

VOLUME 40 | NUMBER 1 | WINTER 2021

THE

VOICE

Of The Enlisted

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The VOICE
is the flagship publication of TREA: The
Enlisted Association, located at 12200 E.
Briarwood Ave, Suite 250 Centennial, CO 80112

Views expressed in the magazine, and the appearance of advertisement, do not necessarily reflect the opinions of TREA or its Board of Directors, and do not imply endorsement. The magazine (ISSN 1527-0467) is published quarterly by TREA, a nonprofit organization.



Magazine Staff

The magazine staff can be reached by email at editor@trea.org. Editor-in-Chief, Debbie Osborne
Creative Director/Graphic Designer, Gabriela Schechter.

Editorial Office

Please send all written communication to TREA Headquarters at 12200 E Briarwood Ave, Suite 250 Centennial, CO 80112

Submissions

The VOICE accepts articles and photographs on a continual basis, but does not pay for submissions. Please send all articles and photos via email to editor@trea.org or by mail to 12200 E. Briarwood Ave., Ste 250, Centennial, CO 80112. There is no guarantee that any submission will be published. Photos must be high quality in order to be printed in the magazine. Low quality photos will not be printed.

Deadlines

For copy and photos (with captions, please) the deadline is the 15th day, two months prior to magazine release.
Next deadline is March 15th, 2021.

Advertising

By their appearance, ads must not imply or infer any kind of TREA representation, warranty, or endorsement. For ad rates and a media kit, please email us at editor@trea.org or call 303-752-0660.

Postmaster (address change)

Please send address changes to The VOICE, 12200 E. Briarwood Ave, Suite 250 Centennial, CO 80112 or by email to treaHQ@trea.org. Periodicals postage paid at Englewood, CO and other mailing offices.

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The mission of TREA

Bring together retired, separated, and active enlisted military veterans to enhance the quality of life for all enlisted personnel of the uniformed services, veterans, and their families. To stop the erosion of earned benefits through our legislative and educational efforts, maintain our esprit de corps, dedication, and patriotism and to promote devotion and allegiance to God and Country. To provide benevolent support for veterans in need.

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E27961

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Justin Jump, National President



Greetings and Salutations,

I hope this message finds you and your family well following the present challenges that we faced individually, as a military community and as a country. We take an honest look at the past, advancing forward in 2021 with a sense of enthusiasm and optimism as we look to the future.

This is a year of great transitions. As our American government transitions with a new Presidential Administration and Congress, TREA: The Enlisted Association (TREA) is also making large transitions as an organization. We are positioning ourselves to take a front seat and an “All Hands-on-Deck” approach in strengthening our core through the benevolent support of our members, all service members, and the veteran community at large. We feel this will open additional revenue streams in supporting our goal and commitments to veterans by monetary grants and corporate sponsorships. TREA has a long history known for its facilitation of the nurturing aspects of social camaraderie and fraternal unity, drawing on our past nostalgias of military service. This aspect of our organization is still present though it may be less evident as we move to focus on those additional purposes and roles that our organization has taken over past decades that directly or indirectly benefit our membership.

The National Board and I are working extremely hard for TREA to become a premier organization that supports veterans through benevolence. The goal is to support all enlisted service members who have worn the American military uniform and fought with bravery and honor for our country. While we will still offer social and fraternal events through chapter affiliation and our Annual Membership Assembly meetings, we will be focusing more heavily on our lobbying and benevolent responsibilities. Over one-hundred National Veteran and Military Service Organizations are on record and recognized by the Department of Veteran Affairs. TREA is one who is taking the challenge to stand out above all the rest. We seek to become the organization of choice for all enlisted service members: past, present, and future. The longevity of TREA and the continued support of veterans for years to come is a necessary objective.

I am proud, as National President, to be part of a Board of Directors that recognizes a need for our organization to be rejuvenated and restructured with a keen precision focus. We need your support to achieve this end state by actively participating at the local, state, and national levels of TREA’s operational visibility. Please join us and be part of this journey!

United We Stand

DOING GOOD THINGS STARTS WITH YOU

With the official launch of our new Benevolent Program “TREA GIVES”, we are offering a very special way for you to get involved. We are offering, only through this year, the opportunity to become a ‘FOUNDING FRIEND’. For a minimum donation of \$1,500 –, you will be forever recorded as a FOUNDING FRIEND in the TREA archives. You will be recognized in every Fall issue of The VOICE magazine, and get preferential acknowledgement at the Annual Membership Meeting. While this recognition is good, the real goodness comes from knowing that you are helping a service member and/or their family in a time of need. This donation is tax deductible and will be used to provide a service member (past and current, active, retired, Honorably Discharged, Guard & Reserve and their families) with support and assistance. No one should go hungry or homeless, especially not someone who served our country. The Enlisted Corp has always bonded together – let’s keep that spirit alive and show them what the enlisted can do --- together.

Send your donation today to TREA GIVES – Founding Friend, 12200 E. Briarwood Ave #250 – Centennial, CO 80112 or call the office to make a credit card donation.

