

Personnel Hilites

Spring Edition/2003

Published by the Personnel and Security Directorate

Inside...

Eagle Eyes	3
Annual Notification of "Weingarten" Rights	4
Federal Civilian Employees Who Are Members of the National Guard or Reserves	5
The ICE Age Cometh	6
Flexible Spending Accounts	7
10 th Annual Interagency Holocaust Program	8
Performance Appraisals Are Due! ..	9
TSP Open Season	11
2002 WHS/PFPA CFC Victory Celebration	12
DoD 2002 CFC Awards Ceremony	14
RESUMIX	16
Did You Know That?	17

HOW TO ACCESS

Personnel Hilites is a quarterly publication. It's available online at <http://persec.whs.mil/hilites>

SUBMISSIONS

The deadline for submitting articles for the summer edition of Personnel Hilites is June 13, 2003.

INFORMATION

The editor, Rita Rutsohn, can be reached at rutsor@psd.whs.mil or at 703/617-7916. The newsletter's layout and production is done by E.S. Illustration & Design, Inc., Arlington, VA 22204, 703/486-3885 or at es301b@aol.com.

Are You Prepared for an Emergency?

The current world environment serves as a reminder of the importance and necessity of collective and individual preparedness. Organizations have developed emergency plans, and employees at the Pentagon have been issued Escape Masks. Masks will be distributed to those working at other National Capital Region (NCR) locations in the near future.

Although there is no specific threat to any of our facilities, prudent planning and preparation is the appropriate response during periods of uncertainty. Specific questions should be directed to your supervisor, or send an email to the Pentagon Force Protection Agency at pfpa@pfpa.mil.

Among the many websites available for emergency planning and preparedness, the list of sites on the next page may provide useful information in helping you plan for your individual, family, and workplace well-being,



Continued on page 2

Due Now!

Public Financial Disclosure Reports

This is a reminder that the annual public financial disclosure report (SF 278) is due now and will be accepted until May 15, 2003. Personnel who are required to file the SF 278 include SES, PAS, Flag and General Officers, and Schedule C appointees. If you're unable to submit your report on time, you may request an extension. To receive an extension, you must request one before May 15, 2003. If you file your SF 278 more than 30 days after May 15, or the extended due date, a \$200.00 late filing fee will be incurred, as required by law. The SF 278 is available at the Standards of Conduct website at http://www.defenselink.mil/dodgc/defense_ethics under the *Ethics Resource Library* under *Forms*.

WHS personnel should mail or deliver their reports to the WHS/OGC, Room 1D197, ATTN: Bonnie Hellmund, 1155 Defense Pentagon, Washington, DC 20301-1155. To request an extension, call 703/ 693-7374, or send an email to hellmunb@dodgc.osd.mil.

All other OSD personnel should mail or deliver their reports to the DoD General Counsel, SOCO, Room 3D941, ATTN: Johannah Eubanks, 1600 Defense Pentagon, Washington DC 20301-1600. To request an extension, call 703/697-9309, or send an email to eubanksj@dodgc.osd.mil.

Continued from page 1

in the unlikely event of an emergency—

- Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Emergency Preparedness Guides for Managers, Employees and Families:
<http://www.opm.gov/emergency/index.asp#employee>
- Department of Homeland Security (DHS), READY.gov brochure:
<http://www.ready.gov/>
- DHS Travel and Transportation:
http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/theme_home3.jsp
- Guide to Citizen Preparedness: <http://www.citizencorps.gov/>
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Library:
<http://www.fema.gov/library/> and <http://www.fema.gov/areyouready/>
- Department of State Travel Advisories: <http://travel.state.gov>
- District of Columbia District Response Plan:
http://dcema.dc.gov/info/drp_launch.shtm
- District of Columbia Emergency Preparedness:
<http://www.dc.gov/citizen/preparedness/index.shtm>
- Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Regional Emergency Coordination Plan:
<http://www.mwcog.org/publications/publications/ic/22803.html>
- Washington DC Emergency Management Agency:
<http://dcema.dc.gov/main.shtm>
- Virginia Department of Emergency Management:
<http://www.vdes.state.va.us/>
- Maryland Emergency Management Agency:
<http://www.mema.state.md.us/>
- American Red Cross: <http://www.redcrossdc.org/>
- American Psychological Association, Tips for Dealing with Stress:
<http://helping.apa.org/resilience/war.html>
- Chemical, Biological, Radiation and Nuclear (CBRN/PFPA) Information and Training: <http://www.dtic.mil/ref/biochem/home.htm>



The Pentagon Force Protection Agency (PFPA) is the primary source of information in the Pentagon on security, emergency procedures, and related issues. PFPA has been distributing to DoD employees a variety of security brochures, pamphlets, and one-page Security Advisory flyers. If you would like to receive any of these materials or have security questions that you'd like to have answered, please send an email to pfpa@pfpa.mil.



Update

David O. Cooke Scholarship Fund

The Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund (FEEA) is pleased to announce that the David O. "Doc" and Marion M. Cooke Scholarship Fund will award \$1,500 in scholarships for the 2003-04 school year. Winners will be chosen from FEEA's general applicant pool, based on criteria specified by the Cooke Family. Doc's children will participate in choosing this year's winners. FEEA and the Cooke Family hope that continued donations to the fund will increase the endowment and the amount available annually for scholarships.

To participate in the Cooke Scholarship Fund, write to FEEA COOKE MEMORIAL FUND, 8441 W. Bowles Avenue, Suite 200, Littleton, CO 80123-9501, or call 303-933-7580 or 1-800-338-0755. For more information about FEEA, go to www.feea.org.

