



# STILL SERVING



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## STILL ARMY STRONG!

### NOTES FROM THE RSO STEVE ASHLEY

I hope this finds everyone doing well.

Happy New Year to all. This year promises to be exciting. We have already started planning for the 2009 Retiree Appreciation Day. It will be held on October 9 at the Fest Tent. Last year's RAD was memorable. It was a nice day and over 300 participated.

Please feel free to check out our homepage. You will find prior issues of the "Still Serving" newsletter, Fort Meade Retiree Council minutes, and up-to-date information on events happening on Fort Meade. The site is:

[www.ftmeade.army.mil/rso-index.html](http://www.ftmeade.army.mil/rso-index.html). Please save this in your favorites.

A big thank you to my staff, Cynthia Johnson and Don Eisenhart. Their dedication, support, and hard work have made this office one of the best. Cynthia and Don work the pre-retirement portion of the office. I would also like to thank the Retiree Council for their dedication to the area retirees.

Make sure you read the article on the Retirement Benefits Symposium put on by the Fort Meade Retiree Council and being held on May 29, 2009. This always draws large crowds.

I would like to take a moment to pay tribute to my predecessor, Mr. Joe Matthews. He has recently retired from the Federal government after retiring from the military. He has served as the Fort Meade Retirement Services Officer and recently as the MDW Regional Transition Manager for Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP). He has been a wealth of knowledge and was always positive. His can-do attitude was an inspiration to me. Thanks Joe!

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### NOTICE

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**NOTES FROM THE FORT MEADE RETIREE  
COUNCIL CHAIRMAN – COL(USA RET) BERT RICE**

**Happy New Year!**

I hope your New Year has started off nicely and that 2009 will meet and satisfy all your expectations! Interestingly, both presidential candidates touted that change will happen one way or another. During my musings, I have been wondering if we can afford all these changes!

I do wish President Obama all the best as he and his administration take on the challenges of serving the best interests of citizens of this – “the greatest Nation in the world!” Also, I hope we can now move beyond the constant bashing of President Bush and his administration, which became too vile for decent words, in my humble opinion. Time has a way of righting such wrongs! I really hope that President Obama is treated more fairly by the liberal media. I do think the American people, as am I, are fed up with the nasty partisanship that has a strangle hold on the country’s political scene - enough said!

Retiree Appreciation Day (RAD) activities went well on 17 October 2008. We had one of the largest turnouts ever and I think this can be attributed to the hard work of our Fort Meade Retirement Services Officer and his staff, the Retiree Council members, and all the organizations and agencies that supported the event. So, thanks everyone for doing a magnificent job that assured the success of RAD 2008.

Also, I want to especially thank Colonel Christopher Castle, Commander, Kimbrough Ambulatory Care Center (KACC), for permitting us use of his facility. The support to include medical screenings and flu shots was outstanding. Also, I offer thanks to many others who “just made it happen” including: the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) for providing refreshments, to AAFES and the Commissary for their contributions, the many organizations who took time to set up educational displays, the Freedom Inn Dining Facility for a wonderful meal at a reasonable cost, Installation Commander Colonel Daniel Thomas and his staff, and guest speaker Lieutenant General Frederick Vollrath, US Army (Ret). LTG Vollrath gave an insightful briefing that helped us understand retiree related issues and what is being done to solve a number of problems.

The next RAD is being planned now so please note that it will occur on **9 October 2009**. This brings me to the next activity that the Fort Meade Retiree Council is planning.

Be sure to reserve the date of **Friday, 29 May 2009** so that you can attend a **Retiree Benefits Symposium at Club Meade beginning at 0900 hours**. We are making arrangements to have representatives from Kimbrough Ambulatory Care Center (medical), the Staff Judge Advocate Office (legal), Veteran Affairs (VA issues), Social Security, and a national veteran organization (MOAA or NAUS) to update attendees on matters related to their fields of expertise. In general, each representative will speak for 30 to 45 minutes, lunch paid for by attendees will be served by Club Meade, and a question and answer period will occur following lunch.

