

Issue 2009-12 — December, 2009

Notices

Korea Retirees' Schedule of Events

Dec 1 – USAG-Daegu RSO Office will be open Tue 1000-1400 at the Garrison Hq Building.

Dec 15 – USAG-Daegu RSO Office will be open Tue 1000-1400 at the Garrison Hq Building.

Dec 15-16 – USAG-Yongsan RSO Office will be open Tue & Wed 0900-1500 in the Soldier Support Center, Bldg 4024, Room 140.

Dec 22-23 – USAG-Yongsan RSO Office will be open Tue & Wed 0900-1500 in the Soldier Support Center, Bldg 4024, Room 140.

Dec 25 – All Korea retiree offices will be closed for the Christmas Day holiday.

Jan 9 – the quarterly Osan AB Retiree Appreciation Day will be held at the Challenger Club starting at noon.

Osan Hospital S.I.C.K. Program

The Osan Hospital has opened the Self-Initiated Care Kit (S.I.C.K.) program to all TRICARE beneficiaries. The program provides over-the-counter medications without having to wait for an appointment. The card allows the cardholder to receive three (3) over-the-counter medications per month.

To participate in the program, retirees and adult family members must attend a 20-minute briefing and receive a S.I.C.K. card that verifies their eligibility to the Pharmacy. Briefings are held in the Osan Hospital Garden Court (lower level) on the 1st Wednesday and 4th Tuesday of each month, starting at 0900.

Military Retiree Assistance Office

MRAO/RAO Vacation

The Military Retiree Assistance Office and the Retiree Activities Office will be closed for a two-week Christmas-New Year vacation starting Dec 21. Normal operations will resume on Jan 4.

Military Retiree Assistance Office

There's nothing sadder in this world than to awake Christmas morning and not be a child. — Erma Bombeck (1927-1996), American author and humorist

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Medical Care Matters

Manila VARO & OPC

The VA Regional Office (VARO) & Outpatient Clinic (OPC), Manila is the only VA activity located in a foreign country. A VA office has been in operation in the Philippines continuously since the U.S. Veterans Bureau was opened in 1922 (except during the Japanese occupation of WW II), and it is an integral part of the United States mission to the Republic of the Philippines. The VARO is located within the U.S. Embassy Compound at 1131 Roxas Blvd., Ermita, 0930 Manila, PI 96440 Tel: 632-528-2500 or Fax: 632-523-1224. (Callers *within the Philippines* but outside of Manila can use 1-800-1-888-5252 without any long distance charges.) It is currently staffed by 8 Americans and 137 Filipinos.

The Regional Office administers compensation, pension, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment, and education benefits to 18,600 beneficiaries. Monthly disbursement is approximately \$17.5 million to 16,600 beneficiaries. VA also administers the U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA) in the Philippines. About \$8 million is disbursed monthly to 18,400 SSA beneficiaries. Effective 2 Jan 09 the Department of Veterans Affairs Manila Regional Office (VA) implemented an appointment system for all visitors to their public contact section. They will no longer entertain walk-in visitors; all visitors will be required to have an appointment before they are admitted to the Embassy.

The VA OPC, Manila is a part of the VA Sierra Pacific Network (VISN 21), which also includes facilities throughout the Pacific Islands, northern California, and northern Nevada. The VA OPC, Manila consists of a stand-alone ambulatory care leased facility, which is located about 2 miles south of the U.S. Embassy, where the VARO is located.

The OPC offers health care services to eligible persons throughout the Philippines. The OPC provides ambulatory care to service-connected U.S. military veterans for their service-connected and non service-connected disabilities and conducts compensation and pension examinations for eligibility purposes. The criteria for care in the Philippines are different than what a veteran may receive in the United States. Veterans residing in the Philippines, veterans planning to travel to the Philippines, and VA Health Care providers should contact the Clinic Manager concerning specific eligibility criteria. Health care services are provided at the OPC by primary care staff physicians utilizing the primary care concept and by contracted specialist consultants.

