



# DMAVA HIGHLIGHTS

May 31, 2013



*Brig. Gen. Michael L. Cunniff, the Adjutant General, Raymond Zawacki, deputy director for Veterans Affairs, New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs; senior military and more than a dozen veterans' organizations paid tribute our nations fallen service members at the State Memorial Day Ceremony at the Brigadier General William C. Doyle Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Arneytown, N.J., May 25, 2013. (Photo by Mark C. Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA)*



## *LEFT HOMELESS BY SANDY, VETERAN RISES AS AN ENTREPRENEUR*

**By Spc. Devon Bistarkey, 444th MPAD**

When Hurricane Sandy struck, Navy veteran Troy Cox found himself out of a job and homeless.

After serving 20 years and finishing his last tour of duty in Iraq in 2007, Cox was faced with the biggest challenge of his life when he lost his job and residence in Seaside Heights.

With nowhere to go, Cox found himself at the place that has returned more than 700 New Jersey veterans to productive lives – Veterans Haven.

The transitional housing program run by the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs puts its residents on a path to self-sufficiency following a formula of job training and life-skills building. The program originated more than a decade ago with one facility in Winslow Township, Gloucester County and expanded last year to a second location in Glen Gardner, Hunterdon County.

In many cases, veterans emerge from the program with newly-acquired life skills and having kicked alcohol or drug dependency.

In Cox's case, the program gave him a home base and an opportunity to regroup. But for Cox and most other Veterans Haven residents, the most powerful weapon they have is their own ambition.

Two months ago, Cox bought a shuttered building in Clinton, N.J., and turned it into the Olde Towne Deli & Bagel House. He opened a week ago and the place is already doing brisk business.

"This all started with nothing but a dream," Cox said recently as he handled the busy Saturday lunch rush.

It may have been Cox's dream, but other veterans have joined him on this journey. A team of fellow Veterans Haven North residents helped with the renovation of the eatery and are now serving customers.

"They put their faith in me," said Cox.

Cox said the transition to running a bagel and deli shop came naturally. He grew up working at his family's diner in Indiana.

When asked, Why bagels? Cox's answer is simple, "Why not?"

The focus of his work is equally simplistic. Work hard and give back. His fellow veterans at the shop follow the same credo.

"Being veterans, we dust our knees off and we get up and we go," he said. "That's what we do."

The bagel shop itself remains a work in progress. It's nestled between a florist and a bookstore and still has no sign out front. Even so, the store continues to draw a steady stream of customers through word of mouth and what Cox describes as the best sandwiches in town.

Cox serves patrons without identifying himself or his employees as veterans living in transitional housing.

"I don't want them to feel like they're out of place because they're in a shelter," he said. "They should feel like heroes, because that's what they are."

When asked what the future holds, his answer is simple: "More."

The next challenge for Cox includes plans to expand and focus on giving back to Veterans Haven for the doors it opened for him.

"I am happy to be able to give back," he said. "They've given to me and I'm giving back."

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## *BBQ and Jersey Shore not on Airmen's plan for Memorial Day Weekend*

**Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Armando Vasquez, 108th Wing**

As Memorial Day weekend was coming upon us this year, some of us were planning for a barbecue party or a trip down the shore. But for several Airmen from the 108th Wing, this Memorial Day weekend required of them a different type of planning. For them, it was all about ensuring their personal affairs and finances were in order, families were prepared, bags and personnel protective equipment packed, and mainly, spend some quality time and celebrate a family member's birthday at their loved one's favorite pub.

"We are going to Buffalo Wild Wings to celebrate my brother's birthday," said Senior Airman Thomas McCoy, a crew chief with the 108th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. "His birthday is the day after we leave."

McCoy, a Mount Laurel resident, along with several Airmen from the 108th AMXS and 141st Air Refueling Squadron deployed to the Middle East in support of Operation Enduring Freedom on Memorial Day.

This being his first deployment in his military career, McCoy felt excited at the opportunity to deploy and support his nation's calling. Both his parents were anxious, but also excited that their son was fulfilling his wishes.

"My dad was in the service, so he knows what it's all about," said McCoy. "His advice to me was to just do my job and keep my head down."

For Staff Sgt. Delonte Williams and Senior Airman Marius Kelsey, both also with the 108th AMX, a second deployment was in order and different family situation awaited them. Both Williams and Kelsey were leaving behind new born babies.

During each of their first deployments, both Williams and Kelsey were single and did not have to worry about leaving family members behind. Sure their parents were worried, but felt they were in good hands in their units.

"My parents are OK because they know I don't get into anything that's crazy," said Williams. "This is an opportunity for me to get a break from my monotonous routine at work and get some experience with my fuel shop."

Kelsey said that his family is a military family and his father served in the Army, so they are also fine. But the same cannot be said for his fiancée, said Kelsey. "She is scared."

But to ease some of the burden of the family left behind, these Airmen processed through a personnel deployment function line May 23 at the 108th Wing. During this process, the Airmen received briefings from various administrative personnel and reviewed their mobility folder to ensure that everything was in order. From dog tags to power of attorneys, the PDF line provides the Airmen the opportunity to update their records and ensure their financial and personal affairs are in order prior to their deployment. In addition, they receive information about support groups that can assist their families with certain needs while they are deployed.

