

ARMY WELL-BEING

Serving: Active Duty, Guard, Reserve, Civilians, Retirees, Veterans, and Families

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Well-Being Liaison Office to represent constituents

The Army Family Liaison Office (AFLO) is currently transforming to meet the needs of today's Army, and better serve those who serve by becoming the Army Well-Being Liaison Office (WBLO).

The AFLO was formed July 6, 1981, to act as the honest broker for the Army Family, and was dedicated to fostering Well-Being, serving as the ombudsman, and communicating family issues with the greater Army.

This transformation will not change what the AFLO has done for Army families for more than two decades. However, the WBLO greatly expands the office's responsibility to the members of the Army's seven constituent communities – Soldiers (active-duty, National Guard and reserve), civilians, retirees, veterans and families.

The WBLO staff will assist Army leadership with its constituent communities to ensure the effective delivery of Well-Being programs to the Army. The WBLO will accomplish this by providing focused representation of constituent interests and attitudes as they relate to Well-Being.

In addition to representing the interests of the Army's seven constituent groups, the WBLO will continue to staff and operate the Army Information Line (1-800-833-6622), which the AFLO has operated for more than 10 years. The line is operational from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. EST Monday through Friday, and callers who reach the line after hours can leave a voicemail that will be responded to when the line re-opens. Staff are available to answer callers questions and provide assistance in any

way they can. This line is not solely for Soldiers and their families, but open to all members of the Army's seven constituent groups, as well as the members of their extended family.

It is important to remember that those who staff the Army Information Line are not able to provide counseling services, but are able to direct callers toward the best resources available to them, based upon their constituency group, and their location.

Additionally, the WBLO will continue the collective missions performed by the AFLO in the past; however, all of these missions will now be expanded to incorporate all the constituents of Army Well-Being.

– Army Well-Being Liaison Office

Army One Source provides around the clock human touch

Army News Service

The Army recently established a new information and referral service line for Soldiers, deployed civilians and their immediate families known as Army One Source (AOS). The line is staffed 24 hours a day – by humans, not a computer-generated voice – and provides information about deployment-related issues.

It's a "twenty-four, seven" toll-free telephone number for information and referral services, said Carla Cary, Family Advocacy Program specialist at the U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center.

The service was activated Aug. 15. It is available not only for Army installations worldwide, but also to all members of the Army's reserve components.

From the United States, callers can dial 1-800-464-8107. From outside the United States, dial the appropriate access code to reach a

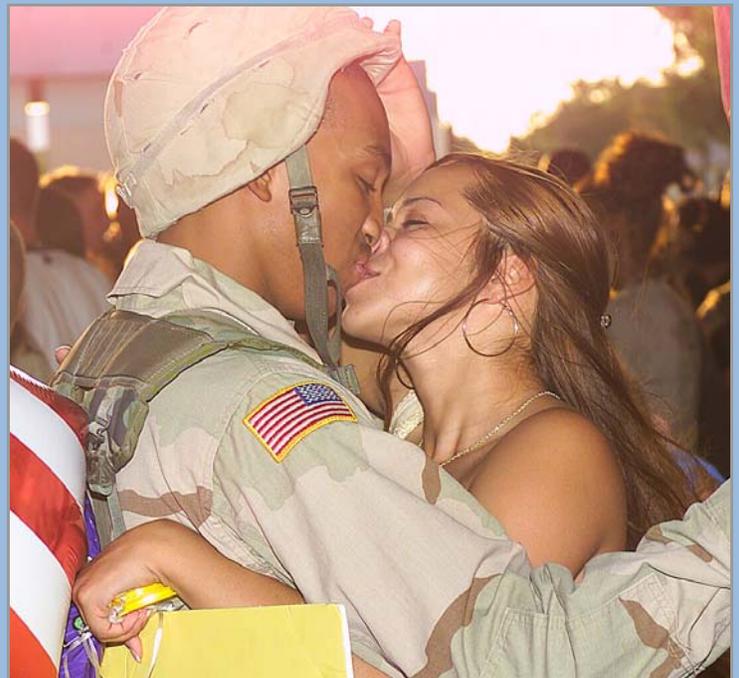
U.S. number and then 1-800-464-81077 – all 11 digits must be dialed. Hearing-impaired callers should use 1-800-364-9188 for TTY access, and Spanish speakers can dial 1-888-732-9020.

