



Wyoming National Guard Retiree News

Volume VII, Number 2

July 2010

WyANG CANCELS AIR SHOW

The WyANG will not be able to host their annual air show during Frontier Days this year. This canceling of the air show will not affect the performing of the USAF Thunderbirds on July 28.

Among the factors influencing the cancelation are many deployments, construction affecting the ramp area, a number of major inspections and lack of additional funds due to assistance in Haiti.

700 SOLDIERS HOME

Approximately 700 WyARNG members of 115th Fires Brigade, 2d Bn, 300th FA and 960th Brigade Support Bn returned to state control in April 2010 after spending nine months in Kuwait and Iraq. A brief description of what each unit accomplished during the deployment follows:

115th FiB conducted command and control operations throughout Kuwait and portions of Iraq. They commanded more than 3000 troops from more than 30 states. The unit drove 5.5 million miles, conducted over 25,000 missions, 24,000 convoy escorts, 4,000 response missions and 175 Mine Resistant Ambush Protection vehicle escorts. They also held 42 host nation training events, trained over 800 Kuwait troops and had command over 6 Kuwait and Iraq camps.

2-300 FA conducted more than 15,500 convoy security missions, drove over 3.2 million miles and moved and provided security of over 500,000 DoD personnel in

Kuwait. They also integrated more than 200 Soldiers from 36 states into the BN and secured 48,000 logistic vehicles into Iraq and maintained accountability of in excess of \$94 million worth of military equipment. In addition, the unit had command and control operations which supported more than 680 troops operating in three different countries.

960th BSB processed more than 20,000 work-orders, served more than 500,000 meals and improved cleanliness and efficiency of Camp Virginia. They initiated camp improvements such as installing run-quiet generators, replaced 700 transient tents, constructed 30 additional larger transient tents, installed a wireless emergency communication system and up graded quality of life living to 1,000 permanent and 180,000 transient troops.

CHARLIE MED 2 HOME

The second deployment phase of the Blackhawk UH-60 helicopter unit, better known as Charlie Med, returned from Afghanistan in June. The deployment consisted of 21 Soldiers and three UH-60 aircraft. First phase returned in Oct. 2009. The third phase has been reinstated and will deploy for Operation Enduring Freedom early in 2011.

GOVERNOR'S RECEPTION

The annual Governor's Reception will be held in Cheyenne at Little America, Oct. 2. Tickets are \$40 each. Invitations will be out soon.

CURRENT DEPLOYMENTS

As of June 24, there were approximately 88 WyNG members deployed.

Since Sept. 11, 2001, more than 2, 200 individual Soldiers and Airmen have been deployed at least once.

Recently close to 400 Soldiers and Airmen were activated for the largest state active duty mission since the Yellowstone fires more than 20 years ago.

Between June 7 and 19, WyNG forces assisted Fremont County residents with flood mitigation efforts.

CADETS GRADUATE

Youth ChalleNGe class 9 began its session on Jan. 16, at Camp Guernsey with 45 cadets. The class graduated 37 cadets, 26 male and 6 female on June 13.

Class 10 is scheduled to begin July 11. For information about the program, cadet applications or how to become a mentor, visit the Web site <http://www.ngycp.org/state/wy> Or call (307) 836-7503.

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MUSEUM NEWS/WMHS

The National Guard Bureau Museum Advisory council will conduct training for NG museums Aug. 17-19 in Kansas City, Mo. Bob & Bev Holmes will represent the WyNG. The training sessions will include: foundations, care of weapons, raising money, strategic planning, USPFPO budget process and grants, using ESGR and CFC for marketing your museum and a trip to visit Fort Leavenworth Museum. We have applied for a grant from Wells Fargo Bank to cover the transportation expenses. We are very excited to attend the training and expect to gain many ideas to improve our WyNG Museum.

