



JEFFERSON BARRACKS SATELLITE RETIREE ACTIVITIES OFFICE NEWSWIRE SEPTEMBER 2009

The staff of the Jefferson Barracks Satellite Retiree Activities Office publishes this NEWSWIRE. This publication is designed to directly inform all military retirees, spouses, widows, widowers and their families of changes to their benefits, the status of current legislation impacting their retirement, health related information and of activities at Scott AFB and Jefferson Barracks AFS.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR SEPTEMBER

10 September Thursday—1300 Hours, Scott RAO monthly council meeting: Located at 215 Heritage Drive, Building P-10, Room A-209. The meeting includes reports from committee chairmen and other Directors generally related to Scott AFB activities and services. Updated reports from the Lambert/ St. Louis RAO and the Jefferson Barracks Satellite Retiree Activities Office (JBSRAO) are part of the meeting agenda.

17 September Thursday - Monthly luncheon 1100 Hrs. **O'Charley's 4130 Rusty Rd. St Louis, MO 63128** (314) 845-8200. The restaurant is located just north of South County Costco Store, Lindbergh Blvd and Rusty Rd.

Up Coming Events

19&20 September – Scott Air Show at Scott Air Force Base, IL

26 September – Annual Retiree Appreciation Day, Scott AFB, IL in the Scott Club. 7 AM – 3 PM With the increased security requirements it would be helpful if the Scott Personnel knew you were planning to attend; so to show our appreciation for the hard work that the Scott Personnel do in putting on this program, please pre-register by completing the reservation form that was in the Summer 2009 Military Retiree Report and mail to: Retiree Activities Office, 215 Heritage Drive, Scott AFB IL, 62225-5009 before September 18. If you do not have the reservation form there are additional copies at the Jefferson Barracks SRAO. If you still cannot pre-register, you can do so at the door at 0700.

TRICARE Changes Impact 6M Beneficiaries

In a surprise development, two of three current TRICARE contractors -- Health Net Federal Services and Humana Military Healthcare Services – lost to rival firms in their bids to handle next-generation support contracts.

The three contracts are worth a total of \$55.5 billion over five years. This means that nearly six million military healthcare beneficiaries, those who live in TRICARE's North and South regions, will have new managed care support contractors and claim processors to deal with by April of next year.

Aetna Government Health Plans of Hartford, Conn., will take over from Health Net in the North Region for three million beneficiaries in Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa (Rock Island Arsenal area only); Kentucky (except Fort Campbell area); Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri (St. Louis area only); New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. Read the full article at Military.com.

<http://www.military.com/features/0,15240,195077,00.html>

Health Care Reform Misinformation

Published by Col. Steve Strobridge, USAF-Ret.

We've all seen the clips of heated exchanges at legislators' town hall meetings, along with news reports that people are nervous about national health reform.

That shouldn't come as any surprise. Health care is a sensitive, personal subject, and all of us are understandably leery about any prospect of significant change that might affect us.

Being leery is healthy. Debate on the issues is healthy. Neither party (and certainly no individual politician) has a corner on good ideas or good judgment.

But good judgment also requires being as objective about the issues as possible. And there's a lot of misinformation out there.

No party has a corner on that, either. Some are so convinced of the rightness of one course or another that any potential downsides are dismissed. Some are so determined to sway the argument one way or the other that they tacitly allow or actively promote some blatant misrepresentations if they think that serves their political purpose.

MOAA believes any legislation has to stand on its merits, and that informed debate is the right way to end up at the best answer. But encouraging misrepresentation of the facts — either to convince people of the rightness of a proposal or to stoke fear about it — is a foul.

So how do you keep informed without falling victim to misinformation?

The first rule is to consider the source. If the person you're talking to (or the email you're reading) includes strong emotion pro or con, that's probably not a very objective source. You're likely wise to at least seek additional inputs from other sources.

The more extreme or outrageous the claim, the more you should consider double-checking an independent source.

Where can you find such sources?

For one, check out MOAA's [Battle of the Bilge blog](#), in which we try to separate fact from myth or fabrication.

For another, try [Politifact.com's Truth-O-Meter](#).

In the end, we all have to make personal judgments on what we will and won't support, whether the issue is national health reform or anything else. But we'll all be better off if we can avoid letting those judgments be swayed by misinformation, pro or con.

Cost Of Living Decline – No COLA Expected, No Medicare Increase

As previously reported, the inflation index used to set the January 2010 federal retiree COLA dropped another 2-tenths of a percent in July, sending the COLA count deeper into negative territory. The count now stands at -2.3 (negative 2.3) percent making it all but certain that there will not be a COLA increase for 2010. On the plus side, although the cost of living has fallen, federal and military pensions, social security benefits, VA disability and survivor benefits will not be reduced.

