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Happy New
Year 2021 !

あけましておめでとう
ございます！



令和
3年

Misawa AB Retiree Activities Office Newsletter

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Articles appearing in this newsletter are compiled from local sources, newsletters received by the RAO, and from other military sources. Information has been edited and reprinted for the benefit of our retiree population. Absolutely no commercial gain is derived from this publication. Our appreciation is extended to those agencies and newsletter sources. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy of any agency of the U.S. Government.

HOT TOPIC

active-duty benefits.

Retiree and certain family member identification cards that expire on or after Jan. 1, 2020, will remain valid through June 30, 2021.

This extension does not apply to children turning age 21. If your child is attending college full time, contact the nearest Uniformed Services ID card issuing site. For secondary dependency information for incapacitated children, visit the Defense Finance and Accounting Service website at <https://www.dfas.mil/> or call Air Force Secondary Dependency at 317-212-8049. .

Common Access Cards will not be reissued prior to 30-days of expiration date, or as determined locally per installation mission capability. Deviated grooming authorized for photo capture as directed by local commander (ID expires one year from issue for deviated grooming photo.

Printed information on all ID cards: CAC or USID card will not be reissued for the purposes of changing information printed on the card.. No reissuance on all ID cards to reflect promotion (grade/rank), including last names changes due to marriage or divorce. Increased minimum age for all ID card issuances requirement from age 10 to 14.

Mobilized Reserves (Includes ANG) and their eligible dependents continue using the Reserve USID card to obtain

DoD civilians transferring between components (i.e. Air Force to Army) will retain existing CAC, no re-issuance.

Request ID Card remotely for dependents and retirees or initial issue or to replace a lost or stolen card. (Otherwise you can continue to use your expired ID as stated above.)

- Print passport type photo, size 5” X 7” or 8” by 10”.
- Complete DD Form 1172-2. Go to <https://www.cac.mil/Portals/53/Documents/dd1172-2.pdf> or https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/self_service.
- Provide copies of two identity documents with photos. Go to www.cac.mil for a list of acceptable identity documents.
- Include a self-sworn statement if replacing a lost or stolen card.

Contact your nearest ID card issuance for local procedures. Visit RAPIDS Site Locator at: <https://idco.dmdc.osd.mil/icdo/#/>

Note: Logistical processing and availability of services is determined locally per ID card office and installation mission capability. For folks here at Misawa, check with the local Military Personnel Flight for more info.

Courtesy of www.retirees.af.mil

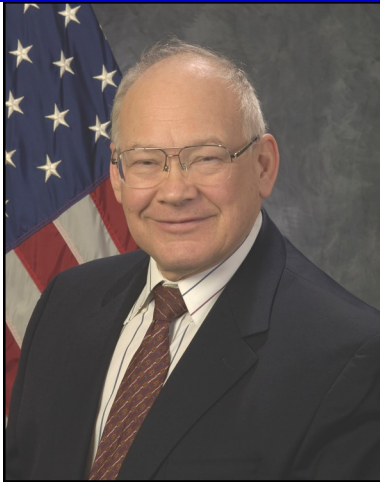
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YOUR RAO STAFF



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DIRECTOR



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DEPUTY DIRECTOR



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SCPO (Ret) Paul Sayles
Staff

From the Director

I have been working as a volunteer in this office for over 11 years, and working with the Japanese members and families since the RAO was established in 2000.

My age and failing health causes me to consider eventual retirement from this office. Accordingly, I have cut back my hours to only Monday. Dave Barton and I are to meet with our boss, the fighter wing vice-commander to discuss the future makeup of our staff and to introduce some replacement candidates. Results of that discussion will be out shortly.

Joseph Roginski

Monitoring Your Credit Report

Checking your credit report every few months is free, and can help you keep track of your financial situation, and can warn you about fraud and identity theft.

- Get your free credit report every 12 months from AnnualCreditReport.com. You get one free report from each company every year. Stagger your orders to get one every four months. It's like free credit monitoring that lets you regularly see a snapshot of your credit history and get early warning if there's a problem.

- Read your bank and credit card statements. Make it a habit – and also read your health plan's explanation of medical benefits. If a statement has mistakes or doesn't come on time, contact the business.
- In 2015, hackers stole personnel files of millions of current and former federal employees. This data breach may affect active duty service members and veterans, especially if you went through background investigations for a security clearance.
- If you got a notification letter and PIN code in the mail, sign up for the services available to you at no cost until December 31, 2018.
- If you didn't get a letter, go to OPM.gov/cybersecurity to verify whether your information was part of the breach.
- If you used the e-QIP system and you use that password for other accounts, change your passwords for those accounts immediately; do not reuse passwords that you used in the e-QIP system.

Tips for active duty (and retired) folks: If you're deploying, put an active duty alert on your credit report. That means creditors must verify your identity before giving credit in your name. It lasts for a year, and you can renew it. To get one, call the fraud department of one of the three credit bureaus.

