

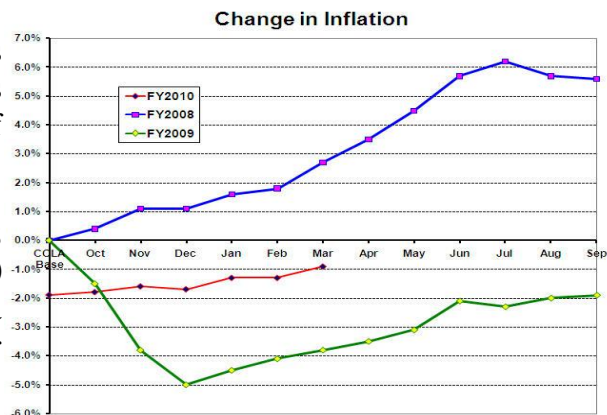


May 2010

Retired Activities Office Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach Newsletter

COLA. The Bureau of Labor Statistics announced the March CPI-W of 213.5 which is an increase of 0.5% from the January CPI-W of 212.5.

The March CPI-W of 213.5 is now down .9% from the 2008 COLA base of 215.5. The 2008 COLA base will be used to calculate the 2010 COLA since there was no 2009 COLA as a result of negative inflation from the third quarter of 2008 to the third quarter of 2009. Source: MOAA.



Dental Program. The TRICARE Retiree Dental Program is available around the world to retired servicemembers who receive retirement pay, "gray area" retired National Guard and Reserve members who are entitled to but not yet receiving retirement pay and Medal of Honor recipients. Spouses and children up to 21 years old, or 23 years old if they are full-time students, of these retirees are also eligible for the retiree dental program. Participants in this voluntary plan may get dental care from any licensed dentist within the program's designated service area. Eligible members may enroll in the TRICARE retiree dental program online, by telephone or by mail. Visit the TRICARE Retiree Dental Program website at (<http://www.trdp.org/>) and click "Prospective Enrollees" for more information on rates and benefits.

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Twitter is a free service that lets you keep in touch with Tricare and obtain answers to simple questions.

Facebook Questions can also be exchanged with Tricare through Facebook.

Cancer Screening. Colorectal cancer screenings may be an uncomfortable subject for some people to discuss, but their importance cannot be underplayed. With one in 19 Americans being diagnosed with colorectal cancer in their lifetime, the good news for TRICARE beneficiaries is that colorectal screenings are available to them at no cost. To read this release, please visit: <http://www.tricare.mil/mediacenter/news.aspx?fid=605>.

Sexual Trauma. Veterans seeking treatment for sexual trauma suffered in the military may have been improperly charged co-payments by the Veterans Affairs Department, according to a new report from the VA inspector general. The report, issued 4 FEB, has resulted in a change in billing practices and a promise that anyone charged for mental health counseling or treatment for physical health conditions could get his or her money back. Counseling and treatment at no cost to those seeking it, mental or physical, is available for male or female veterans for sexual trauma that occurred while on active duty or during National Guard and reserve duties. Unlike disability-related health issues, which veterans often must prove are service-connected, veterans seeking treatment for injury, illness or psychological conditions relating to sexual trauma do not have to provide any documentation or evidence that they reported the incident that caused the trauma. All veterans can receive the care; they don't even have to be eligible for veterans' benefits or be enrolled in the veterans' health care system. [Source: Marine CorpsTimes Rick maze article 5 Feb 2010]

SBP-DIC Offset Remarriage Rule. Survivors, who qualify for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) and are covered by military Survivor Benefit Plan, must have their SBP compensation offset (reduced) by an amount equal to DIC. Widows then are refunded the premiums their husbands had paid for the portion of SBP being offset. But now there is an exception that Defense pay officials ignored until three military widows won a lawsuit last year and forced the DoD to acknowledge what Congress had done. The quirky bottom line is that military widows who remarry after age 57 are exempt from the SBP-DIC offset. Read more about the Remarriage Rule. <http://www.military.com/features/0,15240,213317,00.html>

ID Card Update. Phase Two of the process to remove printed Social Security numbers from retiree identification cards set to begin early this year has been delayed until further notice. When a new plan is made available to the Services, information will be advertised through Air Force retiree news outlets and other public affairs media. There are more than 1,500 ID card centers worldwide. To find the nearest center, refer to the RAPIDS site locator at www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsi/owa/home . Officials urge cardholders to call first to ensure duty hours and determine what documents are required. People must present two forms of identification and one must be an unexpired federal- or state-issued photo ID. [Source: Afterburner article Feb 2010]

USAF DBIDS. Retirees, survivors and their family members have begun registering their identification cards at Air Force installations worldwide as the service implements a new base-entry system that uses scanning devices to manage access. The Defense Biometric Identification System, or DBIDS, is already operational at some bases overseas and in the continental United States. Open registrations for DBIDS are under way at installations gearing up for this Air Force-wide initiative. Particular dates, times and locations vary by base so stay tuned for specific

details. Actual registration takes only a few minutes, according to Air Force Security Forces officials. DBIDS uses automated processes to ensure only those with authorized access are allowed to enter the installation. Other benefits include giving guards visual and audible crosschecks to verify identities of those requesting access.

