

DMAVA HIGHLIGHTS



MARCH 30, 2011

"Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day"



Philip J. Uecker, right, Veterans Liaison for U.S. Rep. Frank A. LoBiondo (R-2nd Dist.) presents Vineland Veterans Memorial Home resident Ollen Bennett, left, a certificate from Congressman LoBiondo honoring his service during the Vietnam War during a ceremony at the Home on March 30. Vietnam Veterans, both residents and staff, of the Vineland Home were honored at the Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day program. The U.S. Senate declared March 30 as "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day,"

agreeing unanimously to a resolution introduced by Sen. Richard Burr (R-N.C.), Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs. On March 30, 1973, all U.S. troops withdrew from Vietnam under the terms of the Treaty of Paris. This March 30, the Senate has encouraged Americans across the country to recognize Vietnam veterans for their sacrifice and demonstrate a warm welcome to these Soldiers who returned from war to a politically divided country. (Photo by Mark C. Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA.)



“Winning!”

NJ Youth ChalleNGe Academy cadet wins by losing

By Sgt. Wayne Woolley
DMAVA/PA

When Matthew Jenkins enrolled in the New Jersey Youth ChalleNGe Academy at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, his goal was to leave the program with something very important: a high school diploma.

But it was something the 16-year-old West Orange cadet ended up leaving *without* that may prove to be nearly as important for his future as an aspiring law-enforcement officer: 60 excess pounds.

Jenkins was among 101 cadets who graduated Saturday, March 25, from the 22-week residency program for at-risk youths, which is run by the New Jersey National Guard.

The aim of the program is to provide mentorship, instill discipline and ultimately ensure that cadets receive a high school diploma and leave the program with a plan to further their education, enlist in the military or with solid job prospects.

JB MDL Commander Air Force Col. Gina M. Grosso was the keynote speaker for the graduation at Villa Victoria Academy in Ewing and she urged Class 33 to take advantage of everything they've learned.

“You must reach your full

potential,” Grosso said. “This is your responsibility to help ensure this nation prospers in an age of rapidly changing technology.”

Army Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth, The Adjutant General of New Jersey, said that all of the graduates have been given a second chance to get their lives on track and make a positive contribution to society. He noted that two of the cadets, Jahi Davis of Hillside, N.J., and Manuel Prados of Old Bridge, N.J., had already begun making those contributions. Both will join the New Jersey Air National Guard.

“The moment they raise their right hand, they are American heroes because they are defending our way of life,” Rieth said.

For Jenkins, who dropped out of high school in West Orange at age 16, graduating from the Youth Challenge Program simply gives him a new lease on life.

Before he entered the program, he said he felt adrift and lacked motivation. His weight had ballooned to 285 pounds, his diet was terrible and the word exercise wasn't in his vocabulary.

“Something just clicked in the program, all the cadre was pulling for me to succeed,” Jenkins said. “They believed



New Jersey Youth ChalleNGe graduate Matthew Jenkins celebrates after earning his high school diploma on Saturday, March 26 at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J. Jenkins, who lost more than 60 pounds during the 22 weeks he spent at JB MDL, was among the 101 graduates of the program for at risk youth. (Photo by Spc. Patrick Nogan, 444th MPAD)

in me and then I started to believe in me.”

Jenkins became part of a group the cadre called “the Big Boys Club,” cadets who not only needed to work on their minds, but their bodies as well. All lost more than 20 pounds, but Jenkins lost the most, dropping from 285 to 224 on a steady regimen of extra physical training and a diet that went from supersized meals at McDonalds to chicken breasts and brown rice.

“Jenkins was one of the most motivated cadets I've seen in eight years,” said David Richardson, a staff sergeant with the ChalleNGe cadre. “He was up at five without complaint and completely embraced everything we told him about living a healthy lifestyle.”

With a fit body, a high school diploma, and a new determination, Jenkins has enrolled in Essex Community College. His goal is to be accepted into his county's police academy after he's earned 60 college credits.

After Jenkins graduated, his mother, Luz Jenkins, said it was almost like meeting her son for the first time.

