**Buckley SFB, CO - RETIREE ACTIVITIES OFFICE (RAO) NEWSLETTER - April 2022**

18401 East A-Basin Ave, Stop 95, Buckley AFB, CO 80011
**Building 606, Room 104**, phone **720-847-6693,** e-mail address: **460sw.rao.org@spaceforce.mil**
**Normal Hrs:** Mon 1000-1600, Tues 0800-1200, Wed 0900-1400, Thurs 0800-1200 & Fri 0900-1200
**Director: Steve Young, Lt Col, USAF, Ret**

**RETIREE ACTIVITIES OFFICE (RAO) LOCATION:** We are in Rm 104 of Bldg 606, close to the main building entrance. As you come in the main entrance, turn left, enter the first hallway on your right and Rm 104 is the first room on your left. Remember, we assist military retirees from **all** Services!

**RAO VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:** We currently have only 8 permanent RAO volunteers that support our "Help Desk" (720-847-6693) which, when all volunteers are available, means the office has someone present during some hours of the morning and/or afternoon Mon-Fri. You can leave a voice mail anytime, and we check Voice Mails frequently to return calls. We still have open time slots during the week and need more volunteers. If you think you might be interested, or just have questions, please contact me (Steve Young) at my home e-mail - elkfive@centurylink.net.

**COVID-19 IMPACTS ON BUCKLEY AFB:** Due to the low levels of COVID-19 transmissions on Buckley SFB and the surrounding counties, the installation recently transitioned to HPCON Alpha. Buckley SFB Public Health Directive #22-3 is now effective. Mask wear is no longer required for DoD personnel or visitors on Buckley SFB (including the gym) but is still required in all Medical Group facilities regardless of vaccination status. The base has directed that 100% of non-mission essential personnel can now report to work on base. For the most current info on base facilities and additional details on **days/hours**, etc. please check the Buckley AFB and 460 FSS FaceBook (FB) pages and Buckley AFB website.

https://www.facebook.com/BuckleySpaceForceBase/
https://www.460fss.com/

**MPF Bldg 606 ID card service hours are: Mon/Tues/Thurs/Fri 0800 to 1500; Wed 0800-1200**
**MPF Call Center: Mon/Tues/Thurs/Fri: 1200-1500; 720-847-4357, Option 2 (Questions or make appts)**

**Retiree & Dependent ID Cards (Appts Only)**

- Agent Letter (allows others to shop commissary, BX, etc for retirees not able to - walk-ins OK!)
- In Apr the AF MPF in Bldg 606 will be open on Saturday, 23 Apr, to issue ID cards - need to call for appt.

**To find the ID facility nearest you and make an appointment online please go to the RAPIDS Site Locator at the following link: https://idco.dmdc.osd.mil/idco/#/**

Once you get to the RAPIDS site, click on the "ID Card Office Locator & Appointments" Continue box. The page that comes up should default to the "Search for Site by Address" tab. Ensure "All" is selected under the "Search For" area, then enter your zip code in the "Enter Location" area, select an entry from the "Radius" drop-down menu, and click on the "Search" box. A list of sites will pop up and then you can select "More Info" for the site you want to use, and the "Schedule an Appointment" block. A calendar will come up for that site where you can scroll through the months on the calendar to see when appointments are available. During the pandemic some locations may not show any appointments available. When you pick a day with appointments you will see a list of the times available for that day below the calendar and you can pick the one you want and click on "Book This Appointment." Just FYI, you will typically find more online appointments available on the 140th ANG and NOSC sites - both on Buckley SFB - than at the MPF in Bldg 606.

**OBSERVANCES IN APRIL:** 5 - Gold Star Spouses Day; 9 - National Former POW Recognition Day; 14 - AF Reserve birthday; 15 - Purple Up! Day; 23 - Army Reserve birthday; 30 - National Military Brats Day.

**FINANCIAL PLANNING:** Most people can benefit from professional financial advice, whether they are just starting out or are getting ready to draw on their retirement savings and want information on how to minimize tax impacts. If you have been thinking about using the services of a financial advisor, the first step is to find and vet an adviser who is appropriate for your needs. When I went through this process the first thing I looked for was an adviser who adheres to a fiduciary standard, which means they are legally bound to act in your best interests and **must** put your interests before their own. This type of adviser is normally fee-only - you pay them either via a set fee or a fee that's calculated as a percentage of your assets they manage.

