

RETIREE NEWSLETTER

TRAVIS AFB

California

Spring 2004

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THE RETIREE NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED BY THE RETIREE ACTIVITIES OFFICE TO INFORM RETIREES, ANNUITANTS, AND FAMILY MEMBERS RESIDING IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA OF CHANGES IN LEGISLATION, DODD POLICIES AND OTHER MATTERS AFFECTING THEIR MILITARY RIGHTS, BENEFITS AND OBLIGATIONS. THERE IS ALSO INFORMATION PERTAINING TO THE AIR BASE. WHILE EVERY EFFORT IS MADE TO VERIFY THE CONTENT, THE RAO STAFF CANNOT GUARANTEE THE ACCURACY OF INFORMATION FURNISHED BY OUTSIDE AGENCIES.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
60th AMW/CVR
540 AIRLIFT DR.
TRAVIS AFB, CA 94535
OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Bulk Rate
US POSTAGE PAID
Fairfield, CA
Permit No. 68





DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 60TH AIR MOBILITY WING (AMC)

Dear Military Retiree and Family Members

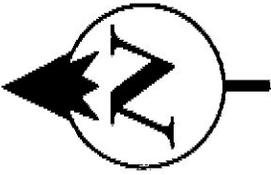
It is my pleasure to invite you to the Travis Air Force Base Retiree Appreciation Day, Saturday, 24 April 2004. The Travis Conference Center will be the site of the major activities of the day. There is a Travis Air Force Base map showing the Conference Center location and a program of the day's events included in this Newsletter. If your map has gone astray, don't hesitate to ask the gate guards for directions.

I hope to welcome you at this year's Appreciation Day, express my gratitude for all you have done, and also thank those of you who continue to help through your volunteer efforts at Travis.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael L. Sevier".

