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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.

Tricare Qualifying Life Events

When life changes for you and your family, your TRICARE health plan options may also change. These are known as Qualifying Life Events (QLEs).

A QLE is a certain change in your life, such as marriage, birth of a child, or retirement from active duty, which may mean different TRICARE health plan options are available to you. A QLE opens a 90-day period for you to make eligible enrollment changes. A QLE for one family member means all family members may make enrollment changes.

The table on <https://www.tricare.mil/LifeEvents/QLE> lists TRICARE QLEs. They include military and family changes, as well as government-directed changes.

Depending on your eligibility, a QLE may allow you and your family to:

- Enroll in a new TRICARE health plan.
- Change your health plan coverage.

If you want to enroll in or change your health plan, you must:

- Update DEERS with the QLE.
- Make the enrollment changes within 90 days following the QLE.

Pay any enrollment fees or premiums due during that period.

No matter when you initiate the enrollment change following a QLE, coverage starts on the date of the QLE

What To Do Following a QLE

With any QLE, the first step is to update your or your family member's information in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) (<https://www.tricare.mil/deers>). Once your change shows in DEERS, you may make any eligible enrollment change online, by mail, or by phone.

What happens if I don't take any action

If you remain eligible for your current health plan and wish to continue coverage following a QLE, you don't need to take action.

If you aren't already in a health plan and don't enroll in one, you'll only be eligible for care at a military hospital or clinic if space is available.

When retiring from active duty, you must make an enrollment decision within 90 days of your retirement. If you don't enroll in a health plan within the 90-day period, you'll lose TRICARE coverage and may only be eligible for care at military hospitals or clinics if space is available.

Making Enrollment Changes When You Haven't experienced a QLE.

If you and your family haven't experienced a QLE, you can enroll in or make changes to your health plan during TRICARE Open Season. Open season occurs each fall, beginning on the Monday of the second full week in November to the Monday of the second full week in December. Visit the Open Season section for more information. You can find it at: <https://tricare.mil/openseason>.

Courtesy of <https://www.tricare.mil/>

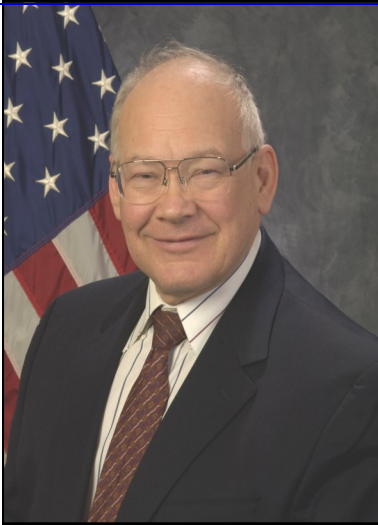
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VA Claim Exams

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recognizes that you may have questions regarding the VA claim exam (also known as a compensation and pension, or C&P, exam) process if you have filed a disability claim. To help answer many of these questions, VA has updated the following two websites regarding VA claim exams:

[Claim Exam Information - Compensation \(va.gov\)](https://benefits.va.gov/compensation/claimexam.asp) <https://benefits.va.gov/compensation/claimexam.asp>

[VA Claim Exam \(C&P Exam\) | Veterans Affairs](https://va.gov/disability/va-claim-exam) <https://va.gov/disability/va-claim-exam>

VA claim exams are a critical part of the claims process and VA wants to help you understand this process. VA's updated websites provide answers about why a claim exam may or may not be needed, who contacts you about scheduling exams and how you may be contacted. These new webpages contain answers to additional questions such as:

What to do if an exam is missed;

How to reschedule an appointment;

What to bring to the exam and how to prepare for it;

Who completes the exam;

Costs or travel expenses and so much more.

Please visit our updated websites for answers to frequently asked questions and for updated information regarding VA claim exams.

