




The State of New Jersey
 Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
 Governor Phil Murphy Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver

Army Guard Air Guard Veterans Administration Leadership Youth Challenge Sitemap

DMAVA Highlights » 13 March 2008

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Volume 8, Number 11

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NJ Advisory Committee for Women Veterans
 Mrs. Anna Hoffman
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BG Willam C. Doyle Cemetery Advisory Council
 Mr. William Rakestraw
warjrnj@msn.com

Veterans Hotlines

Benefits & Entitlements
 1-888-8NJ-VETS
 (1-888-865-8387)

Mental Health
 1-866-VETS-NJ4
 (1-866-838-7654)

Wounded Soldier and Family Hotline

1-800-984-8523

DMAVA Highlights Archive


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NJ World War II Memorial

For information or to make a donation, call 609-530-7049

[WWII Memorial on the web](#)



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NJ Embedded Team graduates Afghan Police class

Story by Petty Officer 1st Class David M. Votroubek CSTC-A Public Affairs

New Jersey's Master Sgt. John Welgos congratulated 143 newly-trained Afghan National Police (ANP) policemen at their graduation Feb. 21 in Herat, Afghanistan. This group might prove to be the best in Afghanistan, according to Col. James Klingaman, the commander of Afghanistan Regional Security Integration Command-West. This was the first class of ANP for the focused district development (FDD) initiative to be trained in Herat.

The FDD initiative is a reform by the Afghan Ministry of Interior which will improve policing in Afghanistan, district by district. It was developed by the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan to address issues of inadequate training, poor equipment and corruption that made it difficult for the police to provide public safety and internal security.

After graduation, the policemen go back to their districts. They won't go back alone, however. A police mentoring team comprised of U.S. Soldiers – among them, New Jersey Army National Guard's Embedded Training Team – will be there to help them use their newly taught policing skills. Master Sgt. Welgos is the senior enlisted mentor for that team. He reminded the graduating class of their responsibility to protect the public. "The eyes of the people will watch you closely," he said. "Stay on the path of good."

Herstory - Women's History Month

From the desk of Dorinda K. Sapp, Affirmative Action Officer

In continuing to celebrate "Women's Herstory Month," this week DMAVA recognizes major accomplishments and female contributions to military service. DMAVA celebrates the contributions of women service members and their importance to the nation in the past, present and future.

Beginning with the early pioneers, who were almost never recognized, here are some of the military women of achievement and their accomplishments.

The First to Receive Medals

The first, and only, woman to receive [The Medal of Honor](#) was **Dr. Mary E. Walker**, a contract surgeon during the Civil War.

The first woman to receive [The Purple Heart](#) was **Annie G. Fox** while serving at Hickam Field during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Dec. 7, 1941.

The first woman to receive [The Bronze Star](#) was **1st Lt. Cordelia E. Cook**, Army Nurse Corps, during World War II in Italy. Lt Cook was also awarded The Purple Heart, becoming the first woman to receive two awards.

Lt Edith Greenwood was awarded [The Soldiers Medal](#) in 1943 for heroism during a fire at a military hospital in Yuma Arizona - the first woman to receive this award. The first woman to receive The Air Medal was **Lt Elsie S. Ott** awarded for her actions in 1943 as an air evac nurse.

Barbara Olive Barnwell was the first woman awarded the [Navy-Marine Corps Medal](#) for heroism in 1953. Barbara Barnwell, a Staff Sgt. from Pittsburgh

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Sgt. Barb Harbison

Deadline is noon Wednesday

Staff Sgt. Barbara Harbison
barbara.harbison@njdmava.state.nj.us
Or Call 609-530-7088

Phone numbers and Web sites to remember

Directory Assistance:

1-602-293-4907

Verizon Super Pages:

<http://www.superpages.com>

AT&T: <http://www.anywho.com/>

SBC Yellow Pages:

<http://www.yellowpages.com/>

Telephone and contact
information on state employees
can be found at

<http://njdirect.state.nj.us/>

DMAVA Emergency Hotline:

1-866-232-5798

Quotes for the Week

If men were angels, no government
would be necessary.

- James Madison

How do you make a million? You start
with \$900,000.

- Stephen Lewis

He that can have patience can have
what he will.

- Benjamin Franklin

He that loves reading has everything
within his reach.

- William Godwin

Pennsylvania and a member of the Marine Reserve, saved a soldier from drowning
in 1952.

Colonel Oveta Culp Hobby was the first Director of the WAC (Women's Army
Core) and the first to receive The U.S. Army Distinguished Service Medal in 1945.

The First to Enlist

Philadelphian **Loretta Walsh** enlisted in March of 1917 and became the first
Yeoman (F) in the Navy.

Twin sisters **Genevieve and Lucille Baker** joined the Coast Guard in 1917.

In August of 1918 **Opha M. Johnson** enlisted as the first woman in the U.S.
Marine Corps Reserve.

Sgt. Esther M. Blake is considered the "first woman in the Air Force" having
enlisted in the first minute of the first hour of the first day the regular Air Force
was authorized. This took place on the July 8, 1948, at Fort McPhearson, Ga.,
where Sgt. Blake was stationed as a member of the WAC. By enlisting in the Air
Force she became the first WAF - which by the way stood for Women in the Air
Force

The First Military Woman Physician

Military commissions for women doctors were nonexistent prior to World War II. In
1940, American Medical Women's Association petitioned the AMA for support in
changing the law excluding women from the military reserves. Previously the AMA
supported the military rank of women nurses but declined to lend support for
women physicians. It wasn't until 1943, when the physician supply could not keep
up with the demand as the Army increased by thirtyfold, that the AMA and the
Army and Navy Surgeon General withdrew their objections. The law was signed on
April 16, 1943, and the first woman to be commissioned into the Army Medical
Corps, Dr. Margaret D. Craighill, was given the rank of major.