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CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

TREA National Director & Chaplain, Garry Turks



For God so loved the world.... (John 3:16)

The world – the whole world, not a part of it, not a culture, not a race, ethnicity, gender or political party – the WORLD.

As we enter a new year, let us do it with the mindset of unity and togetherness. What better way to continue to fulfill TREA's mission to 'honor God' than to embrace God's love of all people.

I am not asking you to invite a stranger into your house for the weekend; I am simply challenging you to open your mind to thoughts and opinions that may differ from that of your own. I am not asking you to change your thoughts or opinions, I am simply asking that you not hate based off them. Imagine the impact this could make throughout our country ... throughout the world.

As we move forward into a new year, it is important to look back at 2020 as a learning opportunity. We should not dwell on the many aspects that we cannot change, but instead work together to change those which we can. It is OK to celebrate your win; OK to feel defeated; OK to be excited; OK to be uncertain. Bottom line, is that it is OK to feel the way that you are feeling. This is what makes us uniquely different and it is that difference that makes the United States the great multi-cultural and diversified country that it is. We are NOT the same – and that in itself is what we need to embrace. The fact that every citizen of this great country has the ability to think, feel and vote independently is something that should be celebrated, not torn apart.

Let us work together to accept each other and make this world a better place for all.





A MESSAGE FROM THE BYLAWS & STANDING RULES COMMITTEE

Walt Coley, National 2nd Vice & Bylaws & Standing Rule Committee Chair



Over the last five years, our Bylaws and Standing Rules have gone through many small changes, and some exceptionally large, fundamental ones. Our president gave this committee a mandate to review all governing directives to assure they are consistent with our national charter, and the fundamental intent of our organization.

First, we have insured that all changes made are typo and grammar problem free. Next, we are working to find discuss and eliminate confusion, duplication. Since you have already approved this when you approved the changes, we will make the corrections and post them to TREA.ORG, by mid-January. If membership has any suggested changes, please base the changes on this copy. Provide your changes according to Article XIV (Amendment of Bylaws and Standing Rules).

Lastly, this committee will begin revising, as needed, our governing directives: Some portions of Bylaws may become Standing Rules; some portions of Standing Rules may become Bylaws. Some bylaws and standing rules may be eliminated. This review for content and intent, will be the most difficult and contentious.

If you wish to participate in this process, or have suggestions, contact me at 2ndvice@trea.org. Deadline for submissions is March 31st, 2021.

United We Stand!



2021/2022 SCHOLARSHIPS

Butch Liebaert, National Director & Scholarship Committee Chair

It is that time of the year again where students start applying for scholarships for help with schooling.

TREA: The Enlisted Association is proud to announce that it will give out Scholarship Awards again this year. Individuals may obtain the application from the TREA website (www.TREA.org), there is a link on the homepage. The completed Application must be returned to TREA National Headquarters no later than April 30, 2021. (12200 E. Briarwood Ave, #250 – Centennial, CO 80112)

Children and grandchildren of TREA members in good standing, or of a deceased TREA member, provided they were an active member at the time of passing, are eligible to apply.

Please read the instructions completely. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Call the TREA National Headquarters Office if you have any questions. (303-752-0660 / 1-800-338-9337)

The topic for this year's essay will be "What are my responsibilities as a U.S. Citizen?"

Good Luck!



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A NEW PROGRAM BRINGS BIG ACTION

With 2020 behind us (thankfully), TREA is proud to announce the start of a new program. The 'TREA GIVES' Program is a program set up to provide financial assistance to you – our members and to all enlisted who served honorably in uniform. We are excited for the opportunities to help our fellow military brothers and sisters and their families. This program is set up to provide assistance to those facing financial adversity. We all are aware of the financial destruction that COVID-19 has brought to many families across the country and throughout the world. Many of these individuals and families are our military brothers and sisters: retired service members, active duty, veterans and current Guard & Reservist. TREA is here to help. Through this program, we are set up to provide enlisted service members, past and present, with assistance for life essential expenses like rent, utilities and food. Within this program, we have the ability to help with medical and emergency travel, and we are working on a program that will provide shelter for homeless veterans. The qualifications are simple: be an enlisted military member – past (honorably discharged) or present; retired, active duty, veteran or guard & reserve – or the family of the same. You served for us, now it is our turn to serve you.

There are more than 1.3 million American Soldiers currently deployed, with over 10K of them still in the Asia's and the Pacific Ocean and 85% of them are enlisted. These are TREA's people and they need our support – we promised them our support.



L-R (standing): Sherri Anderson, TREA National Director & Chaplain Garry Turks, Naomi Turks, Terri Garcia. (sitting): Wanda Ingalls

This program is not just for those who are deployed. According to recent statistics, over 1.25 million veterans in the United States are currently living below the US established poverty line. This number is only for the military member and does not take into account the family members. The biggest concern for these families is the ability to provide food. The numbers are staggering and are not acceptable. A person, and a family, willing to sacrifice so much deserves so much more. There is hope – TREA is that hope.

