

# SHIFT COLORS

The  
Newsletter  
for Navy  
Retirees

Volume 55 Issue #1

Navy Personnel Command

Winter 2009/2010



**Danny Facciola, a certified scuba instructor with Soldiers Undertaking Disabled Scuba (SUDS), leads a class of wounded warriors learning open water diving at U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay. Wounded warriors participating in SUDS visited the station to complete their open water diving certification. The SUDS program teaches and certifies disabled and wounded recovering veterans how to scuba dive.** (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Josh Treadwell)

## No 2010 SSN COLA bump

### *Social Security Administration*

With consumer prices down over the past year, monthly Social Security and Supplemental Security Income benefits for more than 57 million Americans will not automatically increase in 2010. This will be the first year without an automatic Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) since they went into effect in 1975.

“Social Security is doing its job helping Americans maintain their standard of living,” Michael J. Astrue, Commissioner of Social Security said. “Last year when consumer prices spiked, largely as a result of higher gas prices, beneficiaries received a 5.8 percent COLA, the largest increase since 1982. This year, in light of the human need, we need to support President Obama’s call for us to make another \$250 recovery payment for 57 million Americans.”

The Social Security Act provides that Social Security and Supplemental Security Income benefits increase automatically each year if there is an increase in the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) from the third quarter of the last year to the third quarter of the current year. This year there was no increase in the CPI-W from

## TRICARE makes some preventive services free

Immunizations, mammograms and other preventive services may be free for certain TRICARE beneficiaries.

Not all services are covered and nor are Medicare-eligible beneficiaries.

Services covered include breast cancer, cervical cancer, colorectal cancer and prostate cancer screenings; immunizations; some physical exams.

Beneficiaries can request reimbursement for any of these procedures back to Oct. 14, 2008 – the date the benefit was signed into law.

To get reimbursed:

- Contact the TRICARE contractor that processed the claim and request a reimbursement. Beneficiaries can call or write and written requests should include the sponsor’s full Social Security Number, full names and dates of birth of all family members and mailing address.
- The contractor will reimburse beneficiaries.

For more information visit TRICARE online at [www.tricare.mil](http://www.tricare.mil).

See COLA Page 9

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## Shift Colors

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Shift Colors, the newsletter for Navy Retirees (NAVPERS 15886), is published in accordance with Department of the Navy Publication and Printing Regulations. The Secretary of the Navy has determined that this publication is necessary in the transaction of business required by law of the Department of the Navy.

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## Remembering the fallen ...

**Mourners place roses and pay their final respects to Captain Michael Scott Speicher at the Jacksonville Veterans Memorial Wall. Speicher was killed when his F/A-18 Hornet was shot down over Anbar province, Iraq on the first day of offensive operations during Desert Storm on Jan 17, 1991.**  
(Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Leah Stiles)



# From the Chief of Naval Personnel

## *Shipmates,*

Welcome again to another issue of *Shift Colors*. I would like to take this opportunity to bring you up-to-date on the status of our Navy. Our Navy continues to be the best trained, best led and most capable in the world. The legacy our retirees and veterans left behind is reflected in the professionalism I see in our Sailors throughout the Fleet every day.

Your Navy is as strong as ever. We met our recruiting goals for fiscal year 2009 and continue to attract the best and brightest young men and women to serve our Nation and our Navy. By focusing on recruiting and retaining quality Sailors, we ensure our future success. Our success, is due in large part to you, our veterans and family members. Your daily interactions with friends and family are some of the most powerful opportunities we have to share the Navy's message.

Speaking of service, we can still use yours. If you would like to play an active role in assisting your fellow retirees, the Navy Retired Activities Office (RAO) can use your help. Retired Activities volunteers are trained to deal with a variety of issues important to retirees. If interested, contact your nearest office (see the RAO listing on Page 18) or call the Navy Retired Activities Office at 1-866-827-5672 and ask for extension 4308.

If you're the mother or grandmother of a Sailor or prospective Sailor, or simply interested in learning more about the Navy, a great place for information is the "Navy for Moms" Web site at [www.navyformoms.com](http://www.navyformoms.com).

This site was created to give members a place to discuss

issues with others who have something in common ... the Navy experience. Mothers share with fellow moms their dreams, aspirations and personal experiences through hundreds of forums and groups that have been established. I encourage you to spend a few minutes browsing the Web site.

While the issue of health care is being debated across the nation, our retirees have access to the best healthcare insurance in the country through TRICARE. Make sure you familiarize yourself with the wealth of benefits available to you by visiting the TRICARE Web site at [www.tricare.mil/mybenefit](http://www.tricare.mil/mybenefit).

Speaking of benefits, any retiree or veteran who served at least 30 days after Sept. 11, 2001, may be eligible for education benefits through the Post 9/11 GI Bill. This is a significant benefit that provides not only tuition and fees for college, but may also include funding for books, supplies, and a monthly stipend that may be used to offset living expenses. For more information, visit the Veteran's Affairs GI Bill Web site at [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov) or call the Navy Personnel Command Customer Service Center at 1-866-U-ASK NPC (1-866-827-5672). Read more about the Post 9/11 GI Bill on Page 4.

Thank you for your support throughout 2009. We look forward to your continued support as we usher in the new year.



All the best,  
Mark E. Ferguson III  
Vice Admiral, USN

# Supporting those who served: The Post 9/11 GI Bill

*Compiled from VA News*

The Post 9/11 GI Bill is the most extensive educational assistance program authorized since the original GI bill was signed into law in 1944. Veterans who served after Sept. 11, 2001, may be eligible for benefits.

The Post 9/11 GI Bill automatically grants benefits to veterans based on their length of service after 9/11. To qualify for benefits, active-duty Sailors must have served at least 90 days after Sept. 10, 2001, and Reservists must have served at least 90 aggregate days.

“This new GI Bill is a way for a grateful nation to tangibly demonstrate our heartfelt appreciation and abiding respect for their service,” said Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki.

During an Aug. 3 ceremony to celebrate the implementation of the bill, President Barack Obama said, “The

original GI Bill paved the way to a better life for millions of veterans and their families while building the foundation of the American middle class. Today, the Post-9/11 GI Bill is affording a new generation of heroes a 21st century version of that same opportunity.”

Under the Montgomery GI Bill, benefits were paid directly to beneficiaries. The Post 9/11 GI Bill pays tuition fees to the college or university. Additionally, the Post 9/11 GI Bill pays a book stipend and qualified students can get a housing allowance. The housing allowance is set at the Basic Allowance for Housing for an E-5 with dependents based on the ZIP code of the school.

“More than two and half years ago, we began with the simple concept that those who have been serving since 9/11 should have the same opportunity for a first-class educational future as those who served

during World War II,” Senator Jim H. Webb said. “This bill provides a modern and fair educational benefit to address the needs of those who answered the call of duty to our country--those who moved toward the sound of the guns--often at great sacrifice,” said Webb, an original sponsor of the bill.

The maximum benefit under the Post-9/11 GI Bill allows veterans, service members, Reservists and Guard members the ability to receive an in-state, undergraduate education at a public institution at no cost.

To determine your eligibility and find out more information visit the VA's GI Bill Web site at [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov) or call the VA's GI Bill information line at 1-888-GIBILL-1 (1-888-442-4551). Veteran's benefits counselors at partner universities can also answer many questions.

## Are you eligible for a non-service connected pension?

*Compiled by NPC Public Affairs*

The Veteran's Affairs (VA) Pension for veterans is a benefit paid to wartime veterans with little to no income. A veteran may be eligible for the pension if they meet all of the following conditions:

- Discharged from service under conditions other than dishonorable.
- Served at least 90 days of active military service at least one day of which was during a wartime period.
- Family income is below the yearly limit set by Congress and is dependent on different lifestyle categories.
- 65 or older or are permanently disabled (not due to willful misconduct).

In addition to the regular pension, the VA offers special programs called Aid and Attendance (A&A), and Household benefits to those veterans who are seriously disabled.

A&A is paid in addition to the monthly pension. This benefit may not be paid without eligibility to the regular pension. A veteran may be eligible when he or she meet one or more of the following:

- Needs the aid of another person to perform personal functions required in everyday living, such as bathing, feeding, dressing, attending to the wants of nature, adjusting prosthetic devices, or protecting yourself from the hazards of your daily environment.

- The veteran is bedridden. His or her disability requires remaining in bed apart from any prescribed course of convalescence or treatment.

- The veteran is a patient in a nursing home due to mental or physical incapacity.

- The veteran is blind, or so nearly blind as to have corrected visual acuity of 5/200 or less in both eyes, or concentric contraction of the visual field to five degrees or less.

