

DMAVA Highlights

Oct. 22, 2009 Volume 10 Number 38



Obama signs order preventing fed employees from texting, driving

A recent Executive Order was signed by President Barack Obama on the subject of text messaging while driving.

In realizing that texting while driving can be dangerous, he is demonstrating Federal leadership in improving safety on our roads and highways.

The order states that with nearly 3 million civilian employees, the Federal government should demonstrate leadership in reducing the dangers of texting while driving. These employees use government-owned, leased or rented vehicles (GOV) or privately owned vehicles (POV) on government business on official business every day.

According to the Executive Order, Federal employees shall not engage in text messaging (a) when driving GOV, or when driving POV while on official Government business, or (b) when using electronic equipment supplied by the Government while driving.

The Federal Government-wide prohibition on the use of text messaging while driving on official business or while using Government-supplied equipment will help save lives, reduce injuries, and set an example.

So remember – when driving that government vehicle: Don't text and drive!

All-Army Digital Photography contest wants you!

The 2009 All-Army Digital Photography Contest is here again. Enter your best digital images to compete against the best photographers in the Army and win cash prizes.

Categories are: People, place, object, military life, experimental and this year's special category - MWR FUN!

Both color and monochrome photographs will be accepted.

There are two divisions: Active Duty and Civilian (you can enter yourself or for someone as long as you have an active AKO e-mail account).

The submission period is Oct. 15-Nov. 30 with an entry deadline of Nov. 30, 2009

Enter at: <https://artscrafts.fmwrc.army.mil>. Entry rules can be found at <http://www.armymwr.com/recreation/artscrafts/default.aspx>.

Contest information and assistance is available by calling Linda Huff-Franey at 973-724-3038 or by stopping by Building 34 (Choice's) on Picatinny Arsenal.



VA contacting Veteran-Students about new GI Bill as part of outreach to improve service

WASHINGTON (Oct. 19, 2009) -- Representatives of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will be telephoning Veterans across the country to explain their education benefits under the new Post-9/11 GI Bill and ensure beneficiaries are able to receive payments due them.

"The Post-9/11 GI Bill is one of our highest priorities," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "Instead of making people wait to hear from us, we're reaching out to Veterans, so they can get the money they need to stay in school."

The Department is conducting this telephone outreach in response to the large numbers of Veterans who have applied for education benefits for the fall 2009 semester. The calls are scheduled to go to Veterans who have applied for benefits under the new educational assistance program.

Those who registered for advanced payments will be called, too, in ensure they received their benefits.

To protect the personal identity of Veterans, VA representatives making calls will not ask for any personal information, such as birthdates, bank account or social security numbers, but they may ask family members for information to contact Veterans who are away at school.

"Our procedures and policies to provide advanced payments remain in effect," Shinseki said. "Meanwhile, we're completing the on-time development of our automated processing system that will ensure timely delivery of checks in the future."

Technician pre-retirement seminar scheduled for Nov. 17-18

A federal technician pre-retirement seminar will be held at the Joint Training and Training Development Center on Nov. 17-18. The classes will be held from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. each day.

The seminar will cover federal benefits including TSP, health and life insurance, financial planning, Social Security benefits, estate planning and legal issues, and long term care insurance.

If you are interested in attending, contact Lorraine Jamison at 609-562-0874 or Lorraine.jamison@us.army.mil.

I hate war as only a soldier who has lived it can, only as one who has seen its brutality, its futility, its stupidity.

--Dwight D. Eisenhower, 34th president of United States

DMAVA Highlights

Applebee's offering free meal to veterans, military on Nov. 11

In recognition of your service to our country, all veterans and active duty military personnel are invited to eat free at Applebee's Neighborhood Grill & Bar Restaurants this Veterans Day, Wednesday, Nov. 11.

As you may recall, Applebee's launched a pilot program last year on Veterans Day offering free entrees to military service personnel and veterans. Because the response was so overwhelmingly positive, Applebee's is extending the invitation throughout the country this year.

All U.S. veterans and active duty military with proof of current or former military service will eat free at all Applebee's nationwide on Veterans Day, Wednesday, Nov. 11. Proof of service includes: U.S. Uniform Services Identification Card, U.S. Uniform Services Retired Identification Card, Current Leave and Earnings Statement, Veterans Organization Card, photograph in uniform or wearing uniform.

For additional details, visit: www.applebees.com/vetsday Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

DMAVA, SBA holding info fair in Woodbury, Nov. 13

There will be a New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and Small Business Administration (SBA) Information Fair at the Woodbury Armory on Nov. 13, 9:30 a.m.-noon.

The invited presenters include: NJ DMAVA – GI Bill, education programs, VA claims; SBA – loan programs, start-up information, support services; NJ Army National Guard Family Programs; U.S. Dept. of Labor – employment, Civil Service preference and USERA; N.J. Dept. of Labor and Workforce Development – employment, unemployment and veteran services; VA – vocational rehabilitation, GI Bill and certificates of eligibility; and Rutgers Small Business Development Center – free business counseling for start-up and existing businesses.

Representatives from the following colleges and universities will also be there with military and veterans information: Rowan, Rutgers, Burlington County, Camden County and Gloucester County.

A separate SBA seminar is available for those who are interested.



DMAVA Green

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

October is National Energy Awareness Month. As a civilian or military employee of the federal government, do you have any clean, green energy ideas?

President Barack Obama signed an Executive Order on Oct. 5 on Federal Sustainability, committing the federal government to lead by example, practice what we preach and help build a clean energy economy through how we operate, according to the White House blog.

The White House wants the more than 1.8 million civilian federal employees and men and women in uniform to submit ideas to the GreenGov Challenge. From Oct 19-31, federal employees or military members can submit clean energy ideas online to www.whitehouse.gov/GreenGov/.

Some of the top ideas will be presented to the Steering Committee on Federal Sustainability. These ideas can assist your agency meet its 2020 greenhouse gas emissions reduction target.

Even if you are not eligible to participate, you can go online to see the various ideas submitted; maybe one will help you in your search for a greener life.

Keep Green!



Quotes

It takes many good deeds to build a good reputation, and only one bad one to lose it.

--Benjamin Franklin

A diplomat is a man who remembers a woman's birthday and forgets her age.

--Unknown

Childhood sometimes does pay a second visit to man; youth never.

--Anna Jameson

No one tests the depth of a river with both feet.

--African proverb

DMAVA Highlights is published weekly by the Public Affairs Office of the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. The views and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Department of Defense, the Army, the Air Force, the National Guard, the Veterans Affairs or the state of New Jersey. Letters may be sent to: NJDMAVA, DMAVA Highlights, Public Affairs Office, PO Box 340, Trenton NJ 08625-0340. E-mail at pao@njdmava.state.nj.us.

New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth – The Adjutant General

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

Retired Col. Stephen G. Abel – Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs

Maj. Yvonne Mays – Public Affairs Officer

Tech. Sgt. Barb Harbison – Public Affairs Specialist

Sgt. Wayne Woolley – Public Affairs Specialist

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

Families

Dates set for Strong Bonds, Marriage Enrichment weekends

For those Soldiers who recently returned from deployment – how about a great weekend to “reconnect” with your spouse? Why not try Strong Bonds AKA Marriage Enrichment? The critiques are 99 percent positive over all on the effect the weekend has had with insight to marriages. This is NOT a counseling weekend.

Upcoming weekends will be Feb. 12-14, April 16-18 and May 14-16.

This is for couples who have not had the opportunity to attend in the past. If you are interested, contact Marie Durling at marie.durling@us.army.mil, or 609-530-6884 for an application form.



Registration Forms will be checked to see if you did attend previously. If you attended over two years ago, you may fill one out for the waiting list. With the return of the IBCT, we want to make sure the soldiers who have not attended have the opportunity to do so.

Soldiers are required to attend the entire weekend and ALL sessions in order to receive a SUTA certificate. Dress code is casual for the entire weekend. We do not provide child care. This is a couples' weekend.

More information will be mailed to you approximately 30 days before your event weekend with details.

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

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

CJMMP opens scholarship for military, family

The mission of the Central Jersey Military Motor Pool (CJMMP) is to advance the American heritage of freedom by honoring and encouraging military service, defending the sovereignty of the United States, and promoting a national patriotism by owning and operating historic military vehicles. One of the ways we carry out our mission is by providing financial assistance in the form of a scholarship for members of Active Duty, National Guard, or Reserves who have been deployed in support of Operation Iraq Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. These are veterans who have been awarded either the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal, or the Afghanistan Campaign Medal. Also eligible are deserving sons and daughters of Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Guardsman who have been killed or permanently disabled (100 percent VA disability rating) in the line of duty, or who are currently classified as a Prisoner of War (POW) or Missing in Action (MIA).

For further information and the application form contact retired Col. Stan Lapidow at lap1944@aol.com or 908-526-2630.

First Tee program comes to Picatinny Arsenal

From Scott Nordland, Picatinny Arsenal

It is with great pleasure to announce a new FREE program that the Picatinny Arsenal SKIESUnlimited Program will be offering! The First Tee program serves young people by offering them a unique perspective toward learning golf while appreciating the positive personal and social values associated with a lifelong game and physical fitness activity. Life skills programs that incorporate The First Tee Nine Core Values are delivered through a network of community-based chapters and elementary schools. Children ages 7-18 are able to participate in this free program that is being offered by the SKIESUnlimited Program beginning in October. Please visit the Children and Youth School Services Web page <http://www.pica.army.mil/mwr/cys/SKIES/SKIES%20Webpage.htm> for more details!

To register contact Scott Nordland, 973-724-7183 or e-mail scott.nordland@us.army.mil.

Free tutoring, homework assistance to Army families

Tutor.com is available to ALL Army-affiliated families – military, civilian and contractor – regardless of deployment status or component. The Web site is 24/7 real-time, individualized, one-to-one tutoring and homework assistance with a qualified and screened tutor.

Spanish speaking tutors are available from 2 p.m.-1 a.m.

Adult assistance college coursework and resume/job search/citizenship/standardized testing is also available.

If you have questions, contact Nadine Moore at the National Guard Bureau, 703-607-9817 or visit www.myarmyonesource.com/cyss_tutor.

State Employees

Employees charitable campaign begins

By Paul Serdiuk, DMAVA Campaign Chairperson

The New Jersey State Employees Charitable Campaign (ECC) has officially kicked off its 2009/2010 Campaign which will run through December 2009. Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth's letter expressed his commitment to this very worthwhile activity.

The ECC provides each of us with an annual opportunity to voluntarily help others and ourselves by donating to any of the 1,500 participating agencies and organizations listed in the ECC Code Book. Contributions may be made by payroll deductions each year or by cash, or check.

Over the years, our Department has been most successful in this endeavor because of your personal generosity and concern. **We urge every employee to support this worthy cause.**

To reduce the cost of printing extra code books we have been asked to share books. If you did not receive one, go to www.njsecc.org. This year the organizations are listed alphabetically by county.

Please remember, your contribution today means a lot to the people in need tomorrow.

Thank you. For more information, contact Paul Serdiuk at 609-530-6878.

New retirement applications, procedures

The Division of Pensions and Benefits is implementing significant changes to retirement application procedures for members of the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS), Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund (TPAF), Police and Firemen's Retirement System (PFRS), and State Police Retirement System (SPRS).

There will be a new section listing "Terms and Conditions of Retirement" that employees will now need to review and sign off on, in order for their application to be accepted. If a member is applying through MBOS, there will be a check box the employee must check off, stating they have read, understood and agree to the terms and conditions.

Also, for retirements other than Deferred Retirement* the Division of Pensions and Benefits will no longer accept an application more than one year prior to the retirement date. For more information on these changes, a copy of the certified letter from Pensions and Benefits is available as a file attachment with an announcement on the DMAVANet site under Human Resources. If you wish to obtain a copy of the *New Application for Retirement Allowance* form, please visit the DMAVANet site under *Human Resources > Benefit Forms, and Helpful Forms*, as well as on the Pensions and Benefits Web site.

"Save for Retirement Week" designated for October 18-24

Congress has again passed a resolution to designate national "Save for Retirement Week" October 18-24. In New Jersey, the Division of Pensions and Benefits supports this effort to encourage Americans to save more for retirement. This year, we're using this opportunity to remind employees to save the environment as they save for retirement.

The New Jersey State Employees Deferred Compensation Plan (NJSEDCP) is a great way for employees to save for retirement. It also gives them opportunities to save the environment, through actions such as opting for online account statements.

Employees can also get "Save the environment, Save for your retirement" reusable bags from NJSEDCP Education Consultants during National Save for Retirement Week.

Open enrollment for state health plan 2010 begins Oct. 1

It's that time of year again! The State Health Benefits Program (SHBP) Open Enrollment period for all State employees will begin on Oct. 1 and end on Oct. 30, 2009. All changes to coverage made during this open enrollment will be effective on January 2, 2010, for State employees paid through the State Centralized Payroll Unit.

There are new documentation requirements if a member is enrolling a dependent for coverage (spouse, partner, or child). Along with the employer-certified *Health Benefit Applications* and/or *Dental Plan Application* the following documents are required to verify the dependent's relationship to the member and eligibility for coverage.

