

COMMANDER'S RETIREE COUNCIL  
Fort Rucker, Alabama

The Commander's Retiree Council held its regularly scheduled meeting on 5 Mar 2009. It was the 244th 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 Bob Bunting	CSM Gene Nelson
COL Herman S. Heath	SGM Sam McMaster
COL James E. Hyers	SMS Jean A. Woodruff, USAF
LTC Carolyn Bost-Pittman	SFC Bennett Jergenson
CW4 Bob Cooper	EOC Fred Griffin, USN
	Mrs. Marie Wilkins

MEMBERS ABSENT

BG Douglas Smith	CSM James W. Harris
COL Emil Zimmerman	1SG Ken Prier
MAJ Jack K. Swinehart	SFC Ralph Reed

ADVISORS PRESENT

Mr. George Steuber, DGC	Mr. Bobby Ward, Commissary
Mrs. Janice Sullivan, DMWR	Ms Ellen Rutledge, AAFES
Mr. Marc Wonders, PAO	Mr. Chris Moore, RSO

2. SGM Nelson called the meeting to order at 1130.
3. The minutes of the last meeting were approved as written.
4. Old Business - CPT Chris Coy from SJA discussed solicitation and general fund raising by the Retiree Council. His main point was: Represent yourself as a retiree and you must use your "retired" rank, and not represent yourself as a DOD civilian.
5. Committee Reports- None.
  - a. Public Affairs – SGM McMaster provided a calendar of events. Highlights included the Travel Extravaganza, Spring Fest, Thunder on Tholoco, Ft Rucker Appreciation, and the AER Poker Tournament.
  - b. Legislative Affairs – COL Hyers reported military credit unions are in jeopardy because of being forced to provide nearly \$5 billion in bail outs to a small group of corporate credit unions due to risky loan practices. This could put almost half of military credit unions into the

red and potentially cause reduced loan opportunities, reduced savings returns, and higher loan rates for millions of military families.

For the first time in history, the FY2010 budget includes an initiative to help ease the disability offset to military retired pay. According to the President's budget release, it would expand coverage to currently ineligible medically retired members who are highly disabled. This could mean authorizing concurrent receipt for medical retirees with less than 20 years and at least a 50% VA rating.

TRICARE Fees. The budget information made public so far is silent on this issue. There is no healthcare-related budget reduction indicated for the defense budget in either the discretionary or mandatory spending categories, as there was in the last several budgets.

VA Budget. The budget includes \$55.9 billion for "discretionary" VA programs (mostly health care), almost an 11% increase from FY2009.

The Military Spouse Bill is championed by Rep. John Carter (R-TX). The bill would amend the Service Member's Civil Relief Act to allow military spouses the option to choose the same state of residence as their spouse or retain residency in their previous state of domicile.

- c. Health Care - No report.
- d. Voluntary Support Program - No report.
- e. Commissary – Mr. Ward reported 70 of the 86 recall actions were peanut products. All were removed from the shelves and no recalls were reported on the brands remaining on the shelves. The gift check program has been cancelled and may possibly impact the RAD.
- f. PX – The additional 30% off of clothing is limited until Saturday. POPEYES and Burger King both offer specials for March and April. Buyers will visit Ft Rucker from 1100-1300, 7 April for a fashion clothing survey. The PX was approved to sell firearms and ammunition.
- g. Golf Course – Mr. Cooper reported there a membership drive currently underway. By mid-April, modification to 8 and 9 wholes at the Red Course will be completed. Currently, the Silver Wings Golf Course is in "the red" due to Administrative and maintenance costs.
- h. Equestrian Center – COL Heath reported low entries for the last show was due to the weather. Due to extra expense for a volunteer veterinarian, recommendation was made to request an equine veterinarian be assigned at Ft Rucker.
- i. Outdoor Recreation – SFC Jergenson reported general fishing permits are issued for \$25.00. New floating docks are being installed. A pan fish tournament will be hosted on 28 March in addition to the CG's turkey hunt on 18 April. Turkey season will begin soon.

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j. Bowling Alley – No Report

k. RAD – No updates to report. The RAD date is 30 October 2009.

6. Advisors' Comments.

a. The PAO representative, Mr. Wonders, presented information on the 2009 Year of the NCO "Time in the Desert." CSM Sanders is formulating.

b. Mrs. Sullivan, DMWR, reported the ITR trip to Biloxi, Mississippi with 29 people attending and leaving at 6:00AM and returning at 2:00AM the next morning. This trip will visit two casinos. She also mentioned the Travel Extravaganza on 17 March and the Spring Fest on 20-21 March.

c. Mr. Steuber reported the stimulus bill will assist in the renovation of the Physical Fitness Center on Andrews Avenue, installing a new heating system in the AIT barracks, and other projects.

7. New Business – None

8. The meeting adjourned at 1230. The next scheduled meeting will be held at Aviator's Landing at 1130 on 2 April 2009.

Approved via-email

BOB BUNTING  
COL, Retired  
Co-Chairman

Approved via-email

Gene Nelson  
CSM, Retired  
Co-Chairman

Prepared By:

Carolyn Bost-Pittman  
LTC, Retired  
Secretary

  
XVETTE J. KELLEY  
Colonel, Aviation  
Garrison Commander