60: \$390.00
 Ages 61-70: \$340.00 Ages 71-80: \$260.00
 Ages 81-99: \$200.00 Ages 100 and older: FREE

The Security Corner

Provided by: George Birmingham [ET1(SS) USS H.L. Stimson SSBN655—G/SY1/G 69-74, USSVI-Holland Club Carolina Piedmont Base]

Passkeys – What you should know about using them

This month we will take a break in our AI journey for a discussion of something we have probably all seen appearing more frequently in our

digital travels – Passkeys.

What exactly are Passkeys? A google search on the topic provides the following summary:

“Passkeys are a modern, passwordless authentication method that replaces traditional passwords with cryptographic keys, using your device's biometrics (face/fingerprint), or a PIN, to securely log you into websites and apps. They were created for the purpose of offering superior phishing resistance, ease of use, and strong security by eliminating the need for shared secrets. Their design was intended to make them immune to keyloggers and data breaches. They work using public-private key pairs, where a unique public key stays on the server, and a private key stays on your device, syncing securely across your devices.”

The following video link provides a complete and understandable explanation of Passkeys:

Say Goodbye to Passwords: Passkeys

Explained Simply (around 20 minutes to view completely)

(Note: As this is a YouTube video, you may have to sign in with your Google or YouTube account to view)

Seems simple enough. We will trade traditional passwords, which can be hard to remember, especially if we have many of them, for a simpler Passkey. In addition, passwords now have to be more complex to defeat password guessing tools used by the hackers. And we certainly don't want to use the same one for all our accounts out there in the digital jungle for obvious reasons. So, Passkeys can be a reasonable alternative.

This article from AARP provides another perspective on Passkeys that you may find helpful as well.

Bye-Bye, Passwords? Why Passkeys Can Be the New Way to Log Into Apps, Sites

I hope this has provided you with a short introduction to Passkeys and some useful background on how Passkeys work. Like all technology advancements, there are risks associated with this technology. As more merchant websites and service providers adopt the use of Passkeys in the authentication methods they support, most certainly vulnerabilities will be found and they will be fixed. It's just the nature of our digital lifestyle. As you will note in these videos, and in any research, you may choose to do in learning more

about this technology, Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) and Two-Factor Authentication (2FA) are features you should definitely enable on any sites where you bank, or have payment information stored.

DID YOU KNOW??

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3-second tech genius: The next time you need to print something, don't dig through menus. On **Windows**, press **Ctrl + P** to open the print menu instantly. On **Mac**, press **Cmd + P**. This works in most documents, spreadsheets and web browsers.

3-second tech genius: Buying a secondhand phone? Dial ***#06#** to see its IMEI number. Then enter it on **Stolen Phone Checker** to find out if it's been reported stolen or blocked by a carrier.

Cast your PC to a smart TV: On **Windows 11**, you can connect your desktop to your TV wirelessly if both are on the same network. If your PC doesn't have Wi-Fi, get an **adapter**. Press **Windows key + K** to open the **Cast** menu, select your TV and choose how to display it.

Know what files really are: Windows hides file name endings like .jpg, .pdf and .mp4 by default. That's risky, since a malicious file you accidentally downloaded could look like a photo but is actually an .exe (malware). Stay alert: Open File Explorer, click View in the top row, scroll to Show and tick File name extensions.



**VA News by VAVS Branch Representative
PRPSE Fred Bolz**

VAVS Minutes and Newsbytes are posted on the bulletin board.

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VA care is expanding - find a location near you

VA has opened 25 new health care facilities during the second Trump Administration, bringing more care and convenience to Veterans across the nation! Find a VA location near you below.

VA locations

VA provides millions in grants to state Veterans cemeteries

VA awarded more than \$77 million in grants in fiscal year 2025 for the expansion and improvement of 20 state Veterans cemeteries throughout the nation and one establishment grant for Alaska’s first state Veterans cemetery.

[Learn more](#)

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Veterans Health Shake-up, Reforms to Get Underway in Coming Months

The planned reorganization of the Veterans Affairs health system should result in improvements to VA medical facilities, increased oversight of hospitals and clinics, and better access to care at the VA and with civilian providers in the department’s community networks, VA officials said during appearances before Congress this month. In what will be the largest reorganization of the Veterans Health Administration since the 1990s, the VA plans to restructure VHA’s administration, realign staff and resources, and invest in medical facilities.