Most specialties are available in house or by contract Outpatient services which include general medicine; internal medicine with subspecialties in cardiology, pulmonary, renal and nephrology; psychiatry and mental health; neurology; dermatology; ENT; audiology; and orthopedics. Ancillary services include nursing, radiology, social work, pharmacy, laboratory, prosthetics and a number of other professional and support services. Inpatient care and fee basis services are limited to treatment of service-connected conditions. The OPC is located at 2201 Roxas Blvd., Pasay City, PI 1300 Tel: 632-833-4566 or Fax 632-831-4454. It is staffed by 2 Americans and 82 Filipinos.

All e-mail inquiries for the Manila VA Regional Office and the Manila VA Clinic can be sent via VA's main inquiry website at:

<https://iris.va.gov>. Use the "Ask a Question" section to ask questions or submit compliments, and suggestions. It provides answers to 368 frequently asked questions. If the information you are seeking is not there you have the option of filling out an IRIS Customer Entry form which contains a section for you to type in your question. All inquiries should be responded to within five business days. If you are experiencing a medical emergency or in need of immediate crisis counseling, go to your nearest medical facility Emergency Room or call 911. This web site is not intended to provide medical diagnosis or emergency care. [Source: <http://www2.va.gov/directory/guide/facility.asp?ID=682>, Sep 09]

RAO (Baguio) Bulletin, Nov 1

Effectiveness vs. Cost: Which One Is Best?

"Once upon a time, vitamins came in tablets or capsules and that was it. Then came improved tablets and capsules, then chewables, caplets, softgels, powders, and lozenges. With the consistent growth and expansion of the supplement industry, products are now available in almost too-wide a variety of physical forms. Each of these has legitimate pros and cons, but it's all clear to us that there's a lot of confusion about what those pros and cons are among our customers. Sometimes the physical form makes a difference in terms of results, more often it does not."

If you've wondered about these differences and which is best, safest and most effective, then you should read the information at <http://www.allstarhealth.com/blog/products-and-ingredients/tablets-capsules-liquids-powders-chewables/> to find the answers.

Military Retiree Assistance Office

Christmas, in its final essence, is for grown people who have forgotten what children know. Christmas is for whoever is old enough to have denied the unquenchable spirit of man. — Margaret Cousins (1905-1996), senior editor Doubleday Publishing Company

Pay Matters

COLA Crunch

As anticipated, the Social Security Administration has announced there will be no increase in benefits in 2010. The reason: there was no reported inflation from the third quarter of 2008 to the third quarter of 2009. A drop in energy prices, especially for gasoline, held down inflation during this period so there will be no cost-of-living adjustment (COLA).

In 2009, rising energy prices gave Social Security recipients a 5.8 percent increase, the largest since 1982. Thus, benefits have effectively risen 5.8 percent in two years. That's equivalent to a compound increase of about 2.85 percent a year.

Congress is considering a plan to make one-time payments of \$250 to about 57 million senior citizens, veterans, retired railroad workers and people with disabilities. The average Social Security retirement check is about \$1,150 a month, or \$13,800 a year. A senior getting an average check would thus receive a 1.8 percent boost in 2010, if that \$250 payment becomes law.

Retirement and Financial Planning Report, Nov 4

VA Report Card

This week [the National Association for Uniformed Services] NAUS was informed on the progress the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) is making on reducing the number of ratings claims they have.

In FY 2009, which ended on Sept. 30, the VBA made decisions on over 977,000 claims and received more than 1,013,000 new claims. Starting FY 2010 VBA had approximately 416,000 claims in progress.

As of Nov. 7, VBA has 466,173 cases pending, of which 163,907, or 36 percent were over 125 days old. This is significant as the stated goal for processing is 125 days. Currently the average processing time is down to 156 days from a high earlier in the year of 161 days.

NAUS Note: As these figures demonstrate, the backlog remains high. These figures are only for Compensation and Pension cases and do not cover education benefits.

