



KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE

Quarterly Retiree Newsletter

Volume VI, Issue II, Jul-Sept 2024



“Your link to retiree benefits information and assistance.”

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Fellow Retirees,

We hope you are having a pleasant summer. There are lots of program changes happening this summer and a turnover in leadership positions. We often feel like we are running to catch up. We are especially pleased that our Military Personnel Flight teamed with us to provide a dedicated time once a month for retirees to “walk-in” for ID card services.

We have begun planning for our retiree events and activities for next year. We are interested in your thoughts on what would be most helpful to you. Feel free to email or just stop by and talk with us. We are open 1200-1500 Tuesday-Friday.

We have added a new feature in our newsletter. Each quarter we will spotlight one of our volunteers so you, our readers, can get to know the people that help you when you call for assistance. This quarter we will introduce you to David Dunlap, CMSgt. (Ret) who was recognized as the Kirtland Air Force Base Volunteer of the Year for 2023.

We do our best to stay informed and share relevant information with all of you. Please let us know how you think we are doing. We have a dedicated team and constantly strive to improve our own processes and procedures in the RAO.


Sincerely,
Sally

Quarterly RAO Newsletter

The Retiree Activities Office publishes this Newsletter quarterly on or about Mid-February, Mid-May, Mid-August and Mid-November. It can be found at the Base Post Office, BX and Commissary, golf course, bowling alley, CORE and the east side fitness center. If you would like an electronic copy, please e-mail us at 377ABW.CVR.RetireeActivities@us.af.mil or call our office at (505) 846-1536.

REAL ID Enforcement

REAL ID: If you are bringing a visitor on base through the Truman Visitor Center to obtain a pass, they must have two forms of photo ID and one of them must be **Real ID compliant**. If the visitor’s driver’s license is not Real ID compliant, their second form of ID must be a current passport or other Real ID. Remember, you can only access KAFB with either a valid, current base access id or a visitor pass.

<p><u>David Dunlap, CMSgt. NM/CA ANG (Ret)</u> David has brought a wealth of experience to the KAFB RAO from his 38 years of service in the Navy and Air Force (both Active Duty and Full-Time Air National Guard). He is the technical lead for RAO seminars and events, such as the Information Fair during Retiree Appreciation Week and the recent Survivor Benefits Seminar. With his extensive computer experience, he headed the transition for technology upgrades, and he helps all the volunteers resolve computer issues. He works with Wing Staff on equipment procurement, such as printers and VOIP phones. David frequently prepares the weekly updates for Retiree subscribers. He was named as the 377ABW Volunteer of the Year for 2023.</p> <p>Outside the RAO David also serves his community in several other volunteer positions including the Trail Watch program for Albuquerque Open Space and the Sunport Ambassador program. He recently helped mentor a young woman who was raising her siblings and seeking employment with the Air National Guard. She has graduated from Air Force Technical School and is currently on a seasoning tour in her chosen career field. He helped her get off to a successful start in her career.</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">David Receiving 2023 KAFB Volunteer of the Year Award</p>	<p>Spotlight on a Retiree Office Volunteer</p>
<p><u>Do You Need A New ID Card?</u> It has recently been difficult, if not impossible, to get an appointment for a new ID card. In light of this, the Retiree Activities Office has partnered with Military Personnel on a pilot program intended to help our retirees and their dependents get their new or updated ID cards. For the foreseeable future, there will be a dedicated “Retiree Day and Time” from 1100 – 1400 hours on the second Tuesday of each month. The next four dedicated times and days are 1100 – 1400 hours on 13 August 2024, 10 September 2024, 8 October 2024, and 12 November 2024. Retirees and their dependents <u>WILL</u> have priority. Note: You can update your information in DEERS at the same time, even if you don’t need a new ID card. (To check or update your information, login to milconnect.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect or call 1 (800) 538-9552.) Volunteers from the RAO will be on hand to meet and greet our retirees.</p>		<p>ID Cards And DEERS</p>
<p><u>Accessing Your Social Security Account Online</u> The Social Security Administration (SSA) is changing the way to access your SSA account online. In the future, to access their online services, including <i>my Social Security</i>, you will need to create a Login.gov or ID.me account. Not only is login.gov or (ID.me) used by SSA, but these ID s also will be used by other government agencies, so you’ll only need one login to access multiple government websites.</p> <p>If you already use either a Login.gov or ID.me account to sign in to your SSA Account, you do not need to take any action.</p> <p>To transition to your “my <i>Social Security</i> account”, go to https://www.ssa.gov/myaccount and select “Sign in with Social Security Username”. After successfully signing in, you will be asked to create an account with Login.gov. Login.gov has 24/7 customer phone and chat support to answer your questions and, if needed, help you with creating your account.</p> <p>After you successfully link your Social Security username with your new Login.gov account, you will see a confirmation screen and be directed to the service you are attempting to access (SSA). You can start using your new Login.gov account to access Social Security online services immediately. Your old Social Security username will no longer be available.</p>		<p>Changes to Online Social Security Account Access</p>
<p><u>AIR SHOW</u> Kirtland AFB will host the Air Force Thunderbirds in late May 2025. Stay tuned for further details.</p>		<p>Air Show</p>