Guards scanning ID cards will see a red or green display at the bottom of their scanner screens. A red display will say "stop" and indicate why base entry is not authorized, giving up to 26 different messages. Besides showing if access is authorized or denied, the scanner allows a gate guard to see a detailed view that provides more information about the card holder. The photo of the card holder will be the image taken when the card was registered in the system. Although the actual scanning of the cards by guards only takes a few seconds, there may be some delays at gates as everyone gets used to the process. Retirees, survivors and their family members should stay tuned to local information outlets for details on the registration process taking place at their nearest Air Force installation. [Source: Afterburner Robert Goetz article Feb 2010]

Retiree Joint Basing Impact. Although the signs at some gates are changing, joint basing has had very little impact on services and support for retirees. In fact, things should only get better. Efficiencies and effectiveness are the driving forces behind joint basing. By pulling together the best of what each service has to offer, the best practices are being gleaned to become a joint base's standard. This means the best possible service to customers. Unlike normal Base Realignment and Closure actions, joint basing closes no installations meaning retirees living nearby will still have access to the same support they are used to receiving. Joint basing is being done in two phases. Phase 1 bases have already stood up and are fully operational. These joint bases include: McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, Myer-Henderson Hall, Andrews-Naval Air Facility Washington, Little Creek-Fort Story, and Joint Region Marianas, which includes Andersen Air Force Base). Phase 2 bases will be transitioning people, real property and services to the joint base command over the next eight months. They should be fully operational by 1 OCT. The joint bases in Phase 2 include: Lewis-McChord, Anacostia-Bolling, Elmendorf-Richardson, Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Charleston, Langley-Eustis, and San Antonio involving Randolph, Lackland and Fort Sam Houston.

The Air Force is involved in 10 joint-base actions, and is actually the "lead service" for six of them. For example, in San Antonio the Air Force is responsible for all of the support associated with the combined installations -- even the Army civilian employees at Fort Sam Houston will become Air Force civilian employees. One area that is impacting retirees is base decals for vehicles. Although a majority of Air Force bases stopped requiring and issuing decals years ago, other services still require them for access to their respective installations. Air Force retirees must comply with the entry requirements of each particular installation so they may need to get a visitor's pass if the Air Force is not the lead service at a joint base. For example, at Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling where the Navy is the lead service, people must have vehicle access decals beginning Oct. 1. Drivers who frequent such installations may want to consider registering their vehicle at that installation, if they are allowed to do so. [Source: Afterburner article Feb 2010]

Free SAT and ACT Testing. Do you know that eKnowledge provides free SAT and ACT testing to military families worth \$200? Click here <<http://militaryymca.us1.list-manage.com/track/click?u=ce7f1949eb46ca0b1aa8561bd&id=8ccbef5c98&e=b86adfe26d>> for info.

Workshops. The Fleet and Family Service Center Life Skills Team is going to present two workshops at the Navy Weapons Station, Bunker 33. Namely:

1. ***Conflict Resolution*** on Wednesday, May 26. This workshop will show how to resolve interpersonal conflicts in a safe and healthy manner. Participants will learn how effective conflict resolution improves teamwork by developing effective listening skills, the importance of being understood, the importance of understanding another person and tips for resolving conflict in the workplace.
2. ***Couples Communication*** on Thursday, May 27. Participants will explore gender and personality differences that affect communication as a couple. Includes information on non-verbal cues, constructive criticism, and listening skills.

Each workshop will start at 1700 and last one hour.

NMCRS Volunteers. The Navy Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS) helps Marines, Sailors and their family members with immediate emergency needs. The NMCRS at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif. NMCRS is looking for at least 30 new volunteers between now and May. The volunteer NMCRS work-force at Camp Pendleton contributes to the society as receptionists, case workers, budget counselors, and teachers and they also work at the thrift shops. Base occupants interested in volunteering their time can either visit or call the Mainside office at 760-725-5337 or the SOI office at 760-725-7497. To donate funds, visit the Navy Marine Corps Relief Society website at (<http://www.nmcrs.org/>) or visit your nearest Society location.

Discount. Microsoft Office Standard 2007 for \$79.95 is being offered to military personnel for a limited time. Retirees can save up to \$320. Click here: <http://clk.atdmt.com/MRT/go/208018624/direct/01/>

Space-A (Worldwide). If you would like to plan a trip using Space-A, here is a link listing all the places Patriot Express and some AMC service: http://www.transcom.mil/j5/pt/dtrpart1/dtr_part_i_app_o.pdf . Wow!

How to Contact Us

The Retired Activities Office, Naval Weapons Station, Seal Beach, California is located in Bldg. 22, Rm 2. We are here to serve all Armed Forces retirees and are open M-Th 0900 to 1500; Fri 0900 to 1200.. You may contact us at (562)-626-7152 or by writing us at rao-nwssb@navy.mil

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