



DMAVA HIGHLIGHTS



MARCH 22, 2012



Happy 104th Birthday, Frank!

Frank Cuccia, born March 20, 1908 in Philadelphia, Pa, celebrates his 104th birthday with friends and family at the New Jersey Veterans Memorial Home at Vineland. To view more photos of Cuccia's birthday celebration visit our Facebook page by clicking on this link [New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs](#). (Photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen, DMAVA/PA)

DMAVA commits to helping homeless veterans

New Veterans Haven facility to open at Northern New Jersey

Story by Staff Sgt. Wayne Woolley, DMAVA/PA

Photos by Staff Sgt. Armando Vasquez, DMAVA/PA

The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs is about to extend the geographic reach of a program that has already helped nearly 1,000 homeless veterans return to productive and purposeful lives.

Gov. Chris Christie and Brig. Gen. Michael Cunniff, the Adjutant General, on Wednesday announced plans for the creation of Veterans Haven North in Glen Gardner, Hunterdon County, which will become a sister facility to DMAVA's Veterans Haven in Winslow Township, Gloucester County.

Veterans Haven North will operate in partnership with Freedom House, a non-profit organization with a 30-year track record of helping men and women overcome drug and alcohol addiction through long-term residential treatment.

The new North Jersey facility will provide housing, health services and social and vocational rehabilitation to 50 homeless veterans and replicate the services provided since 1995 at Veterans Haven in South Jersey.

"We're launching an effort that continues to honor the commitment of the brave men and women who have worn our nation's uniform by providing them the support they need to get on their feet and be successful," Christie said. "Thanks to innovation and a partnership with Freedom House, New Jersey will continue to lead the country in providing state-of-the-art facilities and quality care for

our veterans. Veterans have sacrificed in their service to our state and country and it is our obligation to support them in every way we can."

Startup funds for the project total \$2.3 million and are included in DMAVA's and the Department of Human Services' Fiscal Year 2013 Budgets for treatment services. In addition, federal funding through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs will allow DMAVA to provide housing, health services and social and vocational rehabilitation to Veterans Haven North residents.

The existing facility in Winslow Township expanded last year to nearly 100 beds and has established an unparalleled track record of success -- three of every four veterans who complete the program remain off the streets for good and return to purposeful lives.

Cunniff said he believes replicating the formula used at Veterans Haven will hopefully yield the same results for veterans in Northern New Jersey.

"Expanding the reach of our services will ensure that all homeless New Jersey veterans are afforded the care and assistance they deserve after their honorable and faithful service to our country," Cunniff said.

To view photos of Gov. Chris Christie and Brig. Gen. Michael L. Cunniff touring Freedom House and the press conference visit our Facebook page by clicking on this link: [New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.](#)



Above, Gov. Chris Christie, right, and Brig. Gen. Michael L. Cunniff, left, the Adjutant General, announce the start-up plans for a Veterans Haven North in Glen Gardner, Hunterdon County on March 17 during a press conference at Freedom House. Center, Herb Coleman, left, a former resident of Veterans Haven South, greets Christie during the tour. Bottom, Gregory Llytwyn, left, a current resident of Veterans Haven South greets the governor at Freedom House.



117th CSSB prepares for deployment in unique ways

Story and photos by Maj. Jason Fetterolf, JFHQ/PAO

FORT INDIANTOWN GAP, Pa. – Spc. Angeline F. Stephens’s military vocation is human resources; but her military passion is heading to the range with an M4 rifle.

“The smell of gunpowder calms you down ... you just block everything out; nothing is important except fundamental skills,” said Stephens, who recently honed those skills here during three weeks of pre-mobilization annual training in preparation for a nine-month deployment to Afghanistan in April with the 117th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion.

The pre-mobilization training for the 117th was unique for two reasons.

The first was that it was led by full-time members of the pre-mobilization training assistance element (PTAE), not by the mobilizing unit’s leaders as normally happens. Sgt. 1st Class Richard Denicola, a senior PTAE trainer said the format allowed the 117th to focus on training while the PTAEs deliver subject matter expert-led training.

“This is New Jersey Soldiers taking care of and training New Jersey Soldiers,” said Lt. Col. Paul Rumberger, commander, 117th CSSB.

