



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 914TH AIRLIFT WING
2720 KIRKBRIDGE DRIVE
NIAGARA FALLS ARS, NEW YORK 14304-5000



MILITARY RETIREE NEWSLETTER (AUGUST – OCTOBER 2016)
“STILL SERVING”

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FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

I would like to express my appreciation to the volunteers of the RAO for all the efforts they put in while I was recuperating after a brief stint in the hospital; like most veterans I've known, they picked up the 'ball' and 'ran' with it. As you may remember from the last edition of this newsletter, our office has been moved and there has been a lot involved to get our new office in Building #314 up to par and we are starting to settle in; the complete remodeling of Building #800 (HQ) is apt to take a few more years. Again, thank you to the volunteers below for your patience and dedication to the task(s) at hand: MAJ Arthur Cline (USAF, Ret.), CMSGT Bob Haring (USAF, Ret.), CMSGT Reggie Edmonds (USAF, Ret.), TSGT Walt Wiertel (USAF, Ret.). I'd like to take this time to introduce two new members to our team, MAJ Chuck Learn (USA, Ret.) and SFC Simon Shakarjian (USA, Ret.). Our team is ready to assist with most of your questions or situations, please call, email, or stop into the office; we appreciate exchanging stories and tales from your experiences (office hours/contacts above).

The date is almost here, Saturday 09/17/2016 is Retiree Appreciation Day. I have been volunteering and assisting the RAD committee, what I found was how much work is involved with planning this retiree-centric event. Think about when you retired from the military, do you remember all the information that you received about your benefits? Neither do I. This is a great time for you to gather information about what you and your spouse could be missing. COL Brian Bowman, 914th Wing Commander has graciously accepted the committee's request to host. Special thanks to the following people I have had the opportunity to partner with on this event: MAJ Andrea Pitruzella, Public Affairs Chief (USAF), COL Dick Peters (USA, Ret.), COL George Crowe (USA, Ret.), LTC Bill Leed (USA, Ret.), and CSM Henry Curtis (USA, Ret.).

This will be a great retiree event, come early to sign up for bus tours of the base and a very limited availability orientation flight (C-130) for people with valid ID cards (including dependents). There will be two short flights with space limited to the first 70 attendees who sign up; registrations for these flights will be available at the sign-in for the RAD on a first come, first serve basis (no pre-registrations before the event). Some other highlights include: Retiree Benefits Counselors, Information on Veteran programs available in our area, Space A(vailable) information, and a Buffet Lunch (cash only). Friendly reminder that entry to the base is authorized only with a valid Military ID card; if your ID has expired or is not valid, please refer to the flyer attached to this newsletter, or contact our office and we'd be happy to walk you through the process.

We at the RAO (Retiree Activities Office) are planning to hold workshops in mid / late October to identify what interests and appetites exist to help educate you on benefits available to you and your families. Some suggested workshop topics include: Space A(vailable) flying and lodging; retiree benefits; health options (to include Hospice); volunteerism (hint), and burial rights. We should have additional specifics available by 9/17/2016, if you're unable to attend the RAD, please contact the RAO after 9/17/2016 and we will have more detailed information available; we are also exploring the possibility to send additional communications in late September.

One thing that has struck me recently is the perceived neglect of recognition for our US Coast Guard brethren; some forget that they have also served at home and in most of the recent wars, including Vietnam and the Middle East. We welcome them and urge them to attend, if you know of any USCG retirees, please inform them of this special day and that their presence is welcomed (someone please let me know if the term "coasties" is derogatory)!

Finally, there will be RAO volunteers and their spouses at the registration desks and also at our information table.

At the end of this newsletter, there are two addendums:

1. "Upon the Death of a Military Retiree" - Fill this out now for peace of mind for your dependents.
2. "ID hours and DEERS" - Contains info regarding ID cards, etc.

I have personally filled these out and I keep them in a secured folder, should I suddenly pass I hope this makes some things easier for my family; I would strongly suggest you consider doing the same.

SURVIVOR BENEFIT PROGRAM (SBP) BENEFICIARIES

From: LTC Shane Ostrom (USAF, Ret., CFP) - MOAA magazine, July 2016

DFAS is conducting an open season to allow a change of SBP beneficiary from a deceased spouse to a current one.