Housebound benefits are also paid in addition to monthly pension. Like A&A, Housebound benefits may not be paid without eligibility to the regular pension. A veteran may be eligible when:

- The veteran has a single permanent disability evaluated as 100-percent disabling, and, due to such disability, is permanently and substantially confined to his or her immediate premises.

- The veteran has a single permanent disability evaluated as 100-percent disabling, and another disability, or disabilities, evaluated as 60 percent or more disabling.

A veteran cannot receive both A&A and Housebound benefits at the same time.

To apply for a pension, visit the following VA Web site: <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/main.asp> or call a Veterans Service Officer (VSO) at 1-800-827-1000 for more information. To apply for A&A or Housebound benefits, contact your VA Regional Office (a list is available at <http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/ro/ro-contacts.htm>) or contact a VSO for more assistance.

# Combat veteran counseling expands

## VA News

WASHINGTON – Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki announced that combat veterans will receive readjustment counseling and other assistance in 28 additional communities across the country where the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will establish Vet Centers in 2010.

“VA is committed to providing high-quality outreach and readjustment counseling to all combat veterans,” Secretary Shinseki said. “These 28 new Vet Centers will address the growing need for those services.”

The community-based Vet Centers — already in all 50 states — are a key component of VA’s mental health program, providing veterans with mental health screening and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) counseling.

The existing 232 centers conduct community outreach to offer counseling on employment, family issues and education to combat veterans and family members, as well as bereavement counseling for families of servicemembers

killed on active duty and counseling for veterans who were sexually harassed on active duty.

Vet Center services are earned through service in a combat zone or area of hostility and are provided at no cost to veterans or their families. They are staffed by small multi-disciplinary teams, which may include social workers, psychologists, psychiatric nurses, master’s-level counselors and outreach specialists. More than percent of Vet Center employees are veterans themselves, a majority of whom served in combat zones.

The Vet Center program was established in 1979 by Congress, recognizing that many Vietnam veterans were still having readjustment problems. In 2008, the Vet Center program provided more than 1.1 million visits to more than 167,000 veterans, including more than 53,000 visits by more than 14,500 Veteran families. More information about Vet Centers can be found at [www.vetcenter.va.gov/index.asp](http://www.vetcenter.va.gov/index.asp).

## Communities receiving new centers:

American Samoa  
Arizona: Mohave and Yuma Counties  
California: San Luis Obispo County  
Delaware: Sussex County  
Florida: Marion, Lake, Collier, Okaloosa and Bay Counties  
Georgia: Muscogee and Richmond Counties  
Hawaii: Western Oahu  
Indiana: St. Joseph County  
Louisiana: Rapides Parish  
Michigan: Grand Traverse County, also serving Wexford County  
Missouri: Boone County  
Montana: Cascade and Flathead Counties  
Ohio: Stark County  
Oregon: Deschutes County  
Pennsylvania: Lancaster County  
South Carolina: Horry County  
Texas: Jefferson and Taylor Counties  
Utah: Washington County  
Washington: Walla Walla County, also serving Umatilla County, Oregon  
Wisconsin: LaCrosse County

# Pentagon, VA expand disability claims test

By Army Sgt. 1st Class  
Michael J. Carden,  
American Forces Press  
Service

Beginning in January, the Disability Evaluation System pilot program will expand to six installations. The new participants are medical facilities at Fort Benning, Ga.; Fort Bragg, N.C.; Fort Hood, Texas; Fort Lewis, Wash.; Fort Riley, Kan.; and Portsmouth Naval Medical Center, Va.

Twenty-seven other military facilities already take part in the program.

“The decision to expand the pilot was based upon favor-

able reviews focusing on the program’s ability to meet timeliness, effectiveness, transparency and customer and stakeholder satisfaction,” said Nole Koch, deputy undersecretary of defense for wounded warrior care and transition policy, in a statement released by the Defense Department.

The pilot program began in November 2007 within the national capital region and concerns servicemembers who separated from the military under honorable conditions for service-related injuries. It addresses redundancy and inconsistent

decisions in medical evaluations in separate disability processes used in the Defense Department and VA.

Through this program, physicians in the Defense Department and VA collaborate on medical findings, speeding the claims and benefit payment processes for disabled veterans.

“The pilot is a test of a new process design eliminating the duplicative, time-consuming, and often confusing elements of the two current disability processes of the departments,” the Defense Department statement said. “Key features of the [pilot]

include one medical examination and a single-sourced disability rating.”

More than 5,400 military members have participated in the pilot program.

“Streamlining our disability claims system and working closely with (the Defense Department) to care for today’s generation of heroes are among VA’s top priorities,” VA Secretary Eric K. Shinseki said in the statement. “We will never lose sight of the fact that veterans and military personnel have earned their benefits ... by virtue of their service to the nation.”

# How to get replacement records

## *From Retired Activities*

There are numerous reasons to have your DD Form 214 or retirement orders readily available to assist you or your family. If you have lost your retirement paperwork and don't know how to get a new copy, or need a copy of other military records, contact one of the below sources.

If you retired prior to 1995, go to [www.archives.gov/veterans](http://www.archives.gov/veterans) to request a

DD Form 214. You can also call 1-866-272-6272.

If you retired after 1995 mail your request to:

Commander  
Navy Personnel Command  
(PERS-312E)  
5720 Integrity Drive  
Millington, TN 38055-3120

Or you can fax your request to 901-874-2664.

Your request should list exactly what you want (i.e. DD Form 214, service record or medical records), and contain both your identification information and signature.

Gray area reservists (retired reservists not yet receiving retired pay) who have questions regarding their records, as well as their benefits and entitlements, should call the Navy Personnel Command Customer Service Center at 866-827-5672.

## **Do you know a widowed spouse of a retiree?**

If you know any widows/widowers of Navy retirees and you are not sure if they are up to date on their current benefits and entitlements, have them contact the Navy Retired Activities Branch at 1-866-827-5672. This office wants to help those who may be in need of assistance.

## **RAO volunteers needed**

The Navy currently has over 50 Retired Activities Offices (RAOs) worldwide staffed entirely by volunteers. The Navy depends on these volunteers to assist the retiree community. Volunteers are trained to assist retirees and their families in claiming benefits and entitlements after the death of a retired Sailor, as well as plan and conduct annual Retiree Appreciation Days. Most RAO volunteers spend a few hours a week in the office. If you are interested in being a volunteer, please contact your nearest RAO or call the Navy's RAO program manager toll free at 1-866-827-5672 and ask for extension 4308.



## **Signing in...**

*Retired Navy captain and former astronaut Jim Lovell and his wife, Marilyn Gerlach, sign the final roofing beam to be lifted into place during the topping-off ceremony for the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center. The building will be the first completely integrated Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs health care center. Located near Naval Station Great Lakes, Ill., the center is scheduled for completion in August 2010. (Photo by Bill Couch)*



# Pay offset for disability-based compensation

## DFAS News

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) has received numerous inquiries regarding the offset of pay for disability-based compensation. Applicable legislation states: "The retired pay of a member retired under Chapter 61 of this title with 20 years or more of service otherwise creditable under Section 1405 of this title, or at least 20 years of service computed under section 12732 of this title, at the time of the member's retirement is subject to reduction under sections 5304 and 5305 of title 38, but only to the extent that the amount of the member's retired pay under Chapter 61 of this title exceeds the amount of retired pay to which the member would

have been entitled under any other provision of law based upon the member's service in the uniformed services if the member had not been retired under Chapter 61 of this title."

Put more simply, those retirees compensated based upon disability will have their Concurrent Retired Disability Payment (CRDP) or Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC) reduced, or offset, but only by the amount of the difference between their Method A and Method B calculations.

For example, if a retiree is entitled to \$2,200 each month through Method A, disability-based compensation and only \$1,400 through Method B, service-

based compensation, he will be compensated at the higher \$2,200 Method A amount. If the same retiree is awarded \$1,100 through CRSC, the \$1,100 amount will be offset by the \$800 difference between the original \$2,200 Method A and \$1,400 Method B types of compensation, resulting in a \$300 CRSC amount.

With the original \$2,200 disability-based retired pay and the addition of the \$300 CRSC amount, the retiree will receive a total \$2,500 monthly compensation. For more information visit [www.dfas.mil/rna-news/march2009/offsetpay-fordisability-basedcompensation.html](http://www.dfas.mil/rna-news/march2009/offsetpay-fordisability-basedcompensation.html) or call DFAS at 1-800-321-1080.

## Some Sailors due stop loss compensation

Sailors who had their obligated service involuntarily extended due to Stop Loss Authority between Sept. 11, 2001 – Sept. 20, 2009, may be eligible for Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay Compensation.

