



**RETIREE NEWSLETTER**  
**Retiree Activities Office (RAO)**  
**Travis AFB, California**  
**Summer 2021**

**Volunteers**

Walt Jue, Lt Col, USAF (Ret)	Roy Sheets, SMSgt, USAF (Ret)
Barry Williams, Lt Col USAF (Ret)	Laurna Sudat, MSgt, USAF (Ret)
Rick Villarina, Jr., Maj USAF (Ret)	Mary Lou Bermudez, MSgt, USAF (Ret)
Jan Homer, Cpt, USAF (Ret)	Rosemary Ingram, EdD

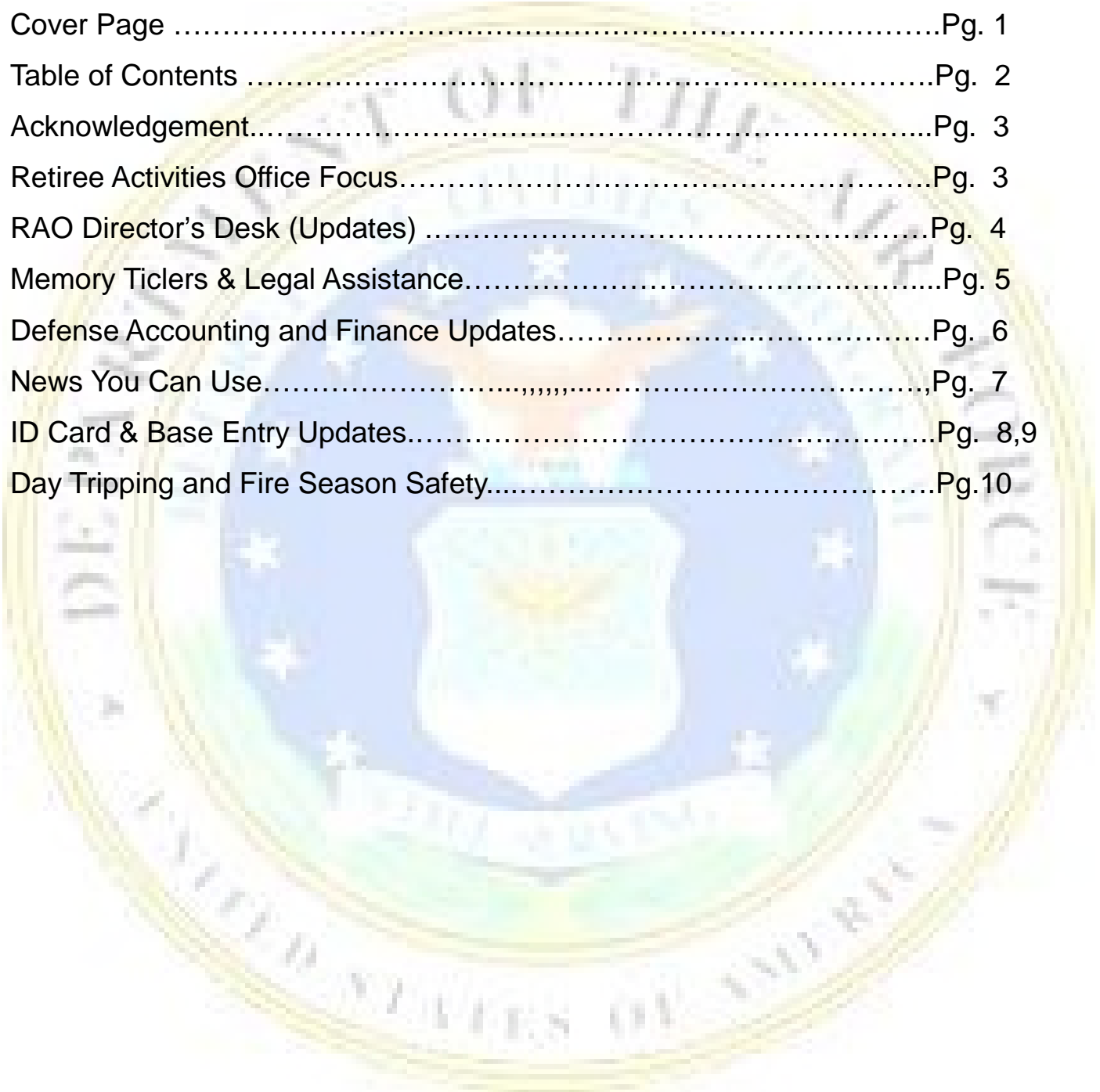
**Jerry A. Edmonds, CMSgt, USAF (Ret)**  
Director, Travis AFB Retiree Activities Office  
707-424-3904  
raotravis@yahoo.com

**Ms. Bunny Dominguez Medical RAO Coordinator,**  
David Grant USAF Medical Center  
707-423-3649

**George Moses, CMSgt, USAF( Ret)**  
Director,  
McClellan Park Satellite Retiree Activities Office  
916-640-8445/8446 George.Moses@VA.GOV

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## ***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.