Buy tickets for belly-filling breakfast

Tickets are available to the "Support the Troops Pancake Breakfast." John Hastings
in Installations Division, 609-530-7124, has tickets to the breakfast which will be
held at the Lawrenceville Armory on Sunday, April 13, 7 a.m.-1 p.m. Cost is \$7 for
adults and \$5 for children under 10.

Proceeds of this event will benefit the State Family Readiness Council. We hope
everyone will support this worthwhile event.

Latest Guardlife on Web site

Find the latest edition of Guardlife on the DMAVA Web site. Click on
<http://www.nj.gov/military/publications/guardlife/volume33no5/index.html>
to check it out.

Sell your stuff at yard sale at Woodstown armory

From the desk of Michele Daisey, Woodbury Family Assistance Center

The Woodstown Armory FRG (Delta Co., 1/114th IN) is hosting a Support Our
Troops-Craft Sale/Yard Sale on Saturday, April 12, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The armory is located at 501 North Main St. Woodstown. Large 10' x 20' spaces
are available for \$15 per space, bring your own table, or \$25 for space and table.
To reserve a space please call 856-718-0299 (ask for Peggy).

Get more info on the Yard/Craft Sale by calling the Woodbury Family Assistance
Center at 856-251-6893. Thanks for your support!

114th Regimental Association golf outing May 12

From the desk of Michele Daisey, Woodbury Family Assistance Center

The Regimental Assoc. would like to invite all to join them for an awards luncheon
and golf outing to benefit the Woodbury Family Readiness Group.

All things are cause for either laughing or weeping.

- Latin proverb

The 1st Annual 114th Regimental Association Golf Outing will be held May 12, at the Pitman Golf Course, 501 Pitman Road, Sewell, NJ. Registration begins at 7:30 a.m., shotgun start at 9 a.m. with a 18-hole scramble format. The entry fee is \$95, cocktails and lunch is only \$45. There are also sponsorship opportunities available. For more information on the golf outing and sponsorship opportunities, contact: Horace MacAdams, Regimental Association Rep., 856-779-0610, exarmy@earthlink.com; Robert Nordaby, Regimental Assoc. Rep., 856-981-8338, RNordaby@verizon.net; or Karen Russell, FRG Fundraiser Rep., 856-430-0852, KGabby@hotmail.com.

Brochures and flyers are also available through the Woodbury FAC, 856-251-6893. For more info on the course visit: www.co.gloucester.nj.us/golf.

DISCOM alumni golf outing, July 10 in Princeton

Come join the 15th Annual New Jersey Army National Guard DISCOM Alumni golf outing on Thursday, July 10 at the Bunker Hill Golf Course, Princeton. Cost is \$100 and the shotgun start is 8 a.m. The cost includes you fees, cart, refreshment cart on the course, awards, door prizes, burgers and dogs at the turn and luncheon after the game.

Checks, made payable to DISCOM Alumni Assoc. are due no later than July 4, to Alumni Golf, PO Box 262, Belleville, NJ 07109-0262.

The association is also looking for cart (\$25) and hole (\$50) sponsors. For more information, contact retired Master Sgt. Roger M. Colarusso Sr., at 973-667-8067.

American Diabetes Alert Day, March 25

From the desk of Ernie Razzano, Health Professions Recruiter

American Diabetes Association "Sounds the Alert" on March 25 On American Diabetes Alert Day. Held annually on the fourth Tuesday in March, the ADA encourages people who are overweight, physically inactive, and over the age of 45 years to take the Diabetes Risk Test.

The Diabetes Risk Test asks seven simple questions about weight, age, lifestyle and family history - all potential risk factors for type 2 diabetes. People scoring 10 points or more are at a high risk for diabetes and are encouraged to schedule an appointment to see their healthcare provider. The Diabetes Risk Test is available in English and Spanish by calling the Association at 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383) or by visiting www.diabetes.org/alert.

New Family Leave related to military service

On January 28, President George W. Bush signed into law the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008 (NDAA), Public Law 110-181. Section 585(a) of the NDAA amended the FMLA to provide eligible employees working for covered employers two important new leave rights related to military service:

☒ **New Qualifying Reason for Leave.** Eligible employees are entitled to up to 12 weeks of leave because of "any qualifying exigency" arising out of the fact that the spouse, son, daughter or parent of the employee is on active duty or has been notified of an impending call to active duty status, in support of a contingency operation. By the terms of the statute, this provision requires the Secretary of Labor to issue regulations defining "any qualifying exigency." In the interim, employers are encouraged to provide this type of leave to qualifying employees.

☒ **New Leave Entitlement.** An eligible employee who is the spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin of a covered servicemember who is recovering from a serious illness or injury sustained in the line of duty on active duty is entitled to up to 26 weeks of leave in a single 12 month period to care for the servicemember. This provision became effective immediately upon enactment. This military caregiver leave is available during "a single 12-month period" during which an eligible employee is entitled to a combined total of 26 weeks of all types of FMLA.

Additional information on the amendments and a version of Title 1 of the FMLA with the new statutory language incorporated is available on the FMLA amendments Web site at http://www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla/NDAA_fmla.htm.

Fed Benefits book available on Web

The 2008 edition of *Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents* is now available for download from the Internet as a PDF.

On the VA Home page (www.va.gov), click on "Benefits Booklet" in the Top Info Requests section on the right-hand side of page.

The popular booklet describing benefits and services available to veterans and their dependents is also available on OPA's Feature Items page (<http://www.va.gov/opa/feature/index.asp>).

