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DMAVA Highlights » 21 August 2008

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Volume 8, Number 34

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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

Staff Sgt. Barbara Harbison
barbara.harbison@njdmava.state.nj.us
 Or

Phone: (609) 530-7088
 Fax: (609) 530-6963

Veterans' Organizations Contact Information

State Veterans Service Council
 Mr. Richard Clark
RJClark21@msn.com

BG Willam C. Doyle Cemetery Advisory Council

Mr. William Rakestraw
warjrnj@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



News For Your Views

ANG director coming to McGuire/Dix for visit Aug. 28

Lt. Gen. Craig R. McKinley, director of the Air National Guard, will be visiting the McGuire Air Force Base/Fort Dix area on Thursday, August 28.

During Gen. McKinley's busy day, he will receive an aerial tour of the Lakehurst/Fort Dix training area, briefings from New Jersey National Guard leadership, meet with local congressmen and have a Town Hall meeting with members of the New Jersey Guard in the Joint Training and Training Development Center.

Sign up for G-RAP and make \$\$\$\$

Sign up today and earn up to \$2,000 for each new recruit who enlists into the National Guard and reports to basic training.

The Guard Recruiting Assistance Program (G-RAP) is a contracted program designed for individuals who voluntarily apply to become eligible to serve as a part-time Recruiting Assistant (RA).

G-RAP is available to Traditional Guard members and National Guard retirees. This opportunity is open to both Army and Air Guard members. For more information, go to <http://www.guardrecruitingassistant.com/>.

NJARNG looking to fill their soccer team

From the desk of Master Sgt. Alex Estrada

The New Jersey Army National Guard is looking for soccer players to play during the (FY) 2008-2009 indoor season at the International Sports Center at Cherry Hill, N.J. For anyone interested in joining the team, contact Sgt. Jose Castro at 609-562-0234 or jose.castro4@us.army.mil or Master Sgt. Alex Estrada at 609-562-0568 or alexandro.estrada@us.army.mil for further information.

Spend Labor Day at Point Pleasant Beach, get free admission

There will be a Family Appreciation Day at Jenkinson's Boardwalk in Point Pleasant, on Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 1, from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. It is open to current and retired N.J. National Guard Soldiers/Airmen (with IDs) and their immediate family.

NJNG members will present their military ID at the welcome table on the boardwalk (foot of Parkway, opposite the Aquarium). Guard personnel and their immediate family will be issued VIP wristbands entitling the wearers to free passage to the beach, unlimited rides, and entrance to the Fun House and Aquarium. Wristbands are limited to IMMEDIATE FAMILY ONLY (spouse and children).

Due to limited parking in Point Pleasant Beach, continuous shuttle service will be provided from the Sea Girt armory to Jenkinson's from 10:30 a.m.-9:30 p.m.

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](#)

ESGR office

JFHQ 3650 Saylors 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

Click and find out which FAC supports your armory

If you are not sure which Family Assistance Center supports your armory, here is the way to find out. By going to the new and growing New Jersey FAC Web site you will be able to locate the FAC nearest you. It also gives you a place to e-mail your questions and concerns. Just go to <http://www.nj-fac.org>.

VSO starting outreach on Monmouth University campus

Starting Sept. 16, DMAVA Veterans Service Officer Donald McNamara will be doing outreach work at Monmouth University on the third Tuesday of each month from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. He will be there to provide assistance to veterans and their families, helping them to apply for the benefits for which they are eligible to receive.

Looking for volunteers to assist in emergencies at DMAVA offices

From the desk of Paul Serdiuk, Training Coordinator

We are looking for volunteers within the DMAVA Central Office complex who would be willing to be trained in Adult CPR and Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) application should an emergency arise within offices. You would receive this free training and, in turn, agree to apply the skills learned if an emergency situation should arise at the central office. Training would be held sometime in the latter part of September. We would like to train at least two individuals from each section in CPR/AED. Contact me at 609-530-6878 if you are willing to volunteer for this life-saving training.

If you have not yet noticed, the AED units are up and ACTIVE on the first and second floors in the fire hose cabinets. Please do not touch the units as an alarm will sound when they have been disturbed.

Education program available for families of mentally ill veterans

The Veterans Health Administration and the National Alliance on Mental Illness have teamed to provide the Family-to-Family Education Program for families of veterans with mental illness. In June 2008 the VA and NAMI entered into a nation-wide partnership to bring the course to all VA Healthcare systems.

The NAMI Family to Family Education Program (FFEP), a free 12-week course for family caregivers of individuals with severe mental illness, will now be offered at VA New Jersey Health Care System locations starting in September 2008.