"There is no phone tree, no menu. The phones are answered by people," Cary said. "The overseas toll-free number has an extra digit that identifies it as toll free. From countries where toll-free calls are not available, customers will be able to call collect."

The line is staffed by consultants who hold master's degrees in social work or psychology and who can talk about a variety of subjects such as parenting, TRICARE, childcare, relocation, finances, legal, elder care, education and everyday household issues.

Stateside active-duty and demobilized National Guard and Reserve Soldiers, deployed civilians and

See One Source on page 2



Spec. Andrew Thompson, the Cannoneer, Fort Sill, Okla.

Welcome home

Spec. Cheston Boyd, of the 226th Maintenance Company, is reunited with his wife Mayra Boyd in Hanger No. 2 at Henry Post Army Airfield, after participating in Operation Iraqi Freedom.



TO SERVE



Letters, small packages get to deployed troops quicker

By K.L. Vantran
American Forces Press Service



The U.S. Postal Service and the Military Postal Service Agency process about 2 million pounds of mail a week for troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, and some items make it to the recipient faster than others, Navy Lt. Cmdr. Brian Lomax, agency chief of plans and policy, said recently.

Depending on where it originates, a letter or package spends "a couple of days" in the USPS system before it reaches either San Francisco or New York City, Lomax said. Then it travels another 16 to 19 hours by plane before landing in Kuwait or Bahrain. From there, it's picked up or delivered by motor vehicle.

Once in theater, a letter takes seven to 14 days to reach the servicemember, while a package usually takes 14 to 24 days, Lomax added. Packages make up 90 percent of the mail.

"The mail is getting to the troops," he said. "The troops are happy. Our intent is to continue to make improvements and exceed their expectations."

Using automated mail scanning equipment

and increasing the number of people working at mail facilities are two improvements that have speeded up mail delivery, Lomax said.

People who mail letters and packages also can help, he added. "The size of the package plays an important role," Lomax said. "Large packages take up a lot more room. If there's a choice between taking one large box or a lot of smaller boxes and letters, the large box will stay (at the mail facility). The ideal size is a shoebox. It's also important to correctly address the package."

Aerosol cans, alcoholic beverages, ammunition, fireworks, flammable or explosive materials and illegal or infectious substances are among items that cannot be mailed to servicemembers in Iraq and Afghanistan. For more

information, call 1-800-ASK-USPS or visit the USPS Web site www.usps.com.

Though it's not one of the restricted items, Lomax recommends against sending chocolate. "Chocolate and 140 degrees makes chocolate paste," he said.

Cookies and sunflower seeds seem to travel well, he added, and placing cookies in a coffee can helps to protect them.

Heat also takes its toll on the tape used in packaging, Lomax said. The USPS Web site states a clear or brown packaging tape, reinforced packing tape or paper tape is best. Cord, string and twine should not be used, because they can get caught in the mail processing equipment.

Servicemembers love to get mail, Lomax continued. "When I was out at sea, it was always a joy to get a letter from home or a copy of a report card. It's an exhilarating feeling: 'I'm out here doing my job, and they haven't forgotten who I am'."

Lomax said the mail system's success is a result of the joint effort of the USPS and his agency. "We have motivated Soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines who are committed to doing their job to make sure the mail gets to the troops," he said.

One Source from page 1

their families can also arrange for up to six face-to-face private counseling sessions with licensed clinical social workers who know the military environment.

Cary pointed out that "while [the service] won't answer questions about Army administrative and personnel issues, they will direct callers to the right place to get help with pay problems and career questions."

The Army Well-Being Liaison

Office's Army Information Line, 1-800-833-6622, is still available to answer questions callers may have that are not exactly deployment-related.

