

Air Force Sergeants Association



Friday, March 10, 2006

Founded at Bolling AFB, DC, on May 3, 1961.



Protecting and defending the quality-of-life benefits of the "TOTAL AIR FORCE" Enlisted Corps and their families since 1961

This is AFSA's electronic publication. Capitol Hill Update, bulletins, and other news items have been combined into this one e-publication. It will be available every Friday on AFSA's web site. To access the links referenced in the articles, click on them. For the newest free download of Adobe Acrobat Reader to read this document, click: www.adobe.com.

AFSA WAGES WAR OVER HEALTH CARE!

AFSA LOBBYISTS MAINTAIN HEAVY DOOR-TO-DOOR SCHEDULE.

CAPITOL HILL UPDATE FOR FRIDAY, MARCH 10, 2006:

The fight to protect the military retiree healthcare benefit continues as AFSA lobbyists maintain a heavy schedule of door-to-door office visits on Capitol Hill. This week we learned that DoD has taken the unusual step of using "Advocate Teams" which are being made available to meet with congressional members and their staff to provide information on the Administration's perspective and elicit input regarding possible modifications to the current plan to increase cost shares to the TRICARE beneficiaries. This is a sign that DoD officials are concerned where this fight is going, compelling them to bring additional resources to bear.

Your calls, letters, and e-mails to congressional members take on greater importance as the House and Senate formulate their respective versions of the FY2007 Budget Resolution. The final budget resolution will serve as a blueprint for Congressional budget decisions made this year. As we previously reported, DoD reduced its proposed health care budget by \$735 million assuming they would receive authority to increase fees and, (erroneously) that these changes would drive thousands of military beneficiaries out of the TRICARE system. Therefore it is important that we try to get that money restored to prevent under funding of the military healthcare system for next year.

The Senate may already be putting the finishing touches on their version of the budget resolution but the House members may be delaying action on theirs until the St. Patrick's Day District Work Pe-

AFSA Executive Director CMSgt (Ret) Richard Dean, in visits with lawmakers on the Hill this week, asked congressional members to obtain an independent analysis of DoD's recommendations and positions regarding health care costs and retiree funding. He further explained that enlisted members make/made far less than officers or DoD civilians and, that for many enlisted retirees, the promise of free medical care and retiree pay was the limit of their "financial planning" because after taking care of the family, there was nothing left to invest/save for a rainy day.

MORE HEADLINES OF IMPORTANCE TO AIR FORCE ENLISTED MEMBERS APPEAR ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES.

riod is over (March 20-24, 2006). That gives AFSA members and interested parties some additional time to contact their representatives and urge them to reject the DoD proposal. Additionally, if you previously wrote your elected officials and a reasonable time has elapsed with out a response, now's a good time to follow-up, reiterate your position, and prompt the congressional member to let you know where they stand on the issue.

CONCURRENT RECEIPT: Senator Harry Reid (D-NV) has introduced a new bill that would protect disabled combat veterans from losing their retirement benefits. S. 2385, the "Combat-Related Special Compensation Act of 2006" would give pro-rated retirement benefits to military personnel who are forced into early retirement because of combat injuries. Currently, service members injured before they complete 20 years of service are forced out of the military without any retirement pay. In announcing his latest piece of concurrent-receipt legislation Reid stated, "People who had planned to make the military a career are being forced into premature retirement because of medical problems. That means they lose their retirement pay, and I think that's unfair. We shouldn't penalize veterans because they were injured serving their country. They fought to protect us, and now we need to take care of them." Senator Reid, a long-standing veteran's advocate has been working for years to end the ban on concurrent receipt. "Ending the ban on concurrent receipt remains one of my highest priorities," said Reid. "I'm proud of the progress we've made so far, but we need to keep chipping away at the unfair policy in place now. I am committed to that goal 100-percent." AFSA commends Senator Reid for his commitment to end the unfair policy banning concurrent receipt of military retired pay and VA disability compensation and supports S. 2385.

THE NEXT CAPITOL HILL UPDATE WILL BE ON FRIDAY, MARCH 17.

