

**Fort Detrick Branch of the COA
Feb 24, 2009 Meeting Minutes
1200-1300 via teleconference**

Officers requested:

LCDR Blaemire, Evelyn, President (CMS)
CDR Bradford, Leigh Ann, Vice President (FDA)
CDR Barnhart, Lisa, Treasurer (NIH)
CDR Matthews, Tracy, Secretary (HRSA)

Officers present:

LCDR Evelyn Blaemire
CDR Amy Anderson
Keil Fisher
Matt Deptola
LCDR Roberta Szydlo
Candido Alicea
CDR Leigh Ann Bradford
CDR Lisa Barnhart
CDR Tracy Matthews

I. Introduction of 2009 Executive Officers and opening by President LCDR Evelyn Blaemire:

LCDR Blaemire opened the meeting with a welcome to the participants and introductions of the 2009 Executive Officers. Each officer provided a short introduction.

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II. Treasurer's report - CDR Barnhart

Current balance: \$1,109.50
Expected expenditures for 2009: none at present
Plans or needs for 2009 accounts receivable:

Attempts over the past couple of years regarding fundraising has not received a good response. Strategies on how to improve this will be considered. CDR Barnhart will check into the membership fees that the Branch is to receive from the National COA.

III. Goals for 2009 – LCDR Blaemire

Overall: Strengthening the Network

LCDR Blaemire discussed the overall goal for the year and how the branch wants to accomplish this goal.

A. Facilitate networking among FDCOA members.

- B. Interact with another branch or branches of the Uniformed Services locally and nationally.
- C. Support and promote wellness in our community.

IV. Proposed Activities for 2009 – LCDR Blaemire

A. Networking Database for our membership: LCDR Blaemire discussed having a stronger and more acceptable database of the FDCOA members to include name, rank, category, duty station, where they live, special skills, and how best to reach them. The database will help the members to build partnerships and improve communication across the branch. One concern is how to distribute the information. Another is how to ensure the database is current. The National COA sends a spreadsheet of the members to the Branch President and to the webmaster. There will be a mechanism for members to opt out of being included in the database. CDR Anderson stated that she is aware of a person who is interested in helping with this activity. The members agreed that this network database would be useful to the Branch. CDR Anderson, CDR Matthews, and LCDR Blaemire will proceed with strategizing of the development the database.

B. MS Walk with local COA chapters in April: The Baltimore COA and the D.C. COA have invited the Fort Detrick COA members to join in the walk to support Multiple Sclerosis. The walk is on Saturday, April 18, 2009 at Howard County Community College. If any members are interested, they are encouraged to contact LCDR Monique Howard. The brochure also discusses how to sign up to join as a team, “USPHS”. If you are not able to join in the walk, donations are accepted.

C. Ft. Detrick Armed Forces Day: USPHS booth: Previous participation in the USPHS booth on Armed Forces has been a struggle due to weather. The Armed Forces Day is May 16th. LCDR Blaemire discussed branch participation this year. Activities could include having blood pressure checks and promote the Surgeon General’s health history initiative (<https://familyhistory.hhs.gov/fhh-web/home.action>). LCDR Blaemire asked for a member to lead the project. The lead is responsible for reserving the booth, coordinating members to help with the booth, and gather the necessary equipment needed. An email to the larger group will be sent to gather volunteers and request a member to lead the project. This activity will help the branch to increase the visibility of PHS in the Fort Detrick and Frederick communities.

D. Maintain support for Barquist Army Health Clinic at Fort Detrick: The branch is excited to continue this activity throughout the year. CDR Cynthia Rubio is the contact person to reach regarding volunteer time at the clinic. Heidi Chaney is the Nurse Manager at the clinic and is always appreciative of the assistance provided by USPHS officers. Please contact CDR Rubio regarding volunteer time.

E. Adopt one or several soldiers stationed in Iraq (<http://adoptaussoldier.org/>): LCDR Blaemire proposed the branch sponsor a soldier stationed in Iraq and Afghanistan through the Adopt a US Soldier project. She discussed the process for signing up for the

project. The soldiers involved in this activity are very appreciative of the connection to what is happening in America while they are stationed overseas. Since most soldiers are living in tough conditions, items such as a football, a Frisbee, candy, and books are needed. The activity would involve sending emails routinely and sending an occasional care package. Members agreed on this activity. LCDR Blaemire will sign up for a soldier on the website. Once the branch has their assigned soldier, the branch will discuss next steps.

F. Possible guest speaker for this year: LCDR Blaemire proposed a guest speaker for a branch meeting to obtain an educational offering. The members discussed having this meeting as a face-to-face versus a teleconference. To ensure maximum participation, member opted for a teleconference which also ensures effective use of the speaker's time. LCDR Blaemire proposes Dr. Valencia Porter from Chopra Center on complimentary alternative medicine (<http://www.chopra.com/medical>). A PowerPoint presentation can be distributed in advance of the meeting.

G. Pool Party: LCDR Blaemire proposed a summer party. CDR Barnhart has offered her house for a pool party. Tentative date is Aug 22nd. CDR Barnhart will review her schedule to confirm the date.

H. Annual Dinner: The annual dinner for the branch is set for Dec 5th. LCDR Blaemire will contact CDR Rubio about reserving the chapel of Fort Detrick. Last year's dinner went well despite the bad weather.

I. Additional activities TBD: Additional activities for the branch will be based on any offers of the members or the Baltimore COA or the DC COA.

J. Quarterly meetings via teleconference: The branch will have quarterly meeting along with a face-to-face meeting (the annual dinner). Meetings are tentatively scheduled for May 6, Sept 17, and Dec 5.

V. Status of committees and committee leadership

- a. Social Activities – Co-Chairs: CAPT Gil Rose; LCDR Evelyn Blaemire will contact CAPT Rose to see what activities are being planned.
- b. Membership – Chair: CDR Amy Anderson: CDR Anderson agreed to continue as the chair for this committee.
- c. Professional – Chair: CDR Cynthia Rubio: No report at this time.
- d. Resolutions – Chair: CDR Thomas Doss: CDR Doss has been contacted regarding continuing as chair. Awaiting response.

- e. Fundraising - Chair: LT Elizabeth Lybarger: LCDR Blaemire will contact LT Lybarger regarding continuing as chair.
- f. Community Activities Co-Chairs: CDR Bradford; CDR Barnhart: No report at this time.
- g. Election - Chair: CDR Rick Gussio: LCDR Blaemire will contact CDR Gussio regarding continuing as chair.

VI. Final/closing comments:

The Executive Committee is looking forward to a productive and positive year. LCDR Blaemire thanked the members for participating in the call and hope that the members participate in the various activities.

The next meeting is May 6th.