



Maxwell/Gunter AFB

Retiree News

News concerning U. S. Military retirees in the Montgomery, AL area



Vol. 01, Issue 1

Nov 03-Jan 04

In This Issue

Page 1...

Message from our director

Page 2...

New E-mail and web site

Page 3...

Volunteers needed and Tricare information

Pages 4...

My Pay, SBP and COLA

Page 5...

Grave Marker Request, Forgotten Widows

Page 6...

Combat Related Compensation

Page 7...

Agents at the commissary

Retirees this is your newsletter. If you have suggestions please refer them to the Retiree Affairs Office 953-6725 or Marketing 953-7410.

Message from the Director

I'm John T. Burch, Colonel, USAF (Ret.), Director of the Retiree Activities Office (RAO) at Maxwell AFB. I have served in this volunteer capacity since shortly after I retired from the Air Force in 1986. I took over the job from Colonel Jim Martin, USAF (Ret.) who had worked with the RAO since about 1978 when RAO's were established. This means that this year we are celebrating our 25th year of service to you, the Retiree, by being a ready source for the many questions you have concerning benefits and services. We have a small, but dedicated, group of volunteer retirees and their spouses who man the RAO office and have an earnest desire to assist you with any need you may have. Please say "Hello" and give your thanks to the group of volunteers that regularly answer the RAO telephone (953-6725) at Maxwell AFB. We are excited about our expanding role at Maxwell AFB and the new ways that we can serve you!



Winter Rates



Effective November 1, 2003

SSgt- Below	\$40
TSgt - Major	\$48
All Others	\$56
Guest Fee	\$5

Ask about our winter monthly rental fee, To make reservations contact the Maxwell Equipment Checkout office at 953-3509.

Recreational Specials

November

Rent a cabin at Mid-Bay Shores for 2 nights and get 3rd night Free.

Rent trailer at Lake Martin for 2 nights and get 1/2 off jon boats and canoes.

December

1/2 off all trailers at Lake Martin

January

Rent trailer at Lake Martin get jon boat/canoe free. (Does not include gas/oil.)

Retiree Special



FREE Green Fees

Monday, Dec. 1st
at Cypress Tree
Golf Course!

Cart fee is \$7.

Call 953-2209
for tee times.



New Web site launched

We have launched our new web site. The web site contains the latest retiree issues, a listing of commonly used phone numbers, an area to update your information with us, as well as many links to other excellent sites. We are still building our

Frequently Asked Question section and will be posting all our Newsletters. Come visit the site at: <http://www.maxwell.af.mil/42abw/rao/> Put us in your "Favorites" on the tool bar and you can access the site with a click of a button.

E-Mail Address Change

Our e-mail address has changed to : retireeactivities@maxwell.af.mil. Be sure to update your e-mail address with us and let us know if you want to be notified via e-mail with important retiree updates.

NPRC initiates online records request procedures

The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) is making it easier for veterans with Internet access to obtain copies of their military files. Military veterans and the next of kin of deceased former military members may use a new online military personnel records system to request documents. Other individuals with a need for documents must still complete the Standard Form 180, Request Pertaining to Military Records. Veterans and next of kin may access this application at <http://vetrecs.archives.gov>. You do

not need to type "www" in front of the web address.

Individuals without computer access and without access to the Standard Form 180 may continue to request copies of records by writing to the NPRC. Be sure to include rank, branch of service, SSN, previous service number.

The address is:

National Personnel Records Center
Military Personnel Records
9700 Page Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63132-5100



Your Retiree Activities Office needs you!

The RAO is expanding its programs. Quarterly Newsletters, RAO Website, and assisting retirees at the MPF and Pass and ID are only a few of the many initiatives. However, such programs take manpower; volunteer manpower. The RAO is operated entirely by volunteers and how active the program is depends directly on volunteerism. You can do anything from answering phones for a couple of hours a week to preparing the newsletter or managing the website, it's up to you. It's a great place to get involved, stay updated on current retiree issues, and help retirees from all services. Volunteers qualify for special base parking passes, discounted golf and meals, and many other incentives. To volunteer, call 953-6725.

Cold War Certificates

Service members, veterans and federal employees who served between Sept. 2, 1945 and Dec. 26, 1991 are still eligible for a Cold War Recognition Certificate. About one million people have responded out of the 22 million entitled to receive the certificate. Applications can be found at <https://coldwar.army.mil>. More information can be found on PERSCOM's Cold War web site or by calling customer service at (703) 325-5864.

TRICARE Standard over Age 65

TRICARE Standard eligibility expires upon reaching the Social Security Medicare eligibility age, on the first day of the month in which the beneficiary becomes entitled to hospital insurance benefits under Medicare. There are no plans to raise this age even though social security full retirement age is rising to 67. Anyone who is a military dependent and is not eligible for Medicare benefits can retain TRICARE Standard benefits provided they can provide to the ID card issuing

activity or DEERS a notice of disallowance of Medicare Part A benefits.

