

DMAVA Highlights

July 22, 2010 Volume 12 Number 27



DMAVA solar projects highlighted in Jersey newspaper

If you have a minute or two, click on the article in the Asbury Park Press about DMAVA's solar project at Sea Girt. Gracing today's front page, the article spoke about the solar project there and upcoming projects in the system.

According to the article, the Sea Girt solar power project has generated approximately \$138,884 savings in kilowatt hours in just eight months.

"If we multiply this by 18 cents, which is typically what utility companies charge per kilowatt hour, this equals \$25 thousand we don't have to pay the utility companies," said John Hastings, Energy Program Manager at the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

You can visit <http://www.sunviewer.net/portals/SeaGirt/> and view the project and how it is conserving energy and saving the Guard money.

A similar structure is in the works at the Joint Force Headquarters building at Fort Dix. Two more solar project and a wind turbine project are also in the works.

The entire article can be viewed at <http://www.app.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=20107210329>.



Sea Girt solar project covers a parking lot while saving the department money. Photo by Mark Olsen, DMAVA Public Affairs specialist.

State offers retirement workshops for employees

All state employees who are members of the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) or the Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund (TPAF) and planning to retire before the end of 2011 are invited to take advantage of the retirement workshops scheduled over the next five months.

The workshops are being held at the New Jersey Forensic Science Technology Center in Hamilton Township, Mercer County. During the workshop, representatives will explain topics including retirement benefits, beneficiary options, group life insurance, pension taxes and health benefits during retirement.

Seating is limited, so register early for the workshop date and time of your choice. Go to www.nj.us/treasury/pensions and click on the link for "Retirement Workshops."

Classes will be held at 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. and are scheduled for Aug. 16, 23; Sept. 9, 15, 24, 29; Oct. 4, 21; Nov. 3, 22, 29; and Dec. 10, 17.

When attending, members must bring along a printed version of their Estimate of Retirement Benefits, which they can get using the Member Benefits Online System. To register for MBOS, go to www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/mbosregister.shtml and follow instructions.

Free admission to PGA tour event for military, Aug. 24-29

Mark your calendar for the Barclays! Golfers from the PGA Tour will descend on the Ridgewood Country Club, Paramus, to participate in another stage of the FedEx Cup, Aug. 24-29.

Again, this year, there will be free admission for active duty, retired and reserve military personnel and their dependents with valid IDs, during the entire tournament.

There will be a Birdies for the Brave Patriots' Outpost-Hospitality tent for all active duty, retired and reserve military and dependents open Aug. 25-29 with complimentary food and beverages.

Visit www.thebarclaysgolf.com for more details.

Industry, thrift and self-control are not sought because they create wealth, but because they create character.

--Calvin Coolidge, 30th president of United States

VA eases claims process for veterans with PTSD

By Elaine Wilson, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, July 12, 2010 - The Veterans Affairs Department will publish a final regulation tomorrow intended to ease the claims process and improve access to health care for veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder, VA officials announced today.

"This nation has a solemn obligation to the men and women who have honorably served this country and suffer from the often-devastating emotional wounds of war," Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric K. Shinseki said in a statement. "This final regulation goes a long way to ensure that veterans receive the benefits and services they need."

The new rule, to be published in the Federal Register, will relax the evidence requirement if the PTSD stressor claimed by a veteran is linked to "fear of hostile military or terrorist activity and is consistent with the places, types and circumstances of the veteran's service," a VA news release said.

Currently, VA decision makers are required to confirm that a noncombat veteran actually experienced a stressor related to hostile military activity, the release said.

Under the new rule, VA no longer will require substantiation of a stressor tied to fear of hostile military or terrorist activity if a VA psychiatrist or psychologist can confirm that the experience recalled by a veteran supports a PTSD diagnosis and the veteran's symptoms are related to the stressor, a VA release said.

