

April 2014

Hangar Flying Newsletter

A Publication of the JBLM McChord Field Retiree Activities Office for Air Force Retirees, their spouses and survivors. Department of the Air Force, 100 Joe Jackson Blvd, Customer Service Mall Rm 1001, McChord Field WA 98438-1114; Phone (253) 982-3214 (Voice Mail 24 hours a day) Fax 253-982-5234. Email – retaffairs@us.af.mil Web Site www.mcchordrao.com Retiree Activities Office: Open 0900-1200 Monday - Friday



To Retirees From the Wing Commander: Let me start by saying a most sincere thank you for the extraordinary service that each and every one of you has given to our great nation. Your leadership...your commitment...your impact—has made us what we are today—simply the finest military in the world. The strength of our nation and the achievements of our current generation of service members is a testament to all of those who have gone before and who have laid the foundations of our Air Force, our military, and our country.

I apologize for not having reached out to you sooner, but I wanted to take a belated opportunity to share a bit about my background and what I've experienced over the last nine months since taking command of the 62nd Airlift Wing. For starters, I'm an Air Force brat—my father retired after 26 years in our Air Force. As many of you probably experienced in your own early upbringing, I was very fortunate to have parents who instilled in me an enduring appreciation for the “humility of service”—an appreciation that I know so many of you continue to embrace in your ongoing service to our nation, our Veterans, our uniformed members, and our families.

Throughout my career, I've had many amazing opportunities and was fortunate early on to attend the USAF Academy and Undergraduate Pilot Training. From there, I flew the C-5 Galaxy at Dover AFB, DE and Travis AFB, CA and later the RQ/MQ-1 Predator. Along the way I've also worked with amazing teams at the Pentagon (unfortunately three different times!) and had the opportunity to command an Operational Support Squadron, and deploy as a Deputy Operations Group Commander to Balad, Iraq. These and other assignments have given me a tremendous appreciation for the dedication, talent, and varied backgrounds of our high caliber Airmen, and have inspired my passion to continue serving our Airmen.

Which has led me to McChord Field and the 62nd Airlift Wing! The past nine months have been filled with new opportunities and experiences—myriad events that I've tried to capture on my Facebook site, “62nd Airlift Wing Commander.” These experiences along with our Air Force Core Values of *Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence In All We Do* have helped shape our three institutional priorities as a wing. The first priority—**providing Prime Nuclear Airlift Forces**—speaks to our unique mission to serve our nation by maintaining the absolute highest standards of integrity and excellence as we transport nuclear weapons and material abroad—weapons capable of enormous destructive power. Our second wing priority, **advancing joint basing and operations**, recognizes that we're part of a larger team that serves our Nation. As a result, we must appreciate and understand how we fit into the larger institution and continuously work to build relationships and processes that enable us to work and fight together. Lastly—**instilling a culture of dignity and respect**—is recognition of the ideal that we are all created equal and deserve to live and work in an environment free of harassment, prejudice, and bias. We have much work to do in this area, but we'll get there!

Ultimately, my job as the 62nd Airlift Wing commander is not just about our Global Reach mission, but about serving our Airmen who make our mission happen. I'm humbled and privileged to work with and serve amazing Airmen—from Veterans who have paved the way, to the brand-new Airmen with fresh, innovative perspectives, to our civilian Airmen who work side-by-side with our military members. Once again, thank you for your exemplary service and your continued support of our Airmen here at the 62nd Airlift Wing. (Col. David Kumashiro, 62nd Airlift Wing commander)

JBLM LEWIS-McCHORD RETIREE APPRECIATION DAY

The Annual Joint Base Lewis-McChord Retiree Appreciation Day will be held on 16 May in conjunction with Armed Forces Day weekend. The RAD will be held at the American Lake Conference Center (ALCC) Joint Base Lewis-McChord-North (JBLM-North) Building P8085 (the old American Lake Club) Hours are from 0700 to 1300 with early blood draws beginning at 0630. Breakfast will be served, the cost will be \$6.70 per person, and there will be a lunch service for \$8.95.