This type symposium has been highly successful in past and we believe it will serve the best interests of retirees and their spouses, surviving spouses, and service members who are about to retire along with their spouses. **So, the requirement is for those who plan to attend to reserve the date, complete the attached reservation form and send the form with payment (\$13.00) to Retirement Services Office, 2234 Huber Road, Fort Meade, MD 20755. Make checks payable to: Retiree Information Activity Fund. The cost of the meal is \$13.00 per person paid by check in advance. Only those who pay in advance will be permitted to eat with the group.**

As you can see, the Fort Meade Retiree Council is committed to addressing issues that are of interest and beneficial to the retired community. Your input and offer to support this effort is always welcome. To that end, if you are interested in becoming a member of the Fort Meade Retiree Council please contact Mr. Steve Ashley, Retirement Services Office, or any member of the Council to let them know of your interest.

In closing, I have submitted my resignation from the Council because of a very heavy workload which leaves limited time to spend with my family and to complete my responsibilities to several other organizations. It has been an honor and a pleasure to serve you and the Fort Meade command as Chairman. I wish my successor best wishes in assuming the Chairmanship of a wonderful Council comprised of great patriotic Americans. I will continue to support the Council in whatever way that I am able.

God Bless each and every one of you and God Bless America!

## **ARMY COMMUNITY SERVICES (ACS)**

Army Community Service (ACS) – Building 830  
Chisholm, Ft. Meade, MD 20755 or call 301-677-5590  
for assistance.

The Fort Meade Army Community Service (ACS) now has a Military and Family Life Consultant position permanently stationed at Fort Meade. This is a contracted clinical professional at the Masters and Ph.D. level. They provide a non medical, short term, solution focused counseling program designed to address issues that service members, civilians, retirees and their Families face as they cope with the normal reactions to the stressful/adverse situations of everyday life. To contact the Military and Family Life Consultant visit the Fort Meade ACS or call 301-922-9586.

At Army Community Service you can receive one-on-one financial counseling. Whether you are already in a bind or want to prevent future financial problems, contact Army Community Service to make an appointment with our financial counselor. Army Emergency Relief can also provide financial assistance through a no interest loan for unexpected emergencies. Call 301-677-5590 to arrange to come in and talk to our staff.

Ever thought about being a community volunteer? Volunteer opportunities can be found throughout the community, both on and off the installation. Visit or call ACS and talk to our Volunteer Coordinator for assistance to help you find the opportunity you are looking for.

Looking for a job? Want to change careers? Employment Readiness provides classes and assistance in acquiring skills, developing networks, and resources needed to promote success in work and career planning. Counseling is available to assist with resumes, interviewing skills and career assessment. Call or visit ACS for assistance.

### **SUMMER DAY CAMP**

This summer, feel secure that the child in your life is in a safe, fun, educational environment! Child, Youth and School Services is offering a fun filled, activity packed, well supervised Summer Day Camp Program.

#### **Two Camps Available:**

School-Age Services- Bldg 1900 Reece Rd  
1<sup>st</sup>- 5<sup>th</sup> Graders of 2008-2009 school year.  
Middle School Camp- Bldg 909 Ernie Pyle -  
6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Graders of 2008-2009 school year.

Camp Hours are : 6:00am-5:30pm Monday-Friday,  
excluding the Federal Holidays - July 4<sup>th</sup>. Parents may  
sign up for one or all ten sessions that begin June 15  
and go through August 28<sup>th</sup>.

Fees are based on total family income and include the following: breakfast, lunch and snacks; field trips every week such as bowling, movies, swimming, Washington DC, and amusement parks; fun and educationally sound enrichment events; daily events such as computers, arts and crafts and drama!

**Register:** Call CYS Central Registration beginning March 09 for an appointment- 301-677-1156/1149/1105. Registration is based on first come first served, don't delay!!

### **MEDAL OF HONOR (MEMORIAL) POST LIBRARY**

This is the perfect place for seniors –

- Borrow books with no fines.
- Unlimited access to computers with FREE and unrestricted internet.
- All the latest fiction for pleasure reading.
- Nice quiet atmosphere for reading a wide variety of magazines.
- If we don't have the book you want, we can get it.

