



FORMING A NEW AMRA CHAPTER

You'd like to form a new chapter of the American Military Retirees Association (AMRA) - but where do you begin? You've already taken the first step by contacting AMRA National Headquarters and reviewing this start-up kit. This document will provide you with information, advice and checklists to help you move your project ahead easily and effectively.

AMRA National Headquarters is a resource for you so don't hesitate to call us at 1-800-424-2969 or email us at info@amra1973.org

GETTING STARTED

1. Read through the first 5 pages of the formation kit and glance through the sample forms and documents you will need at different times throughout the process.
2. Familiarize yourself with AMRA by reading the following sections of the national association's Constitution & Bylaws:
 - a. Preamble (page 2)
 - b. Purpose (page 3)
 - c. Membership Eligibility (page 4)
 - d. Chapters (pages 22-26)

A copy of the AMRA Constitution & Bylaws is available by logging in to www.amra1973.org and clicking on Member Resources.

3. Review the "Chapter Formation Checklist" (included in this kit).

THE ORGANIZATIONAL PROCESS

1. Request a list of telephone numbers and email addresses of local AMRA members. National Headquarters will provide information on all Members-At-Large (MALs) within a 50-mile radius of the city you choose as your chapter's home base. Set a date, time, and location for an "informal" meeting before contacting members.
2. Call or email to tell members about the forming chapter and invite them to an "informal" meeting at which you will attempt to get the signatures of 5 members who will agree to assist you in the chapter formation process.

3. Recruit new members and invite them to the “informal” meeting; this will increase your chances of getting the 5 signatures you need to request “permission to form a chapter” from the National President and the Department President (if a Department exists in your state).
NOTE: Section 1304 of the National Bylaws requires these five (5) members to serve as “temporary officers” during the organizational period.
4. Use the sample letter provided in this kit to request official permission to form your chapter. Once you have received official permission to form, choose a date, time and location for an “Open House”. Restaurants are not ideal for this type of meeting but perhaps a local DAV, VFW or Legion Post would offer you space. You might to see if space is available at a community center on a local military base. National Headquarters may also be able to help you find a suitable location at no cost.
5. Contact National Headquarters with information on your meeting; National Headquarters will write a letter to all members within a 50-mile radius of your base city and invite them to your meeting. Transfer letters will be included and members will be asked to bring them to the meeting and sign on to the Chapter Charter application. You will need to have the signatures of 20 members on the official charter application in order to petition the Board of Directors for a Chapter Charter.
6. PROMOTE your “Open House”. Getting the word out about your event is critical. You may adapt the press release included in this kit to announce the forming of your new chapter and invite all military retirees in your area. Mail the press release to all local newspapers, radio stations and “hometown” cable stations. If your local newspaper will not print the release, ask if you can announce the event on their “community bulletin board” which is usually free of charge.
7. At the Open House you will want to gauge interest in forming a chapter and explain the merits of chapter membership. AMRA will supply you with materials you can provide to attendees that will give them an idea of what AMRA can do for them.

You may use the prepared speech included in this kit as your opening statement and then use the PowerPoint presentation that National Headquarters will make available to you; the presentation is provided in two formats – one with “notes” that you will use to deliver the presentation and one that can be copied and provided to attendees so that they can follow along and take notes. **Try to get the signatures of twenty (20) members on the Chapter Charter application before the end of this meeting.** You may continue meeting as a group before you attain chapter status but the top priority of the meetings must be to get the twenty (20) signatures required to apply to the Board of Directors for a Charter. The original five (5) signers may sign the Charter Application as well and count towards your twenty (20) signatures). The Charter Application may contain a combination of current AMRA members and new members. For all new members, the Charter Application must be accompanied by completed applications, annual dues and proof of eligibility. For all current members who are Members-At-Large you must provide a transfer letter (a sample of such a letter is included in this kit). All

members on the Charter Application will appear as Charter Members on the Chapter's official Charter.

8. Once you have obtained the signatures of a minimum of twenty (20) members on the Charter Application, you may submit the Application for Chapter Status for approval by the National Executive Committee of the Board of Directors. Use the New Chapter Checklist (included in this kit) to gather all the materials you will need in order to petition the Board for a Charter.