This new compensation will pay eligible members \$500 a month for each month or portion of a month that a member was retained on active duty due to Stop Loss Authority. This compensation is not automatic. Those who meet the criteria must apply for the compensation.

Those who meet the criteria must submit a Claim for Retroactive Stop Loss Payment (DD 2944). The form can be found at <http://alt.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/eforms/dd2944.pdf> or <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/forminfo/forminfo3464.html>. The forms can be faxed to (901) 874-2754, e-mailed to [NXAG\\_N132C@navy.mil](mailto:NXAG_N132C@navy.mil) or mailed to:

Commander Navy Personnel Command  
PERS 832

5720 Integrity Drive  
Millington, TN 38055-8320

Substantiating source documents must be submitted with all claims. Forms and documentation must be submitted prior to Oct. 21, 2010.

For more information reference MILPERSMAN 7220-410 Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay Compensation.



### It's a grand, old flag...

**Local citizens and U.S. military personnel display a giant American flag during a "Salute to Veterans" celebration in Greenwich, Conn. The "Salute to Veterans" celebration has been held annually since 1992.** (Photo by Lt. j.g. Arlo Abrahamson)

# 2010 Navy Weeks announced

Listed here is the 2010 *Calendar for America* — the official schedule of Navy Weeks across America.

Multiple Navy demonstrations and displays are scheduled for each Navy Week including: the Blue Angels, the Navy Leap Frogs Parachute Team, Navy rock bands and ceremonial bands, Flag Officer speakers, Navy divers, flight simulators and other interactive displays, and Sailors from namesake ships and submarines.

## The 2010 Weeks are:

Tampa, Fla., March 13-21  
Phoenix, March 22-29  
Charleston, S.C., April 12-18  
San Antonio, Texas, April 15-25  
Des Moines, Iowa, April 19-24  
Kansas City, Mo., April 24 – May 2  
Birmingham, Ala., May 2-9  
Spokane, Wash., May 8-16  
Little Rock, Ark., May 24-30  
Milwaukee, June 7-13  
Boston, June 30 - July 7  
Minneapolis, July 17-25  
Chicago, Aug. 7-15  
Boise, Idaho, Aug. 20-29  
Baltimore, Aug. 28 – Sept. 6  
Cleveland, Aug. 30 - Sept. 6



**Chief Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technicians Colby Ferguson and Mike Manthey play with stingrays the New Orleans Aquarium during a Navy Week event in New Orleans. Navy Weeks are designed to show Americans the investment they have made in their Navy and increase awareness in cities that do not have a significant Navy presence.** (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Katrina Sartain)

St. Louis, Sept. 6-12  
Salt Lake City, Sept. 9-19  
Atlanta, Oct. 11-17

Dallas, Oct. 25-31

For more information visit the NAVCO Web site at [www.navy.mil/navco/](http://www.navy.mil/navco/).

## COLA from Page 1

the third quarter of 2008 to the third quarter of 2009. In addition, because there was no increase in the CPI-W this year, under the law the starting point for determinations regarding a possible 2011 COLA will remain the third quarter of 2008.

Some other changes that would normally take effect in January 2010 based on the increase in average wages also will not take effect, even though average wages did increase. Since there is no

COLA, the statute prohibits an increase in the maximum amount of earnings subject to the Social Security tax as well as the retirement earnings test exempt amounts. These amounts will remain unchanged in 2010.

Information about Medicare changes for 2010, when available, will be found at [www.Medicare.gov](http://www.Medicare.gov). The Department of Health and Human Services has not yet announced if there will be any Medicare premium

changes for 2010. Should there be an increase in the Medicare Part B premium, the law contains a “hold harmless” provision that protects about 93 percent of Social Security beneficiaries from paying a higher Part B premium, in order to avoid reducing their net Social Security benefit. Those not protected include higher income beneficiaries subject to an income-adjusted Part B premium and beneficiaries newly entitled to Part B in 2010. On September 24th,

the House passed legislation by 406-18 that would, on a fully paid-for basis, prevent abnormally large premium increases. The President is calling on the Senate to enact this legislation before it becomes too late for the Social Security Administration to update its computer systems to implement this needed change.

For additional information about the 2010 COLA, go to [www.socialsecurity.gov/cola](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/cola).

# A TRICARE reminder about covered infertility treatments

## TRICARE News

Infertility is a difficult condition for families to cope with. Many TRICARE beneficiaries may be wondering what their options are if they find themselves in a situation where infertility becomes an issue. The answer is, with a few important exceptions, TRICARE covers most infertility treatments.

Diagnostic services to identify physical illnesses or injuries to the reproductive system are covered for both men and women. Infertility treatments, corrective treatments and surgeries for women are also covered. However, treatment of male infertility including erectile dysfunction may be cost-shared, which is determined on a case-by-case basis.

Therapies covered by TRICARE include hormonal treatment, corrective surgery, antibiotics, administration of human chorionic gonadotropin (HCG) or radiation therapy depending on the cause. These therapies are covered for both sexes.

Treatments excluded from TRICARE coverage include in-vitro fertilization (IVF) for women. Reversal of surgical sterilization is not covered for either sex.

Although TRICARE does not cover IVF, there are four military treatment facilities (MTF) where IVF medical training programs are conducted. The four MTFs are: Wilford Hall Medical Center in San Antonio; Tripler Army Medical Center in Honolulu; Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C.; and the Naval Medical Center in San Diego. Beneficiaries who participate in these programs will be responsible for all MTF costs.

These IVF programs are available to military members and their families. However, the IVF treatments are not covered by TRICARE and beneficiaries are responsible for all costs.

Get more information on covered infertility treatments by visiting your TRICARE regional contractor's Web site:

- Health Net Federal Services (North region) <https://www.hnfs.net/bene/home>
- Humana Military Healthcare Services (South region) <http://www.humana-military.com/>
- TriWest Healthcare Alliance (West region) <http://www.triwest.com>

# TRICARE increases payments for beneficiaries with special needs

## TRICARE News

TRICARE has increased the amount it will pay for certain Extended Care Health Option (ECHO) benefits. ECHO assists eligible family members of active duty sponsors who are diagnosed with moderate or severe mental retardation, a serious physical disability, or an extraordinary physical or psychological condition.

The total TRICARE cost share for training, rehabilitation, special education, and assistive technology devices was increased to \$36,000 per fiscal year. The cap also covers institutional care in private nonprofit, public and state institutions and facilities and, if appropriate, transportation to and from such institutions and facilities. The TRICARE Enhanced Access to Autism Services "Demonstration" is also included.

"This is good news for military families out there with an ECHO-qualified family member," said Army Maj. Gen. Elder Granger, deputy director of TRICARE Management Activity. "This change will help make services more accessible to our deserving special needs beneficiaries."

Previously, all ECHO benefits were subject to a limit of \$2,500 per month.

Some ECHO benefits are still subject to the \$2,500 per month cap and ECHO Home Health Care has its own unique reimbursement limits. For more information on ECHO services, costs and limitations go to <http://www.tricare.mil/ECHO> or contact the appropriate regional managed care support contractor found at <http://www.tricare.mil/contactus>. Additional details can also be found at the TRICARE blog at <http://www.health.mil/tmablog/Article.aspx?ID=470>

The ECHO increase was included in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009, which was signed into law on Oct. 14, 2008. As a result, TRICARE urges eligible beneficiaries to submit any claims for their out-of-pocket payments for the identified ECHO services received on or after Oct. 14, 2008, that were previously limited by the \$2,500 monthly cap.

## TRICARE electronic fee payment is easy

With widespread access to the Internet, people are finding convenience in paying bills electronically. TRICARE officials encourage beneficiaries to make the switch now to the more convenient electronic payment option. Get more information and make the change by visiting the Web site of your TRICARE regional MCSC:

Health Net Federal Services (North Region):  
<https://www.hnfs.net/bene/enrollment/fees/Enrollment+Fees-Payments.htm>;

Humana Military Healthcare Services (South region):  
<http://www.humanamilitary.com/south/bene/billing-enrollment/PaymentOptions.asp>

TriWest Healthcare Alliance (West region):  
<http://www.triwest.com/epay>

# SSA outlines important TRICARE information

## *From the Social Security Administration*

The following are some questions and answers for those Social Security disability applicants who are entitled to TRICARE.

**Q.** What is the relationship between TRICARE and Medicare?

**A.** Medicare is health insurance for people 65 or older, under age 65 with certain disabilities, and any age with end-stage renal disease (permanent kidney failure requiring dialysis or a kidney transplant). Medicare Part A (Hospital Insurance) and Medicare Part B (Medical Insurance) cover certain medical services and supplies in hospitals, doctors' offices and other health care settings. For more information about Medicare, go to [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov).