<p><u>How to Avoid Falling for a Scam</u></p> <p>There are more scams out there every day. To protect yourself, some things to look out for include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scammers pretend to be from an organization you know (e.g., - IRS, Social Security) • Scammers can “spoof” any phone number they want to fool your caller ID • Scammers will tell you there is a problem with your account or someone in the family is in serious trouble • Scammers will offer you a prize, but they will want money from you first • Scammers always pressure you to act immediately to take advantage of what they are offering • Scammer will want you to pay them in a specific way, like sending gift cards or wiring money through Western Union <p>To help avoid falling for a scam:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Block any unwanted (or unknown) CALLS AND TEXT MESSAGES • Never give personal or financial information in response to a request you didn’t expect • If you get a text or email from a company you do business with, you can always call them directly to verify that the request is legitimate (Banks, IRS and Social Security usually only contact you by mail) • Resist acting immediately, just because they try to pressure you • When is doubt, talk to someone you trust to give you honest information 	<p>Watch Out for Scammers</p>
<p><u>Casualty Assistance Representative</u></p> <p>The Casualty Assistance Representative is (CAR) is Jesus Palomino. His direct office phone number is (505) 846-5508.</p>	<p>Casualty Assistance</p>
<p><u>377 MDG Immunizations</u></p> <p>The Immunization Clinic is available for Pneumonia, Td/Tdap and Shingles vaccines on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday by appointment. Go to https://go.thryv.com/site/377MDG or call (505) 846-3200 to set up a time.</p> <p>Flu and Covid vaccine available on Fridays by appointment, see Thryv website above.</p> <p>Additionally, on Wednesdays 0730-1200 and 1300-1500, those individuals over 65 may walk-in.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> The RSV vaccine is currently not available.</p> <p><u>377 MDG Radiology</u></p> <p>Outside orders are not available via 0730-1030 walk-ins. Appointments must be booked via Thryv https://go.thryv.com/site/377MDG. The x-ray order must be no older than 60 days and include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete patient information • Paper order from ordering physician • ICD-10 codes • Ordering provider information • Ordering provider fax number • Ordering provider signature 	<p>377th Med Group Information</p>
<p><u>TRICARE for Life Seminars</u></p> <p>The in-person TRICARE For Life (TFL) Seminar offers an introduction to Medicare/TFL for retirees turning 65 years of age or under 65 who will be eligible for Medicare due to a disability. They are held at the 377th Med Group (Kirtland Clinic) from 1330 – 1500. The next three seminars will be 21 August 2024, 18 September 2024 and 16 October 2024. To reserve a seat, call the Health Benefits Advisors (HBA) desk at (505) 853-1396. On the day of the seminar, check in at the Patient Records Desk on the 2nd floor by 1320.</p>	<p>TRICARE For Life Seminars</p>

