From the President’s desk...

Hello Windy City Chapter members,
Despite a heavy, late afternoon snowfall, a reasonable representation of Windy City’s loyal diehards intrepidly made the journey to Park Ridge VFW for our February 12th chapter meeting.

Conversation related to the North Central Regional Conference dominated topics discussed. The members present determined that it would be a real drawing card if National Executive Director Steve Sandy could attend and make a presentation on current legislative buzz and allow Midwest members to meet first hand, the fine Gentleman we send to represent us on Capitol Hill and at The Military Coalition meetings.

WC Treasurer Gene Kolker finally gets his dream come true: Windy City NERA meets the Navy Club. Not only are arrangements in place for our attendance at the Great Lakes Recruit Graduation on Friday (4/18) before our conference, but also Navy Club Ship #1 will be there, along with their National Staff. The Navy Club’s itinery includes socializing with conference attendees at the Ramada. Gene has a special plan to provide liquid libations at the hospitality suite. A plan has been devised that will allow Navy Club member’s conference registration fee to be applied to annual dues.

I thank members of the conference committee for meeting twice at Ed & Marsha Whiteside’s home to organize the arrangements. If you’ve never attended a regional or national conference; don’t miss this opportunity. We’ll have a great time, and be updated on the status quo. Speakers will be Steve Sandy and local SELRES who have recently been deployed for the GWOT (global war on terror).

The Constitution and Bylaws prescribe that proposed resolutions for consideration at the next national Conference should be considered first by chapters and at regional conferences. Bring your ideas!

Butch Michaelson – WC President

**Mark Your Calendar:**

Meetings are conducted at 2000 on the second Tuesdays of even numbered months at the VFW Post # Canfield at Higgins (alongside the Kennedy Expressway) : on the 2nd deck adjacent to the bar. 2008 Windy City NERA Meetings schedule: Apr 8, June 10, Aug 12, Oct 14, Dec 9th. **Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 8th**

**In this issue:**

N/C regional conference approaching; 2/12 meeting minutes; Rest in peace: Bernie Fink; Capt. Gainer Senate Sargeant –at- Arms; Marines kicked out of Toledo; Marine animal abuse; New Coast Guard vessel behind schedule and over budget; What’s happening; Guard & Reserve Comm. Final report out; Dues due this quarter; The Armed Forces Vacation Club; N/C Registration Form

**Planning Ahead!!!**

Windy City Chapter is the host for the “08 North Central Regional conference to be conducted April 18 & 19 at the Ramada Waukegan Hotel @ 200 N. Green Bay Rd. Waukegan, IL 60085. This site is about a mile and a half north of the Great Lakes Main Exchange (Burkey Mall), between Belvedere and Grand Ave. For locals who have never attended a NERA conference this is a great opportunity to get your feet wet at minimal cost and inconvenience. If you need accommodations contact the hotel directly at 847-244-2400, be sure to ask for the NERA rate(Code NESA). You will find a conference registration form at the back of this newsletter.
Windy City Chapter Meeting Minutes –

Naval Enlisted Reserve Association, Windy City Chapter, February 12th, 2008 meeting minutes.

Roll Call was taken.  
President-present, Vice President- Present Treasurer-Present, Master-at Arms-Excused Executive Counselor Present. Secretary-Absent.  
(1) Pledge of Allegiance  
(2) Preamble  
(3) moment of Silence  
(4) Approval of the Minutes from January 19th(Dec) meeting. Motion X Premeske; 2nd X Monroe  
(5) Treasurer’s report was given. Approval motion by Monroe; 2nd X Anderson  

Committee reports: Were given.  

Newsletter Editor’s report: discussion of cost of newsletter pertaining to size.  

Reg. Conference Committee Report: Gene Koelker will provide hard liquor; beer discussion on cans vs. keg. The hospitality suite is ours from Thursday evening through Sunday morning. Microwave to be provided, not plates and crock pots are permitted. Appetizers will be available throughout. Raffle prizes will be in hospitality suite; security by Sea Cadet Petty Officer Richard Koehnke. Numerous prizes available including razors, grills, toasters, tools, women’s novelties, etc.  