Anyone setting links on a Web page or in a newsletter or other document should link to http://www.va.gov/OPA/vadocs/current_benefits.asp, which is a page dedicated exclusively to the booklet. While the booklet will always be available from OPA's Feature Items page, it will not always be at the top of the page, as it is now.

The book is being printed and should be available in printed form in 3 to 4 weeks.

Free tickets to symphony at Carnegie Hall March 19

Complimentary tickets are available for the University of Iowa Symphony at Carnegie Hall, 57th Street & 7th Avenue, New York. The concert will be held Wednesday March 19, at 8 p.m. To reserve tickets call 212/695-6160.

AUSA, OLT unite to support caregivers, spouses

March 1, 2008 - Operation Life Transformed (OLT) is proud to announce the participation of the Association of the United States Army's (AUSA) Family Programs Directorate in their spouse and caregiver scholarship program. AUSA Family Programs has pledged to provide two, \$2000 scholarships through OLT to be used to pay for online training and certification for military spouses and caregivers to our nation's war wounded service members.

AUSA Family Programs is committed to OLT's goal of supporting military families who are managing the long term care of injured service members by providing military spouses and other caregivers with training in careers that fit well with the mobile military lifestyle. Jobs such as medical transcription, coding and billing can move with spouses and are flexible enough to allow caregivers to keep up with the demanding medical schedule of a recovering service member.

About AUSA Family Programs: AUSA Family Programs' mission is to ensure that the interests of Army families are represented in Congress and to provide Army families with information and resources to help them manage the challenges of military life. The Directorate, founded in 1999, is part of the Association of the United States Army, a private, non-profit educational organization that supports America's Army. Learn more at www.ausa.org.

OLT's Executive Director, Tania Mercurio stated, "Support from distinguished organizations like AUSA, confirms to us, that we are providing a service that is certainly needed in the military community and that others, are willing to join us in our mission."

Winners of the AUSA/ OLT scholarships will be announced in the near future.

For more information on Operation Life Transformed and how you can help please see their web site at www.lifetransformed.org and to learn about AUSA Family Programs please go to www.ausa.org/family.

FRG leader training scheduled for April 5

FRG training for leaders will be conducted **April 5** at the Lawrenceville Armory in the Garden Room. Training will begin at 10 a.m. and end at approximately 4 p.m. Lunch will be served from 12:30-1 p.m. Interested FRG Leaders can sign up by contacting Marie Durling by e-mail at marie.durling@nj.ngb.army.mil or call 609-562-0739. Child care will be available for children older than 3 but you must call the office to register a slot for the children.

News For Your Views

Getting economic stimulus payment for seniors

Do you know a senior or low income worker who had at least \$3,000 in earned income in 2007 but do not otherwise earn enough to be required to file a federal tax return? This year they need to file in order to receive the economic stimulus payment in the spring. If they received \$3,000 in Social Security or Railroad Retirement or Veteran's Benefits in 2007, they will report that amount on line 20a of Form 1040 or on line 14a of Form 1040A. Check out the IRS web site at <http://www.irs.gov/irs/article /0,,id=177937,00.html> for more information on the stimulus program.

Tax season help for military members

We are now in the midst of tax season and preparing for the check that Uncle Sam will send our way or digging down to find the \$\$\$ to pay those taxes owed. Here are some tips from various sources to help when it comes to filing.

Review your return before sending it off to the tax man – common problems, especially for paper returns are missing signatures and incorrect Social Security numbers.

The Internal Revenue Service Publication 3, titled, "Armed Forces' Tax Guide" is available at www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p3.pdf.

By visiting the IRS Web site – www.irs.gov – and clicking on the "Individuals" button in the upper left of the screen, you can then find information on military issues in two ways. First, there will be a "Military" button that will show on the line right under the "Individuals" button. Second, scroll down the page to the "Tax Information for Members of the U.S. Armed Forces" button.

For Your Calendar

Museum gala set for May 17 at Lawrenceville

The Foundation for the National Guard Militia Museum of New Jersey invites everyone to support the First Annual Gala which will benefit the museum and its mission.

The Lawrenceville Armory is the setting for the gala on **May 17**. Tickets cost \$75 per person. Tables of 10 cost \$750 and include special recognition at the event.

Other ways to support the gala include –

Become an advertiser or booster sponsor in the gala's souvenir commemorative ad journal

Donate a gift or service that can be auctioned off during their Silent Auction or Live Auction during the event.

If you would like to purchase tickets, place an ad in the journal or have an item for the auctions, contact Bob Dennin at denninr@oponline.net or retired Col. Donald Kale at the Lawrenceville museum, 609-530-6802.

All proceeds from the event will directly benefit the museum. Your support of the event will help the museum to continue to tell the story of the military history in New Jersey, and the New Jersey Army and Air National Guard.

Great Adventure's Military Appreciation Day is May 17

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

Great Adventure Military Appreciation Day will be on Armed Forces Day, Saturday, May 17. There will be meal vouchers for \$9.50 each which can be used at six of the food vendors in the park. Tickets will be available for Great Adventure on April 15 in the State Family Programs Office. Tickets are good for the Theme Park and the Safari. The price of each ticket is \$20.

HRD presents seminars for training

From the desk of Paul Serdiuk, DMAVA Human Resources Division

The Human Resources Division is offering a number of free seminars presented by the Human Recourse Training Section. Reservations are needed for each seminar; contact Paul Serdiuk at 609-530-6878 or at paul.serdiuk@njdmava.state.nj.us. All seminars will be held in Conference Room A at DMAVA Central Office. All are welcomed.