Equifax	1-800-525-6285
Experian	1-888-397-3742
TransUnion	1-800-680-7289

Download the Military Consumer PowerPoint for monitoring your credit report at: <https://www.militaryconsumer.gov/protect/best-practices-empowered-consumers/monitoring-your-credit-reports>

Courtesy of www.militaryconsumer.gov

MILITARY CONSUMER
YOUR TOOL FOR FINANCIAL READINESS



VETERANS' ADMINISTRATION

Veterans Yoga Project

The Veterans Yoga Project offers daily resources to support recovery and well-being.

For Nearly 10 years, the Veterans Yoga Project's mission has been to support recovery and resiliency among veterans, families and communities. Through its core values, this dynamic group of veterans and civilians express their gratitude by sharing their experience with a sense of integrity with veterans, and through the integration of empowering tools to cultivate emotional, physical and spiritual well-being to serve all military members.

To achieve this mission, veterans Yoga Project partners with VA facilities, vet centers, service organizations, and universities throughout the U.S. to provide Mindful Resilience classes. In these sessions, tools are offered to complement other forms of treatment for PTSD and mental/emotional challenges.

Veterans Yoga Project partnered with over 40 veteran and military treatment programs and 20 vet centers along with dozens of other student groups, community-based Veteran Service Organizations, and Yoga studios.

Every day, Veterans Yoga Project offers over three hours of free, live practices on Facebook and Zoom. With the onset of COVID-19, Veterans Yoga Project swiftly shifted their in-session classes to an online platform. Classes include yoga, guided rest and breath work. Veterans Yoga Project students were recently surveyed to determine the change in levels of physical pain and distress before and after classes. Data from 28 participants demonstrated significant reductions in both pain and distress as a result of their home yoga practice.

More than 26,000 visits from veterans, active duty, and their family members in approximately 4,500 classes took place last year throughout the U.S.

Veterans Yoga Project also offers in-person and online Mindful Resource Training for yoga teachers and healthcare professionals. Instructors share self-regulation tools, including breath, meditation, mindful movement, guided rest, and gratitude practices to help participants breath easy, focus clearly, move freely, rest soundly and extend gratitude.

"Veterans Yoga Project exists to help our communities transform trauma into growth," said Veterans Yoga Project Executive Director, Dr. Dan Libby. "Perhaps, this is more relevant and necessary than ever before. The practices of yoga and mindfulness that we share with thousands of veterans and family members are tools which allow us all to serve, grow and connect, even in the midst of extraordinary life circumstances."

"A Veteran recently told me, 'I needed this. This helped me greatly last night. Thank you,'" said Libby. "This is what Veterans Yoga Project is all about. By providing support to all Veterans – whether they are currently challenged by severe symptoms, or focused on increasing resilience and giving back to others – Veterans Yoga Project is doing their part to serve those who have served."

"I want to thank you all for what you do. I've been doing some of your classes in my hotel room and telling the service members I meet about the Veterans Yoga Project online practice library. It was really great to get the chance to actually show them this resource and share in some practices with them? Thank you" said a National Guard social worker

Mindful Resilience for Compassion Passion Fatigue Program

Recently, Veterans Yoga Project launched the Mindful Resilience for Compassion Fatigue program. Intended for individuals and health care professionals, this evidence-informed online course addresses work-based trauma. Through its interactive webinars and

various e-learning modules, the program supports those dealing with burnout, vicarious trauma, and compassion fatigue.

"This course provides tangible tools to help others recognize, prevent, and transform their compassion fatigue into compassion satisfaction," Libby said. "In creating this program, our aim was to provide a framework for a better understanding of all the short- and long-term implications of vicarious trauma and the necessary tools to transform one's personal and professional experience."

Despite all the recent world events and tragedies, Veterans Yoga Project remains resolute in its aim to serve military Veterans," Libby added. "Veterans Yoga Project cultivates mindful compassion and gratitude so that we can be the leader we need to be in our own life, in our own family, and in our own community."

For more information and to register for this program online, go to: www.veteransyogaproject.org.

Data from 28 participants demonstrated significant reductions in both pain and distress as a result of their home yoga practice.

Courtesy of www.blogs.va.gov





Veterans Administration

Blue Water Navy Veteran's Act of 2019

The Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2019 gave the VA an opportunity to consider new and previously submitted Blue Water Navy claims. Now, thanks to collaboration with the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), the VA and NARA are helping to determine ship locations and to digitize more than 1,800 vessels' deck logs.

The data contained in these ships' deck logs is critical in determining qualifying ship locations in accordance with the law. For the first time, VA will have each of these ships mapped with precision, providing a comprehensive view of their locations.

