

**35th Fighter Wing**  
**Misawa Air Base, Japan**

Retiree Activities Office

Col Stilwell  
 35th FW/CC

Col Craig  
 35th FW/CV

CMSgt (Ret) Barton  
 RAD Director  
 Newsletter Editor

TSgt (Ret) Watkins  
 RAD Deputy Director

# Retiree Activities Office Newsletter

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Articles appearing in this newsletter are compiled from local sources, newsletters received by the RAD, and from other military sources. Information has been edited and reprinted for the benefit of our retiree population. Our appreciation is extended to those agencies and newsletter sources.

## Healthcare Reform No Impact on VA/TRICARE

In ongoing discussions about health-care reform, President Barack Obama offered assurance to those receiving medical care through TRICARE or the Department of Veterans Affairs: Your benefits are safe.

Eligibility for health care under VA or TRICARE "will not be affected by our efforts at broader health-care reform," President Obama told military reporters at the White House on Aug. 4.

President Obama said he also made that point clear after meeting with the American Legion's national commander, Dave Rehbein, and executive director, Peter Gaytan.

"I want to make sure that message gets out to our veterans," the president said. "I think it's very important to get the message out: If you are in the VA system and are happy with your care, great. We have no intention of changing your eligibility."

While a new, national program will

not force anyone to change health-care systems, President Obama said it could offer benefits or geographic convenience that might make some veterans elect to join it. A national program "will actually give them more choices, more flexibility," he said.

President Obama cited problems in U.S. health-care delivery systems, which he said cost more than other countries' programs and too often deliver less.

The VA "has probably made more progress than most systems out there in increasing quality" during the past 25 years, and could help shed light on better ways of delivering health care, he said.

But the cost of delivering that care is high even at VA, and TRICARE consumes a big piece of the Defense Department's budget, he said.

With the fiscal 2010 budget reflecting the largest VA funding increase

in 30 years, President Obama told American Legion leaders he is committed to ensuring that VA provides America's veterans the highest-quality health care possible.

Meanwhile, he told reporters VA will increase its outreach to more veterans to make sure they're aware of their medical benefits and other entitlements.

"Although there are hundreds of thousands of veterans who are using our services, we know there are hundreds of thousands more who may not know that benefits are available," he said.

"And we are working really hard to make sure that every single veteran -- not just our active force, but also National Guard and reservists -- are aware of the benefits that are available to them.

"Guiding them through that process, we think, is extraordinarily important."

**Inside this issue:**

<b>TRICARE/VA/DFAS</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Vet Centers/IRS Scam /AFN Misawa</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>SSA Program/VOTE</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Medicare 2010/TRICARE 2010/Retiree Phone Lines</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Cell Phone Discounts/SSN &amp; ID Cards</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>AMC Website/Air Fest</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Retiree Appreciation Days 2009</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>62nd AF Birthday Luncheon</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>PQW/MIA Retreat</b>	<b>10</b>

## Passport Application On Line

Effective immediately, when applying for a passport at the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo, the American Citizen Services (ACS) unit asks that all applicants utilize the online Passport Application Wizard (<https://poptform.state.gov/>) and print (single sided only) the completed passport application prior to coming to the Embassy.





## TRICARE Lower Prices On Retail Prescription Drugs

The Defense Department is projected to reduce spending by \$1.67 billion on prescription medications sold in retail pharmacies in fiscal 2010, following the full implementation of Section 703 of the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal 2008.

"These are significant savings to the Department of Defense and are crucial to our effort to slow the rapid growth of pharmacy costs," said Rear Adm. Thomas McGinnis, chief of TRICARE pharmaceutical operations.

For the past several years the DoD has paid commercial rates for prescription drugs purchased in the TRICARE retail pharmacy network; however, the DoD is included in the 1992 Veterans Health Care Act as one of the "big four" government

agencies entitled to federal prices when it purchases pharmaceuticals for its beneficiaries.

The DoD currently receives federal ceiling prices, the maximum price that can be charged for brand name drugs in military treatment facilities and the TRICARE Mail Order Pharmacy. Through authority provided in Section 703 of the 2008 NDAA and the "final rule" implementing the regulation, the DoD will now get these same discounts in the TRICARE retail pharmacy network.