MICHAEL L. SEVIER, Colonel, USAF
Commander

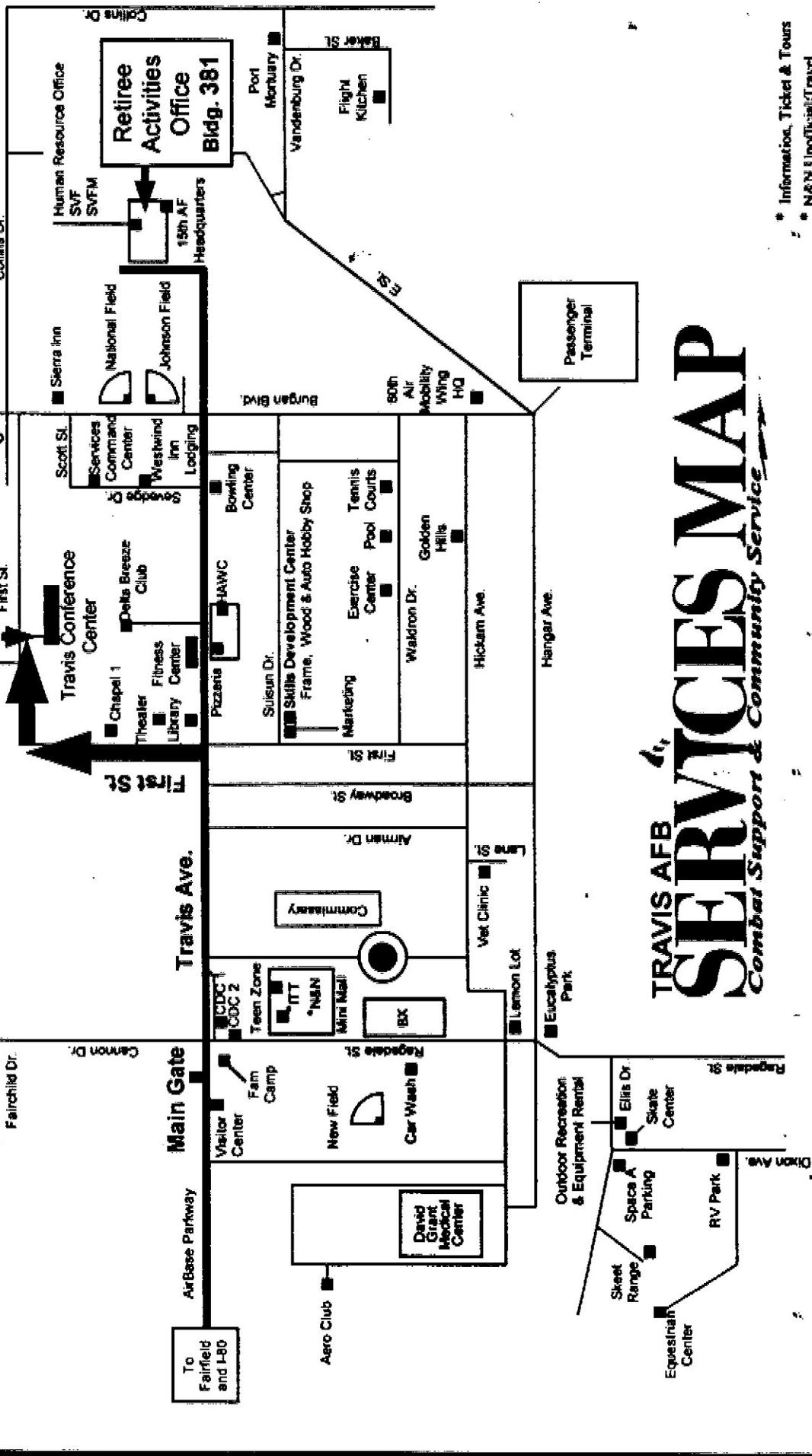


Youth Baseball Fields
Senior League Fields

Chapel Center
Travisville Park
Youth Center

To Cypress Lakes Golf Course (4 mi.)

To Fairfield and L-80



TRAVIS AFB SERVICES MAP

Combat Support & Community Service

* Information, Ticket & Tours
* N&N Unofficial Travel

**DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE
SPRING 2004**

One hundred and seventy four retirees at TAFB gave 55,524 hours of their lives in 2003 by volunteering at the David Grant Medical Center, the Space A Section in the Air Terminal, the Retiree Activities Office, the Retiree Tax Preparation Office, and the Retiree Activities Satellite Office at McClellan Park in Sacramento.

This issue of the Newsletter is being distributed (assuming funds are available) to retirees in the Sacramento area and I want to remind you all that there is a satellite RAO at McClellan Park, located in the VA Clinic, Building 98. The Director is CMSGT George Moses and his office is open Monday through Thursday from 9AM to 3PM. They may be reached by telephone at (916)- 561-7476 and can help retirees with yearly automobile stickers, DOD auto decals, Agents Passes and in many other areas that are of concern to retirees. Remember that the Newsletter is on the computer at: <https://www.travis.af.mil/pages/retiree/newsletter.htm>

I thank all those retirees who are "Still Serving". You do make an appreciable difference!

We have scheduled a Retiree Appreciation Day for April 24, 2004. Our principal speaker is Major General Richard Murray, USAF Retired, who is the President of NAUS and who addressed our group in April of 2000. The events of your day are as follows.

**THE PROGRAM
CONFERENCE CENTER**

**Travis AFB, CA.
Master of Ceremonies**

CMSGT George Moses

- 0800—DOORS OPEN-LIGHT REFRESHMENTS
- 0900—POSTING OF THE COLORS & INVOCATION
- 0915—WELCOMING REMARKS, COMMANDER 60TH AMC
- 0930—STAFF JUDGE ADVOCATE
- 0945—CASUALTY ASSISTANCE OFFICER
- 1000—SOLANO COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER
- 1015—60TH MEDICAL GROUP COMMANDER
- 1100—M/G RICHARD MURRAY, (USAF Ret.) NAUS PRESIDENT
- 1200—LUNCH BREAK. You may dine at the Sierra Inn on Burgen Blvd. at your own expense.
Burger King and the BX Snack Bars are also open for your enjoyment.
- 1300—Auto Registration and ID Cards may be obtained in Bldg. 381 until 1500.
- 1300—Medical Screening will be conducted at the Conference Center by HAWC.
- 1500—The Program is concluded. Thank you for coming. We look forward to seeing you in the Fall of 2005.

Joseph M. Rowan, MSGT USAF Ret.
Director, Retiree Activities Office

PHARMACY PROCEDURES FOR NEW AND RENEWAL PRESCRIPTIONS

After your physician orders a medication you should come to the pharmacy and:

1. **Check in windows:** Give the patient's valid military ID Card (This activates the prescription filling process)
2. Wait for the patient's name to be called or appear on the display board. (The pharmacy will hold this medication for 7 days.)
3. **Pick-up windows:** Show the patient's valid military ID Card and authorization to pick-up, if required.

Why all the procedural changes at the DGMC pharmacy?

1. Even though our new system is focused on improving safety it often delivers faster service. We have found that the patient waiting time has been reduced considerably under the improved system.
2. At check-in we now insure that all drug allergies are documented, all drug to drug interactions and dosages are screened, and we provide you with written information on today's prescription for you to read about and then ask questions you might have.
3. Although the new system has many extra steps built into it they are all focused on reducing medication errors. The system's bar code technology and digital imaging add significant layers of protection to insure you get a safe product.