“I can't believe it, he's so beautiful,” she said. “He's like a different person. He looks different and he acts different. I'm so proud of him.”



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Legion comes through for Veteran's Haven



Ray Zawacki, right to left, Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs, along with American Legion State Commander for New Jersey Robert Looby and Dave MacKinnon, Norix Furniture, pose in front of the furniture that the Legion is purchasing for the new addition at Veteran's Haven during the American Legion meeting at the War Memorial in Trenton on Dec. 4, 2010. MacKinnon is also assisting his two children with a project to provide a lamp and clock for each night table. (Photo courtesy American Legion.)

By Mark C. Olsen, DMAVA/PA

"Originally we just wanted to furnish each bedroom."

That was the goal according to Robert Looby, the American Legion State Commander for New Jersey, when he talked about his 2010 Commander's Project to raise enough money to furnish all 44 rooms in the new addition to the existing 55-bed Veteran's Haven – a transitional housing program at Winslow Township, which is run by the New Jersey Department of Military and Veteran's Affairs.

What no one expected was the outpouring support that came from all the American Legion posts across the state for the residents of the Haven.

It began in 2009 when ground was broken for the 44-room addition at the Veteran's Haven.

Because of increased construction costs, the original amount appropriated for the furnishings had been absorbed through construction and a new source was needed if the project was to be completed.

Enter the American Legion.

"Since the opening of the original facility

in 1994, the American Legion, along with other veteran's service organizations have been instrumental in obtaining donations, both monetary and material and services for the facility," said Sean VanLew, Assistant Superintendent Veteran's Haven.

"It would cost \$2,000 a room," said Looby. No easy feat during these economic times.

To raise awareness, Looby had a scale model of the room on display at the American Legion meeting at the War Memorial in Trenton on Dec. 4, 2010. Dave MacKinnon of Norix Furniture was also at the meeting to answer any questions that may have arisen about the set up of each room.

By that point with donations from 12 counties, Looby had raised almost \$82,000 toward furnishing the addition. With another 10 counties to add to the final amount, there seemed little doubt that the veterans would be taken care of.

What happened next exceeded everyone's expectations: more donations came in.

As the money arrived, it quickly became apparent that Looby's goal of furnishing the rooms would be easily met. Looby now had to consider what else could be done for the

veterans. So he reached out to VanLew and asked him what else the Legion could get.

VanLew said that the treatment lab needed furniture so Looby had that programmed into the purchase.

"Everytime we almost reached our goal I would ask Sean what else we could get him," said Looby.

As more money came in, Looby asked VanLew what else could be purchased; VanLew said that the facility's new computer lab needed computers.

"So we got an estimate for the computer lab and the Ocean County Post is going to buy all the computers," said Looby.

That's \$13,000 worth of computers!

The New Jersey American Legion Posts had taken this project to their hearts, which resulted in them buying all the furnishings for the new addition.

As of this writing the American Legion has raised an unprecedented \$151,000, making this one of the largest single donations in support of New Jersey's veterans ever by a veterans' organization.

"We still have another four counties; so we're not done yet," said Looby.

NJARNG to choose two Soldiers for FLW Bass Fishing Tournament

The New Jersey National Guard Recruiting & Retention Command will be selecting two Army National Guard service members to represent the state at the FLW Bass Fishing Tournament at Potomac River, Md. as a National Guard co-angler during the tournament scheduled June 1 – 5.

As an NG co-angler, the selected Soldiers will have an opportunity to win cash prizes. Consequently, Soldiers must show a very keen interest and passion for fishing, as they will be fishing alongside professional anglers that compete as a livelihood and take these tournaments seriously.

Furthermore, a stipulation for these Soldiers is they cannot be on official duty during the tournament. Soldiers must take annual leave if on AGR or ADOS status.

Commanders or supervisors wishing to nominate a Soldier should contact Sgt. 1st Class Melanie R. Rowton, marketing and advertising NCOIC at NJ NG Recruiting & Retention Command, via e-mail at Melanie.rowton@us.army.mil or by phone at 732-974-5940.