"With this new PTSD regulation, we are acknowledging the inherently stressful nature ... of military service in which the reality and fear of hostile or terrorist activity is always present," Michael Walcoff, VA's acting undersecretary for benefits, said during a news conference today.

The regulation will eliminate the need to search for records to verify veterans' accounts, "often a very involved and protracted process," Walcoff said, and enable VA officials "to move more quickly to award more benefits to veterans suffering from PTSD."

More than 400,000 veterans currently are receiving compensation benefits for PTSD, VA officials said. And of the nearly 400,000 veterans treated at VA facilities for PTSD in fiscal 2009, nearly 70,000, or 19 percent, were veterans of operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

Dr. Robert A. Petzel, VA's undersecretary for health, said the regulation will be particularly beneficial for veterans who have had their military records damaged or destroyed, female veterans whose records don't specify they have combat experience, and veterans who have experienced combat but have no record of it.

President Barack Obama called the changes a "long-overdue step" in his weekly address.

DMAVA Green

By Tech. Sgt. Barb Harbison, DMAVA Public Affairs Specialist

Summer – many of us here in New Jersey take the time to head "down the shore" to soak up some sun, ride the waves, and relax in the sand. The blue ocean, beige sand, and the many colors of the towels, bathing suits and umbrellas may keep us from being green during our time at the beach.

Here are some green beach tips.

Stay off the sensitive dunes and only walk on the marked areas when heading to the ocean.

Take your trash with you – don't leave it on the beach when you leave. Especially remember broken glass – people are on the beach in their bare feet.

Sunscreen – avoid sunscreen with paraben, cinnamate, benzophenone and a camphor derivative. These ingredients wash off you while you are in ocean and are a danger to the fish and wildlife. Do use sunscreen with at least an SPF of 15.

If your pet is permitted on the beach, clean up after them. The beach may look like one big litter box, but visitors do not want to have to clean up after your pet.

Leave what you find – don't bring home shells, rocks, sand dollars, plants or other natural items you find as you walk along the shore. Some beaches have rules on shell collecting; make sure you check before you collect. According to Sanibel Captiva (Fla.) Chamber of Commerce Web site, "Shells and their inhabitants play an important role in Sanibel and Captiva islands ecology. They help keep our sand neatly in place and restock it with more as they're crushed by waves and other forces. They provide food for birds and fish. The scavenging and filtering performed by certain mollusks help cleanse Gulf waters." I would bet shells have the same influences on the New Jersey shoreline too.

If you have the opportunity to join in a local beach, river or stream clean up – do so! the water you help to clean will be the water you and your great-grand children will be using for years to come.

Keep Green!

Quotes

Children begin by loving their parents; as they grow older they judge them; sometimes they forgive them.

--Oscar Wilde

About the most originality that any writer can hope to achieve honestly is to steal with good judgment.

--Josh Billings

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New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

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Brig. Gen. James J. Grant – Director, Joint Staff

Raymond Zawacki – Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs

Maj. Yvonne Mays – Public Affairs Officer

Tech. Sgt. Barb Harbison – Public Affairs Specialist

Sgt. Wayne Woolley – Public Affairs Specialist

Wounded Soldier and Family
Hotline
1-800-984-8523

Families

Marriage Enrichment class on the calendar

By Marie Durling, Deputy State Family Programs Director
I am planning a Marriage Enrichment for 10 couples only for Aug. 27-19 in the Atlantic City area. This will be for first-time couples only. If you are interested, please e-mail me at marie.durling@us.army.mil for more information. If there is no interest, I will cancel the weekend.

Company offers free banners to welcome home service members

BuildASign.com respects the continued service and sacrifice that our military personnel selflessly provide every day. To express their support of our brave men and women in uniform, they want to invite you to take part in their free "Welcome Home" banner promotion. To date, they have given away over 60,000 banners. All banners can be customized in full color, including pictures; they just ask that the customer pay the shipping and handling fee, which varies based on how much in advance of the event you need the banner. [Source: <https://www.myarmyonesource.com/News/2010/03/Banners>]

Take a trip to Broadway to see 'Billy Elliot'

Sign up now open to see "Billy Elliot" on Broadway on Sept. 22. The bus will depart Picatinny Arsenal at 9:45 a.m. and have free time before the show. The cost is \$135 per person and includes charter bus transportation and Orchestra seats. Don't miss out on this Elton John musical Tony Award winner!! Call the "Take Off" Center in building 34 at 973-724-4014 and book your seats.