Old business: President to generate a letter responding to a promulgating message allowing workout t-shirts for a sponsored boot camp company. 70-90 recruits/ company.  
Try to determine where original WC flag was purchased.  

New business:  
Windy City President to request an accounting, from HQ, of NERA National Coins. X Koelker 2nd X Cushing  
Navy Club Staff Meeting coincides with Nera NC Regional Conference. Organizations can socialize together. Cross pollinate ideas and membership.  
Motion for WC to subsidize NED Steve Sandy’s arrangements. Motion X Gene Koelker 2nd X Anderson  
Motion to amend allowance to limit authorized by WC President & VP. Motion X Premeske 2nd X Anderson.  
Suggestion to include info on Armed Forces Vacation Club in upcoming WC newsletter. X Jim Cushing  
Discussion of the Pritzker Military Library- 610 N. Fairbanks Ct. 2nd Floor Chicago 60611 for future newsletter. Pritzkermilitarylibrary.net X Jim Cushing  
Minutes taken by Jim Premeske  

Bernie Fink-the Passing of an ERA- May he rest in peace  
Windy City Chapter mourns the passing of a key member. Someone who never desired the limelight, never second guessed motives; his only agenda has been to contribute his, and his loving wife Enid’s, time and talents to NERA’s success.  

Not only Windy City, but all of NERA owes Bernie a great debt of gratitude; at a time when NERA needed public relations, Bernie and Enid accepted a challenge from Windy City Chapter for the benefit of NERA’s future. An initiative of Windy City Chapter: awarding a plaque recognizing the outstanding reservist of each NPSAC (Non Prior Service Accession Course, later called NRAC) class graduating from Great Lakes Recruit Training Command. Bernie became the face and voice of NERA among new reserve recruits and APGs.  

Bernie witnessed the complete metamorphosis of the Naval Reserve Force. He enlisted in 1950, served during the Korean Conflict and proudly wore his uniform on every legitimate opportunity during Vietnam, a period when it was unpopular to do so.  
Bernie began serving when reservists had few benefits; he witnessed the institution of portal to portal insurance coverage, followed by full time coverage, then enormous increases in death benefits. When Bernie enlisted, reservists were only permitted Exchange privileges when on active duty, by the time he retired he had them full time. Later, limited commissary access was gained, with unlimited access occurring only after Bernie already possessed the coveted grey I.D. Card. He suffered the unwarranted indignity of the red crow and hash marks until NERA embarrassed the Navy into granting the donning of gold when earned after twelve years of service. Through all of this Bernie held his head high… and always appreciated that NERA was the catalyst that made life better for sea service reservists.  

He often reminisced of the pride he held in being a reservist and the chill of watching color guards pass in review during frequent holiday parades during the fifties. Bernie lamented that today’s youngsters were missing out on such pride and allegiance, and surmised it was the result of the Vietnam Conflict’s civic turmoil.  

Bernie’s 1950’s Navy was abundantly supplied with WWII relics: airborne, ashore and afloat. As a Yeoman Bernie saw the cold war’s technology improvements from a different perspective than most. His focus was not electronics, nor weapons systems or propulsion. Bernie measured the passing of his era in the replacement of mimeographs with copiers, radio messages becoming faxes, then emails. His typewriter, became a Selectric. With the advent of computers, files took on a new meaning. He feared implementation of today’s luxury: the Word Processor. How much better his life would have been had performance eval software been available; how many retypings could have been avoided because some young officer distained his copy when he saw it in print.
Bernie witnessed the ebb and flow of progress within the Naval Reserve. He participated in GAO effectiveness investigations of the early seventies; he knew shipmates who appeared in a “SitRep” video CNR distributed touting NavRes’s modern platform’s (many of which were eliminated before the video hit the deck plates). Bernie was there when the dream began to materialize with President Reagan’s “600 ship Navy”; a time when the U.S. Naval Reserve Force became the “tenth most powerful Navy in the World”. Bernie retired in 1984 after thirty-four years of service.