(DGMC, Pharmacy Flight)

VETERANS BENEFIT ACT (VBA) OF 2003 AFFECTS SOME SURVIVING SPOUSES

___The VBA of 2003 allows survivors of members who died of service-connected causes to retain Dependency and Indemnity Compensation if they remarry after attaining age 57. Previously, surviving spouses lost this entitlement if they remarried at any age. The only provision to regain the benefit was if the latter marriage ended in death or divorce. Those who have already remarried (and were age 57 or older when they did so) have until December 16, 2004 to apply for reinstatement of their DIC benefits. The current entitlement is \$967 a month. The application form is VA Form 21-686-C. (MOAA's Benefits Information Update, February 2004)

SBP ANNUITANTS MUST CERTIFY ELIGIBILITY ANNUALLY

If you are a Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuitant, you receive a tax statement and a Certificate of Eligibility (COE) each year. The COE determines if you are going to continue receiving a monthly SBP check.

The COE is sent to annuitants approximately 90 days prior to their birthday each year. It must be completed and returned via mail or fax before the annuitant's birthday to avoid any interruptions in pay.

If a legal representative such as a power of attorney has been added to an annuitants account, that individual should complete and sign the form, marking the representative portion as requested.

Upon the return of the COE, the Defense Finance and Accounting Service processes the document and, according to information provided, either continues, adjusts or terminates the annuitant's pay as appropriate.

A marriage certificate is required when "I married in the past year..." box is marked. An annuitant should include name and Social Security Number, name and Social Security Number of the deceased sponsor and the signature date.

Forms should be mailed to DFAS, US Military Annuitant Pay, PO BOX 7131, LONDON, KY 40742-7131 or faxed to 1-800-982-8459.

GOVERNMENT GRAVE MARKER REQUESTS MADE EASIER

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has revised its application form to make requesting a VA grave marker easier. The new form, Application for Standard Government Headstone or Marker (VA Form 40-1330), includes updated information about changes that expand eligibility for a government marker. The new form and instruction sheets also permit better communication between VA and veterans families, according to VA officials.

For deaths on or after September 11, 2001, Public Laws 107-103 and 107-330 made government markers available for use on veteran's graves that were already marked with privately furnished headstones or markers. Previous law prevented VA from furnishing markers when a grave was already marked. The law requires the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to report to Congress by February 1, 2006, on the effectiveness of this benefit and to recommend whether it should continue. One of the changes made to the application form will allow the VA to report on this new benefit by tracking its use. In January 2002, VA introduced a toll-free fax service for submitting applications. The service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, as an alternative to regular mail. Instructions, as well as the fax number, 1-800-455-7143, are on the VA website at www.cem.va.gov. The application form on the website can be filled in and printed for submitting by mail or fax. Questions about a headstone or marker application can be directed to VA's Memorial Programs Service applicant assistance unit at 1-800-697-6947. (RAO Randolph AFB, TX)

INFORMATION YOU CAN USE:

WATER-

1. 75% of Americans are chronically dehydrated.
2. In 37% of Americans, the thirst mechanism is so weak that it is often mistaken for hunger.
3. Even MILD dehydration will slow down one's metabolism as much as 3%.
4. One glass of water will shut down midnight hunger pangs for almost 100% of the dieters studied in a University of Washington study.
5. Lack of water, the number one trigger of daytime fatigue.
6. Preliminary research indicates that 8-10 glasses of water a day could significantly ease back and joint pain for up to 80% of sufferers.
7. A mere 2% drop in body water can trigger fuzzy short-term memory, trouble with basic math, and difficulty focusing on the computer screen or on a printed page.
8. Drinking 5 glasses of water daily decreases the risk of colon cancer by 45%, plus it can slash the risk of breast cancer by 79%, and one is 50% less likely to develop bladder cancer.

So, lets all have a drink---- of WATER!

(The Internet)

SAFETY TIP:

___Static electricity has been blamed for a number of serious accidents at the gas pump. It is most likely to occur during the fall and winter months when the air is cool, or cold and dry. To minimize the danger, stay outside the vehicle while refueling. It may be tempting on a bitter cold day to get back in the auto to wait but the average fill-up only takes about two or three minutes. Do not over-fill or top-off as this can cause gasoline spillage. When dispensing gasoline into a container, use only an approved, portable container and place it out of the vehicle and on the ground while filling. In the unlikely event static caused fire does occur while refueling, leave the nozzle in the fill pipe and back away from the vehicle while calling for the attendant. Do not use cell phones at the gas pump. (Hancock AFB, MA)