The course includes: Current information about schizophrenia, major depression, bipolar disorder, panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, borderline personality disorder, posttraumatic stress disorder, and co-occurring brain disorders and addictive disorders; current research and treatments to promote recovery; up-to-date information about medications, side effects, and strategies for medication adherence; gaining empathy for a person with mental illness; learning skills for handling crises and relapse; coping with care giver worry, stress, and emotional overload; and guidance on locating and advocating for appropriate supports and services for your family.

NAMI New Jersey and VA New Jersey Health Care System invite families to join us for the class starting Sept. 23 at the Lyons campus. Classes will be on twelve Tuesdays from 7-9:30 p.m. For information/registration contact Marilyn at 908-806-3475.

Additional dental cleaning allowed during pregnancy by Tricare

The TRICARE Management Activity announced an enhancement to maternity dental benefit through United Concordia. An additional cleaning in a 12-month period will now be allowed at no additional cost for all pregnant TRICARE Dental Program enrollees. The additional cleaning is in response to research indicating there is an increase risk of dental disease during pregnancy. For more information about dental health during pregnancy, go to:
http://www.ada.org/public/topics/pregnancy_faqs.asp.

Dog Tags for Kids program

Dog Tags for Kids is a grassroots project which enables service members to send engraved dog tags to their children. The dog tags are provided free and are sent directly to the service members who personally send them to their children at home. The dog tags are engraved with "With Love From Dad/Mom" and include the branch of service, deployment location, and the year. To donate to the project or to request a dog tag for your children, please go to <http://www.dogtagsforkids.com/>.

Quotes for the Week

I pity the man who wants a coat so cheap that the man or woman who produces the cloth will starve in the process.

-Benjamin Harrison

Fatigue is the best pillow.

- Benjamin Franklin

Silence is the most perfect expression of scorn.

- George Bernard Shaw

No one really understands the grief or joy of another.

- Franz Schubert

Nothing is certain except the past.

- Latin proverb

Give parents a break

Child Youth Services at Fort Dix and many other active duty posts provide 16 hours per child per month of free hourly/respice child care to relieve family stress during deployment. Respice care begins 30 days prior to deployment and ends 60 days after return. Drop off the kids while shopping at the commissary or PX or just to get some quiet time to yourself. For additional information, contact Cathy Spiegel at Fort Dix Outreach Services 609-562-2242.

Freedom Walks on Sept. 7 in D.C., Paramus

The America Supports You Freedom Walk honors the victims of Sept. 11 and pays tribute to veterans, past and present. It will be held on **Sept. 7**, 9 a.m.-noon, in Washington, D.C. The starting point is the Women in Military Service Memorial and the finish point is the Pentagon South parking lot. A musical tribute will begin immediately following the Walk. Register online at www.AmericaSupportsYou.mil. Registration closes at 6 p.m. on Sept. 5. Text 8-9-2-7-9 for more information.

There will also be a Paramus Freedom Walk will be on Sept. 7 at the Bergen Community College, Paramus Road, Paramus. The walk will begin at noon. There will be free food, music and games for children. Radio station Z100 will also be there. For more information, contact Joey Rizzolo, at freedomrocks1378@aol.com.

For Your Calendar

Celebrate DMAVA's 10th annual Unity Day Sept. 18

Come celebrate Unity Day: Decade of Diversity with the Soldiers, Airmen and employees of the New Jersey National Guard on **Sept. 18** at the Joint Training and Training Development Center (JT2DC), from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

This will be the 10th annual celebration of Unity Day for the department. This day was created to celebrate the various ethnic observances, enhance cross-cultural awareness and promote harmony among all members of the New Jersey National Guard. Celebrating the contributions of minorities and women has proven to be very successful through this multicultural event.

Activities for the day will include food, displays, music and more. This year booths will represent African American, Italian, Irish, Native American, Hispanic, Pacific Islanders, Tuskegee Airmen, Buffalo Soldiers and the Federal Women's Program.

For more information, contact Capt. Barbara Brown-Wilson, 609-562-0856, or Barbara.g.brown@us.army.mil.

FRG training for leaders, volunteers in September

There will be Family Readiness Group Training for leadership and volunteers on **Sept. 6-7**. Save the date. More information on location will be put out at a later date. Activities for children ages 8-16 will be available at the hotel during the training sessions. We are not able to accommodate children under the age of eight. We will also be having a speaker for parents of deployed Soldiers/Airmen on Sept. 6.

Small business seminar for veterans, families

Are you looking for information about starting a business, getting access to small business financing or want to know about your benefits and rights as a veteran? Then attend the Veterans information seminar, Vetrepreneurs, on **Sept. 4** from 9 a.m. to noon at The College of New Jersey Paul Loser Hall.

The seminar is for veterans of current and past service or members of veteran families or business partners. There is no charge for the event. To register, call 609-771-2947 or visit www.tcnj.edu/sbdc.