[READ MORE](#)

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Why Some Disabled Vets Can't Get Both VA Disability and Military Retirement Pay

As reported February 5 by Brandon Wile for Military.com, servicemembers who medically retires with 19 years of service receives either military retirement pay or VA compensation, but not both in full. A servicemember who reaches 20 years gets both without offset through concurrent retirement and disability pay (CRDP). Before CRDP existed, military retirees receiving VA disability compensation had their retirement pay reduced dollar-for-dollar by their VA payments. The *2004 National Defense Authorization Act* changed this.

[READ MORE](#)

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A Message from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs

Dear Veteran or Beneficiary,

On behalf of all Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) staff, thank you for choosing VA. It is an honor and a privilege to serve you.

VA has made significant progress over the last year implementing our Veteran First strategy – easing access to care when and where you need it most. Patient safety, delivering high quality

health outcomes, and providing best-in-class customer experience for all Veterans and beneficiaries remain our top priorities. That includes maintaining the safety and well-being of Veterans, their families, caregivers, survivors, visitors, and our dedicated staff. As a requirement of Public Law 116-315, this message serves as an annual reminder of VA’s continued commitment to ensure our medical facilities, staff offices, regional benefits offices, and the sacred grounds of our cemeteries are places where all are welcome and treated with dignity and respect.

Though VA continues its long-standing adherence to anti-harassment and anti-sexual assault policies, laws, and programs, it takes all of us working together to maintain safe and welcoming environments for all. One way you can help is to practice the Bystander Intervention Techniques described in this [brochure](#). These are practical techniques to enable you to feel confident in your ability to identify harassment or sexual assault, seek help, and prevent the situation from escalating.

We understand that reporting harassment or sexual assault may feel uncomfortable. But I assure you, our trained staff stands ready to support and assist you throughout the process. If you or someone you know has been harassed or sexually assaulted at a VA facility, we ask that you tell a VA staff member you trust. There is no wrong door for reporting harassment or sexual assault. You may also submit a report by following the guidance found at www.va.gov/report-harassment. Reporting not only helps VA better support victims, it enables us to more effectively prevent future incidents.

Thank you for choosing VA as the place to receive your benefits and services. You are our mission, a responsibility we do not take lightly.

You can view the Veterans Health Administration’s sexual assault and harassment prevention policy [HERE](#).

Download the VA Welcome Kit

[Consolidated VA Welcome Kit in black and white \(PDF\)](#)

49 Pages

[VA Welcome Kit](#)

[in black and white \(PDF\)](#)

17 Pages

S/M Malik Pratt was inducted as a new member of Branch 269 by President Don Barton, Vice President Steve Koch and Secretary Sarah Ihme.



Pictures for the General Assembly Meeting can be viewed at [260219 Branch 269 Meeting](#)

Continuous membership pins were presented to S/M John Hills for 15 years and S/M Ronald Laqua for 5 years. Pins were presented by Secretary Sarah Ihme.



Pictures for the Unit 269 Meeting can be viewed at [260210 Unit 269 Meeting](#)

Ladies Eva Sollo and Laurie Douty were initiated as new members of Unit 269 by President Pat Suckow NSF/PNP.



PNC Laurie Bailey presented the 2026 Essay Awards to the winners. All Award presentation pictures can be viewed at [260219 FRA Essay Winners](#)



Mark your calendar, watch for details, watch for additions
 Unless noted otherwise all meetings are in the large room
 Where no time noted group has room for entire day
 Friday nights – 1930 – Scotch Doubles, 8-Ball Tournament

