

## 1. Business.

- **Reserve Retirement in the Senate.** On Wednesday, April 18, 2007, the Senate Armed Services Subcommittees on Personnel, Readiness, and Management held a joint hearing on the readiness impact of quality of life and family support programs to assist families of active duty, National Guard, and reserve military personnel. During the course of this hearing, the committee discussed retirement benefits for members of the National Guard and Reserve and Senator Saxby Chambliss (R-GA) provided a statement on his bill, S.648, The National Guard and Reserve Modernization Act. During his statement, Senator Chambliss noted that "Since September 11, 2001, an annual average of about 60 million duty days have been performed by Reserve Component members – the equivalent of adding over 164,000 personnel to the active strength each year...this represents almost a five-fold increase since the 1990s..." Referring to the cash bonuses now in place to enhance retention, Senator Chambliss said that, despite the effectiveness of these bonuses, he would "much rather motivate behavior over the long-term by providing an early retirement benefit based on continuous service and deployments." Given that "Guard and Reserve members are the only federal retirees who must wait until age 60 to collect retirement pay," Senator Chambliss' bill will reduce the age for receipt of retirement pay by three months for every 90 days a Guard member spends on active duty in support of a contingency operation or while responding to a national emergency since September 11, 2001. Senator Chambliss said that the bill is the right thing to do because Guard members who are called away to duty are "sacrificing their civilian careers, including their retirement benefits." Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC) agreed, calling the bill "a great idea" and further stating that "now is the time to look at the retirement system of the Guard and Reserve."

- **TRICARE Retiree Dental Program.** The TRICARE Retiree Dental Program (TRDP) a comprehensive dental benefit program to Uniformed Services retirees, including members of the National Guard and Reserve who, regardless of their age, have transferred to Retired Reserve status. Enrollees may seek care from any licensed dentist within the TRDP service area. Eligible retirees and their family members can find answers to their questions about the program, as well as enroll, on the TRDP website. Prospective enrollees can also call Delta Dental's toll-free number for the TRDP, (888) 838-8737, for program details.

To learn more about TRICARE, visit [www.military.com/benefits/tricare](http://www.military.com/benefits/tricare). If the link does not work, copy it to your internet browser.

- **TRICARE Helps Medicare Beneficiaries.** Since the beginning of the Medicare Part D prescription drug program, individuals that become eligible for both Medicaid and Medicare benefits (so-called "dual-eligibles") have automatically been enrolled into Medicare prescription drug plans. If a TRICARE beneficiary is denied prescription coverage due to Medicare Part D enrollment, and believes that he or she is not enrolled in Medicare Part D or disenrolled from Medicare Part D, the beneficiary should contact Express Scripts at 1-866-363-8779.

To view current Medicare Part D enrollment status on the Medicare website, beneficiaries may go to [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov), select the Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Finder option, "Check Current Enrollment" option, then select View Your Current Plan" and follow the instructions.

To learn more about TRICARE, visit [www.military.com/benefits/tricare](http://www.military.com/benefits/tricare). If the link does not work, copy it to your internet browser.

The following article expands a little more on Medicare Prescription Plans.

FALLS CHURCH, Va. - Each month since the beginning of the Medicare Part D prescription drug program in January 2006, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has automatically enrolled individuals that become eligible for both Medicaid and Medicare benefits (so-called "dual eligibles") into Medicare prescription drug plans. These auto-enrollments generally include all dual eligibles who are not yet enrolled in a Medicare Part D plan, potentially including TRICARE beneficiaries.

"Each of these individuals receives an enrollment notification from the CMS and the Medicare Part D plan that tells them about their enrollment and their opportunity to change plans or opt out of the Medicare Part D plan altogether," said Army Maj. Gen. Elder Granger, Deputy Director of the TRICARE Management Activity.

Affected TRICARE beneficiaries who try to use their TRICARE prescription drug benefit may not realize this occurred or may determine that enrollment in Medicare Part D is not necessary. Each individual's case is unique and all aspects of a person's drug coverage need to be considered before making such a decision. According to federal law, the TRICARE pharmacy benefit is a secondary payer to a Medicare Part D prescription drug plan. Therefore, TRICARE has established payment rules with their claims processor to ensure compliance with federal law.

The TRICARE Management Activity (TMA), the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC), and CMS have jointly developed a customer-focused process for beneficiaries to resolve Medicare Part D and TRICARE coverage issues, and obtain their prescriptions quickly.