The VA estimates that there are between 420,000 and 560,000 Vietnam-era Veterans who may be considered Blue Water Navy Veterans. The law also extends benefits to survivors and dependents of those veterans with confirmed service and whose claims would have been granted as a result of the new law

What Veterans Need to Know

NARA's and VA's collaboration has already assisted in granting more than 22,524 claims since Jan. 1, 2020. The effort digitized more than 29 million images from U.S. Navy and Coast Guard deck logs. It has also provided data, such as ship name, date and coordinates to feed an internal claims-related technical processing system that identifies the vessels that may have traveled within the offshore waters of the Republic of Vietnam. This proactive approach ensures that Rating Veterans Service Representatives have the evidence needed to render

a decision the first time a case is reviewed.

This effort has resulted in faster service for veterans and reduced the need for physical handling of archival records which preserves our nation's historical documents. NARA is in the process of redacting the images to make them publicly accessible on the National Archive's website.

How to File a Claim

The VA works with Veteran Service Organizations (VSO) and other partners to ensure veterans and survivors are aware of the changes and know how to determine eligibility for disability compensation or Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) when filing a claim.

If Veterans, survivors or dependents have previously filed and were denied a claim, they can file a supplemental claim. The VA encourages Veterans to work with an approved claims representative or VSO to determine if they qualify.

To learn more, please visit <https://www.benefits.va.gov/benefits/blue-water-navy.asp>.

Courtesy of www.blogs.va.gov

February 2019 marked the successful implementation of the Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act (AMA), which resulted in faster and easier ways to appeal your compensation claim. AMA created a new decision review and appeals process that features three lanes to you to choose from. As always, we recommend that you work with your VSO or representative to assist in making the best decision for you.

If, after you receive your initial de-

cision from VA, you disagree with this decision, you must choose one of three lanes: Supplemental Claim, Higher-Level Review or an Appeal to the Board of Veterans' Appeal (Board).

The Supplemental Claim lane is an option if you have new and relevant evidence. The Higher-level Review lane is beneficial for those who believe there was a mistake in the initial decision. These lanes will get you a second decision in the quickest amount of time.

The final lane is a direct appeal to the Board. If you choose a Board appeal, you must then choose one three paths:

- Direct Review
- Evidence Submission
- Hearing with a Veterans Law Judge (VLJ)

The Direct Review path is the fastest option at the Board, and it is for those who feel there has been a misinterpretation of the law or the facts of your case.

The Evidence Submission path allows you to submit additional evidence to the Board for consideration. This option will take longer than Direct Review.

The final option is the Hearing path. The Hearing path allows you to have a hearing with a VLJ. This path will take the longest for you to receive a second option.

For more information and to see a chart to help you decide which lane/path is best for you, go to <https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/78043/what-to-do-if-you-disagree-with-vas-decision-on-your-compensation-claim/>



Veterans Administration

VA Expands Caregiver Eligibility to Vietnam War Era Veterans

The Veterans Administration is working to give more family caregivers access to the Comprehensive Assistance of Family Caregivers program. They recognize the important role of family caregivers in supporting the health and wellness of veterans.

As part of the VA Mission Act, the VA is working to give more family caregivers access to this program so they can support them as they care for veterans of all eras.

On Oct 1, 2020 they expanded the program to include family caregivers of eligible veterans who were seriously injured in the line of duty on or before May 7, 1975.

Two years from then, (1 Oct, 2022) they will further expand the program to include family caregivers of eligible veterans from all eras who were seriously injured in the line of duty.

In order to apply for this program, the caregiver and the veteran need to apply together and participate in an application process to determine if you are eligible for the program. You both need to sign and date the application and answer all questions for your role.

You can apply on line by going to <https://www.va.gov/family-member-benefits/apply-for-caregiver-assistance-form-10-10cg/introduction>

You can also apply by mail. Download the pdf application form (VA Form 10-10CG at <https://www.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/10-10CG.pdf#>).

Fill out the form and mail it to:
Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers Health Eligibility Center
2957 Clairmont Road NE,
Suite 200
Atlanta, GA 30329-1647

Finally, you can apply in person by bringing your completed VA Form 10-10CG to you local VA medical center's Caregiver support Coordinator.

To find the names of Caregiver Support Coordinators to: https://www.caregiver.va.gov/support/New_CSC_Page.asp or call the Caregiver Support Line at 855-260-3274.

Do not send medical records with the application.

Courtesy of www.caregiver.va.gov

Free Mental Health Care

You can get free mental health care for a year after separation from the military, no matter your discharge status, service history, or eligibility for VA health care.

If you need support for a specific mental health problem, or if you are having problems sleeping, controlling your anger or readjusting to civilian life, you are not alone. The VA can help.

Over 1.7 million veterans received mental health services at VA last year. Their services range from peer support with other veterans to counseling, therapy, medication, or a combination of these options. Their goal is to help you take charge of your treatment and live a full and meaningful life.

