

DMAVA Highlights

Sept. 17, 2009 Volume 9 Number 34



Carmen Venticinque, state chairman of the New Jersey ESGR field committee, left to right, stands with Peter Wilderotter, CEO of the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation after the employer of Army Guard Master Sgt. Steve Coleman received the Pro Patria award in the small business category. On hand for the presentation were retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Robert Dutko, Chair Emeritus, Chairman of the New Jersey Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve and Chad de Satnick from the Life Rolls On Foundation.

NJESGR honors employers with Pro Patria awards

Kryn P. Westhoven, ESGR Public Affairs Volunteer

Whether they were the reserve component service member or the employer who supported them while deployed, everyone at Drumthwacket in Princeton on this Sept. 15 evening knew the importance of the New Jersey State Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Pro Patria awards.

The crowd of more than 100 gathered at the Governor's official residence for the annual presentation of the highest honor a state ESGR Committee can bestow to an employer. The state awards committee reviewed 96 nominations by the more than 16,000 Army and Air National Guard members; Army, Marine, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard reservists serving in various units within the Garden State.

From those nominations for the national Freedom Award, the state committee selected Netjets and Honeywell in the large corporation category, the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation represented the small business category and the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office was the top public sector employer.

Both Netjets and Honeywell received nominations from reserve service members in several states. Netjets, a north Jersey-based company that specializes in selling and renting private business jets, has seen nearly 400 employers called to serve the nation in recent years and has created a supportive environment for service members and their families. Netjets was selected as one of the fifteen employers to receive the prestigious national ESGR Freedom Award this year.

The more than 100 volunteers on the state ESGR committee have donated over 6,000 hours of time to provided briefings to 27,000 service members and nearly seven-thousand family members in a dozen months.

60-day Yellow Ribbon session looks at Soldier's mental health

By Sgt. Wayne Woolley, DMAVA/PA

The volunteers huddled in a cramped conference room on the 7th floor of the Veterans Administration Medical Center in East Orange on Sunday, Sept. 13, for a two-hour meeting that was part strategy session, part pep-talk.

When it was over, the two-dozen mental health specialists fanned out across the building to lead Soldiers from the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team in small group sessions to talk about issues that may have arisen since they returned from their Iraq deployment in June.

A number of the specialists said they volunteered because they had family ties to the military -- and because they had something special to say to the brigade.

"One of the first things I want to tell them is simply: Thank you," said Kathy Pignatelli, a nursing instructor at Bergen Community College and the spouse of a Vietnam veteran. "And then I want to help the Soldiers start a discussion that gives them ideas about ways to ask for help if they need it."

The aim of the re-integration sessions, which were held last weekend in Piscataway and East Orange and will be held this weekend in Piscataway and Stratford, was to help the brigade Soldiers recognize the signs of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and suicidal thoughts. The volunteers came from UMDNJ's University Behavioral Healthcare, the VA and more than a dozen other hospitals, clinics and universities.

Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth, the Adjutant General, told the Soldiers to take advantage of the unprecedented effort to help them readjust -- and to look out for each other.

"If you are not having problems, look to your left and to your right," he said. "Nobody knows your battle buddy better than you."



Staff Sgt. Antonio Nieto talks about his return from Iraq as volunteer mental health specialist Leslie Eaddy-Belvin, a psychological screener and director of community outreach at East Orange.

The world has nothing to fear from military ambition in our Government.

--James Polk, 11th President of the United States

DMAVA Highlights

Wanted: military athletes willing to tell their stories

Are you an OIF or OEF veteran who plays sports competitively and is interested in being profiled by a large New Jersey newspaper? It doesn't matter if you play for your college baseball team or a local volleyball league or are on a masters' swim team. What matters is that you play and are willing to tell your story. If you fit the description, contact Kryn Westhoven in the DMAVA public affairs office at kryn.westhoven@njdmava.state.nj.us or 609-530-6950 and he'll give you the details.