If a TRICARE beneficiary is denied prescription coverage due to Medicare Part D enrollment, and believes that he or she is not enrolled in Medicare Part D or disenrolled from Medicare Part D, the beneficiary should contact Express Scripts at 1-866-363-8779. The Express Scripts customer service representative will ask for the beneficiary's permission to access Medicare Part D coverage information from CMS and determine whether the beneficiary is currently in a Medicare Part D plan. If CMS records show no Medicare Part D coverage, DMDC will update the beneficiary's Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) information, in one business day. Additionally, a representative from DMDC will contact the beneficiary to confirm the record correction.

If Express Scripts discovers that CMS shows the beneficiary as having Medicare Part D coverage, they will advise the beneficiary how to obtain confirmation of disenrollment or cancellation from Medicare Part D, and how to forward the disenrollment or cancellation information to DMDC to update the beneficiary's DEERS record. Once DMDC receives this documentation, a customer service representative will update the DEERS records and telephone the beneficiary to confirm the correction.

To view current Medicare Part D enrollment status on the Medicare Web site, beneficiaries may go to [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov), select the Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Finder option, "Check Current Enrollment" option, then select View Your Current Plan" and follow the instructions.

- **House Asks Where UAVs Belong.** The House Armed Services Air and Land Forces Subcommittee held a hearing on the proposed fiscal 2008 budget. In particular, the hearing focused on the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle program and the issue of single control of the program under one service. Many issues of efficiency and effectiveness were discussed, leading to a request for answers in writing from the panel explaining how many service members are currently working within the UAV fields for each service and also a detailed response on how

having the Air Force as the executive agency for UAVs would effect other services getting what they needed when they needed it. The question on the number of service members comes from a previous hearing where General Moseley stated that 75,000 airmen are performing jobs normally filled by the Army. During this hearing, Michigan Representative Candice Miller brought the importance of the National Guard's role with UAVs to the committee's attention, noting that the UAV has an important place in border security particularly within the National Guard.

Note: the former [163<sup>rd</sup> Air Refueling Wing](#) converted to flying UAVs. There are other ANG units scheduled to convert to this new mission.

- **TSgt Robert Carvalho** of the [154<sup>th</sup> Communications Flight](#) sent out the following web link. Robert serves as the Wing Information Assurance Manager. The link takes you to an article which describes a new nasty virus out there right now. If the link does not work, copy it to your internet browser.

<http://scmagazine.com/us/news/article/650527/its-back-new-storm-worm-spam-run-launched/>

- **TSgt Carvalho** sent another link to an article talking about wireless connections at home. Good little article of the legalities of open wireless connections. If the link does not work, copy it to your internet browser.

<http://www.technewsworld.com/story/56816.html>

- **New Pin for Retired Soldiers.** The Army has created a new pin to emphasize the continuing bond between the Army and its almost 800 thousand retired Soldiers. The pin is the Army logo headed by the word "Retired." Mailing of the pin with a letter began March 26 and will continue for about four months. The packet includes information on the Army Strong campaign and the \$2,000 recruiting referral bonus for retired Soldiers, plus an "Army Retired" window sticker. "We're asking retired Soldiers to wear their retired pins proudly. We want them to wear their new pin to show pride in their past service, and as a 'call to service' for others in the community," said John Radke, chief of Army Retirement Services.

- **New Book Recognizes Nisei Linguists.** A new 514-page book, "Nisei Linguists: Japanese Americans in the Military Intelligence Service During WWII," by James C. McNaughton, command historian for U.S. European Command, is the culmination of two senators' efforts. Senator Daniel K. Akaka and fellow World War II veteran Senator Daniel K. Inouye championed the Army-endorsed project to recognize the roughly 6,000 Nisei linguists who served and the Military Intelligence Service that trained them. This select group of Japanese-Americans learned to interrogate prisoners, intercept messages, translate captured documents, and infiltrate enemy lines. For more information about the Nisei Linguists, read a paper by Dr. McNaughton at <http://www.army.mil/cmh-pg/topics/apam/Nisei.htm>.

- **Social Security is awarding extra credit for military service.** Go to following website for more information: <http://www.ssa.gov/retire2/military.htm>. If the link does not work, copy it to your internet browser. Thanks to **MSgt Kyle Kamikawa** and **MSgt Stan Heu** for passing this on.

