



86th Airlift Wing Ramstein Air Base



Retirees Activities Office

WINTER 2022 NEWSLETTER

SERVING RETIREES IN AND AROUND THE KASIELSLAUTERN MILITARY COMMUNITY



From the 86 Mission Support Commander

Winter 2022

Open Letter to the Retiree Community

As the clocks turned back, and the night comes earlier each day – I am reminded of why I love winter so much. Of course, there are holiday decorations, gift giving and Christmas Markets, but more than that it's the warm light that spills onto the streets from homes, shops, and restaurants across our communities. The light shines so brightly – offering physical respite from the cold and dark – but also a knowing that there's a hearty handshake, warm meal, or friendly chat to be had inside. I always find an intense yearning to be inside that warmth, comforted by community. And when I think of our base, the installation, and the men and women who support our mission, I see and feel that same sense of community – standing ready to welcome, nourish and always support you.

I know all those that were able to attend the Retiree Affairs Day in October know what I'm talking about – as we broke bread together, told stories, old jokes, cut

cake and shared the day together. And with that, I wanted to highlight a few of our on-going 'warm light' spaces that are always open to our Retiree Community.

- We've re-opened the Rheinland Inn Dining Facility after a 2-year renovation and are happy to welcome you through those doors. Hours are Mon-Fri from 0600-0800 for breakfast, 1100-1300 for lunch, 1630-1900 for dinner. We're also open on Sat/Sun/Holidays/Family Days from 0800-1300 for brunch and 1630-1900 for dinner.
- The Woodlawn Golf Course is under *New Management* and we're excited to keep the ball rolling through the winter months. Please swing by play a few rounds, hit some balls at the range, or have a great meal at the Woodlawn Grill.
- In August, we opened a new restaurant in the KMCC – it's called HEROES – and pays homage to many of the giants that have paved the way for our great AF and Team Ramstein (that means you!!) All the great BBQ from The Flying Pig has moved from the Community Center over to HEROES, and we would love to host you, your family and friends for wings, burgers, beer, and BBQ! Hours are Tues-Sat 1100-2200.

Another aspect of the warmth we all yearn for, is someone answering the line when we call. Shameless plug here, but your very own RAO could use some support in manning the desk as a small number of volunteers continue to answer e-mails and provide that 1v1 counseling we all need. I strongly urge you to be a part of the light and consider serving as the RAO director or an RAO volunteer. With a few more volunteers, we may be able to keep RAO doors open 5-days-a-week.

Finally, on behalf of Brig Gen Otis C. Jones, Command Chief Charmaine Kelley, and Airmen across the Global Gateway, we remain honored to serve alongside our most important ambassadors... YOU! Every retiree, spouse, and surviving spouse plays a critical role in making the KMC the model for our U.S.-German partnership. Thank you for your continued service and Happy Holidays to you and yours ~



AMY M. GLISSON, Col, USAF
Commander

Retiring or Resigning from a SOFA protected job -Staying in Germany What to do?

Here are your options when retiring in Germany. If you intend to stay in Germany for 90 days or less past the date your SOFA status expires, you must either:

1) depart the *Schengen area on or prior to the day their SOFA status expires and travel to a non-Schengen country (i.e., UK) before officially re-entering the Schengen area as a tourist to start the 90-day short-term stay under the visa waiver program. The entry stamp marks your official entry for the 90-day tourist stay.

2) obtain a 90-day tourist residence permit (Aufenthaltstitel) at the local Ausländerbehörde prior to the expiration of your SOFA status. This is permissible per the *Allgemeine Verwaltungsvorschrift zum Aufenthaltsgesetz*, §6.1.8.2. and you can travel throughout the Schengen area during those 90 days.

3) obtain a Grenzübertrittsbescheinigung (border crossing certificate) from the Ausländerbehörde if you are departing Germany shortly after

the SOFA status ends and you have a confirmed departure date.