LEGISLATIVE NEWS AND UPDATES

AIR FORCE SPACE COMMAND (AFSPC) COMMANDER STEPS DOWN: AFSPC Commander and AFSA member, General Lance Lord concluded a 37-year Air Force career during retirement ceremonies on March 3. His service will officially end on April first. Air Force Chief of Staff, General T. Michael Moseley told General Lord, "You've been a dear friend, a fellow officer, a teacher, and a mentor. You've taught me a lot, and I value every experience we've had together. In saying farewell for now, General Lord told the 700 military and community leaders in attendance, "It's been an honor to serve. God bless you, and God bless our United States Air Force." Amen, General Lord, and thanks!

CENTCOM NEWS: The CENTCOM area of responsibility includes 25 nations, ranging from Egypt in the west to Pakistan in the east, and from Kazakhstan in the north to Kenya in the south. It encompasses some 428 million people who represent 17 different ethnic groups, speak six major languages with hundreds of dialects, and live under distinct forms of government and various standards of living. The four subregions that make up the area are the Arabian Peninsula and Iraq (Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen), the Northern Red Sea (Egypt and Jordan), the Horn of Africa (Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Seychelles, Somalia, and Sudan), and South and Central Asia (Afghanistan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan). The mission of CENTCOM is to promote and protect U.S. interests, ensure uninterrupted access to regional resources and markets, assist regional friends in providing for their own security and regional stability, promote the attainment of a just and lasting Middle East Peace, counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and other transnational threats, and rapidly deploy joint and combined forces to support the full range of military operation. To see some facts of what is going on in the CENTCOM AOR, check out the CENTCOM weekly newsletter at:

<http://www.centcom.mil/sites/uscentcom1/Shared%20Documents/US%20Central%20Command%20Newsletter/US%20Central%20Command%20Electronic%20Newsletter%20-%20Week%20of%20February%2027,%202006.mht>

AIR FORCE LEADERS TESTIFY ON USAF POSTURE FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR: Air Force Secretary Michael Wynne and Chief of Staff General T. Michael Moseley testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee last week. To view a copy of their testimony, go to: <http://www.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-060303-009.pdf>

SENIOR MASTER SERGEANT PROMOTION RATES: The opportunity for making senior master sergeant has slipped back to its pre-9/11 level, with the selection rate dropping below 9 percent for the first time since 2001. Read more at: <http://aimpoints.hq.af.mil/display.cfm?id=9780>

EXPORTING USAF PME: The United States Air Force has the finest enlisted professional military education in the world. The PME Center at Hickam AFB is hosting Philippine students at its Airman Leadership School so that nation can develop a program of its own. Read the Air Force article on this unique effort at: <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123017026>

SECRETARY WYNNE PUBLISHES ANOTHER LETTER TO AIRMEN. In a March 8 letter to Airmen, Air Force Secretary Wynne highlighted Air Force Smart Operations 21, a program based on both Lean and Six Sigma business process improvement tools. These tools were developed chiefly in the private sector to focus on increasing value to customers, save time and money, reduce waste and improve quality. Read the Secretary's letter at: <http://www.af.mil/library/viewpoints/secaf.asp?id=219>

SENATE MAJORITY LEADER, SEN. BILL FRIST ANNOUNCED THE TIMING FOR SENATE DEBATE ON FLAG PROTECTION AMENDMENT. In a March 7 release, U.S. Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, M.D. (R-TN) announced that the Senate will debate the "Flag Protection Amendment" in the end of June: In doing so, he said, "The American flag is a proud and sacred reminder of the principles of freedom and opportunity that form the foundation of our Republic. Our flag reminds us that there is more that unites us as Americans than divides us, and a constitutional amendment will give one of our Nation's proudest and most treasured symbols the protection it deserves. It honors the sacrifice of countless brave men and women who died defending our flag and the ideals it represents. I look forward to bringing the Flag Protection Amendment to the floor at the end of June so we can debate legislation that respects one of the principal symbols of our nation, and appropriately honors the sacrifice and commitment of all those who've acted to protect it."

AIR FORCE TAKES LEAD ON TRI-SERVICE INSTALLATION: In an Air Force article penned by MSgt Orville F. Desjarlais, Jr., on March 8th. it was reported that The Air Force at McGuire AFB is taking the lead in this nation's first tri-service installation in CONUS. Read more at <http://aimpoints.hq.af.mil/display.cfm?id=9840>

GUARD AND RESERVE COMMISSION STARTS: The newly created Commission on the National Guard and Reserves began hearings this week. Congress establish the commission to study how Guard and Reserve forces should be organized, deployed, and compensated for their present day service. For more information please visit the Commission's website at: <http://www.cngr.gov/>. A related article from the Armed Forces Information Service can be found by going to: http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Mar2006/20060306_4405.html

SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS BAN: Earlier this week the Supreme Court unanimously upheld a ban on federal funding for universities that do not grant equal access to military recruiters. In rendering their decision the court rejected the notion that the ban was a restriction on free speech, rather it regulates conduct. The Justices' ruling went one step further by stating that Congress could directly demand military access on campus without linking the requirement to federal money. The court's decision in *Rumsfeld v. Forum for Academic and Institutional Rights* reversed a November 2004 decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 3rd Circuit. An American Forces Information Service Article, same subject, can be viewed by going to: http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Mar2006/20060307_4416.html

FRAUD WARNING: It's tax time and a tax refund phishing scam seems to have resurfaced. Victims receive an e-mail message supposedly from the Internal Revenue Service that opens with: "You filed your tax return and you're expecting a refund. You have just one question and you want the answer now - Where's My Refund?"

The link provided is supposed to take you to the secure IRS website but in reality it's a phony site that resembles the real thing. (If you place your cursor over the link, you will see that the address being linked to is not the real IRS site which is located at www.irs.gov.)

As with other phishing scams, intended victims are asked to provide various personal information such as your name, Social Security number, and credit card information. As a general rule, the IRS does not send out unsolicited e-mails or ask for detailed personal information. Additionally, the IRS does not ask people for the PIN numbers, passwords or similar secret access information for their credit card, bank or other financial accounts.

The information fraudulently obtained is then used to steal the taxpayer's identity and financial assets. Typically, identity thieves use someone's personal data to steal his or her financial accounts, run up charges on the victim's existing credit cards, apply for new loans, credit cards, services or benefits in the victim's name and even file fraudulent tax returns.

To protect yourself against potential identity thieves, the IRS recommend the following steps:

- Be skeptical of communications you receive from sources you are not expecting. Verify the authenticity of phone calls, standard mail, faxes or e-mails of questionable origin before responding.
- Do not reveal secret passwords, PINs or other security-based data to third parties; genuine organizations or institutions do not need your secret data for ordinary business transactions.
- Do not click on links contained in possibly questionable e-mails; instead, go directly to the site already know to be genuine. For example, the only address for the IRS Web site is www.irs.gov — any other variations on this will not lead to the legitimate IRS Web site.
- Do not open attachments to e-mails of possibly questionable origin, since they may contain viruses that will infect your computer.
- Shred paper documents containing private financial information before discarding.
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To report the fraudulent misuse of the IRS name, logo, forms or other IRS property, you may contact the TIGTA toll-free hotline at 1-800-366-4484 or visit the TIGTA Web site.

CEREMONY COMMEMORATES FIRST MILITARY FLIGHT: FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas, March 8, 2006 – Fort Sam Houston commemorated the 96th anniversary of the first military flight March 2 at the base's main flagpole, the same site where U.S. Army Lt. Benjamin Delahauf Foulois boarded the "Signal Corps 'Aeroplane' No. 1" and circled the fort. Read more at: http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Mar2006/20060308_4427.html

MILITARY IS MOST ADMIRED INSTITUTION IN AMERICA: According to the Harris Poll, (results released on March 7, 2006), the military continues to be the most admired institution in America. A total of 47 percent of Americans said they have a "great deal" of confidence in the military. Some 38 percent of Americans said they had "only some" confidence and 14 percent said they had "hardly any" confidence in the military. The military was followed in the poll by small business - a new category in 2005 - with 45 percent of Americans saying they had a great deal of confidence; colleges and universities, 38 percent; the Supreme Court, 33 percent; and Medicine, 31 percent. At the bottom

of the survey, released March 2, were law firms at 10 percent, Congress at 10 percent, organized labor at 12 percent, major companies at 13 percent and the press at 14 percent. <http://www.vnis.com/story.cfm?textnewsid=1872>