For Medicare-eligible individuals, TRICARE is designed to provide secondary or "wrap-around" coverage to Medicare. TRICARE provides comprehensive health care coverage, but only for those beneficiaries enrolled in Medicare Part B. For more information on TRICARE, go to [tricare.mil/mybenefit/](http://tricare.mil/mybenefit/).

**Q.** When do Medicare Parts A and B begin for disabled TRICARE beneficiaries?

**A.** Most TRICARE beneficiaries are automatically enrolled in Medicare Part A and Part B effective with the 25th month of Social Security Disability benefit entitlement. They are notified of their Medicare entitlement three months before the 25th month of Social Security Disability benefit entitlement. They are also advised that they may decline Part B.

**Q.** When do Medicare Parts A and B begin when the decision on a Social Security Disability appeal results in more than 24 months of retroactive entitlement?

**A.** In these cases, Medicare Part A is retroactive to the 25th month of Social Security Disability benefit entitlement and Part B is effective with the month

the claim is processed. Beneficiaries are notified of the Medicare entitlement dates and advised that they can retroactively enroll in Part B back to the Part A effective date. They are also advised that they can decline Medicare Part B.

**Q.** What is the most important thing for TRICARE beneficiaries to remember about TRICARE and Medicare?

**A.** In order to remain eligible for TRICARE private sector care, individuals who are entitled to Medicare Part A based on Social Security Disability MUST enroll in Medicare Part B.

**Q.** What happens if TRICARE beneficiaries decline Medicare Part B?

**A.** TRICARE beneficiaries who decline Medicare Part B will be ineligible for TRICARE private sector care, including mail order and retail pharmacy coverage, as of the Medicare Part A entitlement date. Recovery of TRICARE payments will be initiated for claims paid for any period when the beneficiary had Part A only. In addition, these beneficiaries will only be able to enroll in Part B from January 1 to March 31 each year. Coverage will be effective July 1 of the enrolled year, and beneficiaries will pay a higher premium.

**Q.** Why do TRICARE beneficiaries have to enroll in Medicare Part B?

**A.** Section 704 of Public Law 102-190 states that TRICARE beneficiaries who are under age 65 and entitled to Medicare Part A must enroll in Medicare Part B to remain eligible for TRICARE private sector care. TRICARE eligibility is terminated for any month in which a beneficiary has Part A but not Part B.

**Q.** Are there any exceptions to the requirement to enroll in Medicare Part B?

**A.** When active-duty service members retire, they, their spouses and dependent children who are entitled to Medicare Part A can enroll in Part B during a special enrollment period. A special enrollment period is available anytime service members are on active duty or within the first eight months following their

retirement. However, to avoid a break in TRICARE private sector care coverage, beneficiaries must enroll in Part B before the service member's retirement date.

**Q.** Do TRICARE beneficiaries who become entitled to Medicare based on receipt of Social Security Disability have to enroll in Medicare Part B retroactive to the Part A entitlement date?

**A.** No, but it may be advantageous for some TRICARE beneficiaries to enroll in Part B retroactive to the Part A entitlement date. If the beneficiary does not enroll in Part B retroactively, TRICARE coverage is terminated for the period in which the beneficiary has Medicare Part A but not Part B. In these cases, TRICARE would recover any payments made to health care providers during the retroactive period and the beneficiary would have sole responsibility for paying those providers for any services received during the retroactive period. To help determine if they should retroactively enroll in Medicare Part B, TRICARE beneficiaries should compare the total cost of Part B premiums back to the Part A date to the total cost of care received.

If Part B premiums are less than the total cost of health care received, it would be advantageous to retroactively enroll in Medicare Part B. This eliminates any TRICARE action to recover prior payments made to doctors for care when the beneficiary was not eligible. If Part B premiums are more than the total cost of health care received, then it would not be advantageous to retroactively enroll in Medicare Part B.

**Q.** Where can TRICARE beneficiaries get more information about how Medicare affects TRICARE?

**A.** TRICARE beneficiaries can visit [www.tricare.mil/factsheets/Medicare](http://www.tricare.mil/factsheets/Medicare) or call TRICARE for Life at Wisconsin Physicians Service (1-866-773-0404) to discuss how enrolling in Part B affects TRICARE benefits.

# TRICARE Retiree Dental Program can assist in savings

## TRICARE News

Many retirees don't realize the TRICARE Retiree Dental Program (TRDP) plan can help save money on the cost of dental care.

### Affordability and value

For the average annual premium amount, the program provides two cleanings, two routine exams and one set of X-rays per year, covered at 100 percent of the program allowable amount with no deductible, as well as coverage for gum surgery, oral surgery and root canals. All these services are available to enrollees as soon as their coverage becomes effective. The TRDP provides enrollees with \$1,200 annually for covered services, \$1,000 annually for dental accidents, and a \$1,500 lifetime maximum amount for orthodontic services.

After 12 months of continuous enrollment, TRDP enrollees become eligible for coverage of crowns, bridges, dental implant services, dentures and orthodontics. These are often necessary services that can be extremely costly—especially without any type of dental coverage.

The program isn't just for active-duty retirees either. National Guard and Reserve retirees are eligible for the TRDP as soon as they stop drilling and enter retired Reserve status – even if they haven't reached age 60 and are not collecting retired pay.

### Coordination of benefits

Many Uniformed Services members are retiring at an earlier age and many are entering the civilian work force. Coverage offered by employer plans can be costly and is not always comprehensive. TRDP can help enrollees who have other dental coverage maximize their benefits, save on their out-of-pocket expenses and protect their family's health when their employer's plan coverage isn't quite enough.

For retirees who are employed or who have a spouse who is employed and who have dental coverage in addition to the TRDP, coverage and benefits are gov-



erned by coordination of benefits (COB) rules. Under COB, most dental carriers coordinate benefits with one another to allow enrollees to maximize the coverage provided by both programs – often paying most or all of the patient's dental bill and helping to greatly reduce out-of-pocket expenses.

Adding coverage for family members through an employer's plan can also mean higher out-of-pocket costs. Sometimes, employer plans do not even offer coverage for family members. TRDP covers eligible family members of non-enrolled military retirees who have a dental insurance plan through their employer that is not available to their families – so they can still get coverage for their family members when it would otherwise not be available. This special TRDP eligibility rule gives retired military members even more options for affordable, quality dental coverage and protection for their families.

### Dental check incentives

One of the most important things you can do for your overall health and well-being to schedule regular dental visits for oral exams and cleanings. Early diagnosis and prevention of dental disease is key to good dental health. The dentist can often be the first to see signs of a more serious health problem.

TRDP provides the coverage necessary to help maintain good oral health and

often avoid the need for major dental treatment down the road. Under the TRDP, basic diagnostic and preventive care like annual exams, X-rays and cleanings are payable at 100 percent with no applicable deductible or maximum amount. With the increasing cost of health care—including dental—enrolling in the TRDP now makes better sense than waiting until more expensive services are needed later.

TRDP has a network of more than 100,000 dentists nationwide

Enrollees in the TRDP can choose any licensed dentist with the enrollment service area to provide their covered dental treatment. However, the program encourages enrollees to use a TRDP participating network dentist or a Delta Dental PremierR dentist. Dentists who participate in the networks that support the TRDP have agreed to a predetermined fee schedule and will submit all claims paperwork and adhere to Delta Dental's quality-of-care standards. Enrollees in the TRDP who see a network dentist will not incur any out-of-pocket costs other than their cost share and applicable deductible.

For more information about how enrolling in the TRDP can help reduce dental health care costs for Uniformed Services retirees and their families, visit the TRDP Web site at [www.trdp.org](http://www.trdp.org).

# VA initiative aims to improve veteran health care

By Army Sgt. 1st Class Michael J. Carden, American Forces Press Service

Officials with the nation's two largest electronic medical records systems announced a pilot program designed to further enhance health-care services for military veterans.

The Department of Veterans Affairs and Kaiser Permanente plan to exchange their records information using the Nationwide Health Information Network (NHIN), which was developed by the Health and Human Services Department last year. The initiative is scheduled to begin in January 2010, VA officials said.

The network allows government and several private health care providers to share integrated delivery networks, pharmacies, labs and patient information.

"The ability to share critical health information is essential to interoper-

ability," VA Secretary Eric K. Shinseki said in a written statement. "Utilizing the NHIN's standards and network will allow organizations like VA and the Department of Defense to partner with private-sector health care providers to promote better, faster and safer care for veterans."