Suspense date to fill the two slots is May 1.

For more information or rules of the tournament, please visit their Web site at: <http://www.flwoutdoors.com/bassfishing/flw/rules/>

Annual golf tournament outing

Join the T3BL Soldiers' Association at their Annual Golf Tournament on May 20 at the Fountain Green Golf Course in Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J.

The tournament will start at 8:30 a.m. with a shotgun start, Captain and Crew – best ball format. The entrance fee of \$100 per person will cover greens fee, cart, refreshments and door prizes.

In addition, a buffet lunch will be held at 2 p.m. in building 3601.

Prizes will be awarded to the first through fourth place teams for low gross score; also for closest to pin on hole 3, longest drive, both men and women on hole 6, and the straightest drive on hole 11.

Send a list of your foursome and a check to T3BL Soldiers Association, ATTN: MSG Mark Rizzo, Bldg 3601 Technology Drive, JB MDL, NJ 08640. All payments should be received not later than May 13.

For questions or more information, contact Master Sgt. Rizzo at 609- 562-0513.

Current Guardlife issue available online

The New Jersey National Guard Magazine "Guardlife" - Volume 35 Issue No. 2 is now available on the Internet in a user friendly online Web version at the following Web address: <http://nj.gov/military/publications/guardlife/volume35no2/index.html>.

The "Hometown Team" magazine Guardlife provides up to date information on the happenings within the New Jersey Army and Air National Guard.

For all the current news on our Soldiers and Airmen take a look at the new issue today.

To view past issues of Guardlife magazine online you can visit the DMAVA Publication homepage at <http://www.nj.gov/military/publications/>.

Veterans Outreach Schedule



April 2

Vietnam Veterans Education Center
PNC Bank Art Center, Holmdel, NJ 07777
Outreach Event Only 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

April 7

New Jersey Veterans Memorial Home
524 North West Boulevard, Vineland, NJ 08360
Medal ceremony only in Auditorium starting at 1:30 p.m.

May 7

New Jersey Vietnam Veterans Memorial
PNC Bank Arts Center, Holmdel, NJ 07777
Outreach Event 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
NJ Vietnam Veterans Remembrance & medal ceremony 11 a.m.

May 21

American Legion Post No. 65
Lake Ave & Holly Street, Metuchen, NJ 08840
Outreach Event Only 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Seventh annual SGT Nutter Run

Looking to improve your running stamina and also helping a family in need?

Well, the 7th Annual 2011 SGT Nutter Run will be held on Sunday May 15 at the National Guard Training Center, Sea Girt, N.J., at 10:30 a.m.

Sgt. Sam Nutter (1/28/66-1/2/2005) was a member of the New Jersey Army National Guard and served in the U.S Navy. Each year the NJ ARNG Officer Candidate School holds a benefit 5k run in his memory and 100 percent of the proceeds raised are donated to a NJ ARNG family in need. This year's proceeds will go to the family of Sgt. Michael Suplee, a current NJ ARNG member whose wife was diagnosed with Lupus.

Registration is currently open at the organization's Web site: <http://www.nutterrun.org/registration.html> or you can register on the day of the event beginning at 8:30 a.m.

The SGT Sam Nutter Organization is a registered non-profit organization which exists solely to benefit the lives of National Guard families in need.

Army 'Jazz Knights' Jersey bound West Point ensemble to perform

Bernardsville – The U.S. Army Jazz Knights will perform a free concert on Thursday, April 7, 2011 at 7 p.m. in the Bernards High School Performing Arts Center in Bernardsville. The Jazz Knights are one of four components of the United States Military Academy Band - the U.S. Army's oldest active band and the oldest unit at West Point, tracing its roots to the Revolutionary War.

Members of the group are graduates of some of America's most prestigious music schools and are recruited and selected through a competitive audition process specifically for service in the United States Military Academy Band at West Point.