TRICARE beneficiaries who need a prescription filled right away and are unable to get to a military pharmacy, can visit one of the more than 54,000 civilian pharmacies that are part of the TRICARE retail pharmacy network.

Through retail network pharmacies, beneficiaries can fill prescriptions up to a 30-day supply of most prescription medications for minimal out-of-pocket costs. They present the pharmacist with a written prescription, along with their uniformed services identification card.

TRICARE retail network pharmacies are available in the United States, Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa and the Northern Mariana Islands. They are not located in any other overseas areas.

To locate a retail pharmacy in the network based on ZIP code, call the TRICARE retail pharmacy program at 866-363-8779. (Courtesy of TRICARE)

## VA Third Party Insurers

Requiring veterans receiving medical treatment from the Veterans Affairs Department to provide their Social Security number and pertinent information about other health coverage could shave \$109 million a year from the VA budget, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office. The Social Security number could help match the patient with Social Security

and federal tax records to show whether a veteran meets or exceeds income thresholds for non-chargeable treatment if he does not have a service-connected medical issue, while insurance information would help bill a third party for care. The Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee has included the proposal in an omnibus veteran's health care bill that is expected to become law

later this year. While some veterans may find the questions intrusive, lawmakers believe that ensuring VA is paying only for care it must provide will make certain that veterans who are entitled to non-chargeable treatment are able to receive it. [Source: NavyTimes Fast Track Pay & Benefits 27 Jul 09]



## DFAS R & A Program

Since JAN 02, the Retired and Annuity Pay (R&A) program at the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) has been outsourced by a private contractor. Beginning in early 2010 R&A operations will once again be performed by Department of Defense personnel. Recent Federal

legislation has led the Department of Defense to survey all contracted programs and select any that could be returned and operated by the Government, specifically those that have been performed by the Government within the last 10 years. A recently conducted Business Case

Analysis by DFAS determined that the R&A program would be suitable for such a purpose. DFAS' intention is that this decision will result in a more securely managed processing environment, that may surpass the current level of quality and efficiency of service to our nation's

military retirees, and potentially save the Government \$20 million across the next 10 years. DFAS and its current R&A contractor will provide a seamless transition of functions back to the Government. [Source: DFAS Newsletter Aug 09]



## VA Creating 28 New Vet Centers

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki announced today that combat veterans will receive readjustment counseling and other assistance in 28 additional communities across the country where the Department of Veterans Affairs will establish vet centers in 2010.

"VA is committed to providing high-quality outreach and readjustment counseling to all combat veterans," Secretary Shinseki said. "These 28 new vet centers will address the growing need for those services."

The community-based vet centers -- already in all 50 states -- are a key component of VA's mental health program, providing veterans with mental health screening and post-traumatic stress disorder counseling.

The existing 232 centers conduct community outreach offering counseling on employment, family issues

and education to combat veterans and family members. Staffs also offer bereavement counseling for families of servicemembers killed on active duty and counseling for veterans who were sexually harassed on active duty.

Vet center services are earned through service in a combat zone or area of hostility and are provided at no cost to veterans or their families.

They are staffed by small multidisciplinary teams, which may include social workers, psychologists, psychiatric nurses, master's-level counselors and outreach specialists. More than 70 percent of vet center employees are veterans themselves, a majority of whom served in combat zones.

The vet center program was established in 1979 by Congress, recognizing that many Vietnam veterans were

still having readjustment problems. In 2008, the vet center program provided more than 1.1 million visits to over 167,000 veterans, including over 53,000 visits by more than 14,500 veteran families. More information about vet centers can be found at [www.vetcenter.va.gov/index.asp](http://www.vetcenter.va.gov/index.asp).