“

Don't let life slip through your fingers by living in the past nor for the future. By living your life one day at a time, you live all the days of your life.

—Anonymous

”

Eagle Eyes

*The National Capital Region's Neighborhood Watch for DoD**



Countering terrorism requires your help. Only you know who or what belongs - or doesn't belong - in your building, neighborhood, or work center. The simple act of recognizing suspicious behavior and reporting it to authorities could thwart terrorist acts and save lives. Please help by being alert for and reporting any of the following:

- **Surveillance:** Someone recording or monitoring activities. This may include the use of cameras (either still or video), note taking, drawing diagrams, annotating on maps, or using binoculars or other vision-enhancing devices.
- **Elicitation:** People or organizations attempting to gain information about military operations, capabilities, or people. Elicitation attempts may be made by mail, fax, telephone, or in person.
- **Tests of security:** Any attempt to measure reaction times to security breaches or to penetrate physical security barriers or procedures in order to assess strengths and weaknesses.
- **Acquiring supplies:** Purchasing or stealing explosives, weapons, ammunition, etc. Also includes acquiring military uniforms, decals, flight manuals, passes or badges (or the equipment to manufacture such items) or any other controlled items.
- **Suspicious persons out of place:** People who don't seem to belong in the workplace, neighborhood, business establishment, or anywhere else. Includes suspicious border crossings and stowaways aboard ship or people jumping ship in port.
- **Dry run:** Putting people into position and moving them around according to their plan without actually committing the terrorist act. This is especially true when planning a kidnapping, but it can also pertain to bombings. An element of this activity could also include mapping out routes and determining the timing of traffic lights and flow.
- **Deploying assets:** People and supplies getting into position to commit the act. This is a person's last chance to alert authorities before the terrorist act occurs.

** An Air Force Office of Special Investigations created and managed program.*

***Pentagon Force Protection Agency
Pentagon Police Department***

Communications: (703) 697-1001
Emergency Line: (703) 697-5555

Annual Notification of “Weingarten” Rights

For employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement, there’s an annual requirement to notify these employees of their right to request “union representation” in connection with an investigation that an employee reasonably believes could result in disciplinary action. This provision, based on a Supreme Court decision, is often referred to as employees’ “Weingarten” rights.

The Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute establishes three conditions that must be met for a meeting to be considered a “Weingarten” meeting—

- ◆ One or more agency representatives are examining (questioning) a bargaining unit employee in connection with an investigation;
- ◆ The employee reasonably believes that the examination may result in disciplinary action against him/her; and
- ◆ The employee requests union representation.

Once all three conditions have been met, supervisors may not generally continue with the examination without allowing the employee his/her requested representation.

Specifically, the supervisor’s options under these circumstances are:

- ◆ Grant the request and notify the union that a meeting to examine a bargaining unit employee is going

to take place and the employee has requested union representation. If union representation attends the meeting, it must be allowed to make relevant comments, but it can neither disrupt the meeting nor answer questions posed to the employee;

- ◆ Discontinue the interview and rely on evidence already available or information obtained from other sources; or
- ◆ Offer the employee a clear choice to either continue the interview without representation or have no interview.

There is an obligation to annually notify bargaining unit employees of their “Weingarten” rights; however, management is not required to inform employees of their rights each time before questioning them. “Weingarten” rights aren’t applicable when management issues a disciplinary action since management isn’t asking any questions in conjunction with an investigation. Additionally, “Weingarten” rights don’t apply to performance counseling because performance issues generally don’t involve disciplinary matters.

If you have any questions concerning “Weingarten” rights or other labor relations issues, contact the WHS/Personnel and Security Directorate, Labor Management and Employee Relations Division at 703 588-0421.



DTRA Presents Director’s Award to P&SD Benefits Specialist

In a ceremony at the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) Headquarters, on Tuesday, January 28, 2003, Dr. Stephen Younger, agency Director, presented Sylvia Smith with the Director’s Award for Outstanding Service. Ms. Smith is a Benefits Specialist with the WHS/Personnel and Security Directorate, Personnel Services Division. This award is bestowed upon non-DTRA federal employees to recognize significant contributions made to the agency’s mission.

As the designated Benefits Specialist from December 2000 to October 2002, Ms. Smith was responsible for assisting DTRA civilian employees with their benefits counseling to include retirement, health benefits, life insurance, and the Thrift Savings Plan. She was a critical member of the DTRA team.

“Life is not a race, but a journey to be savored each step of the way.”

—Author Unknown

Supervisor's CORNER

FAQ: About Federal Civilian Employees Who Are Members of the National Guard or Reserves

The Labor Management and Employee Relations Division (LMER) of the WHS/Personnel and Security Directorate has received a number of inquiries concerning Federal employees who have been called to active duty as a member of the National Guard or Reserves. The information provided below summarizes LMER responses to the most *Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)* regarding Federal civilian employees who provide uniformed military service.

Eligible employees are entitled to request a limited number of paid military leave days each year for active duty, active duty training, and inactive duty training. Employees, who perform active duty, active duty training, and inactive duty training, may request paid military leave, as specified in 5 U.S.C. 6323(a). Under the law, an eligible full-time employee accrues 15 days (120 hours) of military leave each Fiscal Year (FY). In addition, an employee may carry over up to 15 days (120 hours) of unused military leave from one FY to the next. When the 15 days of military leave that are carried over are combined with the 15 days of military leave accrued at the beginning of the new FY, this produces a maximum military leave benefit of 30 days in a FY. However, since an employee can't carry over more than 15 calendar days to the next FY, any unused military leave in excess of 15 days

is forfeited at the beginning of the next FY. Part-time career employees and employees on an uncommon tour of duty accrue military leave on a prorated basis. Employees who elect to use military leave for the purposes previously stated will receive full compensation from

their civilian position for each hour charged to military leave, in addition to their military pay for the same period.

