

COMMANDER'S RETIREE COUNCIL
Fort Rucker, Alabama

The Commander's Retiree Council held its regularly scheduled meeting on 4 June 2009. It was the 247th regularly scheduled meeting since the Council was established in 1973.

1. Members present/absent and advisors and guests present were:

MEMBERS (Army Retiree, except as indicated)

PRESENT

COL Emil Zimmermann	CSM Gene Nelson
COL Herman S. Heath	SFC Bennett Jergenson
COL James E. Hyers	SMS Jean A. Woodruff, USAF
LTC Carolyn Bost-Pittman	SFC Ralph Reed
CW4 Bob Cooper	EOC Fred Griffin, USN
	Mrs. Marie Wilkins

MEMBERS ABSENT

BG Douglas Smith	
COL Bob Bunting	CSM James W. Harris
LTC Clarence Collins	SGM Sam McMaster
	1SG Ken Prier
	1SG Frank Ellerkamp

ADVISORS PRESENT

Mr. George Steuber, DCG	Mr. Mike O'Meara, Commissary
Mr. Tim Laster, DMWR	Ms. Ellen Rutledge, AAFES
Ms. Sheryl Lowell, PAO	Mr. Chris Moore, RSO

2. CSM Nelson called the meeting to order at 1130.

3. The minutes of the last meeting were approved as written.

4. Old Business -None

5. Committee Reports:

a. Public Affairs - Ms. Lowell discussed the Army Flier as a source of information to the population and that the Army Flier also contains information on Veterans Day, Holidays, the Band and Color Guard.

b. Legislative Affairs - COL Hyers reported millions face reduced Social Security checks in 2010 caused by a combination of circumstances that haven't occurred before. The likelihood that Social Security annuitants will not receive a COLA in 2009, coupled with Medicare Part B

increases for some eligible (but not others) are the causes many Medicare eligible folks will see a net reduction in their 2010 Social Security checks. The Senate Veterans Affairs Committee approved the Military Spouse Residency Relief Act (S.475, Sen Burr, R-NC), which would let a spouse choose the same state of residency as the servicemember. If passed, it would reduce some administrative and tax filing difficulties incurred by spouses as they relocate and let them vote in the same state as their servicemember. They also approved a number of measures just prior to the Memorial Day holiday weekend, including:

- (1) S.801, the Caregiver and Veterans Health Services Act of 2009, establishing a permanent VA program to train, support, and assist caregivers of severely disabled veterans, and improve services for rural veterans.
- (2) S.423, the Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act of 2009, authorizing a two-year appropriations process for the VA to protect against funding shortfalls that occur when Congress fails to pass the annual appropriation.
- (3) S.407, authorizing the same COLA as Social Security for VA disability compensation and survivor annuities.
- (4) S.728, the Veterans Benefits Enhancement Act of 2009. Among other changes, it would make traumatic injury insurance (TSGLI) coverage retroactive to 7 October 2001 for severe service-caused disabilities, regardless of where the injury occurred. Currently, retroactive coverage applies only to injuries incurred in a combat zone. Other injuries are covered only if they occurred on or after 1 December 2006. The bill also increases funeral and burial allowances for veterans, and raises VA mortgage insurance limits.

c. Health Care - No report.

d. Voluntary Support Program - No report.

e. Commissary - Mr. O'Meara discussed delivery problems, computer glitches, and a stray hawk trapped in the warehouse.

f. PX – Ms. Rutledge discussed the Grand Opening on 17-19 July at 0900. There will be a ribbon cutting and giveaways. The first one hundred customers will receive \$100.00 in gift cards, TVs, cameras, etc. More electronics, motorcycle protective equipment, and Clinique beauty products will be added. The Armed Forces Bank will move to the customer service area in the back of the PX. GNC is under renovation and will double in size.

g. Golf Course – CW4 Cooper stated the cart path work is complete, income receipts are up, and the golf course will be “in the black” by the end of the year. A junior golf camp will be held 9 June, the Sergeants Major tournament on 12 June and a parent/child scramble on 21 June. Also, the SWGC Flag Tournament is scheduled 3 July.

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h. Equestrian Center - COL Heath reported there will be a horse show at 1000, 20 June and the next show will be in September.

i. Outdoor Recreation - No report.

j. Bowling Alley - Boston Butts are still available and on sale the first weekend of each month at the bowling alley.

k. RAD - The Retiree Appreciation Days activities will be held 30 October 2009. The Health Fair is from 0800-1200 at the Aviators' Landing, the quarterly Retirement Ceremony will be at the Museum at 1600, and the Dinner starts at 1730. The Health Fair and the Dinner will be held at the Aviators' Landing with SMA(R) Jack L. Tilley scheduled to speak. More information will follow.

6. Advisors' Comments.

a. The new PAO representative, Ms Sheryl Lowell, introduced herself and stated she is available to assist the Council.

b. Mr. Laster discussed the 0900, 1 July Allen Heights Community Center opening and ribbon cutting, the first of three Community Center openings. Freedom Fest will be held 3 July from 1600-2300 at its new location along Andrews Ave near Division Rd.

c. Mr. Steuber and his wife will be honored with a farewell luncheon at 1100, 14 July, the cost is \$13.50 and you can RSVP to 334 255-2095.

d. COL Hyers discussed the Honor Flights to Washington, D.C. The second Honor flight is scheduled for 26 September and is already full. A third flight is only 20 short of being filled. Applications for Honor Flights are on line at www.wiregrasshonorflight.org. News articles, TV coverage, and guardians are needed for all flights.

7. New Business – CW4 Cooper discussed the uses of Facebook and how the council could use it. CW4 Cooper and LTC Bost-Pittman volunteered to work on the issue. CSM Nelson read a certificate of appreciation from last year's Retiree Appreciation Day for the AAFES representative, Mr. John Monaghan.

8. The meeting adjourned at 1230. The next scheduled meeting will be held at the Aviators' Landing on 2 July 2009 at 1130.

Approved via-email
BOB BUNTING
COL, Retired
Co-Chairman

Approved via-email
Gene Nelson
CSM, Retired
Co-Chairman

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Prepared By:
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Secretary


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