May 7: State Deferred Compensation – Mike McConnell from Prudential Financial will meet with State employees to discuss their participation and contributions to their deferred compensation account. A 30 minute consultation will be scheduled per each employee.

May 15: Preventing Identity Theft – A representative from the Department of Banking and Insurance will present a one hour overview on what you can do to prevent identity theft and what to do if you should become a victim of identity theft.

June 12: Automobile Insurance – We all have it, are required to have it, but do we really know what it is about? A representative from the Department of Banking and Insurance will present a one hour overview on what you need to know about automobile insurance in New Jersey, decipher many of the terms and jargon of your policies and give an overview of what a policy should include in it to protect you.

Sep. 17: State Deferred Compensation – Mike McConnell from Prudential Financial will meet with State employees to discuss their participation and contributions to their deferred compensation account. A 30 minute consultation will be scheduled per each employee.

Pancake breakfast slated for April 13

The National Guard State Family Readiness Council, American Legion post 414 and the Lawrence Township Lions Club are proudly sponsoring a "Support the Troops Pancake Breakfast" with all proceeds going to support the Soldiers and families of the New Jersey National Guard State Family Readiness Council. For tickets or additional information, please call 609-771-4143, 609-882-2675 or 609-989-9162.

Date: Sunday, **April 13**, 2008

Time: 7 a.m.-1 p.m.

Place: National Guard Armory
151 Eggert Crossing Road
Lawrenceville, NJ

Price: \$7 for adults and \$5 for children under 10 years old.

Note: Tax-free donations can be sent to:
National Guard State Family Readiness Council
PO Box 5692
Trenton, NJ 08638-0692

Military Training, Schools, Opportunities

RTS-Maintenance offers training to Army Guard members

The Regional Training Site-Maintenance provides maintenance and logistics education under The Total Army School System. The RTSM is a subordinate unit to the 254th Regiment RTI. It utilizes automated and current force modernization equipment systems to support Active, Reserve and National Guard soldiers. As a fully accredited schoolhouse it offers military occupational skill classification, additional skill identifiers, sustainment and transition training. Its charge is to provide instruction to non-commissioned officers under the non-commissioned officer education system. The mission supports the enabling of Armed Forces Components to mobilize for wartime mission requirements. The overall unit mission helps to support the "Warrior" during the current operational environment and undertake critical missions to win the fight.

Schoolhouse: Regional Training Site-Maintenance

Location of training: Building 3601, Technology Drive, Fort Dix, N.J.

School Code: 967

Unit Phone: 609-562-0566/0568

RTSM (NJ) Team Home Site: <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/468201>
(Army Knowledge Online (AKO) password required)

❖ 091-ASIH8 (63B) Wheeled - 2 weeks - 80 hour course:

The course helps students to safely and correctly use/operate wheeled vehicle recovery systems and equipment. Instruction on specialized rigging and recovery wheeled vehicle techniques is given throughout the course. Students conduct towing and winching of wheel vehicles to include self-recovery. A mini-field training exercise is part of the course. Note: E5s and below receive an Additional Skill Identifier (ASI) of H8. E6 and above receive a Certificate of Training and cannot be awarded the H8 ASI. The student must possess a current Civilian and Military Driver's License.

❖ 131-F13 Small Group Instructor Course - 1 week - 40 hour course:

This course is for personnel assigned as instructors or to improve instructional techniques. The one week intense course focuses on learning the basic techniques of monitoring, questioning and facilitating small group discussions in a military setting. Emphasis is placed on presenting issues and finding solutions using the small class setting. The students will learn effective use of written, verbal and management techniques to improve public speaking and presentation skills.

254th Regiment announces upcoming courses

Here are the 254th Regiment courses that are on the calendar. When using ATRRS, the school code is 1004.

Inactive Duty Training (IDT) Courses:

The Army Instructor Training Course, (TAITC)

April 5-June 7, 2008 - 12 openings

Basic NCO Course, (BNCOC)

April 5-Sept. 7, 2008 - 48 openings

Active Duty Training (ADT) Courses:

Company Level Command Team Course (for new Commanders & their 1SGs)

April 12-13, 2008 - 60 openings

11B10 MOS-T Infantryman

May 3-17, 2008 - 34 openings

11B40 Infantryman ANCO

June 7-21, 2008 - 31 openings

If you have any questions, contact Master Sgt. Gary Davidson, 732-974-5912 or gary.davidson@nj.ngb.army.mil.

Honorable Mention

Websites give insight to identity theft

To learn more about identity theft and what your rights are you can visit the following websites:

FTC: www.consumer.gov/idtheft

FBI: www.ifccfbi.gov

ID Theft Resource Center: <http://www.idtheftcenter.org>

Privacy Rights Clearing House: <http://www.privacyrights.org>

NJ Division Consumer Affairs: <http://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov>

NJ Division of Criminal Justice: <http://www.njdcj.org/idtheft.htm>

State Health Benefits Program has new plans

The New Jersey State Health Benefits Program will provide active and retired members with new medical plans effective April 1, 2008.

The SHBP is offering two types of medical plans, a Preferred Provider Organization and Health Maintenance Organizations. Several options are available under each plan. Information can be found at the following web site about the plans, co-pays, costs, and directories: www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/shbp.htm. You can also contact your benefits counselor at DMAVA HRD - Lisa Dandrea, 609-530-6888 or e-mail lisa.dandrea@njdmava.state.nj.us.

Affordable TRICARE benefit for drilling National Guard members

The John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 (P.L. 109-364), enhanced the TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) health plan. Under this new TRS health plan, effective Oct. 1, 2007, certain members of the Selected Reserve may qualify for health care coverage under TRS at \$81 for single coverage and \$253 for family coverage. Selected Reserve members who are enrolled or eligible to enroll in a health benefit plan under chapter 89 of title 5 U.S.C. Federal Employees Health Benefit Program (FEHBP), IRR and ING Soldiers are excluded from purchasing TRS.