The seminar is sponsored by N.J. Small business Development Center at The College of New Jersey, U.S. Small Business Administration, N.J. Commerce Commission, N.J. Department of Banking and Insurance, N.J. Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency, N.J. Department of Health and Human Services, Medina Law Firm, the Rovner Group, and Trenton Veterans Services.

Retirements, Reunions

Join in to honor Col. Caruso in his retirement

Come out to the retirement dinner for Col. Frank S. Caruso honoring his 40 years of service on **Sept. 7**. The dinner will be held at Charley's Other Brother, 1383 Monmouth Road, Eastampton, with cocktail hour beginning at 5 p.m. and dinner starting at 6 p.m. Cost is \$40 per person and the menu is Italian buffet. Dress is business casual. If interested, please contact Marie Durling at 609-562-0739 to make reservations. RSVP no later than **Aug. 29**; no checks will be accepted at the door.

117th Cav holding Biennial reunion Oct. 18

The 117th Cavalry Association will be holding their 2008 Biennial Reunion on **Oct. 18** at Gibbs Hall, Fort Monmouth, where they will honor those who have served and those who continue to serve.

The cocktail hour will be from 6-7 p.m. and dinner will be served at 7 p.m. Cost will be \$50 per person if the reservation is received before Aug. 15; \$55 per person thereafter. Meal choices will be chicken francaise, prime rib or stuffed flounder.

There will also be a member appreciation get-together on Oct. 17 at 7 p.m. in the Westfield Armory Heritage Room; spouses and guests are welcome.

Send money and reservations to Col. (ret.) Dennis J. Dougherty, 615 Raymond St., Westfield NJ 07090 by Sept. 15.



Say Again?

NJARNG Safety office has moved

The New Jersey Army National Guard Safety and Occupational Health (SOH) office has moved to room 107 in building 3650, Saylor's Pond Road, Fort Dix. Their main number is 609-562-0605. Of call team members:

Chief Warrant Officer Two Tilbert Brymer, SOH Manager, 609-562-0509; Sgt. Maj. Nick Kampf, SOH specialist, 609-562-0510; Sgt. 1st Class George Reilly, Safety specialist; and, Staff Sgt. Luis Cruz, Occupational Health specialist, 609-562-0606.

Chance for Soldier to sing in Soldier Show at Picatinny

Are you the next ~~American Idol~~? ~~Idol Soldier~~? Let's just ask: Can you sing?

There is a brand spanking new twist to this year's Army Soldier Show which is returning to the stage at Picatinny Arsenal on Oct. 10. It's the opportunity for local Military Talent to be IN THE SHOW.

To recognize and celebrate the last 25 years of the U.S. Army Soldier Show, an opportunity is being offered to identify a local Soldier-singer to join the cast of the 2008 Soldier Show on stage during the finale number in the production.

Picatinny wishes to identify an active duty Soldier, National Guard or Army Reserve to perform on stage. The selected Soldier should be equivalent to that expected of performers in The Soldier Show. The Soldier will be performing a solo of the second verse of the song, "Go the Distance," by Michael Bolton, and then continue to perform with the entire cast for the rest of the finale song. Sheet music is available for review. An MP3 version of the song with and without lyrics is available by going to AED website www.armyentertainment.net and clicking on U.S. Army Soldier Show. The key of the song (D) will not change. The Soldier must be prepared to sing the song in that key. This is a singular opportunity for the hosting installations to recognize local Soldier talent and participate in a unique way with the 2008 25th Anniversary Tour of The US Army Soldier Show.

If you think your singing talent is up to the standards, drop an e-mail to Linda Huff-Franey who will be overseeing the selection at Linda.hufffraney@us.army.mil. Auditions would be held in September. This is open to Soldiers only, no members of other services or family members.

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.

Honor Guard program wants YOU!

Looking for a way to serve and get some satisfaction at the same time? The Honor Guard program is looking for members of the Army and Air Guard to join the team to perform honor guard duties at the funerals of veterans. There is an initial eight hours of training for all new enrollees, with on-going sustainment training. As an honor guard member, you will receive a day of pay for each day's mission, minimum of \$50, and traditional drilling Guard members receive a retirement point for each day's duties.

If you are interested in applying for the Honor Guard program, call retired Sgt. Maj. Ed Goetschius at 609-530-7090.

NJNG retiree "information" e-mail on its way

About three years ago, retired Col. Carmen Venticinque, who is a New Jersey Army National Guard retiree, sent out an e-mail to about 50 retirees of both the Army and Air National Guard asking if they would be interested in receiving an e-mail on information of interest to NJNG retirees. Within a few weeks he received over 100 additional names and e-mail addresses. There are now close to 300 retiree e-mail addresses. All names will be sent the first e-mail, however, those wishing to opt out after receipt of the first group email can do so simply by notifying Col. Venticinque. The overwhelming response and positive comments received from retirees ranging from General Officers to Senior Enlisted personnel is solid evidence of their interest in not only their fellow retirees, but what is currently happening in our New Jersey National Guard.