Upon approval by the Board, the chapter will have the option of requesting that their Chapter Charter be kept open sixty (60) days as a tool to recruit new members or accept transfers who will have the privilege of appearing as Charter Members on the Chapter Charter. National Headquarters will highlight your forming chapter on its website and in its publications for the sixty (60) day period to assist you in recruiting Charter Members. At the end of the sixty (60) day period, National Headquarters will issue your new chapter a Charter listing all Charter Members. If you *do not* wish to exercise the option of leaving your Charter open for the sixty (60) days, you must notify National Headquarters in order for your Charter to be prepared immediately. **The National Organization will welcome your Chapter to AMRA with a start-up gift of \$100.00 to get your Chapter off to a good start.**

CELEBRATE!

You've completed the process and have formalized your chapter! Now is the time to celebrate your success and begin planning the chapter's activities for the coming year. You may wish to issue a press release to your local newspaper and begin letting the community know about your chapter's existence. A list of your chapter officers, the chapter meeting schedule and any programs you may be initiating will be appropriate. (A sample press release is included in this kit).

YOUR FIRST CHAPTER MEETING

You've done all the paperwork...chapter members are arriving at your first of many chapter meetings...and you're thinking **"how do we keep them coming back?"**

Prepare the meeting room and get all your meeting materials organized in plenty of time so that you will be free to greet members as they arrive.

Welcome everyone warmly and introduce them to others. If possible, give everyone a few minutes at the start of the meeting to tell other attendees a little about themselves. This will often result in immediate connections among individuals with common interests, second careers, etc. If possible,

consider hosting an occasional Pot Luck Dinner before the meeting or serving cake and coffee after the meeting to allow members to get to know one another. Interesting speakers also attract attendance.

Start on time...respecting everyone's time is important so starting and ending the meeting on time will give everyone a sense of how much time they will need to devote to meetings in the future and help them make the decision to come back. And won't you look professional!

Move the business along smoothly and efficiently. A good meeting holds everyone's interest and gets all the work done in a timely manner, while still allowing all members the opportunity to voice their ideas or concerns. Especially at your first meeting, make sure the process is interactive...and if members are not interacting on their own, take immediate steps to draw them into the conversation or you may never see them again.

CHAPTER GROUNDWORK

At the inaugural meeting following approval of the Charter by the AMRA Board of Directors, your agenda **must** include these "one time" items of business.

- ✓ "Ratify" the election of your temporary officers or hold elections for a full term of office.
- ✓ "Ratify" the President's signature on the Articles of Agreement.
- ✓ Ratify the signature of the President and Secretary on the Chapter Bylaws.
- ✓ Authorize the Treasurer to file SS-4 to apply for a Federal EIN# which will be required in order to open a chapter checking account. The SS-4 form and instructions for completing it are available at www.irs.gov. A copy of the IRS Confirmation Letter showing the chapter's EIN# must be mailed to National Headquarters as soon as received by the chapter.
- ✓ Discuss incorporation of the chapter in your state which can often be done inexpensively online. **National Headquarters will reimburse the chapter for the initial cost of incorporation in your state.**
- ✓ Choose a focus for your chapter's first year...will you choose volunteering at a VA Hospital, a Stand Down, AMRA's scholarship program, AMRA's JROTC Award, helping families of or sending packages to deployed troops? Whatever you choose will reflect the purposes and values of AMRA...just be sure that you will have the human and financial resources to carry through your commitment.

AMRA NEW CHAPTER CHECKLIST

- _____ Request a list of telephone numbers and email addresses of local AMRA members from HQ.
- _____ Set date, time, and location for “informal meeting”
- _____ Call or email to tell members about the forming chapter and invite them to the “informal” meeting. Try to get signatures of five (5) members who agree to assist in the formation process and serve as “temporary” Officers.
- _____ Recruit new members and invite them to the “informal” meeting.
- _____ Request official permission to form your chapter from National & Department Presidents.
- _____ When permission is received, choose a date, time and location for an “Open House” and request that National Headquarters mail a notice of the meeting and transfer letters to all AMRA members within a 50-mile radius of the chapter’s base city.
- _____ PROMOTE your “Open House” in newspapers and on radio and cable TV stations.
- _____ Use the PowerPoint presentation made available from National Headquarters
- _____ Once the group has decided to proceed, discuss a name for the new chapter and the kinds of local community programs the group may want to work on.
- _____ Obtain signatures of twenty (20) members on the Chapter Charter Application.
- _____ Submit completed application (with all required documents) to National Headquarters for approval by the National Executive Committee.