Below are specifics for open-season eligibility, **all points must apply to your situation:**

- Your deceased former spouse passed before 11/25/2015
- You are currently married
- You married your current spouse on or before 11/25/2015
- Former-spouse coverage must have been cancelled due to death
 - No other reason for discontinued former-spouse coverage is eligible

DFAS has identified retirees they believe meet these standards and has notified them by mail. If you are eligible and did not receive a letter, call DFAS to let them know (800-321-1080). Open season closes 11/24/2016.

QUICK HITS

The USO at the Frankfurt, Germany airport is closed as of April 14, 2016 after over four decades of service due to falling numbers and safety concerns following the March 2011 attack on a military bus at the airport. Two airmen were killed.

BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW

M&Ms is celebrating their 75th anniversary this year. First produced in 1941, they were initially sold to the U.S. military as a portable, high energy snack for service members. They were included in their wartime rations. Once rationing ended, M&Ms were made available to the public. The brown bag was introduced in 1948 and the M's embossed on each candy debuted two years later.

QUOTES

"Do, or do not; there is no try" – Master Yoda, The Empire Strikes Back

"People who think they know everything are a great annoyance to those of us who do" –Unknown

YOGISM

"The future ain't what it used to be."

"Always go to people's funeral or they won't come to yours."

WOMEN AIR FORCE SERVICE PILOTS (WASPS)

The President has signed a bill into law that will allow again, the ashes of female World War II pilots, known as WASPS (Women Air Force Service Pilots) to be buried at Arlington National Cemetery. They flew noncombat missions to free male pilots for combat. (Source: AP 2016)

RETIREE / READER AFTER ACTION REPORTS (R&R AAR)

The next two after-action reports come from CPT Gene Baran (USA, Ret.), Captain Baran has logged more than 120+ trips using the Space A program available to all retired veterans. Members of the RAO staff, who have travelled abroad using Space A are: CMSGT Reggie Edmonds, 1SGT Joe Reece, and SFC Simon Shakarjian. Traveling abroad is a little more involved due to flights not necessarily convenient for your specific timelines, however you should not be reluctant to try it; you will gain confidence with each adventure. If you're interested in having your story featured, please contact the RAO at the aforementioned options and times.

15 April 2016

I, again felt the need to travel. So on 15 April 2016, there was a trip to Savannah, Georgia International Airport with the 914th AW's C130.

On takeoff, which was scheduled for 1300, a fuel pump failed and we taxied back, unloaded 5 passengers and the aero medical personnel and equipment and boarded another C130. We landed at 1700 and another mechanical failure jeopardized the return trip on

Sunday. The FBO at the airport (Signature Aviation) had a National car rental location. We drove away in a Dodge Charger at \$45/day. We drove to Shaw AFB in Sumter, South Carolina and stayed overnight. It was a nice base and the rooms were fair. We had dinner at "Simply Southern Bistro" in Sumter.

Saturday arrived and we started our schedule to the state capitol of Columbia. We then visited Fort Jackson in Columbia for the first time in 45 years, when I did basic training. I found my first drill sergeant still there. 76 years old and still yelling at recruits.....from a wheelchair. (Kidding).

Next stop was to see the Williams-Bryce football stadium (76,000) for the South Carolina Gamecocks.

Late afternoon, we arrived and Congaree National Park. It is one of the newest (2003) parks in the country and only 40 miles from Columbia. Its many features are old growth forests with hiking and canoeing it's top attractions. We left at 1800 and drove back to Savannah's downtown and chose to have dinner at "Lady and Her Sons" (Paula Deen's) restaurant. It was great Southern food and reasonable priced. The menu included fried chicken, seafood gumbo and black-eyed peas. We were given drinks "on the house" and military discount. Great hospitality! We then went on to the airport and got rooms at Days Inn for \$55 across the street.

Sunday was a scheduled takeoff at 1100. We had breakfast at the FBO and were informed by the pilot that a fuel line issue had developed. As the 914th crew was pondering the problem, a crew from a KC 135 and was going to depart soon. Capt Baran approached the crew and found out that they were going to Pease AFB, New Hampshire. I asked if they could take us home to Niagara. Both crews got together to work out the logistics. The C130 got fixed and took off at 1230. The KC 135 left at 1300 and returned at 1445 arriving just behind the C130. The Pease guys were very accommodating and CPT Schylar was receptive and innovating in his approach to solving our flight issues.

