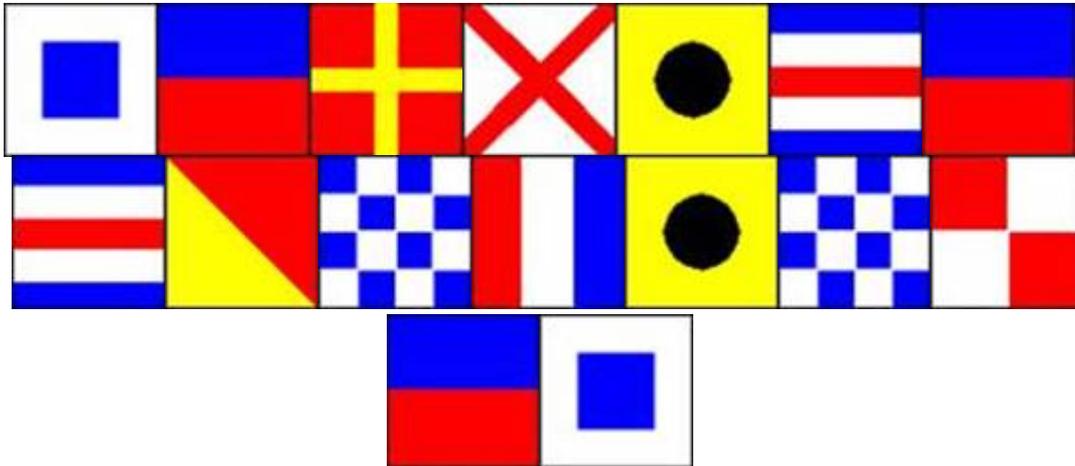


**Capital Area Coast Guard Retiree Council**

**Newsletter February 2015**

**SERVICE CONTINUES**



**Thought of the Day**

**“If you want to know what a man's like, take a good look at how he treats his inferiors, not his equals.”**

**— J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire***

*Well, February's here and soon gone. Many things happening in legislation, Tricare and a few death notices. Also, very important, new gate procedure for entering military installations. One really important attachment “PLEASE pass this along to any veterans you know” provides information on virtually all Web sites & information sources for Veterans*

*Our friend and colleague and the distributor of much Coast Guard news, Norm Paulhus, has been having significant health issues over a period of over 2 years. He's now in a rehabilitation center and would enjoy hearing from any of you who'd care to call him. His number is : 301-461-6394*

*I've had a few indications that people receiving our newsletter have difficulty or cant open the attachments. Of over 500 email newsletters sent, I've had about 4 tell me that there's a problem with the attachments. Please let me know if any of you have that problem.*

*Thanks*

► **Phased Implementation of the Automated Installation Entry System**

*Received information within the past 2 weeks that all Army installations and likely all military installations, are installing automated lift-gates which are activated by swiping military ID cards through a slot. This requires that all holders of a military ID register with the base Security Office. Most important, all ID cards which now bear the member's Social Security number must be issued a new ID. New ID's do not bear an SSN. Most bases are issuing new ID's on a "walk-in" basis and the usual gate guard will remain for a specific period (not sure how long) for those who have not yet registered.*

*Several weeks ago I visited Ft Meade. The liftgate was already in place and some drivers were swiping their cards to enter. The gate guard was present and when I swiped my card (not knowing the process) with neg success, the guard opened the gate and let me in. The next several times I visited Ft Meade, the gate was open and no swiping was required, just the normal guard inspecting the military ID.*

**Please see information below from Joint Base Ft Myer-Henderson Hall on this matter**

Phased Implementation of the Automated Installation Entry System- Use Starts 16 February The following information on the subject was distributed by the JBM-HH Public Affairs Office on 2 February. It is provided verbatim.

"JBM-HH access measures to take Non-DoD ID card holders first

"The safety and security of all residents, workers and visitors at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall is paramount.

**"In order to reduce confusion and serve our customers in the best way possible, Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall is not requiring Department of Defense ID card holders to begin to register their DoD ID cards until Friday, May 15. DoD ID card holders consist of active and reserve component military personnel and their family members; retired military personnel and their family members; and federal workers.**

"In the future, we will offer extended registration hours for residents and DoD ID cardholders only.

"*In the short term* – this delay is aimed at vetting and registering visitors and contractors who do not qualify for a DoD ID card – including volunteers, church goers and nannies, for example. These folks may come on base frequently, although they don't have a DoD ID card. Work on vetting this group only will go toward easing traffic back-ups and long waits for everyone accessing all portions of the joint base (Fort Myer and Henderson Hall in Virginia, and Fort McNair in the District of Columbia).

