



**RETIREE NEWSLETTER**  
**Retiree Activities Office (RAO)**  
**Travis AFB, California**  
**Fall 2020**

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- ◆ The Hot off the Presses page adds important material we received while the newsletter underwent editorial review prior to submission to Public Affairs



## ***Acknowledgement***

Articles appearing in this newsletter are compiled from local sources, newsletters received by this RAO and from other military sources. Information has been edited and reprinted for the benefit of our retiree population.

No commercial gain is derived for this publication. News items are current as of their use in this newsletter. Please advise of any errors, omissions, or suggestions for improving our newsletter.

## ***Your Source of Information***

The RAO has a large library of booklets, pamphlets, flyers, brochures and guides offering useful information covering Veteran and Retiree Benefits, Estate Planning, Personal Loss, Consumer Protection, Security of Personal Finances and Credit and a host of other topics.

We aren't taking walk-ins due to the COVID19 shelter-in-place; However, if you email or call us at 707-424-3905/3904 before you show up, just knock on our door and we will provide you with copies of the requested material at the door.

## ***Focus***

***of the***

## ***Retiree Activities Office***

Our customers are retired American service members and their dependents. They have earned our respect, and their retirement benefits, by dedicating their lives to the preservation, protection and defense of the Constitution of the United States of America.

They have sweated and bled in distant lands, foregone the stability and pleasures of family life, and followed the orders given to them without regard to personal cost.

They should take great pride in their accomplishments. In addition, they are entitled to the fulfillment of the contract drawn with our country.

At the Retiree Activities Office, we take great pride in supporting the fulfillment of this contract. It is our mission to maintain open communication and to ensure they receive the superb service and respect they so rightfully deserve.

Our primary focus shall remain on mission accomplishment, compassionate care of retirees and their families, and the drive to constantly improve and excel.

# From the Desk of the RAO Director

## Travis AFB RAO now on Facebook

Our office now has a presence on Facebook!

The COVID-19 Shelter-in-Place order has limited us to providing assistance by telephone or email.

In order to expand access to information and services available to military retirees in our service area, we established a Facebook page and two Facebook groups.

We upload updates and changes to benefits, services, schedule changes and other information of interest to retirees and their families on our main Facebook page.

Documents, commonly requested forms, and quarterly newsletters are uploaded to the Facebook group pages to make them available for download and use. You may also email our office directly from the page by clicking on Send Email link on the main page.

To view and download files from the group pages, left click on the groups option in the navigation bar located on the left-hand side of the main page.

This will bring up links to the following groups:

1. Northern CA and Bay Area Military Retirees
2. Northern CA Military retirees

The web address for our Facebook page is:

<https://www.facebook.com/Travis-afb-Retiree-Activities-Office>

Please visit and upvote our page after you've looked over the content. We also encourage you to request membership in our Group pages as it gives you access to critical information before the quarterly newsletter is published.

If you have problems accessing the page, give us a call at 707-424-3904/3905 and we will walk you through the process.

## Volunteer Staffing

Without great people volunteering their time and efforts, the Air Force Retiree Activities Program would not exist.

We provide military retiree families with the information and help they need to access benefits they earned through their service to this Nation and its people.

If you are interested in volunteering, please give us a call, or email us to express your interest.

The only qualifications are a desire to be of service to others and a cheerful disposition. We will provide training.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of the program. We schedule volunteers for a three hour tour on desk (9 am— 12 pm and 12 pm to 3 pm).

## Service limitations

Due to COVID-19 shelter-in-place protocols, the RAO is no longer seeing walk-ins until the order is lifted.

There are volunteers staffing the office to answer the telephones and respond to emails requesting assistance or information.

Please call us at 707-424-3905/3904 or email [raotravis@yahoo.com](mailto:raotravis@yahoo.com) if you need help.

Be sure to leave your name, rank, telephone number, email address and a brief description of the issue you need help with.

If you have an active email address and you would like to get base facilities scheduling changes and other information please email us at [raotravis@yahoo.com](mailto:raotravis@yahoo.com). We've established an email military retiree group in Yahoo mail so we can get important updates out to you as soon as they cross our volunteer desk.



# Defense Accounting and Finance Service Updates

## Retiree Account Statement (RAS)

Retirees whose retirement date fell after 1 July 2020 will automatically receive their account statement electronically through DFAS' MyPay webpage.

Retirees that don't have a computer, tablet, or smartphone and Internet service, or that want to get their statements by standard postal service, may have a hard copy mailed to them.

If you want to request a hard copy through the mail, you will need to send DFAS a signed and dated letter requesting to change your RAS delivery to hardcopy mail, or call DFAS Customer Care Center to make the request.

Please send your request to receive a hardcopy of your RAS to:

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

You may also call 1-800-469-6659 to request receiving a hardcopy of your RAS by mail.