Employees who perform emergency duty, as ordered by the President or a state governor, for the purpose of providing military aid to assist domestic civilian authorities in enforcing the law or protecting life and property, may be granted an additional 22 days of military leave under 5 U.S.C. 6323(b). Employees who use military leave under 5 U.S.C. 6323(b) will have their civilian pay reduced by the amount of military pay for the days of military leave. An employee may choose not to take military leave, and instead take annual leave in order to retain both civilian and military pay.

Employees who are also members of the D.C. National Guard may be eligible for additional military leave under 5 U.S.C. 6323(c); however, this may be used only for limited



purposes. A Federal civilian employee who is also a member of the D.C. National Guard is entitled to additional military leave to participate in a "parade or encampment." The law provides that this type of duty must be authorized under title 39 of the District of Columbia Code. Generally, this category is limited to drills and training under the Commanding General of the D.C. National Guard and is not appropriate for extended active duty in connection with the current national emergency.

In accordance with 5 CFR 353.203(d) Mobilization authority, members of the Selected Reserve (a component of the Ready Reserve), can be called up under a Presidential Order for purposes other than training, for as long as 270 days. If the President declares a national emergency, the remainder of the Ready Reserve—the Individual Ready

Continued on page 6

Continued from page 5

Reserve and the Inactive National Guard—may be called up. The Ready Reserve as a whole is subject to as much as 24 consecutive months of active duty in a national emergency declared by the President.

If a supervisor has an employee who fits one of the categories described above, he/she must take certain action/s to ensure that the employee's personnel records accurately reflect his/her status. In that regard, a supervisor shouldn't process a Request for Personnel Action (RPA) for periods of annual leave and military leave connected to mobilization. Rather, the supervisor must document an employee's use of leave without pay (LWOP) for performance of military duty with the uniformed services by processing a RPA, using nature of action "LWOP-US" (nature of action code 473). The effective date of this type of action is the first day the employee begins to use LWOP for duty with the uniformed services. It's important that the supervisor receive and review the TDY orders to ensure that a correct determination is made regarding an employee's military leave entitlements, since the orders indicate the authority and purpose of the employee being called to active duty.

If you have further questions regarding military leave, call Phyllis Pina at 703/588-0432 or TJ Hobbie at 703/588-0438.



The ICE Age Cometh

In January 2003, the WHS/Personnel and Security Directorate (P&SD) became an active participant in the Interactive Customer Evaluation (ICE) program with hundreds of other Defense agencies, activities, and facilities worldwide. ICE is a web-based customer feedback system that allows customers to give direct and immediate feedback to managers about their services and products.

With just the click of a mouse, the ICE system sends a customer's comment, suggestion, compliment, or complaint to the appropriate P&SD Service Provider. All that's needed is an Internet browser to access the ICE system from any computer, any time, and any place.

ICE can be accessed at <http://ice.disa.mil> or from links on the P&SD web pages. Once you're at the ICE website, *click on* OSD Agencies and Activities. At the next screen, *click on* Personnel and Security Directorate which will take you to the P&SD ICE Welcome screen. At this screen, *click on* Personnel Services to display all the P&SD Service Providers—each linked to a Comment Card and an *Info* button. The *Info* button provides specific information about the Service Provider. *Click on* the Service Provider for which you'd like to submit a Comment Card, and the card will appear. Simply complete it and submit it—it's that easy!

The Comment Card data submitted is confidential and viewed only by the Service Provider getting the feedback. Customers providing comments that require follow up will be contacted within two-working days of submitting a Comment Card as long as a name and telephone number and/or email address is provided. But, you can remain anonymous—it's your choice! P&SD is excited about becoming a partner in ICE, and we want to hear from you.

To reach the P&SD ICE site directly, click on the http://ice.disa.mil/index.cfm?fa=site&site_id=244

Questions about the P&SD ICE program should be directed to either Rita Rutsohn or Arliche Sneed, Site Administrators, Strategic Planning and Business Operations. Ms. Rutsohn can be reached on 703/617-7916 or at rutsor@psd.whs.mil, and Ms. Sneed can be contacted on 703/617-7088 or at sneeda@psd.whs.mil.

“

It is because things are difficult that we do not dare. And, it is because we do not dare that things are difficult.

–Seneca

“

Flexible Spending Accounts

Preliminary Information

Recently, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) announced that during calendar year 2003 it will enhance the Federal Flexible Benefits Plan (FedFlex) to include a second pre-tax benefit called Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs). The initial FedFlex benefit, *Premium Conversion*, was implemented in October 2000.

FedFlex will offer two FSAs

- **A Health Care FSA (HCFSA)**, through which employees can use pre-tax allotments to pay for certain health care expenses that aren't reimbursed by any other source and not claimed on a participant's income tax return. As of this writing, OPM hasn't determined an actual amount an employee may set aside. However, the annual maximum amount will likely be in the range of \$2,000-\$3,000.
- **A Dependent Care FSA (DCFSA)**, through which employees may use pre-tax allotments to pay for eligible dependent care expenses up to a maximum annual reimbursement of \$5,000 (\$2,500 if the employee is married and filing a separate income tax return).

The FSA will be administered through a Third Party Administrator (TPA). OPM awarded this TPA contract to SHPS, Inc. headquartered in Louisville, KY. Claims will be paid through TPA reimbursement. Employees will pay the provider for services first, and then apply to the TPA for reimbursement.