"In the long term – This delay is to accommodate implementation of an upgraded Automated Installation Entry system which will actually speed up the entry process.

Further Definition of the Automated Installation Entry System Implementation on JBM-HH The AIE system is described in an article prepared by Julia LeDoux of the *Pentagram* Staff for publication in the *Pentagram* (expected to be in the 5 February issue) but also available now by link on the JBM-HH website, see:

[http://www.army.mil/article/142051/JBM\\_HH\\_to\\_enhance\\_visitor\\_access\\_requirements/](http://www.army.mil/article/142051/JBM_HH_to_enhance_visitor_access_requirements/)

A fact sheet on JBM-HH access control and the AIE system is available in the Base Visitor Control Center in the Emergency Services office wing of Building 415, at the northern entrance, facing the Fitness Center. (Building 415 also houses the Firehouse on Sheridan Avenue). The fact sheet includes specifics on the roles and hours for the different Base access gates and Q&A on areas of probable concern for those who will be entering the Base. Note that the factsheet preparation predates the article available at the website cited above, and includes descriptions of operations that may vary as the system is phased in.

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***Here's the link to Felicia's Chipouras obituary:***

<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/washingtonpost/obituary.aspx?page=lifestory&pid=173940641>

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**► The January 2015 edition of the Retiree Newsletter**

<http://www.uscg.mil/ppc/retnews/2015/January15newsletter.pdf>

**This issue includes the following articles:**

	* COLA Adjustments
* Army-Navy Transplant Program	* VA Compensation
* Combat Veterans Association	* Keeping Active
* CG Aviation Memorial	* FEMA Retirement Program
* TRICARE Changes	* Retiree Services
* Bahamas Rescue	* PHS Core Values
* Dolphin Shooting	* USCGC RELIANCE Returns
* Douglas Munro	

And the following regular features:

* CO's Corner	* Reunions and Notices
* Retiree Pay Days	* Retirements
* TAPS	* Dependent TAPS
* Directory Assistance	

Please visit <http://www.uscg.mil/ppc/retnews/>

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**► The 2014 1099R forms**

Now available online through Self Service at <https://portal.direct-access.us/>. You will have to allow pop-ups for this application in order to view your pay slip or 1099R. It will take a few moments for the system to generate and display the 1099R form. During this time the "Processing" image will display. If you have not used Self Service before, here is the [First Time Logon Guide for Retired Pay Self-Service](#) and here is [the user guide for accessing and printing your IRS Form 1099R](#). Note: Personnel in "RET-2" status are not provided with IRS Form 1099r. Any 2014 earnings from U.S. Coast Guard sources for RET-2 members will be reported on IRS Form W-2.

Contact PPC (ras) for assistance with Direct Access/Global Pay or other account issues.  
Commanding Officer (RAS) U. S. Coast Guard Pay & Personnel Center 444 SE Quincy St Topeka  
KS 66683-3591

Toll Free: [1-800-772-8724](tel:1-800-772-8724) Commercial: [785-339-3415](tel:785-339-3415)

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## ► Health Care | Abolish TRICARE

The congressional commission has recommended a complete overhaul of the military health system — one that does away with Tricare, changes the medical command structure and seeks to improve Defense Department coordination with Veterans Affairs. The goal of the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission's recommendations, according to its final report released 29 JAN, is to preserve the quality of combat care that saved many troops' lives in Iraq and Afghanistan but also improve access to health treatment for those who use the system. Joyce Raezer, executive director of the National Military Family Association, said she polled 20 military spouses shortly after the report's release and said most were "intrigued" by the recommendations, adding that the military system is in dire need of an overhaul, and in the absence of that occurring, the prospect of choice is appealing. "Generally, the option for choice in this arrangement ... they like that. The Tricare bureaucracy is cumbersome," Raezer said. But the spouses added they would need help understanding their options and choosing plans — the kind of information that cannot be provided only to the active-duty service member. They also wondered how such a system would work across state lines and overseas. "The biggest concern is about education," Raezer said. "We have been educating the whole country about health care with the Affordable Care Act right now. This means we'd need to educate retirees and family members."