Communities receiving new VA vet centers include:

American Samoa

Arizona -- Mohave and Yuma Counties

California -- San Luis Obispo County  
Delaware -- Sussex County

Florida -- Marion, Lake, Collier, Okaloosa and Bay Counties

Georgia -- Muscogee and Richmond Counties

Hawaii -- Western Dahu

Indiana -- St. Joseph County

Louisiana -- Rapides Parish

Michigan -- Grand Traverse County, also serving Wexford County

Missouri -- Boone County

Montana -- Cascade and Flathead Counties

Ohio -- Stark County

Oregon -- Deschutes County

Pennsylvania -- Lancaster County

South Carolina -- Horry County

Texas -- Jefferson and Taylor Counties

Utah -- Washington County

Washington -- Walla Walla County, also serving Umatilla County, Oregon

Wisconsin -- LaCrosse County, also serving Monroe County. (Courtesy of VA)

## IRS Scam

We have recently received many phone calls and emails in regards to a faxed bogus IRS letter and Form W-8BEN (Certificate of Foreign Status of Beneficial Owner for United States Tax Withholding) asking non-residents to provide personal information such as account numbers, PINs, mother's maiden name and passport number. The legitimate IRS Form W-8BEN is sent to the recipients by their financial institutions, not the IRS and is used to establish appropriate tax withholding for foreign individuals.

This scam has been around for about

5 years circulating mainly in South America, Europe, and the Caribbean and it has now surfaced in Japan. For more information on this specific scam please go to the IRS webpage.

The IRS generally does not send faxes or emails to taxpayers, nor does the IRS discuss tax account matters with taxpayers via email or fax. Moreover, the IRS never requests security-related personal information, such as PIN numbers from taxpayers. Please be suspicious of any fax, email or phone call asking for any security-related personal information.

Those who have received questionable faxes or emails claiming to come from the IRS may forward it to the following address: [phishing@irs.gov](mailto:phishing@irs.gov). You may also forward suspicious faxes or e-mails to the Federal Trade Commission at [spam@uce.gov](mailto:spam@uce.gov) or call 1-877-IDTHEFT (438-4338).

For information about other scams and what you can do to protect yourself (or what to do if you are the victim of a scam), visit the U.S. Department of State website.



## AFN Misawa Signing Off 2011

We have the date for the turning off the AFN Misawa, over-the-air, UHF TV Channel 66. We will not renew the broadcast license when it expires July 2011. At that time, we will make

the change to digital only. Off-base retirees will only have the satellite option for receiving TV service. (SMSgt Schneck, AFN Misawa Affiliate Superintendent)



## SSA Compassionate Allowance Program



In OCT 08, Social Security launched Compassionate Allowances to expedite the processing of disability claims for applicants with medical conditions so severe that their conditions by definition meet Social Security's standards. The program allows SSA to quickly target the most obviously disabled individuals for allowances based on objective medical information that they can obtain quickly. Michael J. Astrue, Commissioner of Social Security has held four Compassionate Allowance public outreach hearings this year to evaluate additional conditions to add to the list. The first three hearings were on rare diseases, cancers, and traumatic brain injury (TBI) and stroke. The fourth public outreach hearing took place in Chicago on 29 JUL. Commissioner Astrue was joined by Marie A. Bernard, M.D., Deputy Director of the National Institute on Aging, National Institutes of Health, and other Social Security officials. They heard testimony from some of the nation's leading experts on early-onset Alzheimer's disease

and related dementias about possible methods for identifying and implementing Compassionate Allowances for people with early-onset Alzheimer's.

"This year, through Compassionate Allowances and our Quick Disability Determination process, over 100,000 Americans with severe disabilities will be approved for Social Security disability benefits in a matter of days rather than the months and years it can sometimes take," said Commissioner Astrue. "We are now looking to add more diseases and impairments to these expedited processes. With today's hearing, we are expanding our focus from specific rare diseases and cancers to look at subgroups of much broader conditions. Early-onset Alzheimer's disease is a rapidly progressive and debilitating disease of the brain that affects individuals between the ages of 50 and 65 and clearly deserves consideration. "With the aging of the baby-boomers, we are beginning to see more, younger working Americans diagnosed with this

devastating disease," Commissioner Astrue said.