## Time to review your DFAS Retirement Pay Account Info

In the rush of things and in juggling day-to-day priorities it's easy putting off or forget to review your various financial accounts information to ensure it's accurate and current..

DFAS, in their latest newsletter to Retirement Services Officers, reiterated the importance of retirees keeping their retirement pay account information current.

If you haven't done this in awhile, please login to MyPay and check your account information to ensure it is still current. Areas to pay particular attention to for currency and accuracy:

- ◆ Contact information

- ◆ Beneficiaries for AOP/SBP (if enrolled)

- ◆ Life events:

- \* Divorced
- \* Re-married
- \* Widowed
- \* New child

Incorrect account information can delay payment of Arrears of Pay and Survivor Benefits (if enrolled) and create financial hardship for your loved ones after you pass away.

If you don't have a MyPay account, you can call DFAS at 1-800-469-6659 to review and update your account information.

## Phased Elimination of SBP-DIC Offset

DFAS indicated many SBP spouse annuitants would not see a change in their pay in the first phase of the elimination of the SBP-DIC offset in 2021.

The reason is their gross SBP amount is significantly less than their DIC amount.

Fewer annuitants won't see a change in their pay during the 2nd phase for the same reason. For more information visit: <https://www.dfas.mil/sbpdicnews/>.

### **DFAS Tools to Help YOU!**

DFAS has a channel on YouTube that features a number of how to video clips that provide instructions for completing forms and that provide contact information for a variety of retiree and annuitant pay issues.

DFAS produced a number of PDF form wizards that present questions you answer and then uses the answers you provide to complete forms you need to submit.

The form wizards take the pain and guesswork out of the process, speed up changes, and reduce the amount of time it takes for payments to make it to your checking account. The wizards generate a form that's ready to print, sign, date and mail out.

Some forms will require a wet signature and in some cases witnesses or notaries.

### **National Elections Registered to Vote?**

The national elections are scheduled for November, 3rd, 2020.

If you haven't registered to vote, we encourage you to do so.

Elections, like the U.S. Census are important because they affect your pocketbook and quality of life.

Before heading off to the voting booth, study the issues, review the candidates stand on the issues, and cut through the chatter and noise that always accompanies these events to make an informed vote.

You can locate your nearest County Registrar of Voters by visiting: Election 2020 on the web.

The page features registration deadlines, absentee voter and early voting deadlines. This site will also tell you if your voter registration is active.

If you live in Solano County, check the County's web-

site and left click on the Departments tab. Then select Registrar of Voters.

If you don't have computer access or internet service, call us at 707-424-3904 and we can retrieve it for you.



### **Functional Fitness & Nutrition for Seniors**

Mr. Dale Collins, Health Promotions Manager & Exercise Physiologist from the Beale AFB Clinic in collaboration with the Travis and Beale AFB RAO is presenting a series of five to six ZOOM video chats discussing functional fitness and general nutrition for seniors

These videos will be held at 6:00 PM, Thursdays on the 3rd week of each month starting in October

Please reserve a spot in the chats by emailing a request to [raotravis@yahoo.com](mailto:raotravis@yahoo.com) to view and participate. Meeting IDs and access codes will be emailed out the day before the event. You may also call in your request to 707-424-3904.



## **ID Card Renewal Scheduling Change**

Due to COVID-19 Shelter-in-Place constraints, the Department of Defense extended ID Card expiration dates. ID cards expiring after January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 will be honored as current through 30 September 2020.

The ID Section is currently issuing only mission critical ID cards and they are not accepting ID Card renewal appointments through RAPIDS for retirees and their dependents, or as walk-ins.

Retiree and Dependent ID cards should not be confiscated at entry gates until the 30 September, 2020 expiration date. You may still renew your ID card using the eID process. If you choose this method, the new card will be good for one year.

You can download instructions for using eID on line through <https://www.travisfss/idcards/>. If you need additional information, please call our office at 707-424-3904. We will let everyone *know when this process changes*.

The 349th Pass & ID section will renew ID cards but you need an appointment.

If you need an appointment, contact them at 707-424-2346.

## **Beale AFB Walk-ins and appointments**

If you are willing to drive to Beale Air Force Base, their Pass and ID section will take non-critical walk-ins that need to renew their ID cards.

They take walk-ins between the hours of 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

If you need an appointment outside these hours, you will need to make an appointment through the ID Card Office Online webpage.

Their address is:

9 FSS/FSPS  
17852 16th Street  
BEALE AFB, CA  
95903

If you've never been to Beale allow yourself another 20 to 30 minutes drive time. The base is large and spread out and it's easy to get lost trying to find your way around the installation.

GPS and Apple maps have a tendency to go haywire after you get on South Beale Road.