To access free VA mental health

services right away, you can call 877-222-8387 Monday through Friday from 8am to 8pm. If you have hearing loss, call TTY at 1-800-877-8339. If you are in the United States, you can walk into any VA Medical Center, anytime. Day or night.

You can find the nearest VA health facility at <https://www.va.gov/find-locations/?zoom-Level=4&page=1&address=&facilityType=health&serviceType>

You don't need to be enrolled in VA health care to get care for this issue.

If you are unable to go to a VA health or vet center, you can get help online.

The Veteran Training online self-help portal for overcoming everyday challenges can help manage your anger, develop parenting and problem-solving skills, and more. The tools are based on proven mental health practices that have successfully helped other veterans and families. The portal is free, and you don't have to sign in or provide any personal information to use the tools. Visit the Veteran Training portal at <https://www.veterantraining.va.gov/>

Courtesy of <https://www.va.gov/service-member-benefits/>



DFAS

International Direct Deposit

International Direct Deposit (IDD) is available to U.S. military retirees living in eligible locations overseas. IDD electronically deposits funds on the first business day of the month. Japan is an eligible location.

Enrolling in IDD

Complete the form for International Direct Deposit Enrollment (SF 1199-I) (<https://www.dfas.mil/Portals/98/Documents/RetiredMilitary/manage/idd/of1199i.pdf?ver=2020-04-14-232414-877>) and mail it to:

For Retirees:

Defense Finance and Accounting Service
U.S. Military Retired Pay
8899 E. 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46249-1200
Fax: 800-469-5669

For Annuitants, beneficiaries and survivors:

Defense Finance and Accounting Service
U.S. Military Annuitant Pay
8899 E.56th Street
Indianapolis IN, 46249-1300
Fax: 800-982-8459

Make sure the form is accurately completed and signed. Note, that in Japan, if your IDD is going to go to a Japanese bank, the SF1199-I must also be signed by the bank that will be receiving the international direct deposit. Also note that Japanese banks do not use the bank routing number. They use the **Swift Code**, an eight-letter code that must be entered in the bank code block on the 1199-I form. The name on the receiving account must be EXACTLY the same as the name of the retiree or annuitant. Incorrect or incomplete enrollment forms will be returned unprocessed for correction, delaying your enrollment. Typed forms are preferable.

If you currently have your pay sent via direct deposit to a stateside financial institution, do not close that account until you have verified receipt at your international bank. Otherwise, your pay will be re-

turned to DFAS, causing additional delays.

Security and Safety of IDD

Nations chosen for IDD eligibility, like Japan, have met the requirements of the Federal Reserve Bank. Simply put, the banks and other financial institutions in those countries provide secure and trustworthy services and have systems compatible with transferring funds from the U.S. to your account. In many ways, IDD is much more secure than receiving your pay by paper check. Mailed checks can be subject to loss, misrouting or theft. Funds transferred through IDD are sent encrypted and arrive safely at your bank. In Japan, you can set up a U.S. dollar or JPY account to receive your funds.

Keep Your Account Current

Failing to notify DFAS of a change of address or banking information can result in missing payments.

When to Update Your Account

DFAS recommends reviewing your retired pay account at least once a year to make sure your information is up to date. It might be useful to review a copy of your annual Retiree Account Statement (RAS) each December. You might even consider printing a copy of your most recent monthly eRAS from myPay every few months. Below are a few examples of situations in which you might need to update your account information.

If You Switched Banks or Opened a New Account

Your banking information is perhaps the most important thing to keep updated. We rely on you to tell us where to send your payments. The sooner you update your direct deposit, the less likely your payment will go to the wrong place.

If You Move to a New Home or Relocate Temporarily

You need to update your mailing address whenever it changes. Even if you are only going somewhere warmer for the winter, you should let DFAS know. They are always mailing letters, account statements and other im-

portant information you won't want to miss.

If You've Married, Divorced or Added to Your Family

Changes in the size of your family can affect several aspects of your retired pay account. You should first update your Arrears of Pay Beneficiary. This is the person you want to receive your final payment when you die.

If you chose the survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) when you retired, you might also need to update your SBP beneficiary. Life changing events often increase or decrease the amount of your SBP premium. You should send documentation such as divorce decrees, death certificates and marriage certificates to us as soon as possible. Late notification of a change in your life can result in debts to you or your family.

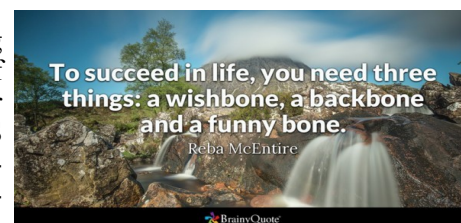
DFAS also suggests reviewing your Federal and State Income Tax Withholding with a tax professional. DFAS cannot help you choose a withholding amount or offer tax advice, but you may find that gaining or losing a family member will affect your tax liability.