If you are in need, or know of someone who is – please let us know or direct them to our website. All the details and the application are under **RESOURCES**.

The program goes far beyond providing financial assistance – it is about acknowledging and supporting the challenges and sacrifice that more times than not, accompanies military service. This program is already providing that by completing our fifth year of the Holiday Program. Unlike our financial assistance program that helps those in financial need, this program is a thank you. A thank you for the families of wounded and/or deployed service members letting them know that we understand and that we support, encourage and thank them for their unselfish service and sacrifice. This year, working in partnership with Soldiers Angels, TREA adopted 50 families from across the United States, as far away as Alaska and provided gifts, clothing, food and good will. Over 300 gifts were purchased, wrapped and shipped along with candy-filled stockings, signed Christmas cards and an individual note from TREA. In addition, each family was provided the means to purchase a Christmas Dinner. This was a monumental undertaking for the Headquarter staff of three and they are very thankful for the assistance of all those who volunteered their time and services: National Director Garry Turks and his wife Naomi who provided lunch and spent the afternoon wrapping gifts along with Sherri Anderson, Terri Garcia and Wanda Ingalls from the local Parker Senior Center. A special thank you to TREA Chapter 119 in Superior, Wisconsin and to TREA Chapter 39 in Aurora, Colorado. Chapter 119 made Christmas special for two families by providing them with food, gifts and an in-person visit for one of the families. Chapter 39 donated \$300 to the program which sponsored the Christmas meals for three families. This program just gets better and better every year and we are already excited about the possibility of being able to take on more families this year.



TREA National Headquarters Staff, L-R: Membership Coordinator - Melissa White, Director for Operations - Deborah Osborne, Administrative Assistant - Misty Siggins

If you want to support this program, we welcome all donations. It will take all of us to ensure the continued success of this much-needed program.

Get in on the ground floor of this amazing program by becoming a 'Founding Friend'. By donating \$1,500 or more, you will be forever recognized as a 'Founding Friend' and will be recognized in the Fall issue of the VOICE magazine as well as be listed on the TREA website (www.trea.org). This special donation will enable TREA to provide food for up to 5 families, or to ensure that 2-3 families of a wounded or deployed service member are acknowledged at the Holidays and thanked for their service.

Perhaps it will give TREA the opportunity to provide safety and warmth to veterans who are homeless and seeking shelter. With your help, we can accomplish so much.

Please send your donation(s) to TREA GIVES at 12200 E. Briarwood Ave, #250 – Centennial, CO 80112, or sign up to become a monthly donor, this is a quick and easy way to provide assistance to those who served all year long. All donations to this program are tax-deductible.



Butch Liebaert (TREA National Director and Chapter 119 President) and chapter member Troy Magnuson wrap gifts for an adopted family



*1st Vice
Deborah Oelschig
Benevolent Committee Chair*



*Director & Chaplain
Garry Turks
Public Relations
Committee Chair*



*Deborah Osborne
Director for Operations*

Let's work together to make great things happen. **United We Stand**

THE BENEVOLENT TEAM

The following individuals have taken on the momentous task of running this program and ensuring it is compliant with all local, state and Federal regulations. They have pledged their time, energy and efforts to ensuring its success so that, through their actions and commitment to this program, TREA's 7th guiding principle of 'aiding service members and their families in need, according to our principle and ability' is met.

They are: **Chairman:** National 1st Vice, Deborah Oelschig
Vice Chairman: National Director & Chaplain, Garry Turks
Ex-Officio Member: National President, Justin Jump
Committee Member and Staff Advisor: Director for Operations, Deborah Osborne
Supporting Staff: Misty Siggins & Melissa White



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

REALLY IMPORTANT INFORMATION

As companies and organizations throughout the country move forward, and away from the negative effects of COVID-19, they are immersing themselves in the technological advancements that only going through a pandemic can provide. We all realize that there is untapped potential in the electronic world – all we need to do is reach out and grab it. TREA is doing just that --- reaching out and grabbing an amazing opportunity that will not only be a huge cost savings for the organization but also provide modern and ‘at your fingertip’ information to our members. We are taking The VOICE of the Enlisted magazine to electronic distribution. This does not mean that you cannot still get a physical copy, you absolutely can. All you have to do is notify TREA National Headquarters via e-mail that you would like to continue receiving a physical copy of the magazine and they will ensure that you remain on the mail list. Phone calls will be accepted provided they are followed up with an e-mail. (This is needed for documentation purposes).

We are hoping that at least half our current membership will give the electronic delivery a try. If so, we will realize approximately a \$36K a year in savings – this adds up and is a really big deal. But the real advantage comes from being able to click on a hyperlink and be taken to that page. No more trying to type in a 50 character web link, only to have it not work – now that is frustrating.

You will be able to print individual pages, save the file to your desktop and share with others with the simple click of a button. We know that old habits die hard, but this is a good change and we hope that you will give it a chance. It really is good for TREA.

