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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.

Social Security Changes (Biden's Reform Plan)

The Senior Citizen's League (TSCL) monitors legislation regarding Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid as well as other issues of importance to seniors. The need to fix Social Security has come to center stage this week with articles in major news outlets pointing out the urgency. During his campaign President Biden proposed a plan to reform Social Security by giving eligible workers a guaranteed minimum benefit equal to at least 125% of the federal poverty level. People who have received benefits for at least 20 years would get a 5% bump. Widows and widowers would receive about 20% more per month. He also proposed changing the measurement for annual cost-of-living increases to the Consumer Price Index for the Elderly, or CPI-E, which could more closely track the expenses retirees face. To pay for those higher benefits, Biden would apply Social Security payroll taxes to those making \$400,000 and up. In 2021, workers generally pay the 6.2% Social Security tax on up to \$142,800 of wages.

TSCL has been in touch with Congressman John Larson (D-CT) regarding his Social Security 2100 legislation which he introduced last year and which TSCL strongly supported. The Larson bill aims to boost benefits and restore the program's solvency for the next 75 years by raising payroll taxes. He has not yet reintroduced his bill but, according to an article on CNBC.com, he said the Biden administration, and members of the Senate and House, are looking to come to a consensus by holding roundtables and evaluating different proposals. "There are a lot of similarities between the Social Security 2100 Act and President Biden's campaign proposal,"

Larson said. "We will be reintroducing a modified Social Security 2100 Act based on what comes out these discussions."

Getting a bill through the House is one thing, but getting it through the Senate is another. With a Senate equally divided between the two parties, the power of every Senator is enlarged because it would only take one Senator to pass or defeat legislation. But in addition, because of the ability of an individual Senator to mount a filibuster, it often actually takes 60 votes to pass legislation. One of the worrisome aspects of any Social Security reform legislation is that conservative politicians would likely object to raising benefits across the board, according to Rachel Greszler at the conservative Heritage Foundation. "There could be room for a compromise to be made here in terms of boosting the minimum benefit that's provided, so it's at least at the poverty level," Greszler said. "But that would have to come ... with a reduction in benefits at the top."

One challenge that could emerge in the negotiations is for leaders to face the decision of whether Social Security should be an anti-poverty or entitlement program, Greszler said. The Heritage Foundation is advocating for a universal benefit to protect those who are low income, while reducing how much middle to high-wage earners rely on benefits. In short, some politicians and others want to cut the benefits of certain Social Security recipients in order to increase the benefits of others. TSCL is totally opposed to that kind of "fix," which is no fix at all.

Senior Citizen's League (TSCL)
Press Release | January 25, 2021

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Inside this issue:

Proposed Social Security Changes	1
New RAO Staff	2
VA Benefits	3
VA Benefits	4
VA Benefits	5
Military Consumer	6
Health- What are the COVID-19 Vaccines?	7
Health-HPV Vaccine COVID Coach	8
myPay Changes Recurring Information	9
(NFCU)ネイビ フェデラル クレジット ユニオン口座 主の方々への重要な知らせ	10
Still Serving	11
RAO & MMRA Info	12



**SERVING THE RETIRED MILITARY
COMMUNITY IN NORTHERN JAPAN**



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CMSgt (Ret) Dave Barton
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SMSgt (Ret) Lee Martin
Webmaster / Newsletter



SCPO (Ret) Paul Sayles
Staff



AT1 (Ret) Mark Ringquist
Staff

We welcome three new staff members to the Misawa Air Base Retiree Activities Office. ATI (Ret) Mark Ringquist retired from the Navy with 20 years of service will be working on Fridays in the office with Dave Barton. Mark previously worked for Cubic/Valient with the AMC Terminal rotator aircraft.

AW1 (Ret) Gary Grishaver retired from Navy with 20 years service will be working on Wednesdays in the office with Dave Barton. Gary previously worked as the IT Manager with the 35th FSS here at Misawa.

MSgt (Ret) Bill Tuttle retired from the Air Force with 24 years of service will be working on Mondays in the office with Joe Roginski. Bill previously worked for Harley-Davidson Military Sales Far East Division here at Misawa.

We want to thank them for stepping up and volunteering their time to assist with our very important mission in the Retiree Activities Office. The need to have the office open 5 days a week provides an invaluable service to our retirees and widows and is of paramount importance as an overseas link to their benefits. We look forward to their many years of service.