Soldiers currently enrolled in the three tier TRS program must have transitioned to the new program by Sept. 30, 2007. For more information or to enroll contact your state representative listed on www.tricare.mil/mybenefit, select the "benefits update" link for the Tricare Reserve Select information page.

N.J. licenses, registration extended for deployed troops

New Jerseyans who are active duty military, including the National Guard and military reserves, serving in the war on terrorism, are eligible for automatic extensions of a valid driver license, registration or inspection expiration dates. Go to www.nj.gov/mvc/ for more information.

Discounts offered for State employees

Are you a state employee looking to save a few \$\$\$?

Visit www.state.nj.us/personnel/discounts/index.htm and you can find a number of businesses who offer discounts to New Jersey state employees. From amusement parks to fitness to computer to phones and lots of other discounts between, you will find many ways to save money. For more information, please contact Cindy Leese at cindy.leese@njdmava.state.nj.us or call 609-530-7056.

For the Families

4-H conference open to middle school students

From the desk of Amanda Balas, State Youth Coordinator

The 2008 New Jersey 4-H Middle School Conference invites youths in grades 6-8 to a one-day leadership conference, "From Today to Tomorrow: Creating Great Leaders."

Held on **May 10**, 9 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. at the Burlington County 4-H office, it gives participants a chance to make new friends and build leadership, goal setting, communication and public speaking skills. Portions of the program include

possibilities to learn about community service, science and state and national opportunities.

For a registration form, call your county 4-H office or e-mail bovitz@njaes.rutgers.edu.

The Burlington County 4-H Office is located at 2 Academy Drive, Westhampton, N.J.

For the kids - tour JT2DC and have lunch on June 7

From the desk of Amanda Balas, State Youth Coordinator

Kids – come tour the Battle Lab – learn about flags, military jobs, weapon marksmanship, walk through the urban, desert and woodland fighting lanes and drive the virtual combat convoy trainer. On **June 7**, from 9:15 a.m. to noon, 30 slots are open for youths 10 and older to tour the Joint Training and Training Development Center (JT2DC) on Fort Dix. Parents may drop children off or walk through with the group. Hot dogs, chips and drinks fill the lunch time menu after the tour. Contact Amanda Balas to register for the tour at Amanda.balas@us.army.mil or 609-562-0742.

Packages of thanks for military kids

From the desk of Amanda Balas, State Youth Coordinator

Celebrate Month of the Military Child in April. Children of New Jersey Guard members can receive a Certificate of Appreciation along with some giveaways as a way of thanking them for being a military child. Parents or guardians must send the request to Amanda Balas at Amanda.balas@us.army.mil or call 609-562-0742. Include the following information: Parent or guardian's name, military member's unit, family e-mail address, children's names and dates of birth and the children's home address. Packages will be mailed directly to the child.

Financial counseling available for deployed service members

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

The Military Housing Assistance Fund (MHAF) helps military families to become homeowners by providing them with grants to assist them with purchasing a home. The Fund also provides financial counseling to members of the National Guard and Reserves, deployed and serving in combat zones overseas, who are having problems meeting their monthly obligations due to their deployment and activation. Learn more at <http://www.militaryhousingassistancefund.org>. The Fund is a project of the Financial Counselors of America (FCA), a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization founded in 1991 to help Americans manage their finances and get out of debt. Visit the FCA website at <http://www.financialcounselors.org>.

Time is near to register for Purple Camps

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

Here is information for families who may be interested in signing their children up for a National Military Family Association (NMFA) Purple Camp this summer. While actual enrollment for the camps will be March 24 - May 5, families can sign up now to receive e-alerts from NMFA regarding the camps and enrollment. To sign up for the alerts, go to the NMFA Web site - <http://www.nmfa.org> – click on blue "Youth Initiatives" link on the left, next click on the red "Operation Purple link, " then sign up for alert (at bottom of page).

A Troop has virtual FRG on AKO

From Patricia Keffer, A Troop FRG member

102 CAV A Troop now has a Virtual FRG (vFRG). This is a Web site that will have useful A Troop information as well as general information. We will be able to share photos, ask questions, share stories and much more. While this will not replace the face-to-face contact that we get from FRG meetings and events this will

provide a connection to those members that are not able to attend in person. One of the best features of our new vFRG is the ability for the soldiers to access the site while they are away. The soldiers will also be able to share and view pictures, stories, and much more. For security reasons the site is restricted to members of AKO. Gaining access is simple; an AKO account is required. For more information on the site or for questions on how to set up an AKO account please email Patricia Keffer at Patricia.Keffer@us.army.mil.

Come visit us at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/511879>.

Strong Bonds program helps strengthen relationships

From the desk of Marie Durling, Family Programs Specialist

Soldiers or Airmen (Army and Air Guard) and their significant others are encouraged to attend one of the upcoming Strong Bonds. Soldiers will attend in a paid SUTA status and all expenses are paid. These seminars have been extremely successful and are designed to strengthen relationships. The cost of the hotel and meals and literature are paid for by NGB.

The seminars are not therapy sessions or encounter groups nor are they for sharing your personal concerns. The seminars are conducted by the state chaplains' office and begin with teaching effective communication skills, address problem resolution strategies that work and teach how to discover the hidden issues in every relationship. The program then moves into friendship, forgiveness, fun and sensuality.

If you are interested in attending or need additional information, please call Marie Durling at 609-562-0739 or e-mail marie.durling@nj.ngb.army.mil.