Courtesy of www.af.mil/News



LOCAL NEWS // IRS

Eagle Scout Advancement Ceremony

On Monday evening, 23 January, 15-year-old Randal Imlah, the son of Navy Captain and Mrs. James Imlah, advanced to the highest rank in Boy Scouts. He was advanced to the rank of Eagle Scout. As the pinnacle of scouting, Randall has had to meet requirements set out by the Boy Scout program as he advanced. Being part of a Navy family, Randall was a member of scout troops in the US as well as troops in Sigonella, Italy and Misawa, Japan. This writer was also in a Navy family and was in several scout troops, some in the US and one in Scotland, so his challenges are the more appreciated due to having shared them.

One of the requirements for advancement to Eagle Scout was to design, acquire materials, and implement a project which would be of value to the community. For his project, Randal created a composting process which involved the building of two compost beds at Edgren High School. This project will be utilized even when Randall and his family have moved on to a new assignment.

If one looks carefully at the photos, Randal has earned at least thirty-three merit badges in his scouting career. His merit badges range from personal fitness, public speaking, to astronomy. Some merit badges are required to be obtained for advancement in scout rank, while others are optional. When looking at the merit badges Randall has earned, one can see his wide range of interests.

As an Eagle Scout, Randal joins others who have achieved the rank of Eagle Scout. This group in-

cludes the late President Gerald Ford and Astronaut Neil Armstrong, along with Stephen Spielberg and the former Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer. Congratulations to Randal and his family!

The Misawa Military Retiree Association is the sponsor for Troop 14.



*By Paul Sales
President, Misawa Military Retiree
Association*

Interactive Tax Assistant

The Interactive Tax Assistant (ITA) is a tool that provides answers to several tax law questions specific to your individual circumstances. Based on your input, it can determine if you have to file a tax return, your filing status, if you can claim a dependent, if the type of income you have is taxable, if you're eligible to claim a credit, or if you can deduct expenses.

The information you provide is anonymous and will be used for purposes of answering your question. It will not be shared, stored or used in any other way, nor can it be

used to identify the individual who enters it. It will be discarded when you exit a topic

You can find topics using the search feature or by viewing the categories at <https://www.irs.gov/help/ita>

Access your IRS Account

Access your individual account information including balance, payments, tax records and more. Go to <https://www.irs.gov/payments/your-online-account> and click on the blue button that says "Sign in to your Online Account". The resulting page will offer you the option of logging in with your ID.me account or with an existing IRS username.

If you don't have an existing IRS username or ID.me account, have your photo identification ready to create your new ID.me account. More information about identity verification is available on the sign-in page.

Once you are logged in to the IRS you can:

- access your tax records
- make and view payments,
- View or create new payment plans
- View your balance
- Manage communication preferences

There are other ways to find your account information.

You can request an account transcript by mail. This information and more is available to [irs.gov/payments/your-online-account](https://www.irs.gov/payments/your-online-account).

Courtesy of irs.gov



Veterans Affairs

Why Veterans Should Consider Opening a Franchise

Any time is a good time to consider your professional future, post military service. Here is an option that doesn't get enough air time with veterans. It's something different than getting a new job or going back to school. How about starting a franchise.

Owning a business through franchising is a perfect hybrid between working for an organization and starting your own business from scratch.

Five Reasons

There are five reasons why you may want to see if you have what it takes to be your own boss.

- **You are already trained for it.** A staggering one in seven franchises is owned by a military veteran. No surprise; especially when you consider that a franchise operating manual is pretty similar to the operating manuals we used to operate military weapons, tanks, aircraft, ships, submarines and drones. The franchise operating manual took lots of time and money to perfect. When you buy into a franchise, you benefit by learning from someone else's mistakes.
- **You don't need business or industry experience.** Ever owned a business before? Don't have experience in the industry? No problem. Franchises train you. Then they follow up with a franchise team that provides services like marketing, accounting setup, vendor relations, operating, pricing and more. On top of that, you have a team of fellow franchise owners who support one another. Unlike a stand-alone busi-

ness where it can be lonely at the top, the franchising model is being in business for yourself, not by yourself. Franchising is a business in a box, with a tremendous support network.

Veteran benefits. Many franchises offer a discount on the franchise fee to veterans. Plus, many veterans have access to VA disability payments and military retirement pensions. All of this provides greater financial stability while you are starting your franchise. This finds you more financing options and allows you to focus on running your business not worrying if you have enough working capital.