Retirees, dependents and annuitants not vaccinated for COVID-19 won't be seen by our volunteers as walk-ins

If this is the case, email or call us at 707-424-3904/3905 and let us know what you need. We will provide you with copies of the requested material at the door, or if requested,

We have now graced our newsletter cover page with the United States Space Force logo.

Welcome into the fold.

## ***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 retirees, their families, and surviving spouses receive the superb service and respect they so rightfully deserve.

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

## *From the Desk of the RAO Director*

### *Gratitude*

The Travis RAO staff thanks Lieutenant Colonel Ruby Hardy at Paradise Valley Estates for her assistance in arranging the posting of our Call for Volunteers recruiting information in the Estate's news flash, closed circuit TV channel, and local MOAA Chapter.

We really appreciate her efforts to help us find new volunteers and maintain our office's existence and operation.

### *DGMC Medical Retiree Activities Office (MRAO)*

Normally, the focus of our newsletter zooms in on benefits and services available to military retirees and their sponsored or annuitant spouses. We are taking some print space to recognize another group of volunteers that assist retirees, active duty personnel, and dependents on a daily basis.

Bunny Dominguez, MRAO Coordinator, her admin support team, and a group of approximately 30 active volunteers free up David Grant Medical Center specialists and technicians so the latter can devote their time to their primary duties -- providing medical care to the military community.

Bunny's staff can be seen providing information about hospital services, clinic locations, other support facilities on Travis at the North and South Information Desks. You are also interacting with her volunteer staff in the Satellite Pharmacy at the AAFES Arcade when you go in to pickup prescriptions. Her volunteer staff assist clinics in their mission of delivering medical services. We extend our thanks and gratitude for all they do to support DGMC's mission.

### *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).

### *Walk-in Service*

We will see walk-ins fully vaccinated for COVID-19 that completed the 14 day period after the last dose that allows full immunity to kick in. If this applies, you may unmask in our office if your comfortable with it.

If you are not vaccinated, please call us at 707-424-3904/3905 or email [rao-travis@yahoo.com](mailto:rao-travis@yahoo.com) for assistance .

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

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 want to get base facilities scheduling changes and other information, please email us at [raotravis@yahoo.com](mailto:raotravis@yahoo.com). We will add you to our military retiree email group in Yahoo mail so we can get important updates out to you as soon as they cross our volunteer desk.

# Memory Ticklers

## DEFENSE ACCOUNTING & FINANCE NEWSLETTERS

We get the SBP Annuitants and the Military Retirees Newsletter on a regular basis. We download and save copies for reference and we send them out as an email attachment.

We also upload copies to the Military Retiree/Veterans Goup pages we set up through our Travis Air Force Base Retiree Facebook Page.

The DFAS Newsletters are far more detailed in covering retiree and SBP annuitant issues. If you need a copy, stop by our office and we will be happy to print them out for you.

If you do have a computer or tablet and an email account, send an email to raotravis@yahoo.com and ask to be added to our Travis Military Retiree e-mail group.

This helps us keep our newsletter brief.

## Air Force Assistance Fund

DFAS published a recap of the results of the 2020 Air Force Assistance Fund efforts.

AAFES raised over \$577,000 and retirees donated nearly \$58,000 in 2020. In 2021, Air Force Retirees kicked in \$65,600 and AAFES raised over \$457,000. DFAS indicated donations have fallen off due to restriction on desk donations caused by COVID.

A sincere thanks was extended to retirees for stepping up to the plate again.

AFAF funding supports Active Duty and retirees. It's a way for us to help our own. If you wish to donate, you may donate online at <https://www.afassistancefund.org>, or donate by text message by texting AFAF to 50155.

## Legal Assistance No Cost/Pro Bono

Currently, the Base Legal Office is only providing will preparation, power of attorney, and notary services to Active Duty, Reserve and Guard members on Title 10 orders.

There are several sources of possible no cost legal services in the immediate area that offer legal assistance if you need help.

