

MILITARY RETIREE NEWSLETTER
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1. **THE FIRST WORD** With the end of funding for postal mailings we now are limited to posting this Newsletter on our website as above with the possibility of further distribution by email to *those whose email addresses we have in the RAO database*. Read the section on email below.

A software consultancy has donated a listserv facility to the RAO. Maintaining an email mailing list has now become an important part of our mission and so we are looking for at least two volunteers skilled in computer usage and Excel to assume responsibility for this project. It will take a few hours a week but bring a lot of satisfaction knowing you are helping maintain our outreach to so many who rely upon us. Volunteer by writing to: rao.hanscom.afb@gmail.com.

2. **YOUR VOLUNTEER STAFF** Our former director, CPT Arline F. Love, USAF, remains full of enthusiasm after three decades of service to us, and she now supports us from home with the treasury of knowledge and contacts saved in her head. Succeeding her is our new director, retired LTC Edward Omiccioli, USA, usually in on Wednesdays. He is assisted by our new deputy director, retired CAPT Dean L Mottard, USMC. Your editor for this newsletter issue is retired LTC Jeffrey Race, USA.

3. **COMING EVENT-- HANSCOM RETIREE APPRECIATION DAY** On 24 April 2015 your RAO will host this long-awaited event at the Minuteman Commons (formerly the Officers Club) between 1000 and 1400. We will have a number of speakers including our 66th Air Base Group Commander in addition to booths staffed by experts from VA, Tricare, SSA, USFH, Delta Dental and others.

4. **COMING EVENT-- WEST POINT RETIREE APPRECIATION DAY** Those who miss us on the 24th may wish to attend the corresponding event at West Point which will take place on Saturday May 2. Your editor has attended this in previous years and can't recommend it highly enough: more vendors/service providers offer information than can join ours at Hanscom, and in addition it's a lot of fun as a family occasion. Weather permitting you'll see both a "Pass in Review" and a parachute demonstration on The Plain and then have a chance (not to be missed!) to take your mid-day meal in the Cadet Mess. There's a lot of music, even breakfast if you're there early enough, and of course shopping in the enormous PX and Commissary at day's end. It's a great occasion for a family day or even mini-vacation over the weekend because there are so many scenic locations nearby. Details on the West Point event are available from a link at: <http://www.westpoint.army.mil/Pages/RSO.aspx>.

5. **ELECTRONS** Detail...details...details...After two decades of cautious observation; the profound thinkers who guide us have concluded that electrons can substitute for postage stamps in the outreach programs of our Armed Forces. Not only is it less expensive: it is *immediate*, and *convenient*, because the electronic communications can include hyperlinks to other information resources and also because we service members and retirees can input data and select program options in real time.

However, this progress comes at a (modest) cost: you must create an account on the DFAS website. You just really have to do this if you want to be a part of this community and draw the full benefits to which you are entitled because of your service to our Nation. If you don't have a computer yourself use one at your local library, and if the task exceeds your skills, ask your own teenager, grandchild or one of your computer literate neighbors.

The Defense Finance & Accounting Service (**DFAS**) site lives at: <http://www/dfas/mil/retiredmilitary.html>.

6. **INCOME TAXES** Due to volunteer moves and 'retirements' we were undermanned this year in handling income tax preparation for our fellow retirees. Remember to book early for your appointment next year, and be sure to have all your documents in order. If you can volunteer to help on this worthy effort, please reach out to us.

7. **ID CARD SCHEDULING** The Pass & ID Office here at Hanscom AFB is open 0900-1500 Monday through Friday, and your most convenient choice is to schedule online at : <https://secure.netappointment.com/appman.php?rownumber=84>.

Be sure to be few minutes early. Walk-ins may have to wait a long time.

8. **COMPREHENSIVE ID CARD OFFICE LOCATOR AND SCHEDULER** A complete listing of alternate facilities to our own at Hanscom can be found at: <http://rapids-appointments.dmdc.osd.mil/appointment/default.aspx>.

9. **SERVICE RECORDS** The Retiree Activities Office often receives urgent calls about veterans records (DD Form 214) from survivors after the passing of a veteran. Where is yours? If you can't find it, your record can be obtained from the following web site: www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/.

10. **DURABLE POWER OF ATTORNEY** Your editor's mother was injured during surgery and could no longer care for herself, finally becoming unable to write her signature and eventually even able to communicate at all. She had the foresight to have created a Durable Power of Attorney which did not expire as does an ordinary power of attorney, greatly easing the handling of her affairs in her final years by those watching over her. If you don't have a Durable Power of Attorney you might really want to look into it. It's easy, fast and free at the Hanscom Legal Office. Call 781-225-1410. It could be important.

11. **CREATE AN ELECTRONIC PATH TO YOUR DOOR** There are lots more of you than we thought and *we need your email address!* DFAS offered to transmit an electronic announcement of the Retiree Appreciation Day to those of you in our catchment area. We thought you numbered a bit over 10,000 souls, but DFAS says there are 39,000 of you for whom they have email addresses for only 20,600. Either way there are many more of you than we thought. DFAS still has money for USPS mail to all its beneficiary clients so you'll still receive benefit notices no matter what. However, you'll have access to faster and more complete interactions if you sign up with them online as noted above.

However, the Hanscom RAO no longer has a postal budget so if you want to hear from us you must advise us of your current contact data: **Name, E-mail address, Postal address, phone.**
Send to: rao.hanscom.afb@gmail.com. Do it now before you forget.

12. **THE LAST WORD** This letter is shorter than usual but we wanted to reach out to you with the above important information after the long lapse due to lack of postage. We hope to be back soon with more material and a fixed predictable schedule. Your Editor needs an assistant editor to do all the hard work. Can a volunteer step forward please?