When callers contact the AOS service, the contracted service provider will collect information about local family programs and morale, welfare and recreation from one point of contact in the installation Army Community Service program so callers will receive information about programs geographically closest to them.

"This is a supplement to our ex-

isting family programs, not a replacement for any programs," Cary said. "It's also to broaden our service delivery."

The service is also available to the immediate family of single Soldiers.

"[The] staff knows the Army and they know who's eligible to use Army services and receive benefits," Cary said. "If a parent calls and they are not eligible to use Army programs, the consultants have information about what's available in the civilian community."

The AOS provides bilingual and

multicultural staff capable of communicating in Spanish, Korean and German.

"The Army recognizes that deployments are tough on everyone and that homecoming is potentially the most difficult phase of deployment," Cary said. "It's very important for Soldier and family morale to have immediate access to information about Army programs and services."

Editor's note: Information taken from a U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center news release.

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To Live



Officials launch family-centered care initiative

By K.L. Vantran

American Forces Press Service

Few occasions are more joyous or stressful than the birth of a child, said Dr. David S.C. Chu, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, as Defense Department officials launched the new family-centered care initiative at National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., recently.

The new TRICARE Management Activity program offers expectant mothers, and their families, standardized services from the first obstetric visit through birth and follow-on pediatric care. This includes inviting fathers and children to participate in prenatal visits and the birth of the child, as well as reserved parking spots – “stork parking” – for expectant and new mothers.

“This is an important moment in military medicine and for military families,” said Dr. William Winkenwerder, Jr., assistant secretary of defense for health affairs. “We’re committing ourselves and the system we lead to be more responsive, accessible and to be a leader in family healthcare services.”

The process to change the way military treatment facilities offer obstetric care began more than a



year ago, Winkenwerder said. Patient feedback and the leadership of the services’ surgeons general “who understood that a fundamental responsibility of the military health system is to match high-quality medical services with a patient-focused system” were instrumental in forging the initiative, he added.

Family-centered care is a commitment to servicemembers that “we will meet their needs for quality care in a sensitive and responsive manner,” Chu said. Because of duty and deployments, major family events often take place without the military member. Some 50,000 babies are born in military hospitals every year, and the father, Chu noted, is “regrettably often absent.”

“This is one reason the family-centered healthcare is so important,” he added. “For those of us who have had the great good fortune to participate [in] and witness the birth of our children, this singular sacrifice of our servicemembers and their families is humbling. Childbirth is a time for uncertainty and concern. It’s also a time for great expectation and, most frequently, joy. When families do have the great fortune to be together for the birthing experience, we will extend the joy of birth to be more inclusive of the entire family.”

Winkenwerder said healthcare professionals are honored to serve the men and women who volunteer to wear the uniform and to demonstrate that pride by the

quality of care they offer.

“We’re privileged to be guests at some of the most important events in their lives, such as the birth of their children,” he said. “The new family-centered care program is the focus – the center of our attention. [We] need to be focused on patients’ and family needs. In introducing this program, we are telling our patients, ‘We value you, we believe in the quality of care for our health care system, and we want you to choose us.’”

The goal of the program is to ensure the same, exceptional level of care and services is available across the military health system, according to a DoD news release. Hospital and clinic staff members are receiving additional training to be more receptive to patients’ questions, to help develop individualized birth plans, and to ensure patients receive coordinated care.

“I’m excited about the program,” Chu said. “I’m confident it’ll be a success, and I know it will be of extraordinary value to our military families.”

To learn more about this program, see TRICARE’s Family-Centered Care Toolkit online at www.tricare.osd.mil/familycare/default.cfm.

DEERS verification changes for un-remarried former spouses

The Social Security Number used to verify TRICARE eligibility, in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS), for un-remarried former spouses is changing.

As of Oct. 1, DEERS will reflect TRICARE eligibility for these beneficiaries using the un-remarried former spouse’s own SSN and not the former sponsor’s. Healthcare information will also be filed under the un-remarried former spouse’s own SSN and name. These beneficiaries will now use their own name and SSN to schedule medical appointments and to file

TRICARE claims as well.