Col. Venticinque can be reached at colcav25@verizon.net. To protect the privacy and integrity of the list, addresses will be listed as "undisclosed recipient" or placed on the "Bcc" line.

Reduced rates on NJ Transit for military, dependents

Here is another benefit offered to military members, retirees and their dependents by the state of New Jersey.

Eligible passengers may ride at reduced fare rates on any NJ Transit bus, rail or light rail service at all times, without restriction, upon presentation of authorized identification.

All military personnel and their dependents will be permitted to purchase transportation at the senior citizen/passengers with disabilities reduced fare rate upon showing their military or military dependent ID card. The following military personnel are entitled to this fare: Active Duty, Reserve, National Guard or Retired for Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines or Coast Guard.

Information for N.J. state employees

Employees required to register for MBOS

From the desk of Lisa J. Dandrea, Human Resources, Personnel Assistant

MBOS is the Member Benefits Online System. Through MBOS, employees may review their pension contributions, loan status, health benefits information, update their beneficiary information, apply for retirement, as well as many other applications. It has been encouraged that all employees register for this helpful tool. However Pensions is now working on MBOS being a requirement in order for employees to make certain updates to their personal information.

Effective immediately, in all cases where an employee is eligible to become a member of the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS), the employer will be required to submit all enrollment information to Pensions via online. Important to note is that the online PERS Enrollment Application does not include the Designation

of Beneficiary page. Instead, once the member is enrolled and issued a pension number, they must register for a MBOS account at: www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/mbosregister.htm and complete the online Beneficiary Designation form. Until the member completes his or her Designation of Beneficiary, the member's "Estate" will be the beneficiary of record.

Current employees –note, even if you are already enrolled into PERS, if you wish to make any changes to your beneficiary information, you too will need to be registered for MBOS. Members will not be able to submit the Change in Beneficiary Designation paper form since this will no longer be acceptable through the Division of Pensions and Benefits.

Visit the link above for complete instructions to register for MBOS. If you encounter any problems with registration, you may e-mail Pensions and Benefits with your questions/concerns and they can assist you through the process. You may also obtain a tri-fold brochure with MBOS instructions from [your Human Resources Office](#).

No handbooks available for NJDIRECT

Inquiries about NEW handbooks and directories for NJDIRECT has prompted this reply from Pensions and Benefits:

"Unfortunately, we do not have NJ Direct Handbooks to give to members and will not be receiving a supply. Members may visit the NJ Direct website www.horizonblue.com/shbp. Members without computers are encouraged to use their local library or a relative's computer or call the plan directly".

You may also look up benefit information and visit the Unified Provider Directory on the Pensions and Benefits website under State Health Benefits Program.

State employees who move, marry must contact HR department

From the desk of Lisa Dandrea, Human Resources Office

Please remember if you have an address change and/or a name change, it is *extremely* important that you contact Lisa Dandrea in the Human Resources Office. There have been a lot of issues with tax W2s, pension statements and pay checks being returned to our office, as well as some employees not receiving their new health cards, all due to incorrect addresses. Your address change is not automatic and it is not limited to completing a new W4. There are specific forms for employees to complete that updates their new information statewide. Your change of address or name affects your paycheck, your pension statements, W2s, loans, any information sent out by your health care provider, promotional announcements from Dept. of Personnel, etc. If you have had an address/name change and have not updated your information, please make sure you contact Lisa Dandrea in HRD-ESB at 609-530-6888 or e-mail Lisa.Dandrea@njdmava.state.nj.us.

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.

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.

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



Teaneck FRG announces August calendar

From the desk of retired Sgt First Class Janis Shaw

Upcoming events for the Teaneck FRG/FAC:

Aug. 21, 6 p.m. - Bullying Workshop

- a. Peer Pressure: Edward Rowbotham, Administrator for Health & Social Services
- b. Gang Awareness: Substance Abuse Coordinator/Youth Coordinator
- c. Bullying: Master Sgt. Minnie Hiller-Cousins Intervention/Prevention Counselor & District\ Court Liaison and 250th BSB FAC Coordinator

Aug. 25, 1:30 p.m. departure from Teaneck Armory - Bowling Outing

Aug. 27, 5 p.m. - Teen Meeting; Teaneck Armory FAC

AAFES essay contest for school age children

AAFES is sponsoring an essay contest for school age children, grades 1-12, with prizes to include computers and savings bonds.