MSgt (Ret) Bill Tuttle
Staff



AW1 (Ret) Gary Grishaver
Staff



Veterans Administration

VA Podcast Network

Podcasts are taking the entertainment world by storm. They are streamable and downloadable audio entertainment, easy for on-the-go listening. Simply put, they are internet radio shows on demand.

The first podcast launched in 2004 with a computer program that could download internet radio shows to iPod MP3 players. Today, podcasting is increasing in popularity as an entertainment- and information-sharing platform. Podcast topics range from narratives to news, cooking and murder mysteries to informative talks on almost every topic imaginable.

Podcasts are usually released as a series with new episodes available at regular intervals, similar to how episodes of TV shows are broadcast on a schedule. Episodes vary in length and there is no standard time for a podcast. Most series tend to keep episodes to similar lengths, but running time is up to the creator.

The VA Podcast Network (<https://www.blogs.va.gov/Vantage/category/va-podcast-network/>) focuses on informative, news-related, and interview-style shows.

The Network currently includes seven *podcasts*:

- Borne the Battle
- Vets First
- Fresh Focus
- My Life, My Story
- Delivering More Together
- TAC Talks
- RMIRECC Sort Takes on Suicide Prevention

The podcast community includes both new and old content. Some radio networks, such as National

Public Radio (NPR), publish their content in podcast form as well as radio broadcasts. Podcasts reimagine traditional radio-style broadcasts to optimize them for convenience and accessibility in an increasingly digital world.

You can stream and download a podcast from multiple websites and apps. Some podcast platforms are available on computers, smart devices or both. Google Podcasts and Apple Podcasts are free apps and services. Stitcher, Spotify and iHeartRadio are currently free with advertisements but offer ad-free, paid subscriptions.

The easiest way to find a podcast is to search for it by name on a search engine, or within a website or mobile app. If you want to browse a podcast library, search the internet for one of the services by name or click one of the links below. If you are using a mobile device, such as an Android or iPhone, they should already have the Google Podcasts or Apple Podcasts app installed. Search the device for "Podcast", click on the app and browse the available podcast offerings. You can also search for specific shows in those apps.

Podcasts produced by the VA Podcast Network are available on all the listed services. They are also accessible through the Vantage Point Blog.

(<https://www.blogs.va.gov/Vantage/>) and Department of Veterans Affairs Facebook (<https://m.facebook.com/VeteransAffairs/>), Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/deptvetaffairs/>) and Twitter (<https://twitter.com/DeptVetAffairs/>) pages.

Courtesy of www.blogs.va.gov

One Phone Number to Reach the VA

The number to call when you don't know who to call at the Veterans' Administration is 1-800-MyVA411 (1-800-698-2411). You only need to remember one number for information on VA care, benefits, and services or to speak to a live agent for assistance.

1-800-MyVA411 serves all members of the Veteran community seeking information or assistance. Veterans and their families may reach the Veterans Crisis Line directly by calling 1-800-273-8255 and pressing 1, by [Chat](#), or by texting 838255. The White House VA Hotline is also available directly at 1-855-948-2311 for Veterans and their families to share compliments and concerns.

What kind of information?

- COVID-19 general information and updates
- Health care eligibility and enrollment
- VA benefits, such as disability, compensation and pension, education programs, caregiver support, insurance, home loans, and burial headstones and markers, among others
- The nearest VA medical centers, benefits offices, or cemeteries to Veterans
- Directory assistance and connection to VA Medical Center operators.
- Technical support for VA.gov
- Debt and payment options

When you call **1-800-MyVA411 and press 0**, you will reach a live agent for immediate assistance or connection to the right VA experts.

Courtesy of www.blogs.va.gov



Veterans Administration

VA Caregiver Stipend

Caregivers play an important role in the health and well-being of Veterans. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers a number of services to support Family Caregivers including a monthly stipend to Primary Family Caregivers of Veterans with moderate and severe needs. A stipend is defined as a monthly financial payment provided to a Primary Family Caregiver of an eligible Veteran.

VA bases stipend payments on the definition of "monthly stipend rate," which means the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) General Schedule (GS) Annual Rate for Grade 4, Step 1, based on the locality pay area in which the eligible Veteran resides, divided by 12. VA will apply a specific percentage of the monthly stipend rate based on the amount and degree of personal care services provided to the eligible Veteran by the Primary Family Caregiver. The amount and degree of personal care services is divided into two levels. The distinction between the two levels is based on if the Veteran is determined to be unable to self-sustain in the community.