If you do nothing, you will NOT receive a printed magazine in May. Instead, you will receive an email from TREA sometime in the first week of May with a link to The VOICE magazine. Click on it – VOILÀ! It’s there – with all the links live and ready for your click. You can also access The VOICE magazine on our website (www.trea.org), under RESOURCES.

Veterans with hearing loss have a right to communicate using the telephone—as guaranteed under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The Clear2Connect Coalition works with the disability and veteran communities to preserve the quality of and access to captioned telephone service.

To learn more, please visit clear2connect.org

CLEAR 2 CONNECT





AUXILIARY PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – *Barbara Coley*



Hello Members, Happy New Year, and welcome to 2021!! One thing for certain, we know that adjusting to change can be challenging. Over the past 10 months, we have experienced a shift in our way of life due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Who would have ever thought that toilet paper and paper towels could become as precious as gold? And do not forget those masks, gloves, social distancing and no more than 10 people in a group to gather, and no big parties. Just a little bit of humor. On a serious note, I am hoping to find you and your family doing well. As you are reading this, I pray that the Lord continue to keep a hedge of protection over all of you.

I, and the Auxiliary BOD would like to welcome our new secretary, Patricia Hopkins. Again, welcome aboard. We also have an opening on the BOD for the appointment of a Director, and I know that there are many out there who are strong leaders and organizers. We would like you to bring those valuable skills to our Auxiliary. You can contact me via email: barbcoley@cox.net. Membership still is an ongoing problem and looking at ways to bring in new members, and for our current members to renew their membership. If you did not know, there is an incentive of local chapters receiving a rebate for bringing in new members. Let us start out 2021 with TREA and the Auxiliary on one accord: working together for what is best for the enlisted and their families.

Our Mid-term Meeting is scheduled for May 3, 4, 2021. Our Annual Business Meeting (previously called TREA National Convention) is scheduled to be held September 14th, 15th, & 16th, 2021. It will be held in San Diego, CA. This is still under discussion right now, and at our Mid-term Meeting the Auxiliary will decide if we will go, if we will have ours at a different site or via Zoom webinar. I will keep all members posted of our decision.

This year's Scholarship application for 2021 is now posted on the TREA website (www.trea.org) Vice-President, Audrey McCray is the Chairperson. It will be posted until June 1, 2021. You can contact her via email: mccraya@aol.com or 303-921-2548.

The WEF/Benevolent Program is still seeking those in need. Funds are available to support widows/widowers of deceased service members. We provide support for dental, vision, hearing and other medical or benevolent needs. APNP Patricia Winds is the Chairperson. You can contact her by via email: Pmitch2121@gmail.com or 720-224-8415.

That is all for now members. Until next time.

Blessings.

Barbara Coley
TREA National Auxiliary President
UNITED WE STAND



FROM THE AUXILIARY CHAPLAIN –
Annette Harris



Prayer is a powerful tool for communicating with our Creator. It's an opportunity to commune with the Giver of all things good. Prayer helps us find strength for today and hope for the future. Yet, because we are busy people living in a demanding world, we don't always take the time to carve out meaningful moments with God. And when we neglect our prayer lives, we rob ourselves of the power and the peace that flows from the loving heart of our Father in heaven.

Prayer has the power to change lives, including yours. So make a regular early morning appointment with the Creator and keep it. Then, as the day unfolds, continue your conversation with God. When you do, you'll sense His peace, you'll gain His perspective, and you'll receive His power.



**A MESSAGE FROM THE AUXILIARY'S BY-
LAWS & STANDING RULE COMMITTEE CHAIR**
Irmgard Cates

Notice: Any proposed amendments or additions to the existing subjects need to be submitted to the TREA National Auxiliary Bylaws & Standing Rules Committee for review. Please submit your suggestions on TREA Auxiliary Form 100-6A, which can be found on our website at:

https://trea.org/TREA/About_Us/National_Auxiliary_Publication_Forms.aspx.

Deadline for submissions, according to TREA National Auxiliary Standing Rule 8, item 3, is 45 days prior to Mid-Term Meeting, scheduled for May 3-4, 2021. Submit by Mail or E-Mail, no later than March 19, 2021.

Irmgard Cates,

TREA National Auxiliary Bylaws/Standing Rules Committee Chairperson.

If any questions, please contact me by phone at 719-593-0112 or E-Mail at irmy@comcast.net.

Note: All recommendations need to be presented to Board of Director (BOD) at Mid-Term Meeting for consideration and vote.



TREA: THE ENLISTED ASSOCIATION WASHINGTON UPDATE

President Biden Nominates Denis McDonough to Be Next VA Secretary

President Biden announced Denis McDonough as the nominee to be the next VA Secretary. McDonough, who served as the 26th White House chief of staff during President Obama's entire second term, worked in other government roles as a deputy national security advisor and foreign policy advisor. TREA looks forward to learning more about the Biden Administration's transition plans and how Mr. McDonough will address the challenges facing VA. in providing benefits and services to veterans.

