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**DMAVA Highlights » 06 March 2008**

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Volume 8, Number 10

**Contacting us is easy!**

Public Affairs Office

Phone: (609) 530-7088

Fax: (609) 530-6963

**Veterans' Organizations Contact Information**

State Veterans Service Council  
 Mr. Richard Clark  
[RJClark21@msn.com](mailto:RJClark21@msn.com)

NJ Advisory Committee for Women Veterans  
 Mrs. Anna Hoffman  
[hoffmanannem@aol.com](mailto:hoffmanannem@aol.com)

BG Willam C. Doyle Cemetery Advisory Council  
 Mr. William Rakestraw  
[warjrj@msn.com](mailto:warjrj@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**


[DMAVA Highlights Archive Page](#)

**NJ World War II Memorial**

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

[WWII Memorial on the web](#)



 [Download PDF Version of this week's highlights](#)

**Daylight Savings Time Alert - Don't be late on Sunday - turn your clock ahead one hour before going to bed Saturday night.**

**Nunn's promotion slated for March 9**

Col. John Nunn, the commander of the 42nd Regional Support Group, will be promoted to Brigadier General on Sunday, March 9. Also on the same day, the Regional Support Group will have a change-of-command ceremony. The 42nd RSG is based in Somerset.

**108th Security Forces return to McGuire, family, friends**

Late Monday night 12 members of the 108th ARW Security Forces Squadron returned to New Jersey after a tour of duty in Iraq. Greeted by members of the New Jersey Air Guard, family and friends, the Airmen flew the last leg of the journey, from Westover Air Force Base, Mass., to McGuire in the familiar environment of a KC-135 piloted by the 108th commander, Brig. Gen. Michael L. Cunniff.

**April is "Her-story" month; women's contributions to the nation**

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

DMAVA celebrates the contributions of women service members and their importance to the nation in the past, present and future. For the next four weeks in celebration of Women's History Month, DMAVA will highlight major accomplishments and female contributions to military service

**The History of Women's History Month**

The public celebration of women's history in this country began in 1978 as "Women's History Week" in Sonoma County, California. The week including March 8, International Women's Day, was selected. In 1981, Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, and Rep. Barbara Mikulski, D-Md., co-sponsored a joint Congressional resolution proclaiming a national Women's History Week. In 1987, Congress expanded the celebration to a month, and March was declared Women's History Month.

**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

## ESGR office

JFHQ 3650 Saylor's Pond Road Fort  
Dix, NJ 08641 Hank Pierre, 609-562-  
0156,  
[hank.pierre@njdmava.state.nj.us](mailto:hank.pierre@njdmava.state.nj.us)  
Tammy Cartagena, 609-562-0157,  
[tammy.l.cartagena@us.army.mil](mailto:tammy.l.cartagena@us.army.mil) Fax  
609-562-0158

### Please submit any articles and all information for DMAVA Highlights to:

PAO Office DMAVA Highlights ATTN: Staff  
Sgt. Barb Harbison

Deadline is noon Wednesday

Staff Sgt. Barbara Harbison  
[barbara.harbison@njdmava.state.nj.us](mailto: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

### Quote for the Week

It is a damn poor mind indeed which  
can't think of at least two ways to  
spell any word.

- Andrew Jackson

A smile is the chosen vehicle for all  
ambiguities.

- Herman Melville

Sports do not build character. They  
reveal it.

- Heywood Brown

My salad days, when I was green in  
judgment.

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](mailto:Amanda.balas@us.army.mil) or 609-562-0742.

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## 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](mailto: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.

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## Nominate a hero for a Extreme Makeover

Do you know a heroic family who deserves an Extreme Makeover? The producers of ABC's Extreme Makeover: Home Edition are looking for real heroes – people with amazing strength and who put their own needs aside to help others. Besides these attributes, they need a home in DIRE need of help. The crew is looking for homes that look like they might fall down on their own.

To show eligibility a family must own their own single family home and be able to show producers how a makeover will make a huge difference in their lives.

E-mail a short description on your family story to [castextremehome@gmail.com](mailto:castextremehome@gmail.com) if you are interested in participating.