Bringing over three decades of musical excellence to their audiences, the West Point Band's Jazz Knights present the best in big band favorites, popular music, and original compositions and arrangements for jazz ensemble.

As a part of their education mission, the Jazz Knights' visit to Bernardsville will include workshops for both the Bernardsville Middle School Jazz Ensemble and Bernards High School Jazz Ensemble.

Free tickets will be available beginning March 1 at Bernards High School, Bernardsville Middle School and outlets throughout Bernardsville, Bedminster and Basking Ridge or by e-mailing bh-sjazz@verizon.net.

Blue Star Mothers to host ziti dinner for stricken Soldier

The Blue Star Mothers of the Jersey Shore Chapter No. 4 is hosting a Ziti dinner fundraiser for a stricken Soldier on April 3 from 3 p.m. – 7 p.m. at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post No. 133.

Sgt. Christopher C. Deremer is currently serving in the New Jersey Army National Guard and is a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom by having served as a medic with the 42nd Infantry Division in Iraq.

He was recently diagnosed with stage-4 lung cancer, which has now traveled to his bones and brains.

The Ziti dinner will include ziti, meatballs, salad, bread, soda, water and deserts. A DJ will provide entertainment during the event. In addition, a gift-basket auction will be held there.

Families are invited to attend. Tickets cost \$10 for adults, \$5 for children under age 12.

To reserve, call Kathleen at 732-673- 0055 or email KZapic@comcast.net. Tickets are available in advance or at the door on the evening of the dinner.

The Blue Star Mothers of the Jersey Shore Chapter No. 4 is a group of mothers who have or have had children serving in all branches of the U.S. military.

Members of the nonprofit service organization support each other, their children, veterans, wounded warriors and Gold Star families.

For more information on the organization, log on to www.bsm-nj4.org.

VFW Post No. 133 is located at 483 Cranbury Road, East Brunswick, N.J.



The Tiger Cub Scout Pack 62 of Toms River visited the National Guard Militia Museum of New Jersey at Sea Girt on Saturday, March 26.

Free enrichment retreat for Soldiers

Come enjoy a free Army National Guard couples' enrichment retreat at the Heldrich Hotel in New Brunswick, N.J., the weekend of April 15 – 17.

Soldiers can attend this retreat in a split unit training assembly (SUTA) status.

Couples will receive Strong Bonds (PREP) training from ANG chaplains. Strong Bonds/Marriage Enrichment is a practical application opportunity to learn what works in a marriage and what makes a marriage work.

This is not counseling nor group therapy session, but a weekend to "reconnect" with your significant other by receiving tools and information for better communication and relationship building.

In addition, hotel accommodations and meals are paid for by the Family Program during the retreat.

For more information or to sign up for this retreat, please contact Marie Durling, family program specialist, at 609-530-6884 or via e-mail at marie.durling@us.army.mil.

The retreat is limited to the first 25 couples.

The Heldrich Hotel is located at 10 Livingston Avenue, New Brunswick, N.J.

NJJWV to host annual breakfast

The Department of New Jersey Jewish War Veterans will hold their 30th annual Legislative Breakfast on May 1, 2011 at 9 a.m. at Tinton Falls, N.J.

The event will honor Rep. Frank Pallone (D-NJ) and the volunteer service coordinators at the three state nursing homes and the two VA hospitals in New Jersey.

The breakfast event will be held at the Doubletree Hotel in Tinton Falls, which is just off Garden State Parkway exit 105.

The cost for this event is \$22 per person.

Anyone interested in attending the event, please contact past department commander Robert Jacobs at 732-323-8680 or via E-mail at conrailbob2003@yahoo.com to make reservations.

Soldiers train on WinT system

By Sgt. Bill Addison, 444th MPAD

The 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team held a communications exercise on Joint Base McGuire-Dix Lakehurst on March 19-20 to familiarize its signal Soldiers with a new \$40 million communications network.

The Warfighter Information Network-Tactical (WinT) is the Army's high-speed, high-capacity backbone communications network. Designed to maintain full communication capabilities in an environment with no communications infrastructure, the WinT can be used domestically to set up field communications networks in an emergency setting where phone and power lines are down, as well as mobile communication hubs to keep companies and battalions in communication with brigade HQ.