There's a franchise for everyone. Franchises are all restaurants, right? Wrong! If you can think of a service or product, there's probably a franchise for it. Franchises run the gamut from home services, senior care, fitness, childcare, tutoring, real estate and much, much more. There are even franchises for removing junk, painting lines in parking lots, mobile flooring retailers and yes, dog walking. All told, there are over 2,000 different franchise brands available today.

Free franchise coaching services for veterans. From deciding if you're cut out for franchising to selecting the best fit to walking through the due diligence and purchase, getting into franchising can be an intimidating process. But you don't have to go it alone. VA's franchise coaching team will walk you through the entire three-to-four-month process from discovery to opening the business. Their services are free to veterans and your cost to the franchisor is the same whether you use their free consulting ser-

vices or not. So if you think you have what it takes to be your own boss, schedule a call with their team.

Go to www.vetrepreneur.com and schedule a free, 10-minute no-obligation call.

Courtesy of news.va.gov/1144 82

200 Remote Jobs from Veteran-friendly Employers

Remote work offers Veterans, family members job flexibility

The opportunity to work remotely from home offers excellent flexibility for Veterans who—whether due to family matters, disabilities or other issues—lack the luxury of commuting to the office every day. Teleworking also provides former service members the chance to carry out their job responsibilities and explore new career choices from the comfort of their home. It's hard to dispute the benefits of remote work.

At the same time, the internet can help connect Veterans and their spouses with fulfilling careers that used to be out of reach. More companies than ever before are exploring remote work choices, making now a prime time to pursue a remote career.

The following is a list of military friendly companies that are offering more than 200 remote jobs, from big corporate names such as Amazon, AT&T, American Express, Enterprise, Hilton and Xerox. The list also includes many positions now posted on USAJOBS, (<https://www.usajobs.gov/>) the U.S. government's official employment site.

Courtesy of news.va.gov



Veterans Affairs

Find Your Next Job from an American Corporate Partners Mentor

National nonprofit American Corporate Partners (ACP) works with post-9/11 veterans to help them find meaningful employment after military service. Whether veterans are looking for a higher paying job or seeking a promotion, an ACP Mentor can help guide them toward positive employment outcomes. The program helps veterans find great jobs—and the right jobs for them.

All industries and career paths are represented and veterans can explore career opportunities, learn about job search tips and tricks, gain resume and interviewing skills and get connected directly to employers who are hiring. Since 2010 more than 22,000 veterans have already found success through ACP. 3,500 have become ACP Alumni in 2021.

In addition to facilitating thousands of nationwide mentorships, ACP staff works hard to connect veterans to meaningful employment opportunities at its partner companies. Veterans who become part of the ACP network also enjoy other benefits such as

- A free online question and answer community, ACP AdvisorNet (www.acp-advisornet.org), to get quick career advice and search job postings.
- Wednesday Webinars (<https://www.acp-advisornet.org/questions>) with partner companies and hiring managers.

Getting started with ACP is easy. Visit <https://www.acp-usa.org> and fill out a brief application. Answer

questions that include background, interests, military experience and mentoring preferences.

After applying, ACP will reach out within 24 hours and schedule a 15-minute phone call to ask a few more clarifying questions in order to match the veteran with the right mentor. ACP will introduce the veteran to a mentor within several weeks of their application to the program and will check in throughout the year to provide customized resources and ensure positive outcomes. Ninety-eight percent of veterans would recommend ACP.

All post 9/11 veterans who have served at least 180 days of active duty since 9/11 are eligible

The sharing of any non-VA information does not constitute an endorsement of products and services by the VA. Verify information with the organization offering employment.

VA publishes new Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry data

All 50 states, District of Columbia and five other jurisdictions

Recently, VA launched a new webpage that shows the number of Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry (AHOBPR) participants by state and congressional district. Go to <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/burnpits/participants.asp>

The current webpage contains breakouts as of Sept. 12, 2022, for all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and five other jurisdictions (Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, United States Virgin Islands and North-

ern Mariana Islands). The data will be updated biannually.