VA and Kaiser Permanente plan to invite veterans in San Diego who receive health care from both organizations to participate in the pilot program, VA officials said, noting that patients must formally consent to their information being shared among different organizations.

"Veterans who respond and ask to participate will enable their public- and private-sector health care providers and doctors to share specific health information electronically, safely, securely and privately," the VA statement said.

The NHIN network also works to cut

health care costs for patients and providers through reducing redundancy in medical services.

"Securely digitizing American's health-care information is only the first step in realizing the cost savings and improved quality benefits possible with health-care technology," said Dr. Andrew M. Wiesenthal, associate executive director of The Permanente Federation, in the VA statement.

"The reality is that most people receive care from multiple providers," Wiesenthal said. "Without the ability for caregivers and patients to have access to their data, all of the time, there is the possibility for wasted time and resources duplicating tests and procedures."

The Defense Department will be included in the second phase of the pilot program early next year, officials said.

***Navy Diver 2nd Class Zachery Dojaquez waits on the Iraqi Navy pier before a day of diving operations in Umm Qasar. A team assigned to Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit (MSDU) 2 is working in partnership with Navy Advisory Training Team and a local Iraqi Navy Dive Team on an operation to remove a sunken barge from Iraqi water ways. (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Matthew Bash)***



# VA recognizes agent orange link to more diseases

By Army Sgt. 1st Class Michael J. Carden,  
American Forces Press Service

Based on an independent study by the Institute of Medicine, Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric K. Shinseki has directed broader health coverage from his department for Vietnam War veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange.

Research found that three illnesses – B cell leukemias, Parkinson's disease and ischemic heart disease -- possibly are associated with Agent Orange exposure. Those conditions join a list of related diseases for which Vietnam War veterans already receive compensation, such as prostate cancer, respiratory cancers, soft-tissue sarcomas, Hodgkin's disease, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and multiple myeloma.

"Since my confirmation as secretary, I've often asked why, 40 years after Agent Orange was last used in Vietnam, we're still trying to determine the health consequences to our veterans who served in the combat theater," Shinseki said in a statement provided by VA to American Forces Press Service. "Veterans who endure a host of health problems deserve timely decisions."

Veterans who served in Vietnam between 1962 and 1975 may qualify for monthly disability compensation and do not have to provide proof they were exposed to Agent Orange to qualify for health benefits.

"We must do better reviews of illnesses that may be connected to service, and we will," Shinseki said in statement released in November. "Veterans who endure health problems deserve timely decisions based on solid evidence."

The U.S. military used Agent Orange herbicides in the Vietnam conflict from 1961 to 1971 to clear foliage that provided enemy cover. VA officials estimate that about 2.6 million military personnel who served in Vietnam were affected.

U.S. Rep. Bob Filner, House Veterans Affairs Committee chairman, released a statement today calling for additional support of the Agent Orange Equity Act of 2009. The bill expands eligibility for presumptive conditions to veterans who were not directly "boots on the ground," such as Sailors and pilots.

Current law suggests that location of service in Vietnam affects some of the qualifications for Agent Orange compensation.

"Time is running out for these Vietnam veterans," Filner said. "Many are dying from their Agent Orange-related diseases, uncompensated for their sacrifice. If, as a result of service, a veteran was exposed to Agent Orange, and it has resulted in failing health, this country has a moral obligation to care for each veteran the way we promised we would."

About 800,000 Vietnam veterans are estimated to be alive today and eligible for treatment for Agent Orange-related illnesses. According to VA's Web site, the department presumes all military members who served in Vietnam were exposed to Agent Orange. Also, some children of female Vietnam veterans may qualify for compensation, based on birth defects associated with the chemicals.



## Taking in the sights...

**Mount Fuji dominates the horizon behind the Los Angeles-class fast attack submarine USS Pasadena (SSN 752) in port at Fleet Activities Yokosuka.** (Photo by Lt. Cmdr. Greg Kuntz)

## TRICARE offers new pharmacy benefits

TRICARE is combining its mail-order and retail pharmacy contracts into one new contract called TRICARE Pharmacy.

Improvements in the TRICARE Pharmacy program include streamlining the system to help beneficiaries switch their military treatment facility prescriptions to mail-order, and one call center phone number: 1-877-363-1303.

"TRICARE beneficiaries will be pleased to know that to get this improved benefit they don't have to do anything," said Rear Adm. Thomas McGinnis, TRICARE Management Activity's chief pharmacy officer. "No calls, no paperwork. Beneficiaries don't have to re-enroll, all co-pays stay the same and the network remains essentially unchanged."

For more information visit [www.tricare.mil/pharmacy](http://www.tricare.mil/pharmacy) or [www.express-scripts.com/TRICARE](http://www.express-scripts.com/TRICARE), or call 1-877-363-1303.

# Retiree checklist: What survivors should know

Shift Colors periodically provides a checklist for retirees and their surviving family members. This checklist is designed to provide retirees and their loved ones with some help in preparing for the future.

\_\_ Create a military file that includes a copy of retirement orders, separation papers, DD Form 214, medical records, and any other pertinent military paperwork. Make sure your spouse knows the location and telephone number of the nearest military installation.

\_\_ Create a military retired pay file that includes the following contact information for the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) and Navy Personnel Command:

Defense Finance and Accounting Service

U S Military Retirement Pay

Post Office Box 7130

London, KY 40742-7130

(800) 321-1080 or (216) 522-5955/(800) 269-5170 (for

issues regarding deceased members)

Navy Personnel Command

(N135C)

Retired Activities Branch

5720 Integrity Drive

Millington, TN 38055-6220

(This file should also include the number of any pending VA claim as well as the address of the local VA office; a list of deductions currently being made from retired pay or VA benefits. Also include the name, relationship and address of the person you have designated to any unpaid retired pay at the time of death. This designation is located on the back of your Retiree Account Statement)

\_\_ Create an annuities file. This file should contain information about the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP), Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan (RCSBP) or the Retired Serviceman's Family Protection Plan (RSFPP), or any applicable Civil Service annuity, etc. Additional information regarding SBP, RCSBP and RSFPP annuity claims can be obtained from DFAS office at (800) 321-1080.

\_\_ Create a personal document file that has copies of marriage certificates, divorce decrees, adoptions and naturalization papers.

\_\_ Create an income tax file. Include copies of both of your state and federal income tax returns.

\_\_ Create a property tax file. Include copies of tax bills, deeds and any other related documents/information.

\_\_ Create an insurance policy file. Include life, property, accident, liability and hospitalization policies.

\_\_ In a secure location, maintain a list of all bank accounts (joint or individual). Include the location of all deposit boxes,

savings bonds, stocks, bonds and any securities owned.

\_\_ In a secure location, maintain a list of all charge accounts and credit cards. Include account numbers and mailing addresses.

\_\_ Maintain a list of all associations and organizations of which you are a member. Some of them could be helpful to your spouse.

\_\_ Maintain a list of all friends and business associates who may be helpful. Include name, address and telephone number.

\_\_ Discuss your plans/desires with respect to the type and location of your funeral service. You should decide about cremation, which cemetery, ground burial, etc. If your spouse knows your desires, it will resolve some of the questions that might arise at a later date.

\_\_ Visit a local funeral home and pre-arrange your services. Many states will allow you to pre-pay for services.

\_\_ Investigate the decisions that you and your family have agreed upon. Many states have specific laws and guidelines regulating cremation and burials at sea. Some states require a letter of authority signed by the deceased in order to authorize a cremation. Know the laws in your specific area and how they may affect your decisions. Information regarding Burials at Sea can be obtained by phoning the Mortuary Affairs Division at (866) 787-0081.

\_\_ Once your decisions have been made and you're comfortable with them, have a will drawn up outlining all your wishes and store it in a secure location with your other paperwork.

\_\_ When all the decision-making and documenting is completed, sit back and continue to enjoy life.

## Who should be notified in the event of my death?

1. Defense Finance and Accounting Service (800) 321-1080 or (216) 522-5955
2. Social Security Administration (for death benefits) - (800) 772-1213
3. Department of Veterans Affairs (if applicable) - (800) 827-1000
4. Office of Personnel and Management (if applicable) - (724) 794-8690
5. Any fraternal group that you have membership with such as MOOA, FRA, NCOA, VFW, AL, TREA
6. Any previous employer that provides pension or benefits.

The above information is not all-inclusive and should be used with other estate planning tools to lessen trauma to your loved ones. If you have other suggestions that might prove helpful and would like to share them with your fellow retirees, send them to the Retired Activities Section for publication in a future issue.