How the FSAs will work

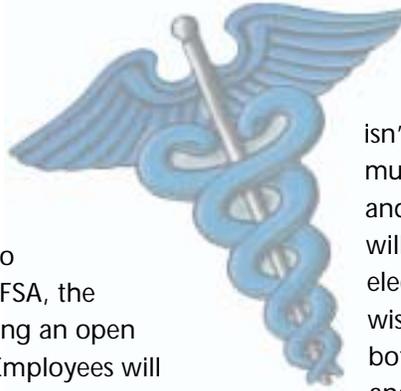
Eligible employees will be able to elect to participate in the HCFSA, the DCFSA, or both, during an open enrollment period. Employees will elect to contribute an amount, up to a maximum, to their FSA/s. Each pay period, the Defense Finance Accounting Service (DFAS) will process as an allotment a fixed portion of the total amount of the employee's contributions. For example, if an employee elects to contribute \$1,040 to the HCFSA and \$520 to the DCFSA and is paid biweekly, DFAS will allot \$40 and \$20, respectively to his/her FSA/s. These allotments will be made before Federal, state, and social security taxes are calculated.

Eligibility

Employees eligible for the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program (even if not currently enrolled) will be able to elect a *healthcare* FSA to cover expenses not covered under their FEHB plan—deductibles, co-insurance, and co-payments—as well as services not generally covered, dental services, eye care, etc. All Federal employees (including employees with temporary, seasonal and intermittent appointments) will be able to elect to participate in the *dependent* care FSA for eligible dependents.

What you should know

Benefit Elections. Unlike *Premium Conversion*, participation in an FSA



isn't automatic. Employees must make an election each and every year. Employees will make two benefit elections—1) whether they wish coverage in one or both of the FedFlex FSAs; and 2) the annual amount they agree to have deducted from their pay during the calendar year for deposit into their FSA account/s. The benefit elections are *irrevocable* once the plan year has begun, unless the employee has a qualifying "life" event.

Use or Lose. Because of the tax advantages of FSAs, the Internal Revenue Service has strict guidelines for its use. One of the guidelines is commonly known as the "use it or lose it" rule. Simply stated, if employees haven't incurred a sufficient number of eligible expenses during the plan year equal to the annual amounts contributed to their FSA/s, they'll lose the balance/s remaining in their account/s when the calendar year ends.

Implementation

At present, OPM hasn't made final policy decisions regarding the full implementation of the FSAs program. The Human Resource Services Center Benefits Office will provide information to employees as it's received from OPM.

For additional information about FSAs, visit OPM's website at www.opm.gov/insure/pretax, or you can link to this site from the HRSC web page, <http://persec.whs.mil/hrsc/benefits.html>.

2002-2003 Performance Appraisal

It's That Time of Year—Performance Appraisals Are Due!

Original copies of completed performance appraisals, recorded on *DD Form 2799*, are due in the WHS Personnel and Security Directorate's Labor and Management Employee Relations (LMER) Division not later than 60 days after the end of the appraisal period. All signatures and dates, including that of the employee and the date the employee became aware of his/her approved rating, must be on the form.



Note: Ratings without signatures (or without annotations from the *Rating Officials* regarding employees' refusal to sign, or their unavailability for signature) will be returned.

The current appraisal period for employees GS-12 and below, and all Federal Wage System employees is April 1, 2002 through March 31, 2003. If a covered employee or his/her *Rating Official* departs after January 1, 2003, the covered employee's appraisal period ends on the departure date, and the annual appraisal is complete as of that date. The appraisal should be completed immediately and forwarded to LMER for processing.

The current appraisal period for GS/GM-13, -14, -15, SL, and ST employees is July 1, 2002 through June 30, 2003. If a covered em-

ployee or their *Rating Official* departs after April 2, 2003, the covered employee's appraisal period ends on the departure date, and the annual appraisal is complete as of that date. The appraisal should be completed immediately and forwarded to LMER for processing.

The minimum appraisal period for employees covered by Administrative Instruction (AI) 63, *Performance Appraisal Program for General Schedule, Federal Wage System, and Certain Other Employees*, is 90 days.

Note: A copy of AI 63 can be obtained by accessing www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/html/ai63.htm. To be rated, an employee must be under standards for at least 90 days as of the end of the appraisal period. Therefore, any employee GS-12 and below, and all Federal Wage System employees who receive standards after January 1, 2003, must have their appraisal period extended to meet the 90-day period to be eligible to receive a rating of record. The annual rating of record must be completed at the end of the extended time period and be submitted for processing, at that time.



Note: LMER will accept **NO ratings** six months after the end of the appraisal period. In addition, a *presumptive rating* (a rating of record that assumes a level of performance by an employee, without an actual evaluation of that employee's performance during the

appraisal period) or a *carryover rating* (a rating of record that is carried over from one appraisal period to the next as the rating of record, without an actual evaluation of the employee's performance during the subsequent appraisal period) cannot be rendered for any purpose and won't be accepted by LMER.



Reoccurring Errors Found on 2001-2002 Performance Appraisals

The common errors enumerated below were found on performance appraisals submitted last year for all levels of employees.

1. Performance **plans** signed after the appraisal period ended or less than 90 days prior to the end of the appraisal period.
2. Performance standards incomplete, non-existent, or too vague to be considered.
3. Employee didn't sign the final evaluation, and no annotation was made regarding employee's unavailability or refusal to sign.
4. Deviation Authority statement missing.
5. Performance awards incorrectly granted. At least one critical

Continued on page 10

Continued from page 9

element must be rated EXCEEDED in order for an employee to be eligible to receive a performance award.

For additional performance appraisal information or assistance, contact either TJ Hobbble or Phyllis Pina as follows:

- TJ Hobbble, 703/588-0438, hobbblt@psd.whs.mil for the offices of USD(P), DSCA, DPMO, DTSA, USD(P&R), ASD(HA), ASD(RA), ASD(LA), ASD(C), PA&E, OGC, OSD, and ExecSec.
- Phyllis Pina, 703/588-0432, pinaph@psd.whs.mil for the offices of USD(AT&L), DARPA, MDA, DA&M, OJS, ASD(PA), AFIS, OT&E, ASD(C3I), OFT, CIFA, and WHS.

Other pertinent areas related to the performance appraisal process—Requests for Reconsideration of Approved Ratings....Performance Awards Guidance....QSI Guidance....and Grievances of Approved Ratings—can be found on <http://persec.whs.mil/lmer/faqs.html> (Click on for a direct link.)

“

Patience and perseverance have a magical effect before which difficulties disappear and obstacles vanish.

–John Quincy Adams

”

Healthy People 2010

Healthy People 2010 is a national health promotion and disease prevention initiative. It challenges individuals, communities, and professionals to take specific steps to ensure that good health, as well as long life, are enjoyed by all. Take every opportunity to improve your own health, the health of your loved ones, and the health of your community.

Healthy People 2010: Understanding and Improving Health is part of the *Healthy People 2010* initiative sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It's the first of three parts in the *Healthy People 2010* series. To receive more information about this initiative and view the document in full text, go to <http://www.healthypeople.gov>.



A Dog's Tale—

What dogs would teach people if we only had the common sense to listen.

- When loved ones come home, always run to greet them with great enthusiasm.
- Allow the experience of fresh air and the wind in your face to be pure ecstasy.
- When it is in your best interest, practice obedience.
- Let others know when they've invaded your territory.
- Run, romp, and play daily.
- Avoid biting, when a simple little growl will do.
- On warm days, stop to lie on your back on the grass.
- On hot days, drink lots of water and lay under a shady tree.
- When you're happy, let people know it ... spread it around.
- No matter how often you're scolded, don't buy into that guilt thing and pout....run right back and make friends all over again.
- Delight in the simple joy of a long walk.
- Eat with gusto and enthusiasm. Stop when you have had enough.
- Be loyal.
- Never pretend to be something you're not.
- If what you want lies buried, keep digging until you find it.
- When someone is having a bad day, be silent, sit close by and give them a friendly nuzzle.



–Author Unknown



THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN

April 15-June 30, 2003

TSP Open Season

The Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) *Open Season* began April 15, 2003, and ends June 30, 2003. During *Open Season*, eligible employees may begin making TSP contributions or change the amounts of their contributions. During the upcoming *Open Season*, the contribution rates are as follows—employees in the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) may contribute up to 13% of their salary, and Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) employees may contribute up to 8%.

Note: The total amount that any employee may contribute to the TSP each year continues to be capped by the Internal Revenue Service's elective deferral limit. For 2003, the deferral limit is \$12,000.

You can make your Open Season election electronically at <http://persec.whs.mil/hrsc/benefits.html>. Click on Benefits Online and follow the instructions. The commercial telephone number for the WHS, Human Resource Services Center (HRSC), Benefits Call Center is 703/617-7382. You can call toll free at 1-877-521-1923. If needed, the TDD number is 703/617-0658. Counselors are available Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. EST to answer your questions. Once you're in the system, press "2" for *Benefits Information* and then press "2" again for *Benefits and Entitlements*. Follow the

voice prompts after pressing "1" for *Current HRSC Serviced Employee*, and enter your social security number and PIN. (**Note:** If this is your first time using the system, your PIN is your 2-digit month and year of birth, e.g., June 1947 is 0647.) When you hear the message for the *Thrift Savings Plan* press "3," and follow the voice prompts to make your Open Season election.

You can also make an Open Season election by completing a TSP-1 form and sending it directly to the WHS/HRSC Benefits Branch, Room 2S12, 5001 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22333-0001. This form is available on the TSP website at www.tsp.gov. **Note:** All TSP-1 forms must be received by the close of business on June 30, 2003, or be postmarked by that date, if mailed.

Update

TSP Catch-Up Contributions for Employees Age 50 and Older

On November 27, 2002, the President signed Public Law 107-304, which permits eligible Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) participants who are age 50 or older to make additional tax-deferred "catch-up" contributions from their basic pay to their TSP accounts. These contributions are a supplement to a participant's regular employee TSP contributions and don't count against either the statutory contribution percentage limitations—in 2003, 13% for employees covered by the Federal Employees' Retirement System and 8% for employees covered by the Civil Service Retirement System—or the Internal Revenue Service's elective deferral limit of \$12,000 in 2003.

The maximum catch-up contributions employees age 50 or older will be able to contribute to their TSP accounts will be an additional \$2,000 for 2003.... \$3,000 in 2004....\$4,000 in 2005....and \$5,000 in 2006. After 2006, the \$5,000 amount will be adjusted based on the inflation rate.

The Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board announced recently that the initial election period for "catch-up" contributions is anticipated to begin July 2003. During this initial period, "catch-up" elections made will be effective the first pay period in August i.e., August 10, 2003. Subsequent to this initial election period, participants will be able to make "catch-up" contributions at any time. The WHS/HRSC Benefits Office will forward complete instructions on making TSP "catch-up" contributions to the Administrative Officers, as soon as the information is made available.

