



September 2007

84th Division Alumni Bugler



Special Points of Interest

- **Remember:** You are responsible for updating your retire pay file information at DFSA-CL within one year of the event if you marry, remarry, have a child are widowed or divorced and need to make or update a Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) election. See the latest Army Echoes newsletter for current address locations.
- **Not receiving Army Echoes?**
- Retired Receiving Pay contact: DFAS @ (800) 321-1080
- Gray Area Retired Contact: USAHRC @ (800) 325-2660

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Washington DC Motor Coach Trip

Your Alumni Board have been diligently working on a proposed trip to Washington DC this fall. In fact the trip is set for the first through the seventh of October 2007.

Lamers Tour and Travel along with the Alumni Board have set a deluxe motor coach trip that will include 7 days and 6 nights, 6 breakfasts, 2 lunches and dinners. We will visit the U.S. Capitol Building, The Supreme Court, Viet Nam, Korean and the World War II Memorials. Arlington National Cemetery and Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. We will tour the Smithsonian Institution and Mt. Vernon, Plus a full day of free time that includes

motor coach transportation to selected sites.

We have high hopes that we will receive the minimum requirement of 40 people to make this trip come true. This trip is available to all of the Alumni Membership, their families and friends. Flyers have been sent to all members in the Wisconsin, Michigan and Illinois areas along with those that have contacted the Alumni for information about this trip. But please do not feel left out. If you are outside the area of the mailing please let us know. We have the ability to add members to this event to a point.

Annual Steak and Chicken Fry

Please join us for our Annual Steak and Chicken Fry. This year it will be held on Saturday, 8 September 2007, starting around 3:00 PM, again at the Griesell-Smith American Legion Post. 3245 North 124th Street, Brookfield, WI.

This annual event is more than just a cookout. First, it is great place to visit with old and new friends that you may

only see once a year. Second, There are several items used as door prizes, silent auctions. You can purchase several 84th Division Alumni items, such as shirts, lapel pins, hats, books etc.

The price is very reasonable for all the food, refreshments, prizes, fun and camaraderie. Too bad it only comes once a year. All you need to bring is your appetite and friendship

Alumni Events

The Annual Meeting that was held on Tuesday, 19 June 2007, at the Griesell-Smith American Legion Post 449. There was another representative from Lamers Tours with information about the proposed trip to Washington DC this fall.

The Washing DC trip is set for 1 to 7 October 2007 leaving the Milwaukee area. At this time we expect it a go.

Please mark your calendars for these events. Flyers will be sent out to all members in advance of each event.

The Presidents Corner

The Annual Membership Meeting was well attended this year with good participation from the membership. Besides the election of officers we had two speakers. The Retirement Services officer from Fort McCoy, Bill Walters, provided us with an excellent overview of services offered from his office. His office is a great resource and he was very knowledgeable in "all things retirement". There were many questions and points of discussion from the membership that Bill was very helpful in answering. We also had our second visit from Jim Derse from Lamers Travel on more details and information on the proposed trip to Washington, DC.

As we look to the rest of the summer make sure you plan on coming to the Annual Steak & Chicken Fry & Picnic coming this Saturday, September 8th. We will need volunteers for set up, cooking, and clean up again this year. We also would appreciate contributions to our raffle.

We have renewed our efforts in communicating our or-

ganization to the 84th Training Command (Leader Readiness) as they have been redesignated. Please continue your efforts to recruit and communicate our events to former and current members of the 84th Division (Tng), (IT), USARRTC as it has been transformed in the past several years. We need membership and participation to continue services provided to you for the future.

As of August 1st we are short of the necessary numbers who have responded to the Washington, DC, trip. We will monitor this very closely. However, if we cannot meet the requirements for our own custom bus tour we will have made this decision before you will have received this newsletter. Those that did respond will have their checks returned if we are forced to cancel.

Strike Hard!

Glen "Rusty" Armstrong
COL, AUS
President

Secretary's Corner

All members are reminded to keep your address current. Your comments, contributions, suggestions and assistance are always welcome. Let me know what you want!

Email are encouraged to contact our board members. All emails will be forwarded to their address as soon as they are received. For your security and protection we will

never share your information with any other source or send any unsolicited information.

Please send them to:

Ed Marynik
PO Box 51, Slinger, WI 53086-0051
(262) 247-6415
email: 84th alumni@charter.net

New military-only resort opens on Virginia coast

The military is adding Virginia's oceanfront to destinations like Hawaii and Florida where service members and their families can get some affordable rest and relaxation.

The Armed Forces Recreation Center in Virginia Beach joins other locations in Orlando, Fla., Germany, Hawaii and Korea that have been getaway destinations for military families and Defense Department civilians since 1946.

The Army Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command assumed responsibility of a 93-room set of cabins and bungalows at Fort Story in April, but plans to expand the property over the next two years with additional rooms and conference facilities. Just feet from the Atlantic Ocean and Chesapeake Bay, the Virginia Beach

resort called Cape Henry Inn has been open for about 12 years under local management.