# Reunions

Check the Shift Colors Web page (<http://www.npc.navy.mil/ReferenceLibrary/Publications/ShiftColors/>) for a full listing of Reunions

Reunion 2010	Date	Phone #	Web/E-mail
3rd NCB, 30th/31st/32nd NCR	Feb. 26-28		stuart8824@bellsouth.net
ACB-1	Feb. 26-28	(516) 379-6562	seabeeskip@verizon.net
CBMU-301/302	Feb. 26-28	(609) 410-5969	dwschill@comcast.net
Destroyer Leader Assoc. (DL 1, DL 2/DDG 35, DL 3/DDG 36, DL 4, DL 5)	Oct. 14-17	(540) 345-5826	destroyerleader1@cox.net www.destroyerleaderassociation.org
East Coast All SeaBee reunion	Feb. 26-28	(804) 921-4753	seabeemacd40@comcast.net
MCB 22	March 5-7	(830) 895-2189	carlton@kfc.com
Mobile Maintenance Facility - Alpha	April 24-26	(575) 434-1461	fnelsonm@msn.com
NAS Barbers Point (1960-1972)	Feb. 22 - March 10	(352) 637-5131	dmclean8@tampabay.rr.com
Naval Training Center Bainbridge	Sept. 30 - Oct. 3	(540) 345-5826	kali8824z@aol.com www.usntcb.org
Navy Postal Clerks	May 3-6	(216) 299-6732	npreunion.dreamhost.com NPCA@roadrunner.com
NMCB 128	April 19-22	(518) 585-6145	
NMCB-1	Feb. 26-28	(781) 837-0393	nmcblreunion@verizon.net
NMCB-10	Feb. 26-28		seabeebill@cox.net
NMCB-121	Feb. 26-28		wmike121@sbcglobal.net
NMCB-128	Feb. 26-28		mcdanelgk@aol.com
NMCB-133	Feb. 26-28		jimw133@aol.com
NMCB-23	Feb. 26-28	(804) 512-7746	dpreston11@yahoo.com
NMCB-3	Feb. 26-28	(352) 383-3836	h2otalk@yahoo.com
NMCB-40	April 29 - May 2	(856) 358-2009	nmcbfighting40@aol.com
NMCB-5	Feb. 26-28	(843) 655-0426	
NMCB-62	Feb. 26-28		price_richardson@howellmotors.com
NMCB-74	Feb. 26-28		seabeeeg@aol.com
NMCB-9	Feb. 26-28	(804) 921-4753	seabeemacd40@comcast.net
NSA-DaNang (& Dets.) SeaBees	Feb. 26-28	(502) 491-8794	gghubbs@msn.com
USS AGERHOLM (DD 826)	Oct. 6-9	(518) 373-8363	auto-hr@msn.com
USS AMERICA (CVA/CV 66)	June 22-26	(610) 585-2155	www.ussamerica.org
USS AMPHION (AR 13)	April 29 - May 2		mcaanreunion@yahoo.com
USS ARCADIA (AD 23)	April 29 - May 2	(828) 256-6008	mcaanreunion@yahoo.com
USS BAINBRIDGE (DD 246)	May 18-20	(864) 855-1137	bbhdsqwh@hotmail.com
USS BLUEFISH (SS 222/SSN 675)	May 13-15	(910) 235-0191	jwittenstrom@nc.rr.com blueassn675@comcast.net www.ussbluefish.com
USS CADMUS (AR 14)	April 29 - May 2	(716) 655-5415	mcaanreunion@yahoo.com
USS CAMBRIA (APA 36)	April 15-18	(703) 660-8602	usscambria@gmail.com
USS CAVALLA (SS/SSK/AGSS 244, SSN 684)	April 23-24	(409) 548-2109	lhadley@gt.rr.com
USS CLAUDE V RICKETTS (DDG 5)	April 29 - May 2	(603) 986-4661	DDGadmin@thebignickel.org rickettsDDG5@yahoo.com
USS EVERGLADES (AD 24), USS CURRITUCK (AV 7), Torpedoman's Association	Sept. 29 - Oct. 3	(415) 467-6284	ad24history@att.net www.usseverglades.org www.uscurrituck.org
USS GALVESTON (CLG 3)	Sept. 22-26	(866) 398-2655	galveston@comcast.net
USS GENERAL H. W. BUTNER (AP 113/T-AP 113)	April 19-21	(606) 698-3883 (727) 723-0109	
USS GRAND CANYON (AD/AR 28)	Oct. 22-26	(317) 881-8866	roberttdun4217@sbcglobal.net
USS GURKE (DD 783)	April 8-11	(408) 263-2836	dd783_reunion@tstephenson.com

Reunion 2010	Date	Phone #	Web/E-mail/
USS INCHON (LPH/MCS 12)	April 21-25	(717) 203-4152	www.ussinchon.com fixie5659@gmail.com
USS IWO JIMA Class Association - USS IWO JIMA (LPH 2/LHD 7), USS OKINAWA (LPH 3), USS GUADALCANAL (LPH 7), USS GUAM (LPH 9), USS TRIPOLI (LPH 11), and USS NEW ORLEANS (LPH 11)	Sept. 15-19	(757) 732-0317	yujack@megalink.net
USS JONAS INGRAM (DD 938)	October	(973) 627-7491	pete.ventola@att.net
USS KALAMAZOO (AOR 6)	April 22-25	(352) 210-0230	usskalamazoo@gmail.com
USS KEMPER COUNTY (LST 854)	June 24-27	(320) 253-2167	jasimonson@stcloudstate.edu
USS KNUDSON (APD 101)	May 4-6	(386) 789-8612	wjr502@cfl.rr.com
USS LAWRENCE (DDG 4/DD 250)	June 24-29	(814) 322-4150	dguts@usslawrence.com usslawrence.com
USS LYNDE MCCORMICK (DDG 8)	Sept. 9-12	(701) 223-8975	bobwefald@msn.com
USS MANLEY (DD 940)	June 24-28	(386) 767-8068	reunionplanner@ussmanleydd940@org
USS MANSFIELD (DD 728)	Sept. 8-12	(562) 425-6968	lpapaj1@verizon.net
USS MARIAS (AO 57)	April 29 - May 2	(828) 256-6008	mcaanreunion@yahoo.com
USS MARSHALL (DD 676)	May 12 - 15	(502) 708-1864	kysherm2@insightbb.com
USS MITSCHER (DL 2/DDG 35)	Oct. 14-17		www.destroyerleaderassociation.org mitscherdl2@cablespeed.com
USS MULIPHEN (AKA 61)	April 22-25	(302) 737-1751	rwiant@ussmuliphen.com
USS MULLINNIX (DD 944)	April 7-10	(302) 650-3042	muxasn@hotmail.com
USS NEW ORLEANS (CA 32)	April 14-17	(603) 882-3951	hwdiv32@aol.com
USS PALAU (CVE 122)	April 25-29	(410) 658-6043	hweldy@zoominternet.net
USS PAWCATUCK (AO 108)	May 4-7	(623) 214-9835	dwshs53@aol.com
USS PIEDMONT (AD 17)	Oct. 13-17	(785) 272-2604	bmk1930@sbcglobal.net rwgeraghty@verizon.net
USS PRARIE (AD 15)	Sept. 30 - Oct. 3	(315) 676-3280	mary.pelton@yahoo.com
USS PURDY (DD 734)	April 21-24	(610) 433-4787	chiefdi@juno.com
USS RANKIN (AKA/LKA 103)	Sept. 17-20	(412) 367-1376	ussrankin@aol.com
USS RATHBURNE (DE/FF 1057)	Sept. 13-16	(901) 837-6106	fs512420@yahoo.com
USS RICHARD S EDWARDS (DD 950)	June 24-27	(540) 856-2575	trlyanch@shtel.net
USS ROBERT L WILSON (DD 847)	Oct. 7-11	(919) 967-3364	rmason2@bellsouth.net www.community-2.webtv.net/dd847
USS SAN MARCOS (LSD 25)	April 29 - May 1	(215) 287-4311	jacklieberman8104@comcast.net
USS SPIEGEL GROVE	Sept. 29 - Oct. 3	(813) 672-0733 (715) 787-4559	LSD32@frontiernet.net www.kevinflatley.com
USS SPROSTON (DD/DDE 577)	Sept. 22-26	(626) 351-0362	jmarlatt@earthlink.net www.sproston.com
USS TARAUA (CV/CVA/CVS 40)	April 15-18	(401) 539-1149	
USS WAINWRIGHT (DLG/CG 28/DD 419)	July 14-18	(404) 245-3835	wainwrightnews@comcast.net www.usswainwright.org
USS WALLACE L. LIND (DD 703)	Sept. 9-13	(856) 829-6470	edwardpro23@verizon.net www.reunionproregistration.com/usswallacellind.htm
USS WHITEPLAINS (AFS 4)	May 27 - June 1	(866) 229-1134	afs-4@comcast.net
VP-47	June 16-20	(360) 679-3697	blandjcampbell@aol.com
VP-90	April 23-25	(682) 225-4377	www.waac.com
VR-21	May 19-22	(901) 372-8123	mwells@_midsouth1@comcast.net

