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Misawa AB Retiree  
Activities Office

Col Timothy J. Sundvall  
35th FW/CC

Col Andrew P. Hansen  
35th FW/CV

MSgt (Ret) Joseph Roginski  
RAO Director

CMSgt (Ret) Dave Barton  
RAO Deputy Director

MSgt (Ret) Tony Watkins  
RAO Staff

SMSgt (Ret) Lee Martin  
RAO Staff

## 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.

### Air Force Retiree Council Convenes at AFMPC

by Tammy Cournoyer  
Afterburner editor

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas – The 2014 Air Force Retiree Council met in May to discuss issues important to retirees and surviving spouses, and receive briefings on various subjects important to the retiree community.

This was the first time the council convened since 2012. Last year’s annual meeting was cancelled because of budget constraints.

The Air Force Retiree Council provides the link between members of the Air Force retiree community – more than 800,000-plus retirees, spouses and surviving spouses living throughout the world -- and the Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh. Council co-chairmen are Welsh’s liaison with the retiree community and work directly for him. Current co-chairmen are Lt. Gen. Steven R. Polk and Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Rodney J. McKinley, both retired.

Comprised of the two co-chairmen and 15 members representing retirees by geographical areas in the United States and overseas, the council gathers annually at the Air Force Personnel Center here to discuss retiree issues. Upon conclusion of the annual meeting, the co-chairmen

report the council’s findings directly to the chief of staff.

Among the issues discussed by the council were the following:

- Maintaining the commissary benefit.

- Continued support for printing and mailing of the *Afterburner*.

- Lowering the age (currently 75) of granting indefinite identification cards for spouses.

- Enhanced support for Defense Finance and Accounting retired and annuity pay customers, including promoting myPay accounts for self-service.

- Continuing Retiree Activities Office support at the base level -- both financial and administrative – and the growing need for more volunteers.

- Support for legislative issues, specifically eliminating offset between the Survivor Benefit Plan and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation; paid-up SBP premiums for retirees at age 67 versus 70; and full pay for the month that a retiree dies.

- Concerns about rising TRICARE costs and reduced Medicare/TRICARE for Life reimbursement.

The co-chairs will work with the agencies related to the issues and report the findings and proposed resolutions to

Welsh in September. They will also brief the chief of staff on the vital role retirees who are “still serving” play in saving millions of dollars in personnel costs by volunteering at local bases.

Despite the fiscal realities that cancelled last year’s meeting, the co-chairs were able to meet with Welsh when he visited AFPC on Sept. 11. Polk, who lives in San Antonio, met with him personally, while McKinley was able to join in via teleconference from Oklahoma. During that meeting, Welsh assured the co-chairs that he strongly supports the retiree community and appreciates their service.

“General Welsh expressed his sincere gratitude for the tireless efforts of our Air Force retiree community,” Polk said. “He acknowledged and boasted about the countless hours retirees volunteer each year in support of our bases.” Retiree Activities Offices stepped into the spotlight this year when their support by the installation commander became part of the 2014 Air Force Inspector General’s inspection checklist.

“General Welsh considers Air Force retirees a key component of our force,” said McKinley. (Reprint from Spring/Summer Afterburner)

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**YOUR RAD STAFF**

**MSgt (Ret) Joseph Roginski**  
**DIRECTOR**



**CMSgt (Ret) Dave Barton**  
**DEPUTY DIRECTOR**



**MSgt (Ret) Everett (Tony)**  
**Watkins**  
**STAFF**

**Misawa AB Welcomes New Base Leadership**

**COLONEL TIMOTHY J. SUNDVALL**



**COLONEL ANDREW P. HANSEN**

Colonel Timothy J. Sundvall is the new Commander of the 35th Fighter Wing, Misawa Air Base, Japan. He commands a combat-ready F-16CM fighter wing composed of nearly 3,100 personnel and sustains forces and facilities worth over \$2 billion. Colonel Sundvall oversees a 13,000-person installation which supports eight associate units representing three U.S. military services (Air Force, Army and Navy) and the Japan Air Self-Defense Force.

Colonel Sundvall is from Sisters, Oregon, and graduated from the United States Air Force Academy in 1992. He earned his pilot wings at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi, in December 1993 and was selected to fly the F-16. Col Sundvall has held a variety of positions at the squadron, wing, and major command level to include the Commander, 8th Operations Support Squadron, Kunsan AB, Republic of Korea, and Commander, Joint Planning Support Element, Joint Enabling Capabilities Command, U.S. Transportation Command, Norfolk, Virginia. Prior to his current position, Colonel Sundvall served as the Vice Commander, 8th Fighter Wing, Kunsan AB, Republic of Korea, where he reported to the 7th Air Force commander for the wing's conduct of conventional air-to-ground and air-to-air missions in support of armistice and wartime taskings.