Date

National President
American Military Retirees Association, Inc.
5436 Peru Street, Suite 1
Plattsburgh, NY 12901

Dear Sir/Madam:

The undersigned AMRA members request your permission to form a new AMRA chapter in (city/state). Upon your approval, we will hold an informational meeting and begin the process of completing our Application for Chapter Status.

We look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Sincerely,

Printed Name & Signature

NOTE: You may contact AMRA National HQ for the names of the National and Department President (if applicable). Both letters must be sent to AMRA National HQ for transmission to the appropriate individuals.

AMRA CHAPTER ELECTION REPORT

Chapter Name _____

PRESIDENT: **Name** _____
 Address _____

 Telephone _____
 Email _____

VICE PRESIDENT: **Name** _____
 Address _____

 Telephone _____
 Email _____

SECRETARY: **Name** _____
 Address _____

 Telephone _____
 Email _____

TREASURER: **Name** _____
 Address _____

 Telephone _____
 Email _____

NOTE: Temporary officers on this report must be “ratified” at the first meeting following the granting of chapter status by the AMRA Board of Directors, or a new election held for permanent officers. If new officers are elected, please be sure to send a new Election Report to National Headquarters.

NOTE: If you have appointed a Chaplain, Sergeant-At-Arms or Historian you may provide names for your chapter’s listing on the AMRA website.

APPLICATION FOR CHAPTER STATUS

TO: American Military Retirees Association, Inc., 5436 Peru Street, Suite 1, Plattsburgh, NY 12901

We, the members of forming Chapter (chapter name) do hereby apply for chapter status in the American Military Retirees Association, Inc. The members listed below shall be shown as Charter Members of this chapter, which shall be based in (city/state). All national membership dues have been paid in full. Transfer letters have been provided for all AMRA At-Large members. The chapter establishes as its territory (list cities, counties or zip codes within 50 miles of your base city) which will define the chapter's recruiting area):

Signature - Chapter President

Date _____

<u>Member #</u>	<u>New/Transfer</u>	<u>Printed Name</u>	<u>Signature</u>
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			
13.			
14.			
15.			
16.			
17.			
18.			
19.			
20.			

NOTE: New members for which dues have been included with this document will not have a Member Number. HQ will process the application and enter the Member Number on this application prior to submission to the Board of Directors

CHAPTER APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- _____ Chapter Application (20 signatures required)
- _____ Membership applications, dues and proof of eligibility for all new members
AND/OR transfer letters for all At- Large Members
- _____ Chapter Election Report
- _____ Signed Articles of Agreement
- _____ Letter requesting chapter be added to the AMRA Group Exemption
- _____ Signed Chapter Bylaws

AMERICAN MILITARY RETIREES ASSOCIATION, INC.
Articles of Agreement

This document will serve as the Agreement between the American Military Retirees Association (AMRA) and the _____ Chapter of AMRA, Inc. This Agreement shall remain in force for the period of one (1) year unless terminated by AMRA, Inc. or Chapter. Without termination by either party at the end of one year, this Agreement shall automatically renew in three (3) year increments. AMRA, Inc. reserves the right to revise this Agreement as may be necessitated by circumstances within AMRA that may require updated Agreements to be signed by all Chapters, or when existing Federal laws may require.

Unless otherwise specifically agreed in writing, nothing herein, nor any act of either party, shall be construed to render one party the agent of the other, and neither party shall be held liable for the acts, omissions, statements, or representations of the other. Each party shall hold the other harmless from any liability for the violation or alleged violation of any Federal, State or other law resulting, without limitation, from decisions, acts, omissions, debts, obligations, statements or representations, whether made before or after the effective date of this Agreement.

This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of New York. Any dispute arising under the terms of this Agreement shall be adjudicated in the courts of the State of New York.

Article 1: **AMRA, Inc.** shall hold sole authority for the approval of Charter Applications and the granting of Chapter Charters.