The total cost for 2 people for 2 nights and three days was about \$485.

24 June 2016

I was prepared to take trip to see a New England by car on June 20th, but due to life's circumstances, was not able to go. On Wednesday,, June 22d, I called the PAX terminal at Niagara and found that there was a trip to Portsmouth, New Hampshire (Pease AFB). That enabled me to run the 35th Annual Corporate Challenge race in Buffalo on Thursday night.

Friday 24 June

We took off at 1300 as the only official passenger. About an hour later, I noticed green out the window. A lot of green! We were flying through the Adirondack Mountains at about 3000 feet and then lower above Lake Champlain. We headed south to New Hampshire and landed at the FBO at about 1545. My Enterprise vehicle was waiting and off I drove to Acacia National Park in Maine. I stopped in Augusta to tour the state capitol building. I stayed in Ellsworth outside of Acacia for \$87.50.

Saturday 25 June

I went to Acacia in the morning and hiked various trail and then up Cadillac Mountain and the highlights. Early evening, I had dinner at Trenton Bridge compound, standing in line with about 20 other people to pick your own fresh lobster.

I drove South via I-95 to Portsmouth Naval yard in Kittery, Maine. I stayed at the (Navy) Gateway Inn on base in a very nice suite for \$68.

Sunday 26 June

I called the aircraft commander to confirm the 1220 take-off. We landed in Niagara at 1325 hrs with temperatures in the 90s! The entire weekend in Maine was sunny and 74-77 degrees. A short and sweet getaway weekend before the crush of tourists descends on Maine.

DISCLAIMER:

The retiree Activities Office Newsletter is published by the Retiree Activities Office to inform retirees and their families of matters affecting their military rights, benefits, activities, and obligations. While every effort is made to verify information in the newsletter, neither the editor nor the RAO staff can guarantee the accuracy of information received from outside sources. The editor reserves the right to reduce the length of the material to fit the space available.

Joseph T. Reeley (1SG USA, Ret.) - Director/Editor



Upon the Death of a Military Retiree or Annuitant (Surviving Spouse)

- **Notify The Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS)** (800) 321-1080 upon the death of a military retiree or annuitant (survivor receiving benefits) with the decedent's Social Security Number (SSN) and date of death.

- **Send 1 copy of a death certificate which indicates the cause of death to:**

- **For Retirees:** DFAS U.S. Military, Retirement Pay, P.O. Box 7130, London, KY 40742-7130, Fax: (800) 469-6559. **Coast Guard:** Call 1-800-772-8724 or 785-339-3415
- **For Annuitants:** DFAS U.S. Military, Annuitant Pay, P.O. Box 7131, London, KY 40742-7131, Fax: (800) 982-8459. **Coast Guard:** Call 1-800-772-8724 or 785-339-3415

DFAS will take steps to close out the pay account to prevent any overpayments. If the decedent was a retiree enrolled in the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) and/or the Retired Serviceman's Family Protection Plan (RSFPP), we will take additional steps to initiate pay accounts for eligible survivors. **Designated beneficiaries of retirees** should expect a Standard Form 1174 (SF-1174) and, if applicable, SBP/RSFPP-related forms in the mail within seven to ten business days of reporting the death. If you need assistance please call us at either of the numbers listed above.

ADDITIONALLY:

- Notify the Social Security Administration (SSA) at (800) 772-1213.
- Notify the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) at (800) 538-9552.
- If the member was receiving disability compensation or Dependency Indemnity Compensation (DIC), notify the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) at (800) 827-1000.
- If member was a civil servant/ retired civil servant, call Office of Personnel Management (OPM) toll-free at (888) 767-6738.
- If the member enrolled in DVA-sponsored insurance such as National Service Life Insurance (NSLI) or Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI), notify them at (800) 669-8477.