Military Appreciation Day at Six Flags, Aug. 6

Six Flags Great Adventure and Wild Safari is holding their Military Appreciation Day on Aug. 6. The special package of \$32.10 per person includes admission to Six Flags Great Adventure and Wild Safari and a two hour all-you-can-eat buffet in the Old Country Picnic Grove.

To get the special promotion, go to www.sixflags.com/great-adventure and type mil2010 in the Promo Code (upper right hand corner). Call Lisa at 732-928-2000, ext. 2864 if you have any questions.

The buffet is from noon to 2 p.m., with a menu of hamburgers, hot dogs, pasta salad, vegetarian baked beans, ice cream cups and Coca-Cola® products. Theme park hours are 10:30 a.m.-10 p.m. and the Safari is open 9 a.m.-4 p.m.



The First Tee offers free program to military

Since 1997, The First Tee, a not-for-profit organization, has introduced the game of golf and its values to more than 3.5 million participants in 50 states, five international locations and more than 3,500 elementary schools.

In the summer of 2009, The First Tee formed a two-year partnership with the Department of Defense to extend its programs to children of military personnel worldwide. Special focus is given to providing service to children of National Guardsmen and Reservists. The First Tee programs are being underwritten by the DoD and are available at no cost to military personnel and their families.



There are two age appropriate programs available.

Target is an introduction to The First Tee life skills experience in a fun safe environment.

PLAYER is a progression of small group classes focusing on life skills and golf skills and etiquette.

If you are a National Guardsman or Reservist and want to sign up your school-aged child, you first need to locate your nearest chapter.

Go to www.thefirsttee.org. Once you find the chapter, download the military coupon at www.thefirsttee.org/military. Now all you have to do is make contact with the chapter, get their class schedule and bring the completed coupon to the facility. Now you can enroll your child at no cost.

The First Tee Military Affiliate Program is in effect through May 1, 2011.

If you have any problems or challenges with the program – contact Dan Brady, the staff specialist for The First Tee's Military Affiliate Program. You can find him at 904-940-4361 or dbrady@thefirsttee.org.

Blue Star Mothers reaching out to Gold Star families

By Karen Rokosny, Blue Star Mother

I am a member of Blue Star Mothers - NJ - 4, and Blue to Gold Liaison for that Chapter. If anyone knows of a Gold Star Family who has not been presented with a Gold Star Banner honoring their Fallen Hero, please contact me and, if the family wishes, I will secure and present it to them. I will also work with any Veteran's group on the above mission.

My contact information is: BSM-NJ-4, PO Box 916, Ocean Gate NJ 08740; daytime phone 732-901-7035.

Et Cetera

USMA Prep looking for mentors for cadets

The USMA Prep School, Fort Monmouth, N.J., is looking for families to be a part of an effective and beneficial program, the Cadet Candidate Sponsorship Program.

Interaction with sponsor families throughout the year help motivate and refresh the Cadet Candidates (CCs). Participation in this worthwhile program will offer the CCs a “home away from home,” and at the same time families will positively influence the life and decisions of these outstanding young people.

If you are interested in participating in the program, send an e-mail to Faiza.Evans@usma.edu by Aug. 1. Applications will be e-mailed to potential participants and the completed application must be returned no later than Aug. 10.

For questions about the sponsorship program or an application, contact Sgt. Evans at 732-532 -0585.

Princeton Officers Society invites new members

From the desk of retired Col. Stan Lapidow

The Princeton Officers Society – an organization of men and women who are former or current commissioned military officers – is looking for members.