Section 808(b)(2) of the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022 (PACT Act) requires VA to make information public about the number of participants in the Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry (AHOBPR) by State and congressional district.

The PACT Act (<https://www.va.gov/resources/the-pact-act-and-your-va-benefits/>) expands health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits, among other toxic substances.

About the Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry

The AHOBPR is designed to collect data from eligible Veterans and service members about their exposures and health during service. Information provided through this registry helps VA better understand whether long-term health conditions may be related to military exposures.

Eligible participants can complete an online questionnaire and have the option to have a free health evaluation to discuss health concerns regarding military exposures. More than 346,544 participants have joined since the launch of this registry in 2014.

To learn more about the registry, visit <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/burnpits/participants.asp>

Courtesy of www.va.gov



Veterans Affairs

Pact Act Fraud Prevention used against them.

Have you recently been contacted by a company aggressively seeking to legally represent you in filing presumptive VA claims authorized by the PACT Act (<https://www.va.gov/resources/the-pact-act-and-your-va-benefits>)? If so, be wary as the company might be seeking a portion of your VA benefits.

Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022 (PACT Act) represents the biggest expansion of Veteran benefits in history, and many Veterans may be eligible to receive compensation for their service. The PACT Act adds 23 burn pit and toxic exposure-related conditions to VA's list of service presumptions, including hypertension, with the expansion of presumptions related to Agent Orange exposure by including Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Guam, American Samoa, and Johnston Atoll as locations for Agent Orange exposure.

While this legislation brings great promise to Veterans, it's also a monumental opportunity for fraud. VA has received multiple reports of unaccredited law firms or companies targeting Veterans to offer their services to file claims for presumptive conditions. Unaccredited law firms and companies are reaching out to help for a fee as high as 40% of the Veteran's retroactive payment and 40% of the Veteran's first year of entitlement payments.

VA is committed to help protect Veterans from predatory entities, by educating Veterans, their families, and all partners about the types of activity and tactics being

To avoid being a victim of these schemes, here are some helpful tips to remember:

- Apply directly to VA. You may submit your application securely online via www.va.gov or in person at any regional office. You may file your claim directly with VA, and VA will help you gather the necessary evidence to support it. There are no costs or hidden fees to apply. Do not agree to pay an unaccredited individual or organization a percentage of your disability compensation payment or retroactive entitlement. If you need help filing a claim, there are accredited representatives (<https://www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/index.asp>) to assist you.

- **Be cautious of aggressive law firms or companies.** Firms may use frequent communications (phone, text, and media messages) to establish a sense of urgency.

- **Be cautious of for-profit companies that use VA's name.** They may alter their name to create a false association with VA and establish legitimacy. Examples include a website such as VAclaimsassistance.com that incorporates VA into its name.

- **Review all legally binding documents thoroughly.** Never sign a blank form someone else will fill out later or give them full discretion to act on your behalf. See the contents before you sign and keep a copy for yourself.

- **Be wary of media advertisements regarding legal representation for presumptive VA claims.** Companies advertising

legal services may be predatory and financially motivated to obtain your VA benefits.

- If a company or individual is projecting misinformation or has questionable business practices regarding VA entitlements, file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission (reportfraud.ftc.gov/#/) at and the Better Business Bureau (www.bbb.org/file-a-complaint)
- To report suspected fraudulent activity, please contact the VA Office of Inspector General (OIG) Hotline (www.va.gov/oig/hotline).
- Veterans and survivors who think they might be eligible should apply for PACT Act benefits right now. Go to va.gov/PACT or call 1-800-MYVA411 for more information.

By protecting Veterans' benefits against fraudulent activity, you can help honor their service and sacrifice.

Courtesy of <https://www.va.gov>

VA Education and Training Benefits

VA education benefits help veterans, service members and their qualified family members with needs like paying college tuition, finding the right school or training program and getting career counseling. Learn how to apply for and manage the education and benefits you have earned.

Go to <https://www.va.gov/education/> for links to all the education and training web pages that will help you navigate your way to these valuable benefits.