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## ► Shrink Retirement | Start 401K

A detailed proposal to revamp military retirement that was sent to Capitol Hill would shrink the size of future troops' pensions and end the 20-year, all-or-nothing aspect of the current benefits package by starting 401(k)-style investment funds with government contributions for lower-ranking troops. After a two-year

study, the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission on 29 JAN publicly unveiled 15 major recommendations that would give individual troops far more control over shaping and managing their own retirement packages. One stunning feature of the new proposal is to give individual troops the option to forgo immediate monthly retirement checks and instead receive a lump-sum payment for the total value of their working-age retirement benefit between the time they leave service and the time they become eligible for their normal Social Security benefits, usually starting at age 67. At its core, the new proposal would scale back the size of military pensions by 20 percent. Yet it preserves the current structure by continuing to offer the option of monthly checks immediately upon separation for those who serve 20 years. To read the full report go to <http://projects.militarytimes.com/pdfs/2015-report-compensation.pdf> [Source: MilitaryTimes | Andrew Tilghman | Jan. 29, 2015 ++]

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## ► **Commissaries & Exchanges | Consolidate**

Defense officials should think about consolidating commissaries and exchanges into a single defense resale system, according to the report from the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission released Thursday. After a two-year study, the commission publicly unveiled 15 major recommendations that would change a variety of military benefits. "Commissary and exchange benefits are valued by many service members, retirees and their families, and should be maintained," the commission recommended. "Let's stop for a minute and celebrate that the commission found that the basic commissary premise of selling at cost plus 5 percent is viable," said Joyce Raezer, executive director of the National Military Family Association. A consolidated resale organization would better sustain that benefit while over time reducing reliance on taxpayer dollars, commissioners said. Based on the commission's survey, the most important aspects of the commissary benefit were discounts and convenience. Go to <http://projects.militarytimes.com/pdfs/2015-report-compensation.pdf> to read the full report. [Source: MilitaryTimes | Karen Jowers | Jan. 29, 2015 ++]

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## ► **DoD Draft Budget Proposals**

Many commissaries would have to cut their hours and days of operation — as much as two days a week, in some cases — under a draft Defense Department budget document that details proposed reductions in the commissary budget for fiscal 2016. The draft document obtained by Military Times presents various options for the Defense Commissary Agency to meet a DoD mandate to come up with \$322 million in annual savings — nearly one-fourth of DeCA's annual baseline budget of \$1.4 billion. Those options are under discussion as defense officials work to finalize their fiscal 2016 budget request to Congress, scheduled to be sent to Capitol Hill in early February. Because plans are still in flux and no final decisions have been made, a DoD spokesman declined to comment. One source said discussions are already ongoing about changes to some of the commissary proposals outlined in the document [Source: NavyTimes | Karen Jowers | Jan. 23, 2015 ++]

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## ► **We Honor Veterans Campaign**

Ask Americans if someone in their family served in the military, and the answer is probably no. After all, fewer than 1 percent of Americans serve these days. But ask if one of their grandfathers served, and you'll likely get a different answer. Between World War II and the wars in Korea and Vietnam, millions of men were drafted into service — and both men and women volunteered. Now, that generation of veterans is getting older. And as many of them near the end of their lives, aging into their 80s and 90s, the demand for hospice care has been growing with them. That means that the Department of Veterans Affairs is spending

a lot more on what's known as end-of-life care. "I think they call it end-of-life care," notes Thomas O'Neil, a 68-year-old resident at the St. Albans VA hospital in Queens, N.Y. "But whatever it is ... they treat you like gold. If you're going to be sick, this is the place to be." half a million veterans will be needing end-of-life care each year for the next five years. For more on the We honor Vets program refer to [www.wehonorveterans.org](http://www.wehonorveterans.org) [Source: NPR | Quil Lawrence | Jan. 28, 29015 ++]

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## ► **Connect Your Docs**

Do you see a Non-VA health care provider? "Connect Your Docs" through VLER Health (Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record) can help your VA and non-VA health care providers have the best possible picture of your current state of health. (VLER) Health is a program that shares important parts of your Veteran health record between the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and participating private health care providers. This sharing of information enables your health care providers to access important information about your health history so they can provide you the best possible care. This exchange occurs over a secure and confidential network known as the eHealth Exchange. This program is free and voluntary for Veterans, but requires your consent to participate. An easy way to do this from your home is through the VA eBenefits website. If you have not already, go to the eBenefits website and register. (It's free!). check out the VLER Health website <http://www.va.gov/VLER>

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## ► **Retiree Appreciation Days** ► **As of 26 Jan 2014**

Retiree Appreciation Days (RADs) are designed with you in mind. They're a great source of the latest information for retirees and Family members in your area. RADs vary from installation to installation, but, in general, they provide an opportunity to renew acquaintances, listen to guest speakers, renew ID Cards, get medical checkups, and various other services. Some RADs include special events such as dinners or golf tournaments. Due to budget constraints, some RADs may be cancelled or rescheduled. Also, scheduled appearances of DFAS representatives may not be possible. If you plan to travel long distances to attend a RAD, before traveling, you should call the sponsoring RSO to ensure the RAD will held as scheduled and, if applicable, whether or not DFAS reps will be available. The current schedule is provided in the attachment to this Bulletin titled, "**Retiree Activity\ Appreciation Days (RAD) Schedule**". Note that this schedule has **been expanded to include** dates for retiree\ veterans related events such as town hall meetings, resource fairs, stand downs, etc. For more information call the phone numbers of the Retirement Services Officer (RSO) sponsoring the RAD as indicated in the attachment. An up-to-date list of Retiree Appreciation Days can always be accessed online at