MARCH						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 Free Pool	2	3	4 <u>1900-2100</u> Sojourners	5 <u>1800-2000</u> SUBVETS BOD	6	7
8 Free Pool DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME	9	10	11 <u>1300-1500</u> Purple Hearts	12 <u>1900-2100</u> SUBVETS Mtg	13	14 <u>1000-1200</u> DAV Mtg <u>1200-</u> Golf Tournament
15 Free Pool	16 <u>1800-2000</u> Home Committee	17 <u>1130</u> Unit Lunch <u>1730</u> Unit Mtg	18 <u>1800-2000</u> Radio Club	19 <u>1800</u> Branch BOD <u>1900</u> Branch Mtg	20 <u>ALL DAY</u> Unit Setup Yard Sale	21 <u>ALL DAY</u> Unit Yard Sale <u>TIME UNK</u> Crawford BDay Party
22 Free Pool	23 <u>1730</u> VVA Mtg <u>1900</u> Carolina Coins Mtg	24	25	26 <u>1900-2100</u> Marine Corps League	27 <u>1030-1300</u> Military Officers Association	28 <u>0900-1200</u> CPR/AED Training <u>1400-1700</u> Retirement Party
29 Free Pool <u>TIME UNK</u> Baby Shower	30	31				

Mark your calendar, watch for details, watch for additions
 Unless noted otherwise all meetings are in the large room
 Where no time noted group has room for entire day
 Friday nights – 1930 – Scotch Doubles, 8-Ball Tournament

APRIL						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 <u>1900-2100</u> Sojourners	2 <u>1800-2000</u> SUBVETS BOD	3	4
5 Free Pool	6	7	8	9 <u>1900-2100</u> SUBVETS Mtg	10 <u>1000</u> Retirement Party	11 <u>1000-1200</u> DAV Mtg
12 Free Pool	13 <u>1800-2000</u> Home Committee	14 <u>1130</u> Unit Lunch <u>1730</u> Unit Mtg	15 <u>1800-2000</u> Radio Club	16 <u>1800-1900</u> Branch BOD <u>1900-2100</u> Branch Mtg	17	18 <u>1000-1200</u> MilFrat Mtg <u>1800-</u> Comedy Show
19 Free Pool	20	21	22	23	24	25
26 Free Pool	27 <u>1730-1900</u> VVA Mtg <u>1900-2000</u> Carolina Coins Mtg	28	29	30		

BRANCH 269 CONTINUOUS MEMBERSHIP—MARCH 2026

Ronald Vanco	57	Laurie Bailey	28	Bryan Wright	20	David Mattingly	8
William Cole	55	Arthur Brown	28	Donald Wolfe Jr.	19	Donald Barton	7
Donald Muccheck	52	Richard Davies	28	Jereome White Jr.	18	William Bryar	7
Frank Carroll	51	Mark Heck	28	Stephen Nogle	17	Kenneth Gray	7
Robert Mustain	51	Marvin Wiands Sr.	28	Ray Stanfield	17	Jack Wirick	7
Joseph Ondo Jr.	51	Robert Moore	27	Dennis Lanier	19	Ernest Sweat Jr.	4
Thomas Clark	50	Larry Pepper	27	Jeanette Gombash	15	Harold Trosper Jr.	4
Robert Koscianski	48	Donald Tingle	27	Danny Trapp	15	Robert Hedin	3
Donald Barvilchak	43	Carl Chinn	26	Lawrence Fletes	13	Charles Humbard	3
Jimmie Gambrell	40	Richard Duprey	26	Wayne Stella	13	Lionel MacVey	2
Bruce Garrabrant	40	David Johnson	26	Ronald Walston	13	Donald Moseng	2
Francis Jones	40	Thomas Lawson	26	Arthur Hance III	12	Edward Peters	2
John Aguilera Jr.	38	Gary Gardner	25	Don Ort	11	Lyle Smith	2
Charles Ivey	37	Charles Day	23	Frank Yeager	11	Jody Sutton	2
George Miller	37	Donald Detwiler	21	Howard Hogue	10	Darryl Barrickman	1
Robert Hughes	32	Robert Harris	21	Leo Kelley Sr.	10	James Evans	1
James Lewis	31	John Tharp	21	Crystal Koch	10	Savannah Sellers	1
William Baranek	31	Paul McHugh	20	Joe Lunn	10		

UNIT 269 CONTINUOUS MEMBERSHIP—MARCH 2026

Linda F. Brinson	57	Katherine R. Sparger	22	Nancy Vella	19	Tina Marie Willis	6
Patricia A. Wlazlinski	57	Carol A. Eustace	19	Rebecca G. Moseley	7	Lorraine Carver	4
Marilyn Tharp	17	Deborah L. Rullman	22	Joseph Holman	6		