While some companies may offer a "free" adviser, they are often more interested in sales than anything else, because they likely receive a commission. They may be following a **suitability** standard rather than a fiduciary standard, meaning that they are only obligated to make sure investments are **appropriate** for you, not that those investments are **your** best options.

There are many sites you can use to search for a financial advisor, below are just a few examples:

- National Association of Personal Financial Advisors
- Garrett Planning Network
- Military Financial Advisors Association
- XY Planning Network

Of course, you can also ask friends, family, and colleagues for their recommendations, but you should still do your own vetting to ensure anyone recommended meets **your** needs and standards.

Examples of some questions you might want to ask when looking for an advisor include:

- What is your fee structure?
- Are you a fiduciary?
- What are your credentials?
- How will our relationship work? You will want to know how often you'll meet, and whether your potential adviser will be available via email or phone if you have questions.
- What is your investment philosophy? Your potential financial planner should be able to explain their style of investing, and it should mesh with your goals and your risk comfort level.

Related to financial planning, some people decide to set up a trust for their assets. Trusts are established to provide legal protection for your assets, make sure those assets are distributed according to your wishes, reduce paperwork (probate for example) and, in some cases, avoid or reduce inheritance or estate taxes.

**TRICARE QUALIFYING LIFE EVENTS (QLEs):** When life changes for TRICARE beneficiaries, their health plan options may also change. These types of changes are called TRICARE Qualifying Life Events, or QLEs. A QLE may allow families to enroll in or change their health plan coverage outside the normal open enrollment season. A tookit is now available with QLE information and resources, including graphics, screensavers, Q&As, TRICARE 101, a video, and more. These tools can help answer many questions you might have about QLEs, from what they are to what actions need to be taken. Here is a link to the Toolkit on the Military Health System website: Qualifying Life Events Toolkit | Health.mil

**NAVY SHIFT COLORS:** The Fall-Winter 2021 issue of Shift Colors can be found at the link below. This document is the Navy version of the Air Force "Afterburner" and has lots of great articles, website links, phone numbers, etc. Shift Colors (navy.mil) Links to all the Service newsletters are on the Buckley SFB RAO website.

**ARMY ECHOES:** The Feb-Apr 2022 issue of Army Echoes can be found at the link below. This document is the Army version of the Air Force "Afterburner" and has lots of great articles, website links, phone numbers, etc.

US Army | Soldier For Life Links to all the Service newsletters are on the Buckley SFB RAO website.

**SECONDARY DEPENDENTS OF RETIREES:** If you're providing financial support to a parent, parent-in-law, or someone who has acted as your parent (the term for this is "in loco parentis"), it makes sense to figure out what types of benefits can help you with that responsibility. **For active duty and military retiree families**, it is possible to have your parent/parent-in-law and others declared a secondary dependent, which grants them some of the privileges of being a military dependent.

In order to successfully apply for secondary dependency, you must be able to prove that you provide over one-half of the applicant's monthly living expenses, and that their income is less than one-half of their monthly living expenses. Application is made through DFAS (Army and Air Force) or through your branch's Secondary Dependency office (Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and Navy.) You'll have to submit a DD Form 137-3 (forms and instructions are available at this link) and supporting paperwork to substantiate the dependency. (The Coast Guard form is CG-1758.) A Fm 1172 will also be required for some.

If dependency is awarded, your parent/parent-in-law will be eligible for a Uniformed Services ID card, use of military pharmacy, may obtain primary medical care at a military treatment facility on a space-available basis under the TRICARE Plus program, be eligible for Tricare for Life, etc. You will likely have to reaffirm your parent dependency periodically. To get an ID card and establish eligibility in Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) for the secondary dependent you will need: completed Fm 1172, DFAS letter of approval, Service member birth certificate and valid photo ID and photo ID and Social Security card of the parent/parent-in-law. *We recommend you call the ID card office you plan to use to confirm required documentation prior to your appointment.*

You can also seek dependent status for a minor child for whom you have legal custody or guardianship. You must submit the child's birth certificate, DD Forms 137-7 and 1172, and the original or certified copies of the guardianship or other relevant court documents to DFAS.