29

Level 1: For an eligible Veteran who is determined not to be "unable to self-sustain" in the community, the Primary Family Caregiver's stipend amount will be 62.5% of the monthly stipend rate. For example the GS rate at Grade 4, Step 1, in Dallas, Texas, for 2020 is \$33,638 annually. Thus the monthly stipend amount for a Primary Family Caregiver of an eligible Veteran in Dallas, Texas, at this rate (62.5%) of \$33,638 will be approximately \$1,751.98.

Level 2: For an eligible Veteran who is determined to be unable to

self-sustain in the community, the Primary Family Caregiver's stipend amount will be 100% of the monthly stipend rate. For example the GS rate at Grade 4, Step 1, in Dallas, Texas, for 2020 is \$33,638 annually. The 2020 monthly stipend amount for a Primary Family Caregiver of an eligible Veteran in Dallas, Texas, at this rate (100%) of \$33,638 will be approximately \$2,803.17.

The VHA Office of Community Care (VHA OCC) issues the recurring monthly payments and processes all updates related to the stipend. You may contact VHA OCC for information on the processing activities for the stipend benefit via the Office of Community Care toll free at 1-877-733-7927 M-F 8:00 am - 8:00 pm EST or Web: <https://www.va.gov/communitycare>

Eligibility: You may be eligible to participate in the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers if you and the Veteran you're caring for meet all of the requirements listed below:

1. *Eligibility requirements for the family caregiver* ♦ You must be at least 18 years old and at least one of these must be true for you. ♦ You must be either a spouse, son, daughter, parent, stepfamily member, or extended family member of the Veteran, or someone who lives full-time with the Veteran, or is willing to do so if designated as a family caregiver

2. *Eligibility requirements for the Veteran* --All of these must be true for the Veteran you're caring for:

♦ The Veteran must have a VA disability rating (individual or combined) of 70% or higher. ♦ The Veteran's service-connected disabilities must have been caused or made worse by their active-duty service during one of these periods of time: On or after September 11, 2001, or On or before May 7, 1975 o And the Veteran must have been discharged from

the U.S. military or have a date of medical discharge, and need at least 6 months of continuous, in-person personal care services

Caregiver Responsibilities & Benefits To provide services the eligible Veteran needs from another person. They include care or assistance to support the Veteran's: Health and well-being Everyday personal needs (like feeding, bathing, and dressing) Safety, protection, or instruction in their daily living environment

The Veteran can appoint one Primary Family Caregiver (the main caregiver), and up to two Secondary Family Caregivers (people who serve as backup support to the primary caregiver when needed). Eligible Primary and Secondary Family Caregivers can receive:

Caregiver education and training Mental health counseling Travel, lodging, and financial assistance when traveling with the Veteran to receive care

Eligible Primary Family Caregivers may also receive: A monthly stipend (payment) Access to health care benefits through the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA)—if you don't already qualify for care or services under another health care plan At least 30 days per year of respite care for the Veteran Application. You and the Veteran will need to apply together and participate in an application process to determine if you're eligible

Continued on page 5



Veterans Administration

Continued from page 4

for the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers. You'll both need to sign and date the application, and answer all questions for your role. You can apply online at <https://www.va.gov/family-member-benefits/apply-for-caregiver-assistance-form-10-10cg>, or by mail, or in person. If by mail, download and fill out a joint Application for the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (VA Form 10-10CG) at <https://www.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/10-10CG.pdf> and mail the form and any supporting documents to:

Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers Health Eligibility Center 2957 Clairmont Road NE, Suite 200 Atlanta, GA 30329-1647

If applying in person bring your completed VA Form 10-10CG to your local VA medical center's Caregiver Support Coordinator. To find the name of your local coordinator, you can contact the Caregiver Support Line at 855-260-3274 or go to:

https://www.caregiver.va.gov/support/New_CSC_Page.asp, the VA Caregiver Support Coordinator directory. Do not send medical records along with the application. VA will follow up after the application is received.

If you need assistance with completing the application or would like to check the status of your 1010CG application, call 1-855-488-8440, option 3. Be sure to check back for updates or subscribe to receive email updates and information about VA Caregiver Support Program services.