YOUR BIRTHDAY IS IN MARCH 2026
 If you are a Branch 269 or Unit 269 member, come on in to the Low Country Home on your birthday for a **FREE BIRTHDAY LUNCH!!!** Auxiliary members in *ITALICS*

William Ambler	1	Dana Johnson	7	Donald Tingle	17	<i>Virginia B. Stamey</i>	25
Darryl Barrickman	1	Ronald Laqua	7	Robert Jaeger	18	<i>Barbara Timmons</i>	25
Thomas Ishee	1	Michael Moore	7	Chad Parsons	18	Stephen Kolbe	26
Robert Mustain	1	Jerry Espiritu	8	Edward Smith Jr.	18	Timothy McNally	26
Hubert Pearce Sr.	1	Robert Massey	9	Jennifer Beilstein	19	Gerald Monnat	26
Savannah Sellers	1	Howard Anderson	10	<i>Anne S. Barton</i>	20	Eugene Morris	27
Roger Adams	2	David Harvey	10	Gary Williams	20	Malik Pratt	26
Sarah Ihme	2	<i>Michael Berezny</i>	10	Scott Benson	20	Don Heywood	28
<i>Tina C. Smith</i>	2	<i>Linda Lunn</i>	10	John Pardo	21	Betty Hilliard	28
Robert Zimmerman	2	<i>Johnathan Price</i>	10	Sheri Ragan	21	Michael Black	29
Richard Mabe	3	John Adams	11	<i>Cynthia M Clark</i>	22	Mark Tompkins	29
Darlene Hines	4	Earl Hamm	13	Merle Melling	22	John Murphy	30
John Allen Jr.	6	<i>Connie R. Chinn</i>	14	<i>Martha Willcut</i>	22	William Nieschalk	30
Eugene Lemieux	6	<i>Joyce E. Hillsman</i>	15	Frank Hixenbaugh	24	Fay Wright	30
Gordan Sarver	6	Wayne Swiech	15	<i>Barbara A. Moyer</i>	24	Robert Crenshaw	31
Bertil Johnson	7	Kenneth Wallace	16	<i>Patricia D. Day</i>	25		

**FRA LOW COUNTRY BRANCH 269
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
FEBRUARY 19, 2026**

Shipmate President Don Barton called the regular Board of Directors meeting of Low Country Branch 269 to order at 1800, Thursday, February 19, 2026, in accordance with FRA Rituals.

Board Members present:

PRPSE Fred Bolz	Ron Lamon	Don Barton	PNP Don Muckeck
PNC Laurie Bailey	John Tharp	Steve Koch	Sarah Ihme
Larry Pepper	Glenn Little		

Minutes: Posted on the entrance table. Motion to accept.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Americanism/Patriotism: PNC Laurie Bailey
Essay awards will be given at the general assembly.

By-Laws: PRPSE Fred Bolz
Report at General Assembly.

Legislative Service and VAVS: PRPSE Fred Bolz
Report at General Assembly.

Hospital, Welfare and Rehabilitation: PNC Laurie Bailey (for Bobbi Sutton)
Two-Bell to be conducted at the general assembly for STS2 Charles Spencer Wood and CSCS Jimmie Vance Gambrell. S/M Tim Bailey is hospitalized and expected to be discharged home soon. Surgery is anticipated at a later date.

Membership and Retention: Ken Wallace
Report at General Assembly.

Youth Activities: Ed Peters
Report at General Assembly.

Public Relations: John Tharp
Report at General Assembly.

Ways and Means: Larry Pepper
Report at General Assembly.

Golf: Larry Pepper
Report at General Assembly.

Budget and Finance: Glenn Little
Report at General Assembly.

Home Committee Report: PNC Laurie Bailey
Report at General Assembly.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mid-Year Meeting Report: We allocated \$300 for food. We took in \$75 from 50/50 and \$106 donations, totaling \$181. The cost of food was \$358.61. The home has been reimbursed. We received \$170 from the dinner. The mid-year meeting was well attended, and all bills received for mid-year have been paid.

NEW BUSINESS

S/M Ron Lamon is working to set up a flag-raising ceremony at a local cemetery.

Ratify the email vote allocating \$1,825 for gift cards for essay contest awardees.