Other Things to Consider

Take some time to look at your allotments every so often. You might find that you want to start, stop or change the deduction amount on one of them. Also take note of any allotments going to insurance companies, particularly when moving. If you forgot to give your insurance company or other potential allotment recipients your new address, they may continue to send important mail to your old address.

If you are a myPay user and your email address changes, please be sure to notify myPay of the change.

Courtesy of DFAS.mil





TRICARE

TRICARE GRIEVANCES

What is a Grievance?

A grievance is a written complaint or concern about a non-appealable issue regarding a perceived failure by any member of the health care delivery team, including authorized providers, military providers, a TRICARE contractor, or subcontractor personnel. To provide appropriate and timely health care services, access, or quality, or to deliver the proper level of care or service.

The grievance process allows you to report in writing any concern or complaint regarding health care quality or service. Any TRICARE civilian or military provider, TRICARE beneficiary, sponsor, parent, guardian or other representative if an eligible dependent child may file a grievance.

As the TRICARE Overseas Program (TOP) contractor, International SOS is responsible for investigating and resolving all grievances. Grievances are generally resolved within 60 days of receipt. Following resolution, International SOS will notify the party who submitted the grievance that the review has been completed.

Grievances may include such issues as:

- The quality of health care or services (e.g., accessibility, appropriateness, level of care, continuity, timeliness of care)
- The demeanor or behavior of providers and their staffs.
- The performance of any part of the health care delivery system.
- Practices related to patient safety.

How to File a Grievance

The following information is required for International SOS to investigate and work toward resolving your emailed grievance.

- Contact information, including:
 - Beneficiary's name, address,

dress, and telephone number.

- Individuals or institutional provider contact details,
- Beneficiary's date of birth
- A description of the issue or concern, including:
 - Date and time of the event
 - Name of the provider(s) and/or person(s) involved
 - Location of the event to include address.
 - The nature of the concern or complaint.
 - Details describing the event or issue.

NOTE: *If you are not the involved beneficiary and the beneficiary is age 18 or younger the adult beneficiary must complete the "Authorization for Disclose" form listed at <http://www.tricare-overseas.com/providers/grievances>. This allows International SOS to respond directly to you. If they do not receive this form, then International SOS will respond directly to the adult beneficiary.*

To file a grievance by email, open your preferred email client and send an email with the above information to: TOPGlobalQualityAssu@internationalsos.com.

Grievances can also be mailed to International SOS at the following address using the PDF form available at <http://www.tricare-overseas.com/providers/grievances>

Mail the completed PDF form to:
International SOS Government Services Inc
Reconsideration/Grievance Department
P.O. Box 11570
Philadelphia, PA 19116 USA
with the password sent in a separate email.

To learn more about grievances visit www.tricare.mil/appeals or

www.tricare.mil/grievances.

Questions can be addressed to your Regional Call Center. For Japan, that number is 0120-983990

Courtesy of www.tricare-overseas.com

Tricare Select Overseas Retirees

If you didn't take action to begin payment for the newly required enrollment fee in order to continue to maintain TRICARE coverage by the end of the Open Enrollment Period which ended on 31 Dec 2020 you are automatically dis-enrolled from TRICARE coverage.

If you failed to set up allotment or automatic payments (for those who are not eligible for allotment) and want to keep these benefits, you must request reinstatement no later than 30 June 2021;

Without reinstatement you will only be able to receive care from a military hospital or clinic, if space is available, and you will be responsible for all civilian health care costs. There are three ways to pay this fee.

- If you get your retirement or other pay from a military pay center, then you will pay your fee via monthly allotment.
- If you don't get your retired pay from a military pay center, then you have to pay by monthly recurring credit or debit card transaction. You can also pay with electronic funds transfer from your U.S. bank.
- If you are an un-remarried former spouse, then you will pay your fees by a monthly recurring credit or debit card transaction. You can also pay your monthly fees through electronic funds transfer from a U.S. bank.

Courtesy of www.tricare-overseas.com

Access to retiree publications of each service:

Army Echoes: www.armygl.army.mil/rso/echoes.asp **Navy Shift Colors:** www.shiftcolors.navy.mil

Air Force Afterburner: www.retirees.af.mil/afterburner

Marine Corps Semper Fidelis: www.manpower.usmc.mil/portal/page/portal/M_RA_HOME/MM/SR/RET_ACT/SemperFidelis

Coast Guard Evening Colors: <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg1/psc/ras>



Health

Influenza Shots

If you haven't gotten your flu shot yet, you are way behind the 8-ball.

Active duty service members, retirees and their families who received the flu vaccination anywhere other than a military treatment facility should follow their service rules to ensure the flu shot is annotated in their health records.

With the novel coronavirus still in circulation, "We don't know how this flu season will impact us," said Army Lt. Gen. Ron Place, director of the Defense Health Agency. "We do know that getting your influenza vaccine is a critical step to keep you and your family healthy."