Courtesy of www.va.gov



Health

Healthy Aging

Contemporary approaches to healthy living, with an increasing attentiveness to social determinants of health and the Vital Conditions for Health and Well-being, hold potential — even real promise — to provide us with longer and greater-quality lives, especially through our later years. Focusing and sustaining meaningful action in support of that potential — that promise — requires a broader perspective on healthy aging and an open and inclusive conversation on the subject.

Just as our older adult population is expanding, so too ought the relevant questions about our conversations on healthy aging: How do you, as a health professional, talk about healthy aging? With whom and when? Are these conversations narrowly focused on older adults, or do they incorporate a longitudinal, whole-of-life perspective? What specifically are the issues discussed?

With these questions in mind, let's talk about talking about healthy aging

Health care access, quality, and costs — and other direct services specific to older adults — are likely the focus of most current conversations on aging. However, as I recently wrote in a blog post about social determinants of health, with the exception of access to quality health care, every determinant that affects our health and well-being — and our opportunity for healthy aging — exists outside the health care sector. Our discussions on healthy aging must therefore also reflect those varied social determinants and be inclusive of many diverse sectors.

Given these expansive social determinants — the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age — greater inclusivity in discussions on healthy aging becomes imperative. **Who** has a voice, **what** they discuss, and **where** discussions take place should all reflect this broad perspective. Beyond such discussions focusing on health care and social services, we must invite a broader representation of sectors — with perspectives, for instance, on life-long learning, physical activity, spirituality, and entertainment. Such richer conver-

ging is a gradual, lifelong process, although it may at times feel like it suddenly sneaks up on you. We know that healthy living throughout life contributes greatly to healthy aging in later years. We also know generally what happens to our bodies and minds as we age. And while advanced age is not guaranteed, there's a general expectation that healthy aging is attainable.

Individual and collective awareness of the characteristics of healthy lifestyles and behaviors necessary to improve the chances for aging healthfully are key. From a public health and systems perspective, ensuring that policies and investments supporting opportunities for healthy living are proactive and focus on improving the Vital Conditions for Health and Well-Being are equally important. These considerations demand a perspective that healthy aging begins early in life and not with the onset of old age. The conversation about supporting healthy aging shouldn't wait until then either — and it shouldn't focus only on people older than 65 years.

The current state of healthy aging policies, funding, and community supports is one in transition. Some of this change is due to increasing attention on healthy aging in general, while also influenced by pandemic-related emergency programs coming to an end. Previously unaddressed inequities and disparities that the pandemic has exacerbated have played a role in the transition as well. These factors add weight to the idea that there is additional need for continued and expanded dialogue about what matters as people age. They also suggest that continued planning, innovation, and adaptation to support healthy aging is essential. All this being said, the answer to the question "When is the right time to talk about healthy aging?" is **now**

How should we talk about healthy aging? At the most fundamental level, as with all conversation related to healthy living throughout the lifespan, it starts with understanding the needs of the individual and the resources of their community. Engaging in collaborative, cross-sector dialogue about healthy aging that supports the sharing of resource discoveries and successful innovations, as well as failures, is critical

for creating beneficial change — as is advocating for healthy aging policy improvements at every turn. This calls for more connection, the formation and sustainment of networks to support one another and foster collaboration, and greater openness — particularly regarding equity. It calls for acting in accordance with the needs of older adults, as defined by older adults who have an active, empowered voice at the table. Such collaboration is the basis for an age-friendly ecosystem overall.

Admittedly, I've painted in broad strokes when outlining these conversations, emphasizing essential — if not general — concepts. There's so much more nuance to the ways we need to talk about healthy aging than I can share in a single post.

With that in mind, I encourage you to open a dialogue among your colleagues and keep the discussion going as we work together, across new and expanded partnerships, to develop new and better approaches for prioritizing healthy aging. Keep asking questions of diverse sectors that expand our understanding of the implications for healthy aging. Keep drilling down on the answers to those questions with new conversations and exploration. And above all else, share what you learn with others working to meet the needs of older adults.

What concerns you in terms of healthy aging? Where have you found successes or innovated by connecting with others? How are you continuing to connect and communicate to provide for those you serve? How have your efforts evolved? Who is missing from the conversations? And critically, are the voices of older individuals with lived experience part of the conversation?