Colonel Sundvall is a command pilot with more than 2,300 hours in the F-16 and T-37.

**EDUCATION**

**1992** Bachelor of Science degree in Operations Research, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colorado

**2005** Master of Arts degree in Logistics Management, Air Force Institute of Technology, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio

**2006** Master of Arts degree in Airpower Art and Science, School of Advanced Air and Space Studies, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama

**2012** Master of Science degree in National Resource Strategy, Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C.

Colonel Andrew P. Hansen is the new Vice Commander of the 35th Fighter Wing, Misawa Air Base, Japan.

Colonel Hansen is from Klamath Falls, Oregon, and received his commission in 1992 as a distinguished graduate of the University of Colorado Reserve Officer Training Corps program. He earned his navigator wings in 1995 and was selected to fly in the F-15E. Colonel Hansen went on to earn his pilot wings at Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas, in December 1999. Colonel Hansen has held a variety of leadership positions to include the wing chief of flight safety, operations officer, and the Commander, 18th Aggressor Squadron, Eielson AFB, Alaska. Prior to his current position, Colonel Hansen served as the Director of Operations, Cyber National Mission Force, Fort Meade, Maryland.

Colonel Hansen is a senior pilot with more than 2,100 flying hours in the F-16 and F-15E.

**EDUCATION**

**1992** Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado

**2002** Master of Science degree in Aeronautical Science, Embry Riddle Aeronautical University, Daytona Beach, Florida

**2008** Master of Science degree in Computer Science, Air Force Institute of Technology, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio

**2012** Master of Science degree in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy, Joint Advanced Warfighting School, National Defense University, Norfolk, Virginia



## RAO Welcomes New Staff Member Leon L. Martin, SMSgt (Ret), USAF



SMSgt (Ret) Leon L. Martin III is our newest staff member for the Misawa RAO. Lee is the Webmaster for the Misawa RAO website and will be the main editor for the Misawa RAO Newsletter.

Lee entered the Air Force in July 1968 and served as a Morse Systems Operator /Supervisor/ Superintendent in Greece; Misawa (two tours); Philippines; San Antonio; and Okinawa. He served at ground sites, in mobile operations and on the RC-135 airborne platform.

Lee spent 13 years in Misawa and retired from the Air Force in here in Misawa in July 1992. He totally retired in August 2013. SMSgt Martin hails from Clifton, N.J.

### Education

CCAF, AA – Communications Technology

University of Maryland Certificate - Japanese Studies

University of Maryland, Asian Division, BA - Management

### Professional Certifications:

CompTIA A+

CompTIA Security+

CIW Web Design Specialist

### Major Awards and Decorations

AF MSM, two Oak Leaf Clusters

Air Medal, six Oak Leaf Clusters

Air Force Commendation Medal, one Oak Leaf Cluster

Air Force Achievement Medal

Air Force Combat Readiness Medal.

Air Force Good Conduct Medal, six Oak Leaf Clusters

National Defense Service Ribbon, one Bronze Star device

## TRICARE Tidbits

### TRICARE to MEDICARE

Are you nearing your 65th birthday? When you turn 65, your current TRICARE medical benefits will end. MEDICARE will become your primary medical coverage and TRICARE For Life (TFL) pays secondary to MEDICARE. You **MUST** enroll in MEDICARE PART B in order to obtain TRICARE For Life coverage. As a TRICARE beneficiary, you are eligible for TRICARE For Life benefits on the first date that you have both Medicare Part A and Part B. If you already have Medicare Part A and wish to sign up for Medicare Part B, please call 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) or contact your local Social Security office at <http://www.ssa.gov/locator/>

If you live in Japan, you may contact the Federal Benefits Unit at the American Embassy in Tokyo at 033-224-5055.

You may also enroll in Medicare Part B online at:

<http://www.ssa.gov/medicare/> or <http://www.medicare.gov>.

You cannot sign up online for Medicare Part B only. Additional TRICARE For Life related information, contact numbers, handbooks, etc., can be found on the TRICARE web site at <http://www.tricare.mil/tfl> or by calling TFL Customer Service at 1-866-773-0404 (TDD 1-866-773-0405). You may also call the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) at 800-538-9552 for more info about TFL. –Courtesy TRICARE Web Site and the editor-JJR

### TRICARE Seeks to Improve Health Care for Service Members Overseas

The Defense Health Agency recently issued a Request for Proposals for a new health care support services contract supporting TRICARE beneficiaries living overseas.

The new contract will provide a health care delivery system that integrates care at military clinics and hospitals with host nation provider networks to provide comprehensive health care for service members and their families stationed outside the United States

TRICARE provides health care to more than 450,000 active duty service members, their families, and other eligible beneficiaries living overseas. Living overseas can present unique challenges and TRICARE is there to ensure beneficiaries have the health care they need including:

- clinical preventive services
- inpatient and outpatient care
- behavioral health care
- substance use disorder services
- maternity care
- and much more.