Reaching out to former Jersey Guard members

In an attempt to further build our National Guard family and reach out to former members and retirees along with current members.....it is asked that you contact Lt. Col. Daniel Mahon at Daniel.T.Mahon@us.army.mil. If you have a father, mother, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, grandmother, grandfather or an in-law who has served, retired from or is still serving in the New Jersey National Guard, we need your help. Send an e-mail to Lt. Col. Mahon and give your name and unit and your relative's name and unit (if known).

DMAVA Green

By Tech Sgt. Barb Harbison, DMAVA Public Affairs

More water saving tips!

For new installations, consider buying "low flush" toilets, which use 1 to 2 gallons per flush instead of the usual 3 to 5 gallons. Replacing an 18 liter per flush toilet with an ultra-low volume (ULV) 6 liter flush model represents a 70 percent savings in water flushed and will cut indoor water use by about 30 percent.

Automatic dishwashers and clothes washers should be fully loaded for optimum water conservation. For partial loads, adjust water levels to match the size of the load. If you're in the market for a new clothes washer, consider buying a water-saving [frontload washer](#).

In-sink 'garburators' require lots of water to operate properly. Start a [compost pile](#) as an alternate method of disposing food waste.

Keep a bottle of drinking water in the fridge. Running tap water to cool it off for drinking water is wasteful. Store drinking water in the fridge in a [safe drinking bottle](#).

Never put water down the drain when there may be another use for it such as watering a plant or garden, or cleaning.

Repair dripping faucets by replacing washers. If your faucet is dripping at the rate of one drop per second, you can expect to waste 2,700 gallons per year

[Catch the rain](#). Use it for watering your plants, lawn or garden. Grow no grass or less grass. Plant something besides a lawn or reduce the size of your lawn. Lawns require much more water (and maintenance) to keep growing than many other plants and ground covers.

Wash the car on the lawn.

Don't wash the driveway or sidewalk with a hose. Use a broom or rake to remove dry matter and let the rain do the rest.

Keep Green!

Quotes

Do not fear mistakes. You will know failure. continue to reach out.

--Benjamin Franklin

If wisdom were offered me with the proviso that I should keep it shut up and refrain from declaring it, I should refuse. There's no delight in owning anything unshared.

--Seneca

If you want a place in the sun, you've got to expect a few blisters.

--Anonymous

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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

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

Families

Free SAT/ACT prep software available for military families

Thanks to eKnowledge and concerned professional athletes, free \$200 SAT/ACT PowerPrep™ programs are available to military service members and their extended families. In its fourth consecutive year, the eKnowledge NFL and MLB sponsorship has donated over \$25 million of SAT/ACT software programs to 120,000 recipients.

It was announced recently that six time all-star and future Hall of Fame baseball player Chipper Jones has joined the SAT/ACT PowerPrep Sponsorship Program. Jones is a patriotic supporter of America's military, and welcomed the opportunity to raise awareness of the availability of the FREE SAT/ACT Test Prep Programs. "I believe in using my gifts and public image to help the military community" stated Jones.

eKnowledge also recently announced the release of the completely new PowerPrep™ version 6xtra. The v6x was in development for two years and cost over \$1.5 million. The new v6x SAT/ACT software includes more than 20 hours of video instruction and 3,000 files of supplemental test prep material, thousands of interactive diagnostic tools, sample questions, practice tests and graphic teaching illustrations are indexed for easy use. The new PowerPrep™ software is also completely MAC and PC compatible.

Families interested in ordering FREE SAT/ACT PowerPrep™ Programs should visit: www.eknowledge.com/military

There is a small fee of \$13.84 (per standard program) which enables eKnowledge to provide technical and customer support, registration, licensure, processing, handling and shipping. This nominal charge allows the sponsorship program to continue helping tens of thousands of students every year.

For further information, contact Lori Caputo, 951-256-4076, LoriCaputo@eknowledge.com.

Next Marriage Enrichment weekend coming in February

From Marie Durling, Family Programs Specialist

The next Marriage Enrichment weekend will be in February 2010. As soon as information is available on location and date, the applications will be available in the Family Support newsletter. There is only space for 25 couples, so keep your eyes open for the notice. Contact Marie at 609-530-6884 or marie.durling@us.army.mil to receive the e-newsletter.