President Biden Nominates and confirms Retired Army Gen. Lloyd Austin to Be Next DOD Secretary

President Joe Biden announced retired Army Gen. Lloyd Austin, as the nominee to be the next DOD Secretary. Austin last served as the head of U.S. Central Command in 2016. In nominating Austin, Biden noted "In his more than 40 years in the United States Army, Austin met every challenge with extraordinary skill and profound personal decency. He is a true and tested soldier and leader. He rose through the Army's ranks during his distinguished career and was the 200th person ever to attain the rank of an Army four-star general. On Friday, January 22, 2021, Gen. Austin was confirmed by the U.S. Senate and officially became first African American to lead the Defense Department. TREA looks forward to working with him in the 117th Congress.

Congress Approves Veterans Omnibus Bill

Congress approved and Former President Trump signed H.R.7105, the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020, an omnibus bill including a variety of veterans-related provisions addressing benefits and health care. The package contains many provisions that TREA helped develop and support. Key items include elimination of the 12-year delimitation date for the Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) program for those who enrolled in it after January 1, 2013; modernization of the Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance (S-DVI) program; and reduction of the Dependent and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) remarriage penalty from age 57 to 55. Other provisions provide greater funding for STEM scholarships and the VET TEC program, improve the Transition Assistance Program, and establish a VA Advisory Committee on Tribal and Indian Affairs.

TREA is especially pleased that most of the provisions of the Deborah Sampson Act (DSA) are included in the omnibus bill. The provisions improve the health care of women veterans at VA through research, pilot programs, and organization and staffing guidance. Provisions require VA to prioritize retrofitting existing medical facilities to make it safer and easier for women veterans to get care; ensure each VA facility has accessible, clinically appropriate prosthetic appliances for women veterans; and conduct a study on infertility services provided by VA.

Compact Act becomes Public Law 116-214

Former President Trump signed H.R. 8247, the Veterans Comprehensive Prevention, Access to Care, and Treatment Act of 2020 or the Veterans COMPACT Act of 2020, on December 5, 2020. The law combines language taken from nine separate measures aimed at reducing veteran suicide and compliments the efforts of the John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act which became Public Law 116-171 on October 17, 2020. Provisions in the Compact Act direct VA to:

- Carry out a pilot program on information sharing between VA and designated persons regarding the assistance and benefits available to veterans;
- Furnish, reimburse, or pay for emergent suicide care, including transportation costs, at a VA or non-VA facility for certain veterans who are in an acute suicidal crisis;



- Establish a program for the education and training of caregivers and family members of veterans with mental health disorders;
- Create a new Task Force on Outdoor Recreation for Veterans, a provision endorsed by PVA, which will make recommendations regarding the use of public lands or other outdoor spaces for medical treatment and therapy for certain veterans;
- Seek to contact certain veterans who have not recently received care to encourage them to receive comprehensive physical, mental health, eye, and audio logical examinations;
- Provide VA police officers with annual training on the prevention of suicide among the population it serves;
- Complete an analysis and report on its programs that aid women veterans who are homeless or precariously housed to identify the areas in which such programs are failing to meet the needs of such women; and
- Annually report on the use of VA health care by women veterans.

NDAAs Agreement Adds Conditions to VA List of Presumptive Conditions

After lengthy negotiations, House and Senate lawmakers reached an agreement on the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act. The \$740.5 billion measure contains more than 4,500 pages addressing issues ranging from the amount military service members are paid to funding the newly established Space Force. While most of the bill's provisions address those actively serving or their families, several provisions relate to veterans. Language adds three new presumptive conditions to VA's list of illnesses linked to Agent Orange exposure. The change means 34,000 veterans suffering from bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, and Parkinsonism will soon be able to receive the care and benefits they deserve. It also directs that Individual Longitudinal Exposure Records (ILER), an electronic record of exposures incurred during military service that is administered by DOD and maintained by VA. ILER records contain important service member and veteran records and must be viewable by individuals so they can see their own records. Other provisions ensure reserve component members can receive VA readjustment counseling and mental health services, and it directs DOD and VA to develop and implement a standard of coordinated care for survivors of military sexual trauma. The House and Senate overwhelmingly approved the bill with votes of 335 to 78 and 84 to 13, respectively. The House voted to override the veto by a vote of 322-87 on December 28. The Senate voted to override on January 1, 2021.

VA Announces Coronavirus Vaccine Plan

VA has begun the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine to its health care providers and veterans who live in VA community living centers (CLCs). VA's vaccination plan is in accordance with guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Once these groups have received the vaccine, VA will make it available to veterans who are at high risk of severe illness due to the virus.

Veterans Health Administration officials stated that disabled veterans, as a whole, do not have priority access to the vaccine. Those who are inpatient or who are living in CLCs do have priority access. VA will provide access to veterans who are older and are deemed at high risk.

