



EAGLE NEWS

The official Newsletter of The Retired Enlisted Association (TREA)
Central Minnesota Chapter 115

October thru December 2012

CHAPTER 115 PRESIDENT'S LETTER

I recently returned from the national convention in Jacksonville Florida. Our new TREA national president is Rick Delaney. Our chapter received an award for the best website for a medium-size chapter. This award was due to the efforts of Dave Hammer. I will present the plaque to Dave and our next meeting.

The next national meeting will be in Colorado Springs Colorado. In 2014, our national meeting will be in Norfolk Virginia and the 2015 meeting will be in St. Louis Missouri. Of the 52 chapters listed on our national website, only 25 attended the national convention.

Our next meeting will be on October 27. It is important for as many members as possible to attend the meeting. We will be electing new officers for our chapter. At present, none of the current officers plans to run for the 2013 positions. If no one's steps up to take on the chapter officer positions, then we will have to shut down the chapter. The current board of directors has been in their positions for several years and it is time for someone else to take charge.

On December 16 of this year, our chapter will be 12 years old. We were chartered on December 16, 2000. Our chapter in 12 years has

only had three members who stepped forward to run our chapter. I believe all of the officers on the board of directors will stay active in the chapter, but only if others step forward to take the positions required by national headquarters. If we do not elect new officers, then everyone in the chapter will become members at large (MALs).

I am looking forward to seeing all of you at our next chapter meeting on October 27.

Ralph Donais

VA GRANT FOR MINNESOTA

The Department of Veterans Affairs is awarding nearly \$1.3 million for the state of Minnesota to construct a new generator building at the state Veterans home in Minneapolis. VA's grant will cover approximately 65 percent of the estimated \$2 million cost of the project. Across the state of Minnesota, VA runs major medical centers in Minneapolis and St. Cloud, 11 outpatient clinics, 3 Vet Centers, and 1 national cemetery. For more information on Minnesota veterans' assistance, visit the Minneapolis VA Health Care System website at www.minneapolis.va.gov/ and the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs website at www.mdva.state.mn.us/.

TMA CREATES WEBSITE COVERING TRICARE WEST REGION TRANSITION

The planning of the TRICARE West contract transition from TriWest (the present contractor for the west region) to United Healthcare (the new contractor) is under way. The TRICARE West Region is made up of Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa (except the Rock Island Arsenal area), Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri (except the St. Louis area), Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas (areas of Western Texas only), Utah, Washington and Wyoming. (This does not cover the Pharmacy, dental or TFL contracts.)

TRICARE Management Activity (TMA) has created a new website where you can get information about the transition. It is www.tricare.mil/westtransition. On that site, you can sign up for e-mailed bulletins about the transition. In addition, beneficiaries in the west region can expect to receive communications from United Healthcare before the April 1st 2013 contract transition date.

In the meantime if you have customer service questions or need help before April 1st 2013 still go to TriWest at: 1-888-TRIWEST (1-888-874-9378) or go to the TriWest Website: www.triwest.com. Of course, please remember if you have problems, the staff of the Washington Office of TREA is here to try to help.

THE AUGUST 25TH AFRAD WAS A GREAT SUCCESS!

Under the guidance of President Ralph Donais, the Chapter core workers turned out in force to staff our 11th annual Armed Forces Retirees Activity Day. We appreciated the work that Jim Krousey of the Camp Ripley staff did arranging tables and chairs in the auditorium foyer for registration and in the café for the vendors. Judy Donais, Dick Kirchner, Jim Gray, Lin Davidson, Denise Hammer, Victoria and Dennis Rock set up the registration area and processed arriving guests. Ralph Donais, Dave Hammer, Mark Davidson and Del Fuller arranged the refreshment stand, the vendor tables, chairs in the Café and identification signs throughout the building.

Registration was to open at 0800, but the enthusiast guests started arriving at 0720. Thankful, AAFES had delivered coffee in the café area but in a 12-cup pot. Shortly, a larger pot arrived and Dave, Mark and Ralph were industriously moving coffee pots around. As calm returned, Dave and Jim became mobile hosts assisted guests to the restrooms, the correct registration table, and the vendors in the Café and the theater entrances.

During the day, Dick staffed the registration table, Del was recruiting new members, Mark was selling military plaques and Ralph was juggling the speakers, vendors, AAFES lunchroom staff, and working with Bill Walter from Camp McCoy. Rod Erickson our faithful audiovisual technician kept the slide shows going in the theater.

At the AFRAD conclusion, our guest counts was 165 pre-registrations, 26 walk-ins, less 16 no shows for a total attendance of 175. We received 36 registration forms from the ECHO, who for the first time included our registration form. The rest of the forms came from the 800 "Eagle News" mailing.



Row 1: Victoria Rock, Judy Donais, Lin Davidson, Mark Davidson and Del Fuller
Row 2: Jim Gray, Dennis Rock, Dick Kirchner, Ralph Donais, Dave Hammer and Denise Hammer

VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION UPDATE: PROSTATE CANCER AND AGENT ORANGE

Are you a Veteran with prostate cancer who was exposed to Agent Orange during service? You may qualify for VA health care and disability compensation. Visit www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange to find out more about Agent Orange and VA benefits.