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
Fax – 609-530-6871

Home Front Hearts helps military families in NJ

Home Front Hearts is a non-profit organization started by the wife of a New Jersey Guardsman with a purpose to help the families of military members.

The mission of Home Front Hearts is to serve the families that serve our country by: providing support and resources to the families of service members, increasing public awareness of the struggles and sacrifices of military families, and engaging both individuals and businesses in building communities that are responsive to the needs of these families. Visit www.homefronthearts.org for more information.



Nominate a deserving veteran for a home makeover from GHTV

Good Housekeeping TV is looking for a veteran who recently returned from a deployment to be surprised on their holiday television show.

The show is looking to give a small home makeover to a veteran for the holidays on a show and surround them with friends, family, and holiday décor.

The folks from GHTV would like to thank these dedicated these women and men. They want to welcome them home to a place that sparkles as bright as the season.

Requirements: Must live within 45 minutes of New York City; must be comfortable being on camera and talking to our host; must be available one day of filming in mid-October. If interested, e-mail three recent pictures of veteran, include contact information of family or friends supporting this veteran (address, phone number, and e-mail). Include a brief description of the veteran.

Feel free to nominate yourself!

If interested, please send a reply to ghtv2@hearst.com with "Veteran Holiday Special" in the subject line."

Army Guard multimedia center wants to open up their library

Catching up on your reading can be difficult in these hectic times.

The Army National Guard Multimedia Learning Center wants to help with an audio book lending program that offers hundreds of titles on CD and cassettes. Many of the selections are educational or self-help oriented. Sign up and listen and learn while commuting by auto, train or bus; exercising, or while on travel. Your selections will be shipped at no charge for a two week listening period. The program, at least for now, is only open to members of the Army National Guard. To sign up, visit: www.arng.3leafgroup.com

State Employees

Tax savings possible with Tax\$Save flexible savings accounts

From the desk of Paul Serdiuk, DMAVA Human Resources

Want to save \$\$\$\$? Stop by a free seminar about the TaxSave benefit program sponsored by the New Jersey Division of Pension & Benefits.

Tax\$ave is a Flexible Spending Account (FSA) that allows eligible state employees to set aside before-tax dollars to pay for certain medical, dental, and dependent care expenses, thereby avoiding federal taxes and saving money. There are three FSAs available this year.



- The Premium Option Plan, which allows you to pay your medical/dental state health benefits program contribution with before-tax dollars.

- The Unreimbursed Medical Flexible Spending Account, which allows you to set aside

money to pay for qualified medical/dental expenses not paid by any group plan.

- The Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account, which allows you to set aside money to pay for anticipated expenses related to dependent care that is required to allow you to work.

The seminar will be held on Tuesday September 29, 2009 from 11:00am to 12:00pm in Conference Room A.

No reservation is required, just show up. If you have any additional questions, please contact: Paul Serdiuk @ 609-530-6878.



Submit those hard-working employees for awards

From DMAVA Human Relations Division

We are accepting nominations for the DMAVA Employee Awards. Please submit nominations for the Winter Trimester (January – April) and the Spring Trimester (May – August) for 2009 by close of business Sept. 23. Forward all your nominations to Anna Marie Boutchia, HR Division, using the template that is available on DMAVANet. Please include the agency, division or group name where the nominee works; this information is needed for the certificates. It is requested that all nominations be typed when submitted for ease of processing and selection. Any questions regarding the awards process can be directed to Loreta Sepulveda, Director of Human Resources. The awards presentation date (Fall 2009) will be announced in the near future.

PAR & PERS available online

From the desk of Anna Marie Boutchia, DMAVA Human Resources

Attention state employees, PAR and PAS 2010 documents are available on DMAVANet under the Human Resources sections. Questions can be directed to Paul Serdiuk at (609)530-6878.

Find lots of ways to save money with your employee discount!

Instructions to access updated New Jersey State Employee Discount List

1. Go to CSC website at <http://www.state.nj.us/csc/>
2. Click on Information on left side of web page
3. Select employee discount
4. Click on State Employee Discounts on left side



Positions opening at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst

Officials want job seekers to know that as 200 federal civilian positions in various career fields and pay grades will be created as Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst reaches full operational capacity Oct. 1.