Please Note: If you live near a military installation you may be able to receive help with administrative matters from a **Casualty Assistance Officer (CAO)** or **Retired Activities/Affairs Office (RAO)**. Please note that these services are not available at all military installations. **716 236-2389**

Fill out this information and keep in a safe location known to your survivors; update as necessary:

Retiree's Name _____ DOB _____
SSN _____ Military Grade _____ MOS _____
Date of Retirement _____ Branch of Service _____ Years of Service _____
Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
Veteran's Place of Birth _____
Veteran's Father's Name _____ DOB _____
Father's Place of Birth _____
Veteran's Mother's Maiden Name _____ DOB _____
Veteran's Mother's Place of Birth _____
Spouse's Name _____ Maiden Name _____ DOB _____
Spouse's Place of Birth _____
Date of Marriage _____ Place of Marriage _____

Documents needed to claim death benefits- (Note location of each)

-Copies of report(s) of separation from active duty (DD Form 214, etc.) _____

- Copies of retirement orders _____
- Copies of birth and death certificates _____
- Copies of birth, marriage, divorce certificate(s) _____
- Household Bills List _____
- Important online account passwords _____

Plus -- You should always have the following documents on hand (note location of each):

Updated will and letter of instructions _____
Names of financial institutions & account #'s: _____
Updated list of assets and liabilities _____
Insurance policies _____

Adoption or naturalization papers (if applicable) _____

Part I - Veterans Administration Data (if applicable)

VA Compensation \$ _____ Disability claim # _____

Remarks _____

VA Insurance policy Nr(s) _____ File Nr _____

Type _____ Amount \$ _____ / _____

Location of policies _____

Any known paid-up add'l VA Insurance \$ _____ As of Date _____

Other Remarks _____

Veteran's claim Nr(s) (other) _____ Patient's data card _____

Part II - Retirement Pay Data (see retiree account statements RAS)

Retiree pay data: (as of date) _____

Gross pay \$ _____

Deduction \$ _____ For _____

Deduction \$ _____ For _____

Deduction \$ _____ For _____

Deduction \$ _____ For _____

Net Pay \$ _____ Taxable Income \$ _____

Survivor coverage Information Survivor benefit plan annuity \$ _____

SBP Base Amount \$ _____

Supplemental SBP (if any) \$ _____ Effective _____ RSFPP annuity _____

Part III - Social Security (when Applicable)

Social Security Claim # _____ Month filed _____

Type of benefit(s) _____ Beginning month of entitlement _____

Amount monthly \$ _____ Bank and acct. # (direct deposit) _____

Note: No payment is payable for the month of death (call local SSA office)

Part IV - More to know and plan for upon death of a retiree/annuitant: (attach as necessary)

- Disposition instructions for the body (burial, cremation, memorial service, etc.)
- Info for Death Certificate (Date/Place of birth, Father's Name, Mother's Maiden Name, etc.)
- Information for obituary notice (names, relation & locations of appropriate relatives, etc.)
- Veterans and spouses may be buried in a veterans cemetery- contact local VA office
- Necessary changes in your DEERS program will have to be made (TRICARE, CHAMPVA, etc.)
- It may take several months to clear estates (you may require at least 8 copies of death certificate)
- Safety deposit box contents should be known (box number, location and key)
- Direct deposit of Soc. Sec. benefits & military retirement payments must be immediately changed
- Named beneficiaries on insurance policies become very important (keep current)
- There may be some entitlement to burial benefits (headstone, payments, etc.) (Check VA)
- Check VA for Presidential Memorial Certificate
- An American flag can be obtained (check with Funeral Director, VA and/or Post Office)
- The survivor should update appropriate will.
- Extra credit cards should be destroyed or canceled, changes should be made to all joint ownerships
- Contact insurance companies as appropriate. Widows will need a new military ID card

Note: Spouse/Next of Kin/Third Party should have a copy of this/know location. Consider giving a copy to a third party in case something should happen to Retiree/ Spouse/ Next of Kin at the same time.



Courtesy of the American Military Retirees Association

Retired Active Duty, Reserve, Guard and Gray- Area
Disabled (100% T&P), Medically Retired and Surviving Spouses Welcome!
5436 Peru Street Ste 1, Plattsburgh, NY 12901-3474
1-800-424-2969 | www.amra1973.org

ID CARDS AND DEERS IMPORTANT INFORMATION

GENERAL PUBLIC SCHEDULE

Monday & Tuesday, 7:30-11:30am & 12:30-2:00pm
914 AW Bldg 314 (716) 236-2197

Wednesday & Thursday, 7:30-11:30am & 12:30-2:00pm
107 AW Bldg 901 Rm 110 (716) 236-2435

Fridays- alternates between buildings
7:30-11:00am ONLY (No afternoon hours)

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

Two forms of identification are required for sponsors and dependents 20 years of age and older when enrolling a member or dependent in DEERS or when an ID Card is issued.