In addition, a “hold-harmless” provision in Social Security law prevents premiums for most Part B enrollees from increasing in 2010 and possibly additional years. This provision limits the premium increase to the dollar amount of a beneficiary’s cost-of-living adjustment (COLA).

The premium protection would exempt about 75 percent of beneficiaries from paying higher Part B premiums in the event Social Security pay is unchanged. The remainder not eligible for premium protection would be individuals with modified adjusted gross incomes above \$85,000 or couples with adjusted gross incomes of \$170,000. The protection would not apply to any surcharge paid by Medicare users who delayed their enrollment in Part B beyond age 65.

“Your Life, Your Choices” an End-of-Life Manual

Source: NAUS Weekly Update

The purported aim of a VA book and planning document entitled "Your Life, Your Choices" has recently sparked strong controversy and heated debate. The material was written in 1997 under a grant from VA, suspended from use in 2007, and is presently either being revised or being recommended by VA health officials. (Top-officials say it's being revised, but various references to it are found in VA healthcare materials.)

VA officials say the document is designed to help veterans make advanced-care decisions, so their family can better understand their wishes and desires regarding end-of-life issues. Strong criticism suggests a darker purpose and points out several sections of the document that encourage sick patients to consider ending their lives prematurely.

According to the VA, the entire matter is under revision, and the document is not currently in use. Considering the expression of concern in the press as of late, perhaps that is best. We trust the VA will take any concerns with the document into consideration as part of its review process.

The NAUS position regarding veterans health care remains starkly clear: every veteran should receive the health care they earned and deserve; vulnerable individuals will never be taken advantage of; and any government decision pertaining to the provision of care be based on an understanding that veterans should be treated as the assets they are and not as burdens to society.

NAUS Note: A primary author of the 52-page document, Dr. Robert Pearlman, advocated for legalized voluntary active euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide in the 1996 Supreme Court case *Vacco v Quill*. At the time, Pearlman stated a strong belief that physicians “should be legally permitted to accede to the desire of a patient to hasten death when the patient's decision is voluntarily reached, a patient is competent to make the decision, and the patient has been fully informed of the diagnosis and prognosis of an incurable, fatal disease which has progressed to the final stages.” This view is reflected in the pages of the book.

Afterburner Retiree Newsletter Back After 3-year Hiatus

Source: Air Force News Service

After a three-year hiatus, the hard-copy *Afterburner* retiree newsletter is back.

Special funding was granted to provide news and information to retirees and surviving spouses. However, those with computer access are urged to forego a hard-copy version to save money.

There are approximately 770,000 Air Force retirees and surviving spouses entitled to receive the Afterburner. Printing and recent postage increases have pushed the cost above \$250,000 for one issue.

"We understand that many of our retirees and surviving spouses do not have computer access so they rely on a printed version," said retired Lt. Gen. Steven R. Polk, co-chair of the Air Force Retiree Council. "But we need to do everything we can to keep the costs down."

Subscribers to the **e-Afterburner**, the online version, are asked to forego receiving hard-copy editions by allowing their names to be removed from the postal mailing list.

To be removed from the hard-copy mailing list, people who receive the **e-Afterburner** should send their full name, U.S. Postal Service mailing address, and the last four digits of their Social Security number to afpc.retiree@randolph.af.mil.

For retirees and annuitants who receive the hard-copy version, the Air Force Retiree Services staff relies on the Defense Finance and Accounting Service to provide current mailing addresses.

"Not only is keeping your address current with DFAS important in order to receive an Afterburner, but DFAS also needs to know where to send you important documents about your pay," said Pat Peek, chief of Air Force Retiree Services.

With nearly 9,500 retirees living abroad without U.S. postal privileges, mailing them their Afterburner is very expensive.

"Several hundred Afterburners that we send overseas are returned to us because of faulty addresses or the person is no longer at the address," explained Ms. Peek. "This wastes thousands of dollars.

"If our overseas audience can get their copy online, it would really help cut our postage costs," she said.

General Polk and his fellow council co-chair, retired Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Gerald R. Murray, will continue seeking funding for future hard-copy Afterburners for the non-wired retirees and surviving spouses.

"The council will continue to rally for the three hard-copy issues a year we enjoyed in the past," said Chief Murray. "We need your help with cutting costs as much as possible."

Dover Reservists Work to Form Canadian Sister Squadron Program

by Capt. Marnee A.C. Losurdo
512th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Reservists here visited members of the Royal Canadian Air Force's 8 Wing at Canadian Forces Base Trenton, Ontario, Aug. 22 through 24 as part of an effort to initiate a sister squadron program.

Airmen with Dover's 512th Airlift Wing hoped to forge a partnership with the Canadian airmen and identify training opportunities for flying, aerial port operations, airlift control and maintenance procedures.