The secondary dependency process requires a significant amount of paperwork, but it can help with some of the challenges of supporting a parent. For additional information and points of contact, you may visit the following DFAS websites or call 888-332-7411:
https://www.dfas.mil/militarymembers/SecondaryDependency/SDC/
Defense Finance and Accounting Service > MilitaryMembers > SecondaryDependency > secondarydependency_Army (dfas.mil)
For establishing Tricare eligibility in DEERS see: Required Documents | TRICARE

**PRE-NEED DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR BURIAL IN A VA CEMETERY:** You can apply to find out in advance if you can be buried in a VA national cemetery. This is called a pre-need determination of eligibility and it can help make the burial planning process easier for your family members in their time of need. To be eligible, one of the following must describe you:

- A Veteran who didn't receive a dishonorable discharge when you separated from the military, **or**
- The spouse or dependent child of a service member or Veteran, even if the service member or Veteran has already passed away, **or**
- In some cases, the adult dependent child of a service member or Veteran (if you aren't married)

The VA bases their decision of whether or not you qualify for burial in a VA national cemetery on your service history, or the service history of the Veteran or service member who's sponsoring your application for burial as a spouse, surviving spouse, or unmarried adult child.

The application process describe here is only for VA national cemeteries. If you'd like to be buried in a state or tribal Veterans cemetery, contact that specific cemetery ahead of time to find out about their pre-need program. Some state Veterans cemeteries require that you live in that state or have other rules around eligibility. You can apply for a pre-need determination of eligibility from VA and also from a state or tribal Veterans cemetery.

This application also doesn't apply to Arlington National Cemetery or the United States Soldiers and Airmen's Home National Cemetery. If you'd like to be buried in either of these Department of the Army cemeteries, please call 877-907-8585, Monday through Friday, 0800 to 1730. ET, and Saturday, 0900 to 1300 ET.
Getting a pre-need determination of eligibility doesn't guarantee you'll be buried in a **specific** VA national cemetery as reservations aren't taken at **any** VA national cemetery. However, you can specify where you prefer to be buried so the VA can try to help fulfill your final wishes.

To apply, you'll need your (or your sponsor's):

- Social Security number
- Date and place of birth
- Military status and service history (like service dates, discharge character, and rank, commonly found on the DD214 or other separation documents)
- Discharge papers (DD214 or other separation documents)

If you don't have all the required documentation, you can still apply and the VA may be able to assist in locating the missing documents. If both you and your spouse are applying you both need to complete an application. If you're applying as a spouse, surviving spouse, or unmarried adult child, you'll also need your personal information, including your Social Security number. If you're applying on behalf of someone else, you'll also need supporting documents showing you have the authority to apply for that person. You'll need to fill out one of these forms: VA Form 21-22 or VA Form 21-22a.

To apply, fill out an Application for Pre-need Determination of Eligibility for Burial in a VA National Cemetery (VA Form 40-10007). If you need help filling out the form, you can call the VA toll-free hotline at 800-535-1117 or contact a Veterans Service Officer (VSO). You can find a nearby VSO using the following link: Veteran Service Officers - List of Where to Find Help (nvf.org)

**MILITARY RETIREES CAN RENEW U.S. PASSPORTS ONLINE:** The State Department has announced that active-duty, reserve and retired service members, and DoD civilians and contractors and their families can now renew their U.S. passports online. An online portal, available 23 Dec 21, will enable customers to renew their passports from the convenience of their homes 24/7 without having to go to a post office to mail their application and supporting documents. See the following link for more information: You Can Now Renew Your Passport Online | Military.com

**BURN PIT BILL AIMS TO EXPAND VA ACCESS FOR POST-9/11 VETERANS:** The bipartisan Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act, passed by the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs (SVAC) on 2 Feb, would expand VA eligibility to about 1 million Post-9/11 combat veterans, with the goal of improving access to treatment for conditions stemming from toxic exposure. The bill would open VA health care eligibility for these veterans from five years after discharge to 10 and would also allow for a one-year open enrollment period for any Post-9/11 combat veterans outside that 10-year window. The bill is the first in a three-phase plan to expand benefits. The second phase would involve the creation of a "new, transparent process" for the VA in determining what illnesses can be presumptively connected to toxic exposure, while the third phase would provide "overdue benefits to thousands of toxic exposure veterans who have been long ignored or forgotten." The bill also requires several studies related to toxic exposure, including one on mortality rates of veterans who served in Southwest Asia during the Persian Gulf War. It would increase VA reporting requirements and outreach efforts on toxic exposure and require the VA provide a toxic exposure screening for all veterans during medical visits.

