



DMAVA Highlights

April 17, 2008

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and Veterans
Affairs*

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Or

609-530-7088

News For Your Views



New patch unveiled as AT comes to end

By Kryn P. Westhoven, Public Affairs Staff Officer

The more than 2,800 Soldiers of the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) are proudly wearing a new patch that was affixed to their Army Combat Uniform (ACU) during a ceremony on Wednesday at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa.

The sound of Velcro releasing the Rainbow patch of the 42nd Infantry Division filled the air near the barracks where the Soldiers have been sleeping since March 28.

The new design incorporates the history of the "Jersey Blues" highlighting the Infantry, Armor and Field Artillery history of the unit and features three stars to show New Jersey was the third state to ratify the Constitution.

Today and tomorrow the Soldiers will be returning to their respective armories completing three weeks annual training, part of the pre-mobilization requirement for their scheduled deployment starting in mid-June.

Bring Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day - April 24

Thursday, April 24 is the day everyone will see lots of new faces around the buildings of DMAVA. Of course the faces will belong to the sons and daughters of the men and women who work here everyday since it is "Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day." The theme for the 2008 event is "Making Choices for a Better World."

This annual event began more than 15 years ago as "Take Our Daughters to Work" and has changed into daughters and sons to better serve our children.

This year DMAVA's children will take a guided tour of the Battleship New Jersey Museum site, which will include lunch, 4D flight simulator ride and a scavenger hunt. There are costs associated with the tour and parents/guardians are required to incur all costs associated with the trip.

To obtain a release form, confirmation slip and other information about the event, contact Dorinda Sapp, Affirmative Action Officer, 609-530-6828. Confirmation and fees must be into the office no later than Friday, April 18.

Free concert, Air Force jazz ensemble, in Bergenfield on April 28

Hailing from Washington, D.C., the United States Air Force's premier jazz ensemble, the Airmen of Note, will be performing a free concert at Bergenfield High School on Monday evening, April 28 at 7:30 p.m. The group has been critically acclaimed by jazz legends such as Randy Brecker, Clark Terry and Slide Hampton and is considered to be among the finest touring "big bands" in the world today. Their appearance at

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-NJ4U
(1-866-838-7654)

Bergenfield High School will be one of only two stops in New Jersey on their northeastern U.S. tour.

Tickets can be obtained by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:
Airmen of Note Tickets
P. O. Box 204
Bergenfield, NJ 07621

For more information, call 201-385-3251 or e-mail music@bergenfield.org. The high school is located at 80 South Prospect Ave., Bergenfield.

Asian Pacific American Heritage Luau, May 10

May is designated APAH month—a celebration of Asians and Pacific Islanