



# EAGLE NEWS

The official Newsletter of The Retired Enlisted Association (TREA)  
Central Minnesota Chapter 115  
March 2009 thru July 2009

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## DOD CHANGES IDENTIFICATION CARDS

The Department of Defense (DOD) began the process of removing Social Security numbers from issued identification (ID) cards in an effort to prevent identity theft. The exception to this applies to Geneva Convention cardholders whose last four numbers of their Social Security number will

remain on their cards. All ID card holders should wait until their cards are in need of renewal before replacing their cards with ones devoid of a Social Security number. The DoD instructed retirees with indefinite expiration dates on their cards to start replacing them in January 2010. Cardholders whose cards

have expired may contact the nearest Real-time Automated Personnel Identification System site. If the cardholder does not know where their local RAPIDS site is located, they can visit the [Rapids Site Locator](#) to find a location nearby.

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## HEALTH RECORD PLAN MAY OPEN VA TO ALL VETERANS

President Obama's ambitious plan to establish a lifetime electronic record for service members and veterans will improve delivery of benefits, speed processing of claims and, over time, open VA health care to any veteran, regardless of their medical condition or income level. VA Secretary Eric Shinseki first raised the idea of a more sophisticated electronic record system, and linked it to automatic enrollment by all veterans in the VA health system, during a House hearing in February.

This week, through a press spokeswoman, Shinseki confirmed that universal access to VA health care is integral to the administration's plan to develop as quickly as possible a 21st Century electronic record system. "Secretary Shinseki and the whole [VA] team believe that 'uniform registration' in the VA health system 'is an essential part of the lifetime virtual record,'" said Katie Roberts, his press secretary, in an e-mail. Shinseki and Defense Secretary Robert Gates were with the president April 9 in the Old Executive Office Building when Obama announced to an audience of veterans a "huge step toward modernizing the way VA health care is delivered and [VA] benefits are administered."

Obama described a comprehensive electronic record system, to be developed and used jointly by the Department of Defense and VA, which would hold all service-related

documents, administrative and medical, on individuals from the time they enter service until "they are laid to rest." Members leaving service no longer would have to "hand carry" medical records to VA health facilities.

And VA health providers, like military counterparts, would have full electronic medical files on any member or veteran. VA claim processes likewise would have access to military administrative files, thereby reducing delays and mistakes for applicants. "And it would do all this," the president said, "with the strictest and most rigorous standards of privacy and security so our veterans can have confidence that their medical records can only be shared at their direction."

Shinseki, a retired four-star general and former Army chief of staff, told the House Veterans Affairs Committee Feb. 4 that he already was discussing with Gates a joint electronic record system. "An individual enters the ranks as a youngster and stays for several years, or stays for 20, and comes to us as a veteran. Those records ought to be transferable...accurate and complete.

Not just medical records but personal records as well, because the personnel records are also part of the disability adjudication process. If we can get to this agreement on what an electronic medical record looks like, we will solve

the challenges we're wrestling with today where we have two different records," Shinseki said. With regard to medical records, Shinseki said features of the VA Vista system were preferred, even by military doctors, to the more cumbersome AHLTA system used by the Defense Department. At the same hearing,

Shinseki said mandatory enrollment in the VA health care system should be part of any move to a joint electronic record. "That alone will force the two institutions to begin to move together on what records need to be handed off," said Shinseki. Mandatory enrollment is significant because current access to VA health care is restricted. Since January 2003, veterans in Priority Group 8 – those who have no service-connected conditions and have incomes above certain government thresholds – have been barred from enrolling in the VA health care system.

About a half million Group 8s since then have applied. Congress has taken a first step to lift that ban. By July, income thresholds on new Group 8 enrollments will be raised enough to allow in about 266,000 more veterans. The Obama administration announced plans to more than double that number by 2013. But if launch of the "Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record", as VA officials have dubbed it, would occur sooner, so too would the VA medical system to all veterans.

That's important, Shinseki told lawmakers. "Even for those who may not have a disability claim" on separation, he said, "10 years down the road, who knows? Twenty years down the road we don't want to be doing what we're doing now, which is chasing details and records that are hidden away some place." Shinseki assured Congress that he won't allow the health system to become so crowded that access to care is choked off for the war disabled or veterans having service-connected disabilities.