**END OF LIFE PLANNING:** This is a subject we in the RAO bring up periodically. We get quite a few calls from the surviving spouses when their military retiree spouse passes away, and most find very little planning was done that would help them deal with all the notifications and actions that need to be taken. Most people would list a will, a trust, an advance directive, a DNR (do not resuscitate) order, and a durable power of attorney among end-of-life documents. However, the list of documents that deal with end-of-life issues is much longer. Deeds to real property, beneficiary declaration for life insurance, the signature card to a bank account, and many others, are all end-of-life documents. They all determine who gets what and through which legal procedure when someone dies.

Fortunately, there are many checklists to help create an end-of-life plan available through a number of trustworthy organizations like Veterans Affairs, Military.com, and the RAO. Some are more comprehensive than others, some are free, and some are not. While doing this properly requires a lot of work, we strongly recommend you do some research, pick a checklist, or create one of your own, and get to work on completing this project **before** you need it. You may need to consult various professionals - lawyer, accountant, insurance agent, financial advisor, etc. - to help build the plan. Once complete, discuss your plan with those who hold health care proxy, powers of attorney, and other authority over your person and/or property, put documents in a safe place, and make sure those who will need them when you are gone know where they are. We recommend you review, update, redraft, and re-execute documents, lists, and paperwork annually, as needed. You can locate the Buckley SFB RAO End-of-Life checklist on our website: www.buckley.spaceforce.mil

**2022 U.S. ARMY RETIRED SOLDIER HANDBOOK:** Produced by Army Retirement Services, the 2022 U.S. Army Retired Soldier Handbook is available for download as a PDF document from the Army Retirement Services website at https://soldierforlife.army.mil/Documents/static/Post/2022_ArmyRetSoldierHandbk.pdf

**ARMY GRAY AREA RETIREMENTS (GARs):** Army Human Resources Command (HRC) services Retired USAR and ARNG Soldiers processing retirement pay packets and family members with RCSBP. You can reach them at (888) 276-9472 or (502) 613-8950. You can download retirement applications at: https://www.hrc.army.mil/asset/19367 or email your request to usarmy.knox.hrc.mbx.tagd-ask-hrc@army.mil The HRC-GAR website is at https://www.hrc.army.mil/content/Gray%20Area%20Retirements%20Branch

**COLORADO PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR SENIORS AND DISABLED VETS:** The Colorado Disabled Veteran Property Tax Exemption is a property tax exemption available to 100% disabled Veterans and Surviving Spouses of 100% disabled Veterans. This is an exemption of the first 50% of the first $200,000 in actual value of their primary residence. The Colorado State Disabled Veteran Property Tax Exemption is from *January 1 - July 1 for each tax year*. the application has changed from last year and the only acceptable application is the one you find on vets.colorado.gov. The applicant will be sent a letter to the address on the form stating their office has received the application. Once the application has been processed, the applicant will receive a letter of their status update; accepted, incomplete, (denied with explanation) via the US Postal Service. If the application is approved, the application will be sent to the veteran's county assessor of further processing. To assist in this process please include the VA Rating Letter ***or*** *the Branch of service medical retirement letter*. Please send applications to 155 Van Gordon Street, Suite 201, Lakewood, CO 80228.
Emailed applications will not be accepted or reviewed due to Personal Identifiable Information (PII) concerns.
Veterans who are not rated 100% but are on Individual Unemployability are not eligible for this tax exemption.
For other questions, please reach out to Beth Maxwell at 303-914-5832.

There is also a property tax exemption for qualifying seniors. Requirements for eligibility are as follows:

- Applicant must be a senior who is 65 or older or a surviving spouse of a senior who previously qualified for the exemption.
- Applicants must have owned and occupied the property as their primary residence for ten or more years.
- Fifty percent of the first $200,000 in actual property value is exempt from property taxation.

