



U.S. ARMY AVIATION CENTER
FORT RUCKER, ALABAMA 36362-5000
"Our Mission is Warfighting!"



ISSUE 1-07

RETIREMENT SERVICES NEWSLETTER

FALL 2007

This is an official newsletter published annually under the authority of AR 600-8-7 by the Retirement Services Office, Adjutant General/Military Personnel Division, Fort Rucker, Alabama, as a service to Army retirees and their family/survivors residing within the geographical jurisdiction of the installation. Official information contained herein is valid until changed or superseded in a later issue of the Newsletter or other official publications. Editorial comments are not necessarily those of the Command or the US Army.

Fort Rucker Retiree Council Co-Chairmen Column

COL (R) Bob Bunting & CSM (R) Charles Frye

Another year has passed and it is time for the readers to begin thinking about attending Retiree Appreciation Days (RAD) at Fort Rucker. The RAD is scheduled for 26 and 27 October this year. The Retirement Services Office, Lyster Army Health Clinic and the Retiree Council are busy planning activities for the RAD. The highlight of the activities is the Health Fair held at Lyster on Friday. Things sure have changed over the years as we look forward to getting the flu vaccine on the 26th. Remember when getting all those shots years ago was anything but a "looked forward to" experience. Door prizes will be given out each day; Saturday will have that old favorite, "SOS" for breakfast. Speakers from the U.S. Army Medical Command and Fort Mitchell National Cemetery will brief us on issues that interest us. A panel of local experts will also be there to answer your questions on Saturday. Please plan to stay for lunch and visit the many activities on post during the afternoon. Effective in April 2008, the Social Security offset of Survivor Benefits Plan (SBP) receipts will be completely eliminated and the full 55% of retired pay will be paid to SBP beneficiaries. No action has been taken by either house of Congress to accelerate the 30 year paid-up SBP to relieve the burden on our older retirees. The House of Representatives has passed the FY2008 Defense Authorization Bill and has approved legislation that would reverse planned 9.9% cuts in Medicare and TRICARE payments next year. The Senate will have to address both issues when Congress reconvenes in September. Again this year we have some new members on the Council: LTC(R) Carolyn Bost, MAJ(R) Jack Swinehart and CW4(R) Robert Cooper, they and the other members of the Retiree Council look forward to seeing you on 26 October.

Retirement Services Officer's Message

Chris Moore

Once again, the annual Retiree Appreciation Days (RAD) is quickly approaching and you and your family are cordially invited to this year's events. With our featured speaker, COL(R) William (Bill) Thresher, Chief of Staff for U.S. Army Medical Command, and representatives from several organizations providing informative answers and updates, you will want to make plans to be here. Only by your attendance at the RAD are we able to consider this event a true success and ensure it's continuance in the future. We have tried to design the program with you in mind so please join us. An important item for me is making the RAD enjoyable and worthwhile to everyone. I need your assistance in making sure the RAD reflects what you want or need. Please give me suggestions of events and/or activities that could be added to make the RAD a better event. I personally look forward to serving you with any assistance you may need. If you have questions or need assistance with retiree issues, the Ft Rucker RSO number is (334) 255-9739 or (800) 240-9373, and e-mail is ruck.retirees@conus.army.mil. Let us hear from you.

RSO WEBSITE & HOME PAGE

The Ft Rucker Retirement Services website is at www.rucker.army.mil/dhr/mpdag/index.htm. Many links are available including the Ft Rucker home page, the Army RSO site, Ft Rucker Retiree Council information and Retiree Bulletins as well as links to the Army G-1 website. Please bookmark this address and use it often.

**33RD ANNUAL FORT RUCKER APPRECIATION DAYS
26-27 OCTOBER 2007**

The Fort Rucker Commanding General, Retiree Council, and Retirement Services Office welcome you to the 33rd annual Retiree Appreciation Days. Please use this agenda in making your selection prior to mailing in the pre-registration form.

