



DMAVA Highlights

January 15, 2009

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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**

**Tech. Sgt. Barbara
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mava.state.nj.us*

Or

609-530-6951

News For Your Views

108th Civil Engineers named CE unit of the Air Force-Reserve component

Congratulations and a round of applause to the 108th Civil Engineer Squadron of the 108th Air Refueling Wing. They received the 2008 Col. William L. Deneke Outstanding Civil Engineer Unit Award – naming them the best civil engineering squadron in the Air National Guard. Then, they went on to receive the 2008 Maj. Gen. Robert H. Curtin Award: The Air Force Civil Engineer Unit Award – Air Reserve Component category.

Lt. Col. Paul Novello leads the squadron of more than 100 men and women, military and civilian, fulltime and traditional, who are responsible for the maintenance and renovations of the 108th facilities; and, deploying around the world; along with all the regular Airmen duties and training.

More than one-third of the squadron has volunteered for deployments to Iraq, Kuwait and Qatar. Other deployments have taken the engineers to Mildenhall Air Base (England) and Croatia. And it is not unusual for those Airmen to get recognized for their exemplary work while deployed – several have been recognized as Airman, NCO or Craftsman of the Month while others have received awards or letters of appreciation from the unit to which they were assigned.

Great work!!

Employers fly to Pa. to see Guardsmen during deployment training

By Wayne Woolley, DMAVA Public Affairs Specialist

More than 30 employers, legislators and veterans service officials participated in a "Boss Lift" on Jan. 9 to observe pre-mobilization training at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa. for the Iraq-bound 1-50th Aviation Battalion.

The group boarded UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters at DMAVA Headquarters in Lawrenceville and made the 45-minute flight to Central Pennsylvania as part of a trip sponsored by the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR). One of the goals of the trip was to allow the employers to see first-hand what their employees do in their "other" job.

Among the bosses who made the trip were representatives of the Belleville Fire Department, the Hamburg Board of Education, the New Providence Police Department and Control Instruments Corp. of Fairfield.

Belleville Fire Lt. Ed Lutz said he was overwhelmed to see, Sgt. Jose Perez, before the veteran firefighter leaves for Iraq this spring. Said Lutz: "He's one of my best guys."

Lutz said the opportunity to see Perez and to fly on a helicopter for the first time "made it a day for the record book for me."

Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth, the state adjutant general, thanked the employers for taking the time to support their employees. By doing so, he said, they were making a direct contribution to the state and nation's defense.

"The nation and our state are asking a lot of our citizen soldiers," Rieth told them. "Now, after what you've seen, you can go out into the community and help tell their story."

We're on the Web!
www.nj.gov/military



Veterans' Organizations

Contact Information

State Veterans Service
Council

Mr. Richard Clark
RJClark21@msn.com

BG William 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)

108th ARW holds awards, promotion ceremony during January drill

By Staff Sgt. Armando Vasquez, 108th ARW PAO

On Sunday of January drill, the 108th Air Refueling Wing held an awards and promotion ceremony. Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth, The Adjutant General, was present at the ceremony to pin the new rank on the enlisted Airmen and to present the awards.

The first promotions were those to Technical Sergeant. After receiving their new rank, each soldier was given a playful punch on the arm by Maj. Gen. Rieth and their respective sponsors, which brought some laughter from the audience. The second group promoted were the Airmen being inducted into the Senior NCO ranks. Last to stand before the audience for their promotions were the newly-appointed NCOs. The presidents of the Senior and Junior Enlisted Councils each gave a speech about the responsibilities and expectations that come with the new position.

The Legion of Merit awards were given to Brig. Gen. Michael L. Cunniff and Col. Ronald Alfors. The Bronze Star was presented to Lt. Col. Ronald Turk for his service while deployed to Iraq for six months. Once the ceremony was complete, everyone was invited all to celebrate the new promotees and award recipients with refreshments.

Atlantic City VSO has moved

Update your address book – the Veterans Service Office in Atlantic City as moved. They are now located in the Atlantic City armory. Their new address is 1008 Absecon Boulevard, Atlantic City NJ 08041-1999. Telephone numbers are 609-441-3060/3061 and the fax number is 609-441-3899.

Sick call for active duty Soldiers at Dix has changed

Sick call procedures for all permanent party Soldiers assigned to Fort Dix have changed as of January 12.

Soldiers who receive care through the 305th Medical Group on McGuire Air Force Base must call 1-866-DRS-APPT (1-866-377-2778) for same day appointments if they are not feeling well and need to be seen by a health care provider.

Soldiers unable to make an appointment using the method above must use the After Hours Clinic located at 3458 Neely Road. This is behind the BX/PX on McGuire; parking and entrance for the clinic is on the east side of the building. The After Hours Clinic is on the left side of the Atrium.