The initial list of Compassionate Allowance conditions was developed as a result of information received at previous public outreach hearings, public comment on an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, comments received from the Social Security and Disability Determination Service communities, and the counsel of medical and scientific experts. Consideration was given to which conditions most likely met SSA's current definition of disability. A modest 50 conditions were selected for the initiative's rollout. The list can be seen at <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/compassionateallowances/conditions.htm> and will expand over time. To learn more and to view a web cast of the 29 JUL hearing, refer to [www.socialsecurity.gov/compassionateallowances](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/compassionateallowances). [Source: Disability.gov Benefits News & Events Update 29 Jul 09]

## DON'T FORGET TO VOTE IN NOVEMBER





## Medicare Rates 2010

Medicare costs are expected to continue to escalate in 2010, but seniors won't be getting any comparable increase in their annual cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs), government economists say. The Social Security Trustees recently forecast that there would be no COLA in 2010 and 2011 because of extremely low inflation. Due to a special "hold harmless" provision of law, the government estimates that about 30 million Medicare beneficiaries will have no change in their Medicare Part B premium, which is automatically deducted from most people's Social

Security benefits. The little-known provision protects the Social Security benefits of most seniors when the Part B premium increases more than a person's COLA. If there is no COLA increase in 2010, then there is no Part B premium increase for beneficiaries protected by the hold harmless provision.

The hold harmless protection, however, does not cover about one-quarter of Part B enrollees, and does not apply at all to Part C Medicare Advantage or Part D plan premiums. The senior citizens League (TSC)

estimates that more than 6.8 million Social Security beneficiaries, about one in every seven, could see their Social Security checks (or direct deposits) reduced next year. If individuals have Medicare Advantage or drug plan premiums automatically deducted from their Social Security and the premium increases, then their benefits will be reduced to cover those rising costs. In addition millions of other seniors pay their plans directly. They would also have to pay a bigger portion of their Social Secu-

rity to cover rising costs and would have less to live on. Medicare Trustees estimate that basic Part B premiums will rise by about \$7.80 per month in 2010 (from \$96.40 to \$104.20), and would jump to \$120.20 by 2011 for seniors subject to the increase. Nationwide Part D premiums climbed about 24% on average in 2009 for most beneficiaries, and have increased about 10% per year, on average, since 2006. [Source: TSC Social Security and Medicare Advisor, Vol. 14, No. 6 dtd 27 Jul 09]

## TRICARE Fees In 2010

Raising TRICARE fees should be the final resort in the effort to hold down military health care costs, the Senate says in a resolution attached to the 2010 defense budget. The resolution, passed by voice vote at the urging of Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ) is not legally binding; it's more of a warning. For the first time in three years, the Defense Department has not proposed raising TRICARE co-payments, deductibles or enrollment fees, so Congress does not have to act on behalf of retirees and their families to block anything. However, Pentagon officials have made clear that the only reason they didn't ask for a fee hike is that they are hoping to work out a compromise to do so in the future.

The House may be ready for an increase. Rep. Susan Davis (D-CA), who chairs the House Armed Services Committee's military personnel panel, said some fee hikes may be inevitable as part of a larger compromise that includes other initiatives to hold down costs. She anticipates a discussion about fee hikes will come next year, during debate over the 2011 defense budget. While Davis has not offered a specific proposal, aides said they don't think it would be out of line to increase TRICARE fees to keep pace with any increase in military retired pay. However, linking increases in fees to increases in retired pay might not result in any increase at all. For

2010, government economists are predicting there will be no cost-of-living adjustment in retired pay. That annual adjustment is tied to the cost of goods and services, which have been falling, according to the Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The Senate seems steadfastly opposed to fee increases except as a last-ditch effort Lautenberg, who led efforts to block proposed fee increases over the past three years, said nothing has changed his view. "We owe our troops and their families the best quality health care at affordable prices," Lautenberg said, taking credit for working with the Obama administration to have health care

fee increases omitted from the 2010 budget. Lautenberg's resolution says the Defense Department "has many additional options to constrain the growth of health care spending in ways that do not disadvantage retired members of the armed services who participate or seek to participate in the TRICARE program, and should pursue any and all such options rather than seeking large increases for enrollment fees, deductibles and co-payments." But by opposing large increases, such as the tripling of some TRICARE fees proposed by the Pentagon over the last few years, the amendment may leave the door open for modest increases. [Source: NavyTimes Rick Maze Article 10 Aug 09 ]

## Telephone News Line Set Up For 'Non-Wired' Retirees

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (AFRNS) – A toll-free telephone news line has been set up for those retirees and surviving spouses who do not have computer access.