The current Uniformed Services Identification and Privilege Card, DD Form 1173, held by the un-remarried former spouse is still valid until it expires. Upon renewal, the un-remarried former spouse will be issued a replacement Department of Defense/Uniformed Services Identification and Privilege Card, DD Form 2765.

The Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office is sending a letter to all beneficiaries affected by this change. The letter explains the new DEERS eligibility verification procedures and serves as official notification from DoD regarding this change. The letter does

not, however, provide proof of continued eligibility for TRICARE healthcare benefits.

After Oct. 1, un-remarried former spouses may contact or visit the nearest identification card issuing facility for questions or assistance. A listing of identification card facilities may be found online at www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl.

Un-remarried former spouses should always keep their DEERS information current and up-to-date. For questions regarding their medical records, they should contact the Military Treatment Facility and medical records department where their DoD medical records are stored.

– TRICARE



To CONNECT



Treats, not troops, needed in Iraq

By Staff Sgt. Marcia Triggs
Army News Service

A reserve officer is promoting Operation Freedom's Library by asking for donations of reading material for Soldiers deployed to Iraq. Boxes of treats and books, not more troops, is what some are saying these deployed Soldiers need most.

A reserve officer currently serving in Iraq is trying to open a library in his area of operations to keep Soldiers entertained. Operation Freedom's Library has been dubbed the name of the mission, said Maj. Richard Miller, a native of Minneapolis serving with the 19th Corps Materiel Management Center in Wiesbaden, Germany.

A friend of Miller's, Lainie Guthrie, came up with the name, and has been instrumental in recruiting friends and coworkers from Hewlett-Packard, he added.

"There are only so many things Soldiers can do here, and they eventually will have seen every movie that has been sent and played spades more than enough times," Miller wrote in a mass e-mail that he sent out to friends and family.

Miller started filling the library's imaginary shelves with magazines left on airplanes, and used books donated by family and friends. Likewise, the zealous reservist got his civilian employer, Toro Company, involved and is expecting 23 boxes of books and magazines that were collected through a book drive.

"I have friends and organizations from across the U.S. contributing," Miller said. "I did have a publishing company offer 70,000 books from their Tennessee warehouse. They were concerned about the cost of mailing them here so I suggested either a donation to the Red Cross ... or take them to Fort Campbell, [Ky.], and donate them to deployed Soldiers in the 101st Airborne (Air Assault) Division."

Romance novels, westerns, technology magazines and a gamut of other types of reading material are needed to round out the library. However, new is not a requirement.

"We have been out here so long that old stuff is new to us," Miller said. "It would give the troops that are pulling guard duty and traffic control point duty something to do on their off hours."

Individuals who want to donate reading material to Operation Freedom's Library can e-

mail Miller at richard.alan.miller1@us.army.mil.

Just to see boxes gets Soldiers excited, Miller said. And that excitement was the inspiration behind Treats for Troops (TFT), Inc., according to the president and founder.

Deborah Crane, the spouse of a retired Soldier and the mother of an airman, founded the company to make sure Soldiers could still get packages from unknown Americans.

Once "Any Servicemember" mail was suspended because of terrorist attacks and the anthrax scare, Soldiers risked not getting the morale booster that those packages provide, Crane states on her Web site – www.treatsfortroops.com.

The company's mission is simple, it wants to put at least one package in the hands of every American servicemember that is deployed anywhere in the world, Crane said.

Individuals can adopt a servicemember without personally knowing anyone in the ser-

vice. When soldiers register with the company to receive care packages, Treats For Troops is committed to keeping the Soldiers' contact information completely confidential. Therefore, TFT acts as the liaison between Soldiers who'd like to be sponsored and Americans who want to show their support to a member of the armed forces.

Once Soldiers receive their packages they are able to say "thank you" by logging onto the TFT site. Their messages are then forwarded through a secure server. The sponsor and Soldier are not able to contact each other directly.