NAUS Weekly Update, Nov 13

The joy of brightening other lives, bearing each others' burdens, easing other's loads and supplanting empty hearts and lives with generous gifts becomes for us the magic of Christmas —
W. C. Jones

Survivor Matters

As I See It — SBP/DIC Offset is Anti-Family

By Col. Steve Strobbridge, USAF-Ret.

[The Military Officers Association of America] MOAA is 100-percent in favor of a recent court ruling that requires payment of both VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) and military Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuities to otherwise-qualifying survivors who remarry after the age of 57.

We've long asserted the law requiring deduction of DIC (payable to surviving spouses of servicemembers, active duty or retired, who die of a service-caused condition) from SBP is inappropriate. When uniformed service is acknowledged to have caused the death, the DIC payment should be added to SBP, not subtracted from it.

We think no survivor should suffer the offset, but the new court ruling marks at least some progress by correcting the situation for the relatively small number who remarry after age 57.

Hopefully, this latest incremental progress will help tear down the offset wall for the remaining survivors, because it certainly makes the disparity between the SBP/DIC haves and have-nots even more glaring and indefensible.

If you're a younger SBP/DIC survivor who finds a new partner, the law imposes a huge financial penalty for remarrying before age 57 but creates a powerful incentive to live together and wait until after age 57 to remarry.

If you're an SBP/DIC survivor who is age 57 or older, the law now rewards you for remarrying as soon as possible. As a Gold Star Wives representative said at a recent meeting with House leaders, "In order to stop this financial loss, the law says I have to be with another man."

I can't imagine a more anti-family law than one that punishes remarriage among younger survivors who find a new love, while also punishing older survivors who believe the love of their life can't be replaced.

It's past time to end the SBP/DIC offset for all dual-eligible survivors.

MOAA Legislative Update, Nov 13

Community Matters

AAFES Pumping Up the Fuel Savings for Military StarSM Card Users

With the busy, and expensive, holiday shopping season just around the corner, Army & Air Force Exchange Service gas stations worldwide are helping to make sure that the fill up doesn't empty the wallet.

In addition to the five cents a gallon discount that Military StarSM Card holders already enjoy every time they fuel up, steeper discounts are being offered three times before the New Year.

On Veterans Day, Nov. 11, military shoppers using their Military StarSM Card can take advantage of 11 cents off per gallon of fuel. From Nov. 30 – Dec. 4 as well as Dec. 28 – Jan. 1, the savings soar to 20 cents per gallon for those purchasing with their Military StarSM Card.

"These discounts couldn't come at a better time," said AAFES' Chief Operating Officer Mike Howard. "Because the Military StarSM Card is an exchange product, it provides unique opportunities to deliver unprecedented savings opportunities like these to authorized drivers."

AAFES News Release 09-074, Nov 4

Holiday Mailing Guidelines Announced

First-class and priority mail bound for service members in Afghanistan should be postmarked no later than Dec. 1 in order for delivery by Christmas, the U.S. Postal Service announced Oct. 28. Afghanistan-bound parcel airlift mail should be sent by no later than Dec. 1; space-available mail should be posted no later than Nov. 21.

Parcel post mail bound for all other military overseas locations should be sent by Nov. 13. The Postal Service offers an online chart with all relevant holiday-mailing deadlines, at http://www.usps.com/communications/newsroom/2009/pr09_082.htm. Families can also order free military care kits for sending packages overseas, by calling toll-free (800) 610-8734. The Postal Service Web site also includes details about rates, and other relevant mailing instructions.

Armed Forces News, Nov 6

Christmas gift suggestions: To your enemy, forgiveness. To an opponent, tolerance. To a friend, your heart. To a customer, service. To all, charity. To every child, a good example. To yourself, respect. — Oren Arnold

'Shuttle Program' Delivers Supercenter Selection to Every BX and PX

As a military command with a mission to provide quality merchandise and services at competitively low prices and generate earnings in support of quality of life programs, the Army & Air Force Exchange Service sometimes is called upon to operate facilities that support limited customer bases.

"AAFES' motto of 'we go where you go' means that AAFES sets up shop, often regardless of the installation's population," said AAFES' Senior Enlisted Advisor Chief Master Sgt. Jeffry Helm. "As such, assortment selections, depending on where you're assigned, can range from that of a small convenience store all the way to a massive supercenter."