Founded in 1993 by the late Squadron Leader, Timothy Craxton, who served in the British Royal Air Force, gatherings of the society include veterans and guests who have served many countries and in all branches of the Armed Forces. Its membership represents service men and women who have served during World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm and up to and including current officers of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Society meets every two months for a dinner “Formation” at the Nassau Club on Mercer Street in Princeton. Members and guests are encouraged to wear their military uniform or black tie with miniature decorations. The opportunity is presented to share military experiences with one another. If you are interested in learning more about the Princeton Officers Society, visit our website at <http://princetonofficerssociety.org> or call 609-896-9370.

Check out Army Soldier Show, coming to a stage near you

If you are looking for some entertainment, you can find it at the U.S. Army Soldier Show which is making four stops in the area between now and November. Pick a date and come watch the music and stage show that the Soldiers give to their audience.

Sept. 25 – time to be announced – Morris Knolls High School, 50 Knolls Drive, Rockaway (Picatinny Arsenal)

Nov. 4 – 1:30 and 6:30 p.m. – Expo Theater, building 1215, Avenue of Memories, Fort Monmouth

4 For more information on the show, visit <http://www.armymwr.com/recreation/entertainment/soldiershow/default.aspx>.

VA center holding Welcome Home event at zoo, Sept. 1

The Philadelphia VA Medical Center invites veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom to the 2010 Welcome Home event at the Philadelphia Zoo on Sept. 1, 3-6 p.m.

You can enjoy the zoo and learn about your VA benefits at the same time. In addition to health care enrollment information (returning Iraq and Afghanistan veterans are automatically eligible for five years of free health care), there will be opportunities to learn about VA home loans, Post -9/11 GI Bill, employment and vocational rehabilitation.

Each veteran may bring up to three immediate family members or significant others. The day's events will take place rain or shine. Veterans are asked to RSVP through the Welcome Home Web site, www.philadelphia.va.gov no later than Aug. 27. A copy of the veteran's DD214 will be necessary on the day of the event.

Unity Day at JT2DC, Sept. 16

Start planning now for the New Jersey National Guard 12th Annual Unity Day celebration on Sept. 16, from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Joint Training and Training Development Center, Fort Dix.

Start the day off with the Fun Walk/Run at 8:30 a.m. Later you can donate blood at the Blood Drive in the Stow Bay Parking Lot, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Spend the day celebrating our ethnic and cultural diversity through food, music, entertainment and giveaways.

For information, volunteer opportunities or questions, contact the following people:

Event POC is Maj. Barbara Brown-Wilson, 609-562-0856, Barbara.g.brown@us.army.mil; Fun Run/Walk POC is Staff Sgt. Christina Ermi, 609-562-0941, Christina.d.ermi@us.army.mil; or, Blood drive POC is Sgt. Geraldo Rodriguez, 609-562-0880, Gerald.rodriguez@us.army.mil.

Healthcare for women vets available at CBOCs

Women veterans are reminded of the services available at the Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC) in South Jersey.

Vineland CBOC – Comprehensive care for women including primary care, gender specific care (gyn care), mental health, podiatry and eye care

Ventnor CBOC – Primary care for women (soon to offer gender-specific care after provider training), mental health, podiatry and eye care

Cape May CBOC – Primary care for women, mental health, podiatry and eye care

Veterans & Military

Fast-running Soldiers needed to try out for NJ Guard ATM team

So Soldier, think you're fast?

Why not compete to represent the New Jersey Army National Guard at the Army 10-miler on Oct. 24 in Washington, D.C.?

The tryout will be held on Aug. 3 at the National Guard Training Center at Sea Girt. Show time is 6 a.m. at Building 35. The competition is open to both sexes and all ranks from within the Army Guard.

Soldiers who make the team will be placed on temporary duty for the race and their registration will be paid.

If you can't make the tryout, but want to try to represent the state at the big race, the posted results of a race 10 miles or longer can be used as a qualifier as long as that race is held within two months of the race.

