



111TH ATTACK WING RETIREE ACTIVITIES OFFICE

BIDDLE AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, PA



Newsletter Vol. 8 Issue #2 2023 Fall / Winter

OUR MISSION

The 111th Attack Wing Retiree Activities Office (RAO) is an official activity organized in accordance with AFI 36-3106. The office is here to assist military retirees, their spouses, military veterans, guard and reserve personnel from all U.S. military services. We can provide information and contacts for pay (DFAS), benefits and entitlements, personnel and casualty affairs and interface with these organizations to help personnel.

This Newsletter, is a publication of the 111th ATKW/RAO, that serves as the interface between the base commander in providing information and assistance to military retirees, their families, and surviving spouses residing in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York. Information, provided in this publication, has been edited and does not reflect the official policy of any U.S. Government agency.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The 111th Attack Wing Retiree Activities Office is located:

**111th Attack Wing /RAO/ CVR
Building 203, Room 168
Biddle ANGB, PA 19044-5203
Telephone 215-323-7135**

Our hours of operation are Tuesday through Friday 9:00 a.m.–3:00p.m. and also Saturday mornings of the 111th Drill/UTA 8:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Telephone 215-323-7135, please leave a message if no answer.

YOUR RAO Volunteer LEADERSHIP

CMSgt Jenny Pappas, Director

MSgt Vincent Acquaviva Co-Director

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Rufus Butler
Robert Maiuro
Joe Hopely
Mark Wilby

Dave Olson
Theresa Arentzen
Cathy Hopely
Paul Vezzetti

Hal Krebs
William Nilsson

AIR FORCE RETIREE SERVICES

- Our parent agency is the Air Force Retiree Services, located at AFPC/DPFFF, Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph TX.
- They are a wealth of information, and resources and can be found at <https://www.retirees.af.mil/> From their webpage you can gain access to retiree specific news, the Afterburner, find answer to many Frequently Asked Question (FAQs), an extensive resource library, survivor Benefits, and much, much more.
- MSgt Vincent Acquaviva Jr AFPC Retiree Council Area 13 Representative (North-East US)

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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTORS

STAY CONNECTED, that is the new word of the day; this newsletter is one of those tools to stay connected. All Retired Service members and Surviving spouses are still part of our military's greater family. We encourage you to ensure that you have a myPAY account so you can get your services respective Retiree and the DFAS Retiree Newsletters. Like it or not, the days of getting a paper copy through the US Postal Service are gone.

In the last couple of years there have been many changes to our retiree benefits. The President and Congress have implemented many new Veterans programs. The Air Force has made many changes to the process we use to apply for our Reserve Retirement with the establishment of the Total Force Service Center. DFAS updated how the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) works. It is important for you and your survivor to stay up to date.

We need to get the word out to our Retirees. The 111th Attack Wing held a very successful Retiree Appreciation Day in July. There are various unofficial retiree groups made up of retired members of the 111th and 913th in the local area – stay connected with your fellow members in Blue. It provides not only information, but maintains the comradery of those folks you served with.

We sympathized with you on the digitalization of our society, but that is one of the reasons why the Air Force, the Pennsylvania Air National Guard and Commander of the 111th Attack Wing support our office. Our Volunteers are here to provide a human voice, to assist you in navigating our digital transition.

During the next twelve months we hope to continue to get the word out. Please like and Follow the 111th Attack Wing on Facebook and Twitter. Use the official 111th Attack Wing on the web. The links have been provided on the bottom of each page of this newsletter. The RAO is working with Wing Public Affairs to get the word out. In closing we would like to quote from the Air Force Creed, "I WILL NEVER LEAVE AN AIRMAN BEHIND".