A C-17 Globemaster III and 10 members from the 326th Airlift Squadron, the 46th Aerial Port Squadron, the 512th Airlift Control Flight and the 712th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron flew to the Canadian base, two miles northeast of Trenton, Ontario, to meet with active-duty members of the 429 Transport Squadron and 2 Air Movements Squadron.

Lt. Col. Craig LaFave, the 326th AS commander, said he came up with the idea of pairing up with the Canadians while working as the 512th AW program integration officer as the 326th AS transitioned to the C-17 in 2007 and 2008.

Much like the 326th AS, the 429 TS has been flying the C-17 since the summer of 2007.

The 429 TS is part of the 8 Wing, which is the heart of Canada's air mobility forces and is at one of the largest air force bases in Canada. According to the unit's Web site, In addition to the C-17, 8 Wing aircrews also fly the CC-130 Hercules, the CC-150 Polarix, the CH-149 Cormorant tactical transport search and rescue helicopter and the CC-144 Challenger.

On the first day of their visit, Capt. Steve Churchill, a 326th AS aircraft commander, and his crew received a flight briefing about air space protocols and procedures in Canadian airspace. The next day, the 326th AS aircrew flew a training mission consisting of low-level navigation, assault landing zone operations, tactical arrivals and departures in Canadian military airspace.

"It's great for low-level flying," Captain Churchill said. "We benefited from this training, because we were able to fly procedures we can't typically conduct on the East Coast due to heavier air traffic."

In the future, the 326th AS aircrews plan to fly with 429 TS aircrews, the captain said.

"The program will allow our crews and unit personnel to exchange unclassified tactics, techniques and procedures while building camaraderie with our Canadian allies," Colonel LaFave said.

Reservists from the 46th APS and 512th ALCF met with 2 Air Movements Squadron members Aug. 24 and received a tour of their facilities. On average, the Canadian squadron processes 23 million pounds of freight and 42,000 passengers annually, according to the unit's Web site.

"Anytime we can get together and train, it will enhance our mutual operations, which are not all that different," said Canadian Maj. Aaron Spott, the 2 AMS commanding officer. "We deploy to the same areas and share the same ramp space, so the more we know about each other's systems, the better we can work together."

Senior Master Sgt. Dan Schultz, the NCO in charge of the 46th APS ramp section, said he is looking forward to working with the Canadians.

"We like this idea, because it's an excellent opportunity to jointly train together, which is beneficial for us, especially with an operational readiness exercise next year and the operational readiness inspection in 2011," Sergeant Schultz said.

This isn't the first time 512th AW reservists have trained with the Canadians.

"The Canadians have been down here this summer using our C-17 simulator, and my special projects office has sat down with them during the planning for these missions," Colonel LaFave said.

Also, the 512th ALCF and reservists from throughout 22nd Air Force participated in Maple Flag Exercise 42, held at Cold Lake Air Base, Alberta, Canada, from May 29 through June 14.

The 512th AW's next trip to Canada is planned for Sept 12.

"We hope we can continue a regular exchange, probably quarterly or semi-annually," the colonel said

Chest Pain

Chest pain and discomfort are key warning signs for a [heart attack](#) but they can be indicative of other illnesses and injuries as well. So the question is, if you have these symptoms, when should you call 911?

According to WebMD, seek medical attention immediately if you are experiencing chest discomfort or pain that is crushing or squeezing and feels like a heavy weight on the chest. You should also seek immediate care if you have chest discomfort or pain that occurs with any of the following: sweating; shortness of breath, nausea or vomiting; pain that spreads from the chest to the back, neck, jaw, upper belly, or one or both shoulders or arms (the left shoulder and arm are more commonly affected); dizziness, [lightheadedness](#), or feeling like you are going to faint; or a fast, slow, or irregular heartbeat.

When in doubt, seek medical attention. It's better to rule out a serious cardiac problem than risk irreparable heart damage or death. Be mindful that the first 3 to 6 hours after the onset of a heart attack are extremely critical. This is the timeframe when much of the damage to the heart occurs. If the victim has already sought care, serious damage to the heart can usually be avoided and the patient's risk of death or permanent disability is greatly diminished.

Additional information about chest pain and its many causes can be found at [WebMD](#).

Source: NAUS Weekly Update

Prevention & Treatment of H1N1 Flu

Source: Center for Disease Control and Prevention

What can I do to protect myself from getting sick?

There is no vaccine available right now to protect against novel H1N1 virus. However, a novel H1N1 vaccine is currently in production and may be ready for the public in the fall. As always, a vaccine will be available to protect against [seasonal influenza](#)

There are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza.

Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. [Alcohol-based hand cleaners*](#) are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you are sick with flu-like illness, [CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone](#) except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.) Keep away from others as much as possible to keep from making others sick.