The library is open Tuesday and Thursday 11-7 p.m., Wednesday and Friday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Closed Sundays, Mondays and Federal holidays. (301) 677-5522

### **FAMILY PET CARE CENTER**

The Family Pet Care Center offers full service grooming as well as low-cost toys and accessories for sale. FPCC also has an indoor/outdoor boarding facility and a doggie daycare program to allow the dogs to get their exercise and socialization. (301) 677-4059.

## ESTATE PLANNING

By Mrs. Jane M. Winand, Chief, Legal Assistance Division

One of the clients recently seeking estate-planning assistance at the Fort Meade Legal Assistance Division showed me a Last Will and Testament done when the soldier (now a retiree) was preparing to deploy to Vietnam in 1969. The client was still satisfied with the language in the will and wondered if it was still valid. The client was curious as to whether a will can expire after a certain period of time.

A Last Will and Testament is valid until the testator, the person who created the will, decides to revoke or nullify it. A will is revoked by tearing it up or marking through it with the intent to revoke it, or by signing a new will. Thus, since the Vietnam era will hadn't been revoked by the testator, it was still a valid will. So the client could rest easy? Well, not necessarily. The state laws which govern the probate of wills and the administration of the estates of deceased persons have changed over the years. Prior to these changes, it was necessary to locate one or more of the witnesses that signed the will. Imagine trying to round up the witnesses that signed that Vietnam era will. In the 1980's, states changed their laws to allow for the addition of a self-proving clause at the back of the will. This extra page, signed by the testator, the witnesses, and a notary public, makes it unnecessary, in most cases, to locate the witnesses. The probate of the will is much easier with the self-proving clause. However, many old wills lack the self-proving clause. In the case of the Vietnam era will client, I prepared a new will with the self-proving clause.

As a general rule, you should review your will and other estate planning documents every few years to make sure that nothing has changed. Perhaps you have had additional children, there has been a divorce or death, or you've changed your mind about the person named in your will to serve as guardian of your children. Furthermore, there may have been changes to the law that will affect your estate plans and the imposition of federal and state estate tax. Many clients have valid wills, but may not have a living will or advance medical directive which govern end-of-life medical issues.

Many married couples simply want to leave their worldly possessions to their spouses. It is possible to simplify the probate process in many cases by titling real estate and investments jointly with right of survivorship between a husband and wife. Some states require a property deed to clearly indicate an intent to hold the property with right of survivorship by using such words

as "joint tenants with survivorship" and "jointly with survivorship." Other states have laws which treat property, owned by a husband and wife, as held with survivorship. Investments such as stocks and mutual funds may also be held jointly with right of survivorship. However, before changing the title documents on assets, it is best to consider estate tax consequences.

The Fort Meade Legal Assistance Attorneys provide advice and assistance on estate-planning matters. We draft wills, living wills, advance medical directives and powers of attorney. It is a good idea to meet with an attorney to discuss your needs, evaluate existing documents for sufficiency, and determine whether there are additional estate tax considerations and other factors that may affect your estate planning. Should you have estate-planning concerns, you may call the Fort Meade Legal Assistance Office and make an appointment to speak with an attorney. The number is (301) 677-9762.

## ACCESS PASS FROM THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Are you a history buff?

Do you enjoy camping at our national forests?

How about just taking in the scenery with our national parks?

Do you want to save some money?

Well then, here is a little known benefit that many retirees don't know about. It's called the Access Pass, and it's issued by the National Park Service to anyone with a disability, even if that disability is only rated at 10%. What the Access Pass will do for you is allow you access into most Federal Recreation areas fee free! Not only for you, but for 3 adults accompanying you as well.

Here is how it works.

Just visit any National Park Service site with an office (Fort McHenry is the closest one to Fort Meade) and have a letter from the VA stating your disability (or your doctor, etc.)

The Access Pass is honored by most Forest Service, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, and some Corp of Engineers and Tennessee Valley Authority.

Not only is it good for fee areas, but it's also good for a 50% discount on some expanded amenity fee areas like boating, camping and swimming. It's also good for a varying discount at some military RV parks (Fort Meade offers a 30% discount with the access pass).