26 October 2007: Retiree Health Fair to be Hosted by Lyster Army Health Clinic

Lyster Army Health Clinic will host the annual Retiree Health Fair on 26 October 2007 from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. during the Retiree Appreciation Days. As always, the Retiree Health Fair will afford you the opportunity to have screenings for your blood pressure, cholesterol, and cancer screenings. There will be educational material and classes concentrating on the health status of older adults. Today we are living longer and have more conditions to learn to cope with than our parents did. Education on what causes these problems, prevention and how to treat these conditions will be the concentration of the educational material and classes. Topics will include, but not limited to, healthy nutrition, depression and dementia, bone health, hormone replacement therapy and others. The Immunization Clinic will be providing flu shots depending on availability. The parking lot on the east side of the clinic will be available for parking providing easier access to the health fair area. It is the goal of the Lyster Army Health Clinic staff to provide you with information that will enhance your health and enable you to become more adept in dealing with any medical problems you may already encounter. We look forward to seeing each of you at the Retiree Health Fair on 26 October 2007!

REVIEW AND RETIREMENT CEREMONY, 3:00 p.m.: The review and retirement ceremony will be held at 3:00 p.m. at the Aviation Museum, located at the corners of Andrews Avenue and Novosel Street, across from the Soldiers' Service Center. There will be reserved seating for retirees and their guests.

COMMAND GROUP – RETIREE SOCIAL & DINNER, 4:30 p.m.: The Command Group – Retiree Social and Dinner will be at the AVIATORS' LANDING immediately following the Review and Retirement Ceremony with a pay-as-you-go bar opening at 4:30 p.m. The Social and Dinner have been combined and is open to those who have registered and paid in advance for dinner. Come socialize with your fellow retirees and the command group. The dinner buffet will begin at 5:30 p.m. Please limit the buffet to one trip until all participants have a chance to eat. Be sure to get your tickets for the door prize drawings!

Dinner Buffet Menu: Honey Baked Ham, Beef Tenderloin, Garlic Mashed Potatoes w/Gravy, Tex-Mex Corn, Mixed Green Salad, Assorted Pies, Rolls w/Butter, Coffee and Tea. **COST IS \$16.65 PER PERSON AND MUST BE PAID IN ADVANCE.**

27 October 2007: All Activities at the Aviators' Landing

BREAKFAST BUFFET, 7:00 a.m. (advance reservations only): **Cost is \$9.00 per person.**

Breakfast Buffet Menu: Scrambled eggs, Creamed Beef (SOS), Bacon, Sausage, Grits, Biscuits, Assorted Jellies, Coffee, and Orange Juice.

RAD GENERAL SESSION, 8:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.: Guest Speaker COL(R) William H. (Bill) Thresher, Chief of Staff, U.S. Army Medical Command and a representative from Ft Mitchell National Cemetery will both present programs. A panel consisting of Ft Rucker staff, Veteran's Administration, and Social Security Office representatives will brief on retiree issues and answer questions. Drawings for door prizes will be held throughout the morning.

LUNCH BUFFET, 11:30 a.m. (advance reservations only): **Cost is \$8.00 per person.**

Lunch Buffet Menu: Traditional Turkey, Cornbread Dressing w/Cranberry Sauce, Mashed Potatoes w/Giblet Gravy, Green Beans Almandine, Rolls, Coffee and Tea.

JOIN US FOR FUN, FOOD, AND DOOR PRIZES AT THE 2007 RAD!!

Updating Your Address and Beneficiaries

To ensure proper receipt of tax documents, retiree account statements (RAS) and the latest retiree information, keep your mailing address current with DFAS-Cleveland. You can contact DFAS toll free at (800) 321-1080.

CASUALTY REPORTING PROCEDURES

Retiree deaths should be reported to DFAS by calling (800) 321-1080. Be prepared to provide the retiree's name, Social Security Number and date of death along with contact information for the retiree's designated beneficiary or next-of-kin. DFAS representative will then enter the information to initiate casualty processing.

FUNERAL HONORS

Ft Rucker supplies an Honors Team for deceased active duty, retirees, POWs, Medal of Honor recipients, and honorably discharged veterans for most of Alabama and the panhandle part of Florida. Funeral Honors must be requested not later than 24 hours prior to the funeral service to allow for Honors Team notification, preparation, and travel. To request Funeral Honors, inform your funeral director or call the Ft Rucker Casualty Operations at (334) 255-9081 or (800) 661-1407. If you live in Mississippi, the Ft Polk Casualty Operations should be contacted at (888) 474-0377. Verification of service for veterans must be provided; usually a DD Form 214 or similar discharge document showing honorable service. Retiree's service can be verified by the Casualty Office.