Lifting this burden of their minds will allow the Airmen to properly complete their jobs during their deployment, and possibly allow them some time to do other things that will help the deployment pass quickly.

Williams intends to study for his 7-level upgrade and possibly learn Spanish.

"I'm going to be missing my daughter start solid foods," said Williams. "But I'm going to try to learn Spanish through Rosetta Stone."



**Senior Airman Thomas McCoy reviews his mobility folder to ensure everything is in order in preparation for the upcoming deployment.**



**Staff Sgt. Delonte Williams, left discusses his family information with Doug Ridgway, right, Airmen and Family Readiness Program director, in preparation for the upcoming deployment.**



**Senior Airman Marius Kelsey, right, discusses his medical readiness in preparation for an upcoming deployment.**

So as some of us enjoyed the day-off on Memorial Day and welcomed the unofficial start of the summer season, these Airmen were loading up on a plane and getting mentally prepared for their mission. To them and their families, summer season will have to wait.

## NJ Guardsmen lead the way on cyber defense

By Staff Sgt. Wayne Woolley, NJ/DMAVA

The New Jersey Army National Guard is on the front line of the global war in defense of Cyberspace.

The U.S. European Command asked representatives from New Jersey to lead two recent seminars in Europe to train American military partners in ways to improve the security of their computer networks, train their employees in IT protocol and better respond to cyber attacks. The EUCOM initiative is known as Cyber Endeavor.

The first seminar took place in February in Albania and Maj. Dwayne Hodges and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Adrian Mendoza were the lead instructors. The two officers then played a key role in the second regional Cyber Endeavor conference in the Slovak Republic and were joined by Col. James Stenson, the New Jersey National Guard J6 (Command, Control, Communications, & Computers/Cyber).

According to Will Poole, the director of the International Cyber Outreach Branch at EUCOM, the seminars “provide a proven platform to successfully build cyber defense partnerships with the end goal of improving force readiness for deployment in support of exercises, multinational crisis response and future missions.”

EUCOM said New Jersey was chosen to lead the seminars because of the strength of its cyber-security program and its ability to provide quality instructors.

“New Jersey Guardsmen did a very good job presenting Seminar 1. Therefore, when we put out a call-out message for Seminar 2 – New Jersey immediately responded,” said Poole. “Because of their reputation in Seminar 1, and because they were

the most pro-active guard unit in responding to our request for assistance to present the Seminar - we chose them.”

In Albania, Hodges and Mendoza’s presentation was titled: “Security Awareness and Developing a Cyber Workforce Program.” The Albania presentation was particularly important to New Jersey because of the National Guard’s nearly 20-year partnership with the Albanian defense forces.

In Slovakia, the training conducted by New Jersey was geared to helping allied nations handle specific incidents.

Stenson said one of the ultimate goals of Cyber Endeavor is to give America’s military allies the ability to detect cyber threats, protect themselves and then share that information with partner nations.

“It’s great to see the whole (military) community working together to improve their cyber-security skills,” said Stenson.

Hodges said the New Jersey team developed the cyber defense curriculum used in the conferences.

“We try to teach ‘This is what cyber crime is. This is how we protect against it,’” he said. “We don’t teach how New Jersey does it. We don’t teach how DoD does it. We teach the international standard.”

Hodges, the Cybersecurity officer for New Jersey, said all of America’s military partners need to recognize the gravity of the threat of cyber attack.

“The thought process going forward needs to be that the next 9/11, or even the next Battle of Normandy may be fought in the cyber domain,” said Hodges.

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## *DOD expands Safe Helpline with innovative peer support system for sexual assault victims*

The Department of Defense (DoD) announced May 30, the launch of The Safe HelpRoom created in response to Safe Helpline users who identified a need for peer support services. The new service allows victims of sexual assault to participate in group chat sessions to connect with and support one another in a moderated secure online environment at [www.Safe-Helpline.org](http://www.Safe-Helpline.org). The moderator is also available to provide referrals as necessary and ensure all ground rules are adhered to prior to chat postings.

“Survivors of sexual assault have told us that being able to discuss their concerns with peers can provide a level of support not available through other means,” said Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Jessica L. Wright. “The Safe HelpRoom is a groundbreaking development in the department’s commitment to support military victims of sexual assault.”

Safe HelpRoom sessions will begin immediately and are available twice weekly in two-hour sessions. The session schedule can be found at [SafeHelpline.org](http://SafeHelpline.org), along with polls to determine session topics to address specific concerns. The Safe HelpRoom and Safe Helpline are administered by DoD and operated by the non-profit Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN), the nation’s largest anti-sexual violence organization, through a contractual agreement with DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and

Response Office (SAPRO).