These seminars usually fill up fast, so if interested, please call as soon as possible. The next seminar will be May 2-4 at the Flanders Hotel in Ocean City, N.J. (This weekend is currently full.) I am also planning another Strong Bonds weekend May 30-June 1. This is for Soldiers and Airmen who have not attended a Marriage Enrichment Seminar in the past.

Time is here to apply for Youth Camp

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

This year's youth camp will be held from **July 13-19** at the National Guard Training Center in Sea Girt, N.J. This year will mark our 14th year for the camp!! Some activities are archery, sports, beach and arts-n-crafts. For more information or to download an application, please visit <http://www.state.nj.us/military/familysupport/programs.html>. Read carefully as some of the applications have changed.

Spend a weekend with your family at Great Wolf Lodge

ARMS has arranged for another weekend at the Great Wolf Lodge in Pocono, Penn. Date: **May 9-11**

Cost: \$250 tax included Sat-Sun

\$500 tax included-Fri-Sun

Includes lodging for up to six people, 2/3 days admission to the indoor water park (open 8:30 a.m.-10 p.m.), free parking. Rooms sleep six and have a mini refrigerator and microwave (Family Suite). Meals are not included. For more info call 732-890-4914 or email usslibertyhouse@comcast.com.

Happenings from the Teaneck FRG

From the desk of Janis M. Shaw, Family Assistance Specialist

The Teaneck Family Readiness Group has the following events for you to add to your calendar:

Palm Sunday Sunrise Service and Easter Basket Distribution Sunday, **March 16**, 6 a.m. on the drill floor. For more information call Sonja McDaniel event coordinator at 201-906-7687.

Saturday, **April 12**, noon-2 p.m., Bully Program, Part 2. For more information contact Master Sgt. Minnie E. Hiller-Cousins, 201-833-0632

Teaneck Family Readiness Group meeting dates are:

March 20 7 p.m.
April 17 7 p.m.
May 15 7 p.m.

Family deployment briefs schedule updated

From the desk of Amanda Balas, New Jersey National Guard Youth Coordinator

The following is the updated Family Deployment Briefing Schedule presented by the Family Programs Office at various armories throughout New Jersey. Any family member that is interested in learning more about important information, who to contact and ways to cope through this upcoming deployment are welcomed to attend ANY of the briefs, no matter where the Soldier's home station is located, as all the information will be the same at every brief. Children, ages three and up, are welcome to attend too! For more information, please contact your local Family Assistance Center by calling 1-888-859-0352.

Date	Armory	Time
Saturday, March 15	Jersey City	9:30 a.m.
Thursday, March 20	Teaneck	6:30 p.m.
Thursday, April 3	Cherry Hill	6:30 p.m.
Sunday, May 4 and 2 p.m.	Woodbury	9:30 a.m.

two briefs in one day to cover all 1/114th families

**Any family that will be experiencing a deployment may attend ANY of the above briefs as all the information will be the same no matter where the Soldier's home station is located in the state. All youth are welcomed to attend. We will have established youth programs, in a separate area, for youth ages three and older.

Journal available for military children

Health Net Federal Services released *My Life, a Kid's Journal*, designed for military children whose parent or loved one is deployed. The journal is meant to serve as a keepsake for the child or as a gift to their special person who is deployed once it's completed. To obtain copies for military children living in the TRICARE North Region, e-mail your request to mailto:HNFS_Communications@healthnet.com. Those living outside the North Region can download the journal from the Health Net Federal Services website.

Post Office offers boxes, discount rate to FPO/APO addresses

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

Now the U.S. Postal Service is making it easier for families to send care packages with a larger flat rate box and a special discount to FPO/ APO addresses. The new boxes can be used beginning March 3. They are 50 percent larger than the current flat rate box and can be sent to any domestic address for \$12.95. A special military version of the box will carry the "America Supports You" logo and can be shipped to any FPO/ APO address for \$10.95. The new Priority Mail Large Flat-Rate Box is "12 x 12" x 5½". For complete guidelines on mail services to military members overseas visit the USPS website at: <http://www.usps.com/supportingourtroops/welcome.htm?from=household&page=troopsupport>.

Reserve Aid gives support to families of deployed service members

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

Reserve Aid is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization committed to providing financial support to the families of Reserve Service Members called to active duty in all five branches of the Armed Forces. Reserve Aid makes unrestricted, need based grants to military families who have a Reserve service member on full-time deployment to a combat zone or homeland security position. Their goal is to alleviate the emotional and financial burdens placed on the men and women called to serve our country by supporting their families at home. For additional information and application procedures go to: www.reserveaid.org

MyArmyBenefits Website - the single source for all Army Benefits

MyArmyBenefits at <http://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil> is the official Army benefits resource for active-duty, Guard and reserve Soldiers, family members and retirees. Active-duty Soldiers with AKO accounts can access personalized reports on the survivor, disability, and retirement benefits through MyArmyBenefits.

Army Information Line: 1-800-833-6622

The Army Information Line (1-800-833-6622) is designed to help all Soldiers and their Family members whether they are deployed; stationed stateside or overseas; are brand new to the Army; or are 30 year veterans.

In addition to The Army Information Line, Army Well-Being's Army Families Online Web site www.ArmyFamiliesOnline.org recently welcomed its 2-millionth visitor this year.

The Army Information Line also celebrates its 25-year existence of providing information and referral services to those Soldiers and Family members.

Federal grant for spouses of deployed military

A \$200,000 grant from the Department of Community Affairs is available for spouses of deployed or recently deployed military (all branches across the state). Typical awards are \$2,500 each and are available for financial difficulties (such as past due rent and childcare) as well as for recreational and stress relieving activities for kids. For more information contact Fawn I. Mutschler, Military Grant Liaison, Women's Opportunity Center, YMCA of Burlington County by calling 609-543-6200 Ext. 325 or by email at wocmilitarygrant@ymca-bc.org.