To ensure military families living and working near smaller locations enjoy the same selection as those at bigger installations, AAFES instituted a 'Shuttle Program' that, upon request, can route items from one exchange to the other. This means anywhere a shopper is they have access to the largest selection of competitively priced goods possible. Everything from large appliances to DVDs can be transferred through AAFES' 'Shuttle Program.'

"If you don't see what you're looking for, just ask a manager if they can bring it in from another location," said Helm. "Chances are, thanks to this effort, they'll be able to take care of you."

AAFES' 'Shuttle Program' is a complimentary service, available at all BXs, PXs, Troop Stores and Shoppettes around the world. *AAFES News Release 09-079, Nov 18*

I wish we could put up some of the Christmas spirit in jars and open a jar of it every month. — Harlan Miller

Federal Service Matters

Still Some Work to Do Under NSPS

Although the [Department of Defense] DoD authorization bill enacting a repeal of DoD's [National Security Personnel System] NSPS has been signed into law, there is still work to be done by managers.

The measure anticipates that NSPS could remain alive, at least in places, for more than another two years, since the mandated ending date is not until January 1, 2012.

In the meantime, employees currently covered by NSPS will continue to follow NSPS regulations, policies and procedures until the transition takes place for their organization. The transition must start within six months, but DoD has said that a comprehensive plan must be put in place before it will begin.

"It is important to remember that, at this important time in the pay pool process, employees and managers have significant responsibilities in NSPS that must be accomplished. Evaluating and rewarding employee performance continues to be an

important aspect of organizational success and individual employee pay," said a DoD factsheet.

Most of the NSPS workforce will convert to the [General Schedule] GS or their previous pay system.

Employees will not be reduced in pay upon conversion. The grade of the position will be determined using the same procedures and criteria currently in use for GS employees.

The authorization bill requires DoD to issue new department-wide policies in areas including hiring, performance evaluation and linking those evaluations to rewards. It also requires regular supervisory training on that new system once it is put in place.

Federal Manager's Daily Report, Nov 3

End of NSPS, Start of FERS Sick Leave Crediting Approved

President Obama has signed into law (P.L. 111-84) the 2010 [Department of Defense] DoD authorization measure that enacts several changes in personnel and retirement policies that the federal employee organizations have been advocating for years. It repeals the [National Security Personnel System] NSPS, ordering that DoD must start within six months and finish no later than the end of calendar year 2011, while instructing DoD to issue new department-wide policies in areas including hiring and performance evaluation that meet certain standards.

The bill also makes several changes in retirement benefits, the most notable of which is allowing [Federal Employee Retirement System] FERS employees who retire from the date of enactment, October 28, through December 31, 2013 to credit half of their unused sick leave as time served in their retirement calculations, with full credit for those who retire in 2014 and later. It also opens the way for more rehiring of retirees without offsets between their pay and their annuities, although only in limited numbers and only for limited periods, with that authority expiring in five years unless renewed.

FEDweek Weekly Newsletter, Nov 4

What is Christmas? It is tenderness for the past, courage for the present, hope for the future. It is a fervent wish that every cup may overflow with blessings rich and eternal, and that every path may lead to peace. — Agnes M. Pahro

White House Launches Veterans Employment Initiative

Veterans should find it easier to get jobs with the federal government, thanks to a policy change announced by President Obama on Nov. 9. Under the new Veterans Employment Initiative, most federal agencies will open Veterans Employment Program offices, responsible for helping veterans find and apply for jobs, and keep track of their job-application status. The Office of Personnel Management will also issue a strategic plan, providing agencies with guidance for seeking out, employing, and developing skills for veterans. As of Sept. 30, 2008, roughly 480,000 veterans worked for the federal government. More information is available on the Web at www.fedshirevets.gov.

