

DMAVA Highlights

Jan. 28, 2010 Volume 12 Number 03



Back To School



Besnik Ahmetaj, center, Head of the Sector for Control of the Territory and Service to Third Parties - (community policing), Albanian Police Headquarters observes Pfc. James Kube, left, during a presentation Memorial Upper Middle School, Willingboro, N.J. Senior members of the Republic of Albania's Department of Education and National Police observed the New Jersey National Guard's Counterdrug Task Force's Drug Education Team perform their duties at Willingboro on Jan. 28. The Albanian delegation came to New Jersey to observe and study the New Jersey National Guard's Counterdrug Task Force's Drug Education program from Jan. 25 to the 29. Albania is implementing a similar program to educate Albanian children on the hazards of drug abuse. *Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA.*

Jersey Aviators show their mettle in Iraq

By Sgt. Wayne Woolley, DMAVA Public Affairs Specialist

The hoopla of their War Memorial homecoming over, the Soldiers of the 1st Battalion of the 1-150th Assault Helicopter Battalion and Detachment I, Bravo Company, 628th Aviation Support Battalion, are settling back into life in New Jersey and shaking away those last bits of Iraqi dust.

The staff of DMAVA Highlights caught up to the two commanders, Col. John W. Scannell and Capt. John Pellington, last week as their troops unit went through demobilization at Fort Dix.

Scannell said the assault helicopter battalion overcame big hurdles to be ready for the Iraq deployment. Although the unit deployed to Iraq in 2005, attrition had left it with a severe shortage of pilots in command, air mission commanders and door gunners. At one point early in pre-mobilization, trainers gave the unit's leaders this blunt assessment: "You guys will never be ready."

"I knew on paper, they were correct, we had a lot of holes," Scannell recalled.

He knew something else: "We had the kind of people who would develop a plan then make it happen." He was right. The unit finished its Iraq deployment with kudos spanning the various chains of command and from all components and branches.

In the end, the Jersey aviators were able to transport more than 11,000 Soldiers and Marines and give them a break from navigating Iraq's dangerous roads.

The unit had a 96 percent mission launch rate, a major accomplishment in a place that's synonymous with sandy grit.

Scannell said he was most proud that the battalion, which numbered about 250 troops, helped other units that came through its base near Al Kut, about 80 miles southeast of Baghdad. The battalion helped other units track down their mail, fix their equipment and use their medical clinic.

"We took in a lot of stray cats," Scannell said. "Anybody who came to our door, we helped out."

The 31-Soldier aviation support detachment also enjoyed plenty of success, according to Pellington.

That unit overcame inexperience among its ranks and went on to perform several maintenance feats no one in Army aviation had seen in Iraq in a long time.

The unit completed full salvage operations on three downed aircraft – the first in Iraq since 2004. The full salvage operation meant collecting the wrecked helicopters from the desert floor – and then transporting the birds to a depot and then orchestrating a complete mechanical overhaul. All three of the aircraft – UH-60 Blackhawks – flew again. Two of the Blackhawks, which had collided, needed the entire rear portion rebuilt, a feat the Jersey troops performed in less than two months.

"They did some pretty amazing work under some real tough conditions," Pellington said.

State Info

Overview, consultations on State Differed Compensation

By Paul Serdiuk, HR Training Coordinator

Mike McConnell, from Prudential Financial, will be at DMAVA Central Office on Feb. 17, in Conference Room A, to discuss some new changes in the State Differed Compensation Program.

A short overview will be given starting at 9:30 a.m. and finishing at 10 a.m. Scheduled 30 minute one-on-one consultations will be available from 10 a.m. until noon and then from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Please contact Paul Serdiuk at 609-530-6878, to reserve a time slot.