One form must be a photo ID and not expired.

The following is a list of **acceptable** forms of identification:

- Military ID
- Driver's License
- Foreign Driver's License
- Social Security Card
- Birth Certificate
- School ID with Photo
- Another form of Federal, State or Local Government issued Photo
- Identification Line Badge
- US Passport
- Weapons Permit
- Voter's Registration Card
- Foreign Passport
- INS Documentation

DD Form 1172 is Required and **MUST** be filled out and signed by the sponsor either in front of a notarizer or DEERS Operator for issuance of a dependent/spouse ID card at any time an initial or replacement id card is requested. **NO EXCEPTIONS!** If sponsor is incapacitated, talk to a DEERS operator for further guidance.

IF YOUR ID CARD IS LOST OR STOLEN, YOU MUST GO TO THE VISITORS CENTER FIRST & FILL OUT A REPORT (UNLESS YOU HAVE A POLICE REPORT) IN ORDER TO BE ISSUED A REPLACEMENT ID CARD. NO EXCEPTIONS!

We will also need the documentation for the action that is being accomplished.

Promotion - Promotion order with effective date

Marriage - Marriage License, Spouses Birth Certificate, Spouses SSN card & photo ID

Divorce - Divorce Decree

Re-enlistment - enlistment document DD Form 4 or extension documents

Retirement- Retirement order, DD Form 214 if active duty / Retirement order

Death of a sponsor, spouse, or dependent - Death certificate

Child Birth- Birth certificate and SSN Card

For 100% Disabled Vet: Letter from VA showing 100% Service connected Disability OR 70% disabled but Unemployable, Commissary/exchange Privilege letter , DD form 214 and 2 forms of ID one must be an un-expired photo ID

Student (Children ages 21 - 23) - A letter from the school registrar that certifies enrollment in a full time course of study leading to an associate degree or higher and the anticipated graduation date.

Dependents with disabilities- Letter from VA/ DFAS determination that states permanent/temporary disability

All of This information can also be accessed at www.niagara.afrc.af.mil

You can also add a family member, update and complete a DD Form 1172 on line at (<https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect/>)

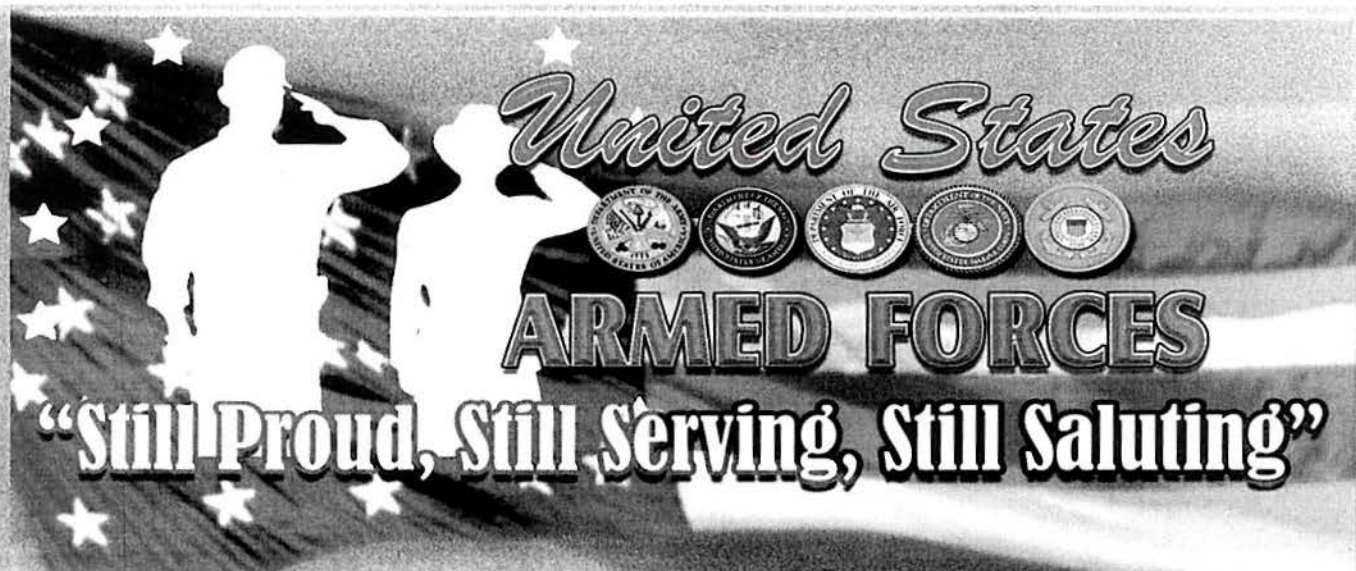
Documentation for the following actions can also be faxed to the 914 AW ARS- Fax # is 716-236-2024 or emaile to the org box 914fss.fsmps@us.af.mil , *include sponsors DOD EDI/ SSN*

