

Issue 2010-08 — August, 2010

Notices

Internet Rumor Regarding Wounded Warriors

Apparently there's a story going around the that "America's wounded warriors face a new tax on prosthetic limbs and other vital medical devices." If you've seen or heard this rumor, you need to know it is not true.

NAUS Weekly Update, Jul 16

Federal Voting Assistance Program

All members of the U.S. Uniformed Services, their family members and citizens residing outside the U.S. who have not registered or requested an absentee ballot this year, should do so as soon as possible. To register or request an absentee ballot use the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA).

The Primary Election calendar is at <http://www.fvap.gov/vao/calendar.html>. For U.S. citizens living outside the U.S., Absentee Ballot can be obtained at <http://www.fvap.gov/ocit.html>.

Extract from Federal Voting Assistance Program, News Release # 17

To see the full slate of conservative candidates, you might be interested in the poll at <http://fs6.formsite.com/westerncenterjournalism/form274689810/index.html> and find out how the candidates are faring with the public.

Jack Terwiel

Ah, summer, what power you have to make us suffer and like it. — Russel Baker

In This Issue

Medical Care Matters

As I See It — "Fit But Unsuitable": Shameless and Shameful

Fact Sheet Outlines New Rule for PTSD Claims

FDA Lifts Hold on Stem Cell Testing in Patients

VA Changes Rules for Patients Who Use Medical Marijuana

Kidney Disease: Are You at Risk?

Pay Matters

Concurrent Receipt (CR) Provision Stripped from H.R. 4213

Current, Former Airmen Eligible for 'Stop-Loss' Special Pay

Agent Orange Update

Legislation Matters

Board Says Military Retirement "Unaffordable"

Community Matters

Korean War Photos

Federal Service Matters

Air Force Civilian Service Website Reveals Depth, Innovation to Federal Employment

IMPORTANT: Impact of Health Care Reform on Your Health Care Flexible Spending Account

Laughing Matters

Children in Church

Sick Day

AMEN!

Director's Corner

Signs of Life

The Poster

Woman 2, Thugs 0 After Home Invasion

Medical Care Matters

As I See It — "Fit But Unsuitable": Shameless and Shameful

by Col. Steve Strobbridge, USAF-Ret.

Children's sayings about "sticks and stones" notwithstanding, words can be powerful and extremely hurtful — especially in the hands of bureaucrats who manage to twist them in self-contradictory ways.

One would think that when a physical evaluation board (PEB) examines a servicemember's medical condition and deems him or her "fit for duty," the meaning of that term would be self-evident. Wrong.

One also would think that, several years in the wake of media exposure of grievous treatment of wounded warriors and low-balled disability ratings that resulted in separation of severely injured servicemembers with no retirement or medical benefits, that wouldn't be happening anymore. Wrong.

All too often, [the Military Officers Association of America] MOAA learns of cases in which soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines with significant, service-connected medical conditions are evaluated by PEBs and found fit for duty — only to be administratively separated or barred from reenlistment as "unsuitable" for continued service based on the same medical condition.

According to [Department of Defense] DoD regulations, there are certain specified medical conditions that warrant separation for unsuitability — enuresis, incapacitating fear of flying, personality or adjustment disorders, substance-abuse disorders, etcetera.

But the services have expanded use of this provision far beyond what's authorized in DoD regulations, separating servicemembers for far more serious medical conditions that are compensable under [Department of Veterans Affairs] VA disability ratings, which the services are supposed to be using to assess disability versus fitness for duty.

In many cases, a servicemember's administrative separation is based on his or her limited deployability as a result of the medical condition. In other cases, the separation documents simply assert the medical condition renders the servicemember "unsuitable" for service — even though the PEB evaluated the same condition (including deployability limitations) and found that servicemember fit for duty.

In many instances, a separated servicemember has been awarded a very high disability rating by the VA for the same condition immediately after separation.

MOAA strongly believes this process is a gross miscarriage of justice. If a person has a seriously disabling medical condition (warranting a 30-percent or higher disability rating under VA rules), then the person should be medically retired. If a PEB evaluates a condition (including deployability limits) and finds it doesn't render the person unfit for duty, then he or she shouldn't be subject to administrative separation for the same medical condition.