Bernie was a reliable contributor in his tireless pursuit of NERA’s success. Enid and he were fixtures at National and Regional conferences. We are grateful for his service to Windy City Chapter and NERA. He will be sorely missed by those of us who were privileged to call him our friend. Bernie is survived by Enid and two daughters. Many of his NERA shipmates joined with Bernie’s family and friends to celebrate his life on February 4th. May he rest in peace.

**Captain Terry Gainer Sighting!**

Following the President’s State of the Union Address Chicago area retired Navy Reservists were treated to a visual of their former shipmate Captain Terry Gainer as he cleared the path for President Bush’s exit from the House Chambers. Captain Gainer, Ret. was appointed late in 2006 as the Senate’s sergeant-at-arms. In this position, Gainer heads the three-member board that oversees the Capitol Police. Gainer led the 2,300-member police force from 2002 until last spring, when he stepped down amid questions of nepotism involving his son-in-law. Colleagues said Gainer was frustrated by frequent sparring with House staff members.

Gainer has a long history in law enforcement. Before heading the Capitol Police, he was second-in-command of the D.C. police. He previously worked as a homicide detective in Chicago and was Superintendent of the Illinois State Police in the 1990s.

His new responsibilities extend beyond police work: The sergeant-at-arms acts as the chief operating officer of the Senate, with approximately 950 staff members who run Senate telecommunications, information technology, postal services, the TV and radio recording studio and the media galleries. The Senate pages and doorkeepers are also his responsibility.

Many remember Terry as a young Lt. in the late 70’s assuming command of ABFC at the Naval Armory in Chicago. He held many billets at Great Lakes, most recently as C.O. of Assault Craft Unit One.

**Mayor to Marines... Leave Toledo**

The 200 Marines based in Grand Rapids, Mich., planned to spend their weekend engaged in urban patrol exercises on the streets of downtown Toledo. Police knew weeks in advance about plans for the three-day exercise. Yet somehow the memo never made it to Toledo’s Mayor, who ordered the Marines out yesterday afternoon just minutes before their buses were to arrive.

"The mayor asked them to leave because they frighten people," said the mayor's spokesman. "He did not want them practicing and drilling in a highly visible area."

Members of the 1st Battalion, 24th Marines have trained periodically in downtown Toledo since at least 2004 and most recently in May, 2006. Past exercises have involved mock gun fights, ambushes, and the firing of blank ammunition.

The Reservists' visit was no surprise to Toledo police, who had already issued a news release to media outlets on behalf of the Marines that asked Citizens of Toledo not to be startled by the sight of camouflaged soldiers toting M16 rifles.

Maj. Jeffrey O'Neill, the company's commanding officer, said he was disappointed by how events played out, especially because Toledo had been a gracious host for Marine exercises in the past. "You can go to military ranges for live fire [exercises], but there's no way to duplicate the urban jungle unless you actually train inside a city," Major O'Neill said.

Lance Cpl. Brandon Bukrey-McCarty, 22, recalled taking part in the company's 2006 urban patrol exercise. He said he learned skills during that exercise that proved useful during the unit's deployment to Fallujah, Iraq, in 2006-2007. "It was extremely helpful, "The training"got me used to looking up on rooftops, looking around every alley, every open door."

Sergeant Davis and other company leaders estimated the total cost of the aborted training exercise, including travel, at roughly $10,000. "...we're Marines," Major O'Neill said. "We'll adapt and overcome."

**Editor's Note:**
Gary Indiana provides more realistic urban combat training!!
Marine Corps Investigates Canine Abuse –
The Corps is currently investigating two separate instances of animal cruelty that have been viewed by thousands on YouTube.

In one case a stray dog is wounded by Marines using a small caliber weapon, possibly a pellet gun. After the dog is unable to stand on its hind legs, the marines pictured in the video, jokingly continue to wound the animal as it attempts to escape dragging its hind end.

In the second, more publicized instance, a young Marine holds a puppy by the scruff of its neck as he laughingly throws the squealing animal over a cliff to its death.

Press release- Marine Corps Base Hawaii continues to investigate videos of Marines mistreating dogs that gained widespread attention on the internet Monday. The content of the video is deplorable and contrary to the high standards we expect of every Marine at home and abroad.