"The commander wants to pick up that phone, know if it's classified or unclassified, he wants to send data traffic," said Capt. Joseph Kling, the S6 for the 3rd Battalion of the 112th Field Artillery.

According to Kling, the WinT system is designed to be a highly mobile satellite network which allows commanders to keep in constant communication with their subordinate units without the need for line-of-site type communications. Instead, the system connects to the Global Information Grid via satellite, giving them connectivity anywhere in the world.

"This is going to create the basic internet structure you have at home, but it does it anywhere in the world," he said.

The weekend's mission goals were light, simply making a satellite connection, and testing data and voice signal transition, but it's a big step in gaining confidence in the equipment, and their own ability to use it in a real time scenario. It also



Spec. Chris Hall-McRae, left Spec. Richard Schaber and Sgt. Kyle McNeill, all from 102nd Cavalry work together on the battalion node of the Warfighter Information Network-Tactical (WIN-T) online during an exercise at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst on March 19.

gave the different battalion and company signal teams a chance to work together with the brigade signal shop.

"This is the first time as a brigade we've sat down and tried to get the whole system running," said Capt. Jared Liddel, the S6 2nd Battalion of the 113th Infantry.

According to Liddel, signal Soldiers have spent the past few months training at Fort Gordon, Ga. in preparation for receiving the new equipment. The brigade received its WinT system in November.

One of the soldiers who went through the training at Fort Gordon was Pfc. Daniel Del-toro, network administrator for the 113th Infantry.

"It helps me as a soldier feel very confident in that this is not the sort of equipment you get to handle every day," he said. "Having an exercise like this really helps especially, since during a deployment I would be expected to know how to set this up."

The Union, N.J. native said his experience in the National Guard and training with systems like the WinT is why he is currently studying computer science in college.

"When I joined the guard I loved this MOS, and I decided I wanted to do it full time on the civilian side," he said.

Battleship NJ; calling all Vietnam War re-enactors

The Battleship New Jersey will host the inaugural Vietnam War Living History Day on Saturday, April 2 from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

The event will feature Vietnam War re-enactors throughout the ship, military vehicles on the pier, presentations by Vietnam veterans in the officers' wardroom and a barbeque from 12 p.m. -3 p.m. on the fantail. The barbeque, featuring hot dogs, chicken and more, will be prepared and grilled by a local restaurant. In addition, the festivities will also include bar service and the classic rock sounds of a premier classic-rock cover band from southern New Jersey.

Any Vietnam War re-enactors that participate in this event will receive a free tour of the Battleship and a free lunch at the barbeque.

Guests that day can enjoy all Vietnam Living History activities, with the exception of food and drink at the barbeque, at no additional cost. Guests can come aboard for a tour and experience these additional activities with any tour ticket.

Located on the Delaware River, along the Camden Waterfront across from the City of Philadelphia, the Battleship is open for guided and audio tours on Saturdays and Sundays from 9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m. through March.

The ship will open every day for tours beginning April 1.

For more information regarding the Battleship call 1-866-877-6262 ext. 203 or visit their Web site at www.battleshipnewjersey.org.

Re-enactors should call 1-866-877-6262 ext. 144 or email Jack Willard at j.willard@battleshipnewjersey.org.



Maj. Gen. Maria Falca-Dodson, second from left, Commander of the New Jersey Air National Guard, poses with U.S. Sen. Robert Menendez, second from right, and his children Alicia and Robert Menendez Jr., after being presented the Evangelina Menendez Trailblazer Award 2011 at a ceremony at the Performing Arts Center, Middlesex County College, Edison, on March 28. The award, which is named after the Senator's late mother, honors all New Jersey women, essential to the growth and progress of the great state. Menendez has created the Women of Distinction Awards Ceremony, an annual event during Women's History Month, so that six outstanding New Jerseyans are recognized for their contributions. (Courtesy photo.)