More information on both of these can be found at the following link: Senior and Veteran Property-Tax Programs | Colorado Department of the Treasury

**TRAGEDY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR SURVIVORS (TAPS):** TAPS, is a 24/7 tragedy-assistance resource for anyone who has suffered the death of a military loved one, regardless of the relationship to the deceased or the circumstance of the death. The program provides comfort and care through comprehensive grief services and programs including peer-based emotional support, casework assistance, connections to community-based care and grief and trauma resources, at no cost to surviving families and loved ones. Since 1994 TAPS has provided compassionate care to all those grieving the death of a military loved one. If you are grieving the loss of a service member, or if you know someone who can use our support, the TAPS 24/7 National Military Survivor Helpline is always available toll-free with loving support and resources at 800-959-TAPS (8277).

**DFAS 1099-R TAX FORMS FOR 2021 ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE:** The fastest and most secure way to obtain a copy of your 1099-R is through myPay. Retirees and annuitants can log in to myPay anytime and print a copy of their 1099-R. Instructions are at: https://myPay.dfas.mil For retirees without a myPay account, if your mailing address on file with DFAS is current, you can get a copy of your 1099-R through the DFAS telephone self-service option. To use telephone self-service:

- Call 800-321-1080
- Select option "1" for Self-Serve
- Select option "1"
- Enter your Social Security Number when prompted

Your 1099-R should be in the mail within 7-10 business days to the address DFAS has on record. *Please note that 1099-R reissues requested through the telephone self-service option cannot be mailed prior to February 10, 2022.*

**MILCONNECT SITE:** I've heard some customers talk about using a milConnect website account for various things, but I have never used it. Some told me one thing you can do is access your Official Military Personnel File (OMPF), so I recently decided to check it out. I found I could go and select which records I wanted from four different groups (Service, Professional History, Performance and Administrative) and submit my request online. About 10-20 minutes after submitting my request I got an e-mail saying that pdf files of the records I requested were on the site and providing me with directions on how to access them. I had over 70 that I could download and save to my home computer - enlistment forms, active-duty service commitment forms, DD214, OPRs, award citations, promotion orders, etc. The e-mail indicated the records would be in my account for 10 days and then deleted from there. While some of the documents were not very clear after being scanned into the system, I was still impressed. I just wanted to see what was in my OMPF on the site but there are many other things you can do from milConnect - manage health benefits, manage SGLI, get proof of health coverage, update personal contact info, etc. You do not need a Common Access Card (CAC) to access milConnect, you can use a DS Logon ID and create a password. You can log in or create an account at milConnect (osd.mil)

Be aware this may not work for everyone. One of the RAO volunteers tried it and got the following error message:

"Please do NOT reply to this email as this email address is not monitored.

Your request for Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) Information has been processed.
However, unfortunately your record is not held in the Service digital image OMPF repository database. It is recommended that you initiate a request for your OMPF information to the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) using this eVetRecs website at http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/

Thank you for making a request for your OMPF record documents through DPRIS! This request will be closed and purged. "

**COVID FUNERAL ASSISTANCE:** Under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, FEMA is providing financial assistance for COVID-19 related funeral expenses incurred on or after January 20, 2020. This federal program can reimburse families up to $9,000 for funeral costs for loved ones who died of COVID-19. You can call a dedicated, toll-free phone number (844-684-6333) to complete your COVID-19 Funeral Assistance application with a FEMA representative. Multilingual services are available. For additional information regarding requirements for this assistance, and other details, see the following link: COVID-19 Funeral Assistance | FEMA.gov

**"WIDOWS TAX" OFFSET PHASE 2 FOR 2022:** 2022 is the second year of a three-year phase out of what has been known as the "widow's tax," which required forfeiture of a dollar of Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) for every dollar of Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) received. Remember, this is only applicable to those surviving spouses who qualify for **both** DIC and SBP and are in receipt of the Special Survivor Indemnity Allowance (SSIA). In Phase 1 (2021), surviving spouse SBP payments were reduced, or offset, **by two-thirds** of the DIC rather than the full dollar-for-dollar reduction. For many surviving spouses, this resulted in an increase in the amount of SBP paid as the gross amount of their SBP exceeded two-thirds of the DIC. Others have had to wait to see an increase in their benefit. We are now nearing the start of Phase 2 of the elimination of the offset for which the amount offset (or deducted) from the SBP will be reduced to **one-third** of the DIC payment. To estimate your benefit, subtract one-third of your current base DIC payment from your current gross SBP benefit. The result is approximately what your SBP payment will be in the second phase, plus any COLAs, which is approximately 5.9%.