Regional call centers are available to assist beneficiaries obtain referrals and authorizations as well as coordinate emergency and urgent medical and dental care for active duty service members on temporary duty or leave overseas. Customer service is available 24/7 to assist beneficiaries with enrollments, general inquiries and transfers. Callers should chose option 4 to reach the global TRICARE service center to reach a representative.

For 24/7 emergency medical assistance, eligible TRICARE beneficiaries can call International SOS, the current contractor, to locate the nearest emergency care facility or coordinate overseas emergency care. See [www.tricare.mil/overseas](http://www.tricare.mil/overseas) for International SOS regional phone numbers.

Overseas beneficiaries also have access to TRICARE Service Centers (TSCs) typically located at military hospitals and clinics. For information about health care when assigned to locations outside the United States visit [www.tricare.mil/overseas](http://www.tricare.mil/overseas).

Source: TRICARE Website



## TRICARE Overseas Program Information

### TRICARE Beneficiaries Will No Longer Receive Mailed Letters for Benefit Updates

TRICARE beneficiaries need to watch their email and ensure they have a milConnect account to receive information about changes to their TRICARE coverage. The Department of Defense is no longer sending paper letters to notify beneficiaries about changes to their coverage and eligibility status. Beneficiaries will now receive emails or post cards directing them to online resources where they can view their information.

When you have correspondence from TRICARE, you'll get it one of two ways. If you have a valid email address in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS), you'll get an email telling you to go milConnect to read your letter. If you don't have an email address in DEERS, you'll get a post card directing you to milConnect. The emails and post cards won't contain private information, only a short generic message to inform you of a change to your coverage or eligibility. Most letters regarding your TRICARE benefit will now be online at milConnect only. You will need to maintain a DoD Self-Service Logon (DS Logon) account to continue to receive electronic letters. milConnect can also be accessed using your Common Access Card (CAC) or Defense Finance and Accounting Services (DFAS) pin, if applicable. However, it is recommended that sponsors and dependents 18 and over obtain a DS logon as it can be used for multiple web sites from milConnect, to regional contractor sites to TRICARE Online to various Veterans Affairs sites. Click the "Sign Up" button on milConnect to find out more.

Beneficiaries who opt to receive email notifications can retrieve their health care information by logging

on to milConnect at [milconnect.dmdc.osd.mil](http://milconnect.dmdc.osd.mil), by going to [www.tricare.mil/](http://www.tricare.mil/) to review general benefits information, or by contacting your regional contractor for help. Here at Misawa, you can also get information from the Tricare Office in the base Medical Facility. This will get the information to you quicker, and since milConnect is available anywhere with internet access, you'll be notified of changes even if you're away from home.

It's important to go to [milconnect.dmdc.osd.mil](http://milconnect.dmdc.osd.mil) to sign up or update your email contact information. Without a DS Logon, CAC, or DFAS pin you won't be able to view this information. Once you sign-up, you will receive up-to-date benefit information such as primary care manager changes, new and replacement enrollment cards, eligibility and enrollment changes due to age or changes in member status, voluntary or involuntary disenrollment actions, and more.

You can click on the "MyProfile" menu item to update your personal email preference. Please allow three days for revised settings to take effect. (Courtesy of the Office of the Secretary of Defense website)

### Tricare Standard Health Matters

The current TRICARE Overseas Program (TOP) newsletter includes articles on preparing for a disaster, proof of payment, TRICARE meeting the minimum essential coverage requirement, understanding emergency vs. urgent care, adult children being eligible for TRICARE Young Adult, signing up for Medicare Part B to keep TRICARE, keeping TRICARE dental benefits in retirement, seeking care with the Philippine Demonstration, and declaring your other health insurance. A TOP claims submission checklist is also included.

You can download a copy of this newsletter at: <http://go.usa.gov/sQF3>

(Courtesy of the Tricare Overseas Standard Newsletter)

### DFAS is only place to receive annual tax statement

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service is the only agency that can issue a 1099-R for tax form to retirees and annuitants. Retirees and annuitants should receive a 1099-R electronically via MyPay or as a paper copy in the mail each year.

People relying on a paper copy who have not received their 1099-R by the end of January each year can call DFAS at 800-321-1080 and use the self-service request option. Telephone self-service requests are logged instantly and are sent to a person's current address of record within three business days.

A written request by fax or mail takes time. It may take DFAS representatives 30 to 60 days to process requests received by fax or mail.

Those retirees and annuitants with Internet access -- but not a myPay account -- can use the "Ask DFAS" option. This option allows people to update a mailing address, enter an email address and request a 1099-R. The transaction will be logged instantly and it will be in the mail within seven to 10 business days.

