



DMAVA Highlights » 03 April 2008

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NJ Dept of Military and Veterans Affairs

Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth
 The Adjutant General

Brig. Gen. Maria Falca-Dodson
 Deputy Adjutant General

Col. (Ret) Stephen G. Abel
 Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs

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

NJ Advisory Committee for Women Veterans
 Mrs. Anna Hoffman
hoffmanannem@aol.com

BG Willam C. Doyle Cemetery Advisory Council
 Mr. William Rakestraw
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

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News For Your Views

177th flies through Health Services Inspection with outstanding rating

By Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, 177FW/PA

"This unit is hallmarked for continued success."

That was the final assessment of the 177th Medical Group, 177th Fighter Wing, New Jersey Air National Guard, which received its second Outstanding rating in a row during the Health Services Inspection.

The Directorate of Medical Operations, Headquarters Air Force Inspection Agency, Kirtland Air Force Base, N.M., was the lead agency on the inspection, which was held from March 27-30 at the 177th. Health Services Inspections are held every five years.

"From Airman to Colonel, they're all professionals and they bring those talents to the fight," stated Col. Barbara J. Johnston, Director, ARC Medical Inspection Division, Air Force Inspection Agency. "They definitely shine."

Outstanding is the highest rating possible on the inspection scale, which ranks units on a score of 100 points – the 177th Medical Group received a 96 – and includes excellent, satisfactory, marginal and unsatisfactory in its ratings.

"It is harder to get an outstanding (on an inspection) because the scoring has changed," noted Johnston.

So think of it as a solid A grade similar to what you got in high school.

Health Services Inspections assess readiness, provide an independent assessment of medical care, identify instances of fraud, waster or abuse; and evaluate and report on the effectiveness and efficiency of medical management.

In the final report, the Occupational Medicine Program was lauded as exemplary and should be shared throughout the Air National Guard.

"They know their programs and they are making sure that those programs are staying in line," observed Johnston. "What we saw, that's called sustainment."

That sustainment is what led the 177th Medical Group to receive that Outstanding rating according to the inspection team's final report. The report cited that the full-time Airmen and the traditional Guardsmen dedicate far more time than what is expected to ensure the success of the 177th Medical Group.

USPFO IG inspection is successful

From the New Jersey USPFO

The United States Property and Fiscal Office (USPFO) recently completed their First Army IG Inspection with great success. Overall, there were NO FINDINGS. They received 15 Commendables, citing specific people and functions for achievement. Col. Ronald Cefalone mentioned that their inspection success is directly attributable to a "Family Atmosphere" where everyone works together to achieve the mission. It's obvious from these results that it certainly is a well oiled "TEAM" environment.

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NJ World War II Memorial

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

[WWII Memorial on the web](#)

ESGR office

JFHQ 3650 Saylor's Pond Road Fort
Dix, NJ 08641

Hank Pierre, 609-562-0156,
hank.pierre@njdmava.state.nj.us
Tammy Cartagena, 609-562-0157,
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
Or Call 609-530-7088

Phone numbers and Web sites to remember

Directory Assistance:

1-602-293-4907

Verizon Super Pages:

<http://www.superpages.com>

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

SBC Yellow Pages:

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

Telephone and contact information on state employees can be found at

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

DMAVA Emergency Hotline:

1-866-232-5798

Quotes for the Week

Every citizen should be a soldier. This was the case with the Greeks and

The USPFO, by Federal Statute, must get an IG Inspection every 18-24 months by an active duty IG team. This inspection is one of several higher command inspections for the USPFO and they always do extremely well. Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth, The Adjutant General, and Col. James Grant, Army Chief of Staff, assembled the workforce in building 3650 and recognized many individuals from the USPFO. TAG Coins were presented to the following people who also had their photos taken with Gen. Rieth:

❖ Letitia "Tish" Queen, Jackie Furda, Kathy Hines, Sgt. 1st Class Mike Hose, Jill Borden and Sharon Yoder

Again, great job to an outstanding TEAM and wishing you success with your future inspections!

