

FORT GEORGE G. MEADE COUNCIL'S REPORT

1. The ninetieth meeting of the Fort George G. Meade Retiree Council was held at 2234 Huber Road, Fort George G. Meade, Maryland, at 9:00 a.m. on 13 March 2004. In accordance with AR 600-8-7, this report of the meeting is submitted:

a. The following members were present:
SGM Kenneth L. McCall Sr., USA Ret (Co-Chairman)
COL Charles M. Shadle, USA Ret (Aberdeen)
COL Edward H, Uemura, USA Ret
COL Edwin Wolf, USA Ret
COL(Dr.) Edwin L. Zemo, USAR Ret
LTC John S. Wisniewski, USA Ret
LtCDR Sam L. Bridwell, USN Ret (Western MD)
MAJ Edward Calhoun, Sr., USA Ret
MAJ William Heath, USA Ret
CW2 Ricky Godbolt, USA Ret
CSM Barry Decker, USA Ret (Aberdeen)
SGM J. Paul Funk, USA Ret
SGM James Gilbert, USA Ret
1SG Richard Gillman, USA Ret
MSG James Lickliter, USA Ret
SFC Carlo DePorto, USA Ret
MSGT Charles E. Plummer, USAF Ret
SSG Walter B. Hollman, Sr., USA Ret
MRS. Cecille Morse

2. The meeting was called to order with the invocation being given by SFC DePorto followed by the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. CO-CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS:

SGM McCall reviewed the minutes of the ninetieth meeting (13 Dec 03) that was accepted with the following corrections: Under the chairman's remarks, add 14 June 2003 to the previous meeting minutes date. Under community action council, change to read Mrs. Morse was selected as the chairperson for the Fort Meade Chapter of the American Red Cross.

SGM McCall conducted the following:

a. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:

(1) COL (USA Ret) Bernard Cullen, Adjutant General, Fort Meade remarked on several issues including the Department of Defense's program to change ID cards, and to accommodate this effort, the ID Card

section would be closed to retirees, dependents and others on certain dates.

- (2) LTC Shelby Bell, Commander, Headquarters Command Battalion reported on the battalion's bi-weekly visits to the wounded that are patients at area military hospitals, the gifts that are provided them and the need for others to become involved. Also mentioned were the events scheduled in March 2004, where they will host visiting wounded attending special programs given in their honor.
- (3) MSGT William F. Pons, USAF Retired was introduced as a perspective member.

4. RSO REMARKS: Mr. Ashley reported on the following:
 - a. The cost of meals that will be served during the 2004 Retiree Appreciation Day weekend at Club Meade will be: Dinner, Friday, 10 Sep 04 - \$13.00 per person; Lunch (Buffet), Saturday, 11 Sep 04 - \$12.00 per person.
 - b. The winter issue of the "Still Serving" newsletter has been distributed.
 - c. Requested all to participate in submitting articles for the newsletter with the deadline for the next issue being 1 June 2004.
 - d. Extended apologies for the commissary and PX for not being able to provide representation to today's meeting. The PX did send gift bags of samples and brochures for distribution to attendees.
5. OLD BUSINESS: None.
6. NEW BUSINESS: COL Zemo remarked on the following:
 - a. Concerns relative to the proper display of our national colors with emphasis placed on nighttime display. After extensive discussion, COL Cullen stated that he would obtain the proper protocol and find a media to disseminate same.
 - b. The new policy that allows extended use of the commissary for both reserves and National Guard.
7. APG UPDATE: CSM Decker reported on the following:
 - a. Their upcoming Retiree Appreciation Day activities scheduled for 6 Nov 04 between 8 a.m. and 12 p.m.
 - b. The departure of their current garrison commander on 7 Jul 04, who is a staunch supporter of military retirees.
 - c. The support provided retiree funerals and that they have several units that can provide the personnel for same.

- d. At a Town Hall meeting with PX management, it was learned that construction on a proposed Church's Fried Chicken eatery was halted because of BRAC mandates.

8. WESTERN MD UPDATE: LTCDR Bridwell reported that Carlisle Barracks commissary had been nominated as the Best Small Commissary in DECA. Also, a special effort is being made to publicize the new program that allows reservists and National Guard extended use of the commissary.

