



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



**MILITARY RETIREE NEWSLETTER (FEBRUARY - APRIL 2017)  
"STILL SERVING"**

**JOSEPH T REELE**  
1SG USA RETIRED  
DIRECTOR/EDITOR  
*Co-editor: Janice Reelee*  
*Technical Advisor: Matthew Reelee*

<b>RAO Office Contact/Hours</b>	
<b>Telephone:</b>	<b>(716) 236-2389</b>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:Joseph.Reelee@us.af.mil">Joseph.Reelee@us.af.mil</a>
<i>Mon - Fri (UTA Sat)</i>	<i>1000-1400</i>

## **From the Director's Desk**

In order to further inform retirees of local assets and military organizations, I have asked the following units to submit a short article regarding their particular unit. This newsletter may not be able to publish them all at one time. The following is a list of units that are being hosted on the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station and points of contact:

- |   |                |
|---|----------------|
| ▪ 914th AW (AFRES)                            | (716) 236-2136 |
| ▪ 107th AW (NYANG)                            | (716) 236-3555 |
| ▪ 277th QM Co (USAR)                          | (716) 298-6226 |
| ▪ 865th CM Hospital (USAR)                    | (716) 298-6214 |
| ▪ 1982 Forward Surgical Team (USAR)           | (716) 298-6207 |
| ▪ 2d Squadron 101st Cavalry 42d ID (NYARNG)   | (716) 898-0262 |
| ▪ MEPS (Military Entrance Processing Station) | (716) 501-9012 |

### **2016 Year in Review**

*Maj. Elaine Nowak | 107<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing*

The 107th Airlift Wing worked tirelessly throughout the last calendar year in preparation to operate the MQ-9 Reaper from Niagara. One of the focus areas set forth by Col. Robert Kilgore, 107AW Commander, was the training and employment of our Airmen. Many of our members are fully certified and traveling to locations around the world engaging in MQ-9 and support operations. These actions are crucial to maintain proficiency and gain valuable experience. We could not be prouder of them!

The modification and expansion of our facility continues. The first phase of the project to modify the existing operations building is nearly complete. Also, a military construction (MILCON) project began in November. MILCON will expand this building to even further create much needed office space. All projects will be complete in early 2018. We are aggressively working to get the unit to 'initial operational capability' status in the next calendar year. This essentially means the unit can staff and fly the MQ-9 24-hours a day from Niagara, conducting combat operations from

home station. Once that milestone is met, the challenge continues as we continue to expand and look for qualified individuals to fill many vacant operational roles. The unit plans to be 'full operational capable' in 2019.

This past year the 107th Security Forces Squadron (SFS) returned from an overseas deployment to southwest Asia. There was a joyful reunion at the Buffalo airport as the SF Airmen reunited with their families after a job well-done. 41 members in all were part of the deployment that provided security for US assets overseas.

Another focus of the commander for 2016 was to provide the resources and tools necessary to make our Airmen resilient, empowered and adaptive. In that spirit, the unit held its first ever Wing Wellness Week in June. The week included classes and activities focused on enhancing the resiliency of Airmen in the areas of mental, social, physical and spiritual fitness. Various classes, including yoga, meditation, self-defense, benefits briefings, nutrition seminars and financial planning seminars, were held for members to choose from throughout the week.

In June, more than 25 Airmen from the 107th Civil Engineer Squadron participated in a two-week humanitarian support mission in Albania. The deployment for training saw the Airmen work in the vicinity of Vau Dejes, where they renovated a clinic and a school that both serve the needs of the local municipality.

Also in June, more than 30 members of the 107 SFS conducted heavy weapons training and qualification in Alpena, Michigan. The Airmen trained at the Combat Readiness Training Center and qualified at Camp Grayling as part of their yearly requirement to remain proficient in their weapon systems. The training included two days of live fire.

Additionally, a large scale Unit Effectiveness Inspection was held in July. It was the first inspection under our new MAJCOM- Air Combat Command (ACC). The areas that were inspected were selected based on importance and our commander's intent. The unit received an overall grade of "Effective." Four areas were recognized as "Superior Performance Teams" which included Host Aviation Management, Intelligence, Comptroller and Deployment and Distribution Sections.

In September the 107 AW took two geographically separated squadrons under its wing; the 222nd Command and Control Squadron and 274th Air Support Operations Squadron. This acquisition adds nearly 380 members to the 107th. The wing has worked tirelessly to merge these organizations to make sure we meet their needs effectively.

A new commander was named for the operations group in October. Lt. Col. Douglas Eoute took the reigns as Lt. Col. Gary Charlton vacated the position to become the unit's vice commander.