MCBH learned of the video Monday morning and immediately began an investigation to confirm the authenticity of the video and the persons responsible for the video. The investigation will be thorough and will examine each person involved. Upon completion of the investigation, it will be reviewed by each Marine's commander who will determine the appropriate action to take in each case.

No charges have been filed at this time. In the event that any Marine is charged with an offense, he will be afforded the constitutional and due process protections guaranteed by the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

The vast majority of Marines conduct their duties in an honorable and compassionate manner that brings great credit upon the Marine Corps and the United States.

What’s Happening?
Space “A” travel is now available to the families of personnel deployed for periods of over 120 days. This includes mobilized reservists. // The HQ for the new AFRICOM central command will continue to operate from Stuttgart, Germany after being turned down by several African countries. // The Navy is contemplating restoration of the Atlantic’s fourth fleet to increase its prominence in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Fourth Fleet hunted submarines in the south Atlantic in WW2. Among their accomplishments was capture of U505 of the coast of Africa. It was disbanded in 1950. HQ would be Mayport. // Retired carrier JF Kennedy has been unwanted and homeless since its ’04 retirement. Unable to fit into its proposed Philly berth, it has languished a few piers from operational carriers at NORVA. Now an entrepreneur has shown an interest in moving her to Port Everglades or Miami as a tourist attraction. For Chicago area sailors this recalls ill-fated efforts to bring the escort carrier Cabot to Lake Calumet about ten years ago.

New All-Rank Navy Work Uniform delayed,
Release of the long awaited new working uniform (E1-O10) has been delayed until winter 08. Design specifics were not disclosed. For the past three years hundreds of sailors have been afforded the opportunity to evaluate several options to determine the optimal design and functionality. These “woodland digital design” work uniforms were provided in a variety of options including:

* Woodland versus digital pattern
* Blue versus gray as the uniform’s predominant color
* Tapered blouse versus standard-style blouse
* Rounded versus pointed collar
* Performance T-shirt versus cotton undershirt
* Pleated versus non-pleated trousers
* Elastic versus adjustable waistband
* Button versus zipper trousers
* No-polish suede versus polished leather boots
* 8-point versus round top cover
* Pocket locations and designators

The Navy also plans to wear test a blue parka that will ultimately match the design pattern of the final working uniform. The parka will be designed for wear in various weather conditions, including sub-freezing temperatures, wind, and heavy rain.

The Coast Guard’s first national security cutter constructed as part of the $24 billion Deepwater program might not be ready by its scheduled late April delivery date, according to a new report from the Government Accountability Office.
The cutter Bertholf was originally set to be finished in August 2007 but rescheduled for an April 2008 delivery. Now, it could be delayed beyond that date, GAO said.

The national security cutter acquisition has evolved over time, GAO auditors said. Its initial costs have nearly doubled — from $385 million per ship projected in 2002 to $681 million per ship today — due to additional requirements related to the 2001 terrorist attacks.
Final Report of Commission on Guard & Reserves Completed – On January 31st the Commission, established in ‘05 by public law 108-375 published its 368 page report which produced 95 recommendations. The report is considered the most comprehensive reserve component review since WW2. Much of the report focuses on Army issues related to multi theater operations capabilities. Impact on Sea Service Reservists is often what is unwritten, therefore requiring interpretation. Six general conclusions summarize the report. 
A) The U.S. must retain a reserve component, but must revamp laws and policies or it will be unable to sustain an operational force. 
B) Reserve interface with Homeland Security must increase 
C) Current practices are geared to the Cold War instead of 21st Century threats. 
D) In spite of their flawed policies and practices, the reserves have responded adequately to the current operating tempo. 
E) A functional reserve force can only be sustained through proper support to reservists, their families and their employers. 
F) Much of current management inadequacies relate to Upper Eschelon Reserve Component Structure; and the failure of DOD to reasonably fund certain inconveniences the expect from reservists.

Full analysis of these proposals and their implementation schemes is beyond the scope of a single WC newsletter; however we will be tracking this topic over the next year or so. Some of what can be anticipated: Reimbursement for reservists traveling over 50 miles. The intention to return reserve component jurisdiction, responsibility and assets to the control of active duty; this will be a set back to the 60’s when reserve capability was diminished due to the preferences of active component preferences. The report also chooses to delete the FTS (TAR) program by using Regular Navy personnel to support Reserve activities. Many of us know this worked well previously. The bottom line will always be whether the bosses will share their funding and assets. More to come on this!!!