<p><u>Legal Office</u> Due to manning issues, the base legal office will not be providing services to retirees through September. This includes notary services. If you need to have a will prepared, please email their office in early September at KirlandLegalAssistance@us.af.mil to request an appointment.</p>	<p>Legal Office</p>
<p><u>Uber Drivers on Base</u> UBER-certified drivers with a valid base ID are able to access Kirtland AFB for pick up and drop off of passengers. <u>Note:</u> all passengers must also have a valid base ID. Please be sure to verify that your driver has the proper KAFB credentials before scheduling a ride.</p>	<p>Uber Info</p>
<p><u>Albuquerque National Cemetery</u> The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently announced that construction for the Albuquerque National Cemetery will begin in 2025. U.S. Sen. Martin Heinrich helped secure funding for the project. The cemetery will be located on 230 acres of land near the Petroglyph National Monument. This will be the third national cemetery in New Mexico, joining the Santa Fe National Cemetery and the Fort Bayard National Cemetery in providing a burial place for veterans.</p>	<p>New Local National Cemetery</p>
<p><u>VA Home Loan Update</u> In March, the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) reached a settlement in a class-action lawsuit that requires NAR to change its brokerage fee rules. This could result in changes to the real estate market. Before that settlement takes effect, the VA has announced an update to help ensure that Veterans using the <u>VA-guaranteed home loan benefit</u> remain competitive buyers. Specifically, eligible Veterans, active-duty service members and surviving spouses who use their VA home loan benefits can pay for certain real estate buyer-broker fees when purchasing a home beginning Aug. 10, 2024. This update is intended to ensure the VA’s programs continue to promote access to homeownership for Veterans.</p> <p>The full impact of the settlement is not yet certain because the real estate market is still adjusting, but there may be an increased expectation that home buyers will pay for their own buyer-broker fees. In the VA’s program, it has been common practice for sellers to pay for the Veteran’s buyer-broker fees. Veterans could not pay buyer-broker fees when purchasing a home with a VA home loan. In light of the settlement, Veterans could be at a disadvantage in the evolving homebuying market, so the VA released this update to make sure that Veterans remain competitive buyers.</p> <p>Veterans using their VA home loan benefits can still negotiate and may pay for their real estate professional’s commission (i.e., the buyer-broker fee), beginning Aug. 10, 2024, subject to certain safeguards. The VA encourages Veterans to seek out the services of mortgage lending and real estate professionals who have experience with the VA home loan program to ensure they are familiar with the specifics of compensation negotiations and the impact of the settlement on home purchase contracts.</p> <p>For questions, please do not hesitate to contact the VA home loan technicians at 1 (877) 827-3702 (Monday – Friday, 0800 to 1800 ET).</p> <p>Source: https://news.va.gov/132094/va-updates-home-loan-competitive-housing-market/#toc_Why_does_this_potential_change_matter_for_Veterans</p>	<p>VA Corner</p>
<p><u>NM Personal Income Tax</u> The governor signed into law the following NM Personal Income Tax changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent extension of the \$30,000 exclusion from tax for armed forces retirement pay. Of course nothing is permanent, since future legislatures can change the law, but this bill removed the 2026 sunset provision. • Addition of surviving spouses of armed forces retirees to those eligible for this tax exclusion. • Adjustment of all income tax rates and income brackets. Analysis says these changes will decrease income taxes for all taxpayers, with emphasis on those in lower tax brackets. 	<p>NM PIT Update</p>