Contest deadline is **Aug. 31** and the essays are to be 200 words or less, explaining, "What AAFES means to me and my family." There are four categories, grades, 1-3, grades 4-6, grades 7-9 and grades 10-12. Entries can be submitted by mail to

Army Air Force Exchange Service
ATTN: Patriot Family BTS Essay (MK-M2 Strategic Marketing)
3911 S. Walton Walker Blvd.
Dallas TX 75236

or e-mailed to patriot family@aafes.com. "Essay" must be in the subject line.

To check for rules and eligibility, go to http://www.aafes.com/Patriot_Family/btsessay.asp.

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.

Healthy Families resource packet available

Order your free copies of Promoting Healthy Families in Your Community: 2008 Resource Packet today. Developed for service providers, the packet highlights strategies to strengthen families by promoting key protective factors that prevent child abuse and neglect. It also includes tip sheets in both English and Spanish to share with parents.

The Resource Packet is produced annually by the Department of Health and Human Services' Children's Bureau, Office on Child Abuse and Neglect, Child Welfare Information Gateway, and the FRIENDS National Resource Center on Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention. The 2008 packet was developed with input from more than 30 national organizations that work to promote healthy families.

The packet and corresponding poster can be downloaded or ordered at www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/res_packet_2008. Or contact Child Welfare Information Gateway at 1.800.394.3366 or info@childwelfare.gov.

No-cost prescription savings plan available

From the desk of Marie Durling, Family Programs Specialist

Here is a no cost to you prescription savings program. This program offers discounts on all generic prescription medications at your local pharmacy. You do not have to do anything special to qualify. There is no income, residence, employment, age, citizenship or any other qualifications to meet. Not even an application to fill out. The Family State Programs Office at Joint Force Headquarters, Fort Dix has the group ID cards. Call Marie Durling at 609-562-0739 and one will be mailed to you. For more information check out www.mediservrx.com.

During the Deployment Information

Federal grant for spouses of deployed military

Grants from a funding from the Department of Community Affairs are 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 Rene Mainor, Military Grant Liaison, Women's Opportunity Center, YMCA of Burlington County by calling 609-543-6200 Ext. 235 or by email at fawnm@ymca-bc.org.

N.J. Family Readiness Council increases grants to families, businesses

The New Jersey National Guard State Family Readiness Council has increased the amounts of family and business grants up to \$5,000 and \$10,000, respectively. Both are what are known as TIER I grants. TIER II family grants are also available 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.

New laws for state, local elections and absentee ballots

Governor Jon S. Corzine signed legislation on Tuesday, August 12, at the West Orange armory that expanded voting rights for military personnel and New Jersey citizens overseas to include state and local elections. Previously, this group of voters could only vote by overseas absentee ballot in federal elections. The new legislation corrects a flaw in the law and permits greater participation in the electoral process.

"The right to vote is the most fundamental element of any democracy," Governor Corzine said. "I could not be more proud to sign this legislation to ensure that those who have sacrificed so much to protect our rights have the opportunity to participate fully in the electoral process."

In addition to expanding voting rights, the bill also expands the methods of transmitting ballots used by overseas voters who wish to vote. Current law only allows votes to be transmitted by fax, but this legislation expands the ability to submit votes by any form of electronic communication, including e-mail. In order to ensure the integrity of the voting process, a paper copy of the ballot must also be submitted for verification purposes after the transmittal of the electronic ballot.

Picatinny "Waiting Family Support Group" open to new members

From the desk of Doris Clark, Picatinny Arsenal

The Hearts Apart Support Group known as Waiting Family Support Group is sponsored by Picatinny Arsenal Army Community Service to help families cope with geographical separation due to deployment, accompanied tour or extended temporary duty. The group meets monthly and provides emotional and moral support to its members in a friendly relaxed atmosphere. This group is open to all branches of service. Come join us for great information, laughs, tears and be a part of the Waiting Family. The group meets monthly at 7 p.m. in the Community Center (building 3225) Picatinny Arsenal, N.J.

Point of contact for this group is Doris Clark, Relocation/Deployment Readiness, 973-724-5219. RSVP in case non-identification holders need permission to access Picatinny Arsenal. Mark your calendars. Please join us for great evening each month. Call with any questions regarding the group.

The remaining schedule for 2008 is: **Aug. 28, Sept. 25, Oct. 23, Nov. 20 and Dec. 18.**

Child care \$\$\$\$\$ available for spouses of deployed military

From the desk of Amanda Balas, State Youth Coordinator

Child care money is available for spouses of Title 10 Army National Guard activated Soldiers only. If the spouses are employed, seeking employment (for 60 days) or going to school, they can qualify for a \$100 per month per child stipend for fulltime care (licensed child care provider required). Call the National Guard Child Care Program today to apply 1-888-642-2799 or ngccp@guardfamily.org.

FRG volunteers needed

Family Readiness Groups (FRG) play an important role during deployments.