Article 2: **AMRA, Inc.** grants Chapter permission to use the official AMRA logo for official chapter business and communications.

Article 3: **AMRA, Inc.** shall maintain an IRS Group Exemption covering all AMRA Chapters, offering all Chapters 501(c)(19) nonprofit tax exempt status. Upon approval of a Chapter Charter, Chapter shall immediately request coverage on the Group Exemption and shall indicate by affixing the signature of the Chapter President to this document that the Chapter will comply with all required Federal and State filings.

Article 4: **AMRA Inc.** shall provide to Chapter accurate and timely information regarding open positions on the National Board of Directors. Chapter is encouraged to submit nominations for consideration of its candidate(s).

Article 5: **AMRA, Inc.** agrees to provide current information to the Chapter via printed and email news reports, brochures, letters and forms published by AMRA Headquarters.

Article 6: **AMRA, Inc.** agrees to provide an annual "chapter dues rebate" according to guidelines adopted by the National Board of Directors.

Article 7: AMRA, Inc. agrees to furnish direction on all AMRA National issues and to furnish the Chapter with sample letters, emails, faxes, etc, to be used when contacting legislators.

Article 8: AMRA, Inc. shall retain ownership of all AMRA materials, including but not limited to, AMRA logo, member rosters, membership recruiting and retention materials, flyers and brochures.

Article 9: Chapter agrees to incorporate within its State of location within one year from date of Charter and maintain an “active” corporate status at all times.

Article 10: Chapter agrees to protect the values, mission and reputation of AMRA, Inc. through proper and judicious usage of the AMRA logo.

Article 11: Chapter agrees, in the event Chapter should disband, to immediately return all AMRA intellectual property, including member rosters, to AMRA National Headquarters.

Article 12: Chapter agrees to make news reports and informational brochures available to all military retirees without prejudice and whether member or non-member, within Chapter’s designated service area.

Article 13 Chapter agrees to hold *at least* one general membership meeting each quarter. The meetings will follow the Chapter’s bylaws, which may not conflict with the National Constitution and Bylaws.

Article 14: Chapter agrees to establish, as a minimum, the following Standing Committees:

1. Finance
2. Audit
3. Legislative
4. Membership
5. Resolutions

The Chapter President may appoint other Ad Hoc committees as required by the goals of the Chapter.

The Chairs of all Chapter Standing Committees shall make an annual report to the Chapter President and/or the Chapter Membership at the final meeting preceding the end of the fiscal year (April 30). Ad Hoc committees shall make a final report of the results of their work at the next regular Chapter meeting, at which time the committee shall be disbanded.

Article 15: All membership dues collected by the Chapter, along with proof of eligibility, will be forwarded to AMRA, Inc. National Headquarters within ten (10) days of receipt from the member. AMRA, Inc. will annually return a portion of the national dues to the Chapter in accordance with guidelines adopted by the National Board of Directors.

Article 16: Permission is granted by AMRA, Inc. to open a bank account and disburse funds in the name of _____ Chapter of AMRA, Inc.

NOTE: Each Chapter is required to obtain its own Federal EIN number in order to open a checking account. Chapters may NOT use the National organization's EIN number.

Article 15: In the event that Chapter disbands and ceases operations, remaining funds in the Chapter treasury shall be conveyed to the Department treasury where it will be held for a period of one (1) year; should Chapter decide to reorganize within the one (1) year period, all funds will be returned to Chapter. If Chapter does not reorganize within one (1) Year, the Department's Board of Directors shall determine usage of the funds for purposes that will further the Department's operations and/or initiatives. Should no Department exist, all funds will be conveyed to AMRA, Inc. where funds will be held at national headquarters for one (1) year in the event Chapter decides to reorganize, at which time all funds will be returned to Chapter. If Chapter does not reorganize within one (1) year, the National Board of Directors shall determine usage of the funds for purposes that will further the national association's operations and/or initiatives.

Article 16: Chapter agrees to file an annual report with AMRA, Inc. as prescribed by and by the deadline set by the National Board of Directors, which shall include: a fiscal year-end financial statement, copies of any required Federal and/or State filings, annual Election Report, and a report of Chapter activities for the previous year.