2002 WHS/PFPA CFC Victory Celebration

On January 17, 2003, the Washington Headquarters Services (WHS) and the Pentagon Force Protection Agency (PFPA) held a victory celebration to recognize and to thank everyone who was instrumental in making this year's campaign a resounding success. The celebratory program was held in the Penthouse at Rosslyn Plaza North. Joe Friedl, WHS CFC Chair, and Larry Hottot, WHS CFC Campaign Manager, welcomed the honorees. Special recognition awards were presented to WHS/PFPA keyworkers and team captains, campaign managers, members of the Steering Committee, and staff of the Graphics and Presentations office. Speakers included Howard Becker, Deputy Director WHS and Director, Organization and Management Planning, DA&M; Jan Thompson, WHS/Director, Personnel and Security and representative to the National Capital Area (NCA) CFC Local Federal Coordinating Committee Board of Directors; and Lt Col James "Reggie" Hall (USAF), WHS Loaned Executive. One

of the highlights of the program was the presentation of the NCA CFC plaques for employee participation to the WHS Directors and the PFPA Campaign Manager, Richard Dooley.

(Photos taken at the victory celebration appear below.)



Joe Friedl (left), WHS CFC Chair, presenting Certificates of Recognition to Paul Haselbush (top), Director, WHS/Real Estate & Facilities and Richard Dooley (right), PFPA Campaign Manager.



Lt Col James "Reggie" Hall (USAF), Loaned Executive to the WHS/PFPA 2002 CFC.



Heidi Smith (left), WHS/Personnel & Security, Campaign Manager pictured with Jan Thompson, Director, WHS/Personnel & Security after being presented with a NCA CFC Merit Award by Howard Becker (center), WHS, Deputy Director and Director, Organization and Management Planning, DA&M.



WHS/Freedom of Information and Security Review Campaign Manager, Art Horn, (left), pictured with his Director, Henry McIntyre, after being presented with special recognition awards.

2002 National Capital Area Keyworker Appreciation Gala



The 2002 National Capital Area (NCA) CFC came to a close with the annual Keyworker Appreciation Gala held on February 26, 2003 at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, Washington D.C. Prior to the formal program, the NCA Communications Contest winners were presented with their recognition trophies. This year, over 150 entries in 10 categories were submitted. Various charitable Federation representatives did the judging.

The U.S. Coast Guard Ceremonial Honor Guard performed the Presentation of the Colors, which was followed by a moving rendition of the national anthem by Thurstan Hunter, Department of Veterans Administration. Mr. Clarence Hardy, Executive Director, NCA CFC welcomed all those who braved the snowy weather to attend the Gala. In his comments, Mr. Hardy stated that the Federal employee-owned and operated CFC raised an incredible \$47 million dollars for the

2002 NCA CFC. This was the second highest amount in the history of the CFC. Mr. Hardy thanked all the campaign members for their diligence and hard work.

Mr. Vince Micone, U.S. Department of Justice, and the NCA CFC Vice Chair, Local Federal Coordinating Committee (LFCC) Board of Directors, saluted all the keyworkers and the volunteers associated with the CFC. Because of the generosity of Federal employees, many charities will continue to keep their doors open in local communities across the country. Mr. Micone talked about the purpose of the LFCC. He stated that all the charities in the "Catalogue of Caring" must be approved by the LFCC to be included. This process is detailed and scrutinized to ensure compliance with all applicable regulations and guidance requirements. The LFCC also administers the NCA Loaned Executive program.

While Mr. Micone expressed his personal thanks, he also shared the gratitude of the LFCC Board, for everyone's efforts in this year's successful campaign.

Eric Bost, Under Secretary of Agriculture delivered the keynote address. He represented the Honorable Ann M. Veneman, Secretary of Agriculture, and the 2002 CFC Chair, who was unable to attend the Gala. Mr. Bost recounted the importance of the CFC and the services it provides to those in need. He stated that the Federal employees once again exhibited selfless giving on the simple premise that it's more important to help others than to help one's self. Mr. Bost thanked all the keyworkers, team captains, and coordinators for their outstanding efforts in making the 2002 CFC a continued success. The program closed with light refreshments and door prizes donated by various charities in attendance.

2002 WHS/PFPA CFC Victory Celebration (cont'd)



WHS/PFPA Campaign Team members after receiving their respective NCA CFC Awards. (l. to r.) Captain John Larson (USAF), Campaign Manager, and Larry Horner, Deputy Director, Communications and Directives (C&D); Henry McIntyre, Director, and Art Horn, Campaign Manager, Freedom of Information & Security Review; Maurice Howe, Campaign Manager, Federal Voting Assistance Program; Thomas Prudhomme, Campaign Manager, Real Estate & Facilities and Miscellaneous Activities; Richard Dooley, Campaign Manager, PFPA; Paul Haselbush, Director RE&F; Heidi Smith, Campaign Manager, P&SD; seated, TSgt Sandra Robinson-Carson, Keyworker, C&D.

DoD 2002 CFC Awards Ceremony

WHS/PFPA Campaign Ends on High Note

At the DoD 2002 CFC awards ceremony, hosted by Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Honorable Paul Wolfowitz, January 29 in the Pentagon, the Defense campaign was recognized for its contributions totaling \$12 million. The average DoD gift was \$243 and 63 percent of all Defense employees participated in this year's campaign. This resulted in DoD attaining 107 percent of its monetary goal.

At the ceremony, the WHS/PFPA campaign received several awards. A CFC Presidential Award for 80 percent employee participation was presented to WHS/Director, Ray DuBois. Also, Acting Director, John Jester, along with his Campaign Manager, Richard Dooley, accepted a CFC Presidential Award for PFPA for having 76 percent employee participation.