Hours for the new clinic are 4:30-9 p.m., Monday-Thursday; 4:30-8 p.m., Friday; 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Saturday; 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Sunday; and, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. on holidays.

For more information on the After Hours Clinic, visit <http://www.mcguire.af.mil/305thmedicalgroup/index.asp>.

Disney offers Armed Forces Salute with great offers, passes

For those military families planning a trip to a Disney Resort this year, you picked a good time to go – Disney Parks are offering active and retired U.S. military personnel, including active and retired members of the U.S. Coast Guard and activated members of the National Guard and Reserves, a complimentary, multi-day admission into their U.S. theme parks.

The "Disney's Armed Forces Salute" also includes great rates at select Walt Disney World Resort and Disneyland Resort hotels and additional special ticket prices for family members and friends.

Visit www.disneyworld.com/military for information on the offerings. You can find detailed information on all the offers at http://wdwibc1.wdpromedia.com/ibc_wdw_v0101/media/en_US/content/nextGen/resorts/MilitaryOffer2009WDPRO2.pdf

Visit your local ITT office for details and to book or get your tickets; there is one located at the Fort Dix/McGuire PX/BX.

When visiting Disney World, don't forget the resort hotel, Shades of Green which is available only to service members and their families, retirees and civilian employees of

NJ World War II Memorial



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



Please submit
any articles
and all
information for
**DMAVA
Highlights**

to:

PAO Office
DMAVA Highlights
ATTN:
Tech. Sgt. Barbara
Harbison

DEADLINE IS
NOON
WEDNESDAY

Tech. Sgt. Barbara
Harbison
Barbara.harbison@njdmava.state.nj.us

the Defense Department. Find out more at www.shadesofgreen.org.

McGuire's All American Inn has moved

The All American Inn at the 305th Air Mobility Wing, McGuire Air Force Base, has moved. The new location of the lodging office is Bldg 2786. This building is located behind building 2784 on East Third Road. The phone numbers to reach the office are still the same - 609-754-3336/3337/4667.

N.J. colleges, universities working to serve military better

New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities (ASCU) is calling upon the nine state colleges and universities to "be all they can be" when it comes to serving members of the military, including recently retiring military service members. ASCU has launched a web-based guide for veterans and members of the armed forces dubbed Operation Promise for Servicemembers (OPS). The site is one of the most extensive provided by any group of public colleges in the nation.

ASCU member institutions, nine in all, currently serve 97,000 students, this number including several thousand active duty service members enrolled in distance learning through Thomas Edison State College. The other eight ASCU institutions are: Kean University, Montclair State University, New Jersey City University, The College of New Jersey, Ramapo College of New Jersey, Richard Stockton State College, Rowan University, and William Paterson University.

The Garden State is home to more than 500,000 veterans, although it is estimated that only one percent (5,000) take advantage of current tuition benefits. The US Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that an additional 5,000 returned to the state after completing their active military service in 2007. Experts predict that the expanded benefits provided under the **Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act** (or Post 9/11 GI Bill) coupled with a steady stream of retiring veterans will substantially increase the number of student veterans seeking higher education opportunities. The Post 9/11 GI Bill will go into effect in August 2009.

In recognition of this expected jump in student veteran attendance, ASCU Executive Director /CEO Dr. Darryl G. Greer recently met with college/university presidents to discuss a concerted effort to ramp up programs and services tailored to the unique needs of these students through the following concrete steps:

- ❖ Consider becoming Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (if they are not ones already) which means the institutions would establish credit acceptance policies for credit earned from other collegiate institutions and/or other documented learning deemed college-level, including military training or accomplishments. Kean University, Thomas Edison State College and Ramapo College are active Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges. Rowan University is currently applying for membership.
- ❖ Adopt flexible policy that will allow student veterans who wish to study here to receive the benefits of in-state, or at least reduced tuition, even though they may not have met the state's residency requirements.
- ❖ Establish student veterans services offices, allocating staff resources to help meet the diverse and, in some cases extensive, needs of retiring or separating members of the military.

Dr. Greer said today he is confident all nine institutions, which are already doing much, will step up to serve our veterans. "How much more they will do, will depend on demand and institutional service mission. Other factors include the institution's current student enrollment capability and its proximity to large retiring military population centers. All nine institutions are all keenly aware of this emerging student population, their service to our country and our responsibility to assist them in any way feasible."

Greer also spelled out what he sees as a role for the Association in helping to make what he calls the Nine Strong (state colleges and universities) a national model for educating veterans:

- ❖ Serve as a clearinghouse for information and policy facilitation related to student veterans programs, services and funding, beginning with a new website section called Operation Promise for Servicemembers (OPS) which was launched today and

Wounded
Soldier and
Family
Hotline
1-800-984-
8523

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

can be accessed via www.njascu.org/Operation Promise Services.html

- ❖ Report to the Governor, Legislature, the public and veterans groups on progress made at the nine institutions during 2009 and beyond.
- ❖ Work with the Legislature on pending legislative initiatives affecting veterans.