By calling (800) 558-1404, retirees and spouses can stay informed using this new easy-to-use menu-driven

service.

Callers can select from several different topics that are compiled from various electronic news sources. Topics include pay and annuity matters, medical and health care, and other benefits and entitlements.

This news line joins the e-Afterburner, Air Force Retiree News Service, and Air Force Retiree Web site at [www.retirees.af.mil](http://www.retirees.af.mil) in providing the latest news and information to the service's retiree community.



## Cell Phone Discounts



Military veterans and active-duty personnel are eligible for significant discounts on cell phone plans if they know to ask. There are over 23 million veterans in the U.S. of which many are unaware of the potential savings on their monthly cell phone bills. Monthly military discounts range from 15% on Verizon Wireless plans to 10% off - and no activation fee - on T-Mobile agreements. Alltel, Sprint and AT&T offer similar discounts. While not everyone knows about the discounts, those who do say that getting the companies to register them for the cheaper plans is no easy task. Phoenix Arizona resident Janis Johnson said she called her cell phone company to register her husband, an Air Force veteran. At first, a customer service representative said no veteran discount existed. "Then she said we should get the 15 percent discount, but we were

supposed to go to the Web site," she said. Johnson eventually gave up when she could find no place online to register.

Kenneth James Madetzke, 60, of Phoenix, had better luck. The Vietnam War veteran was able to sign up for AT&T's discounted plan and saves about \$8 a month. "It makes me feel good to have the money savings and be recognized as a veteran," Madetzke said. "The disappointment was that there was no advertisement. I had to pull it out of them." While waiting for doctor's appointments at the VA hospital, Madetzke often tells fellow veterans about the discount. Most, he said, know nothing about the deals. Bill Messer, president of Vietnam Veterans of America's Arizona State Council, said he used Verizon and hadn't heard of

the discount. Verizon spokeswoman Jenny Weaver said the firm makes an effort to inform veterans of the savings, with in-store posters and military-magazine ads. "There aren't any posters up in the Phoenix metro area right now, because of some of the other promotions we have going on," Weaver said. Most services require a military identification card, veteran identification card or military discharge papers as proof of veteran status. Some companies require online registration to get the discount. Many companies, including Verizon, also offer discounted plans for customers 65 and older. [Source: The Arizona Republic Parker Leavitt article 13 Jun 09 ]

## SSN And ID Cards



In response to an increasing awareness of the growing need to protect the safety of service members, retirees and their families' identity information, the Department of Defense is beginning to remove Social Security numbers from its identification cards. The removal is being done in phases as computer software is modified. Phase One is under way and involves removing the family member's number and replacing it with "XXX-XX-XXXX" on the card. The sponsor's number will remain visible for now.

Phase Two involves removing all printed Social Security numbers beginning later this year. Both the sponsor and cardholder numbers will be replaced with "XXX-XX-XXXX." Phase Three, set to begin in 2012, will involve removing Social Security numbers embedded in barcodes. In JAN 2010, retirees with an indefinite expiration date on their card can begin requesting a new card without a printed Social Security number. Family member ID cards will change when the cardholders' expired cards are renewed. There are more than

1,500 ID card centers worldwide. To find the nearest center, visit the RAPIDS site locator at [www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl/owa/home](http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl/owa/home) . People must present two forms of identification and one must be an unexpired federal- or state-issued photo ID. Specific guidance is published in the Air Force Instruction 36-3026-1P, June 17, 2009. [Source: Afterburner Sep 09 ]





## New AMC Web Site Offers Space-Available Travel Info

Air Mobility Command here recently unveiled its first official, command-level AMC Travel Web site.