Adopted on this ____ day of _____, 20____ at _____, in the State of _____ by _____ (Chapter Name & Number).

Signature of Chapter President _____ Date _____

Signature of AMRA, Inc. National President _____ Date _____

NOTE: A countersigned copy of this Agreement will be returned to the Chapter President for the chapter's permanent records.

Date

National President
American Military Retirees Association, Inc.
5436 Peru Street, Suite 1
Plattsburgh, NY 12901

Dear Sir/Madam:

Enclosed please find the required documents to apply for Chapter Status for (Chapter Name).

We look forward to hearing from you that our Application for Chapter Status has been approved and to beginning our work for all military retirees in (City, State or area chapter will cover).

Sincerely,

Chapter President

Attached: Charter Application (20 signatures required)
Chapter Election Report
Signed Articles of Agreement
Signed Chapter Bylaws
Membership applications , full dues and proof of eligibility and/or Transfer letters
from AMRA At-Large members
Letter requesting that chapter be added to AMRA's Group Exemption

REQUEST FOR GROUP EXEMPTION STATUS

(Date)

American Military Retirees Association
National Headquarters
5436 Peru Street, Suite 1
Plattsburgh, NY 12901

This letter will serve as the official request of the AMRA (Chapter Name) to be added to the national association's Group Exemption which will grant the chapter 501(c)(19) status and exemption from federal income tax.

The chapter agrees to file for state income tax exemption (if required) immediately upon notification from AMRA National Headquarters that the chapter has been accepted on the Group Exemption.

The chapter also agrees to file for state sales tax exemption (if applicable and desired by the chapter).

Sincerely,

(Signature of Chapter President)

AMRA MEMBER TRANSFER REQUEST

Date _____

TO: AMRA National Headquarters

Please transfer my membership from Chapter # _____ to Chapter # _____

OR

Please transfer my membership from At-Large status to :

Chapter # _____ State _____

OR

Please transfer my membership from Chapter # _____ or Member-At-Large (MAL) status _____
to the forming chapter in _____,
(City) (State)

Member # _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Signature

PLEASE NOTE: Transfers to a forming chapter will not be done until the chapter has been granted a Charter by the Board of Directors and assigned a chapter number.

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT:

Name

Telephone

Email

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Your City, State & Date)

Example: (Plattsburgh, NY – May 1, 2013)

The American Military Retirees Association (AMRA) will form a new chapter in (Name of City). All military retirees with 20 or more years of service (including “Gray Area” retirees from the Guard/Reserve), those with medical discharges, those retired with 100 percent total and permanent disabilities, and surviving spouses of military retirees eligible for AMRA membership are invited to attend an organizational meeting (date/time/location).

The new AMRA chapter will serve the needs of local military retirees through education regarding military retirement benefits and services. The chapter will work on advocacy efforts to prevent erosion of military retirement benefits earned through a career of service to the nation or service-connected disability. In addition, the chapter will work on projects in the local community.

The forming chapter will accept applications from new members and transfers from current AMRA members to be included on the charter as charter members. Interested individuals may contact (Name, telephone or email of organizer) for an application and information on member benefits.

Prospective members are invited to attend the organizational meeting (*date/time/location*).

Individuals may also visit www.amra1973.org to learn more about the association and join online.

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Founded in Saranac Lake, New York in 1973, the American Military Retirees Association's focus is service to military retirees and their families. Eligibility for the association includes career military retirees, those medically retired and those 100% service-connected (Disabled T&P), and their surviving spouses. AMRA provides benefits such as TRICARE and CHAMPVA supplemental insurance, discounts with hotels, car rental agencies and moving companies, auto and homeowner insurance. Members receive a weekly electronic newsletter focused on retiree benefits and legislation, and a quarterly newspaper with feature articles. Of primary importance are AMRA's advocacy efforts on behalf of all military retirees and to that end, the association maintains a Legislative Affairs Committee. Visit www.amra1973.org

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT:

Name

Telephone

Email

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Your City, State & Date)

Example: (Plattsburgh, NY – May 1, 2013)

“Recent headlines have proven that military retiree benefits are not as secure as we once imagined,” (your name) reported today. “Without active monitoring and education for military retirees, our pensions and health plans may be in danger.” To this effect, (your name and rank at retirement) urges all local military retirees to turn out for a Meet-and-Greet sponsored by the American Military Retirees Association.