# Retired Activities Office Phone Listing

## Arizona

Phoenix, AZ (N&MCRESREDCEN)  
(602) 353-3033  
0830-1500 (Mon-Fri)

## California

China Lake, CA (NAVAIRWPASTA)  
(760) 939-0978  
0900-1100 1300-1500 (Mon-Fri)

## Lemoore, CA (NAS)

(559) 998-4042  
0800-1630 (Mon-Fri)

## Point Mugu, CA

(805) 982-1023  
0800-1600 (Mon-Fri)

## San Diego, CA (CORONADO - NAS)

(619) 437-2780  
0900-1200 (Mon-Fri)

## San Diego, CA (NAVSTA)

(619) 556-8987  
0800-1600 (Mon-Fri)

## Seal Beach, CA (NWS)

(562) 626-7152  
0900-1500 (Mon-Fri)

Sunnyvale, CA (Onizuka Air  
Station-formerly Moffett Field)  
(650) 603-8047  
0930-1530 (Mon-Fri)

## Connecticut

Groton, CT (SUBASE)  
(860) 694-3284  
0900-1500 (Mon-Fri)

## Delaware

Wilmington, DE (N&MCRESCECEN)  
(302) 998-5194  
0800-1630 (Mon-Fri)

## Florida

Jacksonville, FL (NAS)  
(904) 542-2766 Ext 126  
0900-1500 (Mon-Fri)

Mayport, FL (NAVSTA)  
(904) 270-6600 Ext 122  
0730-1600 (Mon-Fri)

Milton, FL (NAS WHITING FIELD)  
(850) 623-7177  
1000-1300 (Wed/Thu)

Orlando, FL (DFAS BLDG)  
(407) 646-4204/4262  
1000-1400 (Mon-Fri)

Pensacola, FL (NAS)  
(850) 452-5990 Ext 3111  
0900-1300 (Mon-Fri)

## Georgia

Kings Bay, GA (SUBASE)  
(912) 573-4512  
0730-1630 (Mon/Tue/Wed/Fri)  
0900-1630 (Thurs)

## Hawaii

Pearl Harbor, HI (NAVSTA)  
(808) 474-1999 Ext 6317  
0800-1500 (Mon-Fri)

## Illinois

Great Lakes, IL (NTC)  
(847) 688-3603 Ext 118  
0900-1500 (Mon-Fri)

## Louisiana

New Orleans, LA (NAVSUPPACT)  
(504) 678-2134  
0900-1200 (Mon-Fri)

## Massachusetts

Quincy, MA (NAVOPSUPPCTR)  
(617) 753-4636/26  
1200-1600 (Wed/Fri)

## Maryland

Bethesda, MD (NNMC)  
(301) 295-4120  
0930-1530 (Mon-Fri)

## Maine

Brunswick, ME (NAS)  
(207) 921-2609  
0900-1200 (Mon-Fri)

## Michigan

Mt. Clemens, MI (SEL ANGB)  
(586) 307-5580  
0900-1500 (Tue-Fri)

## Minnesota

Minneapolis, MN (NAVAIRRESCEN)  
(612) 727-2854  
1000-1430 (Tue/Thu)

## Missouri

St. Louis, MO (NAVOPSUPPCEN)  
(314) 263-6443  
0930-1330 (Tue/Thur)  
1130-1330 Friday

## New Hampshire

Portsmouth, NH  
(207) 438-1868  
1000-1400 (Tue-Thu)

## New Jersey

Lakehurst, NJ (NAVAIRENGSTA)  
(732) 323-5099  
0900-1500 (Wed/Thu)

## Nevada

Fallon, NV (NAS)  
(775) 426-3333  
0730-1600 (Mon-Fri)

## New Mexico

Cannon AFB, NM  
(578) 784-4679  
0800-1600 (Mon/Wed/Fri)

## New York

Amityville, NY (AFRESTRGCEN)  
(631) 842-6620  
0930-1500 (Tue/Thur)  
0930-1200 (Wed)  
0930-1400 (Fri)

## Oregon

White City, OR (VA SORCC)  
(541) 353-2111  
ext. 3886

## Pennsylvania

Willow Grove, PA (NAS JRB)  
(215) 443-6033  
1-800-773-1569  
1000-1500 (Mon-Fri)

## Rhode Island

Newport, RI (NAVSTAMPT)  
(401) 841-4089  
0900-1200 (Mon-Fri)

## S. Carolina

Charleston, SC (NAVWPNSTA)  
(843) 764-7480  
0800-1630 (Mon-Fri)  
Greenville, SC (NAVOPSUPPCEN)  
(864) 277-9775 opt 4  
1-866-524-6585 Opt 4  
0900-1100 1300-1500 (Mon-Fri)

## Tennessee

Millington, TN (NAVSUPPACT)  
(901) 874-5147  
1000-1400 (Tues-Thurs)

## Texas

Corpus Christi, TX (NAS)  
(361) 961-3113/2372/3722  
0800-1230 (Mon/Tue/Thur/Fri)  
1300-1500 (Wed)

Ft. Worth, TX (NAS JRB)  
(817) 782-5287  
0800-1600 (Mon-Fri)

Houston, TX (NAVOPSUPPCEN)  
(713) 795-4109/4068  
0900-1200 (Tue-Fri)

Kingsville, TX (NAS)  
(361) 516-6105/6333  
1300-1500 (Mon/Wed/Fri)

San Antonio, TX (NAVOPSUPPCEN)  
(210) 225-2997 Ext 119  
1000-1400 (Mon-Fri)

## Virginia

Dahlgren, VA (NSWC)  
(540) 653-1839/3291  
1-800-500-4947  
0800-1530 (Mon-Fri)

## Hampton Roads Regional Office

Norfolk, VA (NAVSTA)  
(757) 322-9105  
1-800-372-5463  
1000-1400 (Mon-Fri)

Little Creek, VA (NAB)  
(757) 462-8663  
1000-1400 (Mon-Fri)

Norfolk, VA (NAVSTA)  
(757) 322-9113  
1-800-372-5463  
1000-1400 (Mon-Fri)

## Washington

Bremerton, WA (NavSta Bremerton)  
(360) 476-5116  
1-866-572-4341  
0900-1330 (Mon-Fri)

Everett, WA (NAVSTA)  
(425) 304-3775  
1-888-463-6697 opt 5 then opt  
2 ask for RAO  
1000-1300 (Mon-Fri)

Whidbey Island, WA (NAS)  
(360) 257-8054/55  
0900-1500 (Mon-Fri)

## Wisconsin

Milwaukee, WI (NAVOPSUPPCEN)  
(414) 744-9766  
0900-1500 (Mon-Fri)

## Overseas Locations

### Guam

NAVACTS  
(671) 339-7635/333-2056/7/8

### Italy

La Maddalena, IT (NAVSUPPACT)  
011-390-789-73-6161  
DSN: (314) 623-8205  
24HRS (Mon-Sun)  
Naples, IT (NAVOPSUPPACT)  
011-39-081-811-6550  
DSN: (314) 629-6550  
1000-1400 (Mon/Thurs/Fri)

### Japan

Atsugi, JA (NAF)  
Local: 0467-78-5015 Ext 264-4190  
011-81-311-764-4190 (fm conus)  
DSN: (315) 264-4190  
0900-1200 (Tue/Fri)

Sasebo, JA (COMFLEACT)  
011-81-611-752-3108 (fm conus)  
DSN: (315) 252-3108  
1300-1500 (Wed)

Yokosuka, JA (COMFLEACT)  
Local: 046-816-9626  
011-81-46-816-9626 (fm conus)  
DSN: (315) 243-9626  
0800-1630 (Mon-Wed/Fri)  
0800-1500 (Thurs)

### Spain

Rota (NAVSTA)  
011-34-956-82-3232 (fm conus)  
DSN: (314) 727-2850  
1100-1700 (Mon/Wed/Fri)  
1100-1500 (Tue/Thurs)

### Thailand

JUSMAGTHAI  
66-2-287-1036 / 1045 ext. 165  
1000-1400 (Mon-Fri)