When you get on South Beale Road, just stay on it. It's about four or five miles to the entry gate.

When you get to the gate and security forces check your ID card for entry, ask them for directions to the main base and the Pass & ID Office.

## **RAPIDS Now ID Card Office Online**

The RAPIDS site for scheduling ID card renewals has moved and the name of the online appointment scheduler has changed from RAPIDS to ID Card Office Online.

Currently, no available appointment dates and times have been uploaded on the page.

If you would like to experiment with it, you can access the scheduler at:

<https://idco.dmdc.osd.mil/>

We will have a short ZOOM video clip uploaded to our Facebook page that will show you how to schedule an ID card renewal appointment once they start making appointment dates and times available on the site.





# David Grant Medical Center Updates

## Prescription Drug Activation Process Changes

If you haven't re-filled or activated a prescription since April, COVID-19 impacts led to David Grant Medical Center modifying the process for activating prescriptions and processing re-fills.

New prescription activations need to be called in by phone. To activate a new prescription, call 707-423-7657.

Prescriptions issued by a TRICARE/Medicare approved provider need to be submitted electronically (with the exception of controlled substances).

For the electronic RX, provide your doctor with the Electronic Pharmacy Prescribing Name: DOD Travis ePhcy and the Pharmacy NCPDP number 5651559.

Other options for filling prescriptions:

- ◆ Home Delivery –call ExpressScripts at 877-363-1303 or visit [www.militaryrx.express-scripts.com/home](http://www.militaryrx.express-scripts.com/home) delivery to switch your prescription to home delivery.
- ◆ Network Pharmacy – call your network pharmacy and ask them to call your Military Treatment Facility to transfer your medication or your provider information to activate new prescriptions.

- ◆ Refills – call 707-423-7600 to refill your prescriptions and pick-up after three business days at the BX Pharmacy.

To check co-pay and deductible costs for prescriptions filled by ExpressScripts visit [www.express-scripts.com/tform](http://www.express-scripts.com/tform).

## FEDVIP Open Enrollment Season

It's that time of year again. If you're not enrolled in FEDVIP and you want to procure vision and dental insurance through the FEDVIP program, you'll need to apply and enroll through the BENEFEDS website.

You can also change your insurance carrier if you're unhappy with your current FEDVIP carrier.

Open enrollment season this year runs 9 Nov through 14 December 2020. After open season ends you can only enroll in FEDVIP if you experience a life changing event.

Please visit the Travis AFB Retiree Activities Office Facebook page and view the **Using the BENEFEDS** website video if you need help navigating the system.

## TRICARE for LIFE

Retirees and their spouses within 90 days of their 65th birthday are required to enroll in Medicare.

If you haven't applied for your social security benefits yet, you'll be required to send quarterly payments to CMS Medicare to maintain your coverage until you start drawing Social Security. At that point they'll pull your premiums out of your monthly Social Security check.

If you are a TRICARE enrollee, you'll be transferred automatically to TRICARE for LIFE, but you need to opt in for Medicare Part B when you enroll in Medicare.

If you or your spouse are impaneled at David Grant Medical Center and want to keep your Primary Care Manager at David Grant Medical Center, you'll need to contact David Grant's TRICARE Benefits advisor to enroll in TRICARE Plus. The advisor can do this over the phone and there is no cost involved in enrolling. TRICARE Plus is managed by the Military Treatment Facility.



## Hot off the Presses

### DGMC Primary Care Manager (PCM) Assignments

Ms. Sandy Llavore, Director of Marketing and Education, 60th MDSS/SGST emailed the following urgent update to our office on 9/11/2020.

“The 60th Medical Group is undergoing changes that will impact Primary Care Manager (PCM) assignments. The purpose is to allow specific PCMs to fully focus on keeping our fighting force ready to deploy to fulfill the military requirements of our national defense strategy.

This change is part of one of the biggest transformations in the AF Medical Service’s history and is not unique to Travis AFB.

DGMC will restructure two of its squadrons: the 60th Aerospace Medicine Squadron (60 AMDS) and the 60th Medical Operations Squadron (60 MDOS). 60 AMDS will be re-designated as the 60th Operational Medical Readiness Squadron (60 ORMS) and 60 MDOS will be re-designated as the 60th Healthcare Operations Squadron (60 HCOS).

This strategic change will align all active duty members under 60 ORMS providers. These providers will treat active duty personnel. All

non-active duty patients will be empaneled to 60 HCOS providers.”

Possible impacts for retirees and their families as listed in the PowerPoint presentation they sent us:

- ◆ Some patients experience PCM Changes
- ◆ If changed, patients will receive a PCM change letter
- ◆ Patients will continue to follow PCM change request process
- ◆ No change to current clinic locations
- ◆ Continue to call the Central Appointment Desk at 707-423-3000 for appointments

### Functional Fitness Video Schedule

The following update is provided by Mr. Dale Collins, Health Promotions Manager and Exercise Physiologist for the Beale AFB Clinic.