While offering an opportunity for military retirees and their spouses to sound off about their concerns, the American Military Retirees Association, hoping to form a local Chapter in the near future, will distribute invaluable information to attendees. “So many of us go to our retirement briefing, and then suffer from information overload. We forget how to use Space-A travel, how or where to report the death of a family member, and what base facilities are open for us to use. We’ll have news for any retirees attending on those topics, and more,” (your name) promised, “And of course- donuts!”

The American Military Retirees Association (AMRA) encourages military retirees to band together to protect earned benefits through education and advocacy by active monitoring of legislation in the U.S. Congress and the policies and proposals of the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs. “We also offer Scholarships, TRICARE and CHAMPVA supplemental health insurance and many

discounts to our members,” (your name) commented. The group welcomes military retirees from all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces, regardless of rank, and publishes not only a quarterly newspaper for its members, but also a weekly electronic newsletter.

All local military retirees and their spouses, as well as surviving military spouses are invited to the event, to be held on Saturday (date) from 10am- Noon at (location/street/city/state/phone#)

For more information, please contact (your name/phone#/email address).

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SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT:

Name

Telephone

Email

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Your City, State & Date)

Example: (Plattsburgh, NY – May 1, 2013)

The (*We Serve Veterans Chapter #1000*) was granted chapter status by the National Board of Directors of the American Military Retirees Association (AMRA) on (*date of Board approval*).

The new AMRA chapter will serve the needs of local military retirees through education regarding military retirement benefits and services available from the Department of Veterans Affairs. The chapter will work on advocacy efforts to prevent erosion of military retirement benefits and to ensure that all retirees and their families are well taken care of, in grateful recognition of their service and sacrifice. In addition, the chapter will work in the local community to (*enter your plans for local community service*).

The chapter will accept new members and transfers from current AMRA members to be included on the charter as charter members until (*date*). Individuals retired with pay from an active or reserve component of the Armed Forces (either for length of service or permanent medical disability), surviving spouses of eligible members, medically retired, and 100% service-connected disabled veterans are eligible for AMRA membership. Interested individuals may contact (Name, telephone or email of Membership Chair) for an application and information on member benefits. Prospective

members are invited to attend the next chapter meeting (*date/time/location*). Individuals may also visit www.amra1973.org to learn more about the Association and join online.

(*Name*) is the inaugural chapter president. Other officers include (*Name/Title*).

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THE AMERICAN MILITARY RETIREES ASSOCIATION

5436 Peru Street, Suite 1, Plattsburgh, NY 12901

Voice: 1-800-424-2969 Fax: 518-324-5204

Website: www.amra1973.org

(Use as opening remarks for the inaugural meeting or Open House (followed by the PowerPoint presentation, if desired) or for recruiting purposes when speaking to groups about AMRA).

Founded in the small village of Saranac Lake, New York in 1973, the American Military Retirees Association (AMRA) mission was set by the Founders as a vehicle to protect and preserve the vested rights, benefits and privileges of retired members of the U.S. Armed Forces. The Founders wanted to sponsor, foster and encourage legislation affecting the status of military retirees, to keep members informed of changes to their benefits and to encourage active participation in the

legislative process. In addition, they wanted to ensure that the surviving spouses and dependent children of Retired U.S. Armed Forces personnel were adequately cared for. The decision was made early on that this organization would represent retirees from all branches of the Armed Forces, regardless of rank, and that the organization would be comprised of “retirees serving retirees”. Finally, the Founders sought to create a structure in which members and their families could enjoy the company of other military families and work together for the good of all.

AMRA provides its members with many benefits, the most significant being a program of legislative activism that monitors and responds to Congressional activities and keeps tabs on the policies and procedures of the Department of

Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs. The key to success in any legislative program is participation by the membership and to that end, AMRA provides a weekly electronic newsletter (Monday Morning Digest) and periodic Special Legislative Updates that ask members to respond immediately to pending legislation affecting military retiree benefits. In addition, a quarterly newspaper (AMRA News) provides more in-depth information on issues and provides members with information that will directly affect them...like making changes to their military pay, how to access VA services, and explaining new or little-known services that our members may need but not know about. Benefits for retirees are fragile, particularly in these difficult economic times, and we must be ever-vigilant. Only by working together will we

ensure that the promises made to those who devoted their lives and careers to the military will not disappear while we are looking the other way.