For more information about competing, contact Sgt. 1st Class Melanie Rowton by email at Melanie.rowton@us.army.mil. For general information about the race, visit www.army10miler.com.

Invitation to join extended by JWV Post 972 to all veterans

An invitation is extended to all military personnel to join the Lt Seth Dvorin Post 972 of the Jewish War Veterans. The veterans meet on the first Wednesday of the month at the Marlboro Jewish Center located at 103 School Road West, Marlboro, N.J. Meeting time is 7:30 p.m.

Second Lt. Seth Dvorin was a native of Monmouth County who made the ultimate sacrifice while proudly defending the American way of life and liberty. Lt Dvorin was killed in Iraq Feb. 3, 2004. The post was renamed in May of 2004 to honor Lt. Dvorin.

Post 972 covers Monmouth and Ocean Counties. Anyone interested in joining this post or a similar post should contact Richard Berg at r2d2b2@optonline.net or Richard Dvorin at ltsethdvorinpost972jvw@comcast.net.

Troops to Teachers helps military lead in classroom

The Troops to Teachers program is designed to assist separating or retiring military personnel in pursuing a rewarding second career in public education (elementary, secondary or vocational) while also facilitating employment in public schools. Funded by the U.S. Department of Education and administered by the U.S. Department of Defense through DANTES, the long term goal of the program is to help improve American education by providing mature, self-disciplined, experienced and dedicated personnel for the nation's classrooms. New Jersey's Troops to Teachers office has counseled hundreds of interested military personnel, advising them on routes and programs to achieve full teacher certification in New Jersey, and referring them to school districts for employment.

To learn more, consider attending one of the upcoming program briefings at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst. Contact 800-680-0884 or via e-mail at tttnj@doe.state.nj.us for briefing and program information. You can also visit the program on the web at: www.nj.gov/education/tttnj.

N.J. Bar offers free legal assistance to military

If you have a legal matter that cannot be handled by our Office of the Staff Judge Advocate (OSJA), you may be eligible for a pro bono (free of charge) military legal assistance program (MLAP) administered by the New Jersey Bar Association (NJSBA), <http://www.njsba.com/>. This program provides legal representation to New Jersey residents who have served overseas as active duty members of reserve components of the armed forces after Sept. 11, 2001. Eligibility for the program is not income based. The program was created to meet the expected demand of military reservists in the current operational tempo and offers assistance in four primary areas:

- Family Law
- Employment Law
- Debtor-Creditor Law
- Medical Evaluation Boards (MEBs)

The program will refer military members who contact the NJSBA to volunteer attorneys qualified to assist them with their specific legal issues. For more information about the MLAP contact the OSJA, visit the NJSBA website, or contact:

D. Todd Sidor, Esq.,
Director of Judicial Administration
New Jersey State Bar Association
One Constitution Square
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
732-249-2815 (fax)
732-937-7544 (phone)

tsidor@njsba.com

Veterans with disabilities can get free hunting, fishing licenses

If you are a honorably discharged veteran with a service-connected disability and a New Jersey resident – you are entitled to free New Jersey hunting and fishing licenses, permits and stamps. Your disability must be declared by the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to be a service-connected disability of any kind for this benefit.

To find out the procedures needed to get certified, necessary documents and any restrictions, visit www.njfishandwildlife.com/dvinfo.htm. Questions can be directed to Sylvia Hall at 908-637-4125 or Sylvia.Hall@dep.state.nj.us.

N.J. Warrant Officer Association looking for new members

The United States Army Warrant Officer Association, Fort Dix Doughboy Chapter, is looking for members. For membership information, contact Chief Warrant Officer Nancy E. Rowbotham at nancy.rowbotham@us.army.mil.



Calendar

Fiscal social - music, more - July 29

Who couldn't stand a midsummer's break? Especially one that has food, refreshments, live music and is cheap (\$5)?