(Author: Jim Barrante ----- 86 AW/RAO - source from Chief, Customer Support, 786th Force Support Squadron)



Note:

* **Schengen Area** signifies a zone where now 27 European countries, abolished their internal borders, for the free and unrestricted movement of people, in harmony with common rules for controlling external borders and fighting criminality by strengthening the common judicial system and police cooperation.

Schengen Area covers most of [the EU countries](#), except Ireland and the countries that are soon to be part of the Schengen Area: Romania, Bulgaria, and Cyprus. Although not members of the EU, countries like Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and Lichtenstein are also part of the Schengen zone.

Space Force or United States Space Force (USSF)



The United States Space Force is a separate and distinct branch of the armed

services, organized under the Department of the Air Force in a manner very similar to how the Marine Corps is organized under the Department of the Navy. As a new military service, the U.S. Space Force will leverage the Department of the Air Force for more than 75 percent of its enabling functions to significantly reduce cost and avoid duplication. The Department of the Air Force will provide support functions that includes logistics, base operating support, IT support, audit agencies, etc.



Look around and take note of new stripes and uniforms worn by our Guardians.

Their motto is:

SEMPER SUPRA—ALWAYS ABOVE

(Author: Jim Barrante –86 AW/RAO from the internet)

Do You Know When Your ID Card Expires

If you possess the older Legacy Teslin card, they eventually will be replaced with new USID cards when they expire and INDEF cards can be renewed any time but NLT 2026 when all Teslin cards will be phased out.



You may schedule an appointment about 30 days from the expiration date via the Appointment Plus link at:

Appointments Plus (A+)

<https://booknow.appointment-plus.com/y7jgzct0/appointments>

Volunteers still needed:

The Commander is still looking for a dynamic retired NCO or officer to run things in the RAO. The position of Director is a Volunteer position and has been vacant since 1 July. Add to that the office also needs additional volunteers to better serve the community. To learn more about the duties required of these staff members go to AFI 36-3106 or talk to someone in the RAO at 06371-47-5486. The RAO is located in Building 2118, Room 2138 and is currently open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10:00 to 12:00 and from 13:00 to 15:00. Stop by and check us out, If interested in finding out more via e-mail or if you desire to become the RAO Director send a short resume to 86aw.rao@us.af.mil (Author: Jim Barrante – 86AW/RAO)



Getting to Know Your

Community: Our long-lasting and valued German-American friendship in Rheinland-Pfalz is decidedly shaped by the countless personal interactions between U.S. service members and locals in the everyday life of communities close to military installations. Here, U.S. families and the local population have the opportunity to encounter each other and learn from each other on a daily basis.

To this end, it is essential to point out how U.S. families can connect with locals, embrace their community of residence, and make it a home away from home! If you go to this website you can find a world of information about your community and for that matter other participating communities in Rheinland-Pfalz

<https://www.welcome-to-rlp.org/project-communities/>

For example, here is

Thank you for your service.
Gen. Jimmy Doolittle, once said:
"There's nothing stronger than the heart of a volunteer."

WELCOME TO RAMSTEIN- MIESENBACH

The community of Ramstein-Miesenbach is delighted to welcome you and your family in our very active town with plenty of opportunities to enjoy your stay. No matter if you live here permanently or just temporarily, you are cordially invited to become a part of our community. Make contacts and friends in your new neighbourhood and partake in the various offers of our community, associations, clubs and groups. Ramstein-Miesenbach offers something for everyone and depending on your personal preferences and interests, you will find the right place for yourself and your family.

We want you to be comfortable here and for an easy start in your new community, we will provide you with useful information about our local offers. Come and discover yourself – you are very welcome!

Mayor Ralf Hechler

(Author: Jim Barrante –
86AW/RAO --Source Welcome to
Rhineland Pfalz website)



Stay connected with USAF Connect!