Armed Forces News, Nov 13

FEHB Disputes a Subplot in Health Reform

Attention has shifted to the Senate on debate on a national health insurance reform measure following passage by the House of a measure (HR-3962) that House Republicans say could have unintended consequences for the [Federal Employee Health Benefits] FEHB program. GOP members of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee – which has primary jurisdiction over FEHB but was not involved in the writing of the House bill and did not hold hearings to review it – assert that FEHB might not be deemed a qualified plan for purposes of the bill, which "will have the effect of either forcing federal employees out of their current coverage and into the 'public option' or subjecting them to a tax for failure to obtain 'acceptable health coverage.'"

Committee chairman Rep. Ed Towns, D-N.Y., has said there would be no such effect and that there would be ample time for FEHB plans to get in compliance if they fall short. FEHB enrollees would benefit from provisions in the House bill such as automatic enrollment, ending copayments for preventative care and extending eligibility for dependents up to age 27, sponsors say. However, a congressional analysis recently concluded that many FEHB enrollees could be subject to a special tax provision in the Senate version.

FEDweek Weekly Issue, Nov 18

Laughing Matters

Hymn #365

A minister was completing a temperance sermon. With great emphasis he said, "If I had all the beer in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river."

With even greater emphasis he said, "And if I had All the wine in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river."

And then finally, shaking his fist in the air, he said, "And if I had all the whiskey in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river."

Sermon complete, he sat down.

The song leader stood very cautiously and announced with a smile, nearly laughing, "For our closing song, Let us sing Hymn #365, 'Shall We Gather at the River.'"

from the Internet

The Power of the Badge

A Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) officer stops at a ranch in Texas and talks with an old rancher. He tells the rancher, "I need to inspect your ranch for illegally grown drugs." The rancher says, "Okay, but do not go in that field over there," as he points out the location.

The DEA officer verbally explodes saying, "Mister, I have the authority of the Federal Government with me." Reaching into his rear pants pocket, he removes his badge and proudly displays it to the rancher. "See this badge? This badge means I am allowed to go wherever I wish ... on any land. No questions asked or answers given. Have I made myself clear? Do you understand?"

The rancher nods politely, apologizes, and goes about his chores.

A short time later, the old rancher hears loud screams and sees the DEA officer running for his life chased by the rancher's big Santa Gertrudis bull.

With every step the bull is gaining ground on the officer, and it seems likely that he'll get gored before he reaches safety. The officer is clearly terrified. The rancher throws down his tools, runs to the fence and yells at the top of his lungs:

"Your badge. Show him your BADGE!"

from the Internet

Christmas – that magic blanket that wraps itself about us, that something so intangible that it is like a fragrance. It may weave a spell of nostalgia. Christmas may be a day of feasting, or of prayer, but always it will be a day of remembrance – a day in which we think of everything we have ever loved. — Augusta E. Rundell

Director's Corner

Tech Tactics — Netbooks Increase in Popularity

By Reid Goldsborough

What's the optimal size of a personal computer? That's a question PC manufacturers wrestle with all the time as they design new models, and it's a question every PC buyer should consider as well.

The trend is clear: small. For the most part, stationary desktop PCs as well as portable PCs have gotten smaller over time (one exception being monitors, which have increased in size). Taken to an extreme today, you wind up with a handheld computer, also called a palmtop computer.

Taken to an extreme in the future, we'll likely have fully functional, voice-activated, talking computers embedded in our

wristwatches, clothing, and eyeglasses. Futurists even write of computers being embedded in our bodies and eventually, when science truly marries science fiction, the melding of carbon and silicon as hybrid beings evolve that are part human and part robot.

For now, the more mundane and more practical question is how small you should go when buying a new computer device for work, play, or both.

A relatively new category of computer devices, netbooks, adds an option. Also called mininotebooks or subnotebooks, these are the smallest computers today that have keyboards that you can type into with both hands for quick data entry. Unlike notebook PCs, they don't typically include a CD-ROM/DVD drive.

The name "netbook" came into use because these devices are ideally suited for using Web applications. Instead of running programs that reside on your computer's own hard drive, you run programs through the Internet that reside on server computers elsewhere. Google Docs is the source of these programs.