Regardless of how a person receives his or her annual 1099-R, it is vital that DFAS has a current mailing address on file for each retiree and annuitant at all times. ( DFAS website)

### 2015 Cost of Living Adjustment

Based on the increase in the Consumer Price Index, there will be a 1.7 percent Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for most retired pay and Survivor Benefit Plan annuities. Retirees will see the change on their Dec. 31, 2014 payment and annuitants on their Jan. 2, 2015 payment.

### Social Security Announces 1.7% COLA for 2015

The 1.7 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) in January 2015. Increased payments will begin on December 31, 2014. The Social Security Act ties the annual COLA to the increase in the Consumer Price Index as determined by the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics



## International Direct Deposit Now Possible For DFAS and SSA Benefit Payments

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.

### Enrolling in IDD

#### For DFAS Payments

Complete the form for International Direct Deposit Enrollment (SF1199-I) and mail it to the appropriate DFAS address below:

<b>For Retirees:</b>	<b>For annuitants, beneficiaries and survivors:</b>
Defense Finance and Accounting Service U.S. Military Retired Pay P.O. Box 7130 London, KY 40742-7130  Fax: 1-800-469-6559	Defense Finance and Accounting Service U.S. Military Annuitant Pay P.O. Box 7131 London, KY 40742-7131  Fax: 1-800-982-8459

#### For Social Security (SSA) Payments

Assuming you live in Japan, complete the form and mail it to the American Embassy in Tokyo, at the following address:

American Embassy Tokyo  
 1-10-5 Akasaka, Minato-ku,  
 Tokyo 0107-8420  
 Attention: Federal Benefits Unit

**For MPS users:**  
 American Embassy Tokyo  
 Unit 9800 Box 114  
 APO AP 96303-0114  
 Attention: Federal Benefits Unit

Make sure the form is accurately completed and signed. Incorrect or incomplete enrollment forms will be returned unprocessed for correction, delaying your enrollment. Typed forms are preferable. Always make a photocopy of the form before you send it in.

#### General Information...

If you currently have your payment sent via direct deposit to a stateside financial institution, do not close that account until you have verified receipt at your international bank. Otherwise, your pay will be returned to the payer, causing additional delays.

The International Direct Deposit Enrollment (SF 1199-I) can be downloaded as a .pdf from DFAS, SSA, RRB, DTIC and other organizations. You can also obtain this form from your RAO.

Currency-Your payment will be converted from U.S. dollars to local currency two business days prior to the U.S. payment date, using a wholesale exchange rate. IDD puts your money directly into your local bank in local currency.

## 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.

## Social Security Administration Offers Disability Benefits

Did you know that many disabled veterans and wounded warriors may qualify for Social Security disability benefits, in addition to their Veterans Affairs benefits?

For info go to [www.socialsecurity.gov/disabilityfacts](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/disabilityfacts)

### myPay Passwords Get Shorter, Last Longer

People with online myPay accounts can now opt for shorter passwords, and those passwords will last longer, according to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service website.

DFAS officials have listened to customer feedback regarding myPay passwords while ensuring the system meets the intent of Department of Defense security policies. As a result, customers can create new passwords using the following rules. Passwords must:

- Must be 9 to 30 characters in length
- Contain at least one UPPER-CASE letter
- Contain at least one lowercase
- Contain at least one number (0-9)
- Contain at least one of the following special characters:
  - # (pound or number sign)
  - @ (at sign)
  - \$ (dollar sign)
  - = (equal sign)
  - + (plus sign)
  - % (percent sign)
  - ^ (caret)
  - ! (exclamation)
  - \* (asterisk)
  - \_ (underline/underscore)
- Must NOT include any spaces

Additionally, passwords will now expire every 150 days requiring users to change their passwords less often.

About 10 days before a password expires, customers will receive an email advising them to update their password to avoid delays logging into myPay. It is vital that each customer's email address recorded in their myPay profile is current to ensure they receive these notices. (Courtesy of DFAS News)

### 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—September 18, 1947

### Retiree ID Card Expiration Date Changes

In 2012, the Department of Defense changed its policy and related software to adjust the way the expiration date is reflected on a military retiree's identification card.

Before the software upgrade, the front-side of the DD Form 2 (Retired) blue ID card reflected an "Indefinite" expiration date, and a civilian "TRICARE" health care expiration date appeared on the back-side of the ID card reflecting the last day of the month just before the retiree's 65th birthday.

Currently, when a retired ID card is issued or replaced, instead of reflecting "Indefinite" status, it now shows an expiration date on the front and back that coincides with the last day of the month before the Medicare eligibility month begins.