Yet, in order to be successful, these groups rely on the support of volunteers.

FRGs are comprised of volunteers who donate their time to make sure our Soldier's "Homefront Heroes" are supported through networking with other family members and mutually offering support to one another.

If you would like to be a volunteer or a participant please contact your local Family Assistance Center. You can reach them by calling our toll free number 888-859-0352 and selecting the prompt of the Family Assistance Center near you.

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.

Federal absentee voting open to military, family

The Uniformed And Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) allows the following U.S. citizens to vote absentee:

- Members of the U.S. Uniformed Services (on active duty) and merchant marine,
- Their family members, and
- U.S. citizens residing outside the U.S.

Members of the U.S. Uniformed Services or merchant marine and their family members may vote absentee while away from their place of voting residence, wherever stationed, inside or outside the United States.

U.S. citizens residing outside the United States and its territories may vote in the state or territory where they last resided immediately prior to departing the United States, even if many years have elapsed and the citizen maintains no residence in the state or territory and the intent to return to that state or territory may not be certain.

1. <http://www.fvap.gov/resources/media/fpca.pdf>

2. <http://www.fvap.gov/resources/media/vagNJ.pdf>

N.J. licenses, registration extended for deployed troops

New Jerseyans who are on active duty military, in the National Guard or the 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.

Battlemind supports Soldiers, families through deployment cycle

Battlemind is a term used to describe combat readiness. The first Battlemind product was a mental health post-deployment briefing. It quickly became a training system supporting Soldiers and families across the seven phases of the deployment cycle. The Battlemind system includes separate pre-deployment training modules for Soldiers, unit leaders, health-care providers and spouses. Psychological debriefings are given in theater and upon redeployment. There is also a post-deployment

module for spouses and several post-deployment modules for Soldiers. Pre-deployment Battlemind tells Soldiers what they are likely to see, to hear, to think and to feel while deployed - by describing the worst-case scenario. Post-deployment Battlemind addresses safety concerns, relationship issues, normalized combat-related mental health reactions and symptoms -- along with teaching Soldiers when they should seek mental health support for themselves or for their buddies. All of the Battlemind products (training modules, brochures, debriefings and videos are available on the Web site, www.battlemind.org.

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 (MHAFF) 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, which 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>.

Order a complimentary Blue Star Flag to show your family's service

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

The Blue Star Flag first appeared in 1917, when Capt. Robert L. Queissner, who had two sons serving on the front line, designed it as a tribute to their dedication and service. He proudly displayed this flag in the front window of his home and the flag quickly became the unofficial symbol of a child in the service. Also known as a Service Flag, the blue star stands for hope and pride. Order a complimentary Blue Star Flag to honor your loved ones in the service by visiting: www.grantham.edu/promo/freebluestar.php.

Morris County offers program for military families

From the desk of Amanda Balas, State Youth Coordinator

Family Service of Morris County in partnership with the Family Programs Office, New Jersey, would like to announce its Military Families Outreach Program. Based on a community effort, the Military Families Outreach Program strives to support Morris County military personnel and their families, including extended families, pre-deployment, during deployment and post-deployment.

We realize the pressures and problems that may occur when a family member is called to duty, and we want to assist with any services that you may need to ensure quality of life. Social services, support services and mental health services are some of the resources that will be available to Morris County residents. All services offered in this program are free of charge to you and your family and are bound by the highest consideration for complete confidentiality.

For more information about the Military Services Outreach Program, contact Wendy Parrinello, Military Families Outreach Case Manager at wparrinello@fsmc.org or call 973-538-5260, extension 326. You can also contact Tammy Rosenthal, Director of child and Adolescent Services at troenthal@fsmc.org or 973-538-5260. We are privileged to work with you who have given so much for your country!

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. 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: www.usps.com/supportingourtroops/welcome.htm?from=household&page=troopsupport.

Sports

Rolling Thunder sponsoring Poker Run to benefit scholarship fund

Come join the 3rd Annual Ryan T. Baker / Philip Spakosky Memorial Poker Run, sponsored by: Rolling Thunder ® Inc., Chapter 2 N.J., on **August 24**. Start site is The Pub, Country Lakes Shopping Center, 558 Lakehurst Road, Browns Mills and the end point is the American Legion, Pemberton-Juliustown Road, Pemberton.



Registration time is 9-11 a.m. and the donations will be \$10 for each rider and \$5 for each passenger.

Proceeds Benefit the Fallen Hero Scholarships and New Jersey Fallen Hero's Scholarship Fund. The event will take place rain or shine. There will be door prizes, live music, food (pigs on wheels), RTNJ2 product sales, vendors and face painting.

For more information, call 609-971-3544 or visit www.rollingthunder-nj2.org or rollingthunderchapter2nj@yahoo.com.