The Post 9/11 GI Bill – effective in August 2009 – is acknowledged as the largest scale effort to bolster services for military veterans since WWII. Because the federal program is so new and extensive, providing an estimated \$62 billion over 10 years, the Association's OPS coordinator, Wendy A. Lang, says there are likely to be a number of coordination challenges (technical and policy-related) in system implementation. Accordingly, cooperation in problem solving to get adequate information to veterans is vital.

"This initiative represents the Association's efforts in preparing to assist both our member institutions--as well as student veterans--adapt to and utilize the broad benefits of the new GI bill. Our institutions have a longstanding history of serving the changing educational needs of our citizenry and this emerging student veteran population will be no different. ASCU is committed to assisting our member institutions establish the programs and services necessary for a seamless transition from combat service to college. Considering what these individuals have sacrificed for our country, it's the least we can do."

ASCU institutions have already taken steps to assist student veterans. For example:

Thomas Edison State College has been providing specialized educational opportunities for members of the United States military for more than 30 years. Its flexible "Military Degree Completion Program" assists active-duty service members engage in degree programs wherever they are stationed.

VA, DOT, DoD working together toward safe driving records

WASHINGTON (Jan. 12, 2009) - With motor vehicle crashes being a leading cause of deaths among combat veterans during the first years after their return home, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Department of Defense (DOD) are working together to reduce these accidents.

Today, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Installations and Environment Wayne Army, and Acting Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration David Kelly announced the creation of a new program designed to identify needed research involving recently returned veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan and to increase awareness of the importance of safe driving among newly-demobilized veterans.

The safe-driving initiative strives to increase awareness of motor vehicle crashes among veterans and the importance of safe driving, seatbelt and helmet usage, and other measures. To reach out to veterans and their families, VA will create a national educational program using the Department's network of medical centers, community clinics, drop-in counseling centers (Vet Centers), and veterans benefits offices.

The initiative will also include outreach to mobilize national veterans service organizations; the nation's governors and state police, safety officers, and state highway safety officials; and the private sector - including employers; automobile, motorcycle and sports vehicle dealers and manufacturers; the motor vehicle insurance industry; and driving and motorcycle racing enthusiasts' organizations. NASCAR legend and safe driving advocate, Richard Petty, will also be an active partner in the initiative.

"Richard Petty Driving Experience (RPDE) is thrilled to be working with VA, DOT and DOD on such a worthwhile project to save veterans' lives," said NASCAR legend Richard Petty. "We want to bring more attention to the continuing problem of veteran drivers and their safety through our involvement. Last year alone, RPDE operated over 1,100 event days, ran almost 1 million miles on track and had a staff of professional drivers.

We have the commitment, the knowledge to teach, and the infrastructure to take this initiative to many markets."

According to the Department of Transportation, motor vehicle crashes are the leading

ESGR office
JFHQ
3650 Saylor's Pond
Road
Fort Dix, NJ
08641
Hank Pierre, 609-
562-0156,
hank.pierre@njdma
va.state.nj.us
Tammy Cartagena,
609-562-0157,
tammy.l.cartagena
@us.army.mil
Fax
609-562-0158

cause of death for all Americans between the ages of eight through 34. Men constitute about 70 percent of all traffic deaths. In the past decade, both deaths and injuries from motor vehicle crashes have gone down in the United States, due to increases in seat-belt use and decreases in alcohol involvement, among other factors.

Nonetheless, motor vehicle accidents remain a major concern in the military and among veterans as the greatest cause of accidental fatalities. Several studies have reported an increase in post-deployment deaths among military personnel who served in a combat zone compared to their non-deployed counterparts, who are in the military but not deployed to a war, after both the Vietnam War and the 1991 Gulf War. Preliminary evidence also indicates this is the case with veterans from the Global War on Terror.

For more information regarding the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Transportation's safe driving initiative for veterans, please visit www.safedriving.va.gov.

DMAVA Green

By Tech. Sgt. Barb Harbison, DMAVA Public Affairs Specialist

The holidays are over and by now everything is packed away for use much later in 2009. But what are you going to do with that stack of Christmas, Chanukah and Kwanza cards that you have accumulated? One person I know saves his cards in boxes from year to year in his attic for reminiscing. Most of us don't have that kind of space so here are some ways to recycle them.

Cut off the back and use the pretty fronts as postcards for your holiday greetings next year.

Glue on plain gift bags bought at a craft store.

Get pre-folded cards at the craft store and glue cut out fronts from your old cards onto the fronts of these plain cards, add your own greeting inside. This is one that your children can participate in creating.