MOAA highlighted this practice to the House and Senate Armed Services committees and urged them to take action to stop it. Subsequently, the House committee demanded a DoD report on the issue, asserting it is "fundamentally unfair and inconsistent with the disability evaluation system reforms that have been enacted in recent years."

The Senate committee went further, putting a provision in its version of the FY 2011 Defense Authorization Act that would bar the services from administratively separating servicemembers for medical conditions other than those explicitly authorized by DoD regulations.

It's long past time to end this grossly unfair practice that blatantly abrogates the military's proper responsibility to those whose service cost them their health.

"Fit but unsuitable" discharges are shameless and shameful.

They're oxymoronic.

MOAA Legislative Update, Jul 9

Fact Sheet Outlines New Rule for PTSD Claims

The Veterans Affairs Department (VA) has posted a fact sheet including questions and answers about the new rule governing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) claims.

This new rule, to be published in the Federal Register, relaxes the evidence requirement of certain PTSD stressor claims by

veterans. The fact sheet is available online at www.va.gov/PTSD_QA.pdf.

Veterans of any era or conflict can file a claim under the new rule. The rule covers claims received by VA on or after July 13; before July 13, but not yet decided by a VA regional office; and in other specific instances outlined in the fact sheet.

"This nation has a solemn obligation to the men and women who have honorably served this country and suffer from the often-devastating emotional wounds of war," Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric K. Shinseki said in a statement issued July 12. "This final regulation goes a long way to ensure that veterans receive the benefits and services they need."

The new rule relaxes the evidence requirement of certain PTSD stressor claims by veterans.

NAUS Weekly Update, Jul 16

Heat, ma'am! it was so dreadful here, that I found there was nothing left for it but to take off my flesh and sit in my bones. — Sydney Smith

FDA Lifts Hold on Stem Cell Testing in Patients

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has cleared the way for a clinical trial that will be the first to test stem cell treatment in patients with spinal cord injuries.

News of the Force (Evening Edition), Jul 30

VA Changes Rules for Patients Who Use Medical Marijuana

The Department of Veterans Affairs has issued a directive stating that VA patients who use medical marijuana in states **where it is legal** will not be disqualified from receiving different pain medications from the VA. The VA **will not allow** its doctors to prescribe marijuana but will not disqualify them from other treatments by deciding that the veteran was using an "illegal drug."

Dr. Robert Jesse, the VA's Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Health, said, "When states start legalizing marijuana we are put in a bit of a unique position because as a federal agency, we are beholden to federal law." But "we didn't want patients who were legally using marijuana to be administratively denied access to pain management programs."

TREA Washington Update, Jul 30

(Jack's Comment: VA rule in brief: "Not prescribed, not proscribed.")

Kidney Disease: Are You at Risk?

Chronic kidney disease – called kidney disease here for short – is a condition in which the small blood vessels in the kidneys are damaged, making the kidneys unable to do their job. Waste then builds up in the blood, harming the body.

Kidney disease is most often caused by diabetes or high blood pressure

Diabetes and high blood pressure damage the blood vessels in the kidneys, so the kidneys are not able to filter the blood as well as they used to. Usually this damage happens slowly, over many years. As more and more blood vessels are damaged, the kidneys eventually stop working.

Other risk factors for kidney disease are cardiovascular (heart) disease and a family history of kidney failure. If you have any of these risk factors, you should get tested for kidney disease.

Early kidney disease has no symptoms

That means you can't feel that you have it. In fact, you might feel just fine until your kidneys have almost stopped working. Don't wait for symptoms. Blood and urine tests are the only way to know if you have kidney disease. A blood test measures your [Glomerular filtration rate] GFR and a urine test checks for protein. Learn more about tests for kidney disease.

Kidney disease can be treated if detected early

The right treatment can help prevent further kidney damage and slow down kidney disease. The earlier kidney disease is found, the sooner you can take medications, called [angiotensin-converting enzyme] ACE inhibitors or [Angiotensin II receptor blockers] ARBs, and other steps that can keep your kidneys healthy longer. Learn more about how to keep your kidneys healthy.

Kidney disease is progressive

Kidney disease does not go away. Instead, it usually gets worse over time. Kidney disease can turn into kidney failure, at which point dialysis or a kidney transplant is needed. Kidney disease can also lead to heart disease. Learn more about what happens if your kidneys fail.