Family Deployment Briefing schedule updated

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
Thursday, April 3	Cherry Hill	6:30 p.m.
Saturday, April 19	Morristown	10 a.m.
Sunday, May 4	Woodbury	9:30 a.m. and 2 p.m.
		two briefs in one day to cover all 1/114th families
Sunday, June 8	Bordentown	2 p.m. (Tentative)

**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.

Hersheypark invites Guard to day at park April 20

Hersheypark is inviting the National Guard from Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland and New Jersey to attend a semi-private day at Hersheypark on Sunday, April 20. Parking is free and the cost of admission is \$21 for all ages (children 2 and under are free). Hersheypark will be closed to the general public on this day.

To purchase your tickets you may:

Order from the e-ticketing link:

[https://tickets.hersheypa.com/hersheypark/store.jsp?merchant=PANational#ceShop,](https://tickets.hersheypa.com/hersheypark/store.jsp?merchant=PANational#ceShop)

User name is paguard and password is hersheybar 2008.

Or, you can call 1-800-242-4236 to place your order.

NGANJ holding 20th Annual Golf Tourney to benefit scholarships

The National Guard Association of New Jersey is holding their 20th Annual President's Golf Tournament at Falcon Creek Golf Course, McGuire Air Force Base on June 28.

Romans, and must be that of every free state.

- Thomas Jefferson

Praise to the undeserving is severe satire.

-Benjamin Franklin

Don't brood on what's past, but never forget it either.

- Thomas H. Raddall

No legacy is so rich as honesty.

- William Shakespeare

A jest is half a truth.

- Yiddish proverb

For a donation of \$115 per person, golfers will receive greens fees, cart, refreshments, dinner, shirt and door prizes. All proceeds from the event will benefit the NGANJ scholarship fund.

The tournament will begin at 10 a.m. with a shotgun start using a four-person scramble format. Prizes will be awarded to the first and second place teams for low gross and low net scores, closest to pin on hole 2 and the longest drive on hole 17, both men and women.

Coffee, juice and donuts will be served at 8:30 a.m. For those who would only like to attend the dinner after the tournament, the cost is \$30.

The committee is also looking for corporate sponsors, refreshment sponsors, hole sponsors, boosters, cash donations, and gift prizes. If you would like to participate in any way, contact Jack Petrosilli at 609-530-6843.

YMCA Burlington County offers drop off program April 27

The YMCA of Burlington County-Mount Laurel is offering "Celebrating Military Children," on Sunday, April 27 at the YMCA located at 59 Centerton Road, Mount Laurel.

There will be a free drop-off service for military children from 1-5 p.m. Operation Military Kids team members will supervise your child and one friend, ages 5 and older. There will be lots of activities including, arts and crafts, climbing wall, swimming, photography, face painting, health food and drink, YMCA Values hoop shoot, free giveaways and more.

RSVP is a must, as there is a 75 youth maximum participation. RSVP must be done by 2 p.m., April 22. For more information or to RSVP, contact Amanda Balas, Youth Coordinator, 609-562-0742 or Amanda.balas@us.army.mil.

Purple Heart Memorial of Union County to be dedicated

The Military Order of the Purple Heart, Chapter 28 of Union County is presenting a Purple Heart Memorial to be dedicated in the Township of Springfield on Saturday, May 3 at 1 p.m. The Township will be hosting the dedication ceremony at Veterans Park located at the intersection of Mountain Avenue and Shunpike Road. Refreshments will be served at the firehouse afterwards. In case of rain, the ceremony will be in the municipal building courtroom. All members of the public, especially present and former military personnel and recipients of the Purple Heart are welcome. For additional information regarding the dedication ceremony, contact Springfield Committeeman Ziad Andrew Shehady at 862-206-2309.