Other important actions that you can take are:

- Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures.
- Be prepared in case you get sick and need to stay home for a week or so; a supply of over-the-counter medicines, [alcohol-based hand rubs,*](#) tissues and other related items might could be useful and help avoid the need to make trips out in public while you are sick and contagious

What is the best way to keep from spreading the virus through coughing or sneezing?

If you are sick with flu-like illness, [CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone](#) except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.)

Keep away from others as much as possible. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or

sneezing. Put your used tissue in the waste basket. Then, clean your hands, and do so every time you cough or sneeze.

How long can an infected person spread this virus to others?

People infected with seasonal and novel H1N1 flu shed virus and may be able to infect others from 1 day before getting sick to 5 to 7 days after. This can be longer in some people, especially children and people with weakened immune systems and in people infected with the new H1N1 virus.

E-Mail Tracking

Here is something everyone should read and react accordingly.

By now, I suspect everyone is familiar with www.snopes.com and/or www.truthorfiction.com for determining whether information received via email is just that: true/false or fact/fiction. Both are excellent sites. **Use them before forwarding E-mails that make wild statements!**

Advice from Snopes.com "Very important!"

1) Any time you see an E-Mail that says forward this on to '10' (or however many) of your friends, sign this petition, or you'll get bad luck, good luck, you'll see something funny on your screen after you send it, or whatever, it **almost always has an E-Mail tracker program attached** that tracks The cookies and E-Mail addresses of those folks you forward it to.

The host sender is getting a copy each time it gets forwarded and then is able to get lists of 'active' E-Mail addresses to use in SPAM E-Mails, or to sell to other spammers.

Even when you get emails that demand you send the email on if you're not ashamed of God/Jesus...that's E-mail tracking and they're playing on our conscience.

These people don't care how they get your email addresses - just as long as they get them. Also, emails that talk about a missing child or a child with an incurable disease - "how would you feel if that was your child"...E-mail Tracking!!! Ignore them and don't participate!

2) Almost all E-Mails that ask you to add your name and forward on to others are similar to that mass letter years ago that asked people to send business cards to the little kid in Florida who wanted to break the Guinness Book of Records for the most cards. All it was, and all any of this type of E-Mail is, is a way to get names and 'cookie' tracking information for telemarketers and spammers - to validate active E-Mail accounts for their own profitable purposes.

You can do your friends and family members a GREAT favor by sending this information to them; you will be providing a service to your friends, and will be rewarded by not getting thousands of spam E-Mails in the future!

If you have been sending out (FORWARDING) the above kinds of E-Mail, now you know why you get so much SPAM!

Do yourself a favor and STOP adding your name(s) to those types of listings regardless of how inviting they might sound...or how guilty they make you feel if you don't! It's all about getting email addresses - nothing more!

You may think you are supporting a GREAT cause, but you are NOT! Instead, you will be getting tons of junk mail later and very possibly with a virus attached! Plus, you are helping the spammers get rich! Let's not make it easy for them!

Also: E-Mail petitions are NOT acceptable to the White House, Ottawa, Congress or any other organization - i.e. Social Security, etc. (And anyway, who is supposed to finally turn in these E-Mail petitions?) To be

acceptable, petitions must have a signed signature and full address of the person signing the petition, so this is a waste of time and you're just helping the Email trackers.

3) AND... Don't forget... **delete other people's e-mail addresses on your e-mails when forwarding/sending.** Instead of using To: or CC:, **use BCC:** (blind carbon copy). (You'll notice that the only names up top on this E-Mail are yours and mine.)

FOLLOWING THESE SIMPLE RULES WILL DRASTICALLY CUT DOWN ON SPAM THAT YOU RECEIVE!

Things to Remember

Always remember you're unique. Just like everyone else.

Note to Our Readers: The Newswire will at times provide links to web sites for additional information. To our readers who receive the Newswire via the U.S. Postal Service, you are not getting full use of this publication. We strongly recommend that you have the Newswire sent to you via e-mail. For those readers who do not have Internet access you can come visit us at Building 65 Jefferson Barracks. We would be happy to download and print a copy of any information that you may need. See our office hours at the end of this publication. Your local library also has computers for patrons to gain access to the Internet.

STILL SERVING

73, Jerry

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Office hours are 0900 to 1200 hours Tuesday and Thursday. Office Hours are 0900-1300 Hrs Monday - Friday
On the 2nd and 3rd Thursdays the office will be closed at 1100 Hrs for the staff to attend Scott Retiree Council meeting and monthly luncheon.

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Disclaimer: Information and views expressed in the Newswire may not reflect the practices and policies of some Government Agencies. Every effort is made to verify information provided in this publication, the SRAO staff cannot guarantee the accuracy of this furnished by other agencies.