For more information and FAQ, please visit on line at [http://www.nps.gov/fees\\_passes.htm](http://www.nps.gov/fees_passes.htm) or [http://usparks.about.com/od/natlparkbasics/a/accesspass\\_2htm](http://usparks.about.com/od/natlparkbasics/a/accesspass_2htm).

Enjoy the great outdoors!

#### **HANDY PHONE NUMBERS**

##### **FORT MEADE**

POST LOCATOR	(301) 677-6261
ACS/AER	(301) 677-5590
CAMP MEADE RV PARK	(301) 677-6196
COMMISSARY	(301) 677-7463
GUEST HOUSE	(301) 677-5660
	(410) 672-1929
HEALTH BENEFITS ADVISOR	(301) 677-8982
ID CARDS	(301) 677-3342
ITT (TOURS AND TRAVEL)	(301) 677-7354
LEGAL ASSISTANCE	(301) 677-9536
KIMBROUGH MED CLINIC	(301) 677-8392
POST EXCHANGE	(301) 677-7695
RSO	(301) 677-9603
VISITORS CONTROL CTR	(301) 677-1064
CASUALTY REPORTING	(301) 677-2902

##### **ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND**

CASUALTY REPORTING	(410) 306-2345
POST LOCATOR	(401) 278-5201
ACS	(410) 278-7572
COMMISSARY	(410) 278-3101
ID CARDS	(410) 306-2389
LEGAL ASSISTANCE	(410) 278-1583
MEDICAL CLINIC	(410) 278-1719
POST EXCHANGE	(410) 272-6829
LOCAL RSO	(410) 306-2320

##### **FORT DETRICK**

CASUALTY REPORTING	(301) 619-3286
ACS	(301) 619-2197
COMMISSARY	(301) 619-2616
ID CARDS	(301) 619-6635

LEGAL ASSISTANCE	(301) 619-2643
MEDICAL CLINIC	(301) 619-7175

#### **FORT MEADE TAX CENTER**

The Fort Meade Tax Assistance Center is now open. It is located at 421`7 Roberts Ave. Hours are from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. with some evening and weekend hours in March and April to be announced.

Free tax preparation services and electronic filing of returns will be provided for all active-duty and retired service members, as well as dependent family members. Tax preparers will assist with both federal and state returns.

Please bring the following information with you:

- Last years federal tax return.
- Your W-2 (wages and earnings statement).
- Form 1099 (interest statements from bank).
- Social Security Number for all dependents you are claiming.
- Information on child care expenses you paid last year.
- Mortgage interest statement.
- Alimony information (copy of divorce or separation agreement).
- Original power of attorney appointing spouse (or other family member) the authority to file.
- A voided check with routing number for direct deposit.
- Any other financial information from the tax year.

For more information or to make an appointment call the Fort Meade Tax Assistance Center at (301) 677-9762.

## RETIREE BENEFITS SYMPOSIUM

The Fort Meade Retiree Council invites you to attend a Retiree Benefits Symposium at Club Meade on Friday, May 29, 2009 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Presentations will include Survivor Benefits, Social Security, Veterans Administration, Legal Assistance, and Health care.

The symposium will begin with registration from 8:30 a.m. until 8:55 a.m. A luncheon will be served from 11:30 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. All activities will be held at Club Meade off Mapes Road.

If you wish to attend, please return the pre-registration form below with a check for \$13.00. The check includes the cost of the luncheon and may be made out to 'RETIREE INFORMATION ACTIVITY FUND'. Reservations must be received at this office NLT May 9, 2009.

We are pleased to be able to demonstrate, through this event, that you are a valued asset to the total military community. We hope this event will provide an opportunity to make new friends and renew acquaintances as well as being kept up to date. Please call the Retirement Services Office at (301) 677-9603 if you have any questions.