Chuck Hume, deputy chief information officer in the Veterans Health Administration, said it's too soon to predict when VA and DOD will be

ready to launch a single electronic record system. "The president has stated that he wants us to pursue this as aggressively as possible and to get this vision realized for the benefit of our service member and veterans," said Hume. "But it's premature – without [a system] architecture, without a detailed plan – to forecast a timeline." Linda Fischetti, VHA's top health informatics officer, said the vision embraced here presents wonderful opportunities for veterans.

Electronic health records evolved, she said, to ease workloads within medical offices, then inside medical departments, across hospitals and then entire systems. What's endorsed here,

she said, is a system with a different purpose. "It's not about the department. It's not about the hospital. It's about the person," said Fischetti. "What do we need to move all of this information to support the best decisions and services for the person? How do we make this information available so they can partner in their health care?"

To comment:

e-mail [milupdate@aol.com](mailto:milupdate@aol.com), write to Military Update, P.O. Box 231111, Centreville, VA, 20120-1111 or visit: [militaryupdate.com](http://militaryupdate.com)

By Tom Philpott, Special to Stars & Stripes. Pacific edition, Saturday, April 25, 2009

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### **NAVY INVESTIGATES 1980'S CAMP LEJEUNE WATER HAZARD**

Did you live or work at Camp Lejeune in 1987 or before? Is so, please register online at the below sites.

In the early 1980's, two solvents, both unregulated at the time were found in two water systems serving the Tarawa Terrace and Hadnot Point areas: TCE and PCE. Certain drinking water wells

were identified as the source and were taken out of service. The Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry is determining whether an association exists between exposure to the water and certain adverse health effects. The National Academy of Sciences is evaluating specific health risks associated with exposure.

Upon completion of the research, the Marine Corps will notify those on the registry through direct mail and e-mail. Hhp://www.marines.mil/clsurvey and <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/>

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### **MINNESOTA HONORS VIETNAM ERA VETERANS**

Join the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs and the Minnesota Veterans community on June 13, 2009 at the State Capitol grounds as Minnesota Honors Vietnam Era Veterans, an event to celebrate remember and honor all Veterans who served during the Vietnam era.

Vietnam Veterans served our nation with pride and dignity. This gathering will unite the Minnesota community in celebration of the brave men and women who served during the Vietnam War era. This event will also give Veterans and their families a chance to

reconnect with other service members and learn about the latest in Veterans benefits

It is a time to proudly celebrate these individuals and come together as a community in support and gratitude for their service and sacrifice.

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### **TREA CHAPTER 115 CENTRAL MINNESOTA MINUTES OF 9 MAY 2009**

Chapter President Ralph Donais brought the meeting to order at 1100 hours at the VFW Memorial Complex, 7350 Quaday Ave NE, Ostego, MN

President Donais led the members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Donais led the chapter in prayer.

The minutes of the meeting of 14 February 2009 were reviewed. Minor changes were made to include changing that the TREA national convention to be held in Sioux Falls, SD to Rapid City, SD. The minutes with the changes were accepted by unanimous consent.

Dennis Rock gave the Treasurer's report. There is \$503.30 in the checking account and \$3,062.65 in the savings account. The Treasurer's report was filed with the chapter minutes.

There was no Legislative report.

Mark Davidson gave the Membership report. The Chapter has 272 members. Mark has sent out 10 to 15 membership applications since the last meeting.

#### **Unfinished Business:**

1. The AFRAD at Camp Ripley, MN is going to be on 29 August 2009. All of the paper work has been approved. There was a discussion about having only one session (0800 to?) or have two

sessions (one AM and one PM) as we have done in the past. It was decided that we would continue to have the two sessions.

2. **Fundraisers:** Brat sales are scheduled for 11 AM to 6 PM on 24 through 26 July 2009 at the Cub grocery store in Rogers, MN and 11 AM to 6 PM on 4 through 7 September 2009 (Labor Day weekend) at the Cub store in Elk River, MN. It would be appreciated if there were more volunteers to assist the sales.
3. **National convention:** The deadline to have the delegate forms to national is 30 July. The chapter is authorized six votes and President Donais would like to see many present members at the convention.
  - The Rapid City, SD chapter can be contacted for information.