Menlo Park staff spreads cheer

From the desk of Joseph Brandspiegel, CEO of the Menlo Park Memorial Home

Once again, the spirit of giving was alive and well at the Menlo Park Memorial Home over the Holiday Season. The staff and residents collected and contributed a large number of toys to the National Guard Family Programs staff. In addition, the president and vice president of the home's Resident Council visited the East Jersey State Prison in Rahway to discuss long-term care activities at the home. Finally, the staff worked hard to distribute gifts to the residents, ranging from electric shavers, watches, warm blankets to cardigans emblazoned with the Menlo logo. Our recreation Therapy Department in coordination with our own volunteers from the DAR have been worked long hours to identify each gift with the resident's name and package all gifts for proper distribution.

Governors official photos are ready

The official photos of Gov. Chris Christie are ready for the armories. Please send an e-mail to Barbara.harbison@njdmava.state.nj.us with the unit, address and person to whom the picture should be mailed. If you need more than one for your facility, let us know.

DMAVA Green

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

Did your resolutions for 2010 include exercise? When you pulled that old exercise/yoga mat out of the closet, did replacement cross your mind? Don't throw it in the trash, recycle it when you buy a new mat.

Visit these two Web sites to find information about where to drop your old mat so it can be made into new mats or sent to a yoga center where students in need can use it. Try www.recycleyourmat.com or <http://www.jadeyoga.com/store/pages.php?pageid=5>.

They ask that you clean your mat before you drop it off. Here are directions from Recycle Your Mat. If your mat is lightly soiled, use a spray bottle, damp sponge, or terry cloth rag to apply a solution of two cups of water and four drops of dish soap. Rub the soiled areas. Wipe the mat with clean water; then rub with a dry terry cloth towel. Hang to air dry.

If your mat is heavily soiled, submerge it in a solution of warm water and mild detergent; use very little soap as any residue may cause the mat to become slippery during future use. Thoroughly hand wash the mat and rinse in clean water. After squeezing out the excess water, lay the mat on a dry towel and roll the mat and towel together. Stepping on the rolled up mat will squeeze more moisture out of the mat and into the towel. Then unroll and hang to air dry.

Visit <http://life.gaiam.com/gaiam/p/50WaystoReuseYourYogaFitnessMatBestidea.html> or <http://dailycupofyoga.wordpress.com/2009/11/07/43-creative-ways-to-reuse-or-recycle-your-old-yoga-mat/> for suggestions on ways to reuse your yoga mat. There are a number of interesting ideas to make use of your mat and keep it out of the landfill.

So don't feel guilty when you buy a new mat, just make sure you recycle or reuse the old one.

Keep Green!

Quotes

In the case of good books, the point is not to see how many of them you can get through, but rather how many can get through to you.

--Mortimer Jerome Adler

It is only rarely that one can see in a little boy the promise of a man, but one can almost always see in a little girl the threat of a woman.

--Alexander Dumas

Our repugnance to death increases in proportion to our consciousness of having lived in vain.

--William Hazlitt

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Sgt. Wayne Woolley – Public Affairs Specialist

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

Families

Free community nights at Franklin Institute

The Franklin Institute is introducing Target Community Nights at the Franklin Institute – free educational and fun-filled science nights, from 5-8 p.m., sponsored by Target. Everyone is welcome: join the fun and experience The Franklin Institute's exhibitions, special programs and themed activities.

Activities include FREE:

Access to all of The Franklin Institute's hands-on exhibits like Sports Challenge and The Giant Heart; tickets to the Tuttleman IMAX Theater; 3D shows in The Franklin Theater; live science shows; Fels Planetarium shows; and access to the Joel N. Bloom observatory. The monthly schedule varies and not all community nights offer free IMAX tickets, nor are the free IMAX tickets for feature length films.

The dates of the 2010 Target Community Nights are: Feb. 17, March 17, April 21, June 16, July 21, Aug. 18, Sept. 15, Oct. 20 and Nov. 17.

You will be asked to register when you arrive; the registration desk opens at 5 p.m.

West Point band schedules two visits to local area

If you are interested in hearing the West Point Band, check out their schedule at www.westpoint.edu/band.