For Marriage - Marriage License, Spouses Birth Certificate, Spouses SSN card & photo ID

Child Birth- Birth certificate and SSN Card

Student (Children ages 21 - 23) - A letter from the school registrar that certifies enrollment in a full time course of study leading to an associate degree or higher and the anticipated graduation date.

If Divorced – a Divorce Decree



RETIREE APPRECIATION DAY

Sponsored by ROA Buffalo Chapter and USAA

Saturday, September 17, 2016

The Heritage Center

Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station

Open to all military retirees

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 0745 - 0845 | Registration & Sign Up for Daily Flights and Bus Tours* |
| 0900 - 1000 | Opening Ceremonies |
| 1000 - 1200 | Updates on Retirement Benefits for Retirees and Spouses |
| 1200 - 1300 | Buffet Lunch—Cash Only |
| 1300 - 1500 | Retiree Fair featuring many Retiree Service Organizations |

TRICARE Under 65/Over 65, Express Scripts, TRICARE Dental, Martins Point, Military Honors, VA Benefits/Programs, USAA, Vets One-Stop Center, Erie and Niagara Counties "Thank A Vet" Discount Program, NIMAC, Space A and many others.

YOU MUST PRE-REGISTER FOR THIS EVENT BY CALLING

(716) 236-2389

JOSEPH.REELE@US.AF.MIL

**** Times for Bus Tours and Orientation Flights to be announced***

**** Flights and Tours will be on a first come, first served basis***

**** DD FORM 214 REQUIRED FOR ERIE/NIAGARA COUNTY THANK A VET PROGRAMS***

**** Military ID Required to Access Installation—2026 Lockport Road Niagara Falls, NY***

914th AIRLIFT WING/CVR
2720 KIRKBRIDGE DRIVE
NIAGARA FALLS, NY 14304-5001

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
FIRST CLASS



Airman & Family Readiness	(716) 236-2097
Base Exchange	(716) 236-2100
Base Billeting	(716) 236-2014
Base Gym (Fitness Center)	(716) 236-2101
Casualty Assistance	877-353-6807
Pittsburgh Office	800-235-7780
Chapel	(716) 236-2395
Credit Union	(716) 236-2085
Customer Service ID	(716) 236-2197
DEERS	800-538-9552
DELTA Dental	888-838-8737
DFAS (Cleveland)	800-321-1080
Equipment Rental	(716) 236-3511/2101
Express Scripts Pharmacy	877-363-1303
Falcon Club Café	(716) 236-2027
Family Support Center	(716) 236-2097
Ft. Drum SB	800-772-6900
Ft. Drum Pharmacy	800-354-9280

IRS	800-829-1040
IT&T Services (tickets)	(716) 236-3367
Legal Aid	(716) 236-2133
Medicare	800-442-8430
Pass & ID Security	(716) 236-2281
PAX Terminal (Niagara)	(716) 236-2360
Retired Activities Office	(716) 236-2389
RAO Fax	(716) 236-3173
Recreation Center	(716) 236-2450
Social Security	800-772-1213
Space-A Travel	(716) 236-2389
TRICARE	877-874-2273
TRICARE for LIFE	866-773-0404
VA Affairs	800-827-1000
VA Affairs	888-VETS-NYS
VA Hospitals	800-532-8387
VA Hospital (Buffalo)	(716) 834-9200
Veterans One-Step Center	(716) 898-0110