The WHS/PFPA Campaign ended in December 2002, but it achieved many milestones—

- WHS exceeded its monetary goal, receiving contributions totaling \$139,975, representing 19 percent over goal, with an average gift of \$159.
- PFPA employees contributed \$28,326, representing 42 percent over goal, with an average gift of \$111.
- Over 90% of all contributions were made through payroll deduction.
- There were 51 WHS and 10 PFPA CFC Eagle-level donors.

Continued on page 15



Ceremonial presentation of DoD CFC check. (l. to r.) Mara Paternoster, National Director, CFC; Wilhelmina Rolark, President, United Black Fund; Ray DuBois, Director, WHS; Clarence Hardy, Director, NCA/CFC; and Paul Wolfowitz, Deputy Secretary of Defense.



WHS CFC Team after receiving CFC awards. (l. to r.) Lt Col James "Reggie" Hall, Loaned Executive; Joe Friedl, Chair; Larry Hottot, Campaign Manager; Ray DuBois, Director, WHS; Pam Mirelson, Communications Liaison, (C&D); and Paul Wolfowitz, Deputy Secretary of Defense.



PFPA CFC Team after receiving CFC awards. (l. to r.) Lt Col James "Reggie" Hall, Loaned Executive; Richard Dooley, Campaign Manager; John Jester, Acting Director, PFPA; Ray DuBois, Director, WHS; and Paul Wolfowitz, Deputy Secretary of Defense.

Continued from page 14

- The total contributions received in 2002 exceeded previous WHS campaigns.

The Director of WHS, Ray DuBois, personally expressed his appreciation to all the campaign keyworkers and staff for their hard work, energy, and dedication shown in the 2002 campaign. He said that the achievements attained in the campaign were a testimony to the generosity of all the employees in WHS and PFFA.

Additional WHS recognition included being named the Best Small CFC Campaign, an honor it shared with the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. It also received first-place recognition from the National Capital Area CFC for best “photographic coverage” of its campaign. A PowerPoint presentation of the DoD awards ceremony and WHS’ award-winning campaign coverage can be seen at <http://www.bfd.whs.mil>. When you get to the site, click on “What’s New.” Once at “What’s New,” to view the DoD awards ceremony select “DoD Awards Presentation.” To view the photo coverage of the WHS campaign select “CFC Award Presentation.” (Note: A listing of all the DoD 2002 CFC Communications contest winners follows this article.)

For more information about the 2002 WHS/PFFA Combined Federal Campaign, contact Larry Hottot, WHS Campaign Manager, on 703/614-5677 or at lhottot@bfd.whs.mil.

2002 DoD CFC Communications Contest Winners

Best Audio Visual:

First Place: Office of Naval Research (ONR)
 Second Place: DIA
 Honorable Mention: Navy Federal Credit Union (NFCU)

Best Continuing Coverage::

First Place: DARPA
 Second Place: DoDIG
 Honorable Mention: Tie between WHS & USAF

Best Feature Story (Agency):

First Place: National Naval Medical Center (Bethesda)
 Second Place: DISA
 Honorable Mention: WHS (Pentagon’s first 9/11 casualty by Pam Mirelson)

Best Feature Story (Employee):

First Place: WHS (Laurie Laychak story by Pam Mirelson)
 Second Place: National Imagery & Mapping Agency (NIMA)

Best Front Page:

First Place: WHS (*Personnel Hilites*—CFC edition)
 Second Place: ONR
 Honorable Mention: USAF

Best Goal Poster:

First Place: Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences (USUHS)
 Second Place: NFCU
 Honorable Mention: USAF

Best Kick-Off or Victory Celebration:

First Place: DIA
 Second Place: Tie between WHS & DARPA
 Honorable Mention: DARPA

Best Lobby Display:

First Place: DIA
 Second Place: DARPA
 Honorable Mention: Naval Sea Systems Command

Best Motivational Poster:

First Place: NIMA
 Second Place: NFCU
 Honorable Mention: Three-way tie—DARPA (2 entries) & NFCU

Best Photographic Coverage:

First Place: WHS (CFC campaign by Larry Hottot)
 Second Place: DISA
 Honorable Mention: ONR

Best Special Edition:

First Place: DIA (poem)
 Second Place: WHS (*Personnel Hilites*—CFC edition)

Best Special Event (other than kickoff or victory):

First Place: DARPA (Ice Cream Social)
 Second Place: NFCU (Jail and Bail)
 Honorable Mention: NFCU

Best Use of Electronic Media:

First Place: DARPA
 Second Place: Tie between WHS & NIMA
 Honorable Mention: Total Army Personnel Command

Best Web Site:

First Place: NFCU (Love Train)
 Second Place: ONR
 Honorable Mention: DARPA

Most Original Campaign Technique:

First Place: Naval Facilities Engineering Command (Tower of Caring)
 Second Place: NIMA
 Honorable Mention: Tie between ONR & NFCU

Best Essay:

First Place: WHS (David O. “Doc” Cooke story by Joe Friedl)
 Second Place: USAF
 Honorable Mention: Naval Research Laboratory

RESUMIX *Corner*

The Human Resource Services Center (HRSC) gets numerous questions from its customers about how to navigate through the <http://persec.whs.mil.hrsc/> web page as well as general questions related to applying for a job online. In response to these questions, the following information is being provided in a Question/Answer format to clarify the application process.

Q: The HRSC Job Kit directs the applicant to <http://persec.whs.mil/hrsc/> for instructions on how to submit a resume using *Resume-Writer*. How do I find *Resume-Writer* from the web page?