"Thanks so much for the package," said one servicemember in a written thank you to his sponsor. "It is impossible for me to express in words the feelings one gets when he hears his name called out for mail call ... especially for a package. Thank you for your patriotism, your support and gift. From the bottom of my heart, thank you."

Workshop helps RSOs serve Soldiers, retirees, families

Ninety-two Retirement Services officers (RSOs) and Transition Center personnel recently participated in a week-long training workshop in Arlington, Va., to help them better serve Soldiers, retirees and families.

The workshop, which is conducted twice each year, was followed by a two-day class for new Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) counselors.

It is the job of RSOs to prepare Soldiers and their families for retirement, and continue to provide support for retirees and their families after retirement. All retirees and their families are served by an RSO although, in some cases, the RSO may serve retirees in more than one state. A list of RSOs, and retirement-related information is available on the Army Retirement Services' Web site – www.armygl.army.mil/retire.

The workshop was conducted by the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, G-1's Army Retirement Service staff, and members of the U.S. Total Army Personnel Command's Retirement and Separations Branch. Workshop topics included TRICARE and Army medicine; Retiree and Annuitant Pay; the Armed

Forces Retirement Home; Army Well-Being and Department of Veterans Affairs benefits.

Additionally, this year's workshop featured two firsts – elective break-out instruction sessions and one-on-one staff assistance visits between 35 RSOs and members of the five-person Army Retirement Services staff.

As a result of downsizing, many RSOs also serve as Transition Center managers, casualty assistance officers and ID card officers. Additionally, many recent competitions between government's "Most Efficient Organization (MEO)" and private contractors, have left RSOs as a part of a smaller MEO, while others are contractors. Therefore, this workshop was a first for roughly half of the attendees.

"You're the subject matter expert for retirees," Co-Chairman of the Army Chief of Staff's Retiree Council Lt. Gen. (Ret.) John A. Dubia, told attendees as they began their workshop. He also reminded them of everything retirees continue to do for the Army as "retired still serving" volunteers on posts and "combat multipliers" volunteering for mobilization.

– Army Retirement Services



To GROW



Hawaii-based family becomes 'Volunteer Family of the Year'

The 2003 Association of the United States Army (AUSA), Rubbermaid Volunteer Family of the Year awardees, are an outstanding example of the many Army families that are dedicated to improving the lives of their fellow military families and their communities through volunteer service.

The McClarans – Staff Sgt. Michael McClaran, his wife Sheila and daughter Kimberly – from Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, will receive their award, and be honored during the AUSA's Annual Meeting, Oct. 6 through 8, at the Washington Convention Center, in Washington, D.C.

In addition to receiving an all expenses paid trip to Washington, the McClaran Family will receive a cash award, and gift basket filled with AUSA and Rubbermaid products, courtesy of the Rubbermaid Group.

The McClarans are active members of both their Army and civilian communities.

Staff Sgt. McClaran is a member of the 25th Infantry Division (Light) Band, and both he and his wife are active with the unit Family Readiness Group (FRG). Together, the McClarans have coordinated numerous fundraisers, family events, and programs for families of deployed Soldiers. Both have also served as liaisons between Army installation management officials and residents, and are heavily involved in the Hawaii Army Mayoral Program.

The couple also volunteers their time assisting local high school students through Project Graduation for Leilehua High School and the Teen Center Council. The project sponsors an alcohol and drug free graduation celebration



Victoria Palmer
The 2003 AUSA, Rubbermaid Volunteer Family of the Year, the McClarans from Schofield Barracks Hawaii — Kimberly, Sheila and Staff Sgt. Michael McClaran.

for graduating seniors. Mrs. McClaran has served as an Army Family Action Plan delegate; participated in "Make a Difference Day," assisted with local Girl Scout troops, and supported the Schofield Barracks Teen Center as a parent-volunteer.