- The Chapter decided not have an item printed in the program
- The Chapter decided not contribute to the sponsorship program.
- There were three By-Law changes that the Chapter voted on:
- Article III, Section 1, Title: Membership. **The Chapter voted no.**
- Article III, Section 4, Title: Membership. **The Chapter voted no.**
- Article III, Section 5, Title: Membership. **The Chapter voted no.**

1. There was a discussion about the AFRAD brochure.
2. There was a discussion about selling raffle tickets for another TREA chapter. It was felt that our members **would not** sell the raffle tickets.
3. There was a discussion about a letter sent to President Donais about joining the Armed Forces Top Enlisted Association.

**Good of the Order:**

Rod thanked the Chapter for the flowers sent to Rod's father's funeral.

**Motion** by Mark Davidson, **seconded** by Dennis Rock to adjourn the meeting. **Motion carried.** President Donais adjourned the meeting at 1230 hours.

**The next Chapter meeting is scheduled for after the close of the AFRAD at Camp Ripley, MN on 29 August 2009. As always, spouses and guests are invited to attend.**

Prepared by: Rick Erickson, Secretary

**New Business:**

**LAWMAKERS SEEK HEALTHIER DOD MEDICAL BUDGET**

Key lawmakers said Friday that they are pleased with the Obama administration's decision to at least temporarily drop the idea that big increases in Tricare fees are an essential part of the future of military health care.

Rep. Susan Davis, D-Calif., chairwoman of the House Armed Services personnel panel, and Rep. Joe Wilson of South Carolina, the panel's ranking Republican, said they expect a healthier debate on the future of military health care when, for the first time in three years, that debate will not begin in a deep rut.

Allen Middleton, the Pentagon's top health official, said the \$47.4 billion health care budget for 2010 not only omits any call for higher co-payments, deductibles and fees for Tricare beneficiaries, but also does not include unspecified across-the-board cuts in service medical budgets, something used several times by the Bush administration, which called the cuts "efficiency wedges."

In the past few years, with the Defense Department medical budget arriving on Capitol Hill with built-in assumptions of cost-savings from the proposed

Tricare fee increases and the efficiency wedges, lawmakers who were not keen on those ideas had to scramble to find extra money to cover their unfunded costs.

Davis, who along with Wilson fiercely oppose Tricare fee increases, said it is not entirely clear if the 2010 budget really includes full medical funding. Davis said, "We have only had the budget justification materials for about 36 hours and are still awaiting answers from the department on various issues."

By Rick Maze - Staff writer. Posted : Friday May 15, 2009 9:58:51 EDT

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National HQ:  
[www.trea.org](http://www.trea.org)

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](mailto:ldavidson77@msn.com)

### FUTURE MEETING SCHEDULE

August 29, 2009 at Camp Ripley after the Saturday AFRAD  
November 14, 2009  
February 13, 2010  
May 8, 2010

All meetings are held at the VFW Sports Complex 7350 Quaday, Otsego, MN 55330. Phone 763-241-5225. Spouses and guests are always invited 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.

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.

Follow Quaday until you see several brown buildings which are the VFW Sport complex.

The Chapter 115 "Eagle News" is scheduled to be published quarterly in January, April, July and October. Send news to Dennis Rock..



THE

RETIRED ENLISTED  
ASSOCIATION

Serving the Total Force

The Voice of the Enlisted:

Retired/Active Duty/Reserves/National Guard  
"United We Stand"

Central Minnesota Chapter 115  
The Retired Enlisted Association  
906 Lookout Place  
Elk River, MN 55330

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### TREA CHAPTER 115 PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Greeting!

I have a few items that need attention from everyone in our chapter.

**First** the National TREA convention is in Rapid city South Dakota this year. The dates are from 23 September to the 26<sup>th</sup> of September. The chapter will pay for your registration if you wish to attend. We need to know if you plan to attend by the end of June so we can make out a check for everyone's registration. We also have to send in our delegate listing to National.

**Next** our chapter is again sponsoring the AFRAD at Camp Ripley, Saturday the 29<sup>th</sup> of August. We need helpers at this event to help make it another great one for our chapter. Workers will receive complementary food & registration. There will be a morning and afternoon sessions again this year. We need volunteers help with the registration tables, break area, TREA information table, just to name a few. A block of rooms in billeting has been

set aside for those volunteers who might want to go up the day before. We usually set up tables in the break and registration areas on Friday afternoon late.