For those of you who may be traveling and require lodging accommodations the IGH Army Hotels on Joint-Base Lewis-McChord is proud to offer a special rate for the RAD. The rate includes pets free and shuttle service to and from the RAD with a complimentary continental breakfast. Rates start at \$63 for the Evergreen Inn and \$81 for the Rainier Inn. Rates are subject to applicable taxes and availability. Phone numbers are 253-982-5613 for the Evergreen Inn and 253-964-0211 for the Rainier Inn, ask for the RAD package.

Updated Information Concerning Automated Installation Entry (AIE): As you are probably aware, the Automated Installation Entry (AIE) has been fielded at most JBLM access points. The system allows for the ID card to be scanned at a pedestal at the gate; a camera on the pedestal provides a live shot of the vehicle operator to a computer screen in the lane booth at the same time the photograph linked to that ID Card in DEERS also appears on the screen; and finally the system will verify that the ID Card is not expired, revoked, or otherwise invalidated. If everything checks out the barrier arm will raise and allow the motorist to proceed.

There is a rumor going around our community, that with AIE we will no longer have Guards on our gates. That is completely untrue. We will always have a live security presence at any gate this is open. AIE enhances guard performance but does not eliminate the need for a Guard.

The AIE system also allows certain ID card holders to sponsor passengers in their vehicle with no requirement for those passengers to present ID cards. By doing this the sponsor accepts responsibility for behavior and conduct of their guests while visiting JBLM. This privilege is called "Trusted Traveler." Trusted Traveler is limited to Service Members with a CAC, their Spouses, DoD Civilians, Military Retirees and their Spouses. Trusted Traveler access may be suspended during heightened Force Protection Conditions or at the discretion of the Base Commander. More stringent security measures (e.g. vehicle inspections; secondary ID checks) will still be applied at random. Foreign citizens must register at a JBLM Visitor Center prior to entry. Sponsors bringing foreign citizens onto JBLM must ensure this requirement is met prior to entry.

In order for any ID card to work it must be registered in the AIE system. In November 2013 there was an initial download of information into AIE from the DEERS database. This meant a large population of our local servicing area was automatically registered. Some of those records did not download properly so AIE card readers will not recognize the ID Card when it is scanned. *(Continued on next page)*

Reserve and National Guard Service Members were not registered as Trusted Travelers. This was a mistake but we cannot correct this locally and it is unlikely that we will get another mass registration download. Reserve and Guard personnel and their spouses with family member ID are eligible for Trusted Traveler status and may register as indicated below.

We have been unable to register Retiree ID cards (DD Form 2) issued prior to 2010. The year 2010 was the first year that social security numbers were removed and an electronic data interchange personal identifier (EDIPI) was substituted. DES recommends replacing these old IDs since the presence of the SSN is a risk for identity theft should the ID be lost or stolen. The ID card section will replace the ID on request but you must present two forms of photo identification at the time of the request. The ID card facility requests that you make an appointment. Information about scheduling an appointment can be found at <http://www.lewis-mcchord.army.mil/dhr/ag/idcard.htm> or call 253-967-5065. The card holder will need to come to an AIE registration site (see below) to register a newly issued card.

Any ID card holder can register their ID in AIE. Registration is available at our Registration Office in Waller Hall, as well as at our two Visitor Centers. The registration process takes 5-10 minutes. Once an ID Card is registered it will remain in our system until that ID Card expires, or until the ID Cardholder obtains a new ID Card.

While registration in AIE is currently not a requirement, it is highly encouraged. The capabilities of the system are expected to grow in the coming years. It is projected that AIE will be with us for many years into the future.

Updated AIE information is posted to our web site at http://www.lewis-mcchord.army.mil/des/le_automated_access.htm. (Source JBLM Lewis-McChord)

Proposal would revamp Survivor Benefit Program: A Defense Department proposal to revamp its Survivor Benefit Program would save money by increasing the premium that retirees pay for coverage.

The SBP is provided at no cost to active-duty troops. Retirees also can purchase it to ensure monthly military pension checks continue coming to their spouse in the event of their death.