<p><u>Change SBP coverage on-line</u></p> <p>When you need to make changes to your SBP coverage, Why Not take advantage of the new Form Wizard? It eliminates the guesswork and assists in ensuring the form is completed correctly the first time.</p> <p>A Form Wizard is available to assist in completing the DD Form 2656-6, Survivor Benefit Plan Election Change Certificate. This form is used to make changes to your Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) coverage as you experience life-changing events throughout your retirement.</p> <p>Form Wizards are located on the Forms Library webpage of the DFAS Retired and Annuitant website at https://www.dfas.mil/raforms. The Form Wizard is above the PDF version of the form on the website.</p> <p>If you are using Chrome, Edge, Firefox, or Safari to access an Adobe Form Wizard, you may need to download or save the PDF (by clicking the download or save icon in the upper right-hand corner of the page). Then go to the saved location and open the form/Form Wizard. Don't save completed forms on a public or shared computer because they contain Personal Identifiable Information (PII).</p> <p>After generating your completed DD Form 2656-6 using the Form Wizard, you can print, sign/witness and then upload your completed form using our askDFAS online upload tool. See more information about our convenient online upload tools at https://www.dfas.mil/askdfas.</p>	<p>Changing SBP Coverage Online</p>
<p><u>The BX Pharmacy Needs Volunteers</u></p> <p>The BX Pharmacy is looking for dedicated volunteers. The Red Cross office is in charge of accepting applicants. If you are interested, call their office at (480) 313-1296, or our office at (505) 846-1536 for more information.</p>	<p>Volunteer at the BX Pharmacy</p>
<p><u>Saluting the U.S. Flag</u></p> <p>All persons present in uniform (military, police, fire, etc.) should render the military salute. Members of the armed forces and veterans who are present but not in uniform may render the military salute. All other people present should face the U.S. flag and stand at attention with their right hand over the heart, or if applicable, remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart.</p> <p><u>Quick list of Flag Etiquette Don'ts:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't dip the U.S. flag for any person, flag, or vessel. • Don't let the U.S. flag touch the ground. • Don't fly flag upside down unless there is an emergency. • Don't carry the U.S. flag flat or carry things in it. • Don't use the U.S. flag as clothing. • Don't store the U.S. flag where it can get dirty. • Don't use it as a cover. • Don't fasten it or tie it back. Always allow it to fall free. • Don't draw on, or otherwise mark the U.S. flag. • Don't use the U.S. flag for decoration. Use bunting with the blue on top, then white, then red. 	<p>U. S. Flag Etiquette</p>
<p><u>Local Area Military Discounts</u></p> <p>The Retiree Activities Office is collecting information about local businesses that offer military discounts. You need to ask and show a valid military ID. The latest discounts we found is 10% at Old Navy (in store only) and 10% at the UPS Store. If you find any others, please give us a call at (505) 846-1536 or email 377ABW.CVR.RetireeActivities@us.af.mil.</p>	<p>Military Discounts</p>

<p><u>Family Camp</u> The Kirtland Air Force Base Family Camp is located at 24250 F Street, near the Eubank gate. Retirees and dependents with a current valid military ID may stay at the Family Camp in an RV for up to 6 months at a time. Once that time is up, you must vacate KAFB for 6 months before being eligible to return. The cost for full hook-up is \$35 per night. If interested, please contact Fam Camp at (505) 846-0377 to reserve a space.</p>	
<p><u>RV Storage</u> KAFB has several locations around the base for dry storing an RV. Retirees and dependents with a current valid military ID are eligible to use this area. The cost is \$30 - \$55 per month, depending on the size of the RV. For more information and to reserve a space visit Outdoor Recreation in the CORE building (next to the BX). You will need to bring a current RV Registration and proof of insurance.</p>	<p>RV Storage</p>
<p><u>KAFB Thunderbird Dining Facility</u> Retirees and their dependents with a valid ID card are eligible to eat in the Dining Facility on Saturdays, Sundays and Federal Holidays from 0900-1300. <u>Note:</u> Credit cards or cash are accepted for payment.</p>	<p>Thunderbird Dining Facility</p>
<p><u>Kirtland AFB Veterinary Treatment Facility</u> Veterinary weekly appointments are now available. Services include basic wellness appointments, sick call appointments, dental cleanings, and surgical procedures (including spay/neuter). Please call (505) 846-4276 or drop by the clinic to register your pet and schedule an appointment. The office is located in building 20168 on Pennsylvania Ave., behind the Base Exchange.</p>	<p>KAFB Veterinary Treatment Facility</p>
<p><u>Kirtland AFB Chapel and Religious Services</u> St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Community celebrates Mass every Sunday at 0900 at the Kirtland AFB Chapel. Anyone with base access is welcome. In addition, daily Mass is offered Monday through Thursday at 1130.</p> <p>The Kirtland AFB Protestant Community Service meets every Sunday at 11 a.m. at the base Chapel. Anyone with base access is welcome to attend.</p> <p>Protestant Women of the Chapel (PWOC) meets every Wednesday, 0900 – 1200, in the annex of the Base Chapel.</p> <p>Jewish Shabbat in the Chapel conference room Fridays at 1800. Service is followed by Kiddish and Oneg. RSVP to Senior Airman Nicholas Bade nbearbade@gmail.com or by calling the Chapel at 505-853-5000. Shabbat services are held contingent upon RSVPs.</p>	<p>Kirtland AFB Chapel Services</p>
<p><u>Kirtland AFB Gate Operations</u> Carlisle Gate – weekdays 0530 – 0900 in/outbound, 1530 – 1730 outbound only Eubank Gate – open 24/7 Gibson Gate – open 0530 – 1930 daily Maxwell Gate – open 24/7 Truman Gate – open 24/7 with Visitor Control Center Wyoming Gate – weekdays 0530 - 0900 in/outbound, 1530 – 1730 outbound only</p>	<p>KAFB Gate Access</p>