**Next** we need volunteers for the Brat fund raising events. The first is in Rogers at Cub Foods the 24-26 July from 11:00 AM to 6 PM each day. There must be two people working at all times in the booth. We need at least four people each day to work for four hours each. If we have extra workers I will bring my motor home for a rest area. **(Note the hours could be shorter if we have more volunteers)**

**Next** we need volunteers for the Brat stand at the Cub Food in Elk River. The 4<sup>th</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup> of September Labor Day weekend. The hours again are from 11:00 AM to 6 PM each day. There must be two people working at all times in the booth. We need at least four people each day to work for four hours each. If we have extra workers I will bring my motor home for a rest

area. **(Note the hours could be shorter if we have more volunteers)**

**Next** are the other RADs going on in Minnesota this summer. Volunteers are needed to help at a TREA table on the 28<sup>th</sup> of August in Rosemont and the 26<sup>th</sup> of September at Mystic Lake Casino. The chapter will pay the registration fee for the two volunteers that work our tables. (The fee pays for lunch)

**Lastly, there will be a chapter meeting following the AFRAD on the 29 in the break area.**

Upcoming Events:  
July - Brat Stand Rogers 24-26  
August - Rosemont RAD 28<sup>th</sup>, AFRAD at Ripley 29<sup>th</sup>, Chapter meeting following the AFRAD  
Sept - Convention 23-26 (Rapid City SD), Mystic Lake Casino RAD 26<sup>th</sup>

I hope everyone has a great summer and I hope to see you at our events /s/Ralph Donais Chapter 115

# JULY 29<sup>TH</sup> AFRAD REGISTRATION PAPERS INCLUDED

WELCOME TO AFRAD 2009

Training & Community Center (TACC)  
Camp Ripley – Little Falls, MN

TENTATIVE AGENDA

SATURDAY, 29 AUGUST 2009

0800—1600 Exhibitors (Cafeteria)

**MORNING SESSION** (Limited to 204)

0700-0800 Sign-in	Lobby
0800-0930 Briefings	Theater
0930-1000 Refreshment Break	Cafe
1000-1130 Briefings	Theater
1130-1215 Lunch	Gym

**AFTERNOON SESSION** (Limited to 204)

1030-1200 Sign-in	Lobby
1100-1145 Lunch	Gym
1200-1330 Briefings	Theater
1330-1400 Refreshment Break	Café
1400-1530 Briefings	Theater
1600 Chapter 115 meeting	Café

The **deadline** for registration with meals is 17 August because of contractual obligations.

Walk-ins are welcome, but meals are unavailable.

CONCURRENT ACTIVITIES

ID CARD PROCESSING (in TACC)  
Based on first come – first served.  
Friday & Saturday, 0830 to 1530

Military Museum  
Friday, 1000 to 1700  
Saturday, 1000 to 1600

Post Exchange & Class VI Store  
Friday, 1000 to 2000  
Saturday, 1000 to 1600

LODGING

On-Post housing **may be** available by calling 320-632-7378 for reservations.  
Check in at Building #6-76 Ed Center  
Friday, 0600 to 2400  
Saturday, 0700 to 2300

AmericInn of Little Falls, MN  
306 LeMieur St SE 320-632-1964  
Reservations: 888-205-0958

Country Suites By Carlson Little Falls  
209 16th Street, NE 320-632-1000  
Reservations: 800-596-2375  
E-mail: [cx\\_lfal@countryinns.com](mailto:cx_lfal@countryinns.com)

AFRAD Point of Contact:  
Ralph Donais  
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REGISTRATION FORM

8th Annual Camp Ripley AFRAD  
Training & Community Center (TACC)  
Saturday, 29 August 2009

Yes, I wish to attend (select 1 session)  
 0800 Morning Session  
 1200 Afternoon Session

\_\_\_ # person/s @ \$7.50 Registration

\_\_\_ # person/s @ \$7.50 Lunch

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Total amount enclosed  
Check payable to "TREA Chapter 115"

\_\_\_\_\_  
First & Last Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City, State & Zip Code

\_\_\_\_\_  
Home Telephone with area code

\_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Military Service & Retired Rank

\_\_\_\_\_  
Guest (first & last name)

Mail registration form & check to:  
TREA Chapter 115  
906 Lookout Place, Elk River, MN 55330

The **deadline** for registration with meals is 17 August because of contractual obligations. Walk-ins are welcome, but meals are unavailable.

----- CUT ALONG LINE AND MAIL -----