The jobs will come online as the three facilities continue to streamline and become one entity said 1st Lt. James Davern, 87th Force Support Squadron.

Davern suggested qualified applicants monitor www.usajobs.gov and access the most current list of openings by typing “McGuire, NJ” in the location section under the “Search Jobs” location.

Because job opening and closing dates will vary, Davern suggested applicants consider the automatic notification feature on the federal job Website.

In addition to the civilian positions, there are also about 50 openings for dual status Air Reserve Technicians. For available ART positions, visit www.AFRC.af.mil/library/jobs

For more information about civilian employment opportunities at the joint base, call the Civilian Personnel office at (609) 754-5691 or visit www.jointbasemdl.af.mil

Veterans & Military

Legislation could extend GI Bill to more Guardsmen

By Air Force Senior Airman Jameel S. Moses, Special to American Forces Press Service

ARLINGTON, Va., Sept. 16, 2009 - More than 30,000 additional National Guard members may become eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill with the help of bipartisan legislation introduced Sept. 10.

U.S. Rep. Dave Loebsack of Iowa has introduced a bill that proposes a change to the GI Bill eligibility rules to include National Guard members called to active duty in support of homeland security.

"Essentially, the new GI Bill of Rights that we passed last year unintentionally left out about 30,000 members of the National Guard," Loebsack said on Radio Iowa. "They are not receiving all of the benefits they have earned."

The current Post-9/11 GI Bill, which began Aug. 3, extends benefits only to servicemembers serving under Title 10 duty status, but the proposed law would cover those serving under Title 32 in homeland security roles. Both duty statuses are paid with federal dollars, but under Title 32, the state governor maintains control of National Guard forces. "Our National Guard members who participate in disaster response, protection of U.S. airspace, border security and many other critical missions deserve the Post-9/11 GI benefits and the opportunities that come with those benefits," Loebsack said. "As a former college professor, I know and understand the many doors an education can open. A small technical error will not and should not get in the way of opening those doors."

The bill also covers reserve-component servicemembers who have been discharged with a service-connected disability, because they're not covered under current law, he added. Servicemembers discharged under Title 10 with a service-connected disability are provided a full, four-year college education, but Guard members discharged under Title 32 aren't eligible.

The bill, which has 22 co-sponsors, has been referred to the House Veterans Affairs Committee. The committee isn't expected to pass new GI Bill-related legislation until next year.

AMC travel site opens with 'hop' info

From the desk of Mike Hughes, Family Assistance Specialist

The Air Mobility Command recently unveiled its first official, command-level AMC Travel Web site. People planning to use the AMC military travel system can now point their Web browsers to www.amc.af.mil/amctravel/index.asp

The site, which officially went live July 24, offers prospective space-available travelers a wealth of information, including an updated AMC passenger terminal contact list (complete with phone, e-mail and Web links), and more than a dozen travel documents, example letters and brochures.

Space-available flights, also known as "military hops," are a unique benefit to U.S. servicemembers, retirees and their families.

Under the AMC travel program, unused seats on U.S. military and military-contracted aircraft are made available to non-duty passengers on a space-available basis (once space-required or official-duty passengers and cargo have been accommodated).

Guard must submit civilian employment information

By Lt. Col. Ellen Krenke, National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. -- Army and Air National Guard members are encouraged to provide their civilian employment information to the Department of Defense through a mandatory program that has been around since the early 1990s.

The Civilian Employment Information program makes it possible for defense officials to know who can be called up for active duty without jeopardizing the civilian forces responsible for safeguarding our country, said Lt. Gen. Harry M. Wyatt, the director of the Air National Guard in a memorandum to the states.

Reporting by the 450,000-member National Guard has been very good in the past with more than 90 percent providing information in the last five years, said James Lamback, the chief of Employer Support for the National Guard Bureau. But information is required to be updated every year, and reporting for this year is less than 20 percent for both services.