CMSgt Jenny Pappas
RAO DIRECTOR

MSgt Vincent Acquaviva
RAO CO-DIRECTOR

DFAS ACCOUNT FOR GRAY AREA RETIREES

The screenshot shows the top portion of the DFAS website. On the left is the DFAS logo with the text "DEFENSE FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING SERVICE PROVIDING PAYMENT SERVICES FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE". To the right is a search bar labeled "Search Defense Finance" and a "myPay" logo. Below these are social media icons for Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, and Ask DFAS. A dark blue navigation bar contains the following categories: MILITARY MEMBER, RETIRED MILITARY & ANNUITANT, CIVILIAN EMPLOYEE, and CONTRACTOR & VENDOR. Below the navigation bar is a breadcrumb trail: HOME > RETIREDMILITARY > PLAN > GRAY AREA RETIREES > AIR FORCE GRAY AREA RETIREES. On the right side, there is a "Get Connected" section with a link to "Find out how to log in to your new myPay account."

- We strongly recommend that Gray Area Retirees establish and account with Defense Finance and Accounting Service in "myPAY".
- As a Gray Area Retiree, you can now stay connected and informed between the time you stop drilling and the time you start receiving retired pay. It's a new kind of **myPay** account especially for Gray Area Retirees.
 - This basic "Future Retiree" myPay account provides Gray Area Retirees a convenient way to keep your contact information updated with DFAS during the gray area period, so you can receive important information from DFAS and from the Air Force.
 - With your current contact information, DFAS can keep you informed about changes in the law or policy that may affect you, send you the Air Force **Afterburner Retiree Newsletter** and the **DFAS Retiree Newsletter**, and remind you when the window to apply for retired pay is approaching.
 - In addition, with current contact information in the new myPay account, when DFAS receives a completed Gray Area Retiree application for retired pay, DFAS will send email status notifications to you, including: when DFAS receives the application, when DFAS begins working on the application, and when DFAS completes it. Remember, you should always be working first with the Air Force on your retired pay application.
- More information can be found at: <https://www.dfas.mil/RetiredMilitary/plan/Gray-Area-Retirees/Air-Force-Gray-Area-Retirees/>

2023 RETIREE APPRICIATION DAY

111th Attack Wing
★ Favorites · July 12 · 🌐

Retired, recently retired, and soon-to-be retiring military personnel along with their spouses gathered for an all-day series of presentations covering the many aspects of retired life during Retiree Appreciation Day here, July 9, 2023. The day-long event was put together by the 111th Attack Wing Retiree's Activities Office and key volunteers. The event included briefs on, but not limited to financial planning, VA Benefits, and TRICRE. For more information on the RAO, call 215-323-7135.

👍❤️ You, Scott Woods, Vincent Acquaviva and 27 others 1 comment 2 shares

SOURCE: 111th Attack Wing (Official) Facebook - www.facebook.com/111thATKW

OPEN SEASON ANNOUNCEMENTS



- TRICARE Open Season
 - TRICARE Open Season starts on November 13, 2023 and runs until December 12, 2023; for most TRICARE beneficiaries, this is your chance to enroll in a health plan or change health plans for coverage that starts January 1, 2024.
 - More information can be found at <https://www.tricare.mil/openseason>
 - Keep up to date by subscribing to the “My TRICARE Health Matters Newsletter”. You can have your newsletter delivered to your email inbox or simply view it online on the TRICARE Publications page at <https://www.tricare.mil/GettingCare/PatientResources/GoPaperless/Newsletters>



- FEDVIP – Dental and Vision and FEHB Open Seasons - The Federal Benefits Open Season is your annual opportunity to enroll in, change, or cancel a FEDVIP dental and/or vision plan. Each year, open season runs from the Monday of the second full work week in November through the Monday of the second full work week in December. More information can be found at: <https://www.benefeds.com/>

Medicare.gov

- MEDICARE Open Enrollment Period (OEP) - Occurs each year from October 15 to December 7, gives you the chance to review and make changes to your current Medicare coverage. More information can be found at: <https://www.medicare.gov/basics/get-started-with-medicare/get-more-coverage/joining-a-plan>