9. COMMISSARY COUNCIL: SGM Funk reported:

- a. Paul Rhodes had been appointed the new commissary officer and states that during the meeting he was assured that problems would be addressed immediately.
- b. SGM Gilbert asked that the ability to replenish out of stock items more rapidly be addressed.
- c. Mrs. Morse queried as to how new items could be requested for stocking in the store. (see Mr. Rhodes)
- d. COL Zemo remarked that handicapped spaces are needed in the parking row. (SGM McCall stated that each row has four slots reserved for same.)

10. KIMBROUGH ADVISORY COUNCIL: COL Uemura reported on the following:

- a. The council did not hold its previously announced meeting and that 8 April 2004 is the next scheduled one.
- b. That while traveling had forgotten to pack some of his prescribed medication and found that there is a procedure in place that will help you acquire same at local military treatment facilities if you contact their officer in charge.
- c. There are new controls in place that prevents patients from hanging on their medical records. Some problems have resulted in the new policy and they are being addressed.

11. COMMUNITY ACTION COUNCIL: Mrs. Morse reported that:

- a. The last meeting had been cancelled.
- b. The council is now included as an entity within the Army's Family Advisory Board.

12. CO-CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS: SGM McCall remarked:

- a. The bills introduced to the Maryland General Assembly that affects military retirees or their family members:
 - (1) House Bill 0474 - allows World War II, Korean War and Vietnam War veterans whose education was disrupted because of their entering the military,

to apply for their high school diplomas through a county board if they were honorably discharged.

- (2) House Bill 0668 - Would have eliminated 19 positions on the Maryland Veterans Commission while providing for certain additional benefits. (SGM McCall along with several other members of the commission, successfully lobbied against this bill.)
- (3) House Bill 1182 - Pertained to a subtraction modification of military retirement income that would allow for a reduction in state income taxes for a certain category of military retirees.
- (4) House Bill 1215 - Pertained to a subtraction of military retirement income that would allow for the reduction in state income tax for military retirement income, eliminating the age and duty status of military retirees requirement, and increasing the level of federal adjusted gross income to which the formula would apply.
- (5) House Bill 1325 - Authorized the granting of a property tax credit to individuals at least 60 years old.
- (6) Senate Bill 0624 - Exempts from property tax a dwelling house owned by a surviving spouse of a veteran who receives dependency and indemnity compensation from the federal Department of Veteran Affairs.

Note: The final status on these bills will be addressed at the councils next meeting. Also, handouts were made available to attendees.

- b. The Korean Defense Service Medal that was established for service members who have or are serving in the Republic of Korea and the criteria for receiving same. Handouts were provides
- c. World War II Memorial dedication that is set for 29 May 2004 in Washington, DC.
- d. The steps being taken by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, and the Social Security Administration to reduce identity theft by removing the first five digits of the social security number from pay statements and checks.
- e. The publishing of an internet address (www.crsc.army.mil) and telephone number (1-866-281-3254) for those needing information relative to the concurrent receipt and expanded Combat Related Special Compensation (CRSC) 2004 Act. COL Wolf reported that he was having difficulty

having his submittals accepted and is to meet with Mr. Ashley to address same.

Note: Problems continue to plague the Department of Veteran Affairs in the implementation of this program.

13. Items of Interest

- a. COL Zemo had heard that COL Rice (Council Chairman) would be accepting a position with the Military Order of World Wars and wanted to know if it would affect his status with the council. SGM McCall reported that it should not.
- b. SGM Gilbert stated that the new Command Sergeant Major of the Army would be attending a breakfast at Club Meade on 2 April 04, hosted by AUSA.
- c. SSG Hollman suggested that reserved parking spaces at the commissary and exchange be made available to certain categories of women who are pregnant.
- d. MSGT Pons reported hearing about the possible elimination of some commissaries and privatizing some operations. The Jan-Apr 2004 issue of Army Echoes addresses this issue that also included a variable pricing policy that would be introduced. Currently, there are no plans to eliminate commissary's that are sound and not draining the system.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 a.m. with the next meeting being scheduled for 9 a.m., 5 June 2004, at 2234 Huber Road, Fort Meade. All were thanked for their support and participation.

KENNETH L. MCCALL, SR.
Sergeant Major, USA Ret
Co-Chairman, Fort Meade
Retiree Council