Netbooks as a product category are only about two years old, emerging in late 2007 — though some contend that netbooks first came into existence in 1999 with the Psion netBook, a device that never caught on. Today's netbooks certainly have caught on, making up nearly one-fourth of all portable PCs sold, according the latest report by the market research firm DisplaySearch. Compared with a year ago, netbook sales revenue grew a whopping 264 percent.

The attraction of netbooks is clear. Compared with other laptop computers, they're lighter, run longer on batter power, and cost less. The main negatives are the flip side of the positives. Smaller keyboards are more difficult to type on, and smaller screens are more difficult to read.

Some analysts have speculated the netbook boom will end when the economy recovers and their low price — which ranges from about \$250 to \$500 — becomes less of a factor in consumer decisions. But market research firm iSuppli Corp. predicts netbook popularity will continue to rise, with shipments projected to quadruple over the next four years.

Top netbook brands, according to the latest testing by Consumer Reports, PC World, and the online sites CNET and NetbookReviews.com, include those by Acer, Asus, Gateway, HP, and Toshiba.

I tested netbooks by Acer and Gateway. The Gateway LT3103u is typical of larger netbooks, while the Acer Aspire One AOD250-1042 is typical of smaller ones. The Gateway has an 11.6-inch screen, 2 gigabytes of memory, and a 250-gigabyte hard drive, the Acer a 10.1-inch screen, 1 gigabyte of memory, and a 160-gigabyte hard drive.

I liked the Gateway better, but I'm a dyed-in-the-wool desktop PC aficionado, preferring faster typing and easier viewing over the convenience of smaller size. The Gateway is available from Gateway's site for about \$400, the Acer from retailers such as Wal-Mart for about \$250.

Most netbooks come with Windows XP as their operating system, though you can find them with Windows Vista, Windows 7, and Linux. The MacBook Air is Apple's answer to the netbook trend, but it's considerably pricier than Windows or Linux netbooks.

Here are some observations from regular users of netbooks, picked up from perusing various online discussion groups: Netbooks are good for just about anything except video editing. Typing speed increases with keyboard size, and typing error rate decreases. You're more likely to take a netbook with you when out casually than a you would notebook. A netbook is convenient even if you rarely or never take it out of the house but just move it from room to room.

According to what I've observed, younger people take to netbooks more easily than bifocal folks. If you're used to texting on an iPod or cell phone, a netbook will seem positively roomy. But if you want to optimize ergonomic comfort and safety as well as speed and efficiency when working, nothing beats a full-size stationary desktop computer.

MOAA News Exchange, Nov 4

(Jack adds: You might find a 'Military Appreciation' version of Microsoft Office Standard Edition at the BX/PX for about \$50. Also, a complete suite of free, safe and legal software including word processing, spreadsheet, etc., can be downloaded from <http://www.openoffice.org/>.)

Soldier Who Led U.S. Army's Last Bayonet Charge Dies

Retired U.S. Army Col. Lewis L. Millett wears his Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star and other medals earned in World War II, Korea and Vietnam. He served as honorary colonel of the 27th Infantry Regiment Association, and was active in veterans events almost to his death on Nov. 14. (U.S. Army photo)

Retired U.S. Army Col. Lewis L. Millett, who earned the Medal of Honor during the Korean War for leading what reportedly was the last major American bayonet charge, died Nov 14.

Millett, 88, died in Loma Linda, Calif., after serving for more than 15 years as the honorary colonel of the 27th Infantry Regiment Association. Millett received the Medal of Honor for his actions Feb. 7, 1951. He led the 25th Infantry Division's Company E, 27th Infantry, in a bayonet charge up Hill 180, near Soam-Ni, Korea. A captain at the time, Millett was leading his company in an attack against a strongly held position when he noticed that a platoon was pinned down by small-arms, automatic and anti-tank fire. Millett placed himself at the head of two other platoons, ordered "fix bayonets," and led an assault up the fire-swept hill. In the fierce charge, Millett bayoneted two enemy soldiers and continued on, throwing grenades, clubbing and bayoneting the enemy, while urging his men forward by shouting encouragement, according to his Medal of Honor citation.