Fiscal Year 2021 Appropriations and Other Package Provisions

On December 27, 2020, Former President Trump signed the massive legislative package, which included funding for the federal government for fiscal year (FY) 2021; additional COVID relief measures; and a variety of other provisions pending in Congress. Former President Trump's signature avoided a government shutdown and provided funding for VA and DOD through September 30, 2021.

Key Appropriations Details:

- \$104.4 billion in discretionary funds for VA, which is an increase of \$12.5 billion over FY 2020. This includes \$90 billion for VA medical care. The funding for VA medical care includes the following:
 - \$10.3 billion for mental health;
 - \$1.2 billion for the caregiver program;
 - \$815 million for medical and prosthetic research; and
 - \$661 million for women veterans' health care.
- \$316 million for the Veterans' Employment and Training Service, an increase of \$5 million above FY 2020. Included in this funding is \$58 million for the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program and \$31 million for the Transition Assistance Program.
- \$2.3 billion for the Administration for Community Living, which is \$35 million above FY 2020. This amount includes: \$952 million for Senior Nutrition programs and \$200 million for Family Caregivers Services.

Other provisions of interest:

- Extends funding for the Medicaid Money Follows the Person Rebalancing Demonstration program at \$450 million per fiscal year through FY 2023. It also makes several improvements to the program.
- Extends the protections against spousal impoverishment for partners of Medicaid beneficiaries who receive home and community-based services through FY 2023.
- Extends the Work Opportunity Tax Credit through 2025. The credit is an elective, general business credit to employers hiring individuals who are members of one or more of ten targeted groups under the program.

For TREA Members Awareness

- VA Benefit Rates Increased

Effective December 1, 2020 all compensation benefit rates increased by 1.3 percent and the higher levels will appear in January 2021 payments.

- VA Debt Management Collections Activities to Resume January 2021

The VA's Debt Management Center (DMC) has announced that it will resume sending debt collection notifications in January 2021 following a nine-month suspension during the pandemic. Collections will not restart until April 2021. DMC has a new debt portal that goes live January 5, 2021. Veterans will be able to review their debts electronically. There are four debt relief options: veterans can establish or adjust a repayment plan, request a waiver, submit a compromise offer, or request a temporary hardship suspension.

January 1, 2021 is effective date for changes in SBP DIC

TREA was successful in eliminating the SBP-DIC off-set, resulting in surviving spouses being able to collect insurance benefits from DOD and not having them offset by DIC payments received from VA. Beneficiaries will see a one-third increase in their checks in 2021, a two-thirds increase in 2022 and the full amount in 2023. The Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) has created a webpage to share information about the elimination of the SBP-DIC offset: <https://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/survivors/SBP-DICNews.html>.

Members are encouraged to check the TREA Facebook account at @TheEnlistedAssn and Twitter account at @TREA_DC for the most updated information. The TREA Home Page and Legislative tab also provides valuable content on TREA's efforts to keep veterans and active-duty members and families informed. If you are not receiving TREA updates, please provide an email address to legislativeinfo@trea.org or call HQ and provide an email by phone. We want to hear your views and comments on issues that are important to you.



THE SENIOR CITIZENS LEAGUE – DID YOU KNOW?

By: Richard Delaney, Chairman

Did you know that according to new analysis from The Senior Citizens League (TSCL) a one - time emergency 3 percent Social Security cost of living adjustment (COLA) would increase a \$1,523 Social Security benefit by about \$398 per year on average, over the course of a 25-year retirement period? Replacing the announced 1.3 percent COLA with an emergency 3 percent increase is a way to provide a more fair and adequate inflation adjustment to beneficiaries. Because retirees tend to use their Social Security benefits to pay for essentials such as housing and healthcare, it would be a way to help stimulate the economy and to put younger adults back to work, which in turn, means stronger funding for Social Security and Medicare as well.

Getting the annual inflation adjustment so that it accurately reflects the spending patterns of retired adults is a critical part of Social Security income over the course of a retirement. When inflation adjustments do not adequately keep pace with rising costs, the Social Security benefits of retirees do not buy as much over time. Research by Johnson has found that Social Security benefits have lost 30 percent of buying power since 2000. A basket of groceries that cost \$70 in 2000 would cost \$100 today.

A key issue is the market basket that the government uses to calculate the inflation adjustment for retirees. “That index, the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W), does not measure the spending patterns of retired adults age 62 and older,” Johnson says. The CPI-W assumes that younger working adults tend to spend about 40 percent of their income on housing and only 7.5 percent of their income on medical care. However, Johnson’s research indicates that retirees tend to spend 47 percent of their income on housing and 14 percent on medical care, both of which have increased faster than the overall rates of inflation in recent years. In addition, the CPI-W does not reflect Medicare Part B premiums, which have grown roughly three times faster than COLAs from 2010 to 2021.



The Federal Reserve does not expect that inflation will be much more than 1.37 percent for much of the next decade. If you cannot get comfortable on a 1.3 percent Social Security COLA, then it is time to get involved.

