



84th Division Alumni Bugler



Special points of interest:

- The 84th Division history that reaches back to Abraham Lincoln and the Black Hawk Indian War of 1832. Officially, the 84th Division was not formed until 5 August 1917. The "Railsplitter" shoulder patch became the Divisions' emblem.
- **Not receiving Army Echoes?**
- Retired Receiving Pay contact: DFAS @ (800) 321-1080
- Gray Area Retired Contact: USAHRC @ (800) 325-2660

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USO "A Hidden Treasure"

USO Background

Since before the United States entered World War II, the USO (United Service Organizations) has been a bridge between the American people and the U.S. military. In times of peace and war, the USO has consistently delivered its special brand of comfort, morale and recreational services to service members and their families.

A nonprofit, congressionally chartered, private organization, the USO relies on the generosity of individuals, organizations and corporations to support USO activities.

The USO is not part of the U.S. Government but is supported by the President of the United States and the Department of Defense. Each President has been the

Honorary Chairman of the USO since its inception.

The USO mission is to provide morale, welfare and recreation-type services to our men and women in uniform. The original intent of Congress and enduring style of USO delivery is to represent the American people by extending a touch of home to the military.

Worldwide Operations:

The USO currently operates 122 Centers around the world, including seven mobile canteens, with 73 located in the continental United States and 49 overseas.

Overseas centers are located in Germany, Italy, France, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Iceland, Bosnia, Japan, Qatar, Korea and Kuwait.

Service members and their families

New VA Identification Cards

The VA has been issuing new Veteran Identification Cards.

The new cards will have veterans' photos on the front and identify them as enrollees in the VA's health care system. The veterans

social security number, date of birth and control number encrypted on the rear. The new cards will ensure that the security of veterans' personal information as well as ensuring that only eligible veterans receive the benefits they

The Presidents Corner

By COL Glen "Rusty" Armstrong, (Ret)

Season's greetings from your Alumni Association. We all wish you and your families a safe holiday season and a Happy New Year.

This has been another successful year for your association and we are planning to continue planning our events for 2006. The board of directors has begun to plan some new events to offer for your consideration this coming year. We all believe that the future of our organization depends on the active participation of the membership.

This past year we enjoyed good attendance at the Dining In, Membership Meeting and the Steak and Chicken Fry. We need your suggestions and participation for us to continue to offer these events for the future.

Your board members consistently have devoted the time and energy necessary for planning and conducting these events. I am asking for each of you to consider how you can assist us in volunteering for events this coming year.

Timeline... 84th Division

Sixty years ago:

Rail-splitters from the 84th Infantry Division were fighting along the Siegfried Line when the German offense opened on December 16th, 1944. The 84th Division was pulled out of line and moved 75 miles south to Marche, Belgium. Then on January 3, 1945, they attacked south to reduce the German Bulge in the Ardennes. This was finally accomplished when patrols from the 84th crossed the Ourthe River from Houffalize to linkup with the US Third Army.

Fifty years ago:

The Army Retirement Service Office celebrated 50 years of helping soldiers and their families transition into retirement. The commitment began with a Retired Activities Branch. The Chief of Staffs (CSA) Retirement Council began in 1972 with 14 retired soldiers who meet annually at the Pentagon. Now the Army Retirement Service trains a number of Retirement Service Offices (RSO) to take care of active, reserve and retired soldiers and their families.

myPay System Adds New Features

Retirees and annuitants can register their e-mail addresses via the myPay system run by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS). Using these e-mail addresses, DFAS will be able to send notifications and information to these retirees and annuitants as the need arises. Also, retirees can elect electronic-only delivery of the retirees account statements and tax statements.

Who is using myPay?

DFAS reports that, as of 1 August 2004, 77% of active Army and Reserve population have started using the system by customizing their Personal Identification Number (PIN). On the other hand, only 22% of the retirees and 4% of the annuitants have customized their PINs and started using myPay. Why not give it a try?

Features: Federal & State Tax Changes, Direct Deposit changes, Change of Correspondence addresses, Start/Change/Stop EFT Allotments, Savings Bonds, Retiree Account Statements, etc.

(RC)SBP Open Enrollment - 1 Oct 2005 – 30 Sep 2006

(Reprinted from a compilation of articles in Army Echoes Sep - Dec 2005)

Retirees, over 60 years old, have a chance to enroll in the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP). Also Gray Area Retiree, under 60 years old and have qualified for retirement pay, have a chance to enroll in the Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan (RCSBP). This open enrollment was established by the FT05 National Defense Authorization Act.

SBC/RCSBP was created by Congress in 1972. Since then there have only been five open enrollments.

RCSBP is the plan that gives the retiree the ability to continue a portion of their retirement pay to a survivor should the retiree die prior to age 60. The same basic rules of SBC and RCSBC for open enrollment remain the same.

What election can you make? During this open

enrollment, a retiree can: enroll in a category for the first time; increase your existing coverage (such as increasing the base amount of retired pay covered or adding child coverage to a spouse or a former spouse coverage); and, if a gray area retiree, can make any of these elections, and may change your Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan options (i.e. A, B, or C)

Decreasing your participation is not permitted!

There is good news, a 55% benefit regardless of age of the annuitant, and bad news, a higher cost for the new elections, options to consider.

There is much to consider, a lot more than in this newsletter. Contact the Retirement Services Officer (RSO) in your area. A full listing on page 9 of Sep - Dec 2005 issue of Army Echoes.

“Operation USO Care Package”



Thousands of U.S. troops have been deployed around the world in the fight against terrorism and war with Iraq. The United Service Organizations (USO) is offering a unique way for individuals and corporations to let our nation's defenders know we haven't forgotten them. “Operation USO Care Package,” initiated by the USO of Metropolitan Washington (USO-Metro), enables individuals to financially support care packages that will be delivered to service members en route to overseas destinations. A contribution of \$25 will purchase one Care Package.

Because of heightened security, individuals can no longer send letters and packages to “Any Service Member.” Operation USO Care Package is approved by the Department of Defense, and provides a safe, easy way for individuals and corporations to show their prayers and thoughts are with our service members. The USO cannot accept items from individuals that are intended for overseas military personnel.

“These Care Packages help the USO bring a touch of home to our men and women in uniform,” said Edward A. Powell, President and CEO of USO World Headquarters. The Care Packages contain an assortment of items specifically requested by the military, such as prepaid international calling cards, disposable cameras, toiletries, and sunscreen.

“Operation USO Care Package will continue for as long as our country is at war,” according to Elaine Rogers, USO-Metro President. “This program is possible because of the support from individuals, corporations and organizations that donate funds to sponsor these Care Packages.”

Check Donations can be sent to:
USO - Operation USO Care Package
P.O. Box 8069
Topeka, KS 66608

For more information on this program, please call 1-866-USO-GIVE or visit www.usocares.org.

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