- Employees who are enrolling a spouse as a dependent in the SHBP for the first time are required to provide a photocopy of the marriage certificate and a copy of the top half of the front page of the employee's most recently filed federal tax return (Form 1040*) that lists the spouse.

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- Employees who are enrolling a child as a dependent in the SHBP for the first time are required to provide a photocopy of the child's birth certificate showing the employee's name as a parent.

If the employee's name is not on the birth certificate, the birth certificate and a copy of the top half of the front page of the employee's most recently filed federal tax return (Form 1040*) that lists the child may be submitted.

**Employees may black out all financial information shown on the form but the last 4 digits of any Social Security numbers.*

Note: Additional documentation requirement information can be found on the SHBP Web site at: www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/shbp.htm. If you wish to enroll any dependents in the SHBP, and are not sure what documentation is required, please contact Benefits Administrator, Lisa J. Dandrea in Human Resources at 609-530-6888.

The State Health Benefits Commission has approved health, dental, and prescription drug plan rates for the 2010 plan year. The cost for health and prescription remains the same at 1.5 percent of the employee's salary. There will be a slight increase to the dental plan rates for state employees. Rate increases will be effective Jan. 2, 2010. These rates may be found on the SHBP Web site at: http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/hb_open_enrollment_2009/dental-state-biweekly.pdf.

Veterans & Military

Veterans Day in Alliger Park

Commemorate Veterans Day with the Hopewell Valley Veterans Association's (HVVA) Veterans Day ceremony on Saturday, Nov. 7, from 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Alliger Park. The event will include remarks by keynote speaker Brig. Gen. James J. Grant, Chief of the Joint Staff, NJDMAVA. Grant will discuss current military events and the significance of Veterans Day. The ceremony will also include remarks by local veterans and military displays. This free event is rain or shine. Refreshments will follow the ceremony. Alliger Park is located at 203 Washington Crossing- Pennington Road (Rt. 546), adjacent to the Hopewell Township Public Works Building. For additional information and directions visit, www.HopewellValleyVeterans.org.

Armed Forces Appreciation Day Nov. 15 in Trenton church

From Rev. Kim Mayner, Associate Minister and Pastoral Assistant

The many freedoms we enjoy as citizens of America is due in no small part to the dedicated service of our armed forces, most recently those serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. From putting their lives on the line to the months spent away from their families, these are sacrifices which many civilians will never fully comprehend.

The congregation of Union Baptist Church will show its appreciation by saluting members of the military and their families during our "Armed Forces Appreciation Day" worship service on Nov. 15 at 11 a.m. Dinner will be served immediately following service in our Fellowship Hall. Our church is located at 301 Pennington Avenue, Trenton.

If you have served in Iraq or Afghanistan or have a spouse, fiancé or children who are serving and would like to attend this special salute, please contact our church office with your name and daytime telephone number at 609-392-2245 ext. 3 by Nov. 3.

Come join the Army Warrant Officer Association

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



Pictures for your "wall"

If your armory needs photos for the Chain of Command "wall," contact Tech. Sgt. Barb Harbison at barbara.harbison@njdma.state.nj.us or call 609-530-7088. Tell us which photos you need and we will mail them to you or get them ready for pick-up.

Cavalry Association, AUSA to host talk by World War II historian

The 117th Cavalry Association and the Northern New Jersey Chapter of the Association of the United States Army will gather on Nov. 6 at 7:30 p.m. in the Heritage Room of the Westfield National Guard Armory, 500 Rahway Avenue.

Military historian Harry Yeide, author of six books on World War II armor units and battles, will be the guest speaker. His latest effort, "Steeds of Steel" is the story of mechanized cavalry during World War II. Units with New Jersey lineage including the 117th Cavalry and the 102nd Cavalry Group played a key role in some of the featured battles.

There is no cost, although donations to the associations will be accepted. Mess dress, Dress Blues or civilian attire is appropriate.

RSVP to retired Col. Richard F. Plechner at 732-549-1535.

Bowl-a-thon supports Wounded Warrior Project, Nov. 15

Natalie Menendez, a psychology graduate student at Monmouth University studying posttraumatic stress, is organizing a charity bowl-a-thon in Strathmore Lanes, Matawan, on Nov. 15 from 2-5 in recognition of Veterans Day.

The event will support the organization, The Wounded Warrior Project. Wounded Warrior Project offers a range of programs and events designed for soldier's needs beyond their hospital stay. The program offers help to service members and their families immediately following injury and during their convalescence and rehabilitation.

