"I shall not be in want… At least not much"

By Cmdr. Barry A. Metzger

"I really like my house on base, the only improvement I would make is with this area." "Traveling in Japan is great. The trains are easy to utilize and always run on time. There is this one improvement though…" There is something about us that makes being content almost impossible it seems. It's so easy to look for what could be improved upon with our condition or situation. Don't get me wrong, looking for ways to make things better for our personnel and their families is admirable. Before I go too far I should also point out that I take special note of Town Hall meetings where folks are quick to praise and thank leadership for improvements made or when a difficult situation is resolved.

When I think about one of the most popular scriptures in Christian tradition, Psalm 23, the very first sentence from David is very interesting, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not be in want." Those words draw our attention because it's easier to be discontent; to wish for something extra or desire something we cannot have.

I'm reminded of a poem entitled "Present Tense" by Jason Lehman, published in a Dear Abby column, Feb. 14 1989. He wrote penned these words when he was only 14 years old.

Present Tense:
It was spring, but it was summer I wanted,
The warm days, and the great outdoors.
It was summer, but it was fall I wanted,
The colorful leaves, and the cool, dry air.
It was fall, but it was winter I wanted,
The beautiful snow, and the joy of the holiday season.
It was winter, but it was spring I wanted,
The warmth and the blossoming of nature.
I was a child, but it was adulthood I wanted,
The freedom and respect.
I was 20, but it was 30 I wanted,
To be mature, and sophisticated.
I was middle-aged, but it was 20 I wanted,
The youth and the free spirit.
I was retired, but it was middle-age I wanted,
The presence of mind without limitations.
My life was over, and I never got what I wanted.

The 23rd Psalm begins with these familiar words, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want."

Satisfaction seems difficult to attain. No matter what our age or stage in life we seem to want more. When we are children, we want more toys or gadgets. When we are teen agers we want more freedom and popularity. As we age we want better health, more friends and so forth.

The Apostle Paul shares an important life lesson about contentedness when he writes, "I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, & I know what it is to have plenty. "I have learned the secret of being content in any & every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want" (Philippians 4:11 12).

It seems clear to me, though I'm seldom good at it, that God wants us to be a happy, satisfied people. The two go hand in hand. We won't find it in restlessness, covetousness or jealousy. A spirit of thankfulness would better suit us.

When we look at the second verse of Psalm 23 we find that "He makes us lie down in green pastures." He leads his sheep, you and I, to lush pasture with plenty to eat. This is a picture of sheep so satisfied that there isn't the least desire for more. He's content to lie down in green pastures.

If you look closely at the first two words of that second verse we see that the good shepherd makes us lie down. We have to be forced sometimes. The preexisting conditions are contentment and harmony in the flock. If there is friction in the flock the sheep will not relax.

The holiday season is upon us. It is a time of many obligations and list making. I encourage each of us, in all the busyness not to miss the things that are most important. Express thanks to and for people in our lives, family and friends. In all the "want" and "I need to" take the time to hear the good shepherd saying "He makes me lie down in green pastures."

Transition Benefits: Critical steps to applying for federal jobs

From Department of Navy Office of Civilian Human Resources

WASHINGTON – The Navy Office of Civilian Human Resources reminds Sailors considering post-Navy career options that those interested in continuing to serve in a civilian capacity should begin preparing for that transition as soon as possible.

There are hundreds of different occupations for civilians with the Department of the Navy (DON) - from aircraft mechanic to zoologist, says Jean Mercer, director of the DON's HR Systems and Business Transformation. Additionally, notes Mercers, the federal job opportunities "literally exist across the globe, from the hills of Tennessee to the deserts of the Middle East. We find that veterans' experience and skills easily transition to one of our many civilian careers."

Before applying for a job, veterans should secure all the necessary documents they need to attach to their federal resume, recommends Mercer. Veterans should retrieve their SMART transcripts to detail their military training and education. These will need to be uploaded with their federal resume.

To obtain SMART transcripts, visit https://www.navycollege.navy.mil/smart_info.cfm. Veterans should also compile information (DD Form 2586) from VMET https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/vmet/index.jsp. (a DEERs login is required); and military service record information on awards, medals, ribbons (documented on DD Form 1650/3), service evaluations and letters of commendation.

Before searching for federal jobs, veterans should find out how their military occupational specialty or rating relate to federal civilian jobs. Maryland's mil2fed webpage http://www.mil2fedjobs.com/mil_search.aspx provides a crosswalk of military occupational specialties or ratings to civilian occupations by occupational codes, title, and position type (white collar or blue collar).

The DON's Credentialing Opportunities Online webpage https://www.cool.navy.mil/ also provides veterans with information on civilian occupations relating to their military occupational specialty or rating, collateral duty/out-of-rate assignment, or officer designator or collateral duty/assignment.

Writing a government resume is different than for the private sector. Related training is offered exclusively to veterans through TURBOTAP, the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) classes, resume writing courses offered by Fleet and Family Service Centers and tips provided by the Shipmates to Workmates program http://jobs.navair.navy.mil/sm2wm/Default.aspx. Information also is available at www.fedshirevets.gov/ hosted by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the DON Office of Civilian Human Resources (OCHR) webpage dedicated to veterans http://www.public.navy.mil/donhr/Employment/Vets/Pages/Default.aspx.

Next, veterans should go to usajobs.gov and use the built-in resume builder to setup their USAJOBS account. Once the resume is created, veterans should search for occupations which most closely match their military training and skills. Searches can be made by location, desired salary/paygrade and more. Mercer says it is critical to pay close attention to the instructions and key information on the job opportunity announcement. The announcements will list who may apply, how they will be evaluated, geographic location of the job, salary, etc., as well as requirements such as security clearances, medical examinations, travel requirements, shift work, and more. Saving your searches will allow you to receive email notifications as new announcements are posted.

OCHR's webpage (noted above) provides tipsheets about how to setup the account. If, after working with the FFSC counselors, applicants have questions navigating the USAJOBS process, the OCHR Employment Information Center is available to answer questions via DONeic@navy.mil or 1-800-378-4559.

The DON remains committed to improving the applicant's experience, reducing the time to fill vacancies and securing quality candidates for DON positions. Civilian careers in the Department of the Navy offer real world challenges with real life rewards - careers where purpose and patriotism unite.

A civilian career with the federal government is one of the opportunities that should be considered by separating Sailors including those affected by the Enlisted Retention Board (ERB).

For the latest ERB information, visit Navy Personnel Command's ERB website www.public.navy.mil/bupers-nps/boards/ERB/Pages/default2/aspx.

Cut and save

Emergency Information

Commander Fleet Activites Yokosuka (CFAY) and Negishi and Ikego Housing Detachment residents are advised to stay tuned to the following mediums for emergency information:

- CFAY Web Site: http://www.cnic.navy.mil/yokosuka
- CFAY Facebook page: http://www.Facebook.com/cfayokosuka
- CFAY Twitter page: http://twitter.com/cfay_yokosuka
- CFAY base Channel 15
- Eagle 810 AM Radio station
- A recorded weather message can be obtained by calling 243-5155.

The information provided will include but is not limited to notification of actions to take for severe weather and the unexpected or early dismissal of schools.

Cut and save