The Air Force Retiree Services and Airman & Family Readiness Division websites are now featured sites on AF Connect, the Air Force's Total Force mobile app. On the USAF Connect home screen, just click on "Featured Sites" and you will find listings for Air Force Retiree Services and Airman & Family Readiness. The USAF Connect app is available for both iPhones and Androids and lets you stay in touch and up-to-date with the United States Air Force.



www.retirees.af.mil from AF
Afterburner

Note: from the Garrison
December Newsletter there is a
most interesting article

Subject: Advice on Successful
Repatriation of Cremated Remains
Following Death

Check it out.

TRICARE Prices Have Increased for 2023



Military families and Retirees will pay more for Tricare in 2023. The increases for many using Tricare Prime and Tricare Select will mainly be to their annual enrollment fees and deductibles, with smaller increases coming for co-payments for medical services. Note that there are no enrollment fees for active duty families, but Retirees will see an increase in 2023. Many of the Tricare cost changes depend on which "Tricare group" a military member is in. One's group is determined by when they first entered the military. Group A consists of those who entered service before Jan. 1, 2018, while Group B covers those who entered after that date.

Group A Retirees enrolled in Tricare Select will see their annual enrollment fees increase from \$317 to \$345 for a family, and from \$158 to \$171.96 for an individual. Group A retirees using Tricare Prime will see the enrollment fees for a family plan increase from \$647 to \$703.92, while the single plan goes from \$323 to \$351.96 annually.

Retirees in Tricare Group B will also see larger increases. Deductibles will also increase in 2023. A deductible is the amount those using Tricare Select must pay out-of-pocket before Tricare makes any payments.

Group A active-duty family members and Retirees will see no changes to the deductible amount. But a military member with the rank of E-4 or below in Group B will see their family deductible increase from \$112 to \$121; families with sponsors E-5 and above in Group B will see their deductible rise from \$336 to \$365.

Most co-payments also will go up slightly in 2023. Tricare Select users with a family in Group A will see the cost of a primary care visit increase from \$24 to \$25. The primary care copay for Group B family members will rise from \$16 to \$18.

Retirees using Tricare Select will see a primary care visit go from \$24 to \$34, while those using Tricare Prime will pay \$24 on 2023, up from the current \$22.

The catastrophic cap is your maximum out-of-pocket cost for all health care provided each year; it limits your liability if a member of your family has a serious illness or injury. Once you have paid this much in co-payments or pharmacy charges during the year, the rest will be paid in full by Tricare.

This cap will also increase in 2023. Group A Retirees using Tricare Select will see it increase from \$3,706 to \$4,028. The cap for active-duty members in Group A who have Tricare Prime will remain the same -- \$3,000 annually, those in Group B will see it increase from \$3,921 to \$4,262. For more details go to:

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/11/12/some-tricare-users-will-see-small-price-increase-2022.html>

It gives a breakdown of all the new enrollment fees and co-payments, plus details about Tricare Prime and Tricare Select coverage.

(Author Jim Barrante 86AW/RAO
—Source reprint permitted from
Chuck Seland-Darmstadt)

TIDBIT

In 1951 the Americans started to build Sembach Air Base; it was finished in 1953 and the last planes were flown from there in 1995 when the airstrip and hangars were returned to the German government. The area called Heuberg (administrative and housing area) remained under control of the Air Force and the base was renamed Sembach Annex. Then in 2010 the US Army took over control and it was re-named Sembach Kaserne. One facility at Sembach that moved from Coleman Barracks (Mannheim) in 2010 was the United States Army Correctional Facility”.

Tax Forms

If you did not get a copy of the revised IRS Forms 8833's dated December 2022, give us a call. A volunteer in the RAO will forward the templates to you

DD Form 214

A very important document. If you cannot find yours, get help now and order a replacement .

Foreign Medical Program:

The Veterans Administration (VA) provides medical services to eligible Veterans living or traveling abroad through the Foreign Medical Program (FMP). Through this program, FMP will pay for health care services, medications, and durable medical equipment for service-connected and related and aggravating disorders. VA may permit foreign medical care for any ailment if you are enrolled in the VA Vocational Rehabilitation Program (Title 38, U.S. Code, Chapter 31).