Collections continue to come to the museum. A 115th Cav Rgmt widow brought in the first newspaper when the 115th was activated to Fort Lewis in 1941. The Powder River Horse-Mobile publication stated "it is not entered at any post office as second class matter under any act of congress." To prove the Army has always had weight control in mind, we share this 1941 story titled: "Troop B Heavy Winning Weight Race by Losing Steadily: While sympathetic fellow troopers watched with avid interest and mirth, Mike Stanko lost another 10 pounds last week, fading away to a mere 340 pounds in his marathon to get down to a trim 270 so he can stay in the Army. Stanko, who at 18 stands 5 feet 6 inches and still growing in both directions, softened the hearts of National Guard Officers back at Sheridan when he promised to lose 100 pounds if they would let him enlist. He weighed 370 pounds then, just 100 pounds over the maximum. Since induction he has been losing steadily, forgoing a pork chop now and then while fellow soldiers take second helpings and gain weight. It took a special built uniform to clothe him and he came very near losing his trousers last week on the overnight march when he took them off and they were mistaken for a tent."

The museum is grateful for all the support and appreciative for donations.

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

At the time of our retirement from the WyARNG in 1991, both as military and fulltime, we made a commitment to remain actively involved as volunteers.

Our intent is to keep the military retirement community informed on items affecting them and on information of interest to them. Since 1997, the main avenue of accomplishing the task is through the publishing of a newsletter three times a year.

As members of the WyNG Retiree Council, we help conduct a free retiree conference in Cheyenne each year in conjunction with the annual Governor's Reception. The speakers and topics cover the most up-to-date information concerning the military retiree community. The 2010 conference is scheduled to be held on Oct. 2, at the Plains Hotel, and will be the seventh held.

One of my wife, Bev's, long time dreams, and mine also for that matter, was to have a Wyoming

National Guard Museum where we preserve and show the history of the WyNG since the beginning on April 4, 1870.

Our dream became a reality a little less than three years ago. Come visit your WyNG Museum at 624 E. Pershing Blvd., in Cheyenne. It is open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. every Wednesday, and for special occasions.

None of these actions could have occurred without the financial support, influence and input from the Wyoming Military Department, Wyo. National Guard Association and Wyo. Militia Historical Society.

It behooves every retiree and family member to repay by fully supporting these entities through memberships, involvement and/or participation in programs offered.

The newsletter can be sent by email if the reader has a fast internet server and save the WyMD postage.

Send your email to RHolmes632@aol.com if you are interested in receiving messages or to receive the newsletter thru email.

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INFORMATION SOURCES: Sources for information being published in this newsletter are gathered from federal, state and private organization publications. Consult with the editorial staff for exact source of data.

DISCLAIMER: Articles provided in this newsletter are of a generic nature and for information purposes only. Readers are urged to investigate an item before acting on it. Military retirees and veterans may have different rights & entitlements dependant on the program being described. Ensure you verify your eligibility with proper authorities before acting on any program described. This joint publication is written, published & distributed by personnel of the Wyoming Military Department using state & federal funds and complies with the DoD Joint Ethics Regulation as reviewed by the Wyoming Military Department Ethics Advisor.

OBITUARIES

We dedicate this portion to honor those who have passed on.

ROBERT L BRADLEY, 86, died March 27, at the Sheridan VA Medical Center and was born in N.D. on July 7, 1923. He joined the US Army during WWII and served in the Pacific Theater (May 43-Jan. 46). He was a member of the Sheridan ARNG unit from Feb. 50-March 78, USAR March 78-April 80 and finished 26 years military service as SFC in WyARNG May 31, 1981.

WALTER C. COOK, 91, died March 20, in Laramie and was born in OK Dec. 5, 1918. Walter enlisted in Nov. 1940 in Tp D, 115th Cav Rgmt, WyNG and was inducted into federal service with the unit in Feb. 1941. He was released from WWII as WyNG Feb. 1945. He was the father of Lt. Col. (WyANG retired) Dennis Cook.