In the next few months, their schedule includes two visits to our area. On March 12, the Concert Band will perform at 7:30 p.m. at Asplundh Hall, West Chester University, West Chester, Penn. On April 1, at 7:30 p.m., the Jazz Knights will perform with trombonist Conrad Herwig at Patriots Theater, Trenton.

Visit their Web site for a complete listing of performances, information about the band and audio clips.

Bucky's at Picatinny Arsenal is looking for live bands

Do you have a band? Bucky's at Picatinny Arsenal is looking for live bands to play on Thursday nights, 5-8 p.m.

If you are interested, call Scott Miller, 973-724-5649, cell phone 201-874-2549, or e-mail scott.f.miller1@us.army.mil.

State Family Programs

101 Eggert Crossing Road, Lawrenceville
Toll-free number 1-888-859-0352
Family Assistance – 609-530-6834/6884
State Youth Coordinator – 609-530-6836
Military Family Life consultants – 609-530-6835/6886
Yellow Ribbon Program – 609-530-6846/6853/6859
Military OneSource 1-800-342-9647; NJ 609-530-6867
Fax – 609-530-6871

July 11-17 slated for 2010 NJ Guard Youth Camp

Applications are now available for the 2010 New Jersey National Guard Youth Camp being held at Sea Girt, July 11-17. To download an application, go to: http://www.state.nj.us/military/familysupport/youth_camp.html or contact your nearest Family Assistance Center.

Registration open for 9-week summer camp at Picatinny

Picatinny Arsenal offers a nine-week summer camp program for military families, DoD civilians and contractors. Children need to have finished kindergarten and up to middle school ages are eligible for the program.

There are weekly field trips, swim lessons at Frog Falls, free swim time, 4-H clubs, and Boys and Girls Club activities, sports, arts and crafts, computer time, special events, team building activities and more.

Military family registration began Jan. 13 and DoD civilian/contractor started Jan. 27 for the lottery. The 2010 lottery will be drawn Feb. 10 at 9 a.m. at the teen center, building 3228. For more information call School Age Services at 973-724-5555.

Try your steps at line dancing Jan. 29

Spend an evening learning how to line dance or just showing off your current skills. Cannon Gate Catering, Picatinny Arsenal, is featuring Country Line Dancing with Music by the M's on Jan. 29, starting at 6 p.m.

Cost is \$15 per person and includes a buffet with barbecue beef brisket, fried chicken, Cajun catfish, cornbread and a cash bar. Call 973-724-2582 for reservations.

Check out Blue Star Flag Program

Grantham University's Blue Star Flag program has been providing Blue Star Flags to Service members and their families since 2006. Grantham University is also offering scholarships and grants to Servicemembers and veterans. For further information about the Blue Star Flag program, please go to: <http://www.mybluestar-flag.com>.

Military and family members health insurance questions should be directed to:
Tricare – Sgt. 1st Class Louis Tuck, 609-562-0865
US Family Health Plans – Pam Worley, 732-977-8531
VA Medical – Michelle Stefanelli, 973-676-1000, ext. 1727

Sports & More

It's time to start thinking about VACATION!!!!

Disney World Armed Forces Salute

From January 3 to July 31, 2010, active and retired U.S. military, including members of the U.S. Coast Guard and active members of the National Guard or Reserves, may purchase 4-day Walt Disney World Armed Forces Salute Tickets for themselves and up to five family members and/or friends for \$99.

The base ticket is valid for four days of admission into one of the four Walt Disney World theme parks. The Park Hopper option allows guests to visit more than one park each day. The Water Park and More option gives guests a total of four visits to a choice of a Disney water park, DisneyQuest Indoor Interactive theme park or certain other attractions.