Courtesy of va.gov

VA Benefits Letters

To receive some VA benefits, veterans need a letter proving their status. Access and download your VA Benefit Summary Letter (sometimes called a VA Award Letter) and other benefit letters and documents online.

You must sign to have access to these letters. Try signing in with an ID.me account. If you don't have one, you can create one by going to <https://www.va.gov/records/download-va-letter/> and click the "Sign in or create and account" button.

Once you have access to this section of the VA website, you can download a variety of VA letters that include information about your benefits and service history.

Before you download your VA letter, they will ask you to review the address they have on file for you. This address will be listed on your letter. If this address isn't correct, you can update it. But your letter will still be valid even with the incorrect address.

Right now, you can only download the VA letters you see listed when you sign in as above.

You can use the following links to get access to other common VA letters and documents you might be eligible for:

- To view and print Post 9/11 GI Bill Statement of Benefits go to: <https://www.va.gov/education/gi-bill/post-9-11/ch-33-benefit/>
- For a Certificate of Eligibility for home loan benefits go to: <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/authfail>
- For copies of discharge or separation papers (DD214) you

should go to <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/authfail>

- To view VA payment information go to <https://www.va.gov/va-payment-history/>
- To search historical military records go to: <https://www.archives.gov/>

If you have trouble downloading documents or letters, call MyVA411 main information line at 800-698-2411.

Veterans Crisis Line

Are you a veteran in crisis or concerned about someone who is?

Connect with the Veterans Crisis Line to reach caring, qualified responders with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Many of them are veterans themselves.

No matter where you are, there is support for getting your life back on track. A trained responder will answer your call, text or chat and ask you a few questions. You can decide how much you want to share.

Feeling anxious or alone and thinking about suicide are some of the signs that a veteran may be in crisis.

You can call them at 800-273-8255. You can open a chat with them by going to <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/chat> and following the instructions there. If you are in the states, you can also text them at 838255. There is also a chat for homeless veterans at <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/chat/homeless-veterans-chat>.

Courtesy of va.gov.



Military Consumer

Avoiding Job Hunting Scams

No legitimate company will ever charge you money to get a job, or guarantee you a job only if you pay. But job scammers will. Job search services might charge, but you'll want to do some research up front to make sure you get your money's worth.

Tips:

- To find a job, participate in military job fairs and seek out employers who have a record of hiring veterans.
- If you are interested in transitioning to a civilian job in the federal government, Feds Hire Vets (fedshirevets.gov) has information about veterans preferences, the federal hiring process, and job listings.
- Search Career One Stop (careeronestop.org) to find listings for jobs, information in each state's job bans (<http://www.careeronestop.org/jobsearch/findjobs/state-job-banks.aspx>) and available training programs in every state. You'll also find special programs for veteran older or younger workers and people with disabilities. Learn more by going to <http://www.careeronestop.org/ResourcesFor/workerswithdisabilities/workers-with-disabilities.aspx>.
- Contact your installation education office about benefits and opportunities, which will include Troops to Teachers, (www.proudtoserveagain.com.) a program to help transitioning service members begin new careers as public school teachers.
- Get tips about resume writing, interviewing and finding jobs for free. Check online job boards, networking sites, your local library or your school's placement office. You can also run an online search for these services.
- Are you thinking about using a

job search service?

- Remember that no job service can guarantee you a job, and no legit job service will promise you a job only if you pay them. If they do, walk away.
- Get all promises and details in writing. What will you pay? What do you get for your money? What happens if they don't find you a job. What is their refund policy?
- Can't get the paperwork to review in advance? Walk away.
- If the service finds you a job, check it out. Go online or call the company where the promised job is. Is there a job listing at all? Are they really using the job service to fill the job?

You can go to <https://www.militaryconsumer.gov/earn-making-money/avoiding-job-hunting-scams> to find a download link to the Military Consumer PowerPoint for avoiding Job Hunting Scams.

Seeing through Imposter Scams

Imposters pretend to be someone you trust, like a government official, a family member, a charity or a company you do business with. They seem convincing and pressure you to send money before you have time to think.

Tips:

- Don't send money or give out personal information in response to an unexpected request.
- Scammers can be convincing and find ways to make their story seem real. They sometimes use information from a social networking sites to convince you they know about you.

They might hack into a loved one's email account to seem like it's really the person you know reaching out.

Is a distressed friend or love interest in touch? Check it out. Look up that person's phone number yourself and check in. Call another family member to see what they know. Is there a real emergency?