BLAINE GILLINGHAM, 63, died of cancer April 3, in Casper and was born Feb. 1, 1947 in Casper. Blaine was a well known full-time WyARNG beginning his military career in the Casper unit Sept. 29, 1966. He served continuously in the WyARNG, both military and civilian until his discharge as MSG on July 1, 2001.

FRANK T. MANNING, 79, died May 22, in Post Fall, Idaho, from complications after heart surgery. He was born May 5, 1931, in Denver, but spent his youth in Thermopolis, graduating from HS there. He joined the WyARNG May 11, 1948 and served in Korea with the unit from 1951-1952, earning the Purple Heart and Bronze Star. He was released from the WyARNG April 3, 1952 and went on to dental school, graduating in 1957. He had a dental practice in Thermopolis for 41 years. During his retirement he wrote a book titled: "Fire Missions and Cherry Blossoms." It was about recalling war from his own experience as a 19 year old with the WyARNG in Korea. Copies are on sale at the WyNG museum in Cheyenne.

ROBERT J. VOLIN, 62, died April 29, in Utah Medical Center from complication of heart surgery. He was born Sept. 13, 1947 in Germany, while his father was stationed there with US Army. Bob joined WyARNG in March 69 and was appointed 2LT Oct. 71. He was enlisted in WyANG April 73-April 75. He rejoined 133rd Engr Co as enlisted Dec. 75 and served continuously until his discharge as SSG May 91.

MARY ELLEN PUTNAM, 88, died April 28, hospice in Casper. She was born Jan. 15, 1922, in Casper. She was the surviving spouse of COL (WyARNG retired) Jacob M. (Jake) Putnam who died several years ago. Jake was a long time WyARNG member starting in 1949. His last assignment was as a NGUS on active duty as liaison officer at Fort Leonard Wood, MO.

LOUIS (JAY) ROTHWELL, 81, passed away at Cheyenne Davis Hospice May 9, after a long battle with cancer. He was born Jan. 25, 1929 in Camden, Ark. Jay enlisted in the Regular Army in 1947 at 17 and was commissioned a 2LT Arty in 1949. He was a true regular Army red-legged artilleryman all of his 31 years of military service. Jay's last military assignment was as the Senior Army Advisor for the WyARNG from 1972 to 1978. He and his wife Virginia enjoyed living at Cheyenne so they remained there their entire retirement. Virginia died in 1995. Jay was well known to both WyARNG and ANG and was an avid supporter of the WyNG as well as of Wyoming.

DOMINIC A. SARA, 62, passed away suddenly March 20, in Cheyenne. He was born Dec. 19, 1947 in Cheyenne. He joined the WyANG July 10, 1966 and began his military career as well as a fulltime machinist technician. Dominic later became the fabrication supervisor. He retired from both full time and military in Jan. 1997 as SMSgt.

MELVIN O. (MEL) WATNE, 97, died March 30, at Pointe Frontier in

Cheyenne. He was born Feb. 5, 1913 in Juanita, N.D. Mel served in the US Army from Feb. 26, 1934 to April 26, 1939. He enlisted in the 67th Army Band, WyARNG on Nov. 14, 1947 and served continuously until he was separated as the unit as 1SG on Jan. 22, 1965. Mel had the distinction as being the oldest WyNG retiree member.

WOMEN'S MEMORIAL

The death of about three-quarters of the 400,000 women who served in WWII has left the Memorial in Washington, D.C., which honors all military women of all eras, short many of its benefactors. Add the recession and post 9/11 decline in book sales at the memorial; it has become very difficult to raise private dollars to help cover the \$2.7 million annual budget.

The memorial has managed to remain afloat thanks to \$1.6 million federal funding and \$250,000 from a fundraising drive. Paying bills is a challenge.

To learn more about the memorial and how to donate visit: <http://www.womensmemorial.org>.

PAY CUT FOR CONGRESS

Legislation has been introduced to cut Congressional pay and eliminate automatic pay adjustments starting in 2011.