Cut parts of the card fronts out a slightly larger piece of card stock underneath, staple together, cover the top of the staple with a tiny bow, sticker, button or other decorative item and use as tags on next year's gifts. (A selection of these would make a nice gift for a neighbor or friend.)

Find two that you can cut to the same size, place plain backs together, glue and when dry, punch a hole in the top edge. Put a ribbon through the hole and you have a homemade decoration for your tree.

Cut the pictures from the old cards and place them between two sheets of clear contact paper, both approximately 12 by 18 inches, press the contact paper together and you have a new place mat. Use cards from different occasions and you have placemats for year-round.

Whenever you cut the cards, this is a good time to use the decorative edge scissors that can be purchased inexpensively at a craft store. It can dress up your project.

You can find more ideas on this Web site: <http://www.squidoo.com/recycleholidaycards>

If you have a green tip or a site to recommend, drop me a line at Barbara.harbison@njdmava.state.nj.us.

Tax Information

Military, retiree W2 tax forms are available on MyPay

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

The 2008 W2 and 1099 tax forms will be available on MyPay - <https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx?flps=99R-RCPS> as follows:

--Retiree 1099R - 12/16/2008

--Annuitant 1099R - 12/16/2008

QUOTES

A man is not finished when he is defeated. He is finished when he quits.

-Richard Nixon

Hear reason, or she'll make you feel her.

- Benjamin Franklin

Criticism is easy, art is difficult.

- Phillippe Destouches

The opposite of talking isn't listening. The opposite of talking is waiting.

- Fran Lebowitz

It's easier for a stingy man to get rich – but what's the use?

- American proverb

--Air Force, Army and Navy Reserve W2 - 1/5/2009
--Civilian W2 - 1/6/2009
--Marine Corps Active and Reserve W2 - 1/7/2009
--Army Non-Appropriated Fund (NAF) Civilian Pay W2 - 1/12/2009
--Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) W2 - 1/12/2009
--Savings Deposit Program (SDP) 1099INT - 1/18/2009
--Air Force, Army and Navy Active W2 - 1/23/2009

Schools, Training

254th Regiment provides class schedule for 2009 training year

The following courses will be conducted by the 254th Regiment, New Jersey Army National Guard, at Sea Girt and Fort Dix during training year 2009.

INACTIVE DUTY TRAINING COURSES (IDT):

- ❖ The Army Basic Instructor Training Course: Jan. 24-March 21, 2009; April 4-June 13, 2009
- ❖ Small Group Instructor Course: July 11-Sept. 19, 2009
- ❖ Pre WARRIOR Leadership Courses (3 Classes, 3 weekends per class):
 - ❖ Jan. 10-Mar 8, 2009; April 4-June 14, 2009; and July 11-Sept. 20, 2009
- ❖ Officer Candidate School: Phase 2 Class 52 Aug. 9, 2008-June 14, 2009
- ❖ Officer Candidate School: Phase 0 Class 53 begins March 7, 2009; Phase 2 is Aug. 1, 2009-June 14, 2010.
- ❖ Company Level Command Team Course (for new Commanders and their 1SGs): April 18-19, 2009

ACTIVE DUTY TRAINING COURSES

*NOTE: There will be no Inactive Duty Training (IDT) BNCOC this year. There is currently an ADT class being conducted at Sea Girt Jan. 10-24, 2009, with another possibly around September 2009. This is a Phase I Common Core Course. It is highly suggested that you send your young sergeants and staff sergeants to this course before the Army begins running Phase I as an on-line web delivery. TY09 is supposed to be the last year in this resident format.

- ❖ Basic NCO Course, (15 days): See note above
- ❖ 68W10 Medic Sustainment (10 days): July 13-22, 2009.
- ❖ 13F10 MOS-T Fire Support Specialist (8 days): March 14-21, 2009
- ❖ 11B10 MOS-T Infantryman (15 days): May 9-23, 2009
- ❖ 11B2/3/4 (T) Infantryman Transition (15 days, E5 and above): May 9-23, 2009
- ❖ 11B40 Advanced NCO Course (ANCOC) Phase II (15 days) Fort Dix: Possibly in Sep09.
- ❖ 31B10 MOS-T Military Police (15 days): Feb. 22-March 6, 2009
- ❖ Combat Lifesaver Course, various locations: Send unit request to Sgt. 1st Class Stephen Cosmanic at Stephen.r.cosmanic@us.army.mil for scheduling.

Questions should be addressed to 1st Sgt. Gary Davidson, 732-974-6312. ATRRS School Code: 1004.

Retirements, Reunions

Gala reunion planned for former, current 170th/108th personnel

Come one, come all – active or retired – for a fun-filled weekend with trips down memory lane. A Gala Reunion is being planned for all of the faces of the 170th and 108th Air Refueling Wing on **April 25, 2009**.