SUBMITTING FOR AIR FORCE RETIREMENT

- Over this past summer, ARPC migrated the process applying for Air Force retirement pay to a new system “myFSS”. For Air National Guard and Reserve “Gray Area” Retiree’s nearing their 60th

Birthday you must initiate an application for retirement pay. ARPC no longer and has not for many years started the action by mailing you a letter,

- Applying for retirement pay begins by submitting an application to HQ ARPC/DPTTR through myFSS (<https://myfss.us.af.mil>).
 - Individuals approaching their Retirement pay effective date (60th birthday or reduced retirement pay age) should submit an application no earlier than 12 months and no later than 6 months in advance of their retirement pay effective date.
- For more information <https://www.arpc.afrc.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/3412300/arpc-offers-services-through-reserve-retirement-counseling-cell/>



NEWS



UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

ARPC Offers Services Through Reserve Retirement Counseling Cell

- Published June 1, 2023
- By HQ ARPC Public Affairs
- Headquarters Air Reserve Personnel Center

BUCKLEY SPACE FORCE BASE, Colo. --

The Air Reserve Personnel Center Reserve Retirement Counseling Cell will begin initial operating capability 1 June 2023.

The RRCC is a resource for Reserve Airmen to help answer individual member questions about military retirement, such as estimated retirement pay, Reduced Retirement Pay Age, the Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan, and other retirement related issues.

The RRCC mission is to educate Reserve Airmen by providing up-to-date and timely information necessary to assist themselves and their families in making life changing decisions regarding military retirement.

The team accomplishes this mission by providing services to all Reserve Airmen, from the 10-year member who wants to know the value of continuing his service, to the 59-year-old Airman who is applying for retired pay.

The RRCC provides information through virtual one-on-one counseling appointments and global engagement, such as briefings, social media presence, and news articles.

The cell is also available to provide briefings in person or virtually. Units interested in hosting the RRCC should contact arpc.dpt.rrcc@us.af.mil.

The team is currently at initial operating capacity and at this time can only advise Reserve Airmen. As the team grows, the hope is to assist Guardsmen soon. Unfortunately, the team cannot provide guidance or advice regarding civilian retirement.

Airmen who would benefit from Reserve military retirement counseling or have any questions regarding how the RRCC can provide assistance can contact the team at arpc.dpt.rrcc@us.af.mil or 1-800-682-1929 to make an appointment.

SOURCE: ARPC

LIST OF MILITARY SERVICE RETIREE AGENCIES AND PUBLICATIONS

- **US Army Retiree Service (Echoes):** <http://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement>
- **Navy Retirees (Shift Colors):** <http://www.shiftcolors.navy.mil>
- **Air Force (Afterburner):** <https://www.retirees.af.mil/Library/Afterburner/>
- **Marine Corps Retiree Service (Semper Fidelis):**
https://www.manpower.usmc.mil/webcenter/portal/MMSR_RS
- **Coast Guard Retiree Service (Evening Colors):**
<https://www.dcms.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/Assistant-Commandant-for-Human-Resources-CG-1/Retiree-Services-Program/>



