

DMAVA Highlights

Dec. 17, 2009 Volume 11 Number 44



Happy Holidays to Everyone from the staff of DMAVA Highlights



This is the last issue of DMAVA Highlight for 2009. We'll see you back on January 8, 2010.



Above, Master Sgt. Liz Stefanoni, left, 108th Air Wing, and Senior Master Sgt. Paul Thompson, center, Joint Forces Headquarters-New Jersey (Air), greet Vineland Veteran's Home resident Curtis Washington. Nineteen Airmen from the 177th Fighter Wing and the 108th Wing of the New Jersey Air National Guard visited the Vineland Veterans' Memorial Home for the Annual Holiday "Songfest" on Dec. 15. They were joined by 71 fourth graders from the Seaview School, Linwood, N.J. Airmen and 4th graders were issued candy canes and holiday greeting cards, assigned to groups and sent out to spread cheer to the residents. Left, the South District Elks sponsored a visit of a Clydesdale horse and sleigh to pull residents around the home parking lot as a holiday treat on Dec. 16. Starlight Carriages of Bridgeton provided the carriage tour rides. Buddy, the Clydesdale, is 14 years old and this is his second visit to the home. The Knights templar was provided by the Vineland Masons Lodge #69. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA.



DMAVA Highlights

DMAVA Green

By Tech. Sgt. Barb Harbison, Public Affairs Specialist

Christmas is around the corner and many of those who celebrate the holiday have had the great debate: artificial or real, cut or potted? When it comes to being green, which way is the greenest way to have the decorated tree in your home?

As with many eco arguments, you can find good and bad on virtually every side of that you could pick.

For those that would think that an artificial tree would be a good way to go – after all you wouldn't be cutting down all those green trees every year and your artificial tree can be used year after year. Of course we can find some ways to be a Grinch about artificial trees!

Many are made from PVC (polyvinyl chloride) – vinyl to most of us; “the poison plastic” to others – deemed dangerous to humans and the environment during its entire life cycle. And some of the trees also have lead in them, another no-no. Oh, and another thing, approximately 85 percent of artificial trees are imported from China where they are not as concerned about lead nor the labor practices. Another thing to put into the carbon footprint of your artificial tree is the transportation costs from China to your store.

So now guilt sets in and you are thinking real trees, but wait, have you thought about....

With live trees, each tree takes between 6-15 years to grow to its full height, using pesticides, water, and then energy to transport the trees. Plus you have money to spend every year to purchase the tree. There are some people whose allergies prevent them from having fresh trees in the house. There are some pluses: the trees are recyclable, since the trees are hardy they can be planted in places other plants cannot grow and they help the environment by absorbing carbon dioxide during their growing years. In fact, an acre of Douglas fir trees can absorb more than 11,300 pounds of carbon dioxide every year.

Another suggestion is to buy a potted tree that you can plant in your yard after the holidays. Keep in mind if the ground is frozen you will need a pre-dug hole for the tree after the holidays. Research the type of tree that will do well in your soil and climate. There are several companies and non-profit groups in Oregon, parts of California and Vancouver, British Columbia that rent out potted trees. After the holiday, the trees are replanted in watersheds across the Pacific Northwest.

For those who want something totally different, visit http://www.pickyourownchristmastree.org/How_to_make_Mountain-Dew_christmas_tree.php to find directions for a tree made of soda cans. If you are interested in other crafty ways to create Christmas trees, visit one of the following sites: <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/christmas/papertree/> is a site with instructions for construction paper Christmas trees; http://www.roxycraft.com/crafts_fur_tree_tutorial.htm uses a Styrofoam

cone and eyelash-style yarn; http://littlebirds.typepad.com/little_birds_handmade/2006/11/soft_tree_patte.html is a fabric tree to sew; and, <http://crafts.kaboose.com/baby-food-jar-christmas-tree.html> for one made from baby food jars.

Bob Schildgen, who writes an environmental advice column for Sierra Magazine, was asked, in the grand scheme of things, how important is choosing the right tree?

His answer was, “It's not the most burning environmental issue. People should be doing the little things like this but don't lose sight of the big picture. If you're driving all over the universe to shop in an SUV, you're having much more of an environmental impact. It's important to see the total impact of your holiday behavior.”

Interesting notes and fun facts about Christmas trees:

The first artificial-brush trees were created in 1930 by the Addis Brush Company. The machinery used to create their toilet brushes what the same machinery used to create their trees. The Addis “Silver Pine” tree was patented in 1950. This was designed to have a revolving light source under it, colored gels allowed the light to shine in different shades as it revolved under the tree.

One acre of growing Christmas trees will produce the daily oxygen needed to sustain 18 people.

Franklin Pierce was the first president to put a Christmas tree in the White House. That was in 1856.

Recycle your Christmas tree? Join the 83 percent of real Christmas tree users who recycle their tree in community recycling programs, garden or backyard.

Never burn your tree in the fireplace; it can contribute to creosote buildup.

Edward Johnson came up with the idea of electric lights to decorate Christmas trees in 1882. Who is Johnson? Thomas Edison's assistant.

The first decorated Christmas tree was in Riga, Latvia in 1510.

Quotes

I once bought my kids a set of batteries for Christmas with a note on it saying, toys not included.

--Bernard Manning

There has been only one Christmas - the rest are anniversaries.

--W.J. Cameron

It is Christmas in the heart that puts Christmas in the air.

--W.T. Ellis

Santa is very jolly because he knows where all the bad girls live.

--Dennis Miller

New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

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

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

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

Families

NORAD tracking Santa for kids of all ages this year

American Forces Press Service

PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo., Dec. 9, 2009 - North American Aerospace Defense Command officials are getting ready to track Santa Claus.

The "NORAD Tracks Santa" Web site, <http://www.noradsanta.org>, features holiday games and activities that change daily.

The site is available in seven languages: English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Spanish and Chinese. On Dec. 24, the Web site will stream videos, captured by NORAD "Santa Cams," from numerous cities along Santa's journey.

This year, children and the young-at-heart are able to track Santa through Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, and TroopTube. To follow on any of these Web sites, type in @noradsanta into the site's search engine and start your tracking.

New this year, OnStar is providing its subscribers with live Santa updates as they travel in their vehicles on Christmas Eve. Subscribers simply push the blue OnStar button to get status reports on Santa's whereabouts.

Also new and beginning at midnight MST on Dec. 24, visitors to the "NORAD Tracks Santa" Web site can watch Santa as he prepares his sleigh, checks his list, and goes through all his preparations to ensure he has a successful journey. As soon as Santa takes off from the North Pole, children can track him with up-to-the-minute Google Maps and Google Earth reports.

Santa trackers will begin answering phones and replying to e-mail at 4 a.m. MST on Christmas Eve. Children of all ages can call 877-Hi-NORAD (877-446-6723) toll-free, or can send an e-mail to noradtrackssanta@gmail.com. NORAD tracks Santa with help from many corporate partners. Booz Allen Hamilton designed the Web site.

Other sponsors include Verizon, which donated the toll-free number; Time Warner, Avaya and PCI providing communications engineering; and OnStar, 5 Star Bank, Pepsi Distributing and First Choice Awards and Gifts keeping the trackers happy with food, beverages and souvenir tracking pins.



The program began Dec. 24, 1955, when a child dialed a phone number that was misprinted in a newspaper advertisement and reached the Continental Air Defense Command Operations Center in Colorado Springs, Colo. The commander at Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Station who answered the phone that night gave the youngster the information requested: Santa's whereabouts. This began the tradition of tracking Santa, a tradition that was carried on by NORAD when it was formed in 1958.

The program has grown immensely since it first was presented on the Internet in 1998. The Web site receives millions of unique visitors from hundreds of countries and territories around the world. In addition, its operations center will be occupied for 25 hours with more than 1,200 volunteers on Christmas Eve, who will be receiving hundreds of thousands phone calls and e-mails from families around the world.