Come join the Fiscal Division social – Rockin' with Rog and the Coyote Jack Band – on July 29 at the Lawrenceville Armory, 4-6 p.m.

Here is your chance to see the band that has DMAVA employees Roger Bushyeager and John Hastings as members; with the band's original music to entertain you.

For those interested in attending, see either Tina Taylor or Dawn Baulo, Fiscal, to pay the cover charge.

I wonder who the bouncer will be?



Savino golf tourney, Sept. 24

The 14th Annual LTC Dave Savino Memorial golf tournament will be held on Sept. 24 at the Hanover Golf Course, Wrightstown. The tourney begins at 12:30 p.m. with a shotgun start and will be played in a two person scramble format (best ball).

Cost is \$100 donation per person and includes greens fees, cart, refreshments and door prizes. A buffet lunch will be served after the tournament at the course.

Send your payments to 108th WG/MXQ, ATTN: SMSgt Mike Balas, 3333 Wonnacott Blvd., JBM-DL, NJ 08641. Make checks payable to LTC Dave Savino Memorial Fund. If you have any questions, call Balas at 609-894-4692.

The course is located at 133 Larrison Road, Wrightstown, 8 1/2 miles west of Great Adventure, just off route 537.



Somerset Patriots host veterans

Operation Jersey Cares is hosting the 8th Annual Veterans of America Day at TD Bank Ballpark, Bridgewater, on Aug. 29, starting at 4 p.m. There will be a celebration with a parade for the veterans with the guest of honor, Jack Gartenberg.

Gartenberg served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1944-1946 and is a Iwo Jima survivor.

After the celebration, the Somerset Patriots invite everyone to stay and enjoy the game between the Southern Maryland Blue Claws and the Patriots. Veterans can receive free tickets; cost of tickets for friends and family will be \$5. To order tickets, contact Marc Russinoff, Somerset Patriots, 908-252-0700, ext. 215 or e-mail mrussinoff@somersetpatriots.com.

Park promotion for the day is a camouflage Patriots hat to the first 2,000 fans in attendance.

Broadway bus trip, Oct. 26

Picatinny Arsenal MWR has done five bus trips to "Jersey Boys" on Broadway. Is there interest in another one? E-mail linda.pienkos@us.army.mil or call 973-724-4014 if you are interested. If we get enough people who want to go, we will purchase the tickets.

The date will be Oct. 26, with show time at 7 p.m. The bus will depart the Arsenal at 3 p.m. and return at 11 p.m. The price will be approximately \$95 for front mezzanine seats and charter bus transportation.

NJVVMF golf outing, Aug. 2

On August 2, the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Foundation will be holding its 16th annual Golf Tournament at the Olde York Country Club in Columbus, N.J.

Registration and the range open at 8 a.m., along with a continental breakfast. The tournament starts at 10 a.m. with a shotgun start. Lunch and refreshments will be on the course. A post golf reception with awards and silent auction and raffles will be held after playing is through.

The outing provides a major source of funds for the Foundation's work throughout the year. If you would like more information on the events or to RSVP your participation, call the office at 732-335-0033 ext. 100., or visit www.njvvmf.org and click on the "events" button.

Veterans Outreach Campaign schedule

The DMAVA Veterans Outreach Campaign has kiosk displays at malls throughout the state and other special events to help veterans and their family members discover and apply for the benefits they are eligible to receive.

July 30 First Energy State Park, Lakewood**
Lakewood Blue Claws Veterans Appreciation Night

August 29 TD Bank Ballpark, Bridgewater**
Somerset Patriots Veterans of America Day

**Outreach events only

Sept. 7*, 8, 9 Willowbrook Mall

Oct. 5*, 6, 7 Brunswick Square Mall

*Medal ceremony 10:30 a.m.

Deadline

Want to place an event or article in DMAVA Highlights?

Deadline for articles is noon Wednesday.

Send submissions to barbara.harbison@njdmava.state.nj.us.