A: Click on *Employment Information* and then select *Submit Resume*. You'll have two (2) options—*HRSC Resume Writer* page and *HRSC Resume E-Mail* page. The *Resume Writer* is a program designed to take you through the resume development process. The *Resume E-Mail* page is a preformatted email message to which you can "cut & paste" your resume. Both of these processes send your resume directly to the HRSC database.

Q: Why do I need to provide the "Supplemental Information?"

A: Supplemental Information is required of all applicants. The questions are designed to provide the Human Resource Specialist with information about whether you have Federal status or are eligible for Veterans Preference.

Q: I checked my resume online using the "Edit Resume" tool from the web

page. Why does it look like the lines run off into hyperspace?

A: The resume you submit must be "translated" into a text file. The text file is a universal storage medium that can be viewed by a variety of readers, such as Word, Notepad, Netscape, E-mail, etc. When the "text file" is opened, it will take the settings provided by the opener's software. The font size and style, margins, etc. are under the control of the reader and aren't part of the text file settings. The file is completely malleable and will conform to the viewer's settings. Only "hard returns" or "paragraphing" are a permanent part of the file's display. Some resumes may lack a pleasing appearance when opened. For example, sentence fragments may wrap onto the next line. To create a more pleasing appearance, you can decrease/increase the font size or the margins. While changing these parameters won't change the content of your resume, it will change the appearance of the display.

Q: What information do I need to check the status of my application for a specific vacancy announcement?

A: First, you need to know the vacancy announcement number. Next, log onto the web page. Click on *Employment Information* and then select *Check Receipt*. If you don't have a Personal Identification Number (PIN), you'll need to complete this process before accessing the information on your self-nomination. Click on *New Application Account Members/Register*. Once your PIN has

been established, click on *Existing Application Account Members/Sign On*. Follow the screen prompts to enter your vacancy announcement number, your user ID, and PIN. The status of your application for the vacancy will be displayed on the screen.

Q: What do I do if I forget my PIN?

A: You can send an email message to the Web Master at webmaster@hrsc.osd.mil. Click on the hotlink to the webmaster on the web page. Or, you can call the HRSC Call Center at 703/617-7434 or at TTY 703/617-0647, if needed.

Q: How do I submit my resume if I don't have access to the Internet?

A: If you don't have Internet access, mail your resume to the HRSC at the following address:

Resume

Washington Headquarters Services
Human Resource Services Center
5001 Eisenhower Avenue, Room 2E22
Alexandria, Va 22333-0001

Additional information about how to make application, what to submit, and the resume format to use, is contained in the HRSC Job Kit. The Job Kit can be obtained by calling the HRSC FAXBACK line at 703/617-0652, the HRSC Call Center at 703/617-7434, or the TTY at 703/617-0647.

Resume Preparation Briefings

Monthly Resume Preparation Briefings are offered and are designed to

Continued on page 17

Continued from page 16

assist applicants in writing a resume for an electronic system. The briefings explain the process for applying on-line using *Resume Writer*, how to check if your resume or self-nomination has been processed, and other information available on the web page to help you with the application process. Briefings are conducted in the OSD Conference Room in the Pentagon, Room 1E801, from 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. Seating is on a first-come, first-serve basis (no reservation required).

April	29	May	28
June	25	July	30
August	27	September	24
October	29	November	25
December	18		

For additional information about resume briefings, contact Avis Wilkins, HR Specialist, WHS/Personnel and Security Directorate, 703/617-0609 or at wilkea@psd.whs.mil.

For information about RESUMIX, contact Paula Hartzoge, RESUMIX Program Manager, WHS/Personnel and Security Directorate, 703/617-7109 or at hartzp@psd.whs.mil.

Your Benefits

Did You Know That...

- ❖ When your child reaches age 22, he/she is no longer covered under the Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB).
- ❖ Your eligible child has 60 days to enroll in Temporary Continuation of Coverage of the FEHB.
- ❖ Extended Leave without Pay (LWOP) may have an adverse effect on your benefits (health, life insurance, retirement credit, etc.).
- ❖ You **must** allocate your TSP contributions directly with the TSP Service Office. You can access the TSP website at www.tsp.gov, or call 504/255-8777, or complete a TSP-50 form. If you complete a TSP-50, it must be mailed to the TSP Service Office. The address is on the form.
- ❖ The salary cap (wage base) subject to Social Security deductions for 2003 is \$87,000. This amount changes annually.
- ❖ If you have previous service as a VISTA or Peace Corps volunteer, it may be creditable for retirement?
- ❖ If you go from a full-time to a part-time work schedule, your benefits may be affected—FEHB, life insurance, and retirement.
- ❖ You should review your Leave and Earnings Statement (LES) regularly to ensure that your health, life, retirement, and TSP deductions are accurate and that your leave balance is correct.
- ❖ Your organization has a Customer Service Representative (CSR) who will assist you if you have pay problems or need to change your allotments, mailing address, and direct deposit.
- ❖ In order to continue your health and life insurance into retirement, you must be covered for five (5) years immediately prior to retirement.
- ❖ Under the FEHB Premium Conversion rules, you can't cancel or change from *Self and Family* coverage to *Self-Only* coverage without a qualifying life event.
- ❖ Your designations of beneficiaries remain valid until you file new designations.

“

Most of us miss out on life's big prizes—the Pulitzer, the Nobel Prize, Oscars, Tonys, and Emmys. But, we're all eligible for life's small pleasures—a pat on the back....a kiss behind the ear....a four-pound bass....a full moon....an empty parking space....a crackling fire....a great meal.... a glorious sunset....a cold beer. Don't fret about not getting life's grand awards. Enjoy its tiny delights.

—Author Unknown

”

Happiness comes through the door you didn't even know you left open.
—Anonymous