Take the first step

If you are at risk, get your blood and urine checked for kidney disease.

Reprinted on July 6, 2010, courtesy of the National Kidney Disease Education Program. For more information, please visit www.nkdep.nih.gov.

Government Employees Health e-Report, Jul 2010

You can never appreciate the shade of a tree unless you sweat in the sun. — Author Unknown

Pay Matters

Concurrent Receipt (CR) Provision Stripped from H.R. 4213

[The National Association for Uniformed Services] NAUS concerns with the survivability of a provision extending concurrent receipt to medical retirees were realized this week when Congress dropped the benefits legislation.

Previous versions of H.R. 4213, The American Jobs and Closing Tax Loopholes Act, would have provided two years of full concurrent receipt of military retired pay paid by the Department of Defense and disability compensation paid by the Department of Veterans Affairs to Chapter 61 retired military personnel who are rated 90 or 100 percent disabled. Increased public pressure to reign in new spending and a growing desire in Congress to get legislation extending unemployment benefits moving again prompted lawmakers to pare back the total cost of the bill. Unfortunately, this included the concurrent receipt provision.

Weeks ago NAUS expressed concern with the tendency of lawmakers to cite an inability to find sufficient funds for correcting matters, like concurrent receipt, while seemingly finding money at the drop of a hat for any number of lesser priority items. We were also troubled that the provision was attached to a controversial and very costly benefits expansion bill that was totally unrelated to defense matters.

This week's action is particularly disappointing because sufficient offsets were already found by Congress to cover the cost of the CR expansion for the first two years. It is unclear whether those same offsets still exist, or if Congress will try to insert the provision in the yet unfinished [National Defense Authorization Act] NDAA.

NAUS Weekly Update, Jul 23

Current, Former Airmen Eligible for "Stop-Loss" Special Pay

by Daniel P. Elkins, Air Force Personnel Center Public Affairs Office

Thousands of current and former Air Force members remain eligible to receive \$500 in retroactive special pay for each month they were affected by "stop-loss." Airmen have until Oct. 21 to apply through the Air Force Personnel Center at Randolph AFB, Texas.

Air Force people eligible include active, retired and former members as well as reserve component members who served on active duty while their enlistment or period of obligated service was involuntarily extended, or whose eligibility for separation or retirement was suspended as a result of "stop-loss."

Those who accepted a selective re-enlistment bonus subsequent to being affected by "stop-loss" are not eligible for the special pay.

Air Force officials used "stop-loss" for Operation Enduring Freedom from Oct. 2, 2001, through Jan. 31, 2003, and Operation Iraqi Freedom from May 2 through Dec. 31, 2003. Individuals who were deployed during either operation may be eligible beyond the inclusive dates depending on their Air Force specialty and deployment return date. The 2009 War Supplemental Appropriation Act set aside \$534.4 million for the retroactive stop loss special pay compensation authority.

Personnel officials are encouraging those who were involuntarily held on active duty during either of the "stop-loss" periods to contact the AFPC to determine if they might be eligible for the special pay compensation. "We want to exhaust all efforts in our attempts to reach as many eligible members as possible while the authority is in place to compensate them for their extended duty," said Col. Bill Foote, the AFPC's director of personnel services. "Of course, many of those eligible to receive this special pay are no longer in our ranks, so we're opening channels to reach out to veterans to help spread the word about this valuable benefit throughout their communities."

More than 3,000 claims by airmen have been approved for retroactive "stop-loss" special pay since officials here began accepting claims in September 2009. Officials estimate an additional 13,000 current and former Air Force members may be eligible for the compensation.

Whether or not Air Force veterans are sure they are eligible, Col. Foote encourages those impacted by "stop-loss" to apply. Claims are evaluated based upon historical records already available to personnel officials as well as any supporting documentation the applicant may submit.

To file a claim, eligible members or legally designated beneficiaries may download a "stop-loss" claim application at www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/stoploss. Applicants who were serving in the Air Force Reserve or Air National Guard at the time of "stop-loss" may apply by visiting the Air Reserve Personnel Center's Web site at <https://arpc.afrc.af.mil/vPC-GR>.