I will also be collecting clothing and food donations and writing letters to the troops.

Tickets are \$20 and includes shoes, unlimited bowling from 2-5 p.m., and refreshments. There are usually about six people per lane.

Come out and support the cause.



Veterans Organizations contact information

State Veterans Service Council
Richard Clark, RJClark21@msn.com
BG William C. Doyle Cemetery Advisory Council
William Rakestraw, warjrnj@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)

Calendar

When – Nov. 7, 11 a.m..

What – Texas Hold'em Tournament

Where – Cannon Gate, Picatinny Arsenal,

More info – \$30 per person, call 973-724-2582 for reservations.

Prizes will be awarded for the top ten players.

Ocean City Walk for Wounded has new date scheduled

Ocean City, NJ – The Walk for the Wounded to benefit Operation First Response, originally scheduled to take place on the Ocean City Boardwalk on Saturday, October 17, was postponed. The event was rescheduled for Saturday, Oct. 31.

For more information: call 1-800-771-7990, ext. 1106 or visit www.ochome.com.

Jersey Devils hold Group Night on Nov. 4, tickets discounted

Come watch the New Jersey Devils battle the Washington Capitals on Group Night! The match is on Wednesday, Nov. 4. The last date to purchase discount tickets is Oct. 27. The price is \$36 for an upper level seat AND a \$10 food coupon. This is a \$66 value for only \$36! Contact the Fort Monmouth ITR office at 973-724-4014 to order your tickets now.



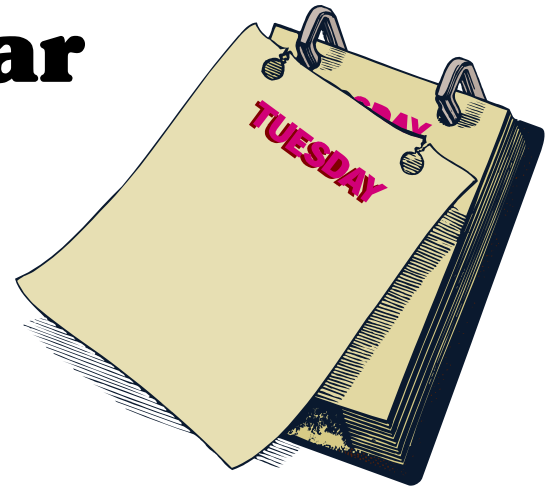
'Run with Dennis' slated for Nov. 8 in Holmdel

The fourth annual Lt. Dennis W. Zilinski II Memorial 3.5-mile run and 2.0 mile walk is slated for Sunday, Nov. 8, (rain or shine) at the PNC Bank Arts Center in Holmdel. Race registration begins at 7:45 a.m., followed by an opening ceremony at 8:50 a.m., and the start of the race slated for 10 a.m.

All proceeds will benefit the Lt. Dennis W. Zilinski II Memorial Fund, which sponsors programs for injured soldiers and scholarships for students attending Christian Brother's Academy in Lincroft, NJ, Zilinski's alma mater.

The Lt. Dennis W. Zilinski, II Memorial was created and founded in 2006 in order to honor Lt. Zilinski's memory and spirit for life. All proceeds raised on behalf of the fund are used to support programs that assist our wounded soldiers and their families, and to provide scholarships in Dennis' name to his alma mater, Christian Brothers Academy. The Fund strives to improve the morale and welfare of members of the United States Armed Forces and their families and provides scholarships that invest in the future of high school students who embody the leadership qualities and community spirit of Lt. Zilinski.

For more information including sponsorship opportunities and race registration please visit: www.runwithdennis.org.



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.

Nov. 9*, 10 Woodbridge Center Mall

January 5*, 6, 7 Cherry Hill Mall

February 2*, 3, 4 Monmouth Mall

*Medal ceremony at 10:30 a.m.

Comedy show with a twist coming to Fort Monmouth

Looking for tickets to see the Radio City Christmas Spectacular with the Rockettes? The Coast Guard Sector NY MWR has tickets for shows on Nov. 25 (2 p.m.)-\$52; Nov. 25 (5 p.m.)-\$60; Nov. 30 (5 p.m.)-\$60; and Dec. 3 (5 p.m.)-\$60. Call 718-354-4407. Tickets are first come, first served and must be paid in full. Order the tickets over the phone and they will be shipped to you for a \$3 handling charge.



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.