Trees do more than you wood think!

Celebrate Earth Day on Saturday, April 19 at Laurel Pond, Fort Dix, from 9 am.-3 p.m. Find out how, "Trees Do More Than You 'Wood' Think!" Pre-registration is required by April 15 for Fort Dix visitors. Call 609-562-5428 or e-mail Jennifer.l.tronco@us.army.mil.

Honoring Military Children

From the desk of Amanda Balas, State Youth Coordinator

Honoring the military child during Month of the Military Child is Connect and Join and AC Moore Stores who will be offering free arts and crafts activities in their stores each Saturday in April from 1-3 p.m.

☒ April 5 – Color Thomas the Train make and take

☒ April 12 – Klutz Book/Red, White and Blue friendship bracelet demo

☒ April 19 – America Supports You! sand art make and take

☒ April 26 – Creative Hands foam make and take

For more information or to find the store nearest you, visit www.acmoore.com/default.aspx.

Support for military children of deployed and injured Guard members

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

Our Military Kids (OMK) provides tangible support to the children of deployed and severely injured National Guard and Military Reserve personnel through grants for enrichment activities and tutoring that nurture and sustain the children during the time a parent is away in service to our country. OMK grants are made to honor the sacrifices military parents make and to ensure that the children have access to activities and support that help the children better cope with challenges arising during a parent's deployment or injury recovery. For additional information go to www.ourmilitarykids.org.

Program offers grant funds to spouses of deployed military

The Deployed Military Spouses Assistance Program provides direct assistance and referrals to existing programs for spouses of deployed military personnel (active duty, reserve and National Guard) who face unusual financial and emotional stress as a result of the deployments.

Applicants should contact Fawn Mutschler at 609-543-6200 ext. 325 or wocmilitarygrant@ymca-bc.org to obtain an application. In addition to the completed application form, applicants will also need to submit the following documentation: LES/paystub for applicant and spouse; statement of Financial Need (i.e. reason for applying and how the grant will help); bill or pricing of expenditure as well as any other supporting information the applicant feels may be helpful. Additional information can be found at: www.state.nj.us/dca/dow/depmilspouseasst.shtml

Museum gala set for May 17; military get reduced cost tickets

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. Military personnel will pay \$50 for their tickets. Tables of 10 cost \$750 and include special recognition at the event. RSVP for the event has been extended to April 15.

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@online.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.

For Your Calendar

Buy tickets for belly-filling breakfast

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

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

Sell your stuff at yard sale at Woodstown armory

From the desk of Michele Daisey, Woodbury Family Assistance Center

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

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

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

Retirement reception for Brig. Gen. Frank Carlini, April 20

A retirement reception for Brig. Gen. Frank R. Carlini is being held on Sunday, April 20 at The Club at McGuire (former Enlisted Club), from 2-6 p.m.

Cost is \$35 per person. Uniform is Mess Dress/Dress Blues for Army, Service Dress for Air Force and Business Attire for civilians.

RSVP by April 15 to Zandra Ramcharitar, 609-562-0959.

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.

Raising funds for Fisher House

On Saturday, **May 17**, the Fort Monmouth Combined Professional Associations, which include Army Aviation Association of America (Quad A), Association of the United States Army (AUSA) and Signal Corps Regimental Association (SCRA), will be hosting the 4th Annual Support Our Heroes Military Ball in support of the Fisher House at Gibbs Hall, Fort Monmouth, N.J. The ball is **free** for military and costs \$75 for non-military. The uniform for the event is the service equivalent for black-tie.

The Fisher House is a unique private-public partnership that supports America's military in their time of need. The program recognizes the special sacrifices of our men and women in uniform and the hardships of military service by meeting a humanitarian need beyond that normally provided by DOD and the VA.

Because members of the military and their families are stationed worldwide and must often travel great distances for specialized medical care, Fisher House Foundation donates "comfort homes," built on the grounds of major military and VA medical centers. These homes enable family members to be close to a loved one at the most stressful time – during the hospitalization for an unexpected illness, disease, or injury.