N.J. State Family Readiness Council offers Family Grants Program

The New Jersey National Guard State Family Readiness Council has expanded its Family Grants Program to include an additional grant. There are now two levels of Family Grants; TIER I is the \$2,500 grant that has been in place for the past couple of years. The TIER II opens family grants to New Jersey Army and Air National Guard non-deployed service members who were on State Active Duty or State Missions (e.g., hurricanes, floods, border missions) for more than 20 consecutive days. Service members meeting these criteria are eligible to apply for a financial hardship grant up to \$1,500. Applications are available at all New Jersey Army and Air National Guard Family Assistance Centers.

Sports

Fourth annual SGT Nutter Run scheduled for June 14

The fourth annual SGT Nutter Run will be held on **June 14**. Sergeant Sam Nutter (Jan. 28, 1966 – Jan. 2, 2005) was a member of the New Jersey Army National Guard and served in the U. S. Navy from 1989-1997. Each year the NJARNG Officer Candidate School holds a benefit 5k run in his memory and the proceeds raised are donated to a NJARNG family in need. This year's beneficiary is Dina; daughter of New Jersey Army National Command Sgt. Maj. Timothy D. Marvian, of the 102nd Cavalry (RSTA) who will be deploying to Iraq later this year. Dina has endured a life-long battle with Neurofibromatosis Type I. Come join us as we band together to give a helping hand to a member of our National Guard family.

Fun family events and a BBQ to celebrate the Army's birthday will follow the race.

Visit <http://www.NutterRun.com> for registration forms, donation forms, and more information.

Travel Help, Ideas

Armed Forces Vacation Club offers affordable lodging

The Armed Forces Vacation Club is a "space available" program offering Department of Defense affiliated personnel affordable condominium vacations at over 3,500 resorts around the world. Visit www.afvclub.com/ for more information.

Shades of Green offers Disney for military

Now that the summer is just around the corner, thoughts of how to spend next summer or your next vacation week, can start to pop into your mind. "Can we go someplace better or different, nearer or farther from home, all without breaking the bank?"

One place to consider if Florida is one of your next vacation places is Shades of Green in Orlando. Minutes from the Disney attractions, this resort is also close to golf, dining and other Florida attractions.

Their web site, www.shadesofgreen.org can give you tours of their rooms and family suites, the local attractions and other amenities that are offered by the resort. The rates are reasonable and will be an opportunity to visit Orlando with your family.

Scholarship, Education News

Enlisted Association announces scholarships

The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of New Jersey announces it is sponsoring five scholarships of \$1,000 each for children of members of the Association and drilling members of the New Jersey National Guard (Army or Air) who are also members of the Association. Additionally, a \$500 USAA scholarship will be given for any Army or Air Drilling Guardsman. Applications for scholarships may be found on the Association's Web site at www.eang-nj.org. Applications must be postmarked by **May 15, 2008** and mailed to:

Enlisted Association of the National Guard of New Jersey

ATTN: Scholarship Committee

3650 Saylor's Pond Road

Fort Dix, NJ 08640-7600

Prior recipients are not eligible to apply.

Education news for NJARNG

Education Services Brochure Booklet (ESB2)

Access the New Jersey Army National Guard's ESB2 at www.nj.gov/military/education. The ESB2 is a comprehensive guide with links and shortcuts to civilian education benefits available to New Jersey Army National Guard Soldiers.

G.I. Bill Notice of Basic Eligibility

New Jersey Army National Guard Soldiers can print their Eligibility of Mobilized Soldier notification letter for CH 1607 as well as Notice Of Basic Eligibility for CH 1606 at <https://www.nationalguardbenefits.com>; click on G.I. Bill Home Page.

American Legion offers scholarships, booklet on their Web site

The American Legion has scholarship information on their Web site – www.legion.org – including the 152-page booklet, *Need a Lift*, which is a complete financial aid reference guide for veterans, family members and the American Legion family. When you get on the site, click on "Scholarship Information" in the "Useful Links" block.

Association News

Enlisted Association wants YOU!

By retired Command Sgt. Maj. Mike Hughes, EANG-NJ

The Enlisted Association National Guard-New Jersey is off to a good start for 2008 as we have realigned all the committees and filled both the Executive Council and Committees with a cross section of Army and Air, uniformed and retirees, and several junior NCOs. Everyone appears to be enthused and pledges to support the Association in all its efforts. All we need now is for you to get on board as a member and bring your fellow soldiers and airmen with you.

We have many challenges facing us over the next few years whether it is another round of base closures via the Base Realignment Commission (BRAC), reduction in TRICARE benefits, reduction in troop strength, attempts to maintain the retirement age at 60, etc. We need a powerful voice to put our message across to the State and Federal Legislators and this can only be accomplished through a strong membership in our State Association (EANG-NJ) and the National Association (EANGUS).

The new membership year starts on 1 January 2008 and we need your help in making our Association grow. We encourage all enlisted soldiers and airmen to join the Association as Active Members and also welcome all officers, warrant officers, federal, and state employees to join as Associate Members. Applications for membership can be obtained from our website www.eang-nj.org.