Does it seem to be the IRS calling? Hang up. The IRS will never contact you initially by phone. The real IRS won't ask you to pay with prepaid debit cards. iTunes cards or wire transfers. They also won't ask for a credit card over telephone. If you have tax questions, visit IRS.gov or call the IRS at 1-800-829-1040

Does a caller say you've been selected to get a grant or other money from the government? Even if you've recently completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), a real government agency won't ask you to pay a processing fee related to FAFSA or for a grant that you have already been awarded.

Does the caller say your computer has a virus and they can help? Hang up. Never give control of your computer or your credit card information to someone who calls you out of the blue.

Is your online romantic interest asking for cash? Don't wire money or give out account information. Scammers, both male and female make fake dating profiles, sometimes using photos of other people, even stolen pictures of real military personnel. They build relationships, even fake wedding plans before they disappear with your money.

Courtesy of DFAS.mil



Health—COVID-19 Vaccines

DOD Experts Explain the Science Behind the COVID-19 Vaccines

Almost three months after the Food and Drug Administration issued emergency use authorization for the first two COVID-19 vaccines, many questions have arisen concerning their efficacy in attacking the SARS-CoV-2 virus and deadly COVID-19 disease.

To better understand how COVID-19 vaccines work, MHS communications spoke to two medical experts who have been intimately involved in the Department of Defense's effort to develop and roll out vaccines for Americans. Dr. Margaret Ryan, medical director of the Defense Health Agency's Immunization Healthcare Division at the Pacific Region Vaccine Safety Hub in San Diego, California and Air Force Col. (Dr.) Jessica Cowden, chief medical officer of the Joint Program Executive Office for Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Defense and the Infectious Disease Programs at the Defense Institute for Medical Operations Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas.

SARS-CoV-2 virus, like other viruses, is an infectious agent that consists of genetic, coding material called RNA (usually a single-stranded ribose sugar phosphate) or DNA (usually a double-stranded deoxyribose sugar phosphate) that is contained in a protein coat, Ryan stated. Viruses cannot reproduce themselves until they infect a living cell, she explained, so viral RNA or DNA cause an infected cell to make copies of the virus, thus infecting other living cells and potentially making people very sick in the process.

"In the case of SARS-CoV-2, the virus tends to infect cells in the human respiratory tracts," said Ryan. "The body responds to infection with inflammation, and people may experience fever, cough, and trouble breathing. The SARS-CoV-2 virus can also use its surface 'spike protein' to infect other cells in the body".

Pharmaceutical companies, universities, and government organizations around the world have been working against and around the clock since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic to develop a safe and effective vaccine to counter the rates of contagion. Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna

received the FDA's emergency use authorization in the United States in mid-December 2020 for people ages 16 and older and 18 and older, respectively, but other promising candidates are in development by additional professional teams, including Janssen, AstraZeneca, and Novavax.

"The different vaccine candidates are all targeting the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein," said Cowden. They work by presenting an antigen — a substance that the body does not recognize — to the body, she said.

The experts explained that antigens are introduced as a small piece of coding material, called messenger RNA (mRNA), into a few immune cells. It is encased in a lipid coat that allows it to enter only the outer part of the cells. It does not integrate into the person's DNA or replicate, and it breaks down quickly, so it's only present in the cell briefly.

"That RNA then tells the cells to express 'spike protein,' resulting in the immune system making antibodies to destroy the spike protein," said Ryan, adding that mRNA vaccines must be handled very carefully and often maintained at very cold temperatures to work properly.

Vaccines use different platforms to introduce the spike protein to the body to elicit the immune system's response of blocking or killing the virus if a person becomes infected after vaccination, added Cowden. "Those antibodies then continue to be made by the body and can bind and/or neutralize the virus if an individual becomes infected after vaccination."

Said Ryan: "The immune system also develops memory immune cells, so that any newly introduced spike protein would also be destroyed. Spike protein is similar to a protein on the coat of coronaviruses, so an immune response to spike protein can equate to immunity from coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2)."

Pfizer partnered with BioNTech to develop an RNA vaccine that is administered in two injections given at least 21 days apart. Moderna developed a similar mRNA vaccine that also requires administration as two injections given at least 28 days apart. The mRNA technology in these does not include any virus.

Janssen, a subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson, developed a viral-vector vaccine to be administered in one injection.