Here is an example of how this offset works: We will assume a COLA of 5.9% for 2022, which puts the projected 2022 base DIC amount at approximately $1,437.66. One-third of that new DIC amount is $479.22. This is the amount you will subtract from your gross SBP amount. So, if your gross SBP without offset is $1,000, then you would subtract $479.22 from $1,000 to give you a 2022 SBP payment of $520.78 ($1,000-$479.22). You would also receive the SSIA, which is projected to be approximately $346.

These new changes will be effective in January 2022, which you will see reflected on the payment you should receive on Feb. 1, 2022. If you do not know your gross SBP, you can find that on your annuitant account statements, available in your myPay account. You should also have received an annuity statement in the mail in December 2021. There are no changes to the post-9/11 active-duty survivor child-only SBP option until 2023, and these changes do not impact the retiree child-only SBP option.

DFAS has put together a new Quick Reference PDF document on the SBP-DIC Offset Phased Elimination that you can find at the following link: https://www.dfas.mil/sbpdicnews

**NAVY RESERVE RETIREMENT TRANSITION OUTREACH EVENTS:** Navy Personnel Command's Retirement Transition Outreach (RTO) provides information to Navy Reserve members on the processes and benefits of reserve retirement. Members of the Navy Reserve Component and their spouses at all milestones toward full retirement with pay are invited to attend a FY22 RTO event. Attendance is not mandatory for Reserve members prior to approval of a retirement request. See below for an updated schedule as well as directions for how to register for an available FY22 RTO event.

Reserve Retirement Counseling Session (RRCS): preferred format for most current SELRES, VTU, and IRR.
Sat.-Sun., Apr. 9-10, 2022, 0800 EST
Sat.-Sun., May 14-15, 2022, 0800 EST
Sat.-Sun., Sept. 10-11, 2022, 0800 PST
Wed., Sept. 14, 2022, 0800 CST

Retirement Awareness Workshop (RAW): preferred for those seeking detailed retirement preparations.
Tues.-Thurs., May 3-5, 2022, 0800 CST (hybrid option: virtual/in-person)

Reserve Retirement Waypoint (RRW) Events: preferred for those retiring with pay within two years.
Tues., Jun. 21, 2022, 1800 CST
Tues., Sept. 20, 2022, 1800 CST

Register here:
FY22 RTO Registration via FLANK SPEED Microsoft Forms: https://forms.osi.apps.mil/r/iukurzfztP
Or, email the RTO Team to request registration for a specific FY22 RTO event: pers-9_RTO@us.navy.mil

Registration will be limited to 150 participants per event. Top priority will be given to Navy Reserve members who will be eligible for retirement with pay in less than 24 months, and to currently serving members who will soon reach their notice of eligibility milestone (20 qualifying years). The RTO event team will provide event joining link and instructions, plus read-ahead materials, via email to registered participants prior to the event. Please note, questions about individual records or request packages will not be addressed by the RTO team including during events.

Please visit the RTO webpage on MyNavy HR for more information about RTO events: https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Career-Management/Reserve-Personnel-Mgmt/Reserve-Retirements/Retirement-Transition-Outreach/

**PHARMACY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED & LINE RECOMMENDATIONS:** The Buckley SFB Pharmacy is in dire need of volunteers, and they asked me to advertise that in our newsletter. Volunteers will need to be fully vaccinated and may need to complete some training. Anyone interested in more information can call the pharmacy at (720) 847-9355 (Option 4, then Option 3) to inquire or to get started. In addition, for those who have trouble standing while waiting for a prescription pick-up in the lobby, they highly recommend you use the drive thru. Prior to COVID, the drive-thru was strictly pick-up only but that is no longer the case. Everything you need from the pharmacy can now be accomplished using the drive thru.