The Senior Citizens League has been working closely with Congressman Peter DeFazio’s (OR-4) office to get legislation passed that would provide an Emergency Cost of Living Adjustment in 2021 of 3 percent.

Now, we need your help! We need you to contact your United States Representative through our website, www.SeniorsLeague.org or call toll free (the call will be paid for by The Senior Citizens League) at 844-455-0045 and let them know you cannot settle for a COLA of 1.3%! You need 3%! Pass an Emergency COLA bill TODAY!

Together we can make a difference!



ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING – TELL US WHAT YOU WANT

After hearing many of our members state that they want more time to visit with fellow members and independent time to see the local sites, we are working on making that happen.

For the 2021 Annual Membership Meeting scheduled for September 15th & 16th in San Diego, we would like to re-arrange the normal flow of things to allow more free time for members to enjoy the local area and to unwind and visit with friends. Business will still have to get done, but we can create a schedule that allows for both, work and pleasure.

In order to make this happen and bring more of a 'Reunion' feel to the event, please take a minute to respond to the questions below. It really is simple and will not take much of your time but our responses will provide us with valuable information and a direction in which to move forward. You can tear this page out, fill it in and mail it back to us at: TREA Meeting Info, 12200 E. Briarwood Ave #250 – Centennial, CO 80112. You can also go to this website and answer the questions online: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TREA-SanDiego>

1. Are you planning to attend the 2021 Membership Meeting in San Diego in September?
 - a. Yes, looking forward to it.
 - b. No. (Please tell us why).
2. If you are planning on attending, what activities are you interested in?
 - a. Pre-planned on-site events with TREA members (Meals, dancing, games, etc.)
 - b. Pre-planned off-site excursions with TREA members (Boat cruises, sightseeing, deep-sea fishing, local tours, etc.)
 - c. Independent time to do what I want with whom I want (no offense, but I like my 'me' time)
 - d. Other – please provide as much information as you can – the more we know, the better we can provide.
3. Now for the hard question – understanding that TREA cannot pick up the tab for these events, are you willing to pay for them on your own?
 - a. Yes, of course
 - b. Yes, but only to a certain point (please specify what that limit is).
 - c. Wish I could, but I can't
 - d. No
4. Are you interested in attending breakout sessions to learn more about the organization?
(circle the ones you would be interested in attending)
 - a. Finances
 - b. Legislative
 - c. Membership
 - d. The Benevolent Program
 - e. The Scholarship Program

If you have any comments that you want to share, please feel free to do so – we are not asking for names so your responses are completely anonymous and will really provide us with important information that we need to support you, our membership. We really do appreciate your time and participation in this. We want to provide you with what you want, but we need to know what that is.

The Committee and Board will meet again in March to review your comments and make the final plans based off the feedback and response we get from you. Make sure to check the TREA website for the most up to date information. (www.trea.org) Everything will be published in the May issue of this magazine as well. In the meantime, look through the next pages to learn about the venue. It is quite the place – very quiet and relaxed. Doesn't that sound wonderful?

2021 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING



THE BAHIA RESORT, MISSION BAY - SAN DIEGO, CA **September 15th & 16th, 2021**

The TREA National Board of Directors will be onsite at the Bahia Resort, in San Diego, CA to hold the annual membership meeting, previously known as the 'convention'.

This event is actually carried over from 2020. We were unable to hold our annual event, due to COVID, so we worked together with the hotel and here we are ---- rescheduled for San Diego for September 2021.

The best news is that the Bahia Resort is a laid back, low-key, completely relaxed resort that will allow everyone the ability to unwind, and after 2020, we all need that.

We are still working out the details, and are going to rely on the survey responses to tell us what direction we need to go in. Because of that, we are not publishing any meeting agendas or details in this issue. All the details will be published in the May issue of The VOICE magazine. In the meantime, here is a little preview:

Located on Mission Bay, The Bahia Resort is the perfect place to relax, soak in some sun and enjoy time with friends. A leisurely 5-block walk will bring you face to face with the mighty Pacific and the well-known Mission Bay Boardwalk with its eclectic options for dining; from an Irish Pub, to an Old Town style Mexican fare

to the expected seaside seafood, to pizza and subs – you name it, you will find it here. You do not need to leave the resort; a full-scale restaurant and sports bar are located just steps from your room. The hotel offers many activities, including a large pool,



complete with bar service, a hot tub, bicycle rental, paddle board, sailboat and powerboat rentals, chair beds on the beach, full gym and an onsite beach store.



Enjoy peaceful walks in the sand along the bay or venture 'inland' through the lush jungle garden area, complete with gazebo and duck pond. At night, relax on the beachside cabana chair beds or sit by one of the many fire pits with friends.



Room Rates: TREA's discounted rate is \$169 (plus tax of course). This rate includes the daily resort fee, which is normally \$30/day/room. So many things to do and see:



We will provide all the details in the May issue of The VOICE, but here are recommendations for your 'must do' list:

The SUNSET CLIFFS and SUNSET CLIFFS NATURAL PARK - spectacular views!
<https://oceanbeachsandiego.com/attractions/parks/sunset-cliffs-natural-park-and-point-loma-lighthouse>.