AstraZeneca, in partnership with the University of Oxford, also developed a viral-vector vaccine that is to be administered in two injections at least 28 days apart. Both pharmaceuticals are likely to submit their products to FDA for emergency use authorization soon.

"The Janssen and AstraZeneca/Oxford vaccines are both replication-deficient adenovirus-vectored vaccines," said Cowden.

This means they use a different virus, such as measles or adenovirus, which is genetically engineered so that it can produce coronavirus proteins in the body and trigger the immune system to make antibodies against those proteins.

"After spike protein is expressed, the immune response is similar to that of mRNA vaccines: The immune system makes antibodies and memory immune cells that target spike protein. This response equates to immunity from SARS-CoV-2," said Ryan.

The viruses used in viral-vector vaccines are weakened or inactivated, so they cannot cause disease or harm humans, said the experts. Viral-vector vaccines are also relatively fragile and must be maintained at temperatures that allow them to remain intact to work optimally.

Novavax developed an adjuvanted protein subunit vaccine to be administered in two injections at least 21 days apart. The experts explained this type of vaccine usually works by introducing a component of the virus — the antigen — into the body along with an adjuvant, a molecule composed of a cholesterol-like substance that stimulates the immune system, prompting the immune system to make antibodies against the protein antigen, resulting in immunity from the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19.

For more information, go to https://health.mil/News/Articles/2021/02/01/DOD-experts-explain-The-science-behind-the-COVID-19-vaccines?utm_medium=govdelivery&utm_source=email

Courtesy of health.mil

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

Decreasing Cervical Cancer—HPV Vaccine

Cervical cancer was once one of the most common causes of cancer death for American women, according to the American Cancer Society (ACS).

With increased use of the Pap test, the cervical cancer death rate has dropped significantly. However, approximately 13,800 new cases of invasive cervical cancer are diagnosed annually, and more than 4,000 women die from the disease each year, numbers from the ACS indicate.

Cervical cancer affects the uterine cervix, a part of the uterus, which can create problems with infertility and blockage of the urinary and bowel tracts. Early detection and prevention methods are key to help women fight and prevent this form of cancer.

According to the Director of Gynecologic Oncology at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Air Force Col. (Dr.) Yovanni Casablanca, early stages of cervical cancer could display no symptoms, which is why regular visits with an OB/GYN are important. “Usually the way we know something is going on is that the cervical pap tests are abnormal,” Casablanca said.

While cervical cancer is usually seen in women in their 30s, 40s and after menopause, there are preventative measures a woman can take to reduce their risk.

“There are over 60 different strains of HPV, but only certain types, high risk types, are associated with cervical and other cancers,” said Casablanca, about the cancer causing Human Papillomavirus. “I tell my patients that HPV is a ‘part of life,’ it is very common and everyone who has had skin-to-skin contact with another

human has likely been exposed to some strain of HPV. Folks who are exposed to higher risk strains, smoke, or have immunosuppression might be susceptible to the consequences of HPV.”

Casablanca encourages both men and women to get the HPV vaccine in early puberty, before sexual activity begins. The vaccine is highly effective in creating immunity to most of the high-risk strains of HPV. Infection to HPV can be increased through tobacco use, multiple sexual partners, and early onset of sexual activity.

“Any age, race, and ethnicity can get cervical cancer, and it only takes one partner to expose you to HPV,” explained Casablanca.

Treatment for cervical cancer can involve invasive surgeries, which a portion of the cervix is removed. For women who don’t wish to retain fertility, they may sometimes opt for a hysterectomy, removal of the uterus. Like most cancers, in a more advanced phase, chemotherapy and radiation treatments are used.

For more information about cervical cancer, refer to the National Cancer Institute (<https://www.cancer.gov/>).

Courtesy of www.health.mil

30 Days of Self Care with COVID Coach

During times of stress, it’s especially important to set time aside for self-care. With the COVID Coach mobile app, they will walk you through 30 different self-care practices that can help you learn about:

- Self-help and coping
- Manage your well-being
- Set and track personal goals
- Get support when you need it.