The elegant semi-formal will be held at the Doubletree Hotel and Executive Meeting Center, 200 Atrium Drive, Somerset, NJ, 6-11 p.m.

A deposit of \$50 is required per person as soon as possible. Hotel reservation, rates and activities will be announced at a later date.

For more information, contact Gloria A. Smith, 732-752-8263/732-991-9102 or Phyllis Jackson-Rackley, 908-451-7147/908-730-6377.

State Family Programs

101 Eggert Crossing Road
Lawrenceville

Toll-free number
888-859-0352
Family Assistance
609-530-6884
Teen Youth Group
609-530-6836
Fax
609-530-6871

Call a Chaplain

24/7

609-694-0635
609-802-8125

Say Again?



DMAVA emergency hotline is up and running

Winter is just around the corner and with that comes weather that can make driving to work difficult. There may be times that the department may have a delayed opening or even closures. If there is a question, call the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Emergency Hotline:

1-866-232-5798

You will then hear the following message:

You have reached the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Emergency Information Number. Please list to the following menu choices and select an appropriate option:

- ❖ State employees – press 1
- ❖ Federal employees – press 2
- ❖ National Guard employees – press 3

Select the appropriate selection and you will hear a pre-recorded message providing further instructions or details regarding the emergency and/or inclement weather reporting instructions.

Free CD for downloading as gift to military, veterans

Isaac Hayes, Alan Jackson, Roy Orbison, Daughtry, Good Charlotte, Joe Perry and eight more artists and groups have come together and each donated one song to the CD, "For the Troops II."

John Ondrasik of Five For Fighting, led the project for the second time. The original CD, "For the Troops," was downloaded more than 350,000 times and 200,000 hard copies were distributed to service members and veterans.

The new CD, which can be downloaded for free at www.aafes.com, will continue to be available until mid-March. Those with valid military identification will be eligible to download the CD.

To get a complete list of the artists and songs on the CD, go to www.cdforthetroops.com.

Earn up to \$8,500 for officer accessions in G-RAP

From the desk of Warrant Officer Misty L. DiGangi, AMEDD Recruiter

Guard Recruiting Assistants can earn additional income assisting ARNG recruiting efforts by identifying well-qualified men and women for service in the ARNG. RAs may earn up to \$8,500 for each select Officer Candidate who accepts a Commission.

As a G-RAP RA you will cultivate quality Officer Candidates from within your spheres of influence and work with an Officer Strength Manager (OSM) or Warrant Officer Strength Manager (WOSM) to process the Officer Candidate and move them towards accession.

The total amount of payment for an Officer Accession is determined by the ARNG's current critical needs and the GRAP-O payment chart. There are four categories by which RAs will receive payment for Officer Accessions. RAs can earn up to \$2,000 for each new recruit who enlists and reports to Basic Training or for each prior service member.

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

Government offers free financial planning, information

These days, watching your pennies is close to becoming a national pastime like baseball and football. Planning for retirement, children's education, buying a home,

Get your VA benefits as a Direct Deposit into your checking or savings account
– call
800-333-1795
or visit
www.GoDirect.org

investing – simply finding a way to save a few dollars – can tax the best of us. We could all use a financial planner, but who can afford one?

Drop in the Web site, Mymoney.gov, and find information on all aspects of financial planning. There is a section of links to calculators to help you plan your college budget and loans, determine if you are able to afford to buy a home, help with retirement planning, compare different types of mortgages, savings bonds values and more.

Are you thinking about starting your own business? You will find a page of links to help you; even to assist you in writing your business plan.

There is also a section for kids to learn about money matters. The site is also in Spanish.

So instead of drumming your fingers on the table as you worry about your financial situation, let them walk over to Mymoney.gov and get answers to your pressing money questions.

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/>.

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.

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

Direct Deposit – A safe and reliable way to receive your pay

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

This is just a reminder that the convenience of direct deposit is offered to all state employees. It is encouraged that our employees consider taking advantage of direct deposit with all that it has to offer.

Enrolling into direct deposit means having your money directly deposited into your

checking or savings account. You're going to be on vacation on pay day? Tired of waiting for Postal Service to deliver your money? Eliminate that with direct deposit. It is a convenient and reliable way to receive your pay and know it is safe in your account, when you need it to be. And the service is free!

To get enrolled you must complete the "Authorization Agreement for Automatic Payroll Deposits" form, and turn it in to your Human Resources Payroll Department. A copy of this form is available on DMAVAnet under [Human Resources – Helpful Forms](#). Just print, fill out and send to Human Resources. Please allow up to three pay periods (six weeks) for your direct deposit to take effect.

To request a form or more information, contact Lisa Dandrea in Human Resources at 609-530-6888.

