

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
FORT STEWART RETIRED SOLDIER COUNCIL  
HEADQUARTERS, US ARMY GARRISON, FORT STEWART/HUNTER ARMY AIRFIELD  
1791 GULICK AVENUE, BUILDING 709  
FORT STEWART, GEORGIA 31314

AMIM-SHH

18 August 2023

MEMORANDUM FOR

SUBJECT: Retiree Appreciation Day (RAD) After Action Report/Meeting Minutes

1. a. Members in attendance:

COL (R) Kinard LaFate – Co-Chairperson	CW5 (R) Robert Letendre
COL (R) Kevin Milton	CSM (R) Divina Bobb – Co-Chairperson
COL (R) James Roberts Jr	CSM (R) Jeffrey Ashmen
LTC (R) George Fredrick	CSM (R) Michael Balch
LTC (R) Karen Nigara – Report Writer	SGM (R) Edward Shelton
LTC (R) Donald Hansen	SFC (R) Karen Bell

b. Members not in attendance:

COL (R) Salvatore Lauricella	CSM (R) Leon Caffie
LTC (R) David Craig	1SG (R) Daila Espeut-Jones
CW5 (R) Edna Frazier	

c. Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield (HAAF) Command and Staff in attendance:

COL Marc Austin, Ft Stewart GC	Ms. Anna Taylor, Ft Stewart-HAAF RSO
LTC Bob Cuthbertson, HAAF GC	Mr. Ernest Smith
CSM Reichard, HAAF GCSM	Ms. Julie Lovelady
Mr. David Southerland, Ft Stewart-HAAF MPD Chief	Ms. Tuu Quarterman

2. The 11th annual Retiree Appreciation Day (RAD) was hosted at the Tominac Fitness Center, Hunter Army Airfield Georgia on 18 August 2023. Of the 333 pre-RAD registered, 206 actually attended. The Council meeting was opened by Mr. David Southerland. The purpose of the meeting was to conduct the Semi-Annual meeting by discussing issues of concern to Retired Soldiers and how the Retired Soldiers can support the Command IAW AR 600-8-7. In addition, the Council conducted a RAD After Action Review (AAR).

3. The AAR comments included the following:

AMIM-SHH

SUBJECT: Retiree Appreciation Day (RAD) After Action Report/Meeting Minutes

a. Pre-RAD Coordination

(1) COL (R) Milton commented he did not receive the event flyer in the mail. COL (R) La Fate commented that next year hard copy mailing may be cost restricted. 44K was spent this year for printing of flyers. Next year's solution may be the utilization of Eventbrite and e-mails sent early and often. LTC Cuthbertson, Hunter Army Airfield Garrison Cdr, suggested utilizing local Veterans Councils to distribute flyers and information in order to cut costs. It was agreed that the way we will do distribution in the future will need to be different than the past and we need to develop a plan to get to the new way of doing this efficiently and cost effectively.

(2) CSM (R) Ashmen asked if we could send out a "test message" to test the reliability of phone numbers and e-mails on record. CSM (R) Balch suggested sending a "Save the date" message to the test contact numbers as soon as the date is finalized.

(3) LTC Cuthbertson asked if we messaged Veterans in addition to Retired Soldiers. He indicated that there are a lot of Veterans in the Veterans Councils and we could work to expand target audience. A discussion ensued regarding whether the RAD was for all Veterans and not just Retired Soldiers. It was noted that the RAD is open to Veterans from all branches of service.

(4) At the next Council meeting all Council members should report on outreach initiatives in their respective communities.

b. RAD Facilities

(1) CSM (R) Ashmen commented that the bleacher seats for Retired Soldier attendees was not the most desirable set up.

(2) COL (R) Milton indicated that a number of entrances were closed which caused confusion.

(3) Signs at the entrances indicated "No liquids allowed" but we served coffee and water inside.

(4) Attendees had the completed registration form on their phones but Council members had no tools to scan them.

(5) CSM (R) Bobb said that when we did the RAD in Florida we had "clickers" to count the number of attendees. This would be helpful in the future.