NGANJ group life insurance available to members

Are you covered by the NGANJ Group Life Insurance Program? As a member of either the Officers or the Enlisted Association, you are entitled to enroll in your Association Life Insurance Program. This special program provides from \$5,000 to \$50,000 of Life Insurance for you, "round the clock". Premiums range from as little as \$2 per month and may be payroll-deducted from your drill check. Family coverage is also available at low rates designed for you as a member of the New Jersey Army and Air National Guard. Think of it!! No aviation exclusions...No hazardous duty restrictions...No war clauses...No checks to write. Dependent coverage includes spouses and all children. Information can be obtained by contacting retired CWO Jack Petrosilli at 609-530-6843, or retired Brig. Gen. Robert S. Dutko Sr. at 609-273-1004. Enrollment forms can be obtained by calling retired Col. Frank L. Carlone, Program Coordinator at 732-249-8335.

Veterans Information

Five years of VA health care for combat veterans

WASHINGTON (February 26, 2008) - Military veterans who served in combat since Nov. 11, 1998, including veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan, are now eligible for five years of free medical care for most conditions from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This measure increases a two-year limit that has been in effect nearly a decade.

"By their service and their sacrifice, America's newest combat veterans have earned this special eligibility period for VA's world-class health care," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake.

The five-year deadline has no effect upon veterans with medical conditions related to their military service. Veterans may apply at any time after their discharge from the military -- even decades later -- for medical care for service-connected health problems.

The new provision, part of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2008 signed by President Bush on Jan. 28, 2008, applies to care in a VA hospital, outpatient clinic or nursing home. It also extends VA dental benefits -- previously limited to 90 days after discharge for most veterans -- to 180 days.

Combat veterans who were discharged between Nov. 11, 1998 and Jan. 16, 2003, and who never took advantage of VA's health care system, have until Jan. 27, 2011 to qualify for free VA health care.

The five-year window is also open to activated Reservists and members of the National Guard, if they served in a theater of combat operations after Nov. 11, 1998 and were discharged under other than dishonorable conditions.

Veterans who take advantage of this five-year window to receive VA health care can continue to receive care after five years, although they may have to pay copayments for medical problems unrelated to their military service. Copayments range from \$8 for a 30-day supply of prescription medicine to \$1,024 for the first 90 days of inpatient care each year.

Career fairs for veterans, Guard members, spouses

RecruitMilitary Career Fairs will be held at two locations convenient to New Jersey residents in March. These are free hiring events for veterans with civilian work experience, men and women who are transitioning from active duty to civilian life, members of the National Guard and reserves, and military spouses.

The fairs are produced by RecruitMilitary in cooperation with HireVetsFirst, a unit of the United States Department of Labor and The American Legion.

The fairs are listed below. If you go to the links, you can register as a job seeker, find a flyer, directions to the park and tips on a successful career fair.

1. New Jersey Performing Arts Center, 1 Center Street, Newark, **March 19**, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. www.recruitmilitary.com/careerfairs/careerfairs3.asp?CFID=77
2. USTA Billie Jean National Tennis Center, Arthur Ashe Stadium, Flushing Meadows, Flushing, N.Y., **March 20**, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. www.recruitmilitary.com/career_fairs/careerfairs3.asp?CFID=78

VA Launches Suicide Hotline

To ensure veterans with emotional crises have round-the-clock access to trained professionals, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has begun operation of a national suicide prevention hot line for veterans. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson said: "Veterans need to know these VA professionals are literally a phone call away. All service members who experience the stresses of combat can have wounds on their minds as well as their bodies. Veterans should see mental health services as another benefit they have earned, which the men and women of VA are honored to provide." VA's hot line will be staffed by mental health professionals in Canandaigua, N.Y. They will take toll-free calls from across the country and work closely with local VA mental health providers to help callers. The toll-free hot line number is 1 (800) 273-TALK (8255).

Web site provides support to separating military members

TurboTAP (Transition Assistance Program) is an easy to use, interactive Web portal that provides life-long support to separating military service members (Active Duty, Guard and Reserve) and their families. It is a single source starting point for accessing key resources available for servicemembers transitioning out of the military at any point in their military career. Resources include Department of Defense, Department of Labor, Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Education, Small Business Administration, the National Veterans Corporation and the National Guard Bureau. For more information go to www.TurboTAP.org or email TAPHelp@military-inc.com.

DMAVA Veterans Outreach Campaign continues

The DMVA Veterans Outreach Campaign continues with kiosk displays at selected malls throughout New Jersey. The schedule is as follows:

April 1*, 2, 3	Voorhees Town Center
May 6*, 7, 8	Ocean County Mall
July 8, 9, 10	Cherry Hill Mall
July 18*	Traveling Wall, Wildwood
August 5*, 6, 7	Willowbrook Mall

*Medal ceremonies begin at 10:30 a.m. on these dates. The kiosk will be open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The kiosk will also be in place at the Wildwood Convention Center for three state conventions.

- ❖ June 5-6, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. – Elks State Convention
- ❖ June 11-13, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. – American Legion State Convention
- ❖ June 18-20, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. – VFW State Convention

N.J. Vietnam Veterans Memorial

N.J. Vietnam Veterans' Memorial and Vietnam Era Educational Center's upcoming events:

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Free guided tours of the Memorial are offered on the first Saturday of each month at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Apr. 12, 1 p.m. – We Were There: Voices of African American Veterans, from World War II to the War in Iraq, a book discussion by the author, Yvonne Latty.

May 7, 11 a.m. – New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Remembrance Day Ceremony at the Memorial. There will be a state medal ceremony.

May 17, 1 p.m. – On the Road to Recovery, an oral-history discussion by NJ Vietnam-Era veteran Bishop Fred Rubin about his service tending wounded G.I.s in the Army hospital in Hawaii during the Vietnam War.

May 26, 11 a.m. – Memorial Day Ceremony at the N.J. Vietnam Veterans' Memorial.

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For further information call 1-800-648-VETS or visit www.njvvmf.org.

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