Influenza is a contagious respiratory illness. It can be spread to others up to about 6 feet away, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The flu is spread mainly by droplets from sick people when they cough, sneeze, or talk. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people nearby, or they might be inhaled into the lungs.

The flu can be associated with serious illnesses, hospitalizations, and deaths - particularly among older adults, very young children, pregnant women, and people of all ages with certain chronic medical conditions.

As the CDC notes, flu vaccines cause antibodies to develop in the body about two weeks after vaccination. These antibodies provide protection against infection from the viruses that are used to make the vaccine.

An annual flu vaccination is mandatory for active-duty service members, notes Dr. Jay Montgom-

ery, medical director of the Defense Health Agency's Immunization Healthcare Division North Atlantic Region Vaccine Safety Hub. He and other health care experts recommend that, generally, everyone six months and older should also get it.

"Adding influenza vaccination to social distancing and masking will lower your risk of contracting two potentially serious respiratory diseases close together - which could very much worsen your outcome," Montgomery said.

"Getting the vaccine also means you're also less likely to potentially expose yourself to COVID-19 by sitting in an urgent care facility or emergency room waiting to have your flu symptoms treated," he added.

Children should be immunized even if schools don't fully reopen, Montgomery said. "School isn't the only place where children can come in contact with viruses and bacteria that cause them to get sick," he said. "Playgrounds and grocery stores are also examples of exposure locations."

In the Department of Defense, the services annually review and vote on the list for vaccine flu distribution. Priority goes to overseas locations, ships afloat, and deployed personnel. When those locations are fulfilled, distribution is prioritized by each individual service for delivery to their locations in the continental United States, in support of all active and reserve locations.

When the vaccine arrives at a military medical treatment facility, the commander of the installation has the authority to determine priority for receiving it. Learn more about DoD flu vaccine availability on the Military Health System website.

If you want to get a flu shot before it's available at your MTF, the

vaccine is covered by TRICARE with no cost-shares or copayments as long as it's administered by a pharmacist at a participating network pharmacy or by a TRICARE-authorized provider. Learn more about the TRICARE benefit and the flu vaccine at the TRICARE website.

Military Health Podcasts

The Defense health Agency's Connected Health Branch has leverage the power of podcasting to provide resources and education to both providers and beneficiaries.

Topics span various aspects of health care to include behavioral health, pain management, sleep issues, chronic pain, mindfulness and meditation the DHA Connected health podcast series have become useful tools to MHS beneficiaries and providers who serve them.

"One of the best things about podcasts is that they can be listened to at your convenience", Julie Kinn (DHA Connected Health Education lead) said. "In our current pandemic environment, where time is so valuable, the ability to select the topic you want and be able to listen to on our schedule is a huge benefit".

DHA has a variety of topics available and is evaluating others of interest to MHS providers and beneficiaries.

For more information and to access episodes, go to <http://health.mil/podcasts>

Courtesy of health.mil

Birthdates of our Military Services

US Army—June 14, 1775

US Navy – October 13, 1775

US Marines—November 10, 1775

US Coast Guard—August 4, 1790

US Air Force—Sept 18, 1947



RECURRING INFORMATION

Retiree Survivor's Guide

A Retiree Survivor's Guide to Benefits is available on the Library page of the Air Force Retiree Services website.

This guide provides general information about most federal benefits and entitlements available to eligible family members of deceased retired airmen, and it explains various application processes. People can direct specific questions to the government agency administering the benefits or discuss these matters with an Air Force casualty assistance representative.

Government agencies outside the Air Force administer most of the benefits discussed in this guide.

This guide is designed to provide general information on most federal benefits and privileges people may be entitled to as survivors of a deceased Air Force retiree. In addition, it contains a list of important necessary documents (see Section H), and a Benefits/Entitlements Checklist (see Section I).

myPay on YouTube

There is an excellent tutorial on YouTube on how to open and use your myPay account. Go to

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLhx_8nsfXqVjnv_WuYeXc84lmlHBMYe6a

Courtesy of myPay.dfas.mil

myPay Support on DFAS

For problems using myPay, or with your myPay password, contact the DFAS Centralized Customer Support Unit toll-free at 1-888-332-7411 or commercial at (216)552-5096. You can also call DSN to 580-5096. This support line is available Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm, Eastern Time.

The Centralized Customer Support Unit can provide assistance on how to use the options available to you in myPay. The support unit will also provide support for establishing and changing your password.

For all other payroll information, you can contact the Misawa Air Base TRICARE Office at 226-office or your customer service representative. 6000 (from off base 0176-77-6000) or visit the office at the base hospital.