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### RETIREE BENEFITS SYMPOSIUM May 29, 2009, Club Meade

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE # \_\_\_\_\_

# ATTENDING \_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to: **RETIREE INFORMATION ACTIVITY FUND**

Return registration Form and check to: **Retirement Services Office  
ATTN: IMNE-MEA-HRM-X  
2234 Huber Road  
Fort George G. Meade, MD 20755-5073**

**SUSPENSE DATE: May 9, 2009**

# CASUALTY ASSISTANCE CHECKLIST

*(to be completed by retired Soldier and/or spouse and kept in your files for your survivors to use)*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Retirement: \_\_\_\_\_ Retired grade/rank: \_\_\_\_\_  
Enrolled in RSFPP, SBP (circle all that apply) Did you disenroll from SBP? YES NO  
VA Claim #:  
Eligible to draw VA disability compensation (even if not in receipt now): YES NO  
Receiving Social Security? YES NO If yes, age at which first received:  
Organ donor? YES NO (circle one)  
Is there a living will? YES NO

## SPOUSE INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_ SSN: \_\_\_\_\_

## MARRIAGE INFORMATION

Date of Marriage: \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Marriage (City, State, Country): \_\_\_\_\_

## CHILD(REN) INFORMATION

Name Birthdates Address/Phone/E-mail Capable of self-support?

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## INSURANCE POLICIES

Policy # Company Amount (include "as of" date) Beneficiary Agent phone/E-mail/Web site

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## LONG TERM CARE INSURANCE

Policy# Company Type of coverage Agent phone/E-mail/Web site

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**INVESTMENTS**

Type (IRA, CD, Mutual Fund) Company Amount (include "as of" date) Agent phone/E-mail/Web site

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**BANK ACCOUNTS**

Bank Name Account # Type of Acct Amount (include "as of" date) Phone/Web site

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**CREDITORS**

Name & Address Account # Balance Due (include "as of" date) Life insurance? Phone/E-mail

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**BURIAL INFORMATION**

Who should be notified of your death:

Name Relationship Address Phone/E-mail

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Do you want a military honor guard? YES NO Do you want to be (circle one): Buried cremated?

Have you purchased a burial plot? YES NO If yes, where?

Name, location of cemetery where you want to be buried:

Do you want to be buried in your uniform? YES NO If yes, where is it?

Do you want a memorial service? YES NO If yes, where?

Do you have a preference of funeral home? YES NO If yes, which one?

**LOCATION OF DOCUMENTS**

**DOCUMENT**

**LOCATION**

Living Will	_____
Current Retired Pay Statement	_____
Marriage Certificate (s)	_____
Divorce Decree(s)/property settlement(s) (from previous marriage(s) of retired Soldier or spouse)	_____
Death certificate(s) (from previous marriage(s) of retired Soldier or spouse)	_____
Birth certificates/adoption papers (retired Soldier, spouse, children)	_____
DD Form(s) 214 (Active Duty Discharge Record ) (for all periods)	_____
Retirement Orders	_____
Safe-Deposit Box List Contents	_____
Will	_____
Vehicle Registration & Title	_____
Insurance policies	_____
Investment papers	_____
Burial plot information	_____
Uniform for burial	_____
Medical and dental records	_____
Real Estate deeds	_____
Tax returns	_____

**PHONE/E-MAIL/WEB SITES**

**Army Casualty Operations** – contact right after retired Soldier’s death, call 1-800-626-3317; or, from overseas, call collect (703) 325-7990; e-mail [cmaocweb@hoffman.army.mil](mailto:cmaocweb@hoffman.army.mil); Web site <https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/active/TAGD/CMAOC/cmaoc.htm>

**Retirement Services Officer** (follow-up assistance) numbers are listed on pages 9-10 of printed *Echoes* and [homepage](#)

**VA** 1-800-827-1000; VA Insurance 1-800-669-8477; Web site <http://www.va.gov>

**Social Security** 1-800-772-1213; Web site <http://www.ssa.gov>

**Retired and Annuitant Pay** 1-800-321-1080; Web site <http://www.dod.mil/dfas>; Online account access: <https://myPay.dfas.mil>

**Update ID card information** 1-800-538-9552; (831) 583-2500; Lawyer

**Initial contact upon death** Fort Meade Casualty Section (301) 677-2206.