During this offer period, active or retired U.S. military personnel may make a one-time purchase of up to a maximum of five 4-day companion tickets (one theme park per day) for \$99 per ticket, for family members (including spouse) or friends. Although this ticket for family members and friends does not include either the Park Hopper or Water Park Fun & More options, this ticket can be upgraded to add either such option, or both, for an additional \$25, per option. All tickets and options are non-transferable and must be activated by Sept. 26, 2010. Block out dates March 12-April 9 in all locations; July 3-4 in Magic Kingdom only. Tickets are available for purchase at Shades of Green beginning Jan. 3.

Busch Garden program for military

"Here's to the Heroes," a program sponsored by Anheuser-Busch, provides free admission in 2010 for any active duty, active reserve, National Guardsman or ready reserve servicemember representing any of the five service branches and as many as three of his or her direct dependents. All servicemembers need to do is register online at www.herosalute.com or in the entrance plaza of a participating park, and show a Department of Defense (DoD) photo identification. Each pass is valid for a one-day admission per person per year to five of Anheuser-Busch's seven theme park brands.

Waterpark opens May 29

Opening May 29 is Frog Falls Waterpark. The waterpark, located at Picatinny Arsenal boasts over 520,000 gallons of water adventures. The facility includes two high-velocity slides, six 25-yard lap lanes, a zero-depth entry leisure pool, a lazy river and a child activity pool with its own activities for our littlest guests.

Frog Falls is a membership only facility open to active duty, Reserve and National Guard military personnel and their dependents; Picatinny civilian employees and their dependents, contractors working on Picatinny as well as members of our partner communities residing in Rockaway Township, Rockaway Borough, Jefferson, Wharton, Denville, Dover, Roxbury, Mine Hill, West Milford, Sparta and Boonton. Through the Army's "Always a Soldier Program," military veterans as well as Morris County First Responders and their dependents are also authorized membership.

For membership information and more, visit <http://www.pica.army.mil/mwr/MWR/AquaticPark/FrogFallsSite/home.htm>. Military personnel and their dependents are allowed to pay a daily fee of \$3 a person with valid ID card. Sponsorship and care giver memberships are also available.

Sea World tickets

Explore the wild world of animals at Sea World with more than 200 acres of world-class shows, thrilling rides and unforgettable animal adventures. There are new state-of-the-art rides such as "Kraken" and "Journey to Atlantis" to twist, turn and drench guest with unprecedented thrills while amazing the family with encounters with killer whales, dolphins, sea lions, stingrays and more.

For discounted tickets for military members, visit the Picatinny Arsenal ITR "Take Off" Center in building 34 or call 973-724-4014/4186. They are open Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Ticket prices for Sea World are \$64 for adults and \$56 for children ages 3-9.

Universal Orlando Military Salute

Universal Orlando's Military Salute offers one free 2-Park Unlimited Admission ticket to all U.S. active duty (including all National Guard and Reservists) and retired military service members with valid military IDs at all base Morale Welfare and Recreation travel and ticket offices. In addition the military member or their dependents can purchase additional 2-Park Unlimited Admission tickets at a substantial discount for family members and friends. Offer expires March 26, 2010.



Military Appreciation special rates for skiers, snowboarders

Military Appreciation ski and snowboarding specials are available from the Big Boulder and Jack Frost Ski areas for all military, spouse, dependents (under age 18), reservists and retirees with current military ID, current military spouse ID, and a current military dependant ID for ages 10 and up. A current military ID is required for all persons purchasing a snow pass and/or rentals. Military rates are:

- Monday-Friday (Non-holiday): \$20 snow pass, \$20 rentals
- Weekend and Holiday: \$30 snow pass, \$20 rentals

All Military snow passes must be purchased at Guest Services. This offer cannot be combined with any other discounts. The Big Boulder and Jack Frost Ski resorts are operated by Peak Resorts and are located in Lake Harmony and Blakeslee, Penn., within minutes of each other. For more information about hours of operations, facilities, directions and events you can visit their website online at: <http://www.jfbb.com>.