Pension loan applications to be submitted through MBOS

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

NOTICE from the Division of Pensions and Benefits:

Effective Nov. 1, 2008, an eligible member who wishes to borrow against their pension account, **MUST** submit the loan request through the Pension Loan Application accessible through a personal account with the Member Benefits Online System (MBOS). Please note the following changes:

- ❖ The *Loan Application* will no longer be available as a printed form or through the Division's Web site.
- ❖ Paper *Loan Applications* that are received by mail as of Nov. 1, 2008, will be returned to members with instructions on submitting the loan request through MBOS.
- ❖ The loan fax number, which has been phased out of use since the introduction of loans through MBOS, will be completely disabled.
- ❖ Limited access to a computer or a member's reluctance to use MBOS **will not** be considered sufficient circumstances to allow manual loan processing.

Employees who are already registered MBOS users currently have access to the online loan application through their MBOS account.

Employees who are new to MBOS can access MBOS after they register with both the *MyNewJersey* Web site *and* MBOS. Registration is free; however, the registration process requires several steps and new users should carefully follow the MBOS registration instructions. Visit <http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/mbosregister.htm> for a complete list of instructions. If, after following the MBOS Registration Instructions, you still need assistance registering for or using MBOS, please contact the MBOS Help Desk at (609) 777-0534 or send an e-mail with the subject line "MBOS E-mail" to: pensions.nj@treas.state.nj.us

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, Personnel Assistant

If you are a state employee, working for DMAVA, Vets Haven, and the Cemetery, and 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.

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

Youth Camp 2009 dates set

From the desk of Amanda Balas, State Youth Coordinator

The dates for 2009 Youth Camp are July 19-25, 2009 at Sea Girt.

Applications will be posted on the website, www.guardfamily.org/Youth, mid-December 2008. Please stay posted for more information.



Strong Bonds weekend scheduled for Feb. 13-15

From the desk of Marie Durling, Family Programs Specialist

The next Marriage Enrichment/Strong Bonds weekend is on the calendar for Feb. 13-15 at the Clarion in Egg Harbor Township. This is open to any N.J. National Guard Service member (Army and Air). Contact me at 609-530-6884 or marie.durling@us.army.mil to get an application form. If you attended a weekend previously, I will put you on a waiting list. This is Valentine's Day weekend so we will make it special for all attendees.

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>.

Join the online Guard Family

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

An invitation is extended to join the online Guard Family Portal community! Our goal is to make this website your "one-stop shop" for everything Guard! Here is the link to join:

- ❖ Visit <http://www.guardfamily.org>
- ❖ Click the Join link on the top right
- ❖ Complete the form and click Submit!

The website will provide up-to-date, relevant and state-specific content, including announcements, news, events, discussion forums, documents, surveys and reports.

In addition, you can learn about Family Readiness, Program Services and Plans & Operations, take on-line training, and the site keeps you informed and involved about your benefits as a serving family. FRG Leaders and volunteers are strongly encouraged to enroll on the site and log in your volunteer hours.

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.

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 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 609-530-6884 and one will be mailed to you. For more information check out www.mediservrx.com.

During the Deployment Information

Our Military Kids grant program recently expanded

Our Military Kids, a program that provides grants to children of deployed and severely injured Reserve and National Guard military, has expanded its program eligibility in two ways. The program which had been open to children in grades K - 12, will now be offered to 3- and 4-year-olds. Additionally, children may be eligible for a second grant award if their parent is deployed for 365 days or more. Our Military Kids grants cover six months of an activity to a maximum award of \$500. Children who have a parent deployed for 365 days or more will now be eligible for a second grant award provided the parent has 60 days remaining on the deployment orders and six months has

elapsed since the first grant award. Our Military Kids provides grants for sports, fine arts and tutoring so that children may start or continue participation in an activity while the parent is away or recovering from serious injury. To date, over 3,000 children have received awards from Our Military Kids.

To find more information on the program or to download an application, go to www.ourmilitarykids.org.

Reunion briefing schedule announced for family members

From the desk of Marie Durling, Family Programs Specialist

We know it is early to mention reunion briefs but we wanted to get the dates and locations out now so you can make plans to attend the one most convenient for you. All briefs are the same - they are not unit specific. Attend the one that is most convenient for you.

Soldier & Family Reunion Brief Schedule

Date	Armory	Time
Feb. 7, 2009	West Orange	9:30 a.m.
Feb. 21, 2009	Morristown	9:30 a.m.
March 21, 2009	Port Murray	9:30 a.m.
March 22, 2009	Lawrenceville	1 p.m.
April 4, 2009	Jersey City	9:30 a.m.
April 5, 2009	Vineland	1 p.m.
April 16, 2009	Cherry Hill	6:30 p.m.
April 19, 2009	Toms River	1 p.m.
April 27, 2009	Woodbridge	6:30 p.m.
May 6, 2009	Somerset	6:30 p.m.
May 11, 2009	Mount Holly	6:30 p.m.
May 16, 2009	Woodbury	9:30 a.m.
May 21, 2009	Teaneck	6:30 p.m.