Hunterdon County Vets Alliance celebrates special day with ball game

Come watch the Somerset (N.J.) Patriots play the Bridgeport (Conn.) Bluefish during the Hunterdon County Veterans Alliance sixth annual Veterans of America Day on **Aug. 30** at 6 p.m. The Veterans of America celebration will begin the evening with guest of honor, Marine Maj. Jason E. Smith, present commander of the recruiting Station New Jersey and veteran of two tours of Iraq.

After the celebration, enjoy the Atlantic League game with free tickets for veterans and discounted tickets - \$5 each - for friends and family. Discounted tickets must be ordered in advance. Contact 908-252-0700 for more information. Call Joe Yuzuik at 732-563-4012 for information on the Veterans events scheduled prior to the game.

Friends of ESGR announce golf outing at McGuire

The N.J. Friends of the Guard and Reserve is proud to present the 2008 State Chairman's Annual Golf Outing. The golf outing will be held on Saturday, **Sept. 6**, at the Falcon Creek Golf Course, McGuire Air Force Base. The rain date is October 11. The \$95 per golfer registration fee includes greens fees, cart, registration, continental breakfast, food and beverages on the course, door prizes and a buffet luncheon at the McGuire Club. Corporate, hole and cart sponsors are being sought also. All proceeds to benefit the activities of the N.J. Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve. For additional information, contact Hank Pierre at 609-562-0156, Tammy Cartagena at 609-562-0157 or Tyler Sandford at 609-562-0155.

Trenton Thunder offers reduced tickets to military personnel, vets

The Trenton Thunder baseball team and its community partner, the Trenton Vet Center, have collaborated to sponsor reduced ticket prices for veterans and their families during the 2008 Trenton Thunder baseball season.

A regular \$10 ticket has been reduced to \$7 for veterans and their family members.

Active Duty, Reserve, and National Guard, separated, and retired veterans are eligible for this program. Interested veterans must have a picture I.D. and provide proof of their veteran status by showing one of the following documents:

- ⚔ Military I.D. card.
- ⚔ Federal Department of Veteran Affairs medical I.D. card
- ⚔ DD Form 214

Travel Help, Ideas

Guard history lessons for family at Sea Girt museum

Looking for a local place to take the family for a history lesson? Try the National Guard Museum of New Jersey in Sea Girt.



The museum had a recent face-lift and upgraded its exhibits which tell the story of the New Jersey Army and Air National Guards and the Naval Militia of New Jersey from the Revolutionary war to the Global War on Terrorism.

The four gallery rooms feature diaries, uniforms, vehicles, weapons and even a Civil War submarine built in 1865.

Open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday and the same hours on the first and second weekends of the month, admission to the museum is free of charge, but a donation is requested. Groups who would like to make arrangements for tours should call 732-974-5966.

Free tickets to Busch Adventure Parks for military, families

Any active duty, activated or drilling reservist, or National Guardsman is entitled to free admission to a Anheuser-Busch Adventure Park under the Here's to the Heroes program. He or she need only register, either by going to this Web site <http://www.herosalute.com/> and submitting his or her information or in the entrance plaza of participating parks, and show a Department of Defense photo ID. As many as three direct dependents of military personnel also are entitled to free admission. Dependents may take advantage of the offer without their service member, though an adult must accompany minor dependents, and dependent ages 10 and over must present valid dependent I.D. Busch Gardens Williamsburg and SeaWorld San Antonio are seasonal operations that will remain closed until spring 2008. Military personnel interested in visiting those parks should check operating schedules. The remaining parks, SeaWorld Orlando, Busch Gardens Tampa Bay and SeaWorld San Diego are open year round.

Valid for one complimentary single-day admission per person, per year, to one of the following Anheuser-Busch Adventure Parks: SeaWorld Orlando, San Diego, or San Antonio, Busch Gardens Tampa Bay or Williamsburg, Sesame Place, Water Country USA, Adventure Island. Not valid at Discovery Cove and Aquatica.

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 your next vacation week are probably starting 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



Help available to students studying for SAT/ACT

In cooperation with the Department of Defense, eKnowledge Corporation, a leading supplier of interactive test preparation products for college entrance exams, along with a group of NFL players, have donated more than \$16 million worth of multimedia SAT/ACT Test Preparation products to service members and their families worldwide.

Now in its fourth year, the eKnowledge/NFL player sponsorship effort has shipped more than 90,000 free SAT/ACT test preparation programs, valued at \$200, to military servicemembers and their families.

The eKnowledge SAT and ACT test prep programs come in either a single DVD or two CD-ROM set that include more than 11 hours of high quality video training/instruction with up to 40 hours of student interactive learning participation.