DEERS requires all dependents upon turning age 65 to obtain a new ID card, which allows them to update their records on each individual's TRICARE eligibility. Eligibility is removed for those who are eligible for Medicare and do not elect to pay for Medicare Part B. By enrolling in Medicare Part B, the person automatically enrolls in TRICARE for Life.

Maxwell Bowling Lanes

GLOW BOWL

Every Friday & Saturday Night!

Sign up for a Tournament:
 Turkey Shoot November 21
 Bowl with Santa December 13
 Family Feud January 17

**Ask about our
 Senior Bowling Leagues!
 Call 953-5049**



Defense Finance and Accounting Service is emphasizing its myPay system. You can access myPay at <https://myPay.dfas.mil>. This secure, customer friendly website, allows myPay customers to easily manage their pay account information.

Retired members and SBP annuitants will find: myPay is available via the Internet 24 hours a day, seven days a week; delivers the Retiree Account Statement (RAS) or Annuitant Account Statement before print mail; and changes made on myPay are effective the current pay period.

Features of myPay for both retirees and annuitants: View and print the Retiree or Annuitant Account Statement; view and print tax statements; update bank account and electronic fund transfer information; edit personal address information.

Retirees can change both federal and state tax withholdings while annuitants can change federal withholdings, and retirees can manage financial allotments and U.S. Savings Bonds.

To use myPay, you must have a Personal Identification Number (PIN), obtained by accessing myPay and clicking on "New Pin" or by calling 1-877-363-3677. A temporary PIN will be mailed to your address of record in about 10 days.

Changes to SBP

Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuitants will be receiving two important documents in the mail. One is a tax statement and the other a Certificate of Eligibility (COE). The tax statement is used to determine how much tax is owed and the COE determines if you're going to continue receiving an SBP check each month.

The COE is automatically sent to the annuitants about 90 days prior to their birthday each year. It must be completed by the annuitant and returned prior to their birthday to avoid interruption of pay. If a legal representative, such as a power of attorney has been added to the account, that individual should complete and sign the form, marking the legal representative portion as requested.

Upon return of the COE, DFAS processes the document according to the information provided and will either continue, adjust or terminate the annuitant's pay as appropriate.

Forms can be mailed to DFAS, US Military Annuitant Pay, P.O. Box 7131, London, KY 40742-7131 or can be faxed to (800) 982-8459.



2.1%

COLA ADJUSTMENT

Payments to military retirees will include a 2.1 percent cost of living allowance increase. The COLA will also affect federal retired pay, VA disability compensation, SBP survivor annuities and Social Security. The COLA for these programs will be effective 1 Dec 03 and will be reflected in checks issued on 2 Jan 04.



New Hours

MPF & Finance

The Maxwell AFB Military Personnel Flight and Finance Customer Service have new operating hours; Mon - Fri, 0830-1600hrs. The MPF and Finance Customer Service are located in Bldg 804.



The Officers' Club
celebrates the New Year

\$30 for members
(\$35 non-members)

Dinner Buffet6 p.m.
Show at.....7:30 p.m.

*Champagne and Breakfast
Buffet starting at midnight*

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.

For deaths on or after September 11, 2001, Public Laws 107-103 and 107-330 made government markers available for use on veterans' graves that were already marked with privately furnished headstones or markers. Previous law prevented the VA from furnishing markers when a grave was already marked.

In January 2002, the VA introduced a toll-free fax service for submitting applications. This 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. Questions about a headstone or marker application can be directed to VA's Memorial Programs Service applicant assistance unit at 1-800-697-6947.



*Ballroom
Dancing
Classes*

Maxwell Community Center
Call 953-7370 for additional information.



**Information
Tickets
& Travel**

Movie Tickets
Rave \$5.00
Carmike \$5.25
O'Neil \$5.00

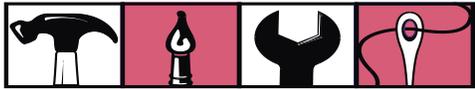
Join Us
for a day trip.
Monthly we offer a casino trip
and a shopping trip.

**Shakespeare Festival
Vouchers are \$27.**
For other trips, cruises or adventures
call 334/953-6351

Forgotten Widows

Do know a widow of a military retiree who retired before 21 Sep 72 and died prior to 21 Mar 74 or a spouse of a reserve retiree who retired and died prior to 1 Oct 78? If they never remarried, they may qualify for the Annuity for Certain Military Surviving Spouses authorizing them a lump sum payment of over \$11,000 and a monthly annuity of \$188.36. If you know someone who may qualify, have them contact us at (334) 953-6725 as soon as possible. While there is no statute of limitations for applying, they will not receive the \$11,000 payment if applying after 1 Dec 03.

Maxwell And Gunter



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

1st Friday of each month
Woodworking Class

1st Saturday of each month
Ceramics and Framing Classes

For more information please call 953-7370.

Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC)

Most of the inquiries we receive are about CRSC. The following articles are provided to give up-to-date information on CRSC. Should you need additional information, please give us a call.

Thousands Apply for CRSC. CRSC allows some disabled military retirees to collect payments for both their military service and their service-related disability. As of Oct 14, 2003, a total of 7,633 applications have been received by the Physical Disability Division, Air Force Personnel Center, Randolph AFB, Texas, with 720 cases approved and 672 cases disapproved.

The number of people qualifying may be larger than the term "combat related" implies. According to the legislation, a veteran with "combat-related" disabilities is any 20-year military retiree receiving retired pay, with at least a 60 percent combined VA disability rating and his or her injuries were: a "direct result" of armed conflict as a result of "hazardous" military service; were incurred while serving in "conditions simulating war;" or were incurred "through an instrumentality of war." Application are available at the RAO, the MPF or online at <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/crsc/>. Applicants should send the DD Form 2860 and supporting documentation to: United States Air Force, Disability Division (CRSC), 550 C Street West Suite 6, Randolph AFB TX 78150-4708. You will find a complete list of supporting documentation and tips for successful applications online, or give us a call.

More information is available by calling the Air Force Contact Center toll free at (866) 229-7074, commercial (210) 565-5000 or DSN 665-5000.

Air Force Retiree News

An excellent source of information for retirees is the Air Force Retiree News Service. To subscribe send an e-mail message using the account you want the service sent. On the "to" line, type exactly:

list.manager@listserv.afpc.randolph.af.mil

il. On the subject line, type exactly: subscribe AFRETIRE and send. You will get confirmation message.



Sunday Brunch
at the Officers' Club

Retirees \$11.95
All Ranks
Adult \$14.95
Children 4-12 (55¢ x age)
10:30 a.m.- 1:30 p.m.

Happy Holidays!
Join us for Lunch
Daily Starting at
10:30 a.m.!

Maxwell Officers' Club

Telephone 953-7820

Maxwell Enlisted Club

Telephone, 953-6878

The Falcon's Nest
Est. 1942

Telephone, 416-4646

Please think about
booking your holiday
parties and special
events with us!



Get your Flu Shot!

Call the Clinic at 953-5731
for times and dates.

“Agents” shopping at the commissary

Recent activities have brought to the forefront the issue of having someone shop for eligible commissary patrons. And it doesn't just apply to children with parent deployed, but to other authorized patrons who may have difficulty shopping on their own.

Known as the agent privilege, it's for any authorized commissary shopper who needs assistance shopping or who cannot shop on his or her own behalf because of disability, illness or infirmity. That privilege also extends to grandparents and guardians of children of service members who may not be available due to deployment or remote assignment.

Agent “Entry Purchase Cards” may be obtained at the Maxwell Visitor Center, Bell Street Gate. If the member is unable to go to the Visitor's Center with the agent, the agent must have a power of attorney, driver's license and registration and the military retiree's ID card. Cards are valid for one year and authorize use of the Commissary, BX, MPF and hospital on the member's behalf.

NOTICE: Daily Use Lockers Only

Due to increased patronage generated from the new AF Fitness Program, effective January 5, 2004, the Maxwell and Gunter Fitness Centers will go to an all daily use locker system. No Lockers will be available for permanent use.

Articles appearing in this newsletter may have appeared in newsletters received by the RAO from other military facilities. They have been reprinted for your benefit. Some may have been reworded because we want to give the most current news and information. We would like to thank the other RAOs for sharing their newsletters. We have found each one has information that all retirees need to know.

DISCLAIMER: Opinions expressed by writers of this newsletter are their own and

should not be construed to be the official position or policy of DOD, USAF, or Maxwell AFB, AL. The RAO published this newsletter to inform AF retirees and their family members of changes in legislation, defense policies and other matters affecting their military rights, benefits and other obligations. It contains information about Maxwell AFB and the local retiree community. While every effort is made to verify information in this newsletter, the RAO

*Family Coming home
for the holidays?*



Lodging has space available
in November and December.
Rooms \$24.50 - \$37.50

Maxwell Enlisted Club

Bingo

*We play bingo where
the prize payouts total over*



\$2,300

Every Wednesday Night Games start at 6PM

Cards go on sale at 5PM.

Open to all ranks

Free admission to club members

Non-club members admission is \$5.00

*Santa Claus
is coming to Maxwell*

December 17th games start at 6:15pm

Cards go on sale at 4:30pm

\$5,000

In Prize Money to be given out

Open to all ranks

Free admission to club members

Non-club members admission \$5.00

Be the Big Winner!

*Retirees over age 65 \$11.95
Adults-\$14.95 non-members-\$12.95 members-\$5.95 Children*

November 27, 2003

10:30 am - 1:30 pm all ranks

Maxwell Officers' Club

Thanksgiving Day

Buffet

42 MSS Building 804
50 Lemay Plaza South
Maxwell AFB, AL 36112-6010

First Class
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit # 700
Montgomery, AL