Guardmembers must fill in 10 specific data fields concerning their civilian employer, including employment status, employer's name and mailing address, their job title and their total number of years in their current civilian occupation.

Technicians must also register as government employees.

As part of this program, the DOD must: give consideration to civilian workers, including emergency responders such as police officers, firefighters and medical personnel; ensure more members with critical civilian jobs and skills are not retained in the Guard longer than necessary to respond to emergencies; and inform civilian employers of their rights and responsibilities under the 1994 Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act.

Employees are considered full time for Civilian Employment Information purposes if their employer considers them to be employed full time. Self-employed personnel are considered full time if they work for themselves for an average of at least 30 hours per week.

Guardmembers who fail or refuse to provide this information, or who knowingly provide false employment-related information, may be subject to administrative action or punishment, officials said.

Employment data can be entered on the Defense Manpower Data Center Web site.

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 – Sept. 21

What – 114th Inf Regimental Assoc. Golf Tournament

Where – Pitman Golf Course, Sewell

More info – royceray@comcast.net



When – Sept. 26

What – 22nd annual New Jersey Friends of the Guard and Reserve golf outing

Where – Falcon Crest golf course, McGuire Air Force Base

More info – 609-562-0156 or 609-562-0157

Hershey Park military appreciation day Sept. 27

Hershey Park in Hershey, Pa. is hosting a military appreciation day on Sunday, Sept. 27 that's open to National Guard troops and their families.

Admission is reduced to \$21 per person (children 2 and under are free.) Parking is free.

But advance ticket purchase online is required to receive the discount.

Use ROMO CODE: 29837 and go to this URL to purchase tickets: <https://tickets.hersheypa.com/WebStore/shop/ViewItems.aspx?Merchant=PAARMY&CategoryGroupExternalID=PAARMY&CategoryExternalID=PAARMYTKTS>

Say farewell to Col. Cefalone on Oct. 17

Col. Ronald Cefalone will be honored for his retirement from the new Jersey Army National Guard on Oct. 17 at a family style dinner at the Lawrenceville National Guard Armory.

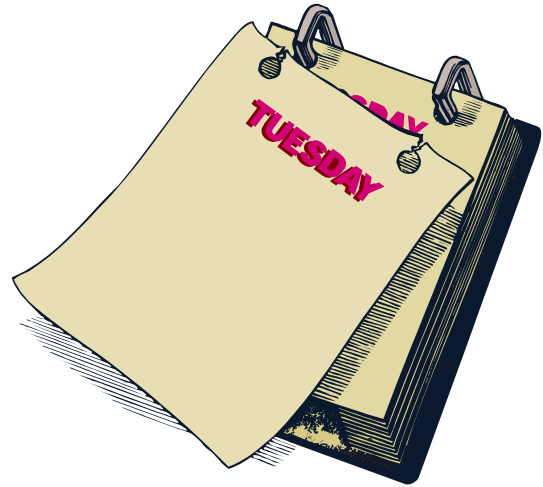
Cocktails begin at 6 p.m. and the dinner will be served at 7 p.m. Dress is Mess Dress for Air Force, Blues or Mess Dress for Army and business attire for civilians. Cost is \$40 per person, \$5 for gift only.

RSVPs need to be given to Lucy Brogle, 609-562-0264 or lucy.a.brogle@us.army.mil by Oct. 7.



Picatinny MWR welcomes you fitness, fun and lots more

If you live near Picatinny Arsenal, you can take advantage of their full service Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation. To find out what's happening, visit their Web site - <http://www.pica.army.mil/newmwr/> - and sign up to receive e-mails about what is coming up on the calendar.



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.

Sept. 22*, 23, 24 Rockaway Townsquare Mall

Oct. 20, 21, 22** Jersey Gardens Mall



Nov. 9*, 10 Woodbridge Center Mall

*Medal ceremony at 10:30 a.m.

**Medal ceremony at 1 p.m.

***Outreach program only, 7:05 p.m.

****Outreach program only, 4:05 p.m.

Deadline

Want to place an event or article in DMAVA Highlights?

Deadline for articles is noon Wednesday.

Send submissions to barbara.harbison@njdmava.state.nj.us.