"The reason for operating these places was for rest and recuperation for war-weary soldiers and that really continues to be the focus today," said Rich Gorman, chief operating officer for the command. "We have to do things necessary to recruit and retain a high quality all-volunteer force who deserve the same quality of life that they are pledged to defend with their very lives."

Each year, about 750,000 people visit the resorts, maintaining a collective occupancy rate of 94 percent and serving up 3.2 million meals, officials said. The resorts are open to active-duty and retired military, current and retired Department of Defense civilians, reservists, delayed-entry recruits and family members.

First Army commander addresses media regarding Fort McCoy's role

Mobilization training at Fort McCoy constantly is being fine-tuned and modified to meet the dynamics of the ongoing theater operations, the First Army commanding general told members of the media at Fort McCoy 18 July.

Lt. Gen. Russel L. Honoré, said Fort McCoy plays an important role in training by supporting the mobilization training of reserve-component Soldiers. He spoke at Range 4, where media personnel could see the latest in training Soldiers for convoy-type scenarios. In the background on Range 2, a Multipurpose Machine-Gun Range, Soldiers were firing squad automatic weapons.

Fort McCoy is in a relatively isolated location so it can provide night training. The installation has invested well in ranges so military personnel can fire just about any type of munitions. "Freedom is loud," Honoré, said. "One of the prices of freedom is to have a place where the Army can train the way they are going to fight."

Military personnel are doing everything to ensure units get the best training possible. At Range 4, a convoy live-fire range, the trainers have replicated the up armored equipment going to Iraq to give units realistic training, Honoré, said, while noting the actual up armored equipment is going to support the troops in theater.

The Army is taking steps to make the reserve-component Soldiers' deployments more predictable by going to a four- to five-year cycle where Soldiers would go through the most intensive training about one year from a potential deployment. "We made a shift about two years ago to theater-immersion training." "We've moved about 90 percent of the training to the field. We've increased the amount of time Soldiers are doing live-fire training, shooting their guns."

The military is facing a challenge in recruitment because the country is at war and the economy. The demographics also can be daunting because the desired pool of applicants is about three in 10 people in the appropriate age range. The Army is meeting its recruiting goals. "Every generation has a responsibility to defend the nation". "Whether the people agree with it or not, we are at war."

Fort McCoy also is benefiting from the increased funding to support mobilization. This increased funding has included support for the construction of many new facilities on the installation, which will help increase the installation's capability. An Improvised Explosive Device (IED) petting zoo was established to allow Soldiers to get up close and recognize IEDs like they will encounter in Iraq.

Ft. McCoy Vehicle Registration

The hours for the Fort McCoy Vehicle Registration Facility, building 35 (Welcome Center), at Fort McCoy now are 6 a.m.-6 p.m. daily.

The facility, which is located near the Main Gate, is for use by installation personnel who need to update their government registration information for their vehicles and for visitors to Fort McCoy who



have specific business on the installation.

Government personnel, including military personnel, who want to register their vehicle or renew their registration will need their driver's license, registration certificate and their identification card (military or civilian).

For more information, call Pat Moore at (608) 388-3355 or e-mail patricia.moore7@us.army.mil.

**"Courage is being scared to death, but still saddling up anyway"
... an old cavalry sergeant**

COMMISSARIES

Commissaries are military supermarkets, with items sold at cost plus a 5 percent surcharge. The Defense Commissary Agency oversees 268 stores worldwide on Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps installations.

Most of DeCA's larger commissaries are relatively full-service grocery stores. The commissaries routinely stock 4,000 to 18,000 items in grocery, meat, produce and deli, bakery, household, health care and cosmetics departments.

Customer satisfaction. Commissary products can be returned for an exchange or refund.

Eligibility. Single and married military personnel, regardless of rank or service, and their families are eligible to shop in commissaries. Active-duty, retired, National Guard and reserve members and their families are eligible, as are disabled veterans, surviving spouses, former spouses and their families.

Special assistance is offered for those with disabilities or infirmities.

Individuals caring for children of service members who are deployed, on remote assignment or deceased may be authorized to use the commissary for 12 months, sometimes longer in cases of continued hardship.

Employees. Most commissary employees work for DeCA. Their salaries are covered by federal civil service regulations and are paid by taxpayer dollars. Baggers are not DeCA employees; their only compensation is customer tips.

Gift certificates. These can be purchased. Shipping and handling charges apply.

Hours. Most stores have evening and weekend hours.

Online shopping. Click on "Virtual Commissary" at www.commissaries.com for a limited selection of items.

Officials hope to expand the number of manufacturers who participate in the online commissary store. Defense Department civilians stationed overseas who have commissary privileges are expected to be able to shop online by mid-2006, when the authorization database is updated.