Another change affects retiree spouses and former spouses who are eligible for a DD Form 1173 (Dependent) tan ID card. Their ID cards will now be modified to extend the expiration date for those spouses and former spouses who are between age 65 and 75 with an incremental expiration date of five years, versus the former four-year issuance. At age 75, their ID card is issued with an "Indefinite" status and will never expire as long as the individual remains eligible.

Currently, any eligible dependent, including un-remarried and unmarried widows, widowers, and former spouses older than age 75 can receive an ID card reflecting the "Indefinite" status.

For more information, call the Total Force Service Center at 1-800-525-0102. (Courtesy of the Afterburner)

### Retirees Must Report Marital Changes Promptly

Air Force retirees are required to report marital status changes to the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) and the Defense and Finance Accounting Service (DFAS).

Retirees must advise a uniformed service identification card issuing facility about any dependent additions within 30 days. Entering a new spouse in DEERS and getting a dependent

identification card is imperative for documenting eligibility for military benefits. Retirees must also report a new marriage to DFAS. Retirees married for the first time, or who remarried after retirement, must notify DFAS to properly establish or re-establish their desired Survivor Benefit Plan coverage.

Laws governing the Survivor Benefit Plan, or SBP, carefully outline program policies. A retiree who was not married at the time of retirement has one year from the marriage date to enroll a new spouse. Retirees forfeit the opportunity to participate in the program if they fail to apply within one year.

A retiree who was married at retirement and originally elected SBP spouse coverage, can elect to cover a future spouse if the previous marriage ends in divorce or death of the spouse. In the event of divorce, a future spouse may be covered only if the divorce decree does not contain language mandating the retiree's need to provide former-spouse SBP coverage.

A retiree who was married at retirement and declined SBP spouse coverage cannot later enroll in the plan on behalf of that spouse or any future spouse unless a congressional open enrollment period is authorized. The last time Congress authorized an open enrollment was Oct. 1, 2005, through Oct. 1, 2006.

Retirees who marry for the first time or who originally elected SBP coverage for a previous spouse and would like to provide SBP coverage for the current spouse, should report the marriage to DFAS using DD Form 2656-6, Survivor Benefit Plan Election Change Certificate. They must attach a copy of the marriage certificate for DFAS to use in processing the request.

Retirees with suspended spouse coverage may elect not to resume spouse coverage upon remarriage. A request to terminate suspended spouse coverage must be received by DFAS before the first anniversary of the remarriage. Failure to notify DFAS to terminate suspended spouse coverage before the first anniversary of the new marriage will result in SBP coverage being automatically reinstated.

For assistance, call 877-353-6807  
 Courtesy DFAS website



## Medicare Part B

### 2015 Medicare Part B Premiums and Deductibles to Remain the Same as Last Two Years

Secretary of Health and Human Services Sylvia Burwell announced today that next year's standard Medicare Part B monthly premium and deductible will remain the same as the last two years. Medicare Part B covers physicians' services, outpatient hospital services, certain home health services, durable medical equipment, and other items.

For the approximately 49 million Americans enrolled in Medicare Part B, premiums and deductibles will remain unchanged in 2015 at \$104.90 and \$147, respectively. This leaves more of seniors' cost of living adjustment from Social Security in their pockets. (Medicare site)

## IRS Information

### The IRS Now Offers Download of Prior Year Tax Filing

The IRS has made it easier than ever to get a record of your past tax returns, otherwise known as tax transcripts. Tax transcripts can be used for a number of things, such as to validate income and tax filing status for mortgage applications, to apply for student and small business loans, and to prepare to file current tax returns.

You can download and print your transcripts instantly, or request the transcript be mailed to your address on record. For further information and to request transcripts visit the IRS website: <http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/Get-transcript>

## General Information

### How Does the Affordable Care Act affect U.S. Citizens/Residents Living Abroad?

Under the Affordable Care Act, the Federal government, state governments, insurers, employers and employees share in the responsibility of providing affordable quality health insurance coverage in the United States. Beginning January 1, 2014, U.S. citizens will have to be signed up for Minimal Essential Coverage (MEC) or pay a penalty, unless they qualify for an exemption.

With 2015 fast approaching, many expats living outside the U.S. are wondering:

- Am I required to subscribe to the Affordable Care Act (ACA)?
- Will I have to pay penalties for not subscribing to ACA?
- Is subscribing to ACA an option for me?
- Is coverage offered outside the U.S.?

As things stand now, U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents (LPR) not present in the United States are already considered to have MEC. Therefore, they are exempt from the requirement to enroll in an ACA plan.

For the most up-to-date information visit the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) webpage topic [Am I Eligible for Coverage in the Health Insurance Market Place?](#)

You can also visit the IRS website at [Questions and Answers on the Individual Shared Responsibility Provision](#). If you have additional questions you can call the HHS help line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 1-800-318-2596. (March 2014 ACS Newsletter)  
*Editor's note: Retirees under TRICARE Overseas already have MEC*

### Air Force *Afterburner* Joins Forces with MyPay to Cut Costs

Air Force retirees and annuitants who have an online myPay account will automatically receive the *Afterburner* electronically. The Air Force has partnered with the Defense Finance and Accounting Service in this effort to save postage costs.