HEALTH NOTICE FOR VETS AT CAMP LEJEUNE 50S THROUGH THE 80S

If you served on active duty at Camp Lejeune between 1957 and 1987, you may have been exposed to contaminated drinking water. Visit the VA website for information at www.va.gov/health/NewsFeatures/20120823a.asp

TREA CENTRAL MINNESOTA CHAPTER 115 MEETING MINUTES – 25 August 2012

Call to Order by Chapter 115 President
Ralph Donais

Invocation by Dell Fuller

Pledge of Allegiance by Ralph.

Preliminary RAD statistics from

Dennis Rock – 195 attendees, 16 no shows. 165 pre-registered, 30 walk-ins. \$30 in donations and \$30 towards the newsletter.

Membership Report by Mark Davidson – 255 members. 2 new members – 1 today and 1 yesterday

Legislative Report by Ralph Donais.

- Starting to have MAG meetings. Send ideas to Ralph to have them start working on them.
- One issue is how the State of MN counts active duty leave time for credit in state service.

- Retiree Tax Except – want it as a standalone bill next year instead of in another bill.

- Many items passed last year. One item not passed was the funding for Phase 3 at the Mpls Veterans Home. The state lost a lot of Federal money.

Motion by Dell to pay up to \$1,200 for the Chapter President for hotel, travel and registration to attend the National Convention. Second by Mark. Motion passed.

Treasurer Report – Dennis - \$529.53 in checking and \$2071.59 in savings. Everything is pre-AFRAD balances.

Dennis – Changed November meeting to October. Due to change, we need to send out the newsletter by September 30. The October meeting is on the 27th.

Ralph asked Chapter attendees to send him their input as to the AFRAD event.

Dennis – Thanked all the registration workers. It went very smooth without any complaints.

Motion by Rod, second by Dell to adjourn. Passed

Respectfully submitted,
David Hammer

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Web sites

Chapter 115:
www.trea115.org

National HQ:
www.trea.org

Eagle News is an unofficial publication of The Retired Enlisted Association (TREA), Central Minnesota Chapter 115, located at 906 Lookout Place, Elk River, MN 55330. The Eagle News is distributed quarterly to Chapter 115 members and is supported by donations that are deductible from Federal and state income tax to the extent permitted by law Section 501c19. Articles may be reprinted wholly providing the intent is to promote the well-being of military retirees and/or the community in general; credit must be given to TREA, Chapter 115. TREA Chapter 115 is a nonprofit organization, nonunion, nonpartisan and nonsectarian. Views expressed in this publication are not the official views of TREA, Chapter 115, or any governmental agency. The editor reserves the right to revise or reject any article due to length or opinion, and no articles discriminating based on race, sex, political stance, religion or age will be accepted for publication. The absolute deadline for articles is the 5th of January, April, July & October to dennisvictoria@usfamily.net

FUTURE MEETING SCHEDULE

Saturday, October 29, 2012
Saturday, February 12, 2013

All meetings begin at 11:00 am at the VFW Sports Complex 7350 Quaday, Otsego, MN 55330. Phone 763-241-5225. Spouses and guests are always welcome to attend.

From I-94 in Rogers: Go north on highway 101 towards Elk River to CR 42/River Road. Turn Left at the light. Second road on the Left is Quaday Ave NE. Turn Left. Follow Quaday until you see several brown buildings, which is the VFW Sport Complex on your Left.

From Highway 10 in Elk River: From Elk River, take Hwy 101 South towards Rogers, exit on CR 42/River Road, turn right at the light onto River Road. The next road on the left will be Quaday Ave NE. Turn Left. Follow Quaday until you see several brown buildings, which is the VFW Sport complex on your Left.

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TRICARE PHARMACY POLICY UPDATE 13

Walgreens left the TRICARE retail network when its contract with Express Scripts expired at the end of last year. While Walgreens is the largest pharmacy chain in the country, the TRICARE pharmacy network still has over 57,000 drug stores nationwide – more than the combined number of McDonald's and Starbucks stores. Since Walgreens' departure, TRICARE pharmacy contractor Express Scripts, Inc. (ESI) has been monitoring the effects on beneficiary satisfaction and access to other retail and community pharmacies, and has experienced relatively few complaints from former Walgreens customers.

Recently, Walgreens announced plans to get back with ESI, having lost millions in business since the breakup. Many thought that meant Walgreens would be rejoining the TRICARE network soon. However, ESI has decided otherwise. Walgreens will remain a non-network pharmacy provider for TRICARE beneficiaries. ESI announced that while it will partner with Walgreens on some of its other programs, Walgreens will NOT be readmitted to the TRICARE pharmacy network, thus remaining a non-network pharmacies.

Accordingly, if you choose to use Walgreens you will have to pay full price for your medication and file a claim for reimbursement. Reimbursements are subject to deductible or out-of-network cost-shares and TRICARE-required copayments. All deductibles must be met before any reimbursement can be made.

As this is our last newsletter for 2012,
The Chapter Officers want to wish everyone,

a GREAT THANKSGIVING,
a MERRY CHRISTMAS,
and a WONDERFUL NEW YEAR!

IF your mailing label contains incorrect information, or if you are not receiving the Chapter e-mail announcements, notify Mark Davidson at ldavidson77@msn.com