The new Pentagon proposal, part of a broader plan to overhaul the military retirement system, calls for raising the premium cap for retirees from 6.5 percent of each monthly retirement check to 10 percent. At the same time, the maximum payout for beneficiaries would be reduced to 50 percent of retired pay, down from the current payout of 55 percent.

The proposal also would limit retirees to two basic options:

- A “full benefit” that would cost 10 percent of gross monthly retirement pay and would continue to pay beneficiaries 50 percent of the military pension.
- A “half benefit” that would cost 5 percent of gross monthly retirement pay and continue paying beneficiaries 25 percent of the military pension.

The proposal was included in a report the Pentagon sent to Congress March 6 outlining potential changes to the entire military retirement system.

The new proposal also calls for eliminating the offset policy that reduces SBP payments if the survivor is also receiving benefits from the Veterans Affairs Department. That means the net value of a total survivor benefit may increase in some cases.

The report notes that survivors also would benefit from the related proposal to shift some of the military retirement benefit away from fixed-income pensions and into a civilian-style investment account that is owned by the service member or retiree. Any funds remaining after death can be passed along to family members.

(Source *Military Times*)

Specially Adaptive Housing Grants: Now Automatically Available to Veterans, Service members Living with ALS

Veterans and active-duty military personnel with service-connected amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease, are now presumed by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) to be medically eligible for grants up to \$67,555 to build, buy or adapt a home to meet their unique needs.

Grants are also available to help eligible individuals purchase adapted homes or pay down mortgages on homes that are already adapted. USDVA estimates this change will save approximately 12 months in the overall process of a Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) grant. The ultimate goal of the program is to provide a barrier-free living environment that affords a level of independent living that the veteran or service member may not otherwise enjoy.

A scientific study done nearly a decade ago found that veterans who served in Gulf War combat zones in 1990 and 1991 were nearly twice as likely to develop ALS as veterans not deployed to the Gulf. The study also reported that the incidence of ALS was especially high among deployed Air Force personnel, who were 2.7 times more likely to develop the disease than non-deployed Air Force personnel.

In 2008, USDVA established a presumption of service connection for ALS for any veteran who develops the disease at any time after separation from service, making them eligible for monthly USDVA disability compensation benefits. USDVA amended its disability rating scale in January 2012 to assign a 100-percent disability evaluation for any veteran who has service-connected ALS.

ALS is a rapidly progressive, totally debilitating, and irreversible motor neuron disease that results in muscle weakness leading to a wide range of serious disabilities, including impaired mobility. USDVA adapted its rules so veterans with service-connected ALS no longer have to file multiple claims for increased benefits as their condition progresses. Prior to the new regulatory change, many veterans and service members who were rated by USDVA for service connected ALS, but who did not yet have symptoms debilitating enough to affect their mobility to the degree required for grant eligibility, were unable to begin the process of modifying their homes to accommodate their often rapidly progressing conditions.

For more information, visit:

<http://benefits.va.gov/homeloans/adaptedhousing.asp> (*Source Veterans Administration*)

PTSD Education Available Online: The National Center for PTSD, US Department of Veterans Affairs and the Red Sox Foundation of Massachusetts General Hospital have produced an online training series for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) for the general public and health care professionals. The series was created to help doctors, nurses, psychologists and family members of those returning from war identify key features of the disorder and teach them how to address mental health issues in the proper way. The free series is available on the [Massachusetts General Hospital website](#). (*Source: Military.com Veterans Report*)

Veterans and Painkillers: The American Legion reports that physicians are prescribing too many opioid painkillers to young veterans, leading to addictions and accidental overdoses. There has been a 270-percent increase in VA prescriptions for four key opiates since 9/11, according to an analysis by the Center for Investigative Reporting. VA patients are twice as likely to die from accidental drug overdoses as civilians, according to a VA study published in the journal *Medical Care* in 2011. Yet a separate VA study has found. opioid painkillers provide "only modest medical benefits in treating chronic non-cancer pain." For more information, read the article from the [American Legion Magazine](#). (*Source: Military.com Veterans report*)

Commissary Funding: Another legislative proposal has been introduced to ward off cuts in commissary funding — at least until the commission that is studying all military compensation completes its work. The “Military Commissary Sustainment Act,” would prohibit the Defense Department from reducing the amount of monthly funds for operating the commissary system in fiscal 2015 below the average monthly amount used in fiscal 2014, until the date of a report by the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission.