AIRMAN LOST IN 1942 CRASH IS IDENTIFIED: (DoD press release) Officials from the Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced this week that the remains of a U.S. Army Air Forces airman, missing since 1942, have been identified and will soon be returned to his family for burial. He is Aviation Cadet Leo Mustonen, 22, of Brainerd, Minn. The family has not set a date for his burial. Mustonen was one of four men aboard a routine navigation training flight that departed Mather Field, Calif., on Nov. 18, 1942. Their AT-7 Navigator aircraft carried about five hours of fuel, and when the plane did not return to base, a search was initiated. It was suspended about a month later with no results. In 1947, several hikers on Darwin Glacier in the Sierra Nevada mountain range discovered the aircraft wreckage. Human remains of three of the crew found at the site were buried in the Golden Gate National Cemetery in San Bruno, Calif. Several other hikers on Mendel Glacier, which is adjacent to Darwin Glacier, discovered frozen human remains, circumstantial evidence and personal effects in October 2005. Park rangers from Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks and a forensic anthropologist from the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) recovered the remains, which were later shipped to the JPAC laboratory in Hawaii. Scientists from JPAC and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory also used mitochondrial DNA as one of the forensic tools in the process. U.S. Army casualty and mortuary officials located and briefed representatives of the families of all four crewmen. For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, visit the DPMO Web site at <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo> or call (703) 699-1169.

Enlisted Quote For the Week

"To me, AFSA is my voice to the nation, Capitol Hill, and the president. It is my one opportunity to voice what is right and should be right. I actually have a say in who I want to represent me at the highest level possible. Membership is VERY important! Strength in numbers—If we do not have the numbers to back up what we are saying ; we will not succeed as an organization , and we as enlisted people will not get the rights and benefits that are so deserving to us. I can not fathom the thought of an enlisted person not wanting to be a member of AFSA. In my eyes AFSA IS THE ONLY ORGANIZATION TAKING CARE OF THE ENLISTED!"

-TSgt Jeanna I. Rogers, USAF

AFSA MEMBER BENEFITS and SERVICE PROVIDERS

NEW MEMBER SERVICE PROVIDER!

VERIZON WIRELESS

Now you can enjoy the benefits of having Verizon wireless cell phone service with special savings just for AFSA members! Log onto AFSA's Web site at www.afsahq.org, click on the Verizon logo and enter your Member ID to gain access to this exciting new AFSA Member Provider Service. You may also click on the following link: www.afsamobility.com to gain immediate access to AFSA's Verizon Web site. The AFSA Verizon wireless member benefits include:

- ⊛ Wireless service with the nation's most reliable wireless network.
- ⊛ \$50 "cash back" value only if purchased through the AFSA Web site.

- ✪ Take your current phone number with you and get FREE FedEx shipping.
- ✪ Customized phone and accessories with a 15-day satisfaction guarantee.
- ✪ Fast, easy, and no waiting in lines at the local store.

NOTE: THIS SERVICE IS AN EXCLUSIVE BENEFIT FOR AFSA MEMBERS AND IS ONLY AVAILABLE ONLINE, NOT IN VERIZON STORES!

The AFSA/MBNA Platinum Plus MasterCard

For every \$1 in net retail purchases you make with your MasterCard credit card, you'll earn 1 Point. You can redeem your Points for:

- ✪ Unlimited cash rewards
- ✪ Tickets on major U.S. airlines with NO blackout dates
- ✪ Brand-name merchandise and gift certificates from top retailers
- ✪ Cruise discounts

Added to these great perks is No Annual Fee; a great low Annual Percentage Rate (APR); support for Air Force Sergeants Association; plus FREE access to MyConcierge service, an exclusive personal service—at no additional cost to you.

To receive current qualifying details and information, and to apply, call toll-free 1-866-GET-MBNA or 1-866-438-6262. Use priority code **LZFS** when calling.

AFSA: YOUR ENLISTED VOICE

AFSA works to gain and protect the quality of life benefits of the *Total Air Force* (Active Duty, Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve Command) enlisted personnel in active, retired, and veteran status and their families. AFSA does this through visits to congressional leaders, visits with Presidential staff members, visits with DoD personnel, and others who may have an influence upon the decisions that could affect the enlisted Airmen.

AFSA was founded on May 3, 1961, as a private, not-for-profit organization in Washington D.C. It was founded by four enlisted personnel, for enlisted personnel. It was federally chartered in 1998. Since its founding, AFSA has had one mission—to protect the enlisted Airmen's quality of life. It has never wavered from that mission. It is the only association with the word "SERGEANTS" in its title because the word sergeant means "to serve," and that is what AFSA does for its members.

If you are not a member, go to our Web site at www.afsahq.org or call 1-800-638-0594. ext 0 and ask to speak to someone in Member and Field Relations. If you are a member, we greatly appreciate your professionalism in supporting your Association and would appreciate you helping to build your voice by recruiting a new member today!