**PHARMACY HOURS:** As of 1 Jan, the pharmacy implemented the following new hours: Mon-Fri 0800-1700. In addition, they will be closed on the second Wed of each month for a Training Day (13 Apr for this month). When there is delayed reporting for non-mission essential personnel the pharmacy will open 30 minutes **after** the Report No Earlier Than time. Please remember holidays, family days, etc. can impact these hours so you can always check the Buckley SFB Facebook page for the latest info on hours.

**PHARMACY - PATIENT ADVOCATE E-MAIL ADDRESS:** As you know, pharmacy patient advocates are available to hear your comments and concerns related to pharmacy operations. There are forms available in the pharmacy for you to submit comments to them, but with the pandemic you don't have access to those. The pharmacy has established an e-mail inbox for the patient advocates so you can now e-mail them directly at the pharmacy patient advocate org box: usaf.buckley.460sw-mdg.mbx.pharmacy-patient-advocate@mail.mil .

**MY AIR FORCE BENEFITS WEBSITE:** While the site is mainly focused on active-duty folks, there is a **lot** of information on there of interest to retirees/surviving spouses as well. The site has about 180 fact sheets on various benefits and a section for "Transition and Retirement Planning." If you look under the "Benefit Library" tab (top left of the page), and click on the "Resource Locator" link, you can then click on CO (or any other state) to see a wealth of information on resources in your state (with base specific resources as well). I strongly encourage you to check out this website. Home | An Official Air Force Benefits Website (af.mil)

**LEGAL OFFICE OPEN FOR "LIMITED SERVICES" FOR RETIREES & DEPENDENTS:** Legal is once again providing **limited** legal assistance services for military retirees and their dependents. Wi**lls** for retirees and dependents will **only be done on Thursdays of each week from 1300 to 1500 and you must have an appointment**. For notary services and powers of attorney, walk-ins for retirees are available on Mondays and Wednesdays from 0800-1200. Retirees have the option of conducting their legal assistance appointment by telephone or in person. Legal expects the will appointments to fill up very quickly and they will **not** have a "waitlist." Thus, legal may ask that retirees call back in 2-3 weeks to check for open appointments once they are booked for several weeks. Prior to scheduling an appointment for a will, medical directive or power of attorney, legal will **require a ticket #** or worksheet, as well as your DoD ID Number which is located in the lower right front of the old (DD Fm 2) ID card (10-digit number). You can obtain a ticket # from the AF legal assistance website at U.S. Air Force Legal Assistance (AFLASS) when you go to the site to fill out the required information for whatever document it is you want completed. If you call legal to make an appointment, they will **not** give you an appointment unless you have the ticket number issued by the website. For any questions call base legal at 720-847-6444.

**HOW TO CREATE A MYPAY ACCOUNT WITH DEFENSE FINANCE & ACCOUNTING SERVICE (DFAS):** If you don't have a MyPay account with DFAS I recommend you create one. With your own account you can download your Form1099 for taxes, print a copy of your Retiree Account Statement (RAS), set up beneficiaries for Arrears of Pay, update your mailing and e-mail address, adjust federal and state withholding for taxes, etc. You start by requesting an initial password on the myPay homepage (myPay Web Site (dfas.mil)) using the "Forgot or Need a Password" link. The password will be mailed to the address you have on file with DFAS and you will receive it in about 10 business days. Once you receive your password in the mail, you return to the myPay homepage and log in with your social security number and the password you received in the mail to create your myPay profile. DFAS has a downloadable step-by-step Get Started Guide to myPay on their website and a how-to video on the DFAS YouTube channel. For additional info on obtaining a MyAccount you can visit: https://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/manage/mypay/

**EMPLOYMENT SERVICES FOR VETERANS:** Arapahoe/Douglas Works! (A/D Works!) Workforce Center is a member of the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment and provides a variety of no-cost services to veteran job seekers; resources and workshops for a self-directed job search, one-on-one employment counseling, customizing resumes, referrals to other state and federal agencies and training assistance. For more information you can visit their website at http://www.adworks.org/ Just FYI, there is an A/D Works! Veterans Employment Specialist that works several days a week in Bldg 606 on base (when non-mission essential personnel are allowed back in their offices on Buckley AFB). For more info you can also contact the AD Works! Call Center at (303) 636-1160 and ask to be contacted to a Veterans Employment Team Member.

**HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED UNSATISFACTORY SERVICE FROM THE RAO?** We are staffed completely with volunteers who do their very best to help with your issues. While we always strive to provide you with the best possible support, we realize there may be times you experience what you consider to be unsatisfactory customer service when you contact the RAO. Perhaps you never received a response to a voice mail/e-mail you left, you got inaccurate information regarding a question you had or the person who helped you was unable to provide an adequate answer to your question. If you are ever dissatisfied with the support you get from the RAO please contact the RAO Director to discuss the situation. The best way to reach me is via my home e-mail - elkfive@centurylink.net.

**DENVER VA REGIONAL BENEFITS OFFICE HOURS & LOCATIONS:** *Do you have a question about your VA Benefits? Compensation Claim, Pension Claim, Aid and Attendance, Appeals, survivor and burial benefits, Home Loans, Employment, or Education*
The *VBA* Office in the Rocky Mountain Regional VA Medical Center is holding office hours:
Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. (last appt. at 3:30 p.m.)
Phone: (800) 827-1000
Location:
Rocky Mountain Regional VA Medical Center
Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)
1700 North Wheeling Street
Aurora, CO 80045
Sign up to meet with a counselor in the Pharmacy waiting room.

We also have a Veterans Affairs Office on Buckley SFB in Bldg 606 with Benefits Advisors (Mr Tyrone Groce & Ms Deloris Evans) who can normally be reached at 720-847-4838 from Mon-Fri 0800 - 1600.

**LIFE CHANGING EVENT? KEEP DFAS INFORMED**: Ensuring your retired pay comes to you accurately and on time is the primary goal at DFAS. To do this, they need your help to keep your account up to date. *Keeping your account up to date includes making sure your mailing address, banking information, allotments, tax withholding status, and your beneficiary choices are current. Be sure to report any c*hange of life events as soon as they happen. These life-changing events include:
- Marriage
- Divorce
- Death of a spouse or child
- Birth or adoption of a child

Some changes, especially those regarding SBP, have a one-year time limit, so it is very important that DFAS is notified of life-changing events when they happen. When you notify them, be sure to include supporting documents, such as birth or marriage certificates. Keeping your contact information updated is also key to staying informed. DFAS occasionally sends out correspondence regarding changes in the law that affect your pay, and a new Retired Account Statement (RAS) is sent when your net pay changes (unless you are on ***myPay*** where the new RAS is available online). If your mailing address is not correct and you are not on ***myPay***, they have no way of notifying you about changes. The easiest way to stay up to date is to use ***myPay***. You can use ***myPay*** to change your mailing address, your direct deposit information, Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) coverage, certain allotments and your tax withholding status. You can create a myPay account at https://mypay.dfas.mil/

**Reporting the Death of a Retiree**

Do your loved ones know who to contact in the event of your death? Casualty Assistance Representatives (CARs) stand ready to lend a hand with your casualty assistance needs. Call them for an appointment to talk about what you should have ready for your loved ones in the event of your passing. If you are not sure who your AF Casualty Assistance Representative (CAR) is, you can call 877-353-6807, enter your zip code, and you will be automatically transferred to the base CAR responsible for your area.

Buckley SFB Casualty Assistance Office (Loretta Lopez) - CAR/SBP Rep .... 720-847-6946
Retired Air Force.....................................................1-877-353-6807
Retired Army...........................................................1-800-626-3317
Retired Coast Guard.................................................1-800-772-8724
Retired Marines........................................................1-800-847-1597
Retired Navy...........................................................1-800-368-3202
Retired Civil Service.................................................1-888-767-6738
Receiving VA Compensation...................................1-800-827-1000
Social Security Administration.................................1-800-772-1213

**AFTERBURNER**: Air Force Retiree Services (AFRS) at Randolph AFB, TX publishes the Afterburner twice a year. You can find copies of the Afterburner at the following link: https://www.retirees.af.mil/library/afterburner/

**This newsletter is a RAO publication for retirees, annuitants and surviving spouses. Content is not to be construed as the official view of, or endorsement by, the RAO, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or the Air Force.**