- **MOTION:** PNP Don Muccheck moved, and S/M John Tharp seconded to allocate \$1,825 for gift cards. Motion carried unanimously.

Invoice received to reimburse S/M Keith Laster for 12 navy hats and 25 patches totaling \$358.61. Invoice received from S/M Ken Wallace for \$153.45 for VA snacks. Invoice received from the FRA Home for four steak dinners and five key cards, totaling \$109.00.

- **MOTION:** PNP Don Muccheck moved, and PRPSE Fred Bolz seconded that these be approved for payment. Motion carried unanimously.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Our Community Salutes of the Lowcountry will host a High School Enlistee Recognition Ceremony honoring Class of 2026 high school seniors and their families who plan to enlist in the U.S. Armed Services. The event will be held May 6, 2026, aboard the USS Yorktown. The welcome reception begins at 1730 and the ceremony begins at 1830.

FRA Southeast Regional meeting will be held on July 27 – 31, 2026 at Warner Robins GA.

FRA National Convention will be held September 29 – October 02 in Las Vegas, NV.

Motion to adjourn made by PRPSE Fred Bolz, seconded by S/M Glenn Little. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 1827.

**FRA LOW COUNTRY BRANCH 269
GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING
FEBRUARY 19, 2026**

Shipmate President Don Barton called the regular meeting of Low Country Branch 269 to order on Thursday, February 19, 2026, at 1900, in accordance with FRA Rituals.

Visitors: Auxiliary members and guests for the essay awards.

Essay Awards: The winners who were present received their awards for Branch 269. The overall winner read her essay. Two awards were presented for SE Region.

Shipmates Initiated: Malik Pratt

Minutes: Published in the newsletter. The minutes stand as approved.

Communications: Received a Christmas card from the Goose Creek Recreation Commission.

Treasurer's Report:

The report for the period of December 28 – January 27 is as follows:

General Checking: \$3,825.45	Savings Account: \$5,197.52
Convention Checking: \$0.00	Certificate of Deposit: \$12,236.11
Total: \$21,259.08	

All bills received to date have been paid. Checking balance after outstanding payments is \$1,749.57.

Continuous Membership:

February 2026

Eugene Morris – 25 Years
Sammy Jackson – 20 Years
Tom Lufkin – 20 Years
Carla Passmore – 20 Years
John Hills – 15 Years

John Bullock – 10 Years
James Schaefer – 10 Years
George White – 10 Years
Matthew Douty – 5 Years
Ronald Laqua – 5 Years

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Americanism/Patriotism – PNC Laurie Bailey

Dates in History February/March

19 February – USCG Reserves Birthday (1941)
03 March – U.S. Naval Reserve Established (1915)
04 March – U.S. Navy Band Established (1925)

05 March – U.S. Navy Seabees Birthday (1942)
08 March – Daylight Savings Time Begins
13 March – National K9 Veterans Day
17 March – St. Patrick’s Day
18 March – National Supreme Sacrifice Day

By-Laws: PRPSE Fred Bolz
Nothing to report.

Legislative Service & VAVS: PRPSE Fred Bolz
Newsbytes are posted on the bulletin board. Will have information for VAVS put into the newsletter.

Hospital, Welfare, and Rehabilitation: PNC Laurie Bailey (for Bobbi Sutton)
A Two-Bell Ceremony will be conducted for Shipmates for STS2 Charles Spencer Wood and CSCS Jimmie Vance Gambrell.
Cecil ‘Sonny’ Rash is in the VA hospital, and his foot may need to be amputated.
Bob Sollo is recovering from his shoulder surgery.
Robert ‘Beetle’ Bailey is recovering from surgery for a pinched nerve in his spine.
Rick Wise started the third round of chemo on February 17th.
Jerry Stout is being treated for a recurrence of skin cancer.
Roger Rader is recovering from broken ribs due to a fall while on a cruise in Aruba.
Tom Lawson is now on hospice care.
Ken Curtis has home Palliative Hospice care.
Tim Bailey is at Summerville Medical Center for a diverticulitis flare-up.