"Despite vicious opposing fire, the whirlwind hand-to-hand assault carried to the crest of the hill," the citation states. "His dauntless leadership and personal courage so inspired his men that they stormed into the hostile position and used their bayonets with such lethal effect that the enemy fled in wild disorder."

Millett was wounded by grenade fragments during the attack, but he refused evacuation until the objective was firmly secured. He recovered, and attended Ranger School after the war.

In the 1960s, he ran the 101st Airborne Division's Recondo School for reconnaissance and commando training at Fort Campbell, Ky. He then served in a number of special operations advisory assignments in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War.

He founded the Royal Thai Army Ranger School with help of the 46th Special Forces Company. This unit reportedly is the only one in the U.S. Army to simultaneously be designated as both Ranger and Special Forces.

Millett retired from the Army in 1973.

"I was very saddened to hear Colonel Millett passed away," said U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Robert L. Caslen, Jr., the current commanding general of the 25th Infantry Division at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. "He was a rare breed - a true patriot who never stopped serving his country. He was a role model for thousands of soldiers, and he will be missed."

Millett was born in Maine and first enlisted in 1940 in the Army Air Corps and served as a gunner. Soon after, when it appeared that the United States would not enter World War II, he left and joined the Canadian army. In 1942, while Millett was serving in London, the United States entered the war. Millett turned himself in to the U.S. Embassy there and eventually was assigned to the 1st Armored Division. As an anti-tank gunner in Tunisia, Millett earned the Silver Star after he jumped into a burning halftrack filled with ammunition, drove it away from Allied soldiers and jumped to safety just before the vehicle exploded. He later shot down a German fighter plane with a vehicle-mounted machine gun. As a sergeant serving in Italy during the war, his desertion to join the Canadian forces caught up to him. He was court-martialed, fined \$52 and denied leave. A few weeks later, he was awarded a battlefield commission.

After the war, he joined the 103rd Infantry, of the Maine Army National Guard, and he attended college until he was called back to active duty in 1949.

In addition to the Medal of Honor, Millett earned the Distinguished Service Cross, the Silver Star, two Legions of Merit and

four Purple Hearts during his 35-year military career. After his retirement, he remained active in both national and local veterans groups from his Idyllwild, Calif., home.

His son, U.S. Army Staff Sgt John Morton Millett, was a member of the 101st Airborne Division returning from duty in the Sinai on Dec. 12, 1985, when a charter plane crashed upon take-off after stopping at Gander, Newfoundland. He was one of 256 soldiers killed in the crash.

On Feb. 7, 1994, Millet was honored with a ceremony on Hill 180, now located on Osan Air Base, South Korea. The ceremony became an annual one, and the road running up the hill was named "Millet Road."

In June 2000, Millet returned to Seoul, South Korea, and served as keynote speaker at the U.S. Army's 225th Birthday Ball at the Grand Hyatt Hotel. All eight of the then-living Korean War Medal of Honor recipients attended the event.

This year, Millet served as the grand marshal of a Salute to Veterans Parade April 21 in Riverside, Calif.

He died Nov. 14 at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Loma Linda, of congestive heart failure. A memorial service for Millet is scheduled for 10 a.m., PST, Dec. 5, at the National Medal of Honor Memorial at Riverside National Cemetery in California.

News of the Force, Nov 20

Greetings of the Season

The staff of the Military Retiree Assistance Office (Jack and Pune) wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

The passing of COL Millet should remind us that the retiree community is constantly being diminished by the loss of some and replaced by the younger retirees coming from active duty to join us. It's appropriate at any time, but especially at special times of the year such as Christmas, to remind yourself of the special folks around you and to remind them of how special they are to you.

Merry Christmas to all and to all a happy, safe and prosperous New Year.

Jack Terwiel

My idea of Christmas, whether old-fashioned or modern, is very simple: loving others. Come to think of it, why do we have to wait for Christmas to do that? — Bob Hope, American film actor and comedian