For more information on sponsorships or for donations to the auction, contact Kit Roache at Kit.Roache@gdc4s.com, or Cheryl Davidson at cdavidso@harris.com. For registration information contact Diane Carnes at diane.carnes@tmsg.sytexinc.com.

HRD presents seminars for training

From the desk of Paul Serdiuk, DMAVA Human Resources Division

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

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

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

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

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

Military Training, Schools, Opportunities

RTS-Maintenance offers training to Army Guard members

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

Schoolhouse: Regional Training Site-Maintenance

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

School Code: 967

Unit Phone: 609-562-0566/0568

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

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

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

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

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

254th Regiment announces upcoming courses

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

Active Duty Training (ADT) Courses:

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

April 12-13, 2008 - 60 openings

11B10 MOS-T Infantryman

May 3-17, 2008 - 34 openings

11B40 Infantryman 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.

Honorable Mention

Websites give insight to identity theft

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

FTC: www.consumer.gov/idtheft

FBI: www.ifccfbi.gov

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

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

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

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

State Health Benefits Program has new plans

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

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

Affordable TRICARE benefit for drilling National Guard members

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

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

N.J. licenses, registration extended for deployed troops

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

Discounts offered for State employees

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

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

For the Families

New Family Leave related to military service

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

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

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

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

4-H conference open to middle school students

From the desk of Amanda Balas, State Youth Coordinator

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

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

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

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

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

From the desk of Amanda Balas, State Youth Coordinator

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

Packages of thanks for military kids

From the desk of Amanda Balas, State Youth Coordinator

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

Financial counseling available for deployed service members

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

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

Time is near to register for Purple Camps

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

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

A Troop has virtual FRG on AKO

From Patricia Keffer, A Troop FRG member

102 CAV A Troop now has a Virtual FRG (vFRG). This is a Web site that will have useful A Troop information as well as general information. We will be able to share photos, ask questions, share stories and much more. While this will not replace the face-to-face contact that we get from FRG meetings and events this will provide a connection to those members that are not able to attend in person. One of the best features of our new vFRG is the ability for the soldiers to access the site while they are away. The soldiers will also be able to share and view pictures, stories, and much more. For security reasons the site is restricted to members of AKO. Gaining access is simple; an AKO account is required. For more information on the site or for questions on how to set up an AKO account please email Patricia Keffer at Patricia.Keffer@us.army.mil.

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

Strong Bonds program helps strengthen relationships

From the desk of Marie Durling, Family Programs Specialist

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

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

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

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

Time is here to apply for Youth Camp

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

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

Spend a weekend with your family at Great Wolf Lodge

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

Cost: \$250 tax included Sat-Sun

\$500 tax included-Fri-Sun

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

Happenings from the Teaneck FRG

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

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

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:

April 17 7 p.m.

May 15 7 p.m.

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

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

Now the U.S. Postal Service is making it easier for families to send care packages with a larger flat rate box and a special discount to FPO/ APO addresses. The new boxes can be used beginning March 3. They are 50 percent larger than the current

flat rate box and can be sent to any domestic address for \$12.95. A special military version of the box will carry the "America Supports You" logo and can be shipped to any FPO/ APO address for \$10.95. The new Priority Mail Large Flat-Rate Box is "12 x 12" x 5½". For complete guidelines on mail services to military members overseas visit the USPS website at: <http://www.usps.com/supportingourtroops/welcome.htm?from=household&page=troopsupport>.

Reserve Aid gives support to families of deployed service members

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

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

MyArmyBenefits Website - the single source for all Army Benefits

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

Army Information Line: 1-800-833-6622

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

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

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

Federal grant for spouses of deployed military

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

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

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

Sports

Play ball – Veterans Appreciation Day with the Trenton Thunder

It's Veterans Appreciation Day at the Waterfront Park on Thursday, **April 24** at 7 p.m. Cheer on the Trenton Thunder as they play the New Britain Rockcats, and enjoy the post-game fireworks. A portion of the ticket sales will support the troops serving in the Global War on Terrorism and their families. Tickets cost \$10 per person.