Membership and Retention: Ken Wallace

Total active members: 708

New Join/Reinstated: Malik Pratt

Past Due: Matthew Aguilera, David Aldrich, Elizabeth Baker, Elijah Cales, Raymond Cotton, Dominador Jimenez, Roger Little, Willie McDonald, Timothy McNally, Ray Phillips Jr., Edward Stank, David Taschner, Jason Tatge, William Trotman

Ready to Renew: John Aguilera Jr., Bryan Alfaro, Mariela Anderson, Darryl Barrickman, Robert Bear, Jennifer Beilstein, Ginger Bevis, Thomas Brown, Richard Davies, Donald Detwiler, Terrie Ehlich, Francis Evans, James Evans, Larry Fowler, Jeannette Gombash, Marion “Wayne” Hall, Robert Hedin, Charles Humbard, Sammy Jackson, Francis Jones, Gavin Karelitz, Allen Katen, Robert Koscianski, Larry Larkins, James Lewis, Alan Lincoln, Joe Lunn, Verne Merrill, Larry Mole, Jaiden Moore, Eugene Morris, Donald Moseng, Charles Moss, Patrick Murphy, Robert Newton, Stephen Nogle, Don Ort, Kevin Patton, Savannah Sellers, Wayne Stella, Jody Sutton, Ernest Sweat Jr., William Teague, John Tharp, Joe Travis, Mervin Wiands Sr., Gary Williams

Term NPD: Gary Arquisola, Oscar Diano, Richard Nolan, Lyndon Porter, Garry Radwick, Guy Travaglio

Term Dec: Jimmie Gambrell, Dan Heath Jr., Jay Rowland III

Active Unit Members: 195

Youth Activities: Ed Peters

Requests a donation of \$675 to support Spring sports for the City of Goose Creek Youth Sports.

Public Relations: John Tharp

Branch meeting information is in the Berkeley Independent under the upcoming events section. Still working with the Summerville Journal to get information in their paper.

Ways and Means: Larry Pepper

Get your 50/50 and steak dinner tickets.

Golf: Larry Pepper

Next golf tournament will be 14 March, 0900 tee time.

Budget and Finance: Glenn Little

Next audit will be in March.

Home Committee Report: PNC Laurie Bailey

Financial Reports

Balances as of 14 February 26: Checking \$14,760.30; Savings \$50,479.62; Credit Card \$8,113.65; Pending Deposits \$1,865.50; Registers/Change Funds \$11,500.00; Total Funds \$86,719.07

Net Profit (Loss): January net profit was approximately \$7,000.

Building and Grounds / Special Events Manager's Report:

The Super Bowl party was successful.

The next golf tournament will be held on March 14, 2026.

Working with the Marine Corps League to host a comedy show around April 18, 2026, to benefit Pets for Vets.

All insurance premiums have been paid.

The State requires bartender certification training and no longer recognizes TIPS.

Reimbursement is being pursued through TIPS. All bartenders will complete ServSafe certification to meet the current requirement.

Kitchen deep cleaning is pending review of available funds after bills are paid.

The bill for floor tiling has not yet been received.

A request for records was received from Berkeley County.

Membership and Security

FRA HQ reports 708 active Branch members and 199 Unit members

Old Business

Branch and Unit 269 hosted the 2026 Mid-Year Meeting on February 7, 2026, at the Home.

S/M Frank Strunk will provide additional information about starting a Chess Club at the Home. Suggestions for the next Home Improvement Project included replacing ceiling tiles in the bar and cleaning the carpet in the banquet room.

Professional kitchen deep cleaning was discussed

New Business

Two suggestions were received in the suggestion box.

Upcoming Events

Mardi Gras – 17 February 2026

St. Patrick's Day – 17 March 2026 – decorate and raffle off a cooler. Corned beef and cabbage will be served.

Easter – 5 April 2026 – Decorate.

Kentucky Derby – 2 May 2026 – Decorate and party.

Good of the Order

Ways to incentivize someone to run the Friday pool tournaments and increase attendance were discussed.

Basic cleaning was conducted on the last clean-up day.

The bar area bookcase was discussed. It was recommended that the smaller cases go to the yard sale and the two larger sections remain. Paperbacks will be boxed for donation to the VA.

Next meeting will be held: 16 March 2026 at 1800

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Requesting for \$675 for the City of Goose Creek Youth Sports.