Enrolling in FMP is simple. Fill out the FMP Registration Form (VA Form 10-7959f-1) and send to VHA Office of Integrated Veteran Care. (Fillable PDFs can be completed online, saved and printed.)

You may also send your full name, mailing address, address of residence

(including country), and VA claim number to the VHA Office of Integrated Veteran Care.

To enroll in FMP, mail your information to:

VHA Office of Integrated Veteran Care
Foreign Medical Program (FMP)
P.O. Box 469061
Denver, CO 80246-9061

The VA will confirm your service-connected disabilities and send you a benefits authorization letter, which outlines the medical conditions the VA will cover.

For more information about the program, you can call toll-free number listed below.

Foreign Medical Program Office:
1-877-345-8179.

The VA also has a YouTube video that outlines the Foreign Medical Program; to learn more about it go here.

<https://youtu.be/eY6zyRRhk8E>

(Author: Frances Gerald,
86AW/RAO- Source Internet)

Those German Tax Laws The two areas of the tax law that require your attention are **income tax and inheritance**.

Income Tax for this past year 2022 is a task we all have to take care for every new year with a deadline usually 15 April for filing with the IRS. If you have to abide by the German-American bi-lateral tax treaty then you will have to follow the German guidance on when and where to file. Be aware that the new IRS Forms 8833 have been revised and you should use the latest ones dated Dec 2022.



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The other taxes everyone will face some day are **inheritance taxes**. That was discussed in the Autumn Edition on an article reprinted from the Darmstadt Newsletter. Look for more detailed information in the “Legal Informer Newsletter” in the Spring since they will also discuss inheritance. (Author: Jim Barrante-86 RAO-sources: IRS Internet, and partial reprint from Darmstadt July Newsletter)

CLEVELAND -- As

of June 1, 2022

DFAS has new

local phone

numbers. Please

make a note of the changes

below: The local phone number

to reach Retired & Annuitant Pay

Customer Service has changed.

The new number is 317-212-0551.

The 216-522-5955 local phone

number will NOT be available to

use after July 1, 2022.

The DSN number to reach

Retired & Annuitant Pay Customer

Service also changed. The new

DSN number is 699-0551.

This change does NOT affect the

toll-free number (1-800-321-1080)

or the fax numbers. The toll-free

number and the fax numbers for

Retired & Annuitant Pay remain

the same. (Courtesy of DFAS)

(taken from the Air Force

Afterburner)



[RAO 86 AW Home Pages](#)

The Wing Public Affairs Office maintains a link to the Ramstein Retiree Activities Office (RAO) <https://www.ramstein.af.mil/PCS-Info/Newcomers-Info/> -- go down the pages to Useful Links and click on

<https://www.ramstein.af.mil/Contact/Retiree-Activities-Program/>

You will find our briefings (both under revision) and eventually all of our Fact Sheets

We are trying our best to maintain this INFO up-to-date to service our retiree community here in the KMC. Any of you that would like to contribute some time to help us in our efforts, you are more than welcome to join us. Remember what you are looking at can be viewed around the globe. Thanks to the PAO-Ramstein Team in helping us maintain these pages

Feedback. We need to hear from you about what we can do better. What is missing from our Newsletter? Are you receiving information overkill? That could be since many of our articles and what we disseminate to you via e-mail comes from other agencies such as DFAS, TRICARE, VA, SSA, VFW, Military news sources such as the Office of Personnel Management.

on what you would like to see in our Newsletters. Thank you.

So, if you are subscribed to different agencies and receive their e-mails like from DFAS—YES you might see a repeat article sent via e-mail and or again appearing in our Newsletter.



Tell us what we should do to make things better:

should we

eliminate dissemination of articles thinking you have seen them or do we double you up?

Please let us know by sending an e-mail to 86aw.rao@us.af.mil

Subject: Feedback

German Reporting American NEWS



["Tüchter's 51 States", the USA newsletter of RHEINPFALZ](#) , will be published this Wednesday for the 20th time. Launched in January, the email, which is sent every 14 days, now reaches subscribers in all 16 federal states and numerous US states - on both coasts and also in the Midwest of the USA.