Adopt a Family open to military for holiday season

From the desk of Marie Durling, Family Programs Specialist

If you or someone you know is in need of toys or assistance for the upcoming holiday, please e-mail or call me as soon as possible – marie.durling@us.army.mil or 609-530-6884. I am compiling a list and ALL information will be in confidence unless I ask you if it's okay if the donating organization works with you directly. If not, they will go through me. I have quite a few organizations that are willing to "Adopt a Family" for the holidays. Please let me know if one of them can assist you. I will do all I can to assist any service member in need.

Military children's artwork to be featured in publications

The Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) seeks to promote the Arts by featuring the great works of military children. Each year children are asked to submit work that can be utilized in the MCEC's publications, conferences, and other activities. Included in the request for work from military-connected children, kindergarten through high school, are artwork, film, and writing (essays, poetry, and short stories).

Artwork in the visual arts is featured at the MCEC's national conference each year. It is utilized in the *On The Move* magazine, the annual calendar, the conference program, and other MCEC publications.

Writing, including essays, poetry, and short stories, is featured in the national conference program, the *On The Move* magazine, the annual calendar, and other MCEC publications.

Film is considered for the "Reel Military" Youth Film and Video Festival at the national conference each year.

For a complete set of the 2010 *Call for the Arts* rules and forms for all categories (Artwork, Writing, and Film & Video), click on <http://www.militarychild.org/child-student/arts/>.

ASYMCA holding annual art, essay contest

The Armed Services YMCA is holding its annual art and essay contest for children and teens of active duty or retired members of Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard or National Guard/Reserve families.

To find rules and entry forms, visit <http://www.asymca.org/Programs.aspx?pgmID=27&mid=27>.

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>.

Sports & More

Jets tickets available for Jersey Guard members

Since the start of the season, the New York Jets have been offering discounted tickets to all members of the NJARNG. They are enhancing the offer even further. The Jets will be offering \$15 tickets to all members of the NJARNG for their 2 remaining home games. There is no specific distinction in the number of tickets you can request. However, to allow for participation for the greatest number of soldiers, there will be a limit of 6 tickets per soldier per game.

If you wish to request tickets, call Ken Seal in the marketing office at 732-974-4883. Or call Shaun Smith at 732-974-4882 or Sgt. Biggins at 732-974-5945.

Game date	Opponent	Request suspense
Dec. 20	Atlanta	Dec. 11, noon
Jan. 10, 2010	Cincinnati	Dec. 23, noon

Once you have made a request for tickets, you are obligated to pay for them, regardless of whether or not you are able to attend the game. The only exception to this is if you cancel your request prior to the suspense for that particular game.

Payment for the tickets will be cash or money order ONLY. We will collect all the money and write one check to the Jets.

Picking up of tickets will be the responsibility of the requestor. The two pick up locations will be Sea Girt or Fort Dix. You may request tickets for any of the games at any time, prior to the suspense. Depending on the number of requests for any given game, it is POSSIBLE that we could exceed our allotment of tickets so it is not recommended that you wait to make your request if you know which game(s) you wish to attend.

Museum book on special sale for the holiday season

The Star-Ledger and the National Guard Militia Museum of New Jersey are pleased to offer a special holiday sale for all orders of "A Tribute to New Jersey Veterans," a historical photo book that takes a pictorial look at New Jersey's military history. This new book is now available at a special 20 percent discount price.

This 128 page, hard-cover book includes numerous unpublished photos from the National Guard Militia Museum of New Jersey, the N.J. National Guard and the Star-Ledger's archives. With photos from the past 150 years, as well as illustrations of the country's early history, this book captures the contributions of New Jersey's men and women since the beginning.

This would be a great gift for the veteran in your life. Part of the proceeds from the sale of this book will benefit the Museum. Signed copies are available at this sale price of \$31.95 at the Sea Girt and Lawrenceville Museums. To order a copy by mail, place your order by Dec. 15 to ensure delivery by Dec. 25. Mail a check for \$39.45 (\$31.95 plus \$7.50 S&H) to the National Guard Militia Museum of NJ, ATTN: COL Donald Kale, 151 Eggert Crossing Rd., Lawrenceville, NJ 08648. If you have any questions, please contact the Museum at 609-530-6802.