It's not surprising that their daughter Kimberly has followed her parents' example. Along with supporting her parents with FRG activities, Kimberley has her own volunteer

interests. She is a member of the Schofield Barracks Chapel Catholic Choir and Aloha Community Chorus, and has been a member of the Hawaii State Student Council and President of the local AAFES Teen Board. Currently, she serves as a tour guide on the USS Missouri.

"Be it their personal pride, love and care for one another, generosity and love for the members of their community, or their everlasting patriotism and commitment to making the world a better place, the McClaran family is truly an exceptional Army family," Eileen McLaughlin of AUSA Hawaii Chapter said in nominating the family for the award.

Two additional Army families were also recognized for their outstanding volunteerism – Lt. Col. Thomas and Velia Fitzpatrick of Fort Gordon, Ga., and Staff Sgt. Timothy and Lisa Torey of Fort Meade, Md. – will both receive \$500 savings bonds and gifts from AUSA and Rubbermaid.

The Volunteer Family of the Year Award recognizes an exceptional Army family whose volunteer service significantly contributes to improving Army Well-Being and the well-being of the local community. It is open to active duty, National Guard, reserve, retiree and Army civilian families. All AUSA chapters had the opportunity to nominate up to three families to receive the award.

– Association of the United States Army

American Red Cross seeks donations for Walter Reed Army Medical Center patients

The American Red Cross office at Walter Reed Army Medical Center is seeking donations for patients being treated there for minor injuries received during operations Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom and Noble Eagle.

These missions encompass action in Iraq, Afghanistan as well as homeland defense and civil support activities in the United States.

Currently more than 120 patients are hospitalized or undergoing outpatient treatment at Walter Reed, said Barbara Green, WRAMC Red Cross station manager. While these patients have the basic essentials, they could use a few things to make their stay more comfortable.

Items in need include: telephone cards; luggage with wheels; comfortable clothing to wear while undergoing physical therapy (T-shirts, shorts, sweatpants, sweatshirts, athletic socks, men's briefs and boxer underwear, and women's sports bras); shower shoes; boxes of note cards; stamps. No food items are requested.

These items are put into gift baskets for the patients.

"Our volunteers make it clear that the donations are from the American public, as a way of saying thank you for their service," Green said.

– American Forces Press Service

CONSTITUENT ROUNDUP

Active Duty

Soldiers and families thinking about retirement can have their questions answered by members of the Army Retirement Services Office staff during the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) annual meeting Oct. 6 through 8, at the Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C.

A Pre-Retirement and Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) briefing will be conducted on Oct. 8 for Soldiers and their spouses attending the annual meeting.

To get a head start on retirement planning, visit the Army Retirement Services Web site at www.army1.army.mil/retire.

– *Army Retirement Services*

National Guard

The Army National Guard will take on a more active role in the war against terrorism beginning next year when upwards of 10,000 citizen-Soldiers will deploy to Iraq to support two active Army divisions earmarked to replace troops now engaged in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Two of the Army National Guard's 15 enhanced separate brigades will fall under the Germany-based 1st Infantry Division, and the 1st Cavalry Division, based at Fort Hood, Texas, during the second rotation of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Gen. Jack Keane, the Army's vice chief of staff said.

The Guard brigades would serve in Iraq for six months, and be on active duty for about a year, as part of the Army's plan to reduce units that are anxious to return to their homes after leading coalition forces to victory in Iraq, and maintain the force required to stabilize that country.

– *Army National Guard*

Army Reserve

Guardsmen and reservists are giving much more than a weekend a month and two weeks of annual training a year, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, Thomas F. Hall said. Many serve 60 to 120 days a year. Department of Defense officials are currently looking at ways to rebalance America's armed forces.

Although only about two percent of the 1.2 million guardsmen and reservists have been called up in eight mobilizations in the past 13 years, the retired Navy rear admiral said, it's the same kinds of specialties – civil affairs, air traffic control, mortuary affairs and force protection – that are always needed.

"It's a new world and we need to transition," he said. This includes a plan to rebalance the force – active, and reserve components. The plan includes looking at specialties that reside

primarily, if not 100 percent, in the Guard and reserve, and perhaps moving them to the active side. Conversely, some active missions might be better suited for the Guard and reserve. Hiring contractors for some specialties is a third part of the plan.