In addition, the 117th opted to combine 15 days AT with a week of drill days and an active duty week, in what is called a “contiguous mobilization.”

“We are the first unit in the state to do a contiguous mob,” said Rumberger. “Now we are ‘in the groove;’ we have a captive audience ... this helps take care of admin, (Army warrior tasks), and pre-mob tasks.”

The pre-mobilization AT trained 117th CSSB Soldiers in both critical-thinking and tactical skills. The training included decision-making and a command post exercises, using systems they may expect to use in theater.

Once deployed, the 117th CSSB will be known as “Task Force Trenton” and execute logistics management missions in the southern region of Afghanistan by directing and managing three transportation companies and one ordnance company to serve the needs of both U.S. and coalition forces in the region. Additionally, the battalion will conduct retrograde operations, facilitating the movement of large con-



Spc. Stephanie Bautista, 117th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, uses a mirror to check for possible hidden dangers under a van at a simulated traffic control point during pre-mobilization training at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa., March 13.

tainers and rolling stock out of Afghanistan as the US decreases its footprint there, according to Rumberger.

A father-son team will be part of the deploying unit.

Sgt. 1st Class Victor M. Lopez, Jr. will be joined by Spc. Victor M. Lopez, III. At first, the elder Lopez was reluctant to deploy with his son.

“I don’t want anyone to think I will give my son special treatment; I will treat him like the rest,” said Sgt. 1st Class Lopez, the unit’s chief movement supervisor and a Philadelphia Sheriff’s deputy.

If anything, the younger Lopez said having his father there made him push himself.

“If anybody has it harder, it’s me; he expects more of me,” said Spc. Lopez.

After a farewell ceremony scheduled March 25 in West Trenton, the unit will proceed to Fort Hood, Texas to complete two weeks of post-mobilization training before deploying overseas.

To view more photos of the 117th CSSB training at FTIG visit our Facebook page by clicking on this link: [New Jersey National Guard](#).



Spc. Victor M. Lopez, III, prone, a Marlton native, fires the M-4 rifle during pre-mobilization training at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa., March 11 while his father, Sgt. 1st Class Victor M. Lopez, Jr., kneeling, coaches him. The father and son, whom call Philadelphia, Pa. home, will deploy together.



Sgt. 1st Class Richard Denicola, center right, pre-mobilization training assistance element senior trainer, prepares Soldiers of the 117th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion for a mounted patrol during pre-mobilization training at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa., March 13.

Generous earth-friendly program available to NJ service members

Believing that solar energy is a powerful way to protect America's energy security, environment, and to grow the American economy while helping service members, Suntuity is offering to provide NO-UPFRONT-COSTS solar power systems to active military personnel and reservists who own their home and reside in New Jersey.

Through their special program coined, "Suntuity America Gives Back Program", Suntuity will install the solar system on the service member's home with minimal or even no out-of-pocket costs, said Granger.

In order to receive this beneficial program, a service member must meet the following requirements: Must have proof of their military status within an active or reserve component; must show proof of homeownership and the home must be located in New Jersey; the home must receive direct, unobstructed sunlight from the hours of 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. (required for generating the electricity); must be able to provide the last 12 months of electric bills and/or electricity usage from the utility company (required for system connection to the utility) and must be able to qualify for the lease program through a credit check.

Interested customers may contact Suntuity by e-mail or phone to discuss the program. Suntuity will have a design program representative available to discuss the program in detail and schedule a site survey to determine if customer meets the requirements for the program. Prior to the site survey, Suntuity will need a copy of customer's electric bill. After the customer understands all of the benefits and agrees to move forward with the installation, Suntuity will start the process of obtaining all state, utility, and local approvals to install the system. Upon receipt of all approvals, Suntuity will install and connect the system to your home.

Contact Sheila Holman at 609-414-6292 or via email at sheila.holman@suntuity.com for information about this program.

NGANJ 2012 annual conference

The National Guard Association of New Jersey invites you to the 2012 State Conference at the Seaview Resort and Spa at Gallopway, Apr. 27-29.

In addition, a professional development training course will be held there for any active NJNG officers.

The host command has put together a great program that will include a golf outing on April 27 at the Pines Course at Seaview. Cost information and registration for the golf event can be found at http://nganj.org/events_golfreg.htm.