SCAMS--SCAMS--SCAMS

Every time I think we have covered all the scams a new one appears. SO-

Keep an eye out for people standing near you at retail stores, restaurants, grocery outlets, etc., that have a cell phone in hand. With the new camera cell phones they can take a picture of your credit card, which gives them your name, number, and the cards expiration date. Identification theft is one of the fastest growing scams today, and this is just another way that has been devised to steal from you and cause undo hardship in your life. (The Internet)

CONSUMER LAW WEB SITES CAN PROVIDE USEFUL TIPS AND WARNINGS

Frequently, the path a consumer takes to purchase a product or service is filled with scams, tricks, and traps. However, many Web sites exist to inform consumers and assist them in navigating the difficult, winding stream of commerce. A little information can go a long way in deciding which products and sellers are the right fit for the buyer's needs.

One helpful Web site is the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) page, www.ftc.gov. The home page has headlines and hot topics in consumer affairs, in addition to links to pages with legal information, the Do Not Call registry, and consumer tips. The consumer page (www.ftc.gov/ftc/consumer) is filled with brochures and information for avoiding scams and rip-offs and making wise decisions. Topics include auto purchases, e-commerce, tobacco sales, investments, scholarships, telemarketing, and many more. From the FTC, you can link to the Consumer.gov page, at www.consumer.gov. This page provides consumer headlines and updates of major consumer law issues and class action suits. It also contains a wealth of information on products and services, including household goods, medical care, investment services, foods, and others. Many other groups' sites are also good reputable sources for consumer information. Examples include the American Association of Retired Persons (www.aarp.org/consumerprotect), Better Business Bureau (www.bbb.org), and almost any state's Attorney General's office.

When shopping online or by telephone, following a few guidelines can save a great deal of time and aggravation.

1. First and foremost, be knowledgeable. Consumers should know what they need and what they want. This information comes from awareness of the consumer's own situation coupled with a bit of research from sources like those named above.

2. Avoid high-pressure sales tactics and high-speed sales pitches. Any reputable seller will give their consumers time to think the offer over.
3. Be wary of cold calls, which are calls and contacts not initiated by the consumer. Do not provide any personal information until you are satisfied that the goods or service offer is legitimate. Never assume you are dealing with a legitimate or reputable source, particularly when they initiated the contact.
4. Do not panic or over react to sales pitches that are long on emotion and short on details. If there had been a newsworthy story or breakthrough, you would not hear it first in an advertisement or sales pitch. This is especially important today, when profiteers feed on consumers' genuine concerns about terrorism and security.
5. Remember that some offers are really too good to be true. Consumers should look for a bargain, but should always take their time to analyze the deal they are really getting.

If you have a consumer affairs problem, resources are available to help. If a consumer discusses the problem with the seller and no resolution is attained, the federal Trade Commission, Better Business Bureau, and each state's Attorney General's office provide dispute investigation and resolution mechanisms. These groups can be contacted with an online form or by telephone. (SJA Office, Sheppard AFB, TX)

ASSERTIVENESS—(FOILED)

A mild-mannered man was tired of being bossed around by his wife so he went to a psychiatrist who told him he needed to build his self-esteem, giving him a book on assertiveness. After reading it on the way home, he stormed into the house and declared. "I want you to know I am the man of this house and my word is law. I want you to prepare me a gourmet meal tonight. Then after dinner, you are going to draw my bath so I can relax and when I am finished with my bath, guess who is going to dress me and comb my hair?" His wife responded "the funeral director".

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

Area Code (707)

Accounting & Finance	424-3925
Base Exchange	437-4633
Casualty Reporting	424-2106
Civilian Personell	424-3067
Delta Breeze Clubs	437-4597
Commissary	437-4004
Customer Service(ID Cards)	424-8466/8468/8480
Judge Advocate	424-3251
Lodging	437-4779
Retiree Activities Office	424-3904
Security Police	424-2227
Space 'A'	424-5703/5704
Tickets & Tours	424-0970
Vehicle Registration	424-3770
Veterinary Clinic	424-3010/2985
Visitors Center	424-7198/1462

60TH MEDICAL GROUP

Information	423-7300
Appointments	423-3000
Appointments Toll Free	800-264-3462
Pharmacy Refills	423-7600
Pharmacy	423-5345
Primary Care	423-5351
Internal Medicine	423-5053
Tricare	800-242-6788
Health Benefits Office	423-7921

Useful 800 Numbers

Cleveland Finance Center	800-321-1080
Casualty Reporting	800-269-5170
SBP Annuitants	800-435-3396
VA Regional Office	800-827-1000
Social Security	800-772-1213