People with a myPay account have been removed from the hard-copy mailing list. Instead, using the email address they have listed in myPay they will receive a notification with a link to the latest *Afterburner*.

So if you start receiving the *Afterburner* in your email box, this is why.

AF Retirees and annuitants can keep their email address updated by logging into myPay at <https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>.

Once logged in, click on "Email Address" and review/edit the "personal email address" block. Click on "Primary" and "Accept/Submit" to complete the transaction.

Courtesy myPay website

### Access to retiree publications of each service:

#### Army *Echoes*:

[www.armygl.army.mil/rso/echoes.asp](http://www.armygl.army.mil/rso/echoes.asp)

#### Navy *Shift Colors*:

[www.shiftcolors.navy.mil](http://www.shiftcolors.navy.mil)

#### Air Force *Afterburner*:

[www.retirees.af.mil/afterburner](http://www.retirees.af.mil/afterburner)

#### Marine Corps *Semper Fidelis*:

[www.manpower.usmc.mil/portal/page/portal/M\\_RA\\_HOME/MM/SR/RET\\_ACT/SemperFidelis](http://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>

## General Information and Community

### Misawa Air Base Hosts 14th Annual Retiree Appreciation Day

Held annually in conjunction with The Exchange's "Still Serving" celebration, October 4th, 2014 was the day that the Retiree Activities Office of Misawa Air Base hosted their 14th annual Retiree Appreciation Day, sponsored by the 35th Fighter Wing, 35th Mission Support Group, 35th Medical Support Group, 35th Force Support Squadron, The Exchange, DeCA, Navy Federal Credit Union, Exchange Car Guys (Auto Sales), Flower Shop, the Misawa Military Retirees' Association and Chiko's Lomilomi Massage.

The annual gala started off with breakfast in the officers club ballroom with the 35th Fighter Wing Vice Commander, Col Andrew Hansen, representatives of the base leadership and sponsoring units and vendors, and of course, Misawa's military retirees and families and several widows of our retirees.

Colonel Hansen recognized the sacrifices and dedication of the retired military servicemen and especially recognized the widows who attended by presenting them with floral bouquets.



After breakfast, the participants regrouped in the foyer of The Exchange for the rest of the celebration, starting with the cake-cutting ceremony, the welcome by Col Hansen, and then a special hula show by the ladies of the MCS Nahoku Hula Dance Studio.

Then began drawings for prizes about every 10 minutes for the next two hours.

During the festivities in the foyer of

The Exchange, the 35th Medical Group provided flu vaccinations for the retirees and their families, and to anyone else who wanted them, free blood pressure checks, blood sugar checks, glaucoma checks, information on diabetes, cancer detection and prevention, dental hygiene, and lots of informative and handy (and fun) hand-outs.



Most of the prizes were gift cards, gift certificates and super discount coupons, but there were also gift baskets from DeCA. The Car Guys couldn't come up with any cars but they did throw in a bunch of gift cards.

All agree that this year's Retiree Appreciation Day was a resounding success, thanks to all the support we received from the base units and vendors. -JJR

### Oldest Unit On Misawa Air Base Inactivated on 30 June 2014

The 301st Intelligence Squadron came to Misawa as the 1st Radio Mobile Detachment in January 1953. It became the 6921st Security Squadron and then 6920th Security Group, and at one time was the largest unit on Misawa Air Base. In 1993 it became the 301st Intelligence Squadron. The unit received the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award 12 times

in its 61 years at Misawa.

The 301st not only supported the Misawa Security Operations Center but had a lasting effect on the base and community. After the massive tsunami and devastating 9.0 earthquake struck the coast of Japan in 2011, Airmen of the 301st devoted countless hours alongside other Americans and Japanese during Operation Tomodachi by assisting with clean-up and restoration efforts throughout Northeast Japan.

The 301st established "Operation Eyesight" a charity that reached world-wide proportions, supporting deaf and blind children in post-war Japan, with surgeries, glasses, hearing aids, musical instruments, and donating advanced optometric surgical equipment to medical universities and hospitals in northern Japan, and adopting the Hachinohe School for the Deaf and Blind. This 50+ year program will be carried on by another Misawa Air Base unit as the 301st departs. The 301st will be relocated to Alaska where it will continue its mission of vigilance in defense of the free world.