People planning to travel the AMC military travel system can now point their Web browsers to [www.amc.af.mil/amctravel/index.asp](http://www.amc.af.mil/amctravel/index.asp) <<http://lyris.dmasa.dma.mil/t/2246039/4617084/5885/0/>> for the latest in AMC travel information.

The site, which officially went live July 24, offers prospective space-available travelers a wealth of information, including an updated AMC passenger terminal contact list (complete with phone, e-mail and Web links), and more than a dozen travel documents, example letters and brochures.

Every day around the world, hundreds of military and military-contracted commercial aircraft travel the world delivering troops and cargo. And each year, hundreds of thousands of military personnel, retirees, and their family members go along for the ride, courtesy of the AMC space-available travel program.

Space-available flights, also known as "military hops," are a unique benefit to U.S. service members,

retirees and their families. Under the AMC travel program, unused seats on U.S. military and military-contracted aircraft are made available to non-duty passengers on a space-available basis (once space-required or official-duty passengers and cargo have been accommodated).

According to one AMC travel expert, the AMC Travel Web site was created simply because "AMC customers deserve it."

"(The AMC Travel) site was created to provide our customers a wealth of AMC travel information, which can be counted on to contain the most accurate and up-to-date travel information available," said Tech. Sgt. Steve Katsonis of the AMC passenger policy branch. "Our customers deserved a Web site where they can obtain travel information that is correct, up to date and validated by AMC. This Web site will give them that."

Sergeant Katsonis said AMC officials understand the massive amount of anxiety and stress felt by space-required and space-available travelers.

"Our goal is that this site will answer any questions the passengers will have, therefore minimizing their stress before they leave

their homes," he said.

In the past, prospective space-available passengers frequently turned to one of several AMC headquarters offices in search of travel information. Sergeant Katsonis said although headquarters personnel are trained to respond to these public queries, he hopes the new Web site will provide all their information and more. Additionally, he said trained passenger service agents at AMC terminals worldwide are standing by to assist. People searching for up-to-the-minute AMC travel information are encouraged to contact their nearest AMC passenger terminal. A current listing is available on the new AMC Travel site.

Another benefit of the new AMC Travel site is that it will be updated with the latest breaking news and updates. For instance, Sergeant Katsonis said active-duty dependent travel policies have gone through a few significant changes during the past few years.

He said Department of Defense officials now allow unaccompanied travel by dependents when the military spouse is deployed on contingency/exercise/deployment orders, also known as CED orders.

According to Sergeant Katsonis, when the deployment is for 120 days or more, unaccompanied travel is authorized in category IV; and for deployments of 366 days or more, unaccompanied travel is authorized in the bottom of category III.

Sergeant Katsonis said he wants people to know that space-available travel is a great benefit, but it can be a stressful experience without the proper planning.

"AMC never guarantees travel, and passengers need to be prepared for their (space-available) trip to take more time than it would were they traveling commercial," the sergeant said.

He added that not every base is equipped with facilities or lodging capable of handling passengers stranded by a broken or rerouted aircraft.

"The most important thing to remember when traveling Space-A is be prepared to fly commercial if problems are encountered" Sergeant Katsonis said. "The key to a stress-free trip is to have a plan. Have enough money for all contingencies, and be mentally prepared for disappointment when plans don't come together." (Courtesy of AMC News Service)