It would be the first Congressional pay cut since 1933. There are two bills before the 111th Congress:

HR 4761 would reduce the 2011 and 2012 pay for members of Congress to 95% of the amount established for FY2010 and eliminate automatic adjustments to such pay.

HR 4762 would reduce the pay for members of Congress and dedicate the annual savings to a reduction of the national debt and also eliminate the automatic pay adjustment starting Dec. 31, 2010. It would amend a 1946 law where only 90% would be applied to rate determined for the position and savings transferred to the national debt.

PRIORITY ISSUES

Priority retiree/surviving spouse issues for 2010 as announced by Military Coalition and led by MOAA are as follows:

*Disability retirement reform. Soldiers forced from the service due to combat related condition must result in disability retirement.

*Guard & Reserve retirement age. Reduce retirement to age 55 and eliminate cap on training points.

*Spouse/survivor ID Card reform. Lower age requirement from 75 to 70 or lower for issuing permanent ID cards. It is becoming difficult to obtain ID cards as more installations are being closed.

*Final Retired Pay for survivors. Authorize the full amount of pay to the survivor for the month in which sponsor dies.

*Repeal or reduce the Windfall Elimination Provisions.

*COLA Commitment. Ensure the intent of COLA continues and/or improve on the benefit.

*Survivor Spouse Tricare benefits. Reinstate Tricare benefits for remarried survivors when the second marriage ended as authorized in 2002 to restore benefits for similar survivors.

*Provide subsidy for Tricare Dental so more retirees enroll.

*Allow military to include retirees to pay medical and health care premiums from pre-tax dollars.

SSN ON ID CARDS

In the newsletter for last July, there was an article that quoted a DoD announcement that SSNs would no longer be required to be entered on military ID cards. The computer program the military installations have to use for issuing ID cards is strictly controlled by DEERS. It appears DoD published the change long before DEERS was ready to implement the program. SSNs will continue to be required for entry on all DoD issued ID Cards until DEERS announces otherwise. *July 2010*

erwise and that date has not been established.

YOUTH CHALLENGE

The eighth class of the Youth ChallengeNGe Program graduated at Camp Guernsey Dec. 13, 2009, with 25 cadets.

Class 9 began on Jan. 16, with 45 cadets. The class is scheduled to graduate on June 13; class #10 is scheduled to begin July 11.

For information about the program, cadet applications or how to become a mentor, visit web site <http://www.ngycp.org/org/state/wy>. Or call (307) 836-7503.

HONOR FLIGHTS

The last Wyoming Honor Flight departed Cheyenne on May 18 and returned on May 19. The flight carried 108 Wyoming WWII veterans and 44 guardian/escorts to view the WWII Memorial and other displays in Washington, D.C.

This flight was very significant to the WyNG as it included three of our retired long time ARNG members, BG John Adams, Laramie, COL Bob Latta, Cheyenne, and CSM Ed Poll, Sheridan. A Sept. 21-22 flight is in the planning stages and scheduled to depart from Casper. Funds are still needed to be raised to cover future trips.

For more information about making donations, the trips, escort requirements or to have applications sent directly to family members or veterans, call the Wyoming Veterans Commission at 307-772-5145.

NEW GENERAL POSITION

A new position provides a fifth general officer for the WyNG and a second BG for WyARNG. The new position is titled deputy adjutant general and BG Olin Oedekoven has been selected for the new position.

Duties of the deputy AG will be to oversee all of the department strategic planning and joint service support functions.

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CHANGES IN COMMAND

There recently have been several major changes in Command in the WyARNG as follows:

On May 6, COL Kathy Wright assumed command of the WyARNG and assumed the duties as the Assistant Adjutant General for Army. COL Wright will be promoted to BG at a later date.

On June 5, LTC Brain R. Nesvik assumed command of the 115th Fires Brigade from COL Richard C. Knowlton who is attending War College.

LTC Gregory Phipps assumed command of the 2-300th FA Battalion from LTC Brain Nesvik who has been reassigned as the Fires Brigade commander.