*Members of the 301st and alumni retirees at the inactivation ceremony.*

### Force Support Squadron Hosts "Retiree Appreciation Luncheon"

The 35th FSS sponsored a "Retiree Appreciation Luncheon" on November 12th, the day after Veteran's Day. This event actually was supposed to be the annual "Air Force Birthday Luncheon" and held in September but circumstances resulted in the event not being held until November. Traditionally, the event consists of 10-15 retirees matched with an equal number of first-termers and consists of a dedication, flag folding ceremony, cake cutting, etc, and gives the first termers a chance to communicate with persons who had made the military a career who are glad to be able to share their experiences. This year's event format was such and was as usual a memorable occasion.





## ベースに電話をかれられなくなった！ どうしよう???

今年ベースの電話システムは変わりました。今まで、米空軍がベースの電話を経営していたが今年の春アメリカの通信会社のAllied Telesys(アライド テレシス)がベースに住んでいる軍人の個人用番号や軍の経営以外の業者の電話システムを契約して運営するようになりました。

簡単に言うとベースの中に住んでる家族や政府の経営ではない業者は全部アメリカ国内の10桁の電話番号に変わりました。ベースの中に住んでる人々は無料アメリカへ電話をかけるようになりましたが、ベースの外から中に住んでる人々にかけるのは大変難しくなりました。たとえばベースに住んでる友達にかけたいなら0176-77-8255をかけて、そしてその10桁の番号をかけなければなりません。難しいです。それらの電話帳もないです。ベースに友達が住んでるならできるだけ相手の携帯電話にかけるのは簡単。相手には携帯電話がなければ、しかたがなく相手の10桁の番号を聞いてください。

ベースの施設一病院、人事課、警察、等は元の226-xxxxの番号に0176-77-xxxxでほとんどつながります。我がのリタイヤ軍人のオフィスの番号は226-4428ですから、外からかけるなら、0176-77-4428です。よくかけられるNavy Federal Credit Union-Misawa Branch (ネイビフェデラルクレジットユニオン三沢支店)の番号は全部変わりました。外からクレジットユニオンにかける場合は034-580-0506。これは直接外に住んでる人々のためにもけた番号です。

アライドテレシス社は特別電話案内システムを作りました。それはTelephone Tree (テレフォンツリー)と呼ばれて、ベースのオペレータの番号をかけて(0176-77-1110)そして英語の録音案内がでます。それをききながら{2}をかけて下さい。案内は日本語に変わります。その案内は科目のメニュー(Menu)を言います-(1)軍の関係の番号(番号を覚えた場合)、(2)ベースの注意のメッセージ(大雪軽法等)、(3)ベース病院、(4)警察、(5)緊急司令部、(6)ベースタクシー、(7)ベースホテル、(8)個人の番号(前もって覚えるのは必要です)、(9)クレジットカード等を利用する人用です、(0)オペレーターです。だからベースオペレーターにかかけたい場合は0176-77-1110-2(日本語)-9(オペレーター)です。各科目のメニューにももっと詳しいメニューがあります。たとえばベースホテル(7)を選んだら、こんど(1)空軍のホテル、か(2)海軍のホテルを選ばなければなりません。

なお元のベース案内番号の0176-53-5181はまだ使われてますが、近い内になくなります。

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 (アメリカ大使館連邦年金部): 03-3224-5055**

## Tax Tips

### When Will Your 1099R Be Ready?

The IRS Forms 1099R for the 2014 tax year will become available online in mid-December 2014. You will be able to access yours on *myPay*. If you have not yet created a *myPay* account, or if you have forgotten your password, or if you are having trouble creating a password for *myPay*, please take a look at <http://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/newsevents/newsletter.html>

We will also mail hard copy versions of the 1099R to those of you who have chosen that option. Please keep in mind that hard copy versions of the 1099R are issued later and will take a while to reach you. If you have elected hard copy, you may not receive it until mid-January 2015.

Please note that 1099R's are not automatically issued for deceased members. If you want to receive a 1099R on the behalf of a member who passed away, a certificate of death must be on file, and you must request that a 1099R be issued. If you would like to make this request, or have questions regarding a 1099R for a deceased member, please contact us using one of the methods described in this link <http://www.dfas.mil/dfas/retiredmilitary/about/aboutus/customer-service.html>

### Replacing a Lost 1099R

Military retirees and annuitants receive a 1099R tax statement either electronically via *myPay* or as a paper copy in their mail each year. Members can also request additional copies of their 1099R tax statements in several different ways.

The fastest and most secure way to obtain a copy of your 1099R is *myPay*. Just login to *myPay*, and you can print your 1099R. You will find instructions for accessing your 1099R using *myPay* at [myPay](#).

Not a *myPay* user yet? Then the fastest and easiest way to get a copy of your 1099R besides *myPay*, is to use our telephone self-service option. Telephone self service requests are

logged instantly and are sent to your current address of record within three business days. Complete directions for using telephone self-service can be found at [Telephone Self-Service](#).