2. **Wanted List.** I am still looking for these HIANG members e-mail addresses or their addresses I have for them no longer works.

**Gaylen Benanua  
Myles Nakastu  
David Paahana  
Robert Kodama  
Michael Delmar  
Bruce Jahnke  
Michael Wong**

Among the new or updated e-mail addresses are:

**David Lowery  
Randall Lum  
Elmer Looney  
Brian Peterson**

### **3. Retiree Update.**

- Congratulations to the following Air Guard members promoted in April. You can send congratulatory e-mail to: [firstname.lastname@hihick.ang.af.mil](mailto:firstname.lastname@hihick.ang.af.mil)

**MSgt Damon J. Duhaylonsod**, 154<sup>th</sup> Operations Support Flight  
**MSgt Dathan Hudson**, 154<sup>th</sup> Civil Engineer Squadron  
**CMSgt Nolan Kanekuni**, 293<sup>rd</sup> Combat Communications Squadron  
**1<sup>st</sup> Lt Heather Lockerman**, 201<sup>st</sup> Combat Communications Group  
**Capt Regina Berry**, Headquarters 154<sup>th</sup> Wing  
**Capt Liliukekulakamaile "Kula" Cummings**, 203<sup>rd</sup> Air Refueling Squadron  
**Capt Olney Hoopai III**, 204<sup>th</sup> Airlift Squadron  
**Capt Sean Lockerman**, 154<sup>th</sup> Logistics Readiness Squadron  
**Capt Matthew Masuyama**, 154<sup>th</sup> Mission Support Flight  
**Capt Dane Minani**, 293<sup>rd</sup> Combat Communications Squadron  
**Capt Troy Unebasami**, 169<sup>th</sup> Aircraft Control & Warning Squadron

- The **Hawaii National Guard Marathon Team** will participate in the 2007 Lincoln/National Guard Marathon on May 6, 2007. Congratulations to the following HING members who are on our team.

**SrA Amy Masuyama**: 154<sup>th</sup> Logistics Readiness Squadron, HIANG  
**SGT Gregory Lum Ho**: Company B, 445<sup>th</sup> Aviation Support Battalion, Schofield Barracks, HI – 103<sup>rd</sup> Troop Command, HIARNG  
**SSG Ryan Taniguchi**: DET 2, 227<sup>th</sup> Engineer Company, Vertical, Kaunakakai, HI – 103<sup>rd</sup> Troop Command, HIARNG  
**MSG Timothy "Lanky" Morrill**: 29th Brigade Combat Team, Kalaeloa, HI - 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, HIARNG  
**Lt Chris Larson**: 293<sup>rd</sup> Combat Communications Squadron, HIANG  
**Lt Col Scott Kimsey**: 204<sup>th</sup> Airlift Squadron, 154<sup>th</sup> Wing, HIANG  
**Col Michael Compton**, HQ Hawaii Air National Guard

Best of luck to all the runners.

- I received an e-mail from **CMSgt Clifford Ono**. The newly retired Chief is working again and it sounds like an interesting job. "I am working for Siemens Government Services as a Pacific

Rim Area Supervisor. I supervise eight technicians spread across the island airports, Guam and Pago Pago. My technicians do maintenance on TSA equipment at the airports such as the metal detectors you walk through, and the explosive residue sniffers that test your luggage. It's a great company and a great job." Great hearing from Cliff!

**4. Upcoming Events.** Listed by date, the events remain posted until they occur.

- There will be a change of command for the [93<sup>rd</sup> Weapons of Mass Destruction – Civil Support Team \(WMD-CST\)](#) on Friday May 11, 2007. [LTC Thomas “Trey” Johnson](#) will assume command from [LTC Courtney Vares-Lum](#). The event will take place at the 93 CST facilities – Building 134 at Kalaeloa, starting at 0900.

**5. The Promise.** Retiree News will contain information about benefits, National Guard events, and news about retired or former members. There will be no chain e-mail, cute pictures, or sales pitches. Retiree News e-mail is published on a random schedule – as topics come up and time permits. If you change your mind about receiving issues of Retiree News, send me an e-mail at [galen.yoshimoto@us.army.mil](mailto:galen.yoshimoto@us.army.mil) or call me at [672-1221](tel:672-1221), and I will remove you from the Retiree News mailing list.