Here's your opportunity to see the Nets play b-ball

NETS Tickets are available - \$40 per tickets, at the IZOD Center. There are only four tickets per game available, located in section 116, row 15 and seats 7-10; tickets will only be sold in pairs. Check the seating chart at <http://www.izodcenter.com/seatingchart.aspx?disp=1&id=192>

Opponent	Dates and Times
Oklahoma City Thunder	Dec. 28, 7:30 p.m.
L.A. Clippers	Jan. 27, 7:30 p.m.
Milwaukee Bucks	Feb. 10, 7:30 p.m.
Toronto Raptors	Feb. 19, 8 p.m.
Washington Wizards	Feb. 28, 6 p.m.
Sacramento Kings	March 24, 7:30 p.m.
Detroit Pistons	March 26, 8 p.m.
San Antonio Spurs	March 29, 7:30 p.m.

Contact Fort Monmouth Tickets N' Tours directly at 732-532-3077 or stop by building 1010.

More tickets to see the Jets

From Picatinny Arsenal: Tickets for both dates can be ordered by phone and put on either a MasterCard or Visa or you may stop by the "Take Off" Center, Bldg 34, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.; 973-724-4014. The tickets come in blocks of 4 seats together. If you have more than 4 people, we will try and seat you in the same section but more than 4 seats will not be exactly together. There are a limited number of tickets available. There are at least 100 for each game.

Jets vs. Atlanta – Dec. 20 – tickets are upper level, \$17 each; parking is not included. (Most parking is now off site due to construction of the new stadium.) Tickets go on sale on Dec. 3. Deadline is 3 p.m., Dec. 11 as long as tickets remain available. You will be e-mailed when tickets are available for pickup – probably on Dec. 16-17.

Jets vs. Cincinnati – Jan. 3 – tickets are upper level, \$17 each; parking is not included. Tickets go on sale Dec. 3. Deadline is 3 p.m., Dec. 22. You must be available the week after Christmas to pick up your tickets. They should be in around Dec. 29.

DMAVA award nominations open for fall trimester

From the Human Relations Department

We are requesting nominations for the DMAVA Employee Awards. We request that everyone submit nominations for the Fall Trimester (September – December) for 2009 by close of business, Dec. 30.

Please forward all your nominations to Anna Marie Boutchia using the template that is available on DMAVANet. It is requested that all nominations be typed when submitted for ease of processing and selection.

If you have any questions regarding the Awards process please feel free to contact Loreta Sepulveda, Director of Human Resources. An e-mail will be sent out to announce the awards presentation date (Spring 2010).

Veterans & Military

177th FW holds groundbreaking for new building



Ground broken at 177th....Col. Robert C. Bolton, left to right, Commander, 177th Fighter Wing; Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth, The Adjutant General of New Jersey; Congressman Frank LoBiondo, 2nd District of New Jersey; Maj. Gen. Maria Falca-Dodson, Commander, New Jersey Air National Guard and Yan Girlya, Vice President, Sambe Construction Company, Inc., break ground on the 177th's Operations and Training Facility on Dec. 12. The \$8.4 million, 21,400 square foot, state-of-the-art facility will support the Wing's mission in the Overseas Contingency Operation by housing the Wing Commander and Staff, Public Affairs, Wing Safety, Mission Support Group Commander and Staff, Judge Advocate, Accounting and Finance, Comptroller, Wing Plans, Chaplain, Forces Support Squadron, Equal Opportunity, Family Support and Recruiting. The facility was designed by Burns and McDonnell located in East Hanover and will be built by Sambe Construction Company, Inc., of Pennsauken. Construction will take approximately 15 months and is expected to be completed in January of 2011. U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, 177FW/PA.

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.

Join the New Jersey WOA

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.

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)

Outward Bound offers free expeditions to OIF/OEF vets

Outward Bound, the outdoor adventure-education organization, is offering fully-funded reintegration wilderness expeditions to OEF and OIF veterans.