LTC Jason D. Kaul will be assuming command of the 960th Brigade Support Battalion later this summer from LTC John A. Papile Jr who will be leaving command.

NEW CONSTRUCTION

The new WyARNG Army Aviation Flight Facility, located on F.E. Warren AFB, was dedicated on May 6.

The new WyNG Joint Hq Center, will be dedicated on Dec. 16, with personnel taking occupancy this fall.

A new, \$8 million organization maintenance shop has just been completed. It is located just north of the Raper Armory.

A complete remodeling of the 67th Army Band armory, in Wheatland, was just completed at a cost of \$2.5 million and dedication was held on June 6. It is now the latest state-of-the-art facility for an Army Band.

NEW SHOP IN LARAMIE

\$15 million federal money and \$400,000 state money will become available Oct. 1, to start construction of a new 38,866 sq ft maintenance shop in Laramie. It will be located on 50 acres next to the Laramie Airport.

A new \$17 million armory is scheduled for construction to start in 2014 at the same location.

SOCIAL SECURITY CREDITS

Since 1957, you paid Social Security taxes on your basic pay earnings for active duty, active duty for training and annual training. Since 1988, SS taxes have been withheld from drill pay.

Special extra earnings can be credited to your SS account for periods of military service from 1957 to 2001. These extra earnings may help a person qualify or increase the amount of SS benefits. Extra credits are not granted for IDT.

From 1957 thru 1967 the Social Security Office will add the extra credits at the time you apply for Social Security benefits.

From 1968 thru 2001 the extra credits were automatically added to your record. Extra credits are applied for periods of AD, ADT & AT military service as follows:

Service from 1957 thru 1977 you are credited with \$300 extra SS earnings for each calendar quarter you received basic pay.

Service from 1978 thru 2001, for every \$300 of basic pay earned you are credited with an additional \$100 in SS earnings up to a maximum of \$1200 a year.

This benefit is not automatic, you must ask for it at the time you apply to start drawing SS.

After 2001 there are no longer extra credits for military service. It was eliminated in Jan. 2002 by Public Law 107-117.

10% DISCOUNTS

Lowe's, Home Depot, Auto Zone and Sutherlands in Cheyenne offer a 10% discount year around to all military personnel and their families - to include retirees and their families.

To get the discount, just show a valid military or dependent military ID card.

LEGAL WEBSITE

A Warren Air Force Base legal assistance Web site is available to all military personnel and dependents to include retirees, Army & Air.

Visit: www.aflegalassistance.com, POC Capt. Star Lopez, 307-773-2256.

The site offers information on numerous legal topics and digital worksheets for clients who need a will, living will or power of attorney. Clients may also complete online surveys that provide the legal office feedback on what is needed additionally, and on how helpful the service was.

COLA TRENDS

Inflation only inched up 0.2% in April. CBO issued a bleak forecast in their Jan. 2010 report on COLA outlook for 2010 thru 2020.

A nonpartisan CBO estimates a 1% COLA on Dec. 1, 2010, a 1.2% COLA in both 2011 and 2012 and an average 1.8% COLA for 2013 thru 2020.

These are only estimates and subject to change dependent on what happens to the economy. By law, annual adjustments in pay for military and federal employee retired Social Security annuity and other federal entitlements are tied to a formula called Consumers Price Index (CPI). CPI measures the cost of goods and services as maintained by Department of Labor. COLA is then based on a comparison of CPI for the third quarter of current year (July-Sept.) with third quarter of previous year.

BAYONET TRAINING AXED

Based on the advice of Iraq and Afghanistan combat veterans, the Army is dropping the requirement for 5-mile runs and bayonet training drills in favor of zigzag sprints and exercises that hone core muscles.

This is the first overhaul of Army basic fitness training since 1980.

Eliminating bayonet training is aimed at making training more relevant to the conditions of the modern battlefield.

SPACE A TRAVEL

Rep. Don Young of Alaska has introduced HR 5404 which, if passed, would allow dependents of gray area retirees (retired before age 60) to accompany the retiree on space available military aircraft.