- HTML: [http://www.hostmtb.org/RADs\\_and\\_Other\\_Retiree-Veterans\\_Events.html](http://www.hostmtb.org/RADs_and_Other_Retiree-Veterans_Events.html)
  - PDF: [http://www.hostmtb.org/RADs\\_and\\_Other\\_Retiree-Veterans\\_Events.pdf](http://www.hostmtb.org/RADs_and_Other_Retiree-Veterans_Events.pdf)
  - Word: [http://www.hostmtb.org/RADs\\_and\\_Other\\_Retiree-Veterans\\_Events.doc](http://www.hostmtb.org/RADs_and_Other_Retiree-Veterans_Events.doc)
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## ► **Vet Hiring Fairs** ► **Feb 01 thru 28 2015**

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce's (USCC) Hiring Our Heroes program employment workshops are available in conjunction with hundreds of their hiring fairs. These workshops are designed to help veterans and military spouses and include resume writing, interview skills, and one-on-one mentoring. For details of each you should click on the city next to the date in the below list. To participate, sign up for the workshop in addition to registering (if indicated) for the hiring fairs which are shown below for the next 6 weeks. For more information about the USCC Hiring Our Heroes Program, Military Spouse Program, Transition

Assistance, GE Employment Workshops, Resume Engine, etc. visit the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's website at <http://www.hiringourheroes.org/hiringourheroes/events>

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### ► **VA Hearing & Vision Benefit** ► **H.R.353 Hearing Act**

U.S. Representative Sean Duffy (R-WI-07) and Rep. Walz (D-MN-01) introduced H.R.353, Veterans Access to Healthy Hearing Act, which will provide much needed options for hearing impaired Veterans. According to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), both our aging Veterans and younger Veterans returning from the battlefield are seeking help from the VA for hearing loss more than any other service-related disability facing them today. VA audiology clinics can't keep up with the increased demand and frustrated Veterans are living in a non-hearing world with no one to turn to. Rep. Duffy's bill would cut Veteran wait times by allowing hearing instrument specialists to be added to the list of the VA's approved care providers. Rep. Duffy offered, "Veterans in my district are driving up to 90 miles one way just to get hearing services from an audiologist at the Veteran's Administration. These Veterans could receive the same service from a local hearing instrument specialist, but under current law, the VA is only allowed to use audiologists. Reps. Duffy and Walz originally introduced the bill in the 113th Congress and received high interest from the Veterans Affairs Committee. Duffy added, "We saw strong interest on this issue from the VA Committee last Congress and have every hope that we'll get it to the Floor for a vote this Congress." [Source: TREA News for the Enlisted | Jan. 26, 2015 ++]

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### ► **Health Care Reform** ► **TRICARE Self-Attest Reporting**

As tax season begins, Defense Department officials want to remind TRICARE beneficiaries of changes in the tax laws, which require all Americans to have health care insurance or potentially pay a tax penalty. For the first time since the Affordable Care Act passed in 2010, all U.S. citizens, including service members, military retirees and their family members, must report health care coverage on their 2014 taxes, said Mark Ellis, a Defense Health Agency health care operations program analyst. For this year only, taxpayers will "self-attest" on their 2014 tax forms to each month in which they had health care coverage, he said. The act mandates that health care must meet minimum essential coverage, and TRICARE coverage meets that criteria for the majority of service members and their families, Ellis said. TRICARE Prime, TRICARE Standard, TRICARE for Life, TRICARE Overseas, TRICARE Remote and the Uniformed Services Family Health Plan meet the minimum essential coverage, he added. When purchased, premium-based plan such as TRICARE Reserve Select or TRICARE Retired Reserve also fulfill the act's requirements. Uniformed service members who have questions about TRICARE, the act and the individual coverage mandate can visit the TRICARE website to download a fact sheet on TRICARE and the act, with TRICARE plans compared to minimum essential coverage, Ellis said. Military beneficiaries that are solely eligible for care in military hospitals and clinics, for example, parents and parents-in-law, have an automatic exemption from the tax penalty for tax year 2014 only. (NOTE: The TRICARE and ACA fact sheet is available at [http://www.tricare.mil/~media/Files/TRICARE/Publications/FactSheets/ACA\\_FS.pdf](http://www.tricare.mil/~media/Files/TRICARE/Publications/FactSheets/ACA_FS.pdf) )

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