For more information and to purchase tickets, call Col. Norman Matthews at 609-838-0354 or John Tymash at 609-499-3339.

Come watch baseball at its best.

Family sports challenge at Picatinny April 12

Picatinny Arsenal Youth Services invites one and all to the Family Sports Challenge on Saturday, **April 12**, from 1-3 p.m. at the Forge Fitness Gym. Join in scooter hockey and dodge ball competition.

Participants must be at least nine years old. Call the Teen Center at 973-724-7183 by April 5 to be placed on a team.

After the games, a pizza party will be held at the Teen Center for all participants, 3-4 p.m.

Bring the whole family for an afternoon of fun and games.

Jewish War Vets taking Guard members, family to baseball game

From the desk of Marie Durling, Family Programs Specialist

The Jewish War Veterans of New Jersey would like to sponsor Soldiers/Airmen and their family members (total of 50 – first come, first served) for a baseball game at Newark's Riverfront Stadium on Sunday, **May 25** at 1:35 p.m.

Included in the "price" is a hot dog, drink and chips. If you would like to attend, please send the following information: Soldier/Airmen's name, your address, phone number and number of tickets you need (please limit this to your significant other and children only). The Jewish War Veterans have been extremely generous to N.J. National Guardsmen and their families by sponsoring these events so if you request tickets, please make every effort to attend.

Send requested information to:

JWV

NJ Dept Commander Sidney Lichter

96 Franklin St

Verona NJ 07044-1923.

114th Regimental Association golf outing May 12

From the desk of Michele Daisey, Woodbury Family Assistance Center

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

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

RNordaby@verizon.net; or Karen Russell, FRG Fundraiser Rep., 856-430-0852, KGabby@hotmail.com.

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

DISCOM alumni golf outing, July 10 in Princeton

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

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

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

Fourth annual SGT Nutter Run scheduled for June 14

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

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

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

Travel Help, Ideas

Armed Forces Vacation Club offers affordable lodging

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

Shades of Green offers Disney for military

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

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

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

Scholarship, Education News

Quad A Scholarships Available

Scholarships from the Monmouth Chapter of the Army Aviation Association of America are available. The scholarships are available for military members of Quad

A and their spouses, siblings, and children. (AAAA membership must have been activated on or before May 1, 2007).

For more information contact the AAAA Scholarship Foundation, Inc. at 755 Main Street, Suite 4D, Monroe, CT 06468-2830, or (203) 268-2450, or aaaa@quad-a.org, or www.quad-a.org.

The application deadline is **May 1, 2008**.

Enlisted Association announces scholarships

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

Enlisted Association of the National Guard of New Jersey

ATTN: Scholarship Committee

3650 Saylor's Pond Road

Fort Dix, NJ 08640-7600

Prior recipients are not eligible to apply.

Education news for NJARNG

Education Services Brochure Booklet (ESB2)

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

G.I. Bill Notice of Basic Eligibility

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

American Legion offers scholarships, booklet on their Web site

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

Association News

Enlisted Association wants YOU!

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

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

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

membership in our State Association (EANG-NJ) and the National Association (EANGUS).

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

NGANJ group life insurance available to members

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

Veterans Information

VA Launches Suicide Hotline

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

Web site provides support to separating military members

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

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:

May 6*, 7, 8	Ocean County Mall
July 8, 9, 10	Cherry Hill Mall
July 18*	Traveling Wall, Wildwood
August 5*, 6, 7	Willowbrook Mall

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

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

❖ June 5-6, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. – Elks State Convention

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

N.J. Vietnam Veterans Memorial

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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