NATIONAL CEMETERIES

Ft Mitchell Cemetery, Seale, AL	(334) 855-4731
Mobile National Cemetery, Mobile, AL	(850) 453-4108
Barrancas National Cemetery, Pensacola, FL	(850) 453-4108
Biloxi National Cemetery, Biloxi, MS	(228) 388-6668
Natchez National Cemetery, Natchez, MS	(601) 445-4981

TRICARE HEALTH, DENTAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Retirees in Alabama, Mississippi, and the Florida Panhandle (TRICARE Region 4, Gulfsouth), may contact TRICARE at (800) 444-5445 or their website at www.humana-military.com. The retiree Delta Dental Plan toll free number is (888) 838-8737 or their website is at www.trdp.org.

Retirement Services Office Toll Free Number

To serve the retiree community, the Ft Rucker RSO has a toll free telephone number, (800) 240-9373. This number is for outside the local calling area only; local callers should dial (334) 255-9124. When calling, be sure to have the full name of the retiree and/or spouse as well as their social security number and a telephone number for the RSO to return messages from missed phone calls.

PROCEDURE TO UPDATE ID CARDS AND DEERS

When it is time for a family member to renew an ID card, one of the following must be done:

1. The sponsor comes in with the family member to sign the application.
2. The sponsor comes in before the family member, completes and signs the paperwork. The family member can then come in any time within 90 days to renew the ID card.
3. The family member can renew the ID card without the sponsor's signature if that family member has a valid power of attorney authorizing them to sign for the sponsor.

DEERS RESPONSIBILITY

Sponsors are responsible for ensuring their DEERS record remains up-to-date. Events such as divorce, children's marriage, children joining the service, etc., affect the eligibility of benefits of these family members. Failure to update DEERS could result in the sponsor being held responsible for medical claims filed for unauthorized family members.

The ID card section/DEERS section is located in the Soldier Service Center, Building 5700, Room 160. Hours of operation (excluding holidays) are 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Monday – Friday and 7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. on the first and third Wednesday of the month. Contact numbers for the section are (334)255-2182/1857/9040/2437.

Effective 13 August 2007, the ID Card Section designated one ID card station to process individuals with an appointment. When calling for an appointment, the customer will be screened and advised of any documentation they need to bring. Walk-ins will continue to be served at the three remaining stations on a first-come, first-served basis. For an appointment call: (334) 255-2182 or (334) 255-2437.

LOCATE THE ID CARD OFFICE NEAREST YOU

Go to <http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl/owa/home> and you can locate the ID card/DEERS office closest to your home. You can enter your town, state, or zip code and find the nearest location with street, city, and phone number. There might be a National Guard/Reserve site close to you for ID card issue and DEERS updates.

The National Personnel Records Center Online Records Request

The National Personnel Records Center has provided the following website for veterans to request their DD Form 214 online: <http://vetrecs.archives.gov>. This may be particularly helpful when a veteran needs a copy of his DD Form 214 for employment purposes. Veterans and the next of kin of deceased former military members may use the online military personnel records system to request documents. Other individuals with a need for documents must still complete the Standard Form 180 which can be downloaded from the online website. The web-based application was designed to provide better service on requests by eliminating mailroom processing time. Please note there is no requirement to type "www" in front of the web address

Fort Rucker Information, Tickets and Reservations Office

The ITR Office is located in the Soldier Service Center, Bldg 5700, Room 130. You may visit our website at www.FtRuckerMWR.com/ITR.htm. Office hours are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday; the office is closed for lunch from 12-1 p.m. Call (334) 255-2997 for information concerning tours, tickets, cruises, and hotels. Let us put you on our e-mail list so you'll be the first to find out about our tours!

The ITR Office sells discounted tickets to such destinations as Disney World, Sea World, Universal Studios, Busch Gardens, Six Flags Over Georgia, Dollywood, the Alabama Space and Rocket Center, and a variety of dinner shows in the Central Florida area. We are now carrying some of the shows in Branson as well. A ticket rate sheet will be sent on request. ITR can assist you in obtaining hotel reservations nationwide plus information about Shades of Green. ITR also has information on the Armed Forces Vacation Club through which you can make reservations at condominiums throughout the world.