If you're not a *myPay* user, and the mailing address you have on file with us is out of date, the easiest quickest way to get your 1099R sent to an updated address is to submit your request through the internet. You can update your mailing address, enter your email address, and request your 1099R be sent to the new address using one easy form. Your transaction will be logged instantly and it will be in the mail to you within 7 to 10 business days. Find the link and complete instructions at [Ask DFAS](#).

Do you prefer traditional mail? If so, send us a written request by fax or mail, and make sure you leave us time to reply. Keep in mind, it takes us 30 to 60 days to process requests received by fax or mail. Find complete instructions at [Written Request](#).

Members with unique situations can speak directly to one of our customer care representatives. Depending on call volume, you may have to wait on hold while we assist other customers. Find complete instructions at [Call Us](#).

### Updating Your Email Address with DFAS

DFAS uses your *myPay* email address to send you newsletters, breaking news, and to notify you when your Retiree Account Statement and 1099R tax statements are available.

Please be sure that you have an accurate email address on record with DFAS.

1. Go to the *myPay* web site, and log into your account using the "Log In" box at the top left-hand side of your screen.

2. After entering your Login ID and Password, click "I agree to the terms of the User Agreement"

3. On the Main Menu page, click on the Email Address link.

4. Enter and confirm the correct address. Be sure to select "primary" beside the email address where you want to receive pay statement notifica-

tions and other important correspondence.

5. Save your changes by selecting Accept/Submit then confirm your changes are correct.

From the top of the page in the gray bar, you may select Main to return to the Main Menu or Exit to close out your session.

### Creating a myPay Account?

[Using myPay To Update Your Correspondence Address](#). If you have never created a *myPay* account, you can find complete instructions at <http://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary.html>

If you have created your *myPay* account, but have problems remembering your login ID or password, you can access *myPay*'s website at <https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>

If you would like an overview of the process before you begin, you can access a video tutorial on resetting your *myPay* password at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1zxXeVoQJVw&list=PLhx\\_8nsfXqVgcoJ9CH0r2uo5u\\_KgCJHs3](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1zxXeVoQJVw&list=PLhx_8nsfXqVgcoJ9CH0r2uo5u_KgCJHs3)

If you need personal attention, you can contact our Customer Care Center at: 1-888-332-7411 Opt 5, Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) Courtesy of DFAS.mil

### Tax Time Again

It's almost that time again, and if you do not have a computer and printer, you can come to the RAO and we will download and print your forms, instructions, and mailing info. Not only tax forms, but we can also download DFAS and SSA documents and give you a place to access your My PAY account and print your W2,s 1099s, etc.

Please e-mail the RAO at [Mi-sawa.rao@us.af.mil](mailto:Mi-sawa.rao@us.af.mil) or call the RAO at 226-4428 or 5675 (0176-77-4428/5675 from off base) to make an appointment.



## Still Serving!



Hello fellow retirees and fellow RAOs staff. Here is 2014 issue of the Misawa Air Base RAO Newsletter; covering the entire year.

This is the second time I have had to combine issues so 2013 was not quarterly but bi-annual. I chronically get behind as I work with retirees and widows, resolving issues, reporting deaths, translating documents, and corresponding with DFAS, SSA, IRS and other organizations. The previous combined issue printed copy got out late because of funding issues.

The regulation recommends but does not require a newsletter, and there is no recommended frequency. However, we at the RAO are charged with the responsibility of getting information to you, the retired community. To resolve the problem, our newest staff member, Lee Martin, will compile the newsletter. Lee and I ask for your help. Anyone can provide input of information or opinion. We will gladly edit and include your contributions in the newsletter. Contact us if you want to contribute.

-JJR

### MMRA Notes

1. Membership dues are \$20 a year. If you have not paid your dues for 2012, please call the RAO or e-mail the RAO and talk to Dave Barton, the acting 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.

3 February 2015

7 April 2015

2 June 2015

4 August 2015

6 October 2015

1 December 2015

**NEXT MEETING—TUESDAY, 3 FEBRUARY  
Election of New MMRA Officers-Please be there!**

# 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: 226-4954 (034-580-0506)  
 Emergency Room:  
     Non-Urgent: 226-6647 (0176-77-6647)  
     Emergency- 911 / Off Base 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 (222) or 77 (226) then the last four. (\*) means use the Phone Tree

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. He may be reached at 09040450149 after hours.



35th FW/CVR  
 Unit 5009  
 APO AP 96319-5009  
 Phone: 011-81-176-77-4428/5675  
 DSN: (315) 226-4428/5675  
 Email: [misawa.rao@us.af.mil](mailto:misawa.rao@us.af.mil)  
 Cell Phone: 090-4045-0149

**WE'RE ON THE WEB!**  
[HTTP://MISAWARAO.ORG](http://misawarao.org)

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.