Bear in mind Gawande's point that the priorities for older adults go beyond "merely being safe and living longer." We must grasp the idea that "the chance to shape one's story" and elevate the quality of one's later years will become all the more important across our nation in the years ahead.

Extracted from the Health and Well Being Matter article by RADML Paul Reed, MD on the Health.gov website

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

Basic Medical Package for Veterans

All enrolled Veterans receive the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA's) comprehensive Medical Benefits Package which includes preventive, primary and specialty care, diagnostic, inpatient and outpatient care services. Veterans may receive additional benefits, such as dental care depending on their unique qualifications.

Who is Eligible for Basic Medical Benefits Package for Veterans?

Veterans generally must be enrolled to receive VA health care. Enrollment assures Veterans that comprehensive health care services are available when they are needed. VA's enrollment system designates Veterans by priority groups.

- Priority Groups 1-3: Service-connected Veterans who have received a VA disability rating, former POWs, awarded Purple Heart or Medal of Honor.
- Priority Groups 4-8: Denote other eligibilities generally based medical conditions, combat status, environmental exposures and income.

If you served in the active military service and were separated under any condition other than dishonorable, you may qualify for VA health care benefits. Current and former members of the Reserves or National Guard who were called to active duty by a Federal order and completed the full period for which they were called or ordered to active duty may be eligible for VA health benefits as well. Combat Veterans who served in a theater of combat operations after November 11, 1998 are eligible to enroll in PG 6 within 5 years from the date of discharge and will receive free health care services and nursing home care for conditions possibly related to their military service.

Veterans who were discharged or released from the active military, naval, or air service after January 1, 2009, and before January 1, 2011, but did not enroll to receive hospital care, medical services, or nursing home care during the five-year period as currently specified by law, will have an additional one-year period from the date of enactment of the Clay Hunt SAV Act (February 12, 2015) to enroll for VA health care.

Veterans who served on active duty at Camp Lejeune for not fewer than 30 days between August 1, 1953 and December 31, 1987 are eligible for care for treatment of certain medical conditions regardless of enrollment status and will also receive free health care related to those illnesses or conditions. For more information about the program and for a list of the conditions and illnesses, visit the Camp Lejeune: Past Water Contamination page on VA's website.

For detailed eligibility requirements, please visit the VA Health Benefits homepage.

How to Apply for Basic Medical Benefits Package for Veterans.

The simplest way to apply for VA health benefits is by completing and submitting VA form 10-10EZ, Application for health benefits online (<https://www.va.gov/health-care/how-to-apply/#main-content>).

You may also apply in person at your local VA medical facility, by calling 1-8977-222-VETS or you may mail the completed form to:

VA Health Eligibility Center
2957 Clairmont Rd, Suite 200
Atlanta, GA 30329

How to contact help.

VA has developed a Website - My HealtheVet - especially for Veterans. VA encourages Veterans, active duty Servicemembers, their dependents and caregivers to register for a My HealtheVet account. Anyone who registers on My HealtheVet starts with a Basic Account which provides limited access to features in My HealtheVet that you self-enter. You may use the journals and other tools to track your health measures. Learn more about Upgrading your My HealtheVet account through In-Person or Online Authentication so that you can see your personal information located in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) or the Department of Defense (DoD) systems.

With a Basic Account you may use My HealtheVet to:

- Add information to a personal health journal about over-the-counter medications, military health history, med-

ical events, tests and allergies

- Record and track personal information such as contact information, emergency contacts, health care providers and doctors, and health insurance information
- Record and track personal health measurements (blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol, heart rate, body temperature, weight, pain level, etc.) in Vitals & Readings
- Print a wallet ID card with the personal information entered into the personal health record
- Set personal goals. **My Goals** makes it easy for you to set goals, identify your strengths and tasks, to overcome obstacles, and track your progress. **My Goals** can be used to help your health care team understand what is important to you

If you have questions:

- Call 1-877-222-VETS (8387) Visit the *Ask.VA.gov* (AVA) website to search Frequently Asked Questions or ask a question on-line
- Call 1-800-829-4833, if you are hearing impaired.

To apply for VA benefits and services, view your benefit status, and many more services go to www.va.gov and either logon with your eBenefits sign on or use www.Logon.gov to enroll. VA.gov is a one-stop source for information on Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs benefits and services. Veterans, service members and their family members can conduct self-service transactions such as checking compensation and pension claim status information, enrolling in GI Bill, and obtaining copies of civil service preference letters, military records (DD214), and other personal information. For further information visit the *VA.gov* website.

For more info, go to <https://benefits.gov/benefit/303>





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, please contact your servicing pay office or your customer service representative.

Questions concerning specific pay account information should contact the

servicing payroll office or the appropriate Customer Service rep as follows:

Military Retirees:

1-800-321-1080

Annuitants: 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.

Courtesy of myPay.dfas.mil

Where to Send Your TRICARE Claim

Non-active duty, TRICARE Pacific; 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, the 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 you can contact the Misawa Air Base TRICARE Office at 226-6000 (from off base 0176-77-6000) or visit the office at the base hospital.

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 misa-wa.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

Call My VA

You have questions for the VA? Dial 1-800-MyVA411. This is the number to call when you don't know who to call.

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

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



TRICARE and MEDICARE トライケアとメデケア

軍人または退職軍人と家族は、軍病院やクリニックで治療を受けることができます。しかし、大部分の軍病院は数少ないし、小さくし、必要とされた治療を必ずしも提供することができません。しばしば、現役軍人と退職者は、民間の病院を利用しなければならなくて、保険によってカバーされなければなりません。**TRICARE** (トライケア)は、現役軍人と退職者とそれらの家族が軍の保健制度の外で受け取られる治療をカバーする健康保険制度です。**MEDICARE**(メデケア)は大部分は65歳以上の人のためのアメリカの一般的なヘルスケア保険制度です。退職軍人と家族は、スペースアヴェラボル(空席待ち)で陸軍医療施設で治療を受けられます。民間人の医療施設を利用するとき、トライケアは退職者と彼らの家族のための保険です。通常、トライケア保険は無料であるか低コストです。しかし、退職軍人が65を過ぎると、トライケア保険を保つために、メデケア健康保険制度に入らなければなりません。現在、メデケア保険料は1ヵ月につきおよそ\$165です。そして、トライケア保険を保つために、退職者が1年につきほぼ\$2000を払わなければなりません。日本の居住者であるならば、あなたは国民健康保険制度に払い込まなければなりません。この保険は医療、歯科、眼科と長期医療保険を含みます。国民健康保険制度を利用したの自負担があればトライケアは、150ドルの年次免責条項の後、経費の多くをカバーします。退職者と家族は、両方の健康保険プログラムに払い込む価値があるかどうか判断をしなければなりません。ときに通常アメリカ合衆国に帰国するつもりである大部分の退職者は、彼らのトライケア/メデケア保険金を保持します。ません。65以上の定住者は、日本の健康保険がよりコストが低くて、トライケアより保険をかけれます。彼らは、メデケア支払いをキャンセルすることによって、トライケアから自発的に撤退することができます。これは非常に簡易冠詞です、そして、トライケアから引き下がることについてのどんな決定でもする前に、トライケアとメデケアのウェブサイトです詳しく調べることを進みます。より特定の情報のために我々の事務所に連絡してください。

- Joe Roginski

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に答えてお手伝いします。ご遠慮なく連絡ください。

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

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)

〒033-0012 青森県三沢市平畑64番地
三沢米軍基地内 35FW/CVR—Retiree Activities Office

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 first quarter 2023 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

Managing Editor: CMSgt (Ret) Dave Barton

MMRA Notes:

1. Membership dues are \$20 a year. If you have not paid your dues for 2022, 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.

7 February 2023

4 April 2023

6 June 2023

1 August 2023

3 October 2023

5 December 2023

Next Meeting—Tuesday 4 April then 6 June 2023

SERVING THE RETIRED MILITARY COMMUNITY IN NORTHERN JAPAN



USEFUL NUMBERS

Exchange: 0176-77-8255-7 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>