The digital RHEINPFALZ offer is also used in other European countries such as Great Britain and France - and recently even in China. This is shown by reader market analyses.

Why the name "Tüchter's 51 States"? The author of the newsletter is RHEINPFALZ editor Ilja Tüchter. The 50-year-old journalist, who has been reporting on American topics for more than two decades, writes about the fifty states of the USA and America's role in Rhineland-Palatinate.

More than 50,000 Americans live there - the German region with US military bases like Ramstein Air Base is something like a 51st state in the USA.

The newsletter is based on current events, but always keeps an eye on the long lines of a story. How is the US troop presence in Europe developing? Why do millions of US students take the oath of flag every day and what can Germans learn from it?

The 20th issue is about the anniversary of the attacks of September 11, 2001 and the domestic political agenda of the Biden government. [Register now and read "Tüchter's 51 States" every 14 days on Wednesdays in the late afternoon.](#)

The newsletter is sent out in both German and English. Be part of the RHEINPFALZ America community! The receipt of the newsletter is free of charge, you do not need a subscription to RHEINPFALZ to read it. Please spread the word: You can still [subscribe to this newsletter](#) for free!

(Author: Jim Barrante-86 RAO-source: Internet)

American Kindergraves

From 1952 to 1971, 451 American infants who died at birth or shortly after birth at the American military hospital at Landstuhl or at nearby civilian hospitals, were buried in the Kaiserslautern main cemetery

cooperation with the Kaiserslautern Military Community and Kaiserslautern city officials. Floral wreaths are placed at the front monument and a candle lighting ceremony takes place in memory of the children. A flower and an American flag are placed



(Waldfriedhof) adjacent to the U.S. Army Daenner Kaserne.

The Ramstein Area Chief's Group (US Air Force E-9's) assumed this role. The cemetery management agreed to move the gravesites to a new area in the heart of the cemetery and drafted a new lease. The Ramstein Area Chief's Group serves as the entrusted agent for the lease.

Each spring following Mother's Day, a memorial ceremony is sponsored by the KKMf in

at each grave marker. The Air Force Jr. ROTC Color Guard leads the procession to the gravesite. The KKMf receives no funding from the US government. The upkeep of the Kindergraves is possible through the generous monetary donations of the local community. The Ramstein Area Chief's Group designate organizes volunteers to accomplish year-round maintenance (grass cutting, edging, trimming, stone cleaning). (Author: Jim Barrante, 86AW/RAO-source RheinPfalz Newspaper)



All weather-related delays, school closures and road conditions will be available on the USAF Connect app and Ramstein Facebook Page at <https://www.facebook.com/RamsteinOfficial/>. Note that the road conditions for Ramstein/Vogelweh refer to on-base; however, off-base conditions are considered when determining delays/closures. The 86 AW, in coordination w/the U.S. Army Garrison and DoDEA, will make every effort to determine/announce weather delays/closures the evening prior to a work day.

Attached is the USAF Connect QR code for ease of download, and the road condition graphic is at <https://www.dvidshub.net/graphic/22950/road-conditions-graphic>.