Veterans & Military

Post extends invitation to Jewish war veterans

An invitation is extended to any Soldier or Airman of the Jewish faith to join the Specialist Marc Seiden Post 444 of the Jewish War Veterans. The veterans meet on the third Thursday of the month at the Twin Rivers library located in East Windsor, N.J. Spc. Seiden was a resident of Twin Rivers and the first Jewish soldier to die in the Iraq War. The post was renamed last April in his name.

Post 444 covers Mercer County and some of the surrounding areas. Anyone interested in joining this post or a similar post should contact Larry Rosenthal Larry.S.Rosenthal@us.army.mil, LSR1950@hotmail.com, or 609-888-0646.



OneSource offers tax services

From the desk of retired Command Sgt. Maj. Mike Hughes, Family Assistance Specialist

Starting January 18, Military OneSource brings you H&R Block At Home® online tax filing (formerly TaxCut), plus tax consultations by phone — free to service members and their spouses.

PLEASE NOTE: On January 18, 2010, the Military OneSource site will provide a link to the customized H&R Block At Home® product. Please wait until this link is posted on Military OneSource and use that link to access the customized product and create your account.

Do not go to the public H&R Block Web site to create a user account. If you create your account on the H&R Block Web site instead of through the Military OneSource site, the H&R Block system will treat your account as a public account. This means that you will receive the public version of the product instead of the customized Military OneSource product. The public version of it is not the same as the customized Military OneSource product and it is not free.

Veterans Organizations contact information

State Veterans Service Council
Richard Clark, RJClark21@msn.com
BG William C. Doyle Cemetery Advisory Council
William Rakestraw, warjnj@msn.com
Veterans Hotlines
Benefits and Entitlements
1-888-8NJ-VETS (1-888-865-8387)
Mental Health
1-866-VETS-NJ4 (1-866-838-7654)

Warrants, mechanics needed

From the desk of Command Chief Warrant Officer Robert Richardson
The New Jersey Army National Guard has a key opportunity for aspiring Warrant Officers. The Signal Corps has a need for Warrant Officers. If you or anyone you know is interested in becoming a Warrant in this MOS, contact me at: Robert.j.Richardson@us.army.mil In addition, there are openings for full-time employment on the Reset Team for 63 Bravo mechanics. Contact me if you hold the MOS and are interested.

Army needs scientific minds For eCybermission judging

The Army is looking for volunteers with a background or interest in science, technology, engineering, math or education to virtually judge a nationwide competition open to students in the sixth through ninth grades. Now in its eighth year, eCYBERMISSION is a free, web-based, science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) competition that allows students to work together to solve a problem in their community while using the scientific method. Virtual Judges are responsible for scoring student project submissions, known as Mission Folders, on the eCYBERMISSION web site. Virtual Judge registration is open through Friday, Feb 26, 2010, at www.ecybermission.com. Michael Lombardi, Research, Development and Engineering Command Program Manager for eCYBERMISSION, urges Americans to serve their country by registering to volunteer. "America's future competitiveness and national security rests partly on our leadership in STEM education. Virtual Judges are in a position to promote these important skills among our next generation of leaders."

Virtual Judges are of vital importance to the success of eCYBERMISSION, and choose to volunteer because they:

- Believe promoting STEM education to America's youth is important to our nation's continued global competitiveness;
- Enjoy supporting and volunteering for an education-related community service activity;
- Want to contribute their expertise in a fun and unique way to the next generation of America's leaders;
- Are interested in discovering how today's students learn and apply math, science and technology in a school setting; and
- Enjoy the flexibility of volunteering online at their convenience during the Regional and Alternate Judging periods, from March 1 through March 29, 2010..

Virtual Judges get to experience firsthand the scientific talent and passion of students nationwide. eCYBERMISSION gives students from all backgrounds a chance to compete and win up to \$8,000 in U.S. EE Savings Bonds, and Virtual Judges have the opportunity to determine the winners based on their Mission Folder submissions. Since the competition's inception in 2002, the U.S. Army has awarded more than \$6.7 million in prize money, and over 58,000 students have participated.