Questions concerning specific pay account information should be contacted through the servicing payroll office or the appropriate Customer Service rep as follows:

Military Retirees:

1-800-321-1080

Annuity: 1-800-321-1080

Former Military Spouses:

1-888-332-7411

Military retirees who are in a non-pay status due to a VA Waiver or Combat Pay can still access myPay but will have limited options available. Questions should be referred to the customer service section listed above.

You can also access your pay statement from the Main Menu of the myPay website by clicking on the Payment Information option.

If you have trouble reading the graphic version of your pay statement, you can click on the Text Version link. The text version of your pay statement lists all of your pay data item information in a single column.

Courtesy of myPay.dfas.mil

Where to Send Your TRICARE Claim

Non-active duty, TRICARE Part B; send to TRICARE Overseas Program, P.O. Box 7985, Madison, WI 53707-7985 USA

TRICARE For Life (TFL) claims in the United States and U.S. territories (American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands) send to WPS TFL, P.O. Box 7890 Madison, WI 53707-7890 USA.

Source: *The 2011 Publication for TRICARE Standard Overseas Beneficiaries*

For TRICARE Overseas Program information, forms and assistance

Courtesy of www.TRICARE-overseas.com

International Direct Deposit

International Direct Deposit (IDD) is available to U.S. military retirees and survivors living in eligible locations overseas. IDD electronically deposits funds on the first business day of the month to your foreign bank in the currency of the country of the receiving bank.

See previous editions of the Misawa RAO Newsletter (go to misawa.rao.org and search archived newsletters (April-June 2016 is most recent) for specific details and instructions to use the new DD1199-I for international direct deposit. *JJR*

ID Card Appointments

For ID card appointments, go to <https://rapids-appointments.dmdc.osd.mil/>

Click "Make an Appointment"

Lee Martin

A Reminder!

If you want to retain your TRICARE benefit, when you turn age 65, you must join and pay for Medicare Part B. If you live overseas, while you will not have access to Medicare unless you go stateside, but without Medicare Part B coverage you will not be able to submit a TRICARE claim. You will still have access to the Military Treatment Facility, space available.

About six months before you turn 65, you will receive a notice from the SSA giving you the option to decline. If you decline Part B, you will need other insurance and cannot claim any out-of-pocket expenses.

Joe Roginski



コロナウイルス・ワクチンは、 近い内に受けるようになります

1. 重要な知らせ： コロナウイルス・ワクチンは、近い内に受けるようになります。現在では、三沢基地の病院のスタッフ、警察と消防士は、ワクチンを受けています。その後、健康リスクをもつ人と高齢者は、予防接種を受けます。ワクチンは少量に到達します。そして、それは予防接種のスケジュールに影響を及ぼします。たぶん、これは1月下旬または2月上旬に発表されるでしょう。家族と生存者を含むすべての国防総省身分証明書所持者(ID Card Holders)は、予防接種を受ける資格があります。ワクチンが我々の年齢グループに利用できるとき、我々のオフィスはあなたに通知します。

2. 私は長い間、11年間以上このオフィス（退役軍人支援事務所(RAO)）で働いていましたが現在の年齢と健康状態によって、引退を考慮することになりました。それについて、仕事日を月曜日だけに下げました。しばらく、私は月曜日だけにオフィスにいます。しかし、おそらくいつか今年、私はRAOを引退します。日本語での援助のために、月曜日だけに私に連絡してください。その期間の間に、私は後任を訓練しているつもりです。

我々事務所のRetiree Activities Office(リタイアリーアクチヴィティオフィス)はどんな問い合わせをするをお手伝いします。ご遠慮なく連絡ください。

Tel: 0176-77-4428 (月～金、0900-1500) (日本語は月曜日のみ)

メール: misawa.rao@us.af.mil (日本語のメールはOKです)

Retiree Activities Officeの住所:

(English)

〒033-0012 Aomori-ken, Misawa-shi, Hirahata 64,

Misawa Beigun Kichi-nai, 35FW/CVR—Retiree Activities Office

(日本語)

東京のアメリカ大使館に年金の局があります。アメリカの年金の相談は直接大使館の年金局にお電話して下さい。

Federal Benefits Unit フェデラル ベネフィット ユニット
(アメリカ大使館連邦年金部): 03-3224-5055



Still Serving!



Hello fellow retirees and fellow RAOs staff. Here is the 4th Quarter 2020 edition of the Misawa Air Base Retiree Activities Office Newsletter.

We at the RAO are charged with getting information to you, our retired military community. Compiling a newsletter is one of the best ways to keep you informed but, it's a lot of work. Lee Martin and I ask for your help. We serve the retired community of northern Japan, which includes Misawa, and the six prefectures of Tohoku and prefecture of Hokkaido, representing all services and all the wars since WWII. You are a treasure of information and history. Don't let it all pass with you without sharing. Anyone can provide information, opinion, history, or even a good story. We also solicit your feedback. What do you want to see covered in these newsletters? How can we improve? We will gladly consider your feedback and include your contributions in your newsletter. Send your contribution to:

misawa.rao@us.af.mil

MMRA Notes:

1. Membership dues are \$20 a year. If you have not paid your dues for 2020, please call the RAO or e-mail the RAO and talk to Dave Barton, the MMRA Treasurer. The Treasurer will arrange to collect your dues and record it in the financial report.
2. Donations to the Misawa Military Retirees' Association are greatly appreciated. Dues and donations are used for the operations of the organization, charitable activities, community activities, assistance grants, and assistance in the case of death in the family. All funds go to the community except for the snacks served at the bi-monthly meeting.