NERA dues expiring this quarter:

George Burchart; Mark Cover; Charles Elliot; Cameron Forbes; Harold Grabow; Kevin Haggerty; Charles Haig; Daniel Hartman; Patricia Hicks; James Johnson; Candace Kotarba; Bob Kulešky; Rodney Livesay; Sean Paul Merchant; LaVerne Moss; Rodney Nordlund; Keneth Novickis; Sheldon Nowiski; James O’Connor; George Pevitts; Daniel Porcelli; Kevin Robinson; Martin Stortz; Allen Vandeweg; Donald Vogt; Michael Wahlman; DeWayne Wells; Jeffrey Wilkens;

Alert-Alert!!
NERA Life Member Dues Increase from $250 to $400 on January 1st, 2009. Isn’t it time to become a life member? 184 of Windy City’s members have already chosen the financial benefit of this long term commitment to NERA’s future. Beat the increase…begin your payment program now!

The Armed Force Vacation Club
Is a "space available" program offering Department of Defense affiliated personnel affordable condominium vacations at over 3,500 resorts around the world.
The Web Site is: www.afvclub.com You can register for an account number, free. You do not need an account number in advance of making a reservation.
We want you to make your first reservation by calling the reservation center. This provides an opportunity for one of our vacation guides to review rules, conditions a resort might have, and resort rental policies that are different than what you find with a conventional hotel rental.
All you need to make a reservation is your AFVC Account Number (7033-xxxxx), the toll-free number (1-800-724-9988), a credit card number, an idea of when and where you want to go and the desire to get away, relax and have fun! Problem: they don’t guarantee specific dates!

Have the following information ready you when you call the reservation center to start the reservation process:
-Your Name __________________________
-How many people are traveling with you _____
-Your Service _________________________
-Your Installation Number________________
-Where do you want to take your vacation?
-When do you want to take your vacation?
-Your Credit Card Number _____________

Call the Reservation Center at 1-800-724-9988. The hours of operation are: Monday - Friday 7 a.m. to 12 midnight, Saturday 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Sunday 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (Eastern). The best times to call are Monday - Friday 7 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. or 12:30 p.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., or Sunday 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Eastern).

NERA dues expiring this quarter:
NERA’s NORTH CENTRAL REGIONAL Conference
18-19 APRIL 2008
RAMADA INN
200 N Green Bay Road Waukegan IL  60085
866 209-4045 or 847 244-2400 www.ramadainnwaukegan-gurnee.com

Name ______________________    ___________________________   ____________________
First          Last         Rate/Rank
Address __________________________
City ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ State ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Zip ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Contact Phone: (___)___________________
E-Mail ___________________________ Number of People attending ______
Chapter ___________________ Position: ___________ 1st Conf? Y/N ___________
Spouse/guest name ________________________   ______________________   ___________
First     Last     Rank

REGISTRATION EVENTS

Registration: Cost   X   # Attending
Before 15 March 2008 $35.00  X   ___ =  $_______

Events:
Fri 18 Apr 0700 Boot Camp Graduation FREE  =  $    FREE
Fri 18 Apr Mixer FREE  =  $    FREE
Sat  19 Apr TBA (Opening Ceremonies, Speaker, Meeting Agenda)
  LUNCH On your own or Saddle Ridge Restaurant in Hotel
  DINNER On your own or Saddle Ridge Restaurant in Hotel Registration/Events Total:  $_______

ROOM RESERVATIONS

Rates are contracted for 3 days before and 3 days after conference.
Room:  $85.00/$90 / Room Night Depending on size of bed. (plus 11% tax)
RAMADA Group Name: Naval Enlisted Reserve Association
Group Code NESA Phone: 866 209-4045

Make checks payable to: Windy City Chapter 313.098
Send registration form to: Penny Padour
Mail to: 1010 Darlington Ln
       Crystal Lake IL  6001