Your nomination must include:

- names and ages of each member of the household
- description of the major challenges within the home
- explanation of why the family is deserving, heroic or a positive role model in their community
- photos of the family and a photo of the house
- contact number

Deadline for the nominations is **March 13**, 2008. For more information, visit <http://abc.go.com/primetime/xtremehome/index?pn=apply>.

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## 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](mailto: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.

- William Shakespeare

It takes taste to account for taste.

- Spanish proverb

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## 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](http://www.consumer.gov/idtheft)

FBI: [www.ifccfbi.gov](http://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>

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## 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](mailto:bovitz@njaes.rutgers.edu).

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

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## More education benefits coming to Guardsmen

WASHINGTON (March 3, 2008) - Some members of the National Guard and the Reserves who serve on active duty will see a significant increase in their educational benefits, thanks to improvements announced today by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

"Reservists and National Guardsmen who serve multiple tours on active duty may get an increase in their educational benefits, in keeping with the value of their service to our nation," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake.

Under new provisions, members who accumulate three years on active duty, regardless of breaks in service, may be eligible for the maximum payment under the Reserve Education Assistance Program (REAP). Previously, reservists and guardsmen had to serve two continuous years on active duty to receive the highest payment.

The new eligibility rules are retroactive to October 1, 2007. The top payment under REAP is currently \$880.80 per month.

The new law, part of the National Defense Authorization Act, also expands the period of eligibility for certain Guard and Reserve members who complete their service obligation before separation from the selected reserve.

Members meeting these criteria may be eligible to use REAP benefits for a period of ten years following discharge. Benefits typically end upon separation for members who do not complete their full, obligated service.

Additionally, some REAP-eligible National Guard and Reserve members may now make an extra contribution to the Department of Defense to increase their monthly benefit rates.

Service members receive an additional \$5 per month for each \$20 contributed. With the maximum \$600 contribution, this option can add up to \$5,400 to a member's total 36-month education benefit package.

Beginning on October 1, 2008, participants in REAP and the Montgomery GI Bill program for the Selected Reserve who pursue non-degree programs lasting less than two years may also be eligible to receive accelerated payments.

During FY 2007, more than 60,000 National Guardsmen and reservists were paid under REAP, more than 41,000 were paid under the Montgomery GI Bill program for the Selected Reserves, and approximately 344,000 participants were paid under the Montgomery GI Bill for active-duty members.

For more information on changes to VA's GI Bill benefits, go to [www.GIBILL.va.gov](http://www.GIBILL.va.gov) or contact VA directly at 1-888-GIBILL1 (or 1-888-442-4551).

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## 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.

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### New recycling rules for Lawrenceville, West Trenton

*From the desk of Joseph K. Dunleavy, Environmental Specialist*

The state has hired a new contractor to implement the Governors Executive Order pertaining to recycling at all State owned and operated facilities. This guidance is targeted for the workforce within the DMAVA Lawrenceville complex and West Trenton NJARNG locations only. The contractor and the Treasury Department have provided new collection containers for recyclable items. These containers are to be placed on the loading dock prior to the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month so that the collection truck can pick them up. Please inform all personnel of the requirements.

All aluminum & steel cans, plastic and glass bottles (coded 1 & 2) need to be placed in the "Decorative Containers" or the blue containers with round openings, in the Headquarters Building for disposal. ***Please no caps or lids!*** These items will be collected on Fridays at the loading dock.

The new company will be conducting participatory audits and notify the Governors Office of participation rates. Encourage everyone in your office to recycle office paper, white paper, colored paper, Post It™ notes, newspaper, magazines, envelopes, folders, junk mail, and paper wrappers.

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### 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](http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p3.pdf).

By visiting the IRS Web site – [www.irs.gov](http://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.

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## For Your Calendar

**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.

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### **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 3 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](mailto:marie.durling@nj.ngb.army.mil) or call 609-562-0739.

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### **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](mailto:paul.serdiuk@njdmava.state.nj.us). All seminars will be held in Conference Room A at DMAVA Central Office. All are welcomed.

**March 13:** Gangs – Introduction, identification, and overview. A nationally known expert from the Department of Corrections will give a 2 ½ hour overview of the gang infiltration into suburban New Jersey. Included will be a historical overview how gangs got started, gang identification, what you can do as a citizen and parent to prevent the spread of gangs.