## Retiree Appreciation Days 2009

We celebrated our 9th Annual Retiree Appreciation Days this year on Saturday and Sunday, 19 & 20 September, with a kickoff breakfast at the Mutsu Officers Club and a cake cutting and prize give-a-ways at the AAFES Main Exchange entrance. The 35th FSS provided a delicious complementary breakfast for about 85 retirees, spouses, and distinguished visitors. CMSgt Hastings, 35th FW Command Chief, provided the opening comments. Col. Craig, 35th FW Vice Commander officiated and we had Group Commanders and Squadron Commanders from Medical and Mission Support in attendance. We were again honored to have with us this year several Japanese widows from out of the area who came from as far away as Sendai, Sapporo and Aomori cities. Tickets were drawn for flower arrangements donated from the AAFES Floral Shop Vendor along with gift certificates from the USA Federal Credit Union. After a brief social hour we all adjourned to the BX Mall for the cake cutting and words from Col. Craig. Afterwards there was two hours of drawings for gifts and prizes donated by AAFES. Spending the day with us were volunteers from the Medical Group, the HAWC who provided blood pressure checks, Optometry providing glaucoma checks, Dental providing literature and dental hygiene products, and the TRICARE office with all the latest information on our benefits. The FSS and AAFES did a tremendous job this year in putting it all together and making it a memorable day. On Sunday, retirees and their spouses were treated to an early opening at the Commissary with a cake cutting ceremony officiated by Col. Craig and Capt. Haugen, Naval Air Facility Commander. A continental breakfast was served. Prizes, product give-a-ways, and special sales along with local/vendor coupons and a case lot sale awaited the retirees on entering the store. Our special thanks to Maj. Gordon, 35th FSS/CC, Ms. Miyako Sugiyama, the retirees favorite caterer, Ms. Inchaurregui-Powell, AAFES Sales and Merchandise Manager, Mr. Melillo, Food Court Manager, Mr. Roginski, USA Federal Credit Union Japan Regional Director, Mr. McGruder, Commissary Store Director, and Ms. Reams (Trish), WEBCO District Manager. Without their generous support none of the days activities would have been possible. As always our great appreciation to Public Affairs and Protocol for their support in recording and logistics.







## 62nd Air Force Birthday Luncheon

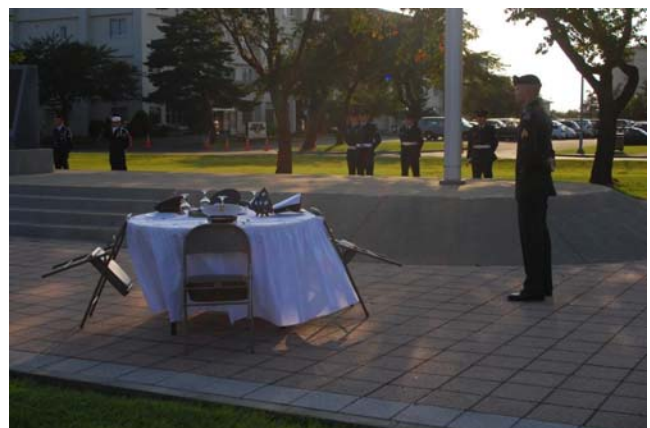
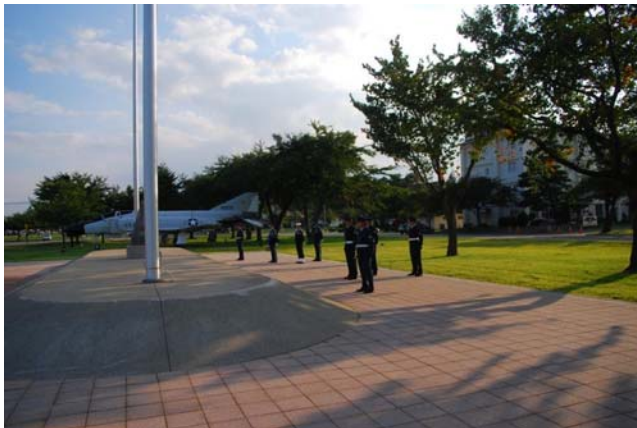
The 62nd Air Force Birthday Luncheon was held at the Grissom Dining Facility on Friday, 18 September 2009, and as in the past three years, a number of retirees were invited to celebrate the occasion. The Grissom staff again out did themselves in preparing and serving a fabulous luncheon paid for by the Focus 5/6 organization. Along with a select group of Airmen we were pampered with the finest service and a meal that could have been served at any Five Star Restaurant; Ribeye Steak, Chicken Breast, or Herb Lemon Fish, with all the trimmings including shrimp cocktail, cake and ice cream. What can you say except that we retirees here in Misawa are the luckiest folks around. We want to again thank TSgt Oglesby and her dining facility staff for putting the time and effort into this annual event. We are truly thankful to them all for making this a memorable time and look forward to next year.