Presently, only dependents of a retired reserve component member who are age 60 and older can accompany the member on Space A flights to include CONUS.

BLACK BERET

The black beret was instituted 10 years ago with great fanfare and controversy and remains as unpopular with Soldiers as it did on day one.

The chief of staff at the time ordered it in 2000 to be required headgear for the entire force to promote esprit de corps. It had been exclusive head gear of the Rangers since 1970.

The beret certainly brought people together – to oppose it. Soldiers view it as something to be earned not issued; besides it does not shield you from the sun as the Army has always preached before. The cry is the beret rightfully belongs to the Rangers, dump it and bring back the patrol cap, garrison cap and/or saucer cap.

TOTAL FORCE

With the elevation of CNGB to four-stars everyone was led to believe we were well on our way to a Total Force Concept. Remarks from DoD and Pentagon officials on what an outstanding contribution NG has made re-enforced that belief. However, the FY2011 defense budget proposed by USAF to transfer 11 ANG C-130s to the USAF with the CNGB never being consulted blows holes in the Total Force concept. Let your Congress reps know how you feel about it.

RSOs

Permanent Retirement Service Offices, or RSOs, are located in Cheyenne to serve retirees, family members and surviving spouses with their administrative needs.

Recently widowed spouses are encouraged to contact the RSOs ASAP.

Personal visits should be prearranged by appointments: POCs are:

ARNG: Staff Sgt. Zachary "Chane" Welchman, toll-free (866) 992-7641, ext. 5238, local 772-5238, 5500 Bishop Blvd., Cheyenne, WY 82009; email:

Zachary.welchman@us.army.mil.

ANG: Master Sgt. Denise Hondel, toll-free (866) 992-7641, ext 6457, local 772-6457, 217 Dell Range Blvd., Cheyenne, WY 82009; email: denise.hondel@ang.af.mil.

In addition, the most up-to-date computer software systems, for issuing military ID cards and DEERS registration (active, gray area, retired and dependents), are permanently located as follows:

1. WyMD, 5500 Bishop Blvd., Cheyenne.
2. Laramie Armory, 2901 Armory Rd.
3. Sheridan Armory, 3219 Coffeen Ave.
4. Casper Armory, 5905 CY Ave.
5. WyANG, 217 Dell Range Blvd, Cheyenne.

Please note: U.S. Air Force installations no longer require the display of a DoD vehicle ID decal; however, most other services do, particularly the U.S. Army. The WyANG will continue to issue decals at the WyANG base, 217 Dell Range Blvd., Cheyenne. Check at the WyANG front gate for the location of the issuing office.

WyNG RETIRED CAPS

Wyoming (Army or Air) Guard Retired Caps are available for purchase from the Wyoming Militia Historical *July 2010*

Society (WMHS). Cost is \$12 and \$3 for shipping. Caps are of the latest design in dark brown with lettering and traditional bucking horse with rider in gold. Be sure to specify if you want Army or Air. Make your \$15 check payable to WMHS and send to Bob Holmes, 2134 North Ramona Ave, Casa Grande, AZ 85122. Caps will be sent upon receipt of your money or you can pick one up for \$12 at the WyNG Museum, 624 E. Pershing.

WyNGA

The annual WyNGA Conference was held April 24, at the new WyANG Social Club with 32 members present. Most of the senior leadership was present. They were asked for their support on getting the word out about the association and help increase membership. They pledged their support as much as possible. Enthusiasm about the WyNGA is at an all time low.

More effort is needed on getting corporate sponsors but need to find ways of giving something in return for their money. The association is presently financially sound with \$23,544.07 available. Association needs to put more emphasis on encouraging retirees to become lifetime members; Cost is only \$25. It also needs to promote the fact E1-E4s are given free membership. \$850 was given toward 2009 college scholarships.

The 39th EANGUS and 37th Auxiliary Conferences will be held in St Louis, Mo, Aug. 8-11.