We recommend you call them to find out if there are any income restrictions in requesting service.

Here are the agencies that may be able to assist you:

Solano County Legal Access Center  
Family Law Facilitator  
600 Union Avenue  
Fairfield CA 94533.  
(Solano County Superior Courthouse)

Napa County Family Law Facilitator  
825 Brown Street  
Napa CA 94599

Legal Aid of North Bay Private Attorney  
Involvement Program  
1227 Coombs St  
Napa, CA 94559

Legal Aid of Napa Valley  
1277 Coombs St  
Napa, CA 94559  
707-255-4933

If you live outside Solano County, please check the JUSTIA Lawyers website at [justia.com](http://justia.com) for listings of agencies in your area that provide no cost legal services.

We will periodically check the Travis AFB Legal Office web page for updates and we'll let retirees registered in our Facebook groups and email list know when the current service restriction ends.

# Defense Accounting and Finance Service Updates

## myPay 2 Factor Authentication

If you haven't logged into your myPay account for a while, DFAS implemented two-factor login authentication for user accounts.

As of April 2021, all myPay users are required to use two-factor logins to access account information.

What happens under two-factor authentication? When you login into myPay using your email address and password, DFAS generates a Personal Identity Code and sends it to either your email address, or cell phone number and gives you a set amount of time (10 minutes) to enter your code into a prompt box generated through the myPay site. If you enter your code within that time frame, it will give you access to your myPay account.

We recommend you request they send it to your cell phone as some people have difficulties navigating from email to their browser. Just have your cell phone next to you when you're trying to access your account.

What are the benefits of two-factor authentication? It keeps people that may have stolen or stumbled upon your login credentials from gaining access to your

account. It tells the DFAS system that the person logging into the account is you.

## SBP-DIC Offset Phase 2 & 3

For those who haven't visited the Defense Accounting and Finance Service Retiree and Annuitants page, downloaded, and read a copy of their latest June 2021 SBP Newsletter, some significant updates were provided regarding the elimination of the Survivor Benefit Program (SBP) Annuity - Disability Indemnity Compensation (DIC) offset.

Phase 2 of the SBP/DIC offset kicks off January 1st, 2021. Your SBP will be reduced by 1/3 of the offset. Here's a summary of how it will work:

VA pays 100% of the DIC Payment.

DOD DFAS pays the remainder of the SBP Benefit minus 1/3 of the surviving spouse's DIC payment from the SBP Gross Annuity. DFAS adds back in the appropriate amount of the Special Survivors Indem-

nity Allowance (SSIA) - a special payment made to restore some of the SBP annuity that was deducted).

Phase III of the SBP/DIC Offset elimination will begin on January 1st, 2023.

On that day, Surviving Spouses will receive their full amount of the SBP Annuity and the Disability Indemnity Compensation payment eliminating the offset.

The SSIA benefit will be stopped as it was meant to partially remedy SBP amounts that were deducted before the change was fully implemented.

If you need more information, please call or visit our office or access the DFAS website at: <https://www.dfas.mil>.

The Retiree/Annuitants sub-page has a download link for the SBP Newsletter and a link to the Frequently Asked Questions page for SBP annuitants.

# News You Can Use

## Space Available Travel Restrictions

Since COVID-19 restrictions are loosening up as infection rates are rapidly declining, many people are chomping at the bits to travel and take vacations.

Prior to the pandemic, many of us were taking advantage of Space Available to travel to our vacation spots of choice.

Please note that general purpose Space A travel for retirees and their sponsored spouses or children is still restricted.

The only Space A travel authorized for retirees now is Space A travel for military retirees or veterans living in U.S. territories or possessions when they need to travel to a military treatment facility or VA Clinic/Center/Hospital for medical care (i.e. American Samoa or Guam to Honolulu Hawaii).

Periodically check Air Mobility Command's Space Available web site for COVID-19 travel updates. The URL for the web page is: <https://www.amc.af.mil/Home/AMC-Travel-Site/AMC-Space-Available-Travel-Page>

Just click on the red COVID-19 Update banner at the top of the page to get the last information, or as usual, you may call us for more information.

## RAO Holiday Operations & Coming Events

The Travis Retiree Activities Office will be closed 2 through 4 July 2021 for Independence Day and an Air Mobility Command Family Day.

The RAO will also be closed on 3 through 6 September 2021 for the Labor Day Weekend.

If you call into the office for assistance, please leave your name, rank, branch of service, telephone number and a brief description of the issue you need help with. We will call you back when we re-open the office.