**Thank You Grissom Dining Facility Staff**

## POW/MIA Retreat 2009

The Navy headed up this years POW/MIA Retreat Ceremony that was held on Friday, 18 September 2009. The weather was perfect and as in past years we were able to muster a flight of retirees for the formation. Navy Capt Haugen, NAF Misawa/CC provided the address honoring our missing in action. A memorial wreath was laid at the Risner Circle Memorial while taps was played by two JASDF trumpeters. Retreat was sounded and the Japanese and American National Anthems were played as the two countries flags were lowered and folded to end the ceremony. We had great participation from our retiree community and we want to thank those who came out and supported the formation. Thanks to the Navy for organizing the event. We look forward to continuing our participation in this retreat as our way of remembering the sacrifices of our fallen comrades.





35th FW/CVR  
Unit 5021  
APO AP 96319-5021  
Phone: 011-81-176-77-4428/5675  
DSN: (315) 226-4428/5675



## Still Serving!

The Misawa Air Base Retiree Activities Office is an official activity organized in accordance with AFI 36-3106. The office is here to assist retirees from all military services in the Tohoku and Hokkaido regions of Japan. We can provide assistance in pay, taxes, social security, and personal/casualty affairs as well as many other matters the retiree may need help with. We provide a focal point for retirees and/or their survivors with questions/concerns and work closely with the active duty community. Through the office and the activities of the Misawa Military Retirees Association we are able to provide assistance to indigent widows in the area with fuel, food and living expenses. The office is supplied and equipped through organizational funding, while being staffed entirely by volunteers.

The office is open Tuesday through Friday from 0900 through 1500 hours. We are located in room 210, Bldg 653. If you are unable to contact the RAO in an emergency, you may contact the Casualty Assistance Representative in the Airman & Family Readiness Center, 226-4735 or from off base, 0176-77-4735. Japanese Nationals requiring assistance, who may have limited English language skills, contact MSgt (Ret) Joe Roginski, 616-3566 or from off base, 0176-66-3566.

## WE'RE ON THE WEB!

[HTTP://MISAWARAO.ORG](http://MISAWARAO.ORG)



Lodging Front Desk: 222-0282 / 0284 (reservations)  
Command Post: 226-9899  
Law Enforcement: 226-3600  
Emergency Room: Non-Urgent- 226-6647  
Emergency- 911 / Off Base 53-911

Medical/Dental Appointments- - -  
Medical: 226-6111  
Dental: 226-6700  
AAFES General Manager: 616-3780  
Commissary Officer: 226-3823  
Anthony's Pizza: 616-6300  
Pizza Hut: 616-5000  
Clothing Sales: 616-8709  
Fitness Center: 226-3982  
Library: 226-4083  
Misawa Clubs- - -  
Enlisted: 616-1889  
Officer: 616-1891  
Base Theater: 616-8701  
Taxi- - -  
Official: 226-3328  
Non-Official (Kichi Cab): 616-5438  
Weather Forecast: 226-3064

Note: When dialing from off base, local area, dial 66-xxxx instead of 222/616-xxxx, and 77-xxxx instead of 226-xxxx. Outside local area add 0176.

MISCELLANEOUS NUMBERS

**Misawa Military Retirees Association meets bi-monthly on the first Tuesday, of even months, at 1700 hours, in the Tohoku Enlisted Club's Gray Room. All military retirees regardless of service affiliation are welcome as members. We are your voice to the active duty community and help to support the many retiree programs on the base. We also provide assistance in emergencies to retirees and surviving spouses in times of need. Come out and help support our efforts.**





## SERVING THE RETIRED MILITARY COMMUNITY IN NORTHERN JAPAN



This publication is written, edited and published by the Misawa Air Base Retiree Activities Office, for the retired community in northern Japan. The information or comments herein do not necessarily represent the position or opinion of the DOD, USAF or the 35 FW. While every effort has been made to assure the accuracy of the information herein, no absolute guarantee of accuracy can be given nor should be assumed.

RETIREE ACTIVITIES OFFICE  
35 FW/CVR  
UNIT 5021  
APO AP 96319-5021  
OFFICIAL MAIL

MPS

TO: