



**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 (MAY – JULY 2017)  
“STILL SERVING”**

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**FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK**

Spring is finally here! Welcome back Snowbirds! For the rest of us, we made it again. The snow part wasn't that bad this year. We can all use some good news for a change, right? Niagara is undergoing some positive changes here at the base. We've already seen the 107<sup>th</sup>'s new mission and now the 914<sup>th</sup> is becoming an air refueling wing. There are two KC 135s on station and more to come. Crews are being trained and will undergo difficult and demanding training.

The RAO is planning a smaller workshop for this Fall. There are newer retirees that could benefit from the opportunities the RAO and this newsletter offer; spaces will be limited and I hope to see some new faces at the workshop. If there is a demand for more of these events, we will oblige. Our thoughts are for information regarding your benefits as well as surviving spousal benefits. In particular: TRICARE, TFL, Martin's Point Health, free eyeglasses for retirees, hearing aid discounts, Space Available travel and lodging, burials rights and other subjects.

Colonel Bowman has proposed a new function here at Niagara. The retirees have experienced a lot of different situations in their careers and could share them with the present active reservists and full time employees. The thought would probably be a luncheon type gathering on the base for the two groups to lunch and let each side get to know the other and share some experiences. The mentoring would be a great experience. I, for one, have seen the great increase in training from when I trained. The technical advancement, alone, has almost passed me by. There will be more on this in the future. I am hoping that the retirees will continue to serve by attending these luncheons. We are considering the UTA on Saturday, August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at 1130. If they are successful, we can have other similar events.

If anyone has comments regarding this, or any other topic, please call us. (716) 236-2389. Please plan to attend some of these gatherings. Colonel Bowman has assured me that "You are not forgotten". Lastly, LTC Andrea Pitruzzella is leaving Niagara to go to 22<sup>nd</sup> Air Force Headquarters in Georgia. This is a well-deserved advancement. Their gain is Niagara's loss. Good luck Andrea, we will miss you! God Speed!

## **2016 YEAR IN REVIEW**

### **TSgt Brittany Kuntz | 914<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing**

The mission of the 914th Airlift Wing is to provide a current, qualified and mission ready force. For the 914 AW, 2016 was a busy year as its airmen embodied these qualities while deployed and here at home station. This past year was a highlight in the 914 AW's rich history at the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station as its Airmen demonstrated its exceptionalism once again as the C-130 Hercules and the wing's Airlift mission set comes to a historic close and as the wing prepares for its new chapter in aerial refueling.

In 2016, the 914 AW's Operations, Maintenance, and Mission Support Groups completed their final partial mobilization deployments flying the C-130 Hercules. After 45 years of flying this aircraft and over 53 years supporting a primarily Global Airlift mission set, the 914th began preparations for its upcoming conversion to the KC-135 Stratotanker. Many families, prior service members, and current service members took part in welcoming our Airmen home from their historic final deployments flying and supporting the beloved C-130 "Herc".

It is worthy to mention, in May, Airmen from the 328th Airlift Squadron (328 AS) deployed in support of Operation INHERENT RESOLVE and Operation FREEDOM'S SENTINEL as part of the 746th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron (746 EAS). Over the course of the four-month deployment the squadron manned 351 missions and 685 combat and combat support sorties amassing more than 1,550 combat and combat support flight hours; airlifting 3,988 passengers, 1,933 short tons of cargo, 153 aeromedical evacuation patients, and 62 distinguished visitors. Of note, the 746 EAS planned and executed two airdrop missions, featuring a two-ship tactical deception mission and an airdrop re-supply mission supporting troops in contact with ISIL forces. This deployment by the 328 AS marks the close of a 72 year legacy of tactical airlift by the flying squadron beginning in WWII flying missions over the Himalaya Mountains in India, Burma, and China in 1944 and ends in the Global War on Terrorism flying missions throughout Iraq, Afghanistan, the Gulf States, and the Horn of Africa in 2016. The 328 AS (the 914th's flying squadron) will convert to the 328th Air Refueling Squadron along with its parent organization.

At home station, in August, a ribbon cutting ceremony for the newly built flight simulator building took place. The new building was originally slated to house a C-130 Regional Simulator. Due to the future mission change, the wing is working to secure a KC-135 Simulator in order to make the building operational and for the simulator to work in tandem with the new mission set.

In addition to the new simulator building, several building projects have begun to include the renovation of the 914 AW Headquarters Facility which is on-going, the completed expansion of the Command Post, and many other renovations, additions, and new construction projects are in the works or taking place throughout the NFARS. Despite the temporary displacement and disruption to

daily operations due to the numerous building projects, the 914 AW's personnel continued to accomplish the mission with excellence.

The 914 AW Wing Commander, Col Brian S. Bowman, has past experience with the KC-135 that will be insightful for the coming conversion as he experienced a conversion many years ago as a young officer, was a Pilot, Instructor, and Evaluator on the KC-135E model.

The 914th Airlift Wing received the distinguished honor and was awarded the Outstanding Air Force Reserve Command Reserve Wing for 2016 by the Airlift/Tanker Association (aka the Lieutenant General James E. Sherrard III award) because of the wings outstanding accomplishments. "Our members worked extremely hard the past 12 months and have showcased their skills across the globe... This award is another display of [the 914th Airlift Wing's Airmen and] their incredible accomplishments," said Col Bowman during the awards ceremony in Nashville, Tennessee. This high honor given by the highest levels of Air Force leadership highlighted the 914th Airlift Wing and the Airman within the wing's exceptionalism across the command. Most recently the wing was also awarded the 2016 Air Force Association Outstanding Reserve Flying Wing Award.

The 914 AW continues to remain a current, qualified, and mission ready force and will continue its legacy into the future as the 914th Air Refueling Wing beginning this coming June of 2017. Retirees are welcome to join in the celebration on June 3, 2017 at 11 a.m. in building 707 at the NFARS for this historic event for the conversion and resignation ceremony as the wing officially changes missions. As the 914th Airlift Wing's rich history of flying the C-130 Hercules comes to a historic close, the wing is preparing with eagerness to begin its new chapter and bright future in its new mission set at the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station.

### **FAMILY DAY**

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, the base will be hosting their annual Family Day for the 914<sup>th</sup> and 107<sup>th</sup> airmen and their families. All retirees are invited to attend, no matter which branch of service you served with; the day will also be celebrated with the formal transition to the 914<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Wing. There will be civilian and military VIPs from Washington D.C. in attendance. Please come out and show that our military retirees support our present service members. There will be food and drink, as well as vendors and games. It should be a great and proud day for all. *Make sure you have your military retiree ID for admittance!*

### **HEADS UP**

#### **Tricare Dental Program (TDP)**

On May, 2017, the program will transition from MetLife to United Concordia . Military retirees and their families will continue to have coverage through the Delta Dental.

Under the new contract, beneficiaries will see a \$200 increase in their annual maximum benefit and lower monthly premiums and increased coverage for preventative services. Beneficiaries should check with their dental provider to see if they accept United Concordia TRICARE plans to avoid any out of pocket expenses. *MOAA Apr 2017*

### Prostate Health

An enlarged prostate or benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) is normal as men age. By age 50, half of men have some prostate enlargement. However, not all will experience symptoms and fewer will require treatment. Symptoms of BPH include a sudden need to urinate, a weak stream, incomplete emptying of the bladder and frequent waking at night to urinate. BPH is usually a clinical diagnosis based on symptoms as well as medical evaluation, which can rule out cancer in the region.

Behavioral changes such as minimizing liquids before bedtime, urinating at preset times, and minimizing alcohol and caffeine can help. Some men find sitting to urinate can be helpful. If possible, avoid medications that make urination more difficult (e.g., antihistamines, decongestants, opiates and antidepressants). ALWAYS consult your medical provider before changing medications! *Rear Adm. Joyce Johnson, USPHS Ret. MOAA April 2017*

### BRAC

This, from the *MOAA* magazine, April 2017 issue:

Unless the current law is changed, sequestration will return this year and automatically trigger billions in deep cuts to DOD's budget. The Budget Control Act of 2011(BCA) established automatic budget cuts known as sequestration. The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 mitigated spending cuts for 2014 and 2015. However, the original cuts for FY 2016-2021 remain in effect. *MOAA's* position is that Congress must repeal the BCA and establish bipartisan, common-sense debt reduction package to avoid harmful cuts to our nation's defense and disproportionate penalties on our service members and their families. If anyone has feeling either way, contact your Congressional representatives to express them. *The RAO does not defend or oppose MOAA's position.*

### Tricare On-The-Go

Are you planning an out of town vacation or trip? These are some proactive steps to take with TRICARE/TFL.

1. Take care of routine care before you go, it may not be covered later
2. Always bring copies of important documents:
  - Primary care doctors phone number
  - Military ID (for all family members)
3. All medications (ensure you have enough)

- Your meds are listed on your site at TRICARE, it is possible to get emergency partial refill
4. In an emergency situation, you can go to an ER that is out-of-network
    - You must contact your primary care manager within 24 hrs, especially if you are admitted so continued care can be authorized
  5. Non-Emergent care options:
    - Contact your primary care manager (PCM)
    - Call the Nurse Advice Line ( 1-800-TRICARE,option #1, 24hrs/day 7 days/week)
    - Self refer to an urgent care facility
  6. Urgent Care Pilot Program:
    - In 2016, this program was announced and will continue through May 2019.It allows enrollees to self refer to an urgent care facility (network providers) without authorization for up to two visits. Urgent care is different than emergency care and should be accessed for non-life threatening illnesses such as sprains or fevers. If you are unsure, refer to the Nurses' Advice line (above).These visits are usually less expensive than ER visits

Regional Telephone Numbers For TRICARE:

North	1-877-874-2273
South	1-800-444-5445
West	1-877-988-9378

For More Information Visit: [www.tricare.mil/](http://www.tricare.mil/)

**WNY WARRIORS' FLIGHT**

A few years ago, Senator George Maziarz initiated a free flight for WWII veterans to see the monument for WWII soldiers in Washington D.C., Senator Robert Ortt has expanded this program to include Korean Veterans. This free and honorary event is usually schedule for October, if any eligible veterans are interested, please contact Sue Hempel at Senator Robert Ortt's office for more information at 175 Walnut St, Suite 6, Lockport, NY 14094. (716) 434-0680.

**PROPOSED "FLY-AWAY" DAY TRIP**

Colonel Bowman has proposed a retiree-only, thank you day trip to Wright-Patterson AFB and the Air Force Museum. The date has been tentatively scheduled for 24 May 2017. Any military retiree may call the RAO office (716) 236-2389 to place your name on the roll call list; sign-ups are on a first-come, first-served basis. The deadline is set for May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Space is limited to the first 30 retirees to call or place their name on the list. Showtime for this flight is set tentatively for 0600. Admission is free and lunch will be available for purchase at the onsite cafeteria(s). The flight will be

on a 914<sup>th</sup> C-130; this may be one of the final flights of these great airplanes from our base. Just to reiterate.....This will be for military retirees only (no dependents) with valid military ID, there will be electric carts available however this event is not available to 100% disabled veterans at this time.

## **JUST FOR FUN**

### **Snapple Fun Fact # 123**

Beavers were once the size of bears!

### **Truisms**

“Recent study found that women, who carry a little extra weight, live longer than men who mention it!”

“Money talks...but all mine says is good-bye!”

### **Yogiisms**

“If you ask me anything I don’t know, I’m not going to answer.”

“It gets late early out there.”

“I usually take a two hour nap from one to four!”

### **Bet Ya Didn’t Know**

In the late 1700s, many household consisted of one large room with only one chair. Commonly, a long wide board folded down from the wall and was used for dining. The head of the household always sat in the chair while everyone else ate sitting on the floor. Occasionally a guest, usually a man, would be invited to sit in this chair during a meal. To sit in the chair meant you were important and in charge. They called the one sitting in the chair “the chairman”. Today, in business, we use the expression or title “chairman” or “chairman of the board”.

### **In Case We Forget...**

“It’s important to have a twinkle in your wrinkle” -Author Unknown

### **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.

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