

**U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY  
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION  
ATLANTA CHAPTER NEWSLETTER  
December 2001**



**MEMBERSHIP DRIVE KICKS OFF IN JANUARY 2002**

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**USNA ACADEMIC DEAN TO SPEAK  
AT JANUARY LUNCHEON**

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<http://www.usnaaaa.com>

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**EVENTS CALENDAR:**

<b>12/18</b>	<b>December Board Meeting</b>
<b>12/21</b>	<b>December Luncheon</b>
<b>01/15</b>	<b>January Board Meeting</b>
<b>01/18</b>	<b>January Luncheon</b>
<b>01/19-21</b>	<b>USNA Gospel Choir in Atlanta</b>
<b>Feb (TBD)</b>	<b>Dark Ages Party</b>
<b>02/19</b>	<b>February Board Meeting</b>
<b>02/22</b>	<b>February Luncheon</b>

**THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER**

Hopefully, this newsletter finds everyone rested (if not still full) from the recent Thanksgiving holiday.

And, of course, now we are all faced with a dwindling number of shopping days left until Christmas! (The year has seemed to fly by at breakneck speed!) So... Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all!

By the time our next (January 2002) newsletter hits the streets we will be underway with our 2002 Chapter Membership drive. In January, you will receive a year 2002 dues mailer in the mail. It will look much like the one used last year, with a place to fill out/update personal information for the Chapter Roster, a choice of membership types, and an enclosed return envelope.

If you have been a Chapter member in past years, you know what the Atlanta Chapter has to offer and the fellowship and camaraderie that it provides. If you have not been involved with the Chapter please take the time to talk to a classmate who has and find out what you've been missing. You can also take some time to browse around the Chapter web site at [WWW.USNAAAA.COM](http://WWW.USNAAAA.COM) and look at the events and activities that your Chapter provides. I'm sure you will be convinced that getting involved is a great idea and can reap many rewards.

We have been informed that the Naval Academy Gospel Choir will visit Atlanta again during the Martin Luther King, Jr. birthday weekend celebration, January 19th through the 21st, 2002. We will let you know the details of the event as the time approaches. If you missed their King Holiday Concert last year you really missed some absolutely uplifting (not to mention knee-slappin', foot stompin') gospel singing. These Mids are very talented and last year they nearly blew the walls off of the old Ebenezer Baptist Church! The place was really hoppin'... praise the Lord!

As this newsletter goes to print, we will have just had our annual gridiron meeting with Army at the 102nd Army-Navy Football Game. About 200 Naval Academy and West Point alumni met at TJ's for the annual party. The final score was Army 26 – Navy 17. Save for a Navy touchdown that was recalled for illegal motion, it could have been much closer. Well, after all, Navy had won the last three out of four, including the last two in a row. Maybe we just have to give them one occasionally to make sure the keep showing up each year!

Next, the Dark Ages are soon upon us! We have in the works a Chapter Dark Ages Party for probably sometime in February. This will most likely be a members only event, and may be tied to Founder's Day to celebrate the founding of the United States Naval Academy. Keep an eye on the newsletters and the web site for further information as it develops.

God bless America, and God bless our troops deployed in the Middle East.

And... BEAT ARMY!

Bob Schultz '71

## CHAPTER EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Naval Academy Gospel Choir in Atlanta January 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>, 2002

The Naval Academy Choir will perform in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Concert at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site located at 450 Auburn Ave. NE, Atlanta, GA 30312. Phone: 404-331-6922. We will make detailed announcements about the event as it draws closer.

## Chapter Membership Drive Kicks off January 2002

Keep your eyes peeled in early 2002 for our dues mailer and the beginning of the Chapter Membership drive.

## JANUARY 2002 LUNCHEON SPEAKER

The Academic Dean of the U.S. Naval Academy, Rear Admiral Bill Miller, Sr. (retired) has agreed to speak to the Atlanta Chapter at the January luncheon. The luncheon will be held on the third Friday of the month, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 11:30, at Jocks & Jill's Sport Bar & Restaurant, 4046 Peachtree Road NE, Atlanta, GA. Phone: (404) 816-2801.

## Founder's Day Celebration in February (Dark Ages Party)

Stay tuned for information on our annual black-tie event celebrating the founding of the Naval Academy. The event will be in February 2002.

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## SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

### Speaks at November Luncheon

On November 28<sup>th</sup>, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, The Honorable Anthony J. Principi (USNA '67) spoke to nearly one hundred members and guests of the Atlanta Chapter. The Chapter hosted a luncheon at the Cherokee Town Club on West Paces Ferry Road, and it was a terrific success.