**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.

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### **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

## ***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.

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### **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:*

#### **13D10 MOS-T FA Tactical Data System Specialist**

March 15-29, 2008 - 12 openings

### **13F10 MOS-T Fire Support Specialist**

March 15-22, 2008 - 18 openings

### **88M10 MOS-T Motor Transport Operator**

March 15-29, 2008 - 16 openings

**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 ANCOC**

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](mailto:gary.davidson@nj.ngb.army.mil).

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## ***Honorable Mention***

### **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](http://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](mailto:lisa.dandrea@njdmava.state.nj.us).

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### **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](http://www.tricare.mil/mybenefit), select the "benefits update" link for the Tricare Reserve Select information page.

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### **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/](http://www.nj.gov/mvc/) for more information.

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### **Discounts offered for State employees**

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

Visit [www.state.nj.us/personnel/discounts/index.htm](http://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](mailto:cindy.leese@njdmava.state.nj.us) or call 609-530-7056.

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## For the Families

### 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>.

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### 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).

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### 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](mailto:Patricia.Keffer@us.army.mil).

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

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### Maintaining Family Connections presentation at Dover Armory

*From the desk of Sabrina Toomey, Troop A FRG Leader*

The A Troop FRG is sponsoring, "Maintaining Family Connections," a presentation by a representative of the Family Advocacy Program. This is one of a series of classes on "Deployment: Coping with Separation and Staying Connected." It will be held at the Dover Armory, 479 West Clinton Street, on **March 9**, from noon to 2 p.m.

Light refreshments will be served.

To RSVP, contact either Cindy Rounsaville, 908-996-3108, [nehihomeo@embarqmail.com](mailto:nehihomeo@embarqmail.com) or Sabrina Toomey, 610-381-7071, [sabrina.toomey@us.army.mil](mailto:sabrina.toomey@us.army.mil).

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### 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](mailto: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.

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### 177th Fighter Wing sponsoring Spring Party for kids

The 177th Fighter Wing, New Jersey Air National Guard, is sponsoring a children's Spring Party on Saturday, **March 15** from 11a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Base Dining Hall, building 400. The event will begin with an Easter Egg Hunt led by the Easter Bunny, followed by food, and then a magic show with Captain Visual. If you are planning on attending, please contact Mr. Gunning, at 609-645-6248 or [family.support@njatla.ang.af.mil](mailto:family.support@njatla.ang.af.mil).

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### 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.

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### 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](mailto:usslibertyhouse@comcast.com).

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### 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:

Teaneck Youth Group Activities – all events are held at the Teaneck Family Assistant Center, from 6:30-8 p.m.

☒ Monday, **March 10**: Vet Center Teen Round Table Discussion "So How Do You Really Feel? Speaker: Teresa Bennett, MSW (for children 10 and older)

For more information, call Sonja McDaniel, event coordinator at 201-906-7687.

Palm Sunday Sunrise Service and Easter Basket Distribution Sunday, **March 16**, 6 a.m. on the drill floor. For more information call Sonja McDaniel

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.

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## 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, <b>March 8</b>	Morristown	2 p.m.(date and time change)
Saturday, <b>March 8</b>	Riverdale	9:30 a.m.
Sunday, <b>March 9</b>	Woodbridge	1:30 p.m.
Saturday, <b>March 15</b>	Jersey City	9:30 a.m.
Thursday, <b>March 20</b>	Teaneck	6:30 p.m.
Thursday, <b>April 3</b>	Cherry Hill	6:30 p.m.
Sunday, <b>May 4</b>	Woodbury	9:30 a.m. and 2 p.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.

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## Scholarships to Space Camp available to military children

Military children can take advantage of the Military Child Education Coalition Contest – Bernard Brown II Space Camp Scholarship.

Space Camp is a place where kids come together for a journey they will never forget. The camp is an eight day program in Huntsville, Ala., that shows young men and women what it takes to be an astronaut.

The scholarship includes round trip transportation (from student's home base to Space Camp), meals, lodging and program materials.

To be eligible for the scholarship, each applicant must:

- Be a child of active duty military parent or activated Guard or Reservist
- Be enrolled in grades 6-9
- Submit HAND WRITTEN essay which includes why he or she should be selected, evidence of patriotism, future goals, community service, and "after camp" intentions
- Submit two letters of recommendation with contact information
- Complete and submit the application by the deadline.