The 132nd NGAUS Conference will be held in Austin, Texas, Aug. 21-23.

RETIREE COUNCIL

Your WyNG Retiree Council is made up of people from the military retired community and is an all volunteer organization. The council is appointed by the Adjutant General *Retiree News -- Wyo. Military Dept.*

and its main mission is to create a link between the WyMD and the WyNG retirement community.

The council is arranging to hold its 7th annual retiree conference on Oct. 2, at the Plains Hotel in Cheyenne.

The WyANG famous Heritage Flag presentation will open the conference and be conducted by an all retiree team. Invitations and agenda will be sent out in early Aug.

Listed below is the current council membership and their points of contact. All numbers are in area code 307 unless otherwise indicated. Utilize them to voice your concerns and desires.

Co-Chair:

Bob Holmes (c) 630-1676

Nick Kricken (c) 631-2947

Air Guard Reps:

Rich Ames (c) 630-1413

Dick Simmons (c) (303) 829-0810

Bob Born (c) 631-2268

Mary Barrett (h) 514-3956

Army Guard Reps:

Kim Price (c) 751-2172

Dennis Russell (c) 631-2314

Ken Persson (c) 349-2881

Sue Reed (h) 673-5354

Surviving Spouse:

Liz Escobedo (h) 632-2490

Ex-Officio:

Larry Barttelbort (c) 631-0812

Recorder (active duty):

Lt. Col. Ron LoPorto (o) 772-5199

WyMD ARNG rep:

SSG Welchman (o) 772-5238

WyMD ANG rep:

MSgt Hondel (o) 772-6457

Lt. Col. Ron LoPorto will be retiring from active service on Sept. 18. Council members commend Ron for his valuable support and attention to details for the past four years. The council wishes him well as he embarks on the next segment of his life. CSM Kenton Franklin will replace Ron.

NO TRICARE HIKES

Tricare recipients will see no increase in premium if Congress approves that provision in the FY2011 defense bill. The no increase was recommended by DoD for a change but noted there has not been an increase since the beginning of the program in 1995.

TRICARE SAFE

To set your mind at ease, the Tricare Affirmation Act was made law after the Health Care Reform Act was passed.

In part, the Tricare Act said: The law reinforces that military health care coverage will not be adversely affected by the Health Care Reform. Tricare meets minimum requirements for individual health insurance and no Tricare beneficiary will have to purchase additional coverage beyond what they already have.

MEDICARE CUTS

Congress granted a 6-month reprieve on Medicare from applying the 21% reimbursement cut to physicians on June 25. Tricare, by law, will take 30-60 days to align to any new Medicare rates.

SSN ON ID CARDS

The initiative to eliminate SSN from retiree and dependent ID Cards is still on hold pending further review with no implementation date in view.

TFL VS SS

The age for full Social Security (SS) to start was increased in increments for anybody born after 1947. However mandatory age for Medicare and TFL to start remained at age 65.

In order to be eligible for TFL you must possess Medicare Part B. Medicare will send you a bill every 90 days

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for Medicare Part B premiums until your SS annuity starts, then Part B will be automatically deducted.

VA MOBILE CLINIC

The VA Medical Center in Cheyenne now has new a Mobile Telehealth Clinic which will bring primary and mental health care services to rural parts of the tri-state patient service area. Mobile schedule is as follows:

Sterling, Colo., every Tuesday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., at the American Legion Post #20.

Wheatland, every Wednesday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the Fire Department training facility.

Torrington, every Thursday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., at the VFW Post 2908.

Laramie, every Friday 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the WyARNG Armory

Schedule an appointment by calling (888) 483-9127, ext. 3816. Same number to cancel an appointment.

The mobile clinic is designed to deliver on going, preventive care appointments.

RETIREE DENTAL

Good oral health is an important part of overall health. Tricare Retiree Dental Program (TRDP), administered by Delta Dental. Participants may utilize any dentist, however if the dentist is not listed with the Delta Dentist Network you may have to pay higher out-of-pocket expenses.