EVENTS, HAPPENINGS, AND REUNIONS

- Annual Friend of the 111th Family Readiness Group Golf Outing
 - Date: September 11, 2023 Time: Shotgun @ 9:00am
 - Registration Deadline: September 6, 2023
 - Contact: Jenny Pappas, Cell (215) 740-5468, email: FriendsofFRG@gmail.com
- Informal 913th AW Monthly Breakfast at VFW Red Hill Post 5954
 - Second Monday Every Month, 0800-1100, event open to the public Do not need to be a VFW member.
 - Contact: Judy Bieberfeld (<https://www.facebook.com/judy.bieberfeld>)
 - More information can be found at:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/219908564701542/user/100076385822850>
- 512th / 913th Willow Grove Air Reserve Association Reunion
 - Next gathering of Eagles! September 20st 2023
 - Location: Fountain Side Seafood & Grill 537 Easton Rd, Horsham, PA 19044
 - Reservation Deadline September 12th 2023
 - Contacts: Bob Simpson 215 659-1181, John Windfelder 215 657-0720, Neil & JoAnn Franklin 215 699-8205 Email Information: c130.wgarf@verizon.net
- 913th Annual Reunion
 - Date: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2023 AT 1 PM – 5 PM
 - Location: Horsham VFW Post 9788 & Auxiliary
 - Contact: William Schweitzer (<https://www.facebook.com/william.schweitzer.16>)
 - More information can be found at:
<https://www.facebook.com/events/191159157245208>

• UNOFFICIAL 111TH AND 913TH VETERANS AND RETIREE GROUPS

- 111TH Fighter Wing Friends www.facebook.com/groups/439096756426502/
- 111TH Fighter Wing (UNOFFICIAL) www.facebook.com/groups/112383465447507/
- Willow Grove WARDAWGS !! www.facebook.com/groups/68968424941
- 913 Airlift Wing Alumni www.facebook.com/groups/73569486328
- 913TH Airlift Wing Friends www.facebook.com/groups/219908564701542
- 913TH Security Forces www.facebook.com/groups/88915076111
- 913TH Annual Reunion www.facebook.com/events/191159157245208
- 31ST Aerial Port Squadron www.facebook.com/groups/198150514240/

**THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THESE VETERANS AND RETIREE GROUPS
DOES NOT REFLECT OFFICIAL POLICY OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND THEIR
INCLUSION IS NOT AN ENDORSEMENT OF THEIR ACTIVITIES.**

**The appearance of external links on this publication does not constitute official
endorsement on behalf of the U.S. Air Force or Department of Defense.**

KEY CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

- **MyAirForceBenefits** is the Official Air Force Benefits Website, and can be a great initial starting place to find information about your benefits.
<https://www.myairforcebenefits.us.af.mil>
- **Casualty Assistance** - Call toll free 877-353-6807.
<https://www.myairforcebenefits.us.af.mil/Casualty-and-Survivor-Assistance>
 - The local Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst AF SBP/Casualty Assistance telephone number 609-754-3814. Point of Contact Ms. Donna Gauze.
- **Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) Telephone Center** - Call DEERS at 800-538-9552, Monday through Friday, excluding U.S. federal holidays, 6 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Pacific time.
- **Identification Cards** - Call 800-525-0102 for location of the nearest issuing facility, or visit the site locator. <https://idco.dmdc.osd.mil/idco/locator>
- **milCONNECT** - With milConnect, Department of Defense (DoD) affiliates and beneficiaries manage their benefits and records through the self-service portal.
<https://milconnect.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect/>
 - You can manage and view your health benefits
 - Update you and your family's DEERs records
 - Find and schedule an appointment for your Identification cards.
- **Defense Finance and Accounting Service** - The agency that pays military retirees and annuitants can be reached at 800-321-1080. Visit the retired military and annuitants webpage for more information about pay matters such as tax forms, pay verification, Direct Deposit, myPay and more. <https://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/>
- **Legal Offices** - Assists members with preparing wills and powers of attorney, and answers certain legal questions. Visit the Air Force Legal Assistance website at <https://aflegalassistance.law.af.mil>.
- **TRICARE** <https://tricare.mil/>
- **Veterans Affairs** - For benefit inquiries call 800-827-1000; life insurance 800-669-8477; status of headstones and markers, 800-697-6947. You can visit their website at www.va.gov/.



YOU CAN STAY CONNECTED AND FOLLOW THE 111TH ATTACK WING AT:

Official US Government website: <https://www.111attackwing.ang.af.mil/>

Facebook: <https://www.111attackwing.ang.af.mil/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/111atkw>