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

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

Now the U.S. Postal Service is making it easier for families to send care packages with a larger flat rate box and a special discount to FPO/ APO addresses. 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/supporting-outroops/welcome.htm?from=household &page=troopsupport.

TroopTube shares video with troops, families

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

TroopTube is the new video-sharing web site for troops and their families. TroopTube is sponsored by Military OneSource and is the only video sharing site for military families approved by the Department of Defense. Users can share videos privately with family members or publicly with the larger community. Access TroopTube through the link <http://www.trooptube.tv/home>.

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.

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/respite child care to relieve family stress during deployment. Respite 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.

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/>.

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

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.

Financial counseling available for deployed service members

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

The Military Housing Assistance Fund (MHAF) helps military families to become homeowners by providing them with grants to assist them with purchasing a home.

The Fund also provides financial counseling to members of the National Guard and Reserves, deployed and serving in combat zones overseas, 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 Valerie Hart, Military Families Outreach Case Manager at vhart@fsmc.org or call 973-538-5260, extension 326. You can also contact Tammy Rosenthal, Director of child and Adolescent Services at trosenthal@fsmc.org or 973-538-5260. We are privileged to work with you who have given so much for your country!

Sports

Ski weekends to West Point available to military, families

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

Enjoy a weekend ski trip to West Point. Trips will leave at 5:15 p.m. from Outdoor Recreation, Fort Dix. The price includes lodging (5 star hotel located adjacent to The United States Military Academy, West Point), lift tickets, transportation and equipment. Pre-registration is required.

Dates: Fri/Sat Jan. 16-17 – Martin Luther King Holiday Weekend Trip
Fri/Sat Feb. 13-14 – Presidents Day Getaway Family Trip
Fri/Sat Feb. 20-21 – Polar Family Fun Fest

Cost: Individual is \$100
Family/Group of 4 is \$200 + \$50 for each additional person

Trips are sponsored by and for more information call:

Fort Dix Outdoor Recreation
Bldg 6045 Doughboy Loop
Ft Dix NJ 08640
609-562-2727/6667

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.

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.

Scholarship, Education News

SSG Frank T. Carvill scholarship for Jersey Guard kids

Friends and family of Staff Sgt. Frank T. Carvill, a member of the New Jersey Army National Guard who was killed while serving in Iraq in Operation Iraqi Freedom, have established scholarship in his name. According to those close to him, Carvill was a strong advocate of education and he felt it was important to help his fellow Guardsmen and their families.



The SSG Frank T. Carvill Memorial Scholarship Award is designed to honor and remember Frank Carvill. Applications are available by contacting Peggy Carvill-Liguori at drpeg639@aol.com. Deadline for submitting applications is **April 30, 2009**.

These are the eligibility requirements for the scholarships –

- ⌘ The applicant's parent or guardian must be a member of the New Jersey National Guard.
- ⌘ The applicant may apply for the scholarship while attending high school or presently be in or accepted by a college/vocational program as a full-time student.
- ⌘ The applicant must volunteer time to the community.
- ⌘ The applicant must have a minimum GPA of 2.75
- ⌘ The applicant must compose an essay stating:
 - How volunteerism affects your life
 - How the U.S. military has influenced your life

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.

College scholarships available through commissary agency

The Defense Commissary Agency is making college scholarships worth \$1,500 available to qualified children of military families, including those in the National Guard. Applications are now available at commissaries worldwide or through a link at www.commissaries.com or at www.militaryscholar.org.

According to Philip E. Sakowitz Jr., Defense Commissary Agency director and chief executive officer, the program has awarded more than \$6.4 million in scholarship to more than 4,000 children of military families since the program began in 2001.

Qualified applicants are dependent, unmarried children of active duty, Reserve, Guard or retired military personnel. Applicants must be under the age of 23. Also survivors of service members who died while on active duty or survivors of individuals who died while receiving retired pay from the military may apply for the scholarship.

Eligibility is determined using the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System database. Applicants should ensure that they, along with their sponsors, are enrolled in the DEERS database and have a current ID card. The applicants must be planning to attend, or already be attending, an accredited college or university full time in the fall of 2009 or be enrolled in a program of studies designed to transfer directly into a four-year program.

Applicants will be asked to submit an essay on the following topic: What would you place inside a time capsule to help people in the next century understand military life today? Applications must be turned in by **Feb. 18, 2009**. At least one scholarship will be awarded at every commissary location with qualified applicants.