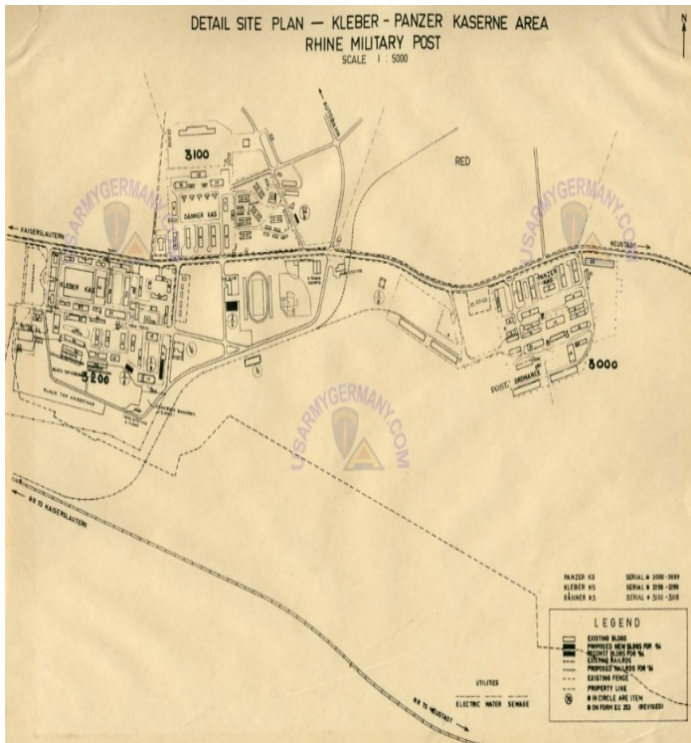
Here is some more Trivia from around the KMC

The castle barracks is one of the oldest barracks. The building was part of the "Central Prison", which was shut down in 1907 and which in turn stood on part of the former Casimir Palace. The building was used as barracks during World War I. It was used as the city's administration building from the 1950s until it was demolished for the construction of the town hall. The Daenner barracks was built in 1937. It is named after Lieutenant General Rudolf Daenner, who commanded during World War I. Here is an old map:

The barracks were taken over by the Americans in 1951. Over the past 50- years it has been home to several different agencies.

(Author: Jim Barrante, 86 AW/RAO -source internet)

More Trivia in the SPRING Until then stay healthy!



WINTER ROAD CONDITIONS



All weather-related delays, school closures and road conditions will be available on the USAF Connect app and Ramstein Facebook Page at <https://www.facebook.com/RamsteinOfficial/>

Note that the road conditions for Ramstein/Vogelweh refer to on-base; however, off-base

conditions are considered when determining delays/closures. The 86 AW, in coordination w/the U.S. Army Garrison and DoDEA, will make every effort to determine/announce weather delays/closures the evening prior to a work day.

The link below depicts the road condition graphic used at the USAF Connect QR code (for ease of download) and the road condition graphic is at <https://www.dvidshub.net/graphic/22950/road-conditions-graphic>.

Following is an extract from Erik Thomsen's December Newsletter

WANTED: The KMC Retiree Council is looking for a new venue in which to hold their meetings. If anyone knows of a good place that can hold 50 or more people, please reach out to LTC (RET) Benjamin Strange at

benjaminlstrange@yahoo.com or myself at erik.c.thomsen2.civ@army.mil
Commercial: 06111-43541- 1021.
We thank you

The RAO Newsletter is published by the RAO staff at Ramstein Air Base for all military Retirees and their families in and around the greater Kaiserslautern Military Community. All information was accurate at the date of publication and is subject to change without notice. If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please send your e-mail address to: 86aw.rao@us.af.mil

We in turn will send you a membership form so we can add you to the data base and our group contacts of some 1400 readers.

Contact: The RAO is in Building 2118, Room 138. Our business hours are Tuesday – Thursday from 1000 – 1500 hours. Our Phone Number is 06371-47-5486, DSN 480-5486.

E-Mail Address is: 86aw.rao@us.af.mil, we are also on Facebook at [Ramstein RAO](#)



NOTICE:

This quarterly Newsletter will be the first time where you might see a printed copy of the Newsletter at the Commissary or the Mailroom. If you received your copy via e-mail GREAT!

These copies on the newsstands are meant for those more senior than me retirees or surviving spouses that do not have or know how to download a file attached to an e-mail or do not even own a computer. If you are not receiving e-mails from the RAO on a regular basis then you need to sign up and get added to our Contacts list.

The RAO Team at Ramstein, Denise, Fran, Vesta, Bob and Jim—each and every one of us wish you all a peaceful blessed Christmas time with family and friends and a **Happy New Year** 2023 –Stay Healthy, keep informed and keep in touch.