Here are the monthly video topics by month:

- ◆ Oct 2020 — Nutrition changes with age

- ◆ Nov 2020— Preventing falls—the importance of balance

- ◆ Dec 2020– Balanced dieting—the overseas edition

- ◆ Jan 2020—At your core, lower back and core exercise

- ◆ Feb 2020—Leg exercises to keep you moving

The December presentation covers dietary problems for foreign born spouses that may cause diabetes, high blood pressure and kidney disease.

The video presentations will be broadcast over ZOOM and they are scheduled the 3rd Thursday of each month at 18:00 hours (6 PM) for folks on the civilian time clock.

Please email us at [rao-travis@yahoo.com](mailto:rao-travis@yahoo.com) if you would like to participate.

We will send a group email to participants containing the meeting ID and pin for joining each meeting the day prior to the video presentation.



## Fall Safety Tips

### Smoke and Carbon Dioxide Detectors

On November 1st, we all get extra sleep due to moving our clocks back an hour.

It's a good practice to change out the batteries in your smoke and carbon dioxide detectors to ensure they'll operate as designed in the event of a fire.

If your detectors are more than 10 years old, it's highly recommended you replace them.

Many big box stores like Costco and Sam's Club offer them in low cost packages.

Additionally, check the AAFES website to see if they offer them.

It's also a good time to do a safety check on your clothes dryer vents to make sure the vents are clear of lint build up. These have been known to cause house fires due to lint catching fire in the vents.

### Prep Car for Fall and Winter Driving

Although it hasn't felt like it over the past few weeks, Fall will be here shortly and Winter is just around the corner.

Now is the time to prep your car and put together a safety travel kit for those trips up over the Sierras.

An excellent start is change out your windshield wipers, invest in a good window frost scraper, and change your oil, engine and cabin air filters.

Your safety travel kit should include a good set of tire chains (you'll probably need them by the time you get to Blue Canyon or Pollock Pines)

Make sure you have blankets, snacks and other finger ready food, water, and first aid supplies: bandages, disinfectants, flashlight, and a good spare tire in your car before heading out.

Check the weather before you leave. If it's going to be really bad you might consider holding off on the trip.

After all, none of us want to end up like the Donner Party.



### Home Safety

It's an understatement to say that it's been a bad year for fires and the season isn't over.

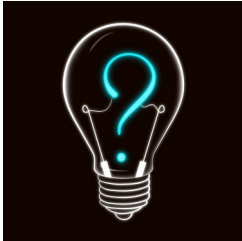
If you haven't gotten to it yet, now's a good time to clear out the leaves and debris from your home's gutters.

This removes combustible fuel sources from your home and prevents possible water and mold damage to your house caused by overflowing water.

If you've had a lot of leaf drop over the summer due to the dry conditions, it's also a good time to clear dead leaves from your home's landscaping to remove more fuel.

Trimming back shrubs, bushes, trees and overgrown plants near your home's entry and windows help burglar proof your home and reduce the chances you'll become a crime victim when you're out of town.

## *Closing thoughts.....*



As government on all levels (Federal, State and Local) and the military services attempt to constrain costs, they are shifting more of their operations and services online and making them self-service.

Not too far in the past, most people were able to go into an office and have their issues addressed by a nice, warm, fuzzy human being. Not so much the case anymore.

This has created issues for people that don't own an internet-connected computer, laptop, or tablet, or that lack computer skills in accessing services and benefits available to them.

There are ways to handle this issue. Most public libraries have computer terminals available for use at no cost to residents. If you're a technophobe, many Senior Centers, Adult Night Schools and public service organizations offer free tutoring and in some case full courses at little or no cost.

Your Travis RAO Volunteers are also here to help you navigate those waters when you need help.

We encourage you to reach out to your library, Adult School, and other local sources to avail yourself of these free to low cost training opportunities. Although a lot of faulty and useless information can be found on the web, there's a great deal of good solid advice, learning opportunities, how to videos and other information just a keystroke away that can make your life easier, peak your interest, and keep you engaged.

None of us are ever too old to learn something new!

### ***Topics You Would Like Addressed***

The purpose of our newsletter is to keep military retiree and annuitants informed about Air Force events and the programs that affect their lives. If you have topics you would like to see covered in future newsletters, please email your ideas to [raotravis@yahoo.com](mailto:raotravis@yahoo.com), or call us at 707-424-3904. We'll do our best to address them. After all, our newsletters are for you. The only topics we won't entertain are those our parents and teachers told us to avoid.