That congressionally mandated commission is scrutinizing all pay and compensation benefits for active duty and retired members, to include the commissary system, and is set to issue a report in early 2015. The bill is identical to one introduced in the Senate. Both House and Senate proposals have been referred to their respective Armed Services committees.

The president’s budget included a proposed to cut funding for commissaries by gradually cutting \$1 billion of their current \$1.4 billion budget over three years. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel emphasized that no stores would be directed to close.

By reducing funding Commissaries would have to operate more like military exchanges — where prices are marked up, rather than sold at cost as they are in commissaries. Current law requires items to be sold at cost. Savings in commissaries average 30 percent. (Source: Defense Early Bird Brief)

The McChord RAO Annual Military Retiree Heritage Dinner

The annual McChord Retiree Activities Office Heritage Dinner will be held on Saturday 21 June this year at the McChord Club ballroom. Our guest speaker for this year’s event will be Mrs. Betty Dybrro a Woman’s Air Service Pilot during WWII. Betty will talk about her training and flying experiences as a W.A.S.P. pilot flying PT-19s, T-6 Texans and the B-17 Bomber.

The annual Heritage Dinner is open to all retirees, their family’s civilian guest and Active Duty personnel from all branches of the military. A No-host social hour will kick-off the event in the McChord Club Main Ballroom at 6:30; with dinner at 7 PM. Dinner selections for this year are London Broil or Fillet of Salmon. The required dress for the event is suit and tie. Ladies please dress accordingly. Those who wish to, and still can, wear their military uniform are encouraged to do so.

The Annual McChord RAO Heritage Dinner is a wonderful opportunity to greet old friends and meet new ones. For our younger attendees it is an excellent opportunity to met and talk with living history. Door prizes will be awarded thought the evening. Do plan to attend for a great evening of fun! For more information, please call the RAO, 0900 to 1200 noon, Monday through Friday, [253-982-3214](tel:253-982-3214). For reservations, fill out the accompanying reservation form and mail it to the club or call or stop by the Club, [253-982-2795](tel:253-982-2795) or [253-982-5581](tel:253-982-5581).

(Reservation form on the following page)

ANNUAL RETIREE HERITAGE DINNER RESERVATION

The Annual Retiree Heritage Dinner will be held on Saturday evening, 21 June 2014.

This invitation is extended to all retirees, their families and friends. It is a great way to spend an evening at reasonable expense. Coat and tie are required for men; you may wear your Mess Dress if you so desire, we encourage you to wear it. We are not going to tell the women what to wear, as they always dress appropriately.

A "no host" cocktail bar will open at 1830 hours. Everyone should be seated by 1850 hours. There is a choice of Sliced London Broil, or Fillet of King Salmon. The complete dinner including gratuity and a beverage will cost \$22.20 per person for the Sliced London Broil, and \$22.20 per person for the Fillet of King Salmon. \$2.00 per meal will be added for non-club members.

Please specify your selection and the number attending on the reservation form below. Mail it as soon as possible, but no later than Monday 16 June 2014 or you may make reservations in person at the club no later than 20 June 2014.

Retiree Heritage Dinner Reservation Form

Mail to: McChord Collocated Club
P O Box 4007
McChord AFB, WA 98438

Please make reservations for _____ persons.

Number for:

Sliced London Briol _____ \$22.20

Fillet of King Salmon _____ \$22.20

Add \$2.00 for non-club members

Enclosed is my check payable to McChord Collocated Club or please charge my officer/enlisted club card

_____ (Club card number last nine digits) Expiration Date _____

Please make reservations in the name of _____

Number of Guests _____

You may contact me at (home phone) _____