The SAT and ACT test prep programs can be used as a stand-alone instruction tool to prepare thoroughly for the SAT and ACT, or as a supplement to other SAT and ACT preparation materials. Each student can select the areas where they need additional or special training/instruction, and can then study at their own pace using the 120 video lessons which comprise the SAT and Act test prep programs. The program also provides the student with feedback on their learning progress, test readiness and more.

Those military families interested in receiving free eKnowledge products under this sponsorship can complete an online request form at <http://eknowledge.com/military> or visit the Department of Defense <http://militaryhomefront.dod.mil> Web site for more details. Copies can also be requested by calling 951-256-4076 or via e-mail at support@eknowledge.com.

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 holding conference Sept. 26-28



It's time for the 2008 Enlisted Association of the National Guard of New Jersey Conference, being held in Atlantic City at the Sheraton Hotel on **Sept. 26-28**. Come see your friends and have fun. The options are unlimited. Come Friday and do your own thing or join the Junior Enlisted sponsoring a hospitality room featuring a "Taste of Atlantic City," with food to match. Saturday, our business meeting is from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. The Military Ball cocktail hour is 6-7 p.m. and then it's dinner and awards. Have your picture taken by our photographer or visit our Chinese auction. Following the Military Ball, the Junior Enlisted will entertain everyone with "Boogie Nights" in the hospitality room.

To see all that Atlantic City has to offer, visit www.starwoodmeeting.com/book/EANGNJ.

Visit our Web site EANG-NJ.org for the application and to discover more about the conference. For more information, contact Jerome Zebrowski, 609-214-6959, jcptfalc@aol.com, or Edward Goetschius, 609-965-1972, esgtmaj@comcast.net.

117th Cav Association announces meeting schedule

The 117th Cavalry Association, whose mission is to promote and enhance the friendships and camaraderie of our members, who are mutually bound by service and devotion to our country, announces its upcoming meetings. They will be held at 7:30 p.m., at the Westfield Armory's Heritage Room. Meetings will be on **Oct. 17**, **Nov. 7** and the reunion on **Oct. 18** at Fort Monmouth, N.J.

Veterans Information

Vet Career Connect helps military members find jobs

Vet Career Connect is a program designed to connect military service members with New Jersey employers. Vet Career Connect matches veteran's specific abilities, drives and interests with jobs requiring those specific abilities.



Participants complete a Caliper Profile, which is an on-line self assessment. They will receive an Individual Developmental Guide outlining personal motivators and areas of developmental opportunity. Participants will then have the opportunity to place the results of the Caliper Profile, their resume and military achievements onto a database which will be viewed by New Jersey-based companies who have indicated a strong interest in employing veterans.

Vet Career Connect program is available at no cost to service members. In order to participate in this program, or if you have additional questions please email or call

Barbara Foos, Project Administrator, at 609-524-1228 or bfoos@calipercorp.com.

VA Suicide Hotline

To ensure veterans with emotional crises have round-the-clock access to trained professionals, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has a national suicide prevention hot line for veterans. 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).

When retiring, check for military service earnings

Here is some information from the Social Security Administration pertaining to military service earnings that may come in handy to those planning on retiring soon. You can find more about this credit at <http://www.ssa.gov/retire2/military.htm>.

Since 1957, if you had military service earnings for active duty, including active duty for training, you paid Social Security taxes on those earnings. Since 1988, inactive duty service in the Armed Forces reserves (such as weekend drills) has also been covered by Social Security.

Under certain circumstances, special extra earnings for your military service from 1957 through 2001 can be credited to your record for Social Security purposes. Special extra earnings credits are NOT given for inactive duty training. These extra earnings credits may help you qualify for Social Security or increase the amount of your Social Security benefit.

If your active military service occurred from 1957-1967, the extra credits will be added to your record when you apply for Social Security benefits. If the time was from 1968-2001, there is no need to do anything for the extra credits; they were automatically added to your record. Time after 2001 receives no special extra earnings.

How much is the credit? For service from 1957-1977, you will be credited with \$300 in additional earnings for each calendar quarter in which you received active duty basic pay. For service from 1978-2001, for every \$300 in active duty basic pay, you are credited with \$100 in earnings up to a maximum in of \$1,200 a year. If you enlisted after Sept. 7, 1980, and did not complete at least 24 months of active duty or your full tour, you may not be able to receive the additional earnings.

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:

September 2*, 3, 4	Bridgewater Commons Mall
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October 14*, 15, 16	Menlo Park Mall
November 5*, 6, 7	Deptford 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.

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.

Sept. 19, 11 a.m. – National POW/MIA Recognition Day and National Gold Star Mothers Day Ceremony at the N.J. Vietnam Veterans' Memorial.

Sept. 21, 12:30 p.m. – Arrival at the N.J. Vietnam Veterans' Memorial by Rolling Thunder-

N.J., annual motorcycle run for POW/MIA awareness.

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

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