Some Interesting Information From the 377 AB Historian

MAY

Inactivation of the 377 CSW

Event: On 1 May 1991, the 377th Air Base Wing's predecessor unit, the 377th Combat Support Wing (CSW), was inactivated at Ramstein Air Base, Germany.

Background: The 377 CSW had formerly been activated at Ramstein on 14 June 1985 to provide support services for the base's new fleet of General Dynamics F-16 Fighting Falcons—operated by the 86th Tactical Fighter Wing. Not only did the 377 CSW take on host installation responsibilities for the entire Kaiserslautern Military Community, containing approximately 70,000 American citizens, but it also supported numerous geographically separated units throughout Europe.



Wing Heritage
Pamphlet

377 ABW History Office: Email – 377ABW.HO.Workflow@us.af.mil
Phone – (505) 846-0170

THE ARCHIVE



Caption: Ramstein Air Base circa 1985.

JUNE

Albuquerque AAB in WWII

Event: On 7 June 1941, the 19th Bombardment Group (BG) arrived at Albuquerque Army Air Base (AAB) to begin training for their eventual deployment to the Pacific Theater of World War II.

Background: During the 19 BG's time at Albuquerque AAB the foundation for the base's infrastructure, installation support, and administration was developed to support advanced flying, bombardier training, and multi-engine schoolhouses for B-17 and B-24 aircrews. Training activity eventually encompassed both the local airfield and several bombing ranges west and southwest of Albuquerque, including an area of 2,450 square miles between the village of Los Lunas and the Rio Puerco.



Wing Heritage
Pamphlet

377 ABW History Office: Email – 377ABW.HO.Workflow@us.af.mil
Phone – (505) 846-0170

THE ARCHIVE



Caption: Bombardier training at Albuquerque Army Air Base ca. 1940s.
(U.S. Air Force Photo)

<https://www.kirtland.af.mil/Portals/52/20240101%20%28U%29%20377%20ABW%20Heritage%20Pamphlet.pdf>

Wing Holidays and Training Days

Minimum base services will be available on these dates in 2024	
Thursday, 15 August 2024	Training Day
Friday, 30 August 2024	Family Day
Monday, 2 September 2024	Labor Day
Thursday, 19 September 2024	Training Day
Friday, 11 October 2024	Family Day
Monday, 14 October 2024	Indigenous Peoples Day
Thursday, 17 October 2024	Training Day
Friday, 11 November 2024	Veterans Day
Monday, 13 November 2024	Family Day
Thursday, 21 November 2024	Training Day
Thursday, 28 November 2024	Thanksgiving Day
Friday, 29 November 2024	Family Day
Thursday, 21 December 2024	Training Day
Tuesday, 24 December 2024	Family Day
Wednesday, 25 December 2024	Christmas Day
Tuesday, 31 December 2024	Family Day