Registration documents for both the conference and hotel rooms can be obtained by visiting their Website at www.nganj.org/events.htm or contacting the NGANJ by email at nganj@aol.com.

Hiring our Heroes expo

RecruitMilitary, a top full-service military-to-civilian recruiting firm, in cooperation with the American Legion and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce are sponsoring Hiring our Heroes Expo at Philadelphia March 29.

Veteran-friendly employers, franchisors, and educational institutions will be in attendance to offer a variety of opportunities to all veterans, transitioning military personnel, and military family members.

The free event will be held at Lincoln Financial Field, which is located at One Novacare Way, Philadelphia from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

To register for the event, please visit RecruitMilitary's candidate information Web page at <https://events.recruitmilitary.com/events/> or contact Anthony Carney, marketing specialist, at 513-677-7088.

Deadline to Apply for Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay Extended

Soldier, Airmen, Sailor and Marine: You may be entitled to some money from the government.

The deadline for eligible service members, veterans and their beneficiaries to apply for Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay (RSL-SP) has been extended to Oct. 21, 2012, providing those eligible with more time to apply for the pay under the program guidelines.

"Even with extensive outreach efforts, and tremendous support from the President, Congress, the VA, veteran and military service organizations, and friends and family around the world, some qualified individuals have not yet applied," said Juliet Beyler, acting director of Officer and Enlisted Personnel Management. "We highly encourage anyone who may be eligible to apply for this pay; you have earned it."

RSLSP was established to compensate for the hardships military members encountered when their service was involuntarily extended under Stop Loss authority between Sept. 11, 2001, and Sept. 30, 2009. Eligible members or their beneficiaries may submit a claim to their respective military service in order to receive the benefit of \$500 for each full or partial month served in a Stop Loss status.

When RSLSP began on Oct. 21, 2009, the services estimated 145,000 service members, veterans and beneficiaries were eligible for this benefit. Because the majority of those eligible had separated from the military, the services have engaged in extensive and persistent outreach efforts, to include multiple direct mailings, public service announcements, and continuous engagements with military and veteran service organizations, social networks and media outlets.

To apply for the pay, or for more information on RSLSP, including submission requirements and service-specific links, go to <http://www.defense.gov/stoploss>.

**E-mail your Highlights submissions to
wayne.woolley@njdmava.state.nj.us OR armando.vasquez@njdmava.state.nj.us**

HIGHLIGHTS



Firefighters of the 177th Fire Department salute 177th Fighter Wing Commander, Col. Robert C. Bolton, at the end of his final flight on March 10. The 177th, which is part of the New Jersey Air National Guard, is

based at Egg Harbor Township. To see more photos of Bolton's last flight visit the [177th Fighter Wing's Facebook page](#). (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen, 177th Fighter Wing Public Affairs)



Chief Warrant Officer 5 Guy Remig, center, is pinned with his new CW5 rank by Brig. Gen. Michael L. Cunniff, right, the Adjutant General, during a promotion ceremony March 15 at Joint Force Headquarters at Joint

Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst. To see more photos of Remig's promotion ceremony visit our Facebook page by clicking on this link: [New Jersey National Guard](#). (Photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen, DMAVA/PA)



Employers of Soldiers from the New Jersey National Guard participated in an Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Bosslift program to National Guard Training Center at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa., to observe the training of the Soldiers of the 117th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, March 14. The bosslift program offers employers an opportunity to visit military installations throughout the nation to observe National Guard and Reserve members involved in training exercises. Employers see firsthand the quality of training and leadership activities their uniformed employees receive as part of the total force. To view more photos of the bosslift event visit our Facebook page by clicking this link: [New Jersey National Guard](#). (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen, 177th Fighter Wing Public Affairs)

A Welcome Home Ceremony was held for the 119th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, New Jersey Army National Guard, at the Trump Taj Mahal in Atlantic City, March 16. The 119th deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom from February 2011 through February 2012. While in theater, the unit's main body was located in Bagram with personnel co-located in Shindand (Afghanistan), Bagdad (Iraq) and Germany. Collectively they provided direct support to Special Operations Command and performed sustainment operations for a Joint Task Force. To view more photos from the Welcome Home ceremony visit our Facebook page by clicking on this link: [New Jersey National Guard](#). (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen, 177th Fighter Wing Public Affairs)



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