Overseas. Commissaries overseas operate under unique restrictions. Limits are imposed on purchases that can be sold on illegal markets; in Korea, for example, shoppers are limited to a monthly spending cap based on family size.

Rules on who can use overseas commissaries are affected by status-of-forces agreements between host nations and the U.S. government. Service members on leave, retirees and Guard and reserve members visiting overseas countries in unofficial capacity may not be granted commissary privileges. Reservists in Germany are not granted the full privileges enjoyed by stateside units.

Payment. Commissaries accept cash, personal checks, traveler's checks and debit and credit cards. Food stamps and WIC vouchers are accepted in the United States, including Puerto Rico and Guam. Commissaries overseas accept the overseas military-issued WIC vouchers for military families.

Sales restrictions. Federal law restricts what commissaries can sell. For example, they do not stock beer, wine and many general merchandise items carried by base exchanges.

Savings. Shoppers get average savings of 30 percent or more. There is no sales tax. The 5 percent surcharge pays for construction and renovation of stores and equipment purchases.

Information on monthly sales and promotions are available at www.commissaries.com.

HANOI, Vietnam — The suspected remains of three American soldiers killed during the Vietnam War have been sent back to the U.S., a U.S. official said on 7 July.

Three cases holding the likely remains of three American soldiers left Da Nang in central Vietnam in a mili-

Vtary aircraft headed for Hawaii on Wednesday, said Ron Ward, an official of the U.S. MIA, or Missing in Action, office in Vietnam.

They are to be identified at a military laboratory in Hawaii, Ward said.

Choose A Health Care Plan That Meets Your Needs

By Alex Keenan - Special to the Army Times

One of the first things on a new retiree's checklist after leaving military duty is getting health care.

One of the first steps to doing that is to make sure the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting — the gateway to military benefits — reflects the change in your status from active duty to retiree. You can check on and update your DEERS record by calling (800) 538-9552.

For those who retire near a military medical facility, the health care issue is not so complex — although you need to keep in mind that military downsizing over the past 15 years or so has cut the number of military treatment facilities, and those that remain in operation are devoted first to active-duty health care, with retirees a good distance down the priority list.

Many retirees will look to stay with Tricare, which has some of the lowest fees of any health insurance plan in the nation.

Tricare has three basic plans. Prime is similar to a civilian Health Maintenance Organization that provides the lowest out-of-pocket costs, in return for the requirement that enrollees use only doctors who are part of the designated network. Enrollees are assigned a primary-care physician who supervises all medical care and authorizes referrals for specialty care. Enrollees pay an annual enrollment fee and pre-established co-payments depending on the type of medical care received.

Tricare Extra is similar to the Preferred Provider Option. It offers a choice of civilian physicians and specialists from a list of health care providers. Individuals and families often choose this if their regular physician is not a member of the network or if they live too far from a military hospital.

In Tricare Standard, the government shares the costs of health care. For using this network of preferred physicians and specialists, the government will pay an additional 5 percent of medical costs incurred (85 percent for dependents of active-duty members and 80 percent for retirees).

If you and your family were previously enrolled in Tricare Prime under your active-duty status, everyone needs to re-enroll in Tricare Prime under your new retiree

status. Beneficiaries can contact their regional contractor or overseas lead agent to find out if Tricare Prime is offered in their retirement ZIP code.

If a Tricare-eligible beneficiary is eligible for Medicare, entitled to Part A and enrolled in Part B, DEERS must be updated to reflect Medicare parts A and B status for the beneficiary to retain Tricare coverage. When a beneficiary turns 65, the medical section of the military ID card may also need to be updated.

When considering post-service health care options, new retirees need to take into account what they might be able to get through their private-sector employers.

Private businesses as well as some state governments are weighing the cost of subsidizing Tricare for their military retiree-employees as a way to cut their own benefits costs. In Texas, which has the third-highest number of retired military veterans in the nation, many private corporations are exploring the cost savings of having their retired military workers use Tricare; the company would then pick up the cost of a Tricare Supplement policy.

However, Pentagon officials are quite worried about that trend because it drives up their own health care costs, which are now approaching \$40 billion a year. That's why defense officials are pushing hard for Congress to approve new Tricare fees and deductibles for "working-age" retirees younger than 65.

While nationwide health care costs have soared over the past decade, Tricare fees have not changed since 1995 — which is why private-sector employers are so willing to subsidize Tricare coverage for their military retiree workers; it's extremely inexpensive for them.

Tricare Supplements are offered by most military associations and by some private firms and is designed to reimburse you for your medical care bills, co-payments and deductibles, after Tricare pays the government's share of the cost. Each supplemental policy has its own rules on pre-existing conditions, eligibility for family members, deductibles, mental health limitations, long-term illness, disabilities, and allowable charges.

Retirees need to be smart about getting good insurance coverage at economical prices. Assuming that most retirees will want to stick with Tricare.

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