To get started, download the

COVID Coach app on your IOS or Android device and download the “30 Days of Self-Care with COVID Coach guidebook (PDF) that has all of the suggestions for self-care practices. Copy this link into a browser.

https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOi-JIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDQsInVyaSI6ImJwMjppbGJjayIsImJlYm90IjoiImJyMTAxMjcuMzQwNTg2ODEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy5wdHNkLnZhLmdvdi9hcHB2aWQvZG9jcy8zMERheXNTZWxmQ2FyZUNPVklEQ29hY2g1MDgucGRmIn0.K50sW83ME5zG00Aob_bNPB7S6_x-BVljNrViTu2UVig/s/569624500/br/93691983781-1

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JIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDQsInVyaSI6ImJwMjppbGJjayIsImJlYm90IjoiImJyMTAxMjcuMzQwNTg2ODEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy5wdHNkLnZhLmdvdi9hcHB2aWQvZG9jcy8zMERheXNTZWxmQ2FyZUNPVklEQ29hY2g1MDgucGRmIn0.K50sW83ME5zG00Aob_bNPB7S6_x-BVljNrViTu2UVig/s/569624500/br/93691983781-1.

Their COVID Coach mobile app offers a number of practices and tools to help you practice self-care. Many exercise can be completed in just a few minutes. Even if you aren’t feeling particularly stressed, it’s important to get into a good self-care routine to prevent stress.

All it takes is 30 days to establish a new habit. So visit day 1 to get started on the path to self care.

This guide is for anyone. However, it does have some content and resources specifically for veterans.

This guide contains a list of 30 self-care practices, one for each day of the month but you don’t have to wait for the 1st of the month to begin. You can start your 30-day program any time.

Courtesy of www.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

Two Factor Authentication Comes to myPay

Two-factor authentication is a login process that requires something you already know (your login and password) and something you have, in this case a one-time PIN (Personal Identification Number) that you receive by e-mail or text message.

Effective in April 2021, two-factor authentication is mandatory on the myPay site, with the intent of adding an extra layer of security on your myPay account. This does not apply to SmartCard users, because the SmartCard is already a two-factor authentication.

The next time you log into myPay, you will be asked to opt into two-factor authentication. You must choose a preferred contact methods, either e-mail or your cell-phone, which will become the usual method to receive the one-time PINs. However, currently DFAS systems do not recognize foreign cell phone numbers, so we overseas retirees must use our e-mail. You may use your cell phone e-mail or personal computer e-mail address.

When you receive the PIN, you must input it within 10 minutes of it being sent. If delayed, it will expire and you have to do the login process again.

You can update your contact information through your Personal Settings.

Extracted from myPay FAQs

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.

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 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, or US dollars if your bank offers dollar accounts.

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

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



Navy Federal Credit Unionの口座主の皆さんへ

1. あなたはNavy Federal Credit Union（ベースにあるネイビー フェデラル クレジット ユニオン「NFCU」）にアカウントがあるならば、これは重要な情報です。大金がアカウントにたまった時、三沢の近くに住むならば、お金をアカウントから簡単に降ろすことができます。しかし、三沢から遠くに住むならば、お金にアクセスする2つの方法だけしかありません：デビットカードまたは国際銀行振り込み。以前NFCUは国際銀行振り込みの文書による要請を受け入れたが今から口座主は直接銀行に来なければなりません。ということは遠くに住む方々はデビットカードで降ろすことしかありません。しかし、デビットカードは一日の取引額は宣言されて、現在一日に\$600しか降ろせません。アカウントにアクセスするために三沢へ行きたくないなら、米国源から日本の預金口座を毎月直接入金するように設定することを私は勧めます。そして、資金が毎月直接日本の銀行に着くようになってから、完全にNFCUアカウントを解約すること。もう一つの方法は、デビットカードを使って、毎月、必要とされたお金を降ろすことです。アドバイスと援助等のために、毎週月曜日に、オフィスに電話をしてください。（電話番号0176-77-4428）

ロジンスキー

2. 毎月の直接国際預金(International Direct Deposit)に何かの問題を抱えているならば、RAOオフィスで私に連絡してください。ロジンスキー

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)

(日本語)

〒033-0012 Aomori-ken, Misawa-shi, Hirahata 64, 〒033-0012 青森県三沢市平畑64番地

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 1st quarter 2021 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 input to:

misawa.rao@us.af.mil

Managing Editor's Announcement— Beginning the next newsletter (2nd Quarter 2021 Apr-Jun), Dave Barton, the Deputy Director will take over as managing editor.

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

1 June 2021

3 August 2021

5 October 2021

7 December 2021

NEXT MEETING—TUESDAY, 1 June 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>