Our wing is a proud member of the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station and is fortunate to call Niagara home. Strong participation with service partners and our enhanced mission capabilities provide the opportunity to learn various technical skills. Please contact us with questions at (716) 236-2423 or visit [www.goang.com](http://www.goang.com). In the very near future we will officially have our name change to the 107th Attack Wing. We look forward to having our title as we strive to meet the challenges of the upcoming year.

## **Noteworthy Activities & Events**

Are you interested in attending home basketball and hockey games at Niagara University? Do you enjoy free things? You can get free tickets through the ITT (Information, Tickets, and Tours) office in BLDG 314 (formerly the Falcon Club) on base. Tickets are for Men's and Women's home basketball and hockey games for the remainder of the season.

The ITT office is also working on putting together two trips in the upcoming months. An ice wine tour in Niagara-on-the-Lake and a trip to Toronto to enjoy a Medieval Times dinner theater. More information about these trips will be sent via email as details are finalized.

You can contact the ITT office by phone at (716) 236-3090, follow them on Facebook (Niagara Falls Force Support Squadron), or check out their website ([www.niagarafss.com](http://www.niagarafss.com)) for the latest updates.

## **Local/State**

### **Volunteer Opportunities | New York Guard**

New York Guard is an unpaid, state volunteer force serving at the direction of the Governor to augment & support the NY National Guard with manpower and skills; it cannot be federalized. Its main mission is to act as a support element to the NY National Guard in the event of a natural disaster or state emergencies. Candidates must be a US citizen or legal resident between 18 and 62 years old, and in reasonably good health. They offer complete training and uniforms.

Among the benefits are free NY State hunting, fishing and trapping licenses, job protection and payment for services in the event of state call-up. For more information visit: [dmna.ny.gov/nyg/request/](http://dmna.ny.gov/nyg/request/) or call (914) 930-1116.

### **Space A**

There will be a few changes in the Space A program starting in March. One change that is already in effect is that Major Tom Scozzafava has been appointed interim OPS Commander due to the transfer of Col Joe Janik to 22d AF HQ in Georgia. Tom is a very capable pilot and leader. We wish him well and offer our assistance whenever we can help.

The delivery of two KC-135 "tankers" is scheduled for February and missions could begin as soon as Fall 2017. Crew members are being trained now and should be "operational" shortly thereafter. These new aircraft will bring new missions; missions for refueling other aircraft and cargo will also bring new Space A opportunities for more distant bases. Without having any knowledge of where, I can only speculate that they may be towards the conflicts going on now. (Aviano, Italy, Hawaii, Alaska, and perhaps others). It should be a very exciting time for retiree travelers!

Two of our C-130s have already been reassigned elsewhere, however, this may be your last chance for flying in one on Space A, as they will all be gone by June. There will probably still be some interesting missions in the meantime (Key West is perhaps possibility). The last Space A passenger flights for the C-130s will probably cease sometime in June.

As a reminder, AMC regulations state that the passenger terminals may not give out flight information, more than 72 hours in advance. The PAX TERM people are doing what they can to inform you. This may not seem to be a lot of time to prepare, but it can be done and it is truly worth it! If there is any interest in another Space A workshop, call and let us know. Don't pass up free trips. You have earned it! Enjoy them! If anyone would like help planning, or even thinking about a trip, call us, and we will help!

Lastly, we are listening for your input in this and any other subject matter; if you would like to share please write or call us!

## **National/International**

### **Edelweiss Lodge And Resort**

As mentioned in previous newsletters, the Edelweiss Resort in Bavaria, Germany is not authorized for retirees and active duty members living in the US. I recently contacted them and they informed me that it was because of the SOFA (Status of Forces Agreement) agreement between the US and Germany. However they said that if there was space available, you would have to show up on the day you wished to check in. If there was room available, you could check in.

### **VA National Cemeteries**

The Department of Veterans Affairs announced on December 8, 2016 that it now provides eligibility determinations for internment in a VA cemetery *prior to the time of need*.

If interested, you may submit VA Form 40-10007 Application for pre-need Determination of eligibility for Burial in a VA cemetery and documentation such as DD214 ([www.va.gov/vaforms/va/pdf/va40-10007.pdf](http://www.va.gov/vaforms/va/pdf/va40-10007.pdf)); you may also call (1-800-827-1000) for more information. Forms may be downloaded by using the link above, or call our office and we can assist you.

### **Tax Time**

It's that time again! Income tax filing. All retirees should have already received the DFAS Retiree Newsletter. In this newsletter, information is provided for the DFAS part of your income tax returns.

It also states that the 2017 Cost of living adjustment (COLA) will be 0.3%. You will see the change on your Dec. 30, 2016 payment and annuitants on their Jan. 3, 2017 payment. There are also directions for using "myPay" to get documents you need.

For additional information, go to [www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary.html](http://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary.html). There is also a site for "Ins and Outs of Retired Pay Who to Contact?" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GNHE7GnXRFI>. Along with that, there will be a 2.1% pay raise for retirees.

### **\*Update\* | Exchange Privileges for Veterans**

As previously mentioned in an earlier newsletter and effective on Veterans' Day 2017 (11/11/2017), all honorably discharged veterans, 100% disabled from service connected injuries and Medal of Honor recipients will be able to shop at the online Exchanges. Dependents are not authorized, but can "help" their veteran to shop.

### **Military Family Clinic**

The Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at NYU Langone is providing free care for veterans and dependents in all phases of military service; these services include: relationship issues, school problems, relocation hardships, unemployment complications, and other life stresses. For more information, call (855) 698-4677 or write at [militaryfamilyclinic@nyumc.org](mailto:militaryfamilyclinic@nyumc.org). For immediate assistance call the National Crisis line at 1-800-273-8255.

## Fun Section

### **And then the fight started...**

When our lawnmower broke and wouldn't run, my wife kept hinting to me to get it fixed. Somehow, I always had something else to take care of first, the boat, the shed, making beer....always something more important to me. Finally she thought of a clever way to make her point.

When I arrived home one day, I found her snipping away the tall grass with a tiny pair of sewing scissors. I watched silently for a while and then went into the house. I was gone only a minute and when I came out, I handed her a toothbrush. I said "when you're finished cutting the grass, you might as well sweep the driveway."The doctors say I will walk again, but I will always have a limp.

I asked my wife where she wanted to go for our anniversary."Somewhere I haven't been in a long time". So I suggested the kitchen...and then the fight started.

### **Yogiisms**

- "In theory there is no difference between theory and practice. In practice, there is."
- "I'm not going to buy my kids an encyclopedia, let them walk to school like I did."

### **Bet Ya Didn't Know...**

Years ago, incredibly, men and women took baths only twice a year.(May and October). Women kept their hair covered, while men shaved their heads (because of lice and bugs) and wore wigs. Wealthy men could afford wigs made of wool. They couldn't wash them, so they would carve out a loaf of bread, put the wig in the shell and bake it for 30 minutes. The heat would make the wig big and fluffy. Hence the term "big wig". Today we often use the term "here comes the big wig" for someone appears to be or is powerful.

Everyone on Earth is born with the ability to wiggle their ears, but if you don't learn early on, the muscle atrophies and you can't learn any longer. I saw you try it!

*To those who served...*

***Thank you!***

*To the spouses who loved, endured and maintained...*

***Thank you!***

*To the children of the above...*

***Honor them!***

"God Bless us, everyone" - 'Tiny Tim' A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens; it still has meaning...

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

**OFFICIAL BUSINESS  
 FIRST CLASS**



Airman & Family Readiness	(716) 236-2097	IRS	800-829-1040
Base Exchange	(716) 236-2100	IT&T Services (tickets)	(716) 236-3367
Base Billeting	(716) 236-2014	Legal Aid	(716) 236-2133
Base Gym (Fitness Center)	(716) 236-2101	Medicare	800-442-8430
Casualty Assistance	877-353-6807	Pass & ID Security	(716) 236-2281
Pittsburgh Office	800-235-7780	PAX Terminal (Niagara)	(716) 236-2360
Chapel	(716) 236-2395	Retired Activities Office	(716) 236-2389
Credit Union	(716) 236-2085	RAO Fax	(716) 236-3173
Customer Service ID	(716) 236-2197	Recreation Center	(716) 236-2450
DEERS	800-538-9552	Social Security	800-772-1213
DELTA Dental	888-838-8737	Space-A Travel	(716) 236-2389
DFAS (Cleveland)	800-321-1080	TRICARE	877-874-2273
Equipment Rental	(716) 236-3511/2101	TRICARE for LIFE	866-773-0404
Express Scripts Pharmacy	877-363-1303	VA Affairs	800-827-1000
Falcon Club Café	(716) 236-2027	VA Affairs	888-VETS-NYS
Family Support Center	(716) 236-2097	VA Hospitals	800-532-8387
Ft. Drum SB	800-772-6900	VA Hospital (Buffalo)	(716) 834-9200
Ft. Drum Pharmacy	800-354-9280	Veterans One-Step Center	(716) 898-0110