“Safe HelpRoom was designed with unique safeguards to ensure a safe and welcoming place for survivors to connect,” said Maj. Gen. Gary S. Patton, director, DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office. “Safe HelpRoom is the first of its

kind to require participants to commit to a series of ‘ground rules’ of acceptable behavior before entering a session. Additionally, each participant comment is reviewed to ensure it complies with the ground rules prior to posting for the group to see. The Safe HelpRoom provides a secure and private environment for positive and supportive discussions.”

When users visit Safe Helpline, the staff provides one-on-one tailored assistance and offers a variety of up-to-date service referrals for resources on and off military bases and installations. Service referrals include information for sexual assault response coordinators, along with legal, medical, mental health, and spiritual military resources. The referral database also houses information for local civilian and the Department of Veterans Affairs resources for helpline users seeking information and crisis support away from the military response system.

Additional information regarding DoD SAPRO and DoD Safe Helpline/Safe HelpRoom can be found at <http://www.sapr.mil/>.



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## SCOUTS BATTLE RAIN, MEET OLD GLORY MISSION AT DOYLE CEMETERY

By 1st Sgt. David Moore/444th MPAD

NORTH HANOVER, N.J. -- High winds and rain showed Boy and Girls Scouts alike how to live their motto of 'Be Prepared' when they took on the challenging of kicking off the Memorial Day weekend by placing U.S. flags on each veterans' grave at the Brigadier General William C. Doyle Memorial Cemetery.

Nearly 1,500 scouts from around the state took part May 24 in the annual event that allows scouts to focus on community service and citizenry-type awards. The Scouts also receive a patch and a tab commemorating their part in the annual event.

Tim Brennan, a scout leader for Cub Pack 80 who has attended the event for four years, said the event is a good community service project and it shows respect for our veterans.

"When the sun is shining you see wide open spots with green hills and in a short time, when the scouts finish the work, you see the red, white and blue flags blowing in the wind," said Brennan. "It truly is a heartfelt event seeing this happen and thinking about all those who served protecting our country."

An estimated 56,000 flags were placed on the graves in about 30 minutes and despite challenging weather on the day that kicked off the Memorial Day weekend, scouts spirit remained high as they waited for the bull-horn to signal it was time to start their mission.

Brianna Acacia, of Girl Scout Troop 488, who started traveling to the event when she was a younger Daisy Scout, said it was a great event to remember the men and women who served their country despite the rain. Acacia was a junior scout leader helping



younger Daisy Scouts of Troop 93 from Jackson Township, "I'm still going to be here because they made a commitment and I made a commitment too," said Acacia.

Acacia's mother, Meredith, who served as the Daisy troop leader, said all the scouts get a lesson about this country's history.

"It not only teaches them about their community, but it teaches them our history as a country by honoring all those who served in the military and we give thanks to them for what they did for us," said Meredith Acacia.



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Independence Seaport Museum

## MILITARY DAY



Friday, June 14, 2013  
10:00am to 2:00pm

Freedom is never free. Thank you for all you do and all you give.

Please come to our museum at a special one day rate on Flag Day and get this special experience.



Talk with our ship expert for a behind the scenes look aboard the Cruiser *Olympia* & Submarine *Becuna*

Walk through the new exhibit, *Tides of Freedom* with the Independence Seaport Museum Education Director

Enjoy light refreshments in our Education Center

Special pricing: \$7.00 per active military & family member  
Must RSVP to attend by calling or emailing by 06/11/13

Tina Yerkes, Group Sales Manager 215-413-8626  
tyerkes@phillyseaport.org

Independence Seaport Museum  
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# HIGHLIGHTS

## CONGRATULATIONS BILL & CHARLY



Charles Bryant, photo left, and William Hutchison, photo right, have more than 77 years of service to New Jersey's military and veterans. The longtime New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs' employees were honored by Brig. Gen. Michael L. Cunniff, the Adjutant General, at a joint retirement luncheon on May 29. Bryant joined the Army National Guard in 1964 and later used skills amassed over

decades as a supply sergeant in his position in DMAVA's installation division. Hutchinson joined DMAVA full-time as an armorer in Atlantic City in 1985 and went on to become a Special Staff Officer I, creating one of the most comprehensive work order systems used by the department. Both men plan for lots of travel, relaxation and time with their grandchildren (14 in all between the two of them) in retirement.

**NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS**  
**Serving Those Who Served**  
 Division of Veterans Healthcare Services  
 Division of Veterans Services

**Remember**  
**Comfort**  
**Honor**

### NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY & VETERANS AFFAIRS Veterans Outreach Campaign

#### CHERRY HILL MALL

June \*4, 5 & 6

\* Medal Ceremony at 11:00a.m. on Tuesday, June 4  
 Kiosk hours 10 a.m. – 8p.m.  
 200 Route 38, Cherry Hill, NJ 08002  
 (Camden County)

#### NJ KOREAN WAR MEMORIAL

COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY ON THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY  
 OF THE SIGNING OF THE KOREAN WAR ARMISTICE  
 July \*26

\* Medal Ceremony at 11:00a.m. will be part of program chaired  
 by Korean War Veterans Association of New Jersey  
 Brighton Park Amphitheatre & the Boardwalk, Atlantic City, NJ  
 (Atlantic County)

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