USS MIDWAY – Absolutely a must! <https://www.midway.org/>

CORONADO ISLAND – Gorgeous, simply gorgeous! <https://coronadovisitorcenter.com/>

CORONADO NAVAL BASE –
<https://installations.militaryonesource.mil/in-depth-overview/naval-base-coronado>

OLD TOWN – <https://www.oldtownsandiegoguide.com>

FORT ROSECRANS NATIONAL CEMETERY –
<https://sandiegohistory.org/journal/1959/october/fortrosecrans/>

SAN DIEGO ZOO – <https://zoo.sandiegozoo.org/>

SEAWORLD – <https://seaworld.com/san-diego/>

MARINE CORPS RECRUIT DEPOT – <https://www.mcrdsd.marines.mil/>

DEEP SEA FISHING & MOONLIGHT CRUISES – too many to list here. If you are interested in this activity, please let us know and if we have enough interest, we will provide more information.

We look forward to seeing you all in September.

Did you know that TREA membership is now open to spouses?

If your spouse is/was a TREA member, or eligible to be a TREA member, you are now eligible for your own TREA membership.

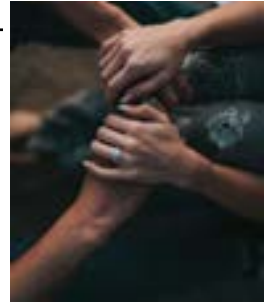
Contact Headquarters today to join!

WE NEED YOU

In addition to the National Board, TREA has multiple committees. These committees are chaired by members of the National board and are an integral part of TREA's operations.

The committees meet to discuss, research and provide guidance and suggestions to the board of directors.

The committees are made up of you – our members. TREA is your organization and we need your participation to continue to push TREA forward. There is so much talent within the TREA membership and we encourage you to reach out to the committee chairs to volunteer your time and services. You can also contact TREA Headquarters and we will match you up with a committee that needs your talent.



Membership	President, Justin Jump	president@trea.org
Legislative	1 st Vice, Deborah Oelschig	1stvice@trea.org
Bylaws & Standing Rules	2 nd Vice, Walt Coley	2ndvice@trea.org
5-Year Strategic Plan	3rd Vice, CJ Johnson	3rd vice@trea.org
Information Technology (IT)	3 rd Vice, CJ Johnson	3rdvice@trea.org
Finance	Treasurer, Kyle Carpenter	treasurer@trea.org
PT & Marketing	Director, Garry Turks	directorturks@trea.org
Nominations & Credentials	Director, Garry Turks	directorturks@trea.org
Scholarship	Director, Butch Liebaert	directorliebaert@trea.org
Awards	IPNP, Phil Hilinski	ipnp@trea.org

Melissa is our Membership Coordinator and she is looking forward to getting to know all of you. If you have any membership questions, you can reach her at membership@trea.org, or by calling 303-752-0660.



TREA STORE

This quarter we are featuring TREA Face Masks. Protect yourself and those you love while showing your support for TREA: The Enlisted Association.

Only \$6.00 each or 3 for \$15.00 – includes shipping.

Email us at treaHQ@trea.org or call us at 1-800-338-9337 to order





MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

- **Membership:** Any honorably discharged enlisted person – retired, active duty, National Guard or Reserve, or the spouse/widow/widower of an honorably discharged enlisted person - retired, active duty, National Guard or Reserve shall be eligible for membership. Membership entitles the person to all privileges of membership including attending business meetings, making motions and holding office.

New Member Renewal Membership Number: _____

Name: _____ Birthdate: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____ E-Mail: _____

Spouse: _____ Your Grade/Rank: _____ Years Served: from _____ to _____

Recruiter Information: Name: _____ Membership Number: _____

Service: Air Force Army Navy Marines Space Force Coast Guard Guard/Reserve

I am : Retired Veteran Active Duty Spouse/widow/widower of a veteran

By submitting payment, I acknowledge that I am an Enlisted U.S. Armed Forces Veteran and as such qualify to be a member of TREA: The Enlisted Association (if joining as a veteran spouse/widow/widower, your payment acknowledges the veteran status of your spouse).

Proof of eligibility falls on the applicant and not TREA

Membership Dues (Does not include Chapter dues, if applicable)

- One Year - \$30
- Two Years - \$55
- Three Years - \$75

Payment:

Visa
Master Card
Discover
American Express

Credit Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____ CCV: _____

Make checks payable to: TREA)

Please return your completed application to:

TREA: The Enlisted Association - 12200 E. Briarwood Ave, Suite 250 - Centennial, CO 80112

E-mail: treahq@trea.org

303-752-0660 800-338-9337

www.trea.org



WE EARNED OUR STRIPES

**TREA CELEBRATES ALL OF THE BRAVE MEN & WOMEN
WHO SERVED THE UNITED STATES**