– *American Forces Information Service*

Civilian Employees

The next Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) "Open Season" is Oct. 15 through Dec. 31.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) elective-deferral limit for 2003 is \$12,000. The TSP contribution limit for FERS employees for 2003 is 13 percent (up to the IRS limit), and the TSP contribution limit for CSRS employees for 2003 is eight percent (up to the IRS limit).

It is the responsibility of civilian TSP participants – who are members of the Ready Reserve – and have an outstanding loan that has been placed in a non-pay status, in order to perform military service to ensure your agency provides the TSP with documentation to certify your status and suspend loan payments.

Internal Revenue Service code allows the TSP to suspend loan payments for all participants placed in non-pay status for up to one year of non-pay. However, participants placed in non-pay status to perform military service for more than one year are authorized suspension of loan payments for the entire period of military service. More information is available on the TSP Web site at www.tsp.gov.

– *Office of Personnel Management*

Retirees

The Army Retirement Services Office will help make retirement one of the key issues at this year's AUSA annual meeting Oct. 6 through 8.

John Radke, chief of Retirement Services will be one of the speakers featured during a two-hour retirement seminar Oct. 6, which will include briefings on Combat-Related Special Compensation, and the source of retired and annuitant pay – the Defense Finance and Accounting Service's Cleveland Center.

During the Retiree Affairs Committee meeting Oct. 7, Army Retirement Services will be represented by Radke, Deputy Chief of Staff Avis Allen, and the Army Chief of Staff's Retiree Council Co-Chairmen Lt. Gen. (Ret.) John Dubia and Sergeant Maj. of the Army (Ret.) Robert Hall.

Retirees and family members are invited to visit the Retirement Services display between Oct. 6 and 8, where members of the staff will be available to answer retiree questions and provide information.

– *Army Retirement Services*

Veterans

The Department of Veterans Affairs is asking an independent commission to review a plan to reshape its veterans' healthcare policy.

The draft plan stems from a VA study called Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services, or CARES. VA Secretary Anthony J. Principi presented the draft national CARES plan to the CARES Commission in August. The commission will review the plan and conduct hearings before presenting its report to Principi for a final decision.

Among changes the plan proposes are:

- Closing VA hospitals in Canandaigua, N.Y.; Pittsburgh (Highland Drive); Lexington, Ky. (Leestown); Brecksville, Ohio; Gulfport, Miss.; Livermore, Calif.; and Waco, Texas.
- Opening new hospitals in Las Vegas and in Orlando, Fla.
- Adding centers for the blind in Biloxi, Miss., and Long Beach, Calif.
- Creating new spinal-cord injury centers in Denver; Minneapolis; Syracuse or Albany, N.Y.; and Little Rock, Ark.

The draft plan is available on the VA's Web site at www.va.gov/cares. Comments about the plan may also be submitted via the VA's Web site at www.va.gov/cares/page.cfm?pg=105#toolbox.

– *Department of Veterans Affairs*

Army Families

The Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, G-1, Well-Being Division, will present two Family Forums at the Association of the United States Army's annual meeting at the Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C., from Oct. 6 through 8.

Military Family Forum I – "Focus on Well-Being: This is Your Life" – will provide attendees with information on the Army's most current Well-Being initiatives and how the Well-Being concept affects constituents. This forum will feature a panel of senior leaders from the Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management; Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel; Office of the Surgeon General; Chief of Chaplains and the Director of the G-1 Human Resources Policy Directorate. The session is scheduled for 2 to 4 p.m., Oct. 6.

Military Family Forum II – "We Are Family: Total Army Readiness is Synonymous With the Well-Being of our Soldiers (Active National Guard and Reserve), Retirees, Civilians, Veterans and Their Families" – will feature feedback from Well-Being constituents on their experiences as they relate to Well-Being initiatives. This session will take place from 8:30 to 11 a.m., Oct. 7.

– *Army Well-Being Liaison Office*