Prospective Virtual Judges can learn more and register to volunteer at www.ecybermission.com More information is also available by calling 1-866-GO-CYBER (462-9237) or by e-mailing volunteerprogram@ecybermission.com.

Calendar

Watch them dunk the ball!

Rutgers University basketball invites all military members as well as first responders to buy tickets to two upcoming games at the reduced rate of \$5.

The first is at 7:30 p.m. on Feb. 2 when the men's' squad faces off against St. John's University. The second opportunity for reduced tickets is on March 1, when the Lady Knights play Louisville at 7:30.

Rutgers has dubbed the games "Heroes Nights."

For more information, please call the Rutgers Ticket Office at 866-445-GORU or email marketing@scarletknights.com.

Catch the Jersey Devils icing the competition

Picatinny Arsenal Family Morale Welfare and Recreation Events has tickets to see the New Jersey Devils at the Prudential Center, Newark.

Tickets are \$36. That includes upper level seats – exact seat location is unknown but usually near the ends – and a \$10 food & beverage card. That's a \$66 value for only \$36!

See the Devils skate against the Philadelphia Flyers on Feb. 10. Reservations are by paid sign up only. The sooner you sign up, the better. You may stop by the "Take Off" Center in building 34 at Picatinny or call 973-724-4014 and put your order on your Visa or Mastercard. Deadline is Feb. 3, 3 p.m. Call 973-724-4014 for more information.

North Jersey AUSA chapter holding social event on Feb. 2

The Northern New Jersey Chapter 1502 of the Association of the United States Army is holding a cocktail and social gathering on Feb. 2, 6 p.m., at the Vienna 60 Restaurant, 375 Park Avenue, Scotch Plains.

Menu for the event is hors d'oeuvres with a cash bar. Cost is \$10 per person and dress is business attire.

Please RSVP by Jan. 22 to retired Col. Richard F. Plechner, 739-549-1535.

Guard families holding Band of Brothers Memorial Poker Run

The families of the four New Jersey Army National Guard Soldiers who were killed in Iraq in June 2004 are honoring the memory of their fallen heroes with the Band of Brothers Memorial Poker Run which will be held on June 6, 2010.

The families are asking for their friends' and communities help and support with the event. All donations – monetary or otherwise – will be greatly appreciated and acknowledged on the day of the event. All donations are tax deductible. Individuals or organizations donating \$1,000 or more will have their names listed on the Run T-shirt.

All profits will be divided among the Friends of Frank Carvill Foundation, the SGT Ryan E. Doltz Memorial Foundation and the Duffy and Timoteo families.

For more information visit www.RememberingRyan.org.

Marriage enrichment on the way

From the desk of Marie Durling, Deputy Director, Family Programs

We have three Strong Bonds Marriage Enrichment seminars coming up. The first is Feb. 12 to 14 at the Sheraton in Atlantic City. The second will be at a to-be-determined location in Central Jersey on April 8 to 11 and the one after that will be somewhere in North Jersey on May 14 to 16. We will announce the locations as soon as they become available. Seats are available for Soldiers and Airmen and their significant others, but priority goes to personnel returning from deployment and those who have not attended in the past. Contact me at marie.durling@us.army.mil or 609-530-6884 for registration forms.

In other news, Family Programs is holding a deployment briefing for the finance unit in Flemington on Feb. 6 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Amici Milano's hall.

We are also working on getting tickets for Great Adventure at the reduced rate of \$21. Finally, we have a date for Youth Camp, it's July 11 to 17. For more information about that, contact me or visit our Website: www.state.nj.us/military/familysupport/

H1N1 Vaccinations Offered

DMAVA Employees who would like to get the H1N1 Flu shot may get it at Sea Girt, Building 26 from 2:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Feb. 1

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.

February 2*, 3, 4 Monmouth Mall

March 2*, 3, 4 Bridgewater Commons Mall

April 6*, 7, 8 Paramus Park Mall

*Medal ceremony at 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.