
United States Army Garrison Heidelberg

+ + + + + Retiree Newsletter + + + + +

July 2007

A Publication of the United States Army Garrison Heidelberg Retiree Council

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VP Programs: MAJ (R) Bernd Rieger
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President's Corner

Last Retiree Council Meeting

At the last Council meeting, the presentation focused on casualty assistance operations. The principal theme was the responsibilities of the casualty assistance officer (CAO) and what the surviving spouse can expect. Recognizing that the individual assigned as the CAO may be performing the duty for the first time, the responsibilities of the surviving spouse were also addressed. Specifically, the surviving spouse should make every effort to provide the CAO with the required personnel-related documentation so he or she can do what has to be done.

It is essential that while the retiree is still alive, he or she keep the important papers together and, further, that the surviving spouse be familiar with the various documents. Timely receipt of benefits highly depends on the submission of complete applications.

Retiree Appreciation Day

The USAREUR-wide Retiree Appreciation Day (RAD) may not be a thing of the past, at least for 2007. We recently received information that this year's RAD will be sponsored by the Installation Management Command-Europe and hosted by the US Army Garrison, Heidelberg on Saturday, 20 October 2007. In addition to various presentations, there will be representatives from the Defense Finance and Accounting Service and the US Consulate Frankfurt Federal Benefits Unit (Social Security and Veterans Affairs). The extent of the medical, wellness and other support is still in the planning phase.

Stars and Stripes On-Line.

If you can not get the Stars and Stripes delivered or at a newsstand and you have Internet access you can read it on line. Go to <http://www.stripesonline.com>. Under services, click on electronic paper.

How to Report the Death of a Retiree

Call the USAREUR Casualty Operations Center (CAC) (24 hours a day) at: Telephone DSN 379-7800/6172, Civilian: 06202-80-7800/6172 International: 0049-6202-80-7800/6172. Send e-mail to: 1pc.casualty@eur.army.mil. The personnel at above numbers will notify the U.S. Army of the death of a retiree and will help start the casualty assistance process.

Death Certificates

When a retiree dies, it is important to obtain a death certificate from the nearest American Consulate. If the retiree dies in a German hospital, nursing home, old people's home, etc, be sure the attending German physician includes a written clarification as to the specific cause along with the German death certificate. The written clarification should state, for example, cardiac arrest or a description of the illness that lead to the death, for example, lung cancer. When applying for the death certificate from the American Consulate, the written clarification and the German death certificate must be attached to the application for official US death certificate.

A copy of the American death certificate is included with the applications for the various survivor benefits.

Corresponding with Members of Congress

There are many issues that affect retiree benefits and entitlements. If you feel strongly about any of the issues, make the time to write to your senators and representative. Use the following link to access the access the Military Officers Association of America. <http://capwiz.com/moaa/home/>. Using this web page as the start point you can look at the issues and also use prepared emails to ask your members of Congress to co-sponsor or support important legislation. You need not be a member of MOAA to use this web site to contact your senators and representative.

The Next Retiree Council Meeting

The next Council meeting will be held at 1700 hours on Saturday, 11 August 2007 at the Wimmer's Land-Wirtschaft, Im Grassenberg 2, 69168 Wiesloch. All retirees, widowed spouses of retirees, family members and their guests are invited to attend.

To help us better plan the meeting and dinner, please call or email your reservations to MAJ (R) Bernd Rieger, 06221-374724 (Email berieger@hotmail.de) or to LTC (R) Larry Applebaum 06224-52741 (Email: L-M.Applebaum@t-online.de) by Wednesday, 8 August 2007.

Directions to Wimmer's

Assumes you can use your road atlas to find Bundesstrasse 39 that runs past Walldorf and Wiesloch.

Drive along Bundesstrasse 39 and take the Wiesloch Zentrum exit direction to Wiesloch. Then take the first road to the left at Florapark Wagner and drive direction to Zentrum. After the rotary, take the first right (Steingötter-Greif-Strasse). At the next intersection turn right (Johann-Phillip-Bronner-Strasse). Follow this street, cross a small bridge and immediately turn left. After this left turn, there is a sign "Zufahrt zum Wimmer Hof frei." Wimmer's is on the right side of the road.

Retiree Council Newsletter via Email

We now have 77 people who receive this newsletter via email. For those of you who have an email address and still receive a paper copy of the newsletter, we can add you to the email distribution list. Send an email to L-M.Applebaum@t-online.de with the subject line "Retiree Council Newsletter via Email" and we will add you to the list.

Direct Deposit of Veterans Benefits to Foreign Bank Accounts.

Currently, this type of deposit is not possible. However, the Retiree Council at Department of the Army has recommended that the Army Chief of Staff urge the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish, without delay, procedures for a direct deposit for retirees and annuitants residing in foreign countries. It will be a great benefit to those veterans who want the same direct deposit option that they currently have with retired pay and the Social Security annuity.

This issue was submitted to DA by the Army in Europe Retiree Council.

American Consulate Federal Benefits Unit

The FBU at the American Consulate in Frankfurt assists persons residing in Germany with all Social Security, Veterans, Black Lung and Railroad benefits, pensions and some civil service matters. The FBU handles all Office of Personnel Management post-entitlement matters, such as death notices, change of address and non-receipt of payment. Contact information is provided below.

Tel: 069-7535-2440

Fax: 069-7535-2370

0900 to 1200 hours, Monday through Friday.

Community Retirement Services Office

Any military retiree or surviving spouse of a military retiree needing retirement services should call the Community Retirement Services Office. SSG (R) George Hall, our community retirement services officer volunteer, is in the office on a full-time basis, Monday through Friday. His telephone number is DSN 370-8236 or from a civilian phone, 06221-57-8236.

Commander
US Army Garrison, Heidelberg
Attention: Retirement Services Officer
Unit 29237
APO AE 09102

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