Special guests attending included Pete Wheeler, Commissioner of Georgia's Department of Veterans Service, Bill Mountcastle, Director of the Atlanta VA Medical Center, Freeman Walker, Bill's Associate Director, Pat Courtney, the Director of the VA's Atlanta Regional Office, and several guests from the Atlanta Military Academy Alumni Chapter.

The Secretary began by thanking the men and women currently serving in our Armed Forces. "The young men and women of our Navy, Army, Air

Force, Marines, and Coast Guard are acquitting themselves well and with honor in their pursuit of the alchemists of evil who boldly announced their goal to bring down the United States of America. You and I know they will not succeed – not in their wildest dreams – and America will prevail in our relentless hunt for terrorists wherever they try to hide.”

Secretary Principi offered an overview of the services provided by the VA including a number of impressive statistics that indicate the type of challenges our Veterans Administration faces. “On December 1, over 2.7 million disabled veterans will receive their disability compensation check from the Department of Veterans Affairs. On any given day, over 56,000 veterans are in-patients in VA medical facilities or VA nursing home, and over 107,000 veterans are walked through the doors of one of our out-patient clinics across the country.

Each working day, VA will guarantee over 700 home loans for young men in uniform as well as veterans who enter the ranks of home ownership. This year, almost 400,000 veterans will attend school on the Montgomery GI Bill. And almost 64,000 disabled veterans will receive vocational rehabilitation, training to prepare them for civilian careers.

The VA is doing work quite close to home: VA spent nearly \$1.3 billion in 2000 to serve 769,000 Georgia veterans. Last year, VA provided healthcare to 95,034 Georgia veterans and 109,819 Georgia veterans collected disability compensation or pension payments. More than 11,700 received GI Bill payments for their education, 130,083 owned homes purchased through VA home loan guarantees and 56 were interred at Marietta National Cemetery.

Last April, VA accepted the very generous donation of 776 acres of land in Cherokee County to be developed into a new National Cemetery. The new cemetery will accommodate more than 65,000 interments between 2004 and 2030. These facts, in my view, reflect our nation's gratitude for the service of millions of men and women who return to civilian life after serving our nation in uniform.”

In an honest assessment of the challenges he faces, Secretary Principi described “Frankly, we do not now meet that standard today. We're falling way

short. Today, our backlog is over 650,000 cases, and the average claim takes over nine months to decide. President Bush directed me to declare war on our backlog and our delays, and I have done so. We have added nearly 13,000 new employees since January to process claims.

A new "tiger team," an old military term, is focused on the oldest claims of America's oldest veterans. Any veteran over the age of 70, whose claim has been pending over a year, will have that claim sent to a tiger team for immediate resolution.”

The Secretary closed with a compelling reminder that U.S. Servicemen and women around the world are still making sacrifices to assure our Nation's freedom.

“In the wake of a terrorist attack on innocent civilians that killed more Americans than died at Pearl Harbor, American service members are once again responding to the president's call to bring our enemies to justice or bring justice to our enemies. Nor does Operation Enduring Freedom define the boundaries of our debt to the men and women now on active duty.

Today as we enjoy our lunch and contemplate the past Thanksgiving, I remind you that it is night on the Korean DMZ, and some GIs are now standing a very cold and lonely watch to deter the garrison state that may be the world's last legacy of Stalinism from plunging the world back into war.

And this afternoon as we go about our business, soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines will be on duty on the ground in Afghanistan, onboard ships in the Arabian Sea, and flying patrols over the region in an effort to bring an end to terrorism. And this evening as we go to bed, soldiers will be waking up in the Balkans once again to another day of stabilizing the cauldron from which the winds of war have all too often first enveloped Europe and then the United States.

Today, as in every day, American men and women who embody our nuclear deterrent are standing watch over the world, away from their families, away from their loved ones, their very presence ensuring that they will never have to fight the unimaginable battles for which they have been trained. Indeed all day every day men and women of

**the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the Marines, the Coast Guard, do their duty.**

**Every one of them has made an unlimited commitment to this country, and the Department of Veteran Affairs has been entrusted with the noble and solemn mission of transforming our nation's reciprocal obligation to them into the reality of the benefits and services they will need when they hang up that uniform and become civilians.”**

**This luncheon was an outstanding opportunity to spend time with old Chapter friends, network with alumni who have recently moved to Atlanta, enjoy a superb meal in a beautiful setting, and hear an update on an important Federal department from one of our own who is making a difference at the highest level of government.**

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