These 5-7 day wilderness expeditions can include backpacking, rock climbing, canoeing, dogsledding, sailing, sea kayaking and white water rafting. The goals of the program are to provide a positive outdoor experience for military veterans the will enable them to experience the healing benefits of the natural world and benefit from quality environmental education.

The program is available to all OIF and OEF veterans who were deployed to Iraq and/or Afghanistan. It is held in locations around the U.S., including California, Colorado, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Utah, Oregon, Washington, Alabama and Florida. Participants can be active, inactive, retired or discharged, as long as they deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan as part of OIF/OEF.

All expenses are paid; veterans will not be responsible for the cost of the expedition including the round-trip stateside transportation to the course. Funding is provided by the Military Family Outdoor Initiative Project, a joint project of the Sierra Club and The Sierra Club Foundation. Dates are available year round.

For more information or to enroll, visit <http://www.outward-bound.org/index.cfm/do/cp.veterans> or call 1-866-669-2362 ext. 8387.

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.

Calendar

*Mark your calendar
for February 13.*

*Valentine's Day Weekend Company
Grade and Warrant Officer Mixer
Details coming soon.*

State employee discount Web site has changed



The New Jersey State Employee discount Web site was recently moved. Here is the link to the new location: <http://www.state.nj.us/csc/discounts/index.htm>.

Veterans Outreach Campaign schedule

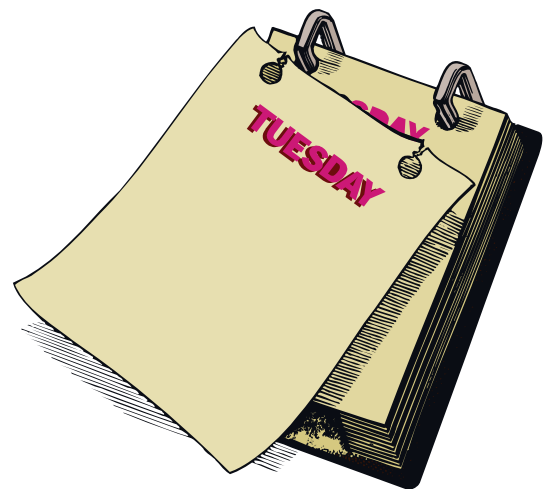
The DMAVA Veterans Outreach Campaign has kiosk displays at malls throughout the state and other special events to help veterans and their family members discover and apply for the benefits they are eligible to receive.

January 5*, 6, 7 Cherry Hill Mall

February 2*, 3, 4 Monmouth Mall

March 2*, 3, 4 Bridgewater Commons Mall

*Medal ceremony at 10:30 a.m.



Come talk to Credit Union of New Jersey reps on Jan. 13

From the desk of Paul Serdiuk, Human Relations Dept.

A representative from the Credit Union of New Jersey will be here on Jan. 13, 2010 from 10 a.m.-11 a.m. in Conference Room A for a presentation about their organization. The following are some points of interest about the CUNJ:

- The official credit union for state employees
- Not-for-profit, full-service financial institution
- Offers savings, checking, loans, investment products and services
- 6 branch location in Mercer County; one located a few miles from DMAVA in Ewing
- More than 2,000 Surcharge-Free ATMs in NJ
- Auto loans starting at 3.74 percent
- Home equity lines of credit starting at 2.74 percent
- Credit management and debt consolidation planning for all members at no cost
- Full service internet banking and free bill-payer

Stop by to learn more. For additional information contact Paul Serdiuk, 609-530-6878 or paul.serdiuk@njdmava.state.nj.us.

Free showing of "The Princess and the Frog"

Join the USO for a free family movie event to see Disney's "The Princess and the Frog." There will be a showing in New Jersey on Dec. 19 at 9:30 a.m. at the Hazlet Multiplex Cinemas. A light breakfast and movie theater concessions will be served.

To register, visit www.usonyc.org/free-movie. Reservations are limited and will be available on a first come, first serve basis.



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.