Useful Websites

Base Exchange	shopmyexchange.com
BENEFEDS (Vision / Dental)	benefeds.com
DEERS	milconnect.dmdc.osd.mil
Dept of Veterans Affairs	va.gov
DFAS (Retirees/Annuitants)	dfas.mil
Express Scripts	militaryrx.express-scripts.com
Genesis Patient Portal	https://patientportal.mhsgenesis.health.mil
ID Card Renewal Appointment	https://idco.dmdc.osd.mil/idco
Information, Tickets & Travel	kirtlandforcesupport.com/itt-office
KAFB Retiree Activities Office	https://www.kirtland.af.mil/About-Us/Retiree-Activities-Office
Medicare	medicare.gov
My Pay Login	mypay.dfas.mil
National Personnel Records Center	archives.gov/veterans
Social Security	ssa.gov
Tricare	tricare.mil
Tricare for Life	tricare.mil/tfl
Tricare Claims Information	tricare4u.com
Tricare West	tricare-west.com
Veterans Group Life Insurance	benefits.va.gov/insurance

Useful Phone Numbers

Air Force Lodging (Conus Only)	1 (888) 2356343
AMVETS Appointment (Lou Rossi)	(505) 846-0741
Arts and Crafts	(505) 853-3003
Base Exchange	(505) 232-8771
BX Pharmacy – Consult Only	(505) 846-3200
BX Pharmacy – Consult Only	(505) 846-5770
BX Pharmacy - Script Refills	(505) 846-7902
BENEFEDS (Vision / Dental Insurance)	1 (877) 888-3337
Bowling Alley	(505) 846-1156
Casualty Assistance	(505) 846-5508
Chapel	(505) 853-5000
Commissary	(505) 846-4902
DEERS	1 (800) 538-9552
DFAS (Retirees/Annuitants)	1 (800) 321-1080
East Side Fitness Center	(505) 846-1102
Express Scripts	1 (800) 282-2881
Family Camp	(505) 846-0337
Golf Course	(505) 846-1169
Golf Course Snack Bar	(505) 846-7835
Health Benefits Advisor (377 Med Group)	(505) 853-1396
ID Cards	(505) 846-2017
Information, Tickets & Travel	(505) 846-2924
Legal Office	(505) 846-4217
Military & Family Readiness	(505) 846-0751
Medicare Claims and Information	1 (800) 633-4227
My Pay (DFAS)	1 (888) 332-7411
National Personnel Records Center	1 (314) 801-0800
National Aging and Disability Resources	1 (800) 432-2080
NM Department of Veterans Affairs	(505) 346-4810
Outdoor Recreation	(505) 846-1499
Patient Advocacy (377 Med Group)	(505) 249-2675
Retiree Activities Office	(505) 846-1536
Senior Citizens Law Office	1 (505) 265-2300
Social Security (Local Office)	1 (866) 613-9961
Thrift Shop	(505) 508-1114
Total Force Service Center (myPers)	1 (800) 525-0102
Tricare for Life	1 (866) 773-0404
Tricare West	1 (844) 866-9378
Truman Gate Visitor Center (24 Hours)	(505) 846-2676
VA Benefits Advisor	(505) 853-1707
VA Hospital Albuquerque	(505) 265-1711
Veterinary Office	(505) 846-4276
Veterans Group Life Insurance	1 (800) 419-1473
West Side Fitness Center	(505) 846-1068

“This Kirtland AFB Retiree Activities Office Newsletter is an authorized publication for retired military personnel and their spouses. The contents of this newsletter are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or the Department of the Air Force.”



Retiree Activities Office Hours
Tuesday through Friday from 1200 to 1500.

If you would like to receive this newsletter or other information from the Retiree Activities Office electronically, please call us with your e-mail address at (505) 846-1536 or e-mail us at 377ABW.CVR.RetireeActivities@us.af.mil

Visit Our
KAFB Retiree Activities Office
Website at

<https://www.kirtland.af.mil/About-Us/Retiree-Activities-Office>