TRDP is a premium based plan that has cost sharing for certain services after the \$50 deductible per person has been met.

Most preventive, diagnostic and emergency dental services are immediately covered or available for cost sharing. Some services like orthodontics, dentures, crowns are not covered until after 12 months of continued enrollment.

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Premiums are automatically deducted from military retired pay. Gray area participants are billed directly until retired pay begins.

Monthly premium rates vary based on location and number of people covered by the plan. To give a general idea of how much it cost, at present a retiree and spouse in the Cheyenne area pay \$63.32 a month. Rates are adjusted every Oct. 1.

You may enroll by telephone or online. Web Site: www.trdp.org or toll-free enrollment: (888) 838-8737.

Mailing address: Delta Dental, Federal Services, P.O. Box 537008, Sacramento, CA 95853-7008

MAIL ORDER PHARMACY

Tricare Mail Order Pharmacy (TMOP) is administered by Express Scripts Inc., of Phoenix, and is the cheapest way of obtaining drugs other than through VA or MTFs. You must be pre-enrolled.

A 90-day supply co-pay for generic is \$3 and \$9 for named brands.

Tricare established a member choice center. Beneficiaries who do not have other health insurance and are currently using retail pharmacies thru DEERS can register online by going to "My Benefit" portal on www.tricare.mil or www.express-scripts.com/tricare or call (877) 363-1433.

Express Scripts will contact your physician to transfer or obtain prescriptions for a 90-day supply for up to three refills. After enrollment you can ask for refills online, by phone or mail and the prescriptions are mailed directly to your home. Providers can either mail new prescriptions or fax them 24/7. Mail to Express Scripts, P.O. Box 52150, Phoenix, AZ 85072-9954 or fax: 877-895-1900. Include full name, mailing address, date of birth for all prescriptions.

Wyoming Military Department
Retiree Newsletter
5500 Bishop Blvd.
Cheyenne, WY 82009-3320

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TO YOUR HEALTH

Are you getting your Zs? Sleep disorders are not limited to insomnia. A person can have sleep disorder and not even know it. Most adults need from 7 to 9 hours of sleep. Key is to be consistent with amount and time of sleep. A study found people who sleep 5 hours or less are more likely to have high blood pressure, heart problems, obesity, diabetes depression, alcoholism, and even car accidents. Being deprived of sleep affects areas of the brain which deal with mood and concentration leaving tired people grumpy, overly emotional and unable to focus. If you wake up sleepy, irritable and unfocused and stay that way all day, you may be suffering from sleep disorder. Best bet is to see your doctor, find out what is causing the sleep disorder and fix it.

NOT TOO MUCH WATER

How often do you hear "drink plenty of water when exercising to prevent dehydration?" However the military has found Hyponatremia occurs when a person drinks so much water they dilute the salt concentration in their blood. Hyponatremia can cause a number of problems, including brain swelling which can lead to death if not treated immediately. Eating more bacon is not a healthy solution. A practical solution is to keep sodium/water ratio at proper levels which relates to water consumption. That can be done by proper water limits per hour per day. Especially while doing physical exercising in hot humid weather. Paris Island Marine base had the most Hyponatremia cases. It advises not to exceed 12 quarts of water a day & not more than 1 1/2 quart an hour.

Retiree News -- Wyo. Military Dept.

DRINK WATER

5.1 million Americans have gout, a form of arthritis caused by excess uric acid in the blood which causes crystals to form. These crystals lodge in the joints leading to intense pain and swelling. Ways to cope is limit alcohol consumption, manage weight, eat healthfully and take anti-inflammatory drugs. Recent research has found simply drinking more water may ward off attacks. In a study of 535 adults with gout, people who drank five to eight glasses of water a day were 40% less likely to have an attack than those who drank one glass or less. Why? Dehydration allows uric acid to concentrate in the blood stream and that makes it more likely for crystals to form. Water needs vary dependent on activity levels. Best bet is to see your doctor.

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