Mid to late October 2021 -- Travis AFB Retiree Appreciation Day tentatively scheduled. We will provide more information in the Fall Newsletter.

November - Mid December -- FEDVIP Open Enrollment Season for Retirees and Spouses that want dental and vision insurance coverage.

We'll provide the exact dates in the Fall Newsletter when we get them from the Office of Personnel Management's website.

We highly recommend retirees and surviving spouses visit the [Benefeds.com](https://www.benefeds.com) website to review carrier plans, costs,

and services before the Open Enrollment Season begins.

## Civilian Escorts

During short periods of the pandemic, civilians providing military retirees, spouses, and annuitants transportation were denied entry to the Base because of COVID-19 spread concerns. Those restrictions have ended but are subject to change.

Normally, civilians are allowed to transport and escort retirees and surviving spouses on the base as long as the retiree/spouse possesses a current DOD ID Card and the escort has a current drivers' license, registration, and proof of auto insurance.

Please note that in October 2021 civilian escorts must possess a Real ID compliant photo ID document to gain entry to the base.

The California Driver License with the Golden Bear and Star Seal embossed on it, or a current U.S. Passport meet Real ID requirements for base entry when accompanying a DOD ID card (current) bearing retiree or surviving spouse on a trip to the base.

If you have concerns about base entry requirements, we encourage you to call the Travis

## ID Card & Base Entry Updates

Visitors Center at **707-424-1462**. Retirees or Surviving Spouses requiring recurring escort to the base for medical appointments, shopping at the Exchange, or Commissary are highly encouraged to apply for an Agent Letter if they can't drive or have mobility issues.

For the retiree, sponsored retiree spouse, or surviving spouse, a current DOD ID card meets Real ID requirements and allows your entry to the base.

### Agent Letters

Retirees and sponsored/surviving spouses with mobility, health, or transportation issues (unable to drive due to medical or physical conditions caused by aging, illness, or injury), may designate an individual that can shop in their stead, or transport them to medical appointments and Pharmacy by submitting and Agent Letter package.

In order to apply, the retiree or spouse will need a letter signed by their Doctor detailing the condition driving the need for an agent and the expected length of the condition. We have a sample letter the Doctor can use as a guide.

If the condition described is permanent, the retiree/spouse only needs the original physician's letter, but the retiree/spouse will need to annually apply for renewal of the Agent letter.

Once the Agent Letter is approved, it's good for a year.

In October 2021, Agents will need a Real ID compliant driver's license to access the base (The California license with the Golden Bear and Star Seal on the front). If the Agent has a non-Real ID compliant license, they may present a current U.S. Passport to gain entry.

You may call the Travis AFB Visitor's Center at 707-424-1462 if you have questions about what your agent will need to enter the base.

Our office has a sample packet if you, or someone you know needs to apply. You can stop by our office for a copy, or we can send it to you by email if you have an email address. You may email a request to [raotravis@yahoo.com](mailto:raotravis@yahoo.com).



### ID Card Expiration Policy Change

If you have a retiree or dependent's ID card that has expiration dates between January 1, 2020 and July 31, 2021, it will remain valid through January 21, 2022.

Cards with expiration dates before January 1, 2020, or after July 31, 2021 have not been extended and they will not be accepted. If you fall into this

category, you will need to get a new ID card.

If you fall under the last category, live in the Travis area, and wish to get ID Cards renewed at the 60th AMW's Pass and ID Section you may schedule an appointment online. You need a valid email address and a cellphone number to make an appointment online.

You can get to the appointment application through the 60th FSS' main web page. Just open your browser and type 60 FSS in the browser's search box and hit enter. Click on 60 FSS from the search results list by clicking on it (should be the first item in the search results list). When the page loads, click on the ID Card & DEERS text at the top of the page. The ID Card Appointment page will load. Scroll to the bottom of the page until you see a blue calendar icon with the word "Appointment" under it and click on the icon. It will launch the scheduling application. Just follow the prompts, check your information to make sure it's correct, submit and print a copy of the appointment confirmation.

Also, you can copy this web address in your browser's search bar and it will get you directly to their appointment scheduler: <https://travisfss.com/idcards/>.

If something comes up and you can't make the appointment, call the contact number on the confirmation to cancel the appointment so someone else can use the slot.

Military retirees and spouses living outside reasonable commuting distance from Travis AFB that want to use an ID Card issuing office closer to



## **ID Card & Base Entry Updates—Continued**

their homes will need to use the RAPIDS ID Card Office Online site to find and make an appointment with the office nearest their homes.