The Misawa Military Retirees Association (MMRA) 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. These meetings are your forum to voice your opinions, concerns, questions and suggestions, and get information about retiree and survivor issues and support on Misawa Air Base. 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 join our group, share your experiences and skills, contribute to the community. The time you give to your fellow retirees and their families may someday come back as assistance to you or your survivors.



MMRA Meeting Schedule

All meetings are held the first Tuesday of even-numbered months at the Tohoku Enlisted Club, Gray Room at 1700 hours.

2 February 2021

6 April 2021

8 June 2021

3 August 2021

5 October 2021

7 December 2021

NEXT MEETING—TUESDAY, 2 February 2021

SERVING THE RETIRED MILITARY COMMUNITY IN NORTHERN JAPAN



USEFUL NUMBERS

Exchange: 0176-7788255-7 plus last 4 digits (*)
 HRO: 7460 (*), Manager: 7401(*), Gas Station:
 7428 (*), Express (main base): 7433 (*),
 Express (North Area): 7435 (*)
 Base Operator: 226-1110 / (0176) 77-1110
 Chapel: 226-4630 / (0176) 77-4630
 Command Post: 226-9880/9881 / (0176) 77-9880
 Commissary Officer: 226-3482/ (0176) 77-3482
 Community Bank: 226-4070 / (0176) 77-4070
 Credit Union Navy Federal: 1-617-938-5097
 US HQ: 1-888-842-6328
 Emergency Room:
 Non-Urgent: 226-6647/ (0176) 77-6647
 Emergency- 911 / Off Base (0176) 53-1911
 Fitness Center: 226-3982 (*)
 Golf Course: 1-281-657-1563 (*)
 Law Enforcement: 226-3600/ (0176) 77-3600
 Library: 226-3068 / (0176) 77-3068
 Medical/Dental Appointments
 Medical: 226-6111 / (0176) 77-6111
 Dental: 226-6700 / (0176) 77-6700
 Misawa Clubs
 Admin: 1-281-675-1560 (*)
 Catering: 1-281-657-1560 (*)
 Misawa Inn (Air Force Lodging) (*)
 Front: 222-0282/ (0176) 66-0282
 Reservations: 222-0284/ (0176) 66-0284
 Navy Gateway Lodging: (*)
 Front Desk: 226-3131 / (0176) 77-3131
 Reservations: 226-4483/ (0176) 77-4483
 Navy HRO: 226-4674 / (0176) 77-4674
 Pass and Registration: 226-3995 / (0176) 77-3995
 Red Cross: 226-3016 / (0176) 77-3016
 FSS Auto Center "Pit Stop": 226-9486 /
 (0176) 77-9486
 FSS HRO: 226-3108/9275 (*)
 Taxi: Official: 226-3328 / (0176) 77-3328 (*)
 Base Commercial (Kichi Cab): 1-469-375-7479 (*)
 Fm Off Base—(0176) 53-6481 (*)
 Theater: 1-469-375-7450 (*)
 Veterinarian 226-4502 / (0176) 77-4502
 Weather Forecast: 226-3065 (*)
 Numbers that begin with "1" require special dialing.
 When dialing from a cell, 03-4580-0135, wait for
 voice, then dial the number. For 226-222 numbers
 dial 0176-66 (for 222) or 77 (for 226) then the last
 four. (*) means use the Phone Tree

RAO mailing address in Japan

〒033-0012 Aomori-ken, Misawa-shi, Hirahata 64,
 Misawa Beigun Kichi-nai,
 35FW/CVR—Retiree Activities Office

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 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 RAO is open Monday through Friday from 0900 through 1500 hours however, volunteers sometimes have to be out of the office. We are located in Room 210, Bldg. 653. Please call or e-mail before visiting to make sure a staff member is available when you come to the office. 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, and who have limited English language skills, may contact us and talk with MSgt (Ret) Joseph Roginski, who is bi-lingual. In an emergency, he may be reached at 09040450149 after hours.



**35th FW/CVR (RAO)
 Unit 5009
 APO AP 96319-5009**

**Phone: 011-81-176-77-4428/5675
 DSN: (315) 226-4428/5675
 Email: misawa.rao@us.af.mil**

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 or currency can be given nor should be assumed.

WE'RE ON THE WEB!
<http://www.misawarao.org>