(6) LTC Cuthbertson said there was a need for better signage on the installation directing attendees to the event and parking.

AMIM-SHH

SUBJECT: Retiree Appreciation Day (RAD) After Action Report/Meeting Minutes

c. Vendors and execution of RAD

(1) Vendors need to cover the tables and refrain from interacting with attendees until after the speakers are completed. It was commented that many of the attendees come for the vendors and the “goodies” offered not for long speeches.

(2) It was discussed that a video of the speakers sent out before and after the RAD would be helpful in shortening the actual on-site briefings.

(3) COL (R) Milton suggested static displays of military equipment and a “meet Your Army” type of event would be of interest and would make the attendees feel appreciated and engaged.

(4) CSM (R) Bobb suggested a re-enlistment ceremony incorporating the Retired Soldiers similar to events at Fort Drum would be good for the future to provide more interaction in addition to static event.

(5) COL (R) Milton suggested the 3<sup>rd</sup> ID band provide a closing musical event. CSM (R) Bobb suggested the band play the medley from each branch of service.

d. Social: American Legion facility was an excellent location.

e. General

(1) CSM (R) Ashmen asked if the comment card comments could be shared with Council members.

(2) LTC (R) Bell mentioned that the recycling and trash bins were not accessible and not clearly marked.

(3) Comment cards shouldn't be dated which will allow for future usage at other events-- cost saving. We plan to reuse the pre-dated cards by taping 2024 over the 2023 date.

(4) All Council members agreed that the refreshments were less than expected for the price paid. AUSA donated \$900 but the only refreshments provided were coffee, tap water, and sweet/unsweetened tea.

(5) It was suggested that installation maps be inserted into the programs next year to include post facilities. It would also be helpful to have a layout of the vendor display area.

(6) Soldier support was good. We need to recognize these Soldiers at the next RAD.

AMIM-SHH

SUBJECT: Retiree Appreciation Day (RAD) After Action Report/Meeting Minutes

(7) Speakers: Too many and too long. It was suggested that the Council pick a theme and then pick the speakers appropriately. Use the “test message” to ask for popular theme topics. It was discussed that only the main guest speaker speak to the entire group then there are break out groups so the attendees can listen to the speakers they are interested in. Speakers should be publicly thanked for their time and involvement and presented with a token of appreciation.

4. MPD Chief Guidance. Mr. Southerland said the Council charter will be due for update in May 2024. He also provided the Council members guidance on Retired Soldier Council meetings and RADs. The Council is required to conduct semi-annual meetings, usually conducted after the RAD events. The Council briefs the Garrison leadership team in the spring. The Council and the Garrison staff need to take a hard look at how we fund future events. This is related to the imminent decisions regarding location and dates of future RADs. A location and date need to be firmed immediately for the Feb/Mar 2024 time frame. Mr. Southerland said he would reach out to Naval Air Station Jacksonville. COL (R) Lauricella and CSM (R) Bobb are working a potential location in the Orlando area.

5. Co-Chairpersons COL (R) La Fate and CSM (R) Bobb discussed the importance of issues sent through the Garrison Commander and IMCOM to the CSA Council. It was discussed that a review of the history of issues submitted might help the Council members to determine which issues are still relevant and need to be re-addressed.

6. Potential issues for CSA submission were briefly discussed. It was also commented that in the future the Co-Chairpersons share the Issues in Development slide with all committee members not just the Committee Chairs. Below is a list of potential issue topics:

- a. RAD Sponsorship
- b. Recruiting
- c. SFL Window Stickers and Florida SFL license tags
- d. Survivor Benefit Plan End of Year (EOY) taxes
- e. Recruiting Education System have no visibility with the Army Transcript System
- f. Federal Long Term Health Insurance Plan. Re-work this issue submitted in 2023

7. At the conclusion of the official meeting, sub-committees worked on their potential issue papers.

**D Bobb**  
DIVINA BOBB  
Command Sergeant Major  
U.S. Army, Retired  
Co-Chairperson

**Kinard J. La Fate**  
KINARD J. LA FATE  
Colonel  
U.S. Army, Retired  
Co-Chairperson