The web address for the DOD ID Card appointment scheduling app is at <https://idco.dmdc.osd.mil/idco>

Please call our office if you have difficulties in making an appointment and we'll assist you or give you options.

### **Real ID**

In October 2021, you will need an ID Card meeting DHS Real ID requirements in your possession when traveling by air, or clearing a TSA checkpoint, or entering a DOD military installation.

For military retirees and dependents, a DOD ID card meets the requirements as does a current U.S. Passport, or current California Real ID driver's license.

The compliant CA Driver's license will have a Gold Bear and a Star embossed in the upper right-hand corner of the license.

If you use a current California license that has the term Federal Limits Apply in the upper right-hand corner, that license does not comply with Real ID requirements and cannot be used for air travel, checking through TSA security check points, or entering U.S. military installations.

On a side note, if you plan to vacation overseas, consider taking a photograph of your COVID-19 vaccine card and keep it on your Smartphone.

A lot of countries are requiring visitors to present proof of vaccination before allowing entry and quite a few accept a photo stored on your smartphone as proof.

To be on the safe side, always go to embassy websites to confirm the documents you need to have to meet entry requirements.

### **ID Card Renewal Tip**

If you're a military sponsor and your wife, or dependent child's ID card is set to expire, there is one thing that may hinder its renewal.

Sponsors that have a health condition or another engagement that prevents them from accompanying their spouse to the appointment to sign off on the DEERS/ID Card issuing documents, need to ensure their spouses have a DD Form 1172 signed by the retiree sponsor and the form needs to be notarized.

You can swing by our office and pick a copy up, or you can download the DD Form

1172 online.

A revocable Power of Attorney giving your spouse authority to sign off on those documents will also work.

If you need a power of attorney, please call us and we'll find a pro bono legal organization that will either prepare one for you, or get you to one that will at low to no cost.

Currently, Base Legal is only providing this service to Active Duty, Reserve, and Guard Members on Title 10 orders.

If you use the 60 FSS online appointment scheduling app, be sure to read the instructions before you start entering your information.

The last edition of the Afterburner indicated that Dependents that are 65 or older would start being issued indefinite ID cards sometime this summer.

We had a client come in that was turned away due to the 1172/Power of Attorney requirement and she was disappointed they wouldn't issue an indefinite ID card.

The DEERS system hasn't been updated to flag spouses 65 and older. You may or may not get a card with an indefinite date on it. We'll let you know as soon as it's fully implemented.

## Day Tripping & Summer Safety



We are constantly looking for ways to make this newsletter an interesting and enjoyable read.

In keeping, we like to make low cost outings a recurring feature (If you're in good shape — this is for you!)

The Grizzly Island Wildlife Refuge is only 10 miles down the road from Fairfield.

It has 17.1 miles of walking and hiking trails running parallel to a number of sloughs.

It features an abundance of wildlife. Tule elk, river otter, hawks, and a large variety of water and marsh fowl.

It's due to close for hunting season between the middle of July through March, so if you want to hike around, now's the time to do it.

Just take Sunset Avenue and stay on it. It turns into Grizzly

### Island Road.

Take the road until you see the bridge, then make a right turn at the bridge and drive another three miles to the Ranger Station.

Stop at the ranger station on the left to get a Day Use Permit. On weekends they close; however you still need to stop at the station and sign in in their log book and sign out when you leave.

You can also pickup a map that shows their hiking trails and off limits areas. Please heed the latter.

We recommend stopping at Parking lots 5 & 6. Those trail heads give you the best shot at seeing wildlife. Tule elk, river otters (they like the areas around the salination pumps), and White tailed kites. You'll also see a lot of egrets and Blue Herons. Go early before the heat sets in and enjoy the sights and fresh air.



### Preventing Heat Stroke

August temperatures have arrived early this year! We are only a week or two into summer and we've already experienced a stretch of 100 degree plus weather.

The older we get, the harder it is to regulate body temperature. This makes us more prone to heat stroke.

Here are a few tips to avoid it:

- ◆ Refrain from doing hard physical tasks during the heat of the day (usually 10:00 AM—6:00 PM).
- ◆ Stay hydrated — drink lots of water
- ◆ Avoid drinking alcoholic beverages; alcohol is a diuretic and it will dehydrate you.
- ◆ Make sure your air conditioner has been serviced and it's in good operating order.
- ◆ Have a plan to go to a cooling center if the power goes out or your air conditioner bombs out.