For more information on program eligibility and claims instructions, call the Total Force Service Center at 1-800-525-0102.
News of the Force (page 2), Jul 27

Deep summer is when laziness finds respectability. — Sam Keen

Agent Orange Update

The President signed the War Supplemental yesterday. In that bill is the \$13.4 billion in funding for the three newly-designated presumptive diseases [ischemic heart disease, Parkinson's disease, and B-cell leukemia] related to Agent Orange exposure.

What does this mean for veterans who have already filed and those waiting to file on these conditions? The money is now in place and the authorization to spend it needs to be completed. The House overwhelmingly passed the VA/Military Construction Authorization bill earlier this week and now the Senate must do the same. The House version authorizes the money for these new conditions.

All of this is fine and shows progress, but the main roadblock now is the 60 day hold placed on spending any of the money by Sen. Webb (D-VA) who wishes to take a look at the science and reasons behind the decision to connect these three potentially very expensive, new conditions to service in Vietnam.

On September 23, the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee has scheduled a hearing to examine the reasons and evidence used by Secretary Shinseki to add these three conditions to the list of presumptive diseases related to Agent Orange exposure.

[The National Association for Uniformed Services] NAUS has heard reports that the [Department of Veterans Affairs] VA may publish the final rules as early as next week. This could, repeat, could mean that the VA might be able to start paying for these three diseases sometime in October, shortly after the September hearing. The payments would be retroactive to the date of the original claim or death of veteran if survivors are filing the claim.

NAUS Weekly Update, Jul 30

Legislation Matters

Board Says Military Retirement "Unaffordable"

On July 22, the Defense Business Board task force recommended that the Secretary of Defense reduce the [Department of Defense] DoD civilian workforce by more than 111,000, and laid the groundwork for potential future recommendations to cut spending on military retirement, health care, family support, and other programs.

Additionally, the task force recommended drastic reductions in combatant command staffing, hiring freezes, and elimination of organizational duplication. These preliminary recommendations will be followed in October by additional cost-cutting proposals.

For the last year, the Defense Business Board has predicted major problems for the Defense budget as the nation deals with deficit reduction efforts, the economic slowdown, escalating health care and personnel costs, and the potential exit from two wars.

Board members believe that avoiding a looming fiscal crisis will require cutting the Defense budget beyond Secretary Gates' recently announced target of a \$100-billion reduction in "overhead" spending.

The **Board's "Initial Observations"** briefing devoted an entire section to costs for military compensation, retirement, health care, veterans affairs, concurrent receipt, commissaries, dependent education, and military family housing. It particularly highlighted costs associated with TRICARE For Life.

A page titled "The 'Military Retirement' sacred cow is increasingly unaffordable" cites increases in the number of military retirees since 1980 (as if this weren't the direct result of decisions by every administration and Congress since the 1950s to induce a large standing career force to protect America and the world) and criticizes the 20-year retirement system (as if the military could have sustained the force over the last 10 years of repeated wartime deployments without it).

Another cites personnel cost growth since 1998 — conveniently overlooking that 1998 was the nadir of two decades of erosion of military pay, retirement, health care, and other benefits and that the resulting retention problems of that era were what sparked Congress to embark on an extended program to fix them.

Unfortunately, the Defense Business Board report is only one of the early shots in what likely will be years of budget battles to reconcile military and other needs with truly daunting deficit projections.

MOAA Legislative Update, Jul 30

Rest is not idleness, and to lie sometimes on the grass on a summer day listening to the murmur of water, or watching the clouds float across the sky, is hardly a waste of time. — John Lubbock

Community Matters

Korean War Photos

The Boston Globe had a recent set of excellent photos to remember the Korean War. So I was browsing through them and was just stunned to see photo #44. This is not your typical wartime photo ... or at least I haven't seen much like this before. What you're looking at is a pile of "empty brass", spent artillery shells that were fired over a 4-day period. And this pile of brass can give you an idea of the amount of artillery fire used during that fight.

The link to the photo exhibit is http://www.boston.com/bigpicture/2010/06/remembering_the_korean_war_60.html
Provided by a Korean War Vet

Federal Service Matters

Air Force Civilian Service Website Reveals Depth, Innovation to Federal Employment

by April Rowden, Air Force Personnel Center Public Affairs Office

Jobseekers unfamiliar with the civilian employment opportunities within the Air Force now have a new online resource that defines the numerous career fields and outlines many of the benefits of being a federal employee working side by side with uniformed Airmen.