Updated Dec. 10, 2009

# Ready Reference Contact Information

**Air Force Retiree Services:** (800) 531-7502; [www.retirees.af.mil/](http://www.retirees.af.mil/)  
**Arlington National Cemetery:** (703) 607-8000; [www.arlington-cemetery.org](http://www.arlington-cemetery.org)

**Armed Forces Retirement Home:** (800) 422-9988; [www.afrh.gov](http://www.afrh.gov)

**Army & Air Force Exchange Service:** (214) 312-2011; [www.aafes.com](http://www.aafes.com)

**Army Retired Services:** (703)325-9158; [www.armyg1.army.mil/retire](http://www.armyg1.army.mil/retire)

**Burial at Sea Information:** (866) 787-0081; [www.npc.navy.mil](http://www.npc.navy.mil)

**Combat Related Special Compensation:**

[www.donhq.navy.mil/corb/crsccb/crsccmainpage.htm](http://www.donhq.navy.mil/corb/crsccb/crsccmainpage.htm)

**DEERS:** (800)-538-9552, Fax: (831) 655-8317;  
[www.tricare.osd.mil/deers](http://www.tricare.osd.mil/deers)

**Defense Commissary Agency:** [www.commissaries.com](http://www.commissaries.com)

**DFAS Casualty Assistance Branch:** (800) 269-5170; (For Reporting a Retiree's death, press 2)

**Fleet Reserve Association:** (703) 683-1400; [www.fra.org](http://www.fra.org)

**Gulf War homepage:** [www.gulflink.osd.mil](http://www.gulflink.osd.mil)

**I.D. Cards Benefits and Eligibility:** (866) 827-5672;

[www.npc.navy.mil/commandsupport/PayPersSupport/IDcards](http://www.npc.navy.mil/commandsupport/PayPersSupport/IDcards)

**Internal Revenue Service:** (800) 829-1040; [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)

**Marine Corps Retired Affairs:** (800) 336-4649; [www.usmc.mil](http://www.usmc.mil)  
(Hover over "Marine Services" then click on "Retired Services")

**Medicare:** (800) 633-4227. TTY: (877) 486-2048; [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov)

**Military Officers Assoc. of America:** (800) 234-6622; [www.moaa.org](http://www.moaa.org)

**National Burial Services:** (800) 697-6940

**NPC Navy Reserve Personnel Management (PERS 9):** (866) 827-5672,

[www.npc.navy.mil/CareerInfo/ReservePersonnelManagement/](http://www.npc.navy.mil/CareerInfo/ReservePersonnelManagement/)

**Navy Retired Activities Office:** (866) U-ASK-NPC (866-827-5672);

[MILL\\_RetiredActivities@navy.mil](mailto:MILL_RetiredActivities@navy.mil);

[www.npc.navy.mil/CommandSupport/RetiredActivities](http://www.npc.navy.mil/CommandSupport/RetiredActivities)

**Navy Uniform Shop:** (800) 368-4088; [www.navy-nex.com/uniform](http://www.navy-nex.com/uniform)

**Navy Worldwide Locator:** (901) 874-3388;

[www.npc.navy.mil/CommandSupport/NavyWorldWideLocator](http://www.npc.navy.mil/CommandSupport/NavyWorldWideLocator)

**Reserve Component SBP:** (877) 807-8199

**Retiree Dental — Delta Dental:** (888) 838-8737; [www.trdp.org](http://www.trdp.org)

**Servicemembers Group Insurance (SGLI):** (800) 419-1473;

[www.insurance.va.gov](http://www.insurance.va.gov)

**Naval Historical Center:** (202) 433-2210; [www.history.navy.mil](http://www.history.navy.mil)

**Social Security Administration:** (800) 772-1213; [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)

**TRICARE:** [www.tricare.mil](http://www.tricare.mil)

**TRICARE North:** (877) TRICARE (874-2273); [www.hnfs.net/](http://www.hnfs.net/):  
CT, DC, DE, IL, IN, KY, MA, MD, ME, MI, NC, NH, NJ, NY, OH,  
PA, RI, VT, VA, WI, WV, some zips in IA, MO, TN

**TRICARE South:** (800) 444-5445; [www.humana-military.com](http://www.humana-military.com):  
AL, AR, FL, GA, LA, MS, OK, SC, TN (except 35 TN zips near  
Fort Campbell), and TX (except the extreme SW El Paso area)

**TRICARE West:** (888) TRIWEST (874-9378); [www.triwest.com](http://www.triwest.com):  
AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, IA (except 82 zips near Rock Island),  
KS, MO (except St. Louis area), MN, MT, ND, NE, NM, NV, OR,  
DE, SW TX, UT, WA, WY

**TRICARE Overseas:** (888) 777-8343; [www.tricare.mil](http://www.tricare.mil)

**TRICARE For Life:** (866) 773-0404; [www.tricare.mil/tfl](http://www.tricare.mil/tfl)

**TRICARE mail order pharmacy:** (866) 363-8667;

[www.tricare.mil/pharmacy](http://www.tricare.mil/pharmacy)

**TRICARE retail pharmacy:** (866) 363-8779;

[www.express-scripts.com](http://www.express-scripts.com)

**VA:** [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)

**Regional offices:** (800) 827-1000 (overseas retirees should  
contact the American Embassy/consulate), TDD (800) 829-4833

**Insurance:**

VA Regional Office and Insurance Center

PO Box 7208 (claims inquiries) -OR-

PO Box 7327 (loans) -OR-

PO Box 7787 (payments)

Philadelphia PA 19101

(800) 669-8477; [www.insurance.va.gov](http://www.insurance.va.gov)

**Burial information:** (800) 827-1000; [www.cem.va.gov](http://www.cem.va.gov)

**GI Bill:** (888) 442-4551; [www.gibill.va.gov/](http://www.gibill.va.gov/)

**Records:**

**For replacement DD 214, service records, medical records,  
award information:**

**Retired prior to 1995:** [www.vetrecs.archives.gov](http://www.vetrecs.archives.gov)

**Retired after 1995:**

Navy Personnel Command

PERS-312E

5720 Integrity Drive

Millington, Tn 38055-3120

Fax requests to: (901) 874-2664

**Gray-area reservists:** (866) 827-5672

**Sister service retiree publications:**

**Air Force Afterburner:** [www.retirees.af.mil/afterburner](http://www.retirees.af.mil/afterburner)

**Army Echoes:** [www.armyg1.army.mil/rso/echoes.asp](http://www.armyg1.army.mil/rso/echoes.asp)

**Coast Guard Evening Colors:** <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg1/psc/retnews/>

**Marine Corps Semper Fidelis:** [www.usmc.mil](http://www.usmc.mil) (hover over  
"Marine Services," click on "Retired Services," then hover over  
"Retired Activities" in the left menu and click on "Semper Fidelis  
Newsletter")

**Navy recreation:** [www.mwr.navy.mil/](http://www.mwr.navy.mil/)

**Navy Gateway Inns & Suites:** <http://dodlodging.net>

**ITT:** [http://www.mwr.navy.mil/mwrprgms/itt\\_military\\_special.htm](http://www.mwr.navy.mil/mwrprgms/itt_military_special.htm)

**Pay/SBP Questions:** [www.dfas.mil](http://www.dfas.mil)

**Pay inquiries and update of pay or SBP records in case of  
death, divorce or remarriage:**

**Retiree:**

Defense Finance and Accounting Service

U.S. Military Retirement Pay

PO Box 7130

London KY 40742-7130

(800) 321-1080, (216) 522-5955

**SBP/RSFPP annuitant:**

Defense Finance and Accounting Service

U.S. military Annuitant Pay

PO Box 7131

London KY 40742-7131

(800) 321-1080, (216) 522-5955



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Don't let your questions go unanswered. If you're not sure who to contact,  
**Call 1-866-U-ASK-NPC (1-866-827-5672)**  
Let the Navy Personnel Command Customer Service Center help you!  
**www.npc.navy.mil**

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## Sign up for e-mail delivery

Recently, we attempted to get a civilian contract that would handle the printing and mailing of *Shift Colors*. There were no bidders on any of our proposals, so we are currently still publishing online only.

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following information: your full name, your e-mail address (please do write it out; it's much easier to copy it into our database), your rank or preferred salutation (Mr., Mrs., Dr., etc.), your military affiliation (whether or not you're retired, active duty, a veteran, a surviving spouse, or just someone who's interested in receiving the newsletter).

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The information compiled for **Shift Colors** comes from a variety of sources to include experts in their respective fields. The content was current at the time of publication. We appreciate your patience and continued readership. - Editor, **Shift Colors**

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