



US ARMY AVIATION CENTER OF EXCELLENCE
FORT RUCKER, ALABAMA 36362-5000
"Our Mission is Warfighting!"



ISSUE 1-08

RETIREMENT SERVICES NEWSLETTER

FALL 2008

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 Official information contained herein is valid until changed or superseded in a later issue of the Newsletter or other official publications.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 to begin thinking about attending Retiree Appreciation Days (RAD) at Fort Rucker, scheduled for 24 and 25 October this year. The Retirement Services Office, Lyster Army Health Clinic, and your Retiree Council are busy planning 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 24th. Remember when getting all those shots years ago was anything but a "looked forward to" experience? Door prizes will be given out each day and Saturday we will have that old favorite, "SOS," for breakfast. This year's guest speaker comes to us from the Veteran's Administration. She is Mrs. Anissa Bauman, Nurse Manager, with the VA Wiregrass Outpatient Clinic. A panel of local experts will also be there to answer questions. Please plan to stay for lunch and visit the many activities on post during the afternoon. On a separate note, the elimination of the Social Security offset of Survivor Benefits Plan (SBP) has occurred, with the full 55% of retired pay now paid to SBP beneficiaries. On 1 October, the long awaited 30 year paid-up SBP statute takes effect. Sadly, I must report we lost several council members from last year, one passed away and the others reached their term's end, so we have some new members: Mrs. Marie Wilkins, 1SG(R) Ken Prier, SMSgt(R) Jean Woodruff, and SFC(R) Ralph Reed. There are openings on the Council, so please let us know if you are interested in "Still Serving" as a member. We have slots for both officer and enlisted representatives. Last and certainly not least, our local council is now able to claim a member of the Army Chief of Staff Retiree Council as one of its own. CW4(R) Robert Cooper represented the Wiregrass and surrounding areas at this year's meeting in Washington, D.C. Ask him about his experience if you get a chance during the RAD. We look forward to seeing you on 24 October.

Retirement Services Officer's Message

Chris Moore

The annual Retiree Appreciation Days (RAD) approaches quickly and you and your Family are cordially invited to attend. You will want to make plans to be here with our featured speaker and representatives from several organizations providing informative answers and updates. We try to design the program with you in mind, so please join us. Only through your attendance at the RAD are we able to consider this event a true success and ensure its continuance in the future. Making the RAD enjoyable and worthwhile to everyone is very important to me. I need your assistance in doing just that, making sure the RAD reflects what you want or need. Please suggest 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, please contact me at (334) 255-9739 or (800) 240-9373, or if you are handy with a computer you may contact me by e-mail at ruck.retirees@conus.army.mil. Let me hear from you.

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 may contact DFAS toll free at (800) 321-1080.

**34TH ANNUAL FORT RUCKER APPRECIATION DAYS
24-25 OCTOBER 2008**

The Fort Rucker Commanding General, Retiree Council, and Retirement Services Office welcome you to the 34th Annual Retiree Appreciation Days. Please use this agenda in making your selections before mailing in the pre-registration form.

24 October 2008: Retiree Health Fair Hosted by Lyster Army Health Clinic

Lyster Army Health Clinic will host the annual Retiree Health Fair on 24 October 2008 from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. As always, the Retiree Health Fair will afford you the opportunity to have blood pressure, cholesterol, and cancer screenings. There will be educational material and classes concentrating on the health status of mature adults. Today we are living longer and have more conditions to learn to cope with than our parents did. Education on causes, prevention, and treatment of these conditions will be addressed. Specific topics include healthy nutrition, depression and dementia, bone health, hormone replacement therapy, and others. The Immunization Clinic will provide flu shots if the vaccine is available. The parking lot on the east side of the clinic will be available for parking to provide easier access to the health fair area. It is the goal of the Lyster Army Health Clinic staff to provide you with information to enhance your health and let you become more adept at dealing with medical problems. We look forward to seeing each of you at the Retiree Health Fair!

RETIREMENT CEREMONY (3:00 p.m.): The Retirement Ceremony is at 3:00 p.m. in 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 is in the Aviators' Landing immediately following the 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: Authentic style Schnitzel w/Jaeger Gravy along with other assorted Meats, German Potato Salad and German Cole Slaw, assorted Vegetables, assorted Desserts, Rolls w/Butter, Coffee and Tea. **COST IS \$12.60 PER PERSON AND MUST BE PAID IN ADVANCE.**

25 October 2008: All Activities at the Aviators' Landing

BREAKFAST BUFFET (7:00 a.m.) Cost is \$9.50 per person. (Advance reservations only):

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, Mrs. Anissa Bauman, Nurse Manager of VA Wiregrass Outpatient Clinic. 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.) Cost is \$8.00 per person. (Advance reservations only):

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

JOIN US FOR FUN, FOOD, AND DOOR PRIZES AT THE 2008 RAD!!