The site, www.afciviliancareers.com, contains practical information for those interested in applying for a federal job within the Air Force Civilian Service, or AFCS, including various hiring authorities, base locations, career field descriptions, employee benefits and application procedures. There is also information specifically geared toward hiring veterans and disabled veterans

"The Air Force has always relied on the civilian work force to meet the mission. With new organizations standing up and an overall net gain in civilian positions, we hope more people will look at all the benefits we have to offer and consider applying with us," said Michelle LoweSolis, director of civilian force integration at the Air Force Personnel Center.

One of the highlights of the website is a Job Match Machine. By entering educational background or specific skills, the Job Match Machine will generate a list of possible career choices.

"We think this is going to be one of the most popular applications on the site," said Mike Brosnan at AFPC. "People are often unaware of the breadth of Air Force Civilian Service careers and we're hoping this will aid them in their job search."

The site also has a Resume Coach that walks users through some of the most frequently asked questions: How do I get my resume to stand out? Do veterans or current federal employees have different application procedures? What should college graduates include on their resumes?

The site also features a faster-loading HTML version, or the more interactive Flash version. Look for the "underground" extras on the site for special downloads and video clips.

When visitors are ready to search for an AFCS job, clicking the "apply now" button on the home page will give them access to Air Force jobs listed on USAJOBS.gov. There, they can build their resumes, search for job vacancies, and submit their applications.

For more information, Air Force employees may call the Total Force Service Center at (800) 525-0102 or DSN 665-5000.

Related Links Veteran Hiring: <http://www.afciviliancareers.com/careers/hiringopportunities/veterans/> Job Match: <http://www.afciviliancareers.com/apply/jobmatch/> Resume Coach: <http://www.afciviliancareers.com/apply/resumecoach/>
Air Force Retiree Service, Jul 21

Summer is the time when one sheds one's tensions with one's clothes, and the right kind of day is jeweled balm for the battered spirit. A few of those days and you can become drunk with the belief that all's right with the world. — Ada Louise Huxtable

IMPORTANT: Impact of Health Care Reform on Your Health Care Flexible Spending Account

The new healthcare reform legislation produces important changes to your Health Care Flexible Spending Account (FSA).

Eligible Over-the-Counter Medicines and Drugs Will Require a Prescription to be Reimbursed — Effective January 1, 2011

Beginning January 1, 2011, currently eligible over-the-counter (OTC) products that are medicines or drugs (e.g., acne treatments, allergy and cold medicines, antacids, etc.) will not be eligible for reimbursement from your Health Care FSA— unless — you have a prescription for that item written by your physician. The only exception is insulin — you will not need a prescription

from January 1, 2011 forward. Other currently eligible OTC items that are not medicines or drugs, such as bandages and nasal strips, will not require a prescription.

Here are a few Q&As:

How will 2010 Grace Period incurred (January 1, 2011 through March 15, 2011) OTC expenses be handled?

It won't matter that you are using your 2010 funds — any eligible OTC medicine or drug purchased from January 1, 2011 forward will not be reimbursed unless you can provide us with a prescription written by your physician.

Will I be required to submit additional documentation with my claim form?

Yes. If you currently use a portion of your FSA funds for eligible OTC that are medicines or drugs, you will need to provide us with valid prescriptions for those items on January 1, 2011 and beyond.

I'm not sure how much I will need to elect for the 2011 Benefit Period. What should I do? During the Federal Benefits Open Season for the upcoming 2011 Benefit Period, you should carefully estimate the amount you elect to contribute to your Health Care FSA. Once Open Season is over, you cannot change your annual election amount unless you experience a Qualifying Life Event (QLE).

How will the January 1 effective date impact my OTC spending?

The below chart provides a summary with examples.

Health Care Reform and Flexible Spending Accounts		
Date of OTC Expense	Reimbursement Eligibility	Example
On or before 12/31/2010	Eligible OTC expenses for medicines and drugs do not require a prescription.	Sally buys a one-month supply of Claritin on 12/21/2010. Her expense will be reimbursed as long as she submits her claim on or before April 30, 2011.
On or after 01/01/2011	OTC expenses for medicines and drugs CANNOT be reimbursed unless they are accompanied by a prescription (except for insulin). It does not matter if you are using your 2010 or 2011 Health Care account — OTC incurred expenses for medicines and drugs will not be reimbursed without a prescription.	Sally buys Claritin on 01/03/2011 but does not have a prescription for it. She will not be reimbursed for this expense. Sally buys Claritin on 01/03/2011 and has a prescription for it . FSAFEDS will reimburse the expense.