All submissions are due no later than **March 10, 2008**. (NOTE: Write "Attn. Call for the Arts" on envelope when mailing in entry.)

For more detailed information about the Space Camp Scholarship, visit the MCEC at [www.MilitaryChild.org](http://www.MilitaryChild.org) or call at 254-953-1923.

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### 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](mailto:HNFS_Communications@healthnet.com). Those living outside the North Region can download the journal from the Health Net Federal Services website.

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### 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>.

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### Picatinny Arsenal Egg Hunt, March 8

The Picatinny Arsenal invites all National Guard families along with the Picatinny community to the Annual Egg Hunt held on **March 8**, 1:30-3 p.m. at the Teen Center. Come out for an afternoon of fun and laughter. There will be games, prizes, egg hunt, arts and crafts and pictures with the Easter Bunny.

The day is for children 11 and under. Attendees are asked to bring their own basket. To reserve your spot, please call 973-724-5555/7183.

The Teen Center is located in building 3228, next to the community center. The egg hunt starts at 1:30 sharp; hunters are asked to arrive early.

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### 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](http://www.reserveaid.org).

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### 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.

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## 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](http://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.

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## 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](mailto:wocmilitarygrant@ymca-bc.org).

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## 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.

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## 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.

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## Free Trenton Devils tickets available

The Trenton Devils have at least 50 tickets they are giving away to hockey fans for the **March 8** game against the Wheeling (W.V.) Nailers at the Sovereign Bank Center, Trenton. The game will be held at noon.

Since the Devils want the seats filled, tickets will only be given to those Guardmembers who are certain they will attend the game.

If you are interested in tickets, contact Marie Durling at 609-562-0739 or [marie.durling@us.army.mil](mailto:marie.durling@us.army.mil).

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## **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/](http://www.afvclub.com/) for more information.

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### **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](http://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.

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## **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](http://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.

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### **Education news for NJARNG**

#### **Education Services Brochure Booklet (ESB2)**

Access the New Jersey Army National Guard's ESB2 at [www.nj.gov/military/education](http://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.

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### **Scholarships for military spouses now available**

The National Military Family Association's Joanne Holbrook Patton Military Spouse Scholarships are awarded to spouses of uniformed services members (active duty, National Guard and Reserve, retirees and survivors) to obtain professional certification or to attend post secondary or graduate school. Scholarships range in

amount from \$500-1,000, and the number awarded each year varies depending on funding. Scholarship funds may be used for tuition, fees and school room and board.

Scholarship selection is based on completion of some survey questions that will help NMFA advocate for education changes on your behalf, short-answer questions and an essay question that will help us get to know you better. To be considered, applications must be completed by midnight **March 15**. To apply, go to: [https://secure2.convio.net/nmfa/site/SSurvey?SURVEY\\_ID=4420&ACTION\\_REQUIRED=URI ACTION USER REQUESTS](https://secure2.convio.net/nmfa/site/SSurvey?SURVEY_ID=4420&ACTION_REQUIRED=URI_ACTION_USER_REQUESTS).

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## **American Legion offers scholarships, booklet on their Web site**

The American Legion has scholarship information on their Web site – [www.legion.org](http://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.

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## **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](http://www.eang-nj.org).

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### **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.

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## **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.

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## Career fairs for veterans, Guard members, spouses

RecruitMilitary Career Fairs will be held at three 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 three 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. Citizens Bank Park, Philadelphia, **March 12**, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Citizens Bank Park is the home of the Philadelphia Phillies and is located at 1 Citizens Bank Way, Philadelphia PA 19148. The fair will take place in the Hall of Fame Club.

<http://www.recruitmilitary.com/careerfairs/careerfairs3.asp?CFID=76>.

2. 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](http://www.recruitmilitary.com/careerfairs/careerfairs3.asp?CFID=77)

3. 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](http://www.recruitmilitary.com/career_fairs/careerfairs3.asp?CFID=78)

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## 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).

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## 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](http://www.TurboTAP.org) or email [TAPHelp@military-inc.com](mailto:TAPHelp@military-inc.com).

## DMVA 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](http://www.njvvmf.org).

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