- **MOTION:** PNC Laurie Bailey moved, and PRPSE Fred Bolz seconded to donate \$675 for the City of Goose Creek Youth Sports. Motion carried unanimously.

The Board of Directors approved an allotment of \$1,825 for gift cards for essay contest awardees.

- **MOTION:** PNP Don Mucke moved, and PRPSE Fred Bolz seconded that \$1,825 be allocated for the gift cards. Motion carried unanimously.

FRA Southeast Regional meeting will be held on July 27 – 31, 2026 at Warner Robins GA.

FRA National Convention will be held September 29 – October 02, 2026 in Las Vegas, NV.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Our Community Salutes of the Lowcountry will host a High School Enlistee Recognition Ceremony honoring Class of 2026 high school seniors and their families who plan to enlist in the U.S. Armed Services. The event will be held May 6, 2026, aboard the USS Yorktown. The welcome reception begins at 1730 and the ceremony begins at 1830.

Unit Report: Marilyn Tharp (for NFS Pat Suckow, PNP)

Thank you letter was received from the Ralph Johnson VAMC for food pantry donations. Please continue to donate.

The Victory House has been contacted, and our visit will be set for August or September. Unit Yard Sale will be March 20 – 21.

Next unit luncheon will be Tuesday, March 17 at 1130 at the Home, and the Unit meeting will be the same Tuesday at 1730 at the Fleet.

It was recommended that everyone read the article in the FRA today by the NED.

A reminder was given to treat all Auxiliary members with respect and to support membership retention.

The Two-Bell Ceremony took place.

Meeting adjourned at 2006.

FRA LOW COUNTRY HOME COMMITTEE MEETING

FEBRUARY 16, 2026

PNC Laurie Bailey called the FRA Low Country Home Committee meeting to order at 1804 on Monday, February 16, 2026. A quorum was not present. The committee proceeded with discussion and reports only. No votes were taken.

Board Members Present: Shipmates PNC Laurie Bailey, Sarah Ihme, Ken Wallace, and Ryan Stevenson; Lady Dee Wallace

Other Members Present: S/M Larry Pepper, Bob Zauner, and Fred Bolz

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the January meeting were reviewed.

Financial Reports

PNP Don Muccheck and S/M Ken Hutchison conducted cash audit.

Balances as of 14 February 26: Checking \$14,760.30; Savings \$50,479.62; Credit Card \$8,113.65; Pending Deposits \$1,865.50; Registers/Change Funds \$11,500.00; Total Funds \$86,719.07

Net Profit (Loss): January net profit was approximately \$7,000.

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Kitchen deep cleaning is pending review of available funds after bills are paid.

The bill for floor tiling has not yet been received.

A request for records was received from Berkeley County.

Membership and Security

FRA HQ reports 708 active Branch members and 199 Unit members

Old Business

Branch and Unit 269 hosted the 2026 Mid-Year Meeting on February 7, 2026, at the Home. Doughnuts, coffee, and juice were donated by shipmates. Lunch was well attended. Dinner attendance was low. Desserts were donated by Auxiliary members.

S/M Frank Strunk will provide additional information about starting a Chess Club at the Home.

Suggestions for the next Home Improvement Project included replacing ceiling tiles in the bar and cleaning the carpet in the banquet room.

Professional kitchen deep cleaning was discussed. The committee will ask the current cleaning team if they can add monthly kitchen cleaning.

New Business

It was noted that the Kentucky Derby party should be added to the Home calendar. The Home Managers will update the calendar accordingly.

Two suggestions were received in the suggestion box.

Upcoming Events

Mardi Gras – 17 February 2026

St. Patrick's Day – 17 March 2026 – decorate and raffle off a cooler. Corned beef and cabbage will be served.

Easter – 5 April 2026 – Decorate.

Kentucky Derby – 2 May 2026 – Decorate and party.

Good of the Order

Ways to incentivize someone to run the Friday pool tournaments and increase attendance were discussed.

Basic cleaning was conducted on the last clean-up day.

The bar area bookcase was discussed. It was recommended that the smaller cases go to the yard sale and the two larger sections remain. Paperbacks will be boxed for donation to the VA.

Next clean-up day: table until next meeting

Next meeting will be held: 16 March 2026 at 1800

The meeting adjourned at 1843.