Commonly Referenced Fort Rucker Numbers

AAFES (Main Store)	503-9044	Pools	255-3386
Adjutant General (AG)	255-2700	Post Office	598-6446
Army Community Service	255-3817	Reloc/Lending Hanger	255-3161
Army Emergency Relief	255-2341	Rent –All, AAFES	598-3092
Army Lodging	598-5216	Retirement Services	255-9124
Auto Craft Shop	255-9725	Retirement Svcs (Toll Free)	800-240-9373
Aviators' Landing	598-2426	SJA, Legal Assistance	255-3482
Barber Shop (AAFES)	598-4484	Spiritual Life Center	255-3903
Beauty Shop (AAFES)	598-4315	Staff Duty Officer	255-3100
Bowling Center/Pro Shop	255-9503	Tailor/Alteration Shop	598-2312
Burger King	503-9044, ext 220	Theatre, AAFES	255-2408
Casualty Operations	255-9081/9005	Thrift Shop	255-9595
Chapel, Main Post	255-3140	Tire Shop/Auto Parts	503-9338, ext 109
Child Development Center	255-2262	Vehicle Registration	255-3168
Civilian Personnel Office	255-9165	Veterinary Treatment Facility	255-9071
Claims	255-2517	Volunteer Coordinator	255-3949
Class Six	503-9044, ext 283	Youth Services	255-9108
Cleaners PX Annex	598-3417		
Clothing Sales	503-9338, ext 105		
Commissary	255-9177		
Community Health Nurse	255-7151		
Community Recreation Division	255-3878		
Consumer Affairs/Financial Div	255-9631		
Craft Center	255-9020		
DEERS	255-2182		
Dir Morale/Welfare/Recreation	255-2100		
Employment Assistance Program	255-3949		
Equestrian Center	598-3384		
Flowers Shop, AAFES	598-1678		
Four Seasons	503-9044, ext 252		
Golf Course	255-2449		
ID Cards	255-2437		
Information, Tickets and Reservations (ITR)	255-9517/2997		
Job Line	255-3375		
Lemon Lot Info	255-9020		
Library	255-3885		
Lyster Health Clinic	255-7000		
Managed Care	255-7230		
Military Police	255-2222		
Mini Mall Shoppette	503-9338		
Outpatient Medical Records	255-7110		
Optical Shop, AAFES	598-4373		
Outdoor Recreation	255-4305		
Patient Appointments	255-7000		
Patient Representative	255-7337		
Pharmacy	255-7000		
Physical Fitness Center	255-2296		

Other Commonly Referenced Numbers

Dept of Veterans Affairs	800-827-1000
DFAS-Cleveland	800-321-1080
DFAS-CL (Fax #)	800-469-6559
DFAS-Denver	800-435-3395
DFAS Casualty Notification	800-269-5170
NSLI/USGLI	800-748-5822
Social Security Admin	800-772-1213
SGLI/VGLI	800-419-1473

Local VA Offices

Website: www.va.gov

Coffee County	334-894-2171/5858
Covington County	334-222-5481
Crenshaw County	334-335-6568
Dale County	334-774-5550
Geneva County	334-684-5657
Houston County	334-677-4749
Mobile County	251-574-8578/8579
Pike County	334-566-1780

Local Area Hotels

The Lodge, Daleville, AL	334-598-6304
Jameson Inn, Ozark, AL	334-774-0233
Green House Inn, Daleville, AL	334-598-1475
Days Inn, Enterprise, AL	334-347-3297

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.

RSO WEBSITE & HOME PAGE

The Ft Rucker Retirement Services website is 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.

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. A DFAS representative enters the information to initiate processing.

FUNERAL HONORS

Ft Rucker provides an Honors Team for deceased active duty, retirees, POWs, Medal of Honor recipients, and honorably discharged veterans for most of Alabama and the panhandle 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 office at (334) 255-9081 or (800) 661-1407. If you live in Mississippi, the Ft Polk Casualty office 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 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. If the RSO is not available, please be sure to leave a telephone number so he can return your call.

REQUIREMENTS TO OBTAIN OR RENEW ID CARDS

Effective March 1, 2008, rules changed regarding proof of identity. The new rules require two specific forms of identification. If you have any questions regarding the required documentation or to schedule an appointment, please call (334) 255-2182 or (334) 255-2437.

For Family members 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.

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

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.

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's website, <http://vetrecs.archives.gov>, is available for veterans to request a copy of their DD Form 214. This may be particularly helpful when a veteran needs a copy for employment purposes. Veterans and the next of kin of deceased former military members may use the online 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 application process was designed to provide better service 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; closed for lunch from 12 p.m. to 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 provide information about Shades of Green and assist you in obtaining hotel reservations nationwide. We also have 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 by telephone at (800) 422-9988. The Home in Gulfport, MS, was damaged by Hurricane Katrina and is tentatively scheduled to reopen in May 2010.

COMMISSARY

Finish your shopping quicker with our new self-service check out lanes. These four new lanes are just another upgrade found at your Ft Rucker Commissary. You can find information about other improvements and changes to come at the Defense Commissary's website <http://www.commissaries.com>.

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 who wants to receive it electronically. Once you say you want it via e-mail, we will take your name off the newsletter's traditional mailing list. To help with the process, please send your request, along with your US Postal address, to ruck.retirees@conus.army.mil. Thanks for your assistance and cooperation.

LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO STAY DURING THE RAD?

Contact Outdoor Recreation to reserve your spot at one of the paved RV pads located at Lake Tholocco. You can also request a reservation at one of the newly opened cabins. Call today at (334) 255-4234!

JOIN US FOR FUN, FOOD, AND DOOR PRIZES AT THE 2008 RAD!!

**2008 FORT RUCKER RETIREE APPRECIATION DAYS
REGISTRATION FORM**

Please complete the following application and return to the Retirement Services Office NLT 17 October 2008. Make your check payable to IMWRF or furnish credit card info below, and mail to Cdr, USAACE, 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 24

SATURDAY, OCT 25

Health Fair

General Session

Retirement Ceremony

Command Group Dinner

RESERVATIONS:

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

Eating

_____ Friday Night Buffet(s) @ \$12.60 per person \$ _____

_____ Saturday Breakfast Buffet(s) @ \$9.50 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!!