If you have questions, call us toll-free, at 1-877-FSAFEDS (372-3337), TTY: 1-800-952-0450, Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. Eastern Time, or via email at FSAFEDS@shps.com.

FSAFEDS E-mail, Jul 29

Deep summer is when laziness finds respectability. — Sam Keen

Laughing Matters

Children in Church

A little boy was attending his first wedding.

After the service, his cousin asked him, "How many women can a man marry?"

"Sixteen," the boy responded. His cousin was amazed that he had an answer so quickly. "How do you know that?"

"Easy," the little boy said. "All you have to do is add it up, like the pastor said, 4 better, 4 worse, 4 richer, 4 poorer."

After a church service on Sunday morning, a young boy suddenly announced to his mother, "Mom, I've decided to become a minister when I grow up."

"That's okay with us, but what made you decide that?"

"Well," said the little boy, "I have to go to church on Sunday anyway, and I figure it will be more fun to stand up and

yell, than to sit and listen."

A 6-year-old was overheard reciting the Lord's Prayer at a church service, "And forgive us our trash passes, as we forgive those who passed trash against us."

A boy was watching his father, a pastor, write a sermon. "How do you know what to say," he asked.

"Why, God tells me."

"Oh, then why do you keep crossing things out?"

A little girl became restless as the preacher's sermon dragged on and on.

Finally, she leaned over to her mother and whispered, "Mommy, if we give him the money now, will he let us go?"

Ms. Terri asked her Sunday School class to draw pictures of their favorite Bible stories.

She was puzzled by Kyle's picture, which showed four people on an airplane, so she asked him which story it was meant to represent.

"The Flight to Egypt," was his reply.

Pointing at each figure, Ms. Terri said, "That must be Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus. But who's the fourth person?"

"Oh, that's Pontius — the pilot!"

The Sunday School Teacher asks, "Now, Johnny, tell me frankly, do you say prayers before eating?"

"No sir," little Johnny replies, "I don't have to. My mom is a good cook."

A little girl was sitting on her grandfather's lap as he read her a bedtime story.

From time to time, she would take her eyes off the book and reach up to touch his wrinkled cheek. She was alternately stroking her own cheek, then his again.

Finally she spoke up, "Grandpa, did God make you?"

"Yes, sweetheart," he answered, "God made me a long time ago."

"Oh," she paused, "Grandpa, did God make me too?"

"Yes, indeed, honey," he said, "God made you just a little while ago."

Feeling their respective faces again, she observed, "God's getting better at it, isn't he?"

from the Internet

When I was a little kid, of course, I was brown all summer. That's because I was free as a bird – nothing to do but catch bugs all day. — Roy Blount Jr.

Sick Day

Negotiations between union members and their employer were at an impasse. The union denied that their workers were flagrantly abusing the sick-leave provisions set out by their contract.

One morning at the bargaining table, the company's chief negotiator held aloft the morning edition of the newspaper, "This man," he announced, "called in sick yesterday!"

There on the sports page, was a photo of the supposedly ill employee, who had just won a local golf tournament with an excellent score.

A union negotiator broke the silence in the room.

"Wow!" he said. "Just think what kind of score he could have had if he hadn't been sick!"

from the Internet

AMEN!

The light turned yellow, just in front of him. He did the right thing, stopping at the crosswalk, even though he could have beaten the red light by accelerating through the intersection.

The tailgating woman was furious and honked her horn, screaming in frustration, as she missed her chance to get through the intersection, dropping her cell phone and makeup.

As she was still in mid-rant, she heard a tap on her window and looked up into the face of a very serious police officer. The officer ordered her to exit her car with her hands up.

He took her to the police station where she was searched, fingerprinted, photographed, and placed in a holding cell.

After a couple of hours, a policeman approached the cell and opened the door. She was escorted back to the booking desk where the arresting officer was waiting with her personal effects.