ARMED FORCES RETIREMENT HOME

There is an Armed Forces Retirement Home located in Washington, DC. You may contact them at (800) 422-9988. The Home in Gulfport, MS was damaged by Hurricane Katrina and is tentatively scheduled to re-open in May 2010.

Army Family Action Plan (AFAP) Conference, Be a Part of the Solution!!

Fort Rucker will host the AFAP Conference, 30-31 October 2007 at Aviators' Landing. Is something on your mind? Submit your issue for inclusion in the AFAP conference. This is your opportunity to affect policy and regulation. Contact the AFAP Program Manager at (334) 255-2382.

COMMISSARY

The Ft Rucker Commissary will have a Case Lot Sale on 15-16 Sep 07. Plenty of items will be available. Additional information can be found at the Defense Commissary website <http://www.commissaries.com>.

Comments concerning **Echoes** should be directed to the editor, Army Echoes, HQDA, 200 Stovall St, Room 3N33, ATTN: DAPE-RSO, Alexandria, VA 22332-0470 or e-mail to Laura.Paul@hoffman.army.mil.

RECEIVE THIS NEWSLETTER ELECTRONICALLY !!

We are cutting costs AND speeding up future deliveries of the Annual Retiree Newsletter. We will send it by e-mail to everyone that wants to receive it electronically. Once you say you want it via e-mail, we will take your name off of the newsletter's traditional mailing list. To help with the process, please send your request along with your U.S. Postal address to ruck.retirees@conus.army.mil. Thanks for your assistance and cooperation.

**2007 FORT RUCKER RETIREE APPRECIATION DAYS
REGISTRATION FORM**

Please complete the following application and return to the Retirement Services Office NLT 19 October 2007. Make your check payable to IMWRF or furnish credit card info below, and mail to Cdr, USAAWC, ATTN: Retirement Services, Room 161, 5700 Novosel Street, Ft Rucker, AL 36362-5000. Sorry, we cannot take cash. For planning purposes, we must have reservations for meals. **NO TICKETS WILL BE SOLD AT THE DOOR.** Also, advance notice of your intent to attend the Health Fair, Retirement/Review Ceremony, or General Session will enable us to adequately provide desired services and prepare a welcome packet with name tag for you.

RANK NAME (LAST, FIRST, MI) PHONE (WITH AREA CODE)

MAILING ADDRESS (P.O. BOX OR STREET, CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE)

STATUS: RETIREE SPOUSE WIDOW(ER)

SERVICE: ARMY AIR FORCE NAVY MARINE COAST GUARD

NAME OF PERSON(S) ATTENDING WITH ME (For registration purposes):

I WILL BE ATTENDING THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES (Check all that apply):

FRIDAY, OCT 26

SATURDAY, OCT 27

Health Fair

General Session

Retirement/Review Ceremony

Command Group Dinner

RESERVATIONS:

Please place my reservation for the following meals in the numbers indicated:

Eating

_____ Friday Night Buffet(s) @ \$16.65 per person \$ _____

_____ Saturday Breakfast Buffet(s) @ \$9.00 per person \$ _____

_____ Saturday Lunch Buffet(s) @ \$8.00 per person \$ _____

TOTAL COST OF MEALS \$ _____

(Please enclose check made payable to: IMWRF or provide credit card info below)

IF PAYING BY CREDIT CARD, ENTER THE FOLLOWING INFO (Please Print):

MASTER CARD VISA (circle the appropriate one)

Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____

Name as it appears on the card: _____

Signature _____

REMEMBER THE DOOR PRIZE DRAWINGS FRIDAY NIGHT AND SATURDAY!!

- ID Card Hours & Procedures
- Local National Cemeteries
- Requesting Funeral Honors
- Retiree Telephone Contact Numbers
- 2007 RAD Program & Registration

Inside this Retiree Bulletin

COMMANDER, USAAWC
ATTN: IMSE-RCK-HRM
5700 NOVOSEL ST, ROOM 161
FORT RUCKER, AL 36362-5000

OFFICIAL BUSINESS