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 For Army National Guard Education Benefits, please use <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

Join the Enlisted Association, make your voice heard

Now is the time to join the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of New Jersey.

The Association started out in 1965 as a chapter of the Active Army Association (NCOA) but membership was limited to NCOs of the Army National Guard. Six years later they reorganized as the Army and Air National Guard Noncommissioned Officer's Association. In 1992, a change to their current name expanded the membership to all enlisted Soldiers and Airmen.

Benefits of joining the EANGNJ include subscriptions to the New Patriot and Enlisted Voice newsletters, eligibility to apply for six \$1,000 scholarships, inexpensive term insurance, national membership with EANGUS and a voice on legislative issues.

The association holds four executive council meetings in February, May, August, and November. They will hold their annual business in Gettysburg, Pa., on Oct. 9-11, 2009.

Join EANGNJ and help make your voice heard. EANGNJ has helped to get state tuition assistance for Guard members attending state institutions, up to 15 credits per semester with continuation through a master's degree. Their voice on a national level has helped to get increased educational benefits, additional TRICARE benefits and eliminated increased premiums to TRICARE.

Upcoming legislative goals include reducing the retirement age to 55 and continued funding for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Membership is open to all enlisted Soldiers and Airmen, with associate memberships for officers, warrant officers, and DoD, state and federal employees. Cost is \$15 for E1-E4, \$20 for E5-E7 and \$25 for E8-E9. All associate memberships are \$10. You can find a membership application at their Web site: www.eang-nj.org.

NGANJ group life insurance available to members

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

ESGR News, Information

Guard, Reserve members and families encourage to nominate employers

The Department of Defense opened the nomination season for the 2009 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award on Nov. 1. National Guard and Reserve members and their families are eligible and encouraged to nominate employers who have gone above and beyond in their support of employees serving in the seven reserve components.

Almost one-half of the U.S. military is comprised of the National Guard and Reserve. The Department of Defense shares these citizen warriors with their civilian employers, many of whom provide significant support to their employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve.

In 2008 the Jersey City Fire Department was the first New Jersey employers to receive



the Employer Support Freedom Award, one of fifteen employers bestowed with the high honor.

"The number of nominations was outstanding last year," said retired Army Col. Carmen Venticinque, chairman, New Jersey state field committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve. "I encourage the more than 20,000 citizen Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors, Marines and Coast Guard members to nominate their employer this year."

The New Jersey ESGR held a luncheon for all the Freedom Award nominees and the Jersey City Fire Department was honored with the Pro Patria award along with Campbell Soup and Jenny Engineering.

Nominations will be accepted at www.freedomaward.mil/nominate.aspx until **Jan. 19, 2009**. The Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award is the U.S. government's highest recognition given to outstanding employers.

The Freedom Award was instituted in 1996 under the auspices of the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) to recognize exceptional support from the employer community. More than 100 employers have received this prestigious award.

For questions regarding the nomination process, please contact Hank Pierre of the New Jersey ESGR at 609-562-0156.

Veterans Information

Help for small business owners

If you are ready to start your own business, grow or expand, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) can help. The SBA offers many programs and services to help Veteran entrepreneurs succeed. For more information on how SBA can help you start, grow and build your business, contact: Frank Burke at 973-645-6049 or e-mail frank.burke@sba.gov Visit the SBA New Jersey website at www.sba.gov/nj

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).

DoD develops compensation and benefits handbook

DoD announced it has developed a comprehensive handbook describing compensation and other benefits service members and their families would be entitled to upon separation or retirement as a result of serious injury or illness.

"The Compensation and Benefits Handbook is the one source of information that covers everything a seriously ill and injured service member will need during his or her recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration," said Ronald A. Winter, principal deputy assistant secretary of the Air Force for manpower and reserve affairs.

The handbook was compiled in cooperation with the Departments of Veterans Affairs, Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education and the Social Security Administration. Additionally; there are references to assistance provided by other governmental and non-governmental agencies and organizations.

"The handbook describes the disability eligibility process, various program qualifications, application procedures, and numerous resources with associated contact information," said Sharon Gunselman, policy and resource analyst for the Department of Defense.

Web sites and toll-free numbers are provided, and the electronic version includes hyperlinks. The electronic version of the handbook will be updated frequently and the hard copy of the compensation and benefits handbook will be updated annually.

The electronic version of the handbook can be found on the five Web sites listed below:

<http://turbotap.org>

<https://www.nko.navy.mil>

<http://www.npc.navy.mil>

<https://www.aw2.army.mil>

<https://www.my.af.mil/gcss-af/USAF/AFP40/d/1073755231/Files/C&BHandbook>

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:

February 3*, 4, 5	Paramus Park Mall
March 3*, 4, 5	Monmouth 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.

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For further information call 1-800-648-VETS or visit

www.njvvmf.org.