He said, "I'm very sorry for this mistake. You see, I pulled up behind your car while you were blowing your horn, flipping off the guy in front of you and cussing a blue streak at him. I noticed the 'What Would Jesus Do' bumper sticker, the 'Choose Life' license plate holder, the 'Follow Me to Sunday-School' bumper sticker, and the chrome-plated Christian fish emblem on the trunk, so naturally I assumed you had stolen the car."

from the Internet

Yellow butterflies look like flowers flying through the warm summer air. — Andrea Willis

Director's Corner

Signs of Life

For retirees who have not visited the Military Retiree Assistance Office, I thought you might be interested in three signs hanging in the office. They express my philosophy in operating the MRAO.

- "I expect to pass through life but once. If therefore, there be any kindness I can show, or any good thing I can do to any fellow being, let me do it now, and not defer or neglect it, as I shall not pass this way again." — William Penn
- "To give real service you must add something which cannot be bought or measured with money, and that is sincerity and integrity." — Donald A. Adams
- "It is useless for sheep to pass resolutions in favor of vegetarianism while wolves remain of a different opinion." — William R. Dye, DD, 1860-1954

The third one might need some explanation. Some people believe that benefits (for which they are not eligible) are owed to them. These people come to me to ask me to figure out how to remove (legally or not) the immovable obstacles that would allow them to get money to which they're not entitled. The sign reminds me not to waste my time on things that won't happen and that I can't change.

(And the two items below just caught my fancy and I decided to share them.)

Jack Terwiel

A life without love is like a year without summer. — Swedish Proverb

The Poster

by Phil Blansett

I went to Texas Christian University (TCU) in Fort Worth, and so did one of my friends and Senior ROTC classmate, Tim James. We marched together and played future pilot together through the first 3 years of AFROTC.

I had learned that his dad was Harry James, the trumpet player, and from time to time he would play "Taps" for the ROTC activity on one of his dad's old trumpets. I vaguely remember Harry James coming to visit Tim a couple of times, but I'm not real sure of that. But what I am sure of is that Tim and I went to the same summer encampment, which provides a basic training environment for senior ROTC cadets.

During one inspection, early in the program, I heard the inspecting captain blow a gasket. He had opened Tim's locker and there on the inside was an absolutely naked pin-up of a beautiful woman who had a single, most slender red/white/and/blue ribbon covering the "business" parts of her breasts and pubic area. As I said, the captain had blown a gasket. "Cadet James! You know that pin-ups are forbidden! You will go on report, and stand before the disciplinary committee! Now, remove this pin up immediately!"

Tim responded, "But, sir, regulations state that we may have a photograph of our mother, and this is my mother, Betty Grable."

They allowed him to keep the photo, covered by a confidential document cover with a hole cut out for her head to be visible.

News of the Force (Evening Edition), Jul 14

Woman 2, Thugs 0 After Home Invasion

by *Bob Unruh*

One gun isn't enough.

That was what Linda Smith (a pseudonym) was thinking after two thugs broke into her Oklahoma apartment. One was holding a weapon (she initially thought it was a knife but it turned out to be a screwdriver) at her throat, and the other was pacing back and forth while holding her purse and demanding her money and valuables. She screamed, and was told if she screamed again, she'd be dead.

She was doing as police recommend in robberies – comply with a robber's demands. But her Lady Smith & Wesson .38 special, which she carries by permit, was hidden in her purse – and the purse was being held by one of the attackers.

Then the situation, suddenly, got much, much worse: One of the robbers demanded that she take off her clothes.

"Come on, what are you waiting for," he told her as he started to yank on her sweatpants, trying to take them off.

Smith pleaded for her safety and distracted the attackers by telling them she would get her money, which was "in my purse."

The robbers inexplicably allowed her to drop to her knees and crawl across the floor to her purse, which the second attacker had dropped.

She reached inside, and the first shot was clear of the muzzle and into the torso of one of the attackers before she even pulled the weapon clear of the purse. Four more shots followed shortly and, in the end, one of the attackers was dead and the second was hospitalized facing a murder rap for having participated in a felony in which someone died.

Extracted from longer story at World Net Daily, Jul 24

Summer afternoon - summer afternoon; to me those have always been the two most beautiful words in the English language. — Henry James