Although AMRA has members in every state, we have very few chapters at this time. The AMRA Board of Directors has recently launched a chapter formation initiative and we are encouraging our members to organize themselves into working groups that will join their voices with the national organization to fight for the earned rights and privileges of all military retirees. Recruiting new members to help with the work will lighten everyone's load.

AMRA offers reasonably-priced TRICARE and CHAMPVA supplements that many members use to manage health care

costs for their families. In addition, AMRA has a multitude of discount programs – from auto and life insurance, hotels and car rentals, to interstate moving, real estate and mortgage services. High on the popular member services list is the SGM Douglas R. Drum Memorial Scholarship program. Members, their spouses and dependent children, and their grandchildren may apply for an annual total of \$35,000 in scholarships...all funded by the generous donations of AMRA members.

Since 1973 AMRA has remained true to its Founding Principles...to help you, the military retiree, take care of your health and provide for your families, even after you are gone.

JOIN US! AMRA is your “Home Base in Retirement” and together we can make good things happen for all military retirees!

THE AMERICAN MILITARY RETIREES ASSOCIATION

Your “Home Base” In Retirement

Who We Are and What We Do

PURPOSE: Founded in Saranac Lake, New York in 1973, the focus of AMRA is the military retiree family and the protection of earned benefits. The purposes for which the Association was formed are fraternal, patriotic, and educational and include, but are not limited to, protecting and preserving the vested rights, benefits and privileges of Retired Armed Forces personnel; providing a means to sponsor, foster, and encourage legislation affecting the status of retired personnel of the U.S. Armed Forces; keeping members informed of changes to benefits and legislation that may affect their benefits; encouraging active participation in the legislative process; fostering the welfare of survivors and dependent children of Retired Armed Forces personnel; and providing a means of social contact for all members and their families.

ELIGIBILITY: Military Retirees from Active Duty, Guard/Reserve (including “gray area”), Disabled (T & P) veterans, Medically Retired, and Surviving Spouses of all ranks from all branches of the military. AMRA offers annual and life memberships.

PROGRAMS:

- **ADVOCACY:** Of primary importance are AMRA’s advocacy efforts on behalf of all military retirees. To that end, the Association’s Legislative Affairs Committee adopts annual legislative goals and encourages AMRA members to contact Members of Congress on legislation specific to retiree issues. The National President, First Vice President, Executive Director, Chair and Vice Chair of the Legislative Affairs Committee visit with Members of Congress annually to ensure that AMRA is recognized as a retiree advocate in the legislative arena.
- **SCHOLARSHIP:** The Sergeant Major Douglas R. Drum Memorial Scholarship provides scholarships for current members of AMRA, their spouses, their dependent children, and their grandchildren. Scholarships totaling \$35,000 are made possible through the generosity of AMRA’s members.
- **JROTC:** The Robert J. Jock LEAP Award for Outstanding JROTC Cadets, sponsored and presented by AMRA Chapters and Departments.
- **PATRIOTISM:** The "Proudly We Wave" program encourages patriotism through respect for the American Flag. A special card educates readers on proper flag etiquette and may be given or mailed to those who are flying a flag improperly or in poor condition.
- **SAVE MY TRICARE** (<http://www.savemytricare.net>): Information and prepared webmail messages to lawmakers for visitors to use to prevent implementation of increases in TRICARE fees that make it increasingly difficult for military retirees and their families to access their earned healthcare benefits.

PUBLICATIONS: *AMRA News* (quarterly, print), *eNEWS Monday Morning Digest* (weekly electronic), as well as periodic *Special Legislative Updates* and *News from Your State*.

BENEFITS:

- Informational Fact Sheets, links and important documents found in online Members Only area
- TRICARE and CHAMPVA supplemental insurance
- Chapter membership, where available
- Career Center
- Holiday Retirement Home Discount
- Auto, Home and Renters Insurance Program
- Moving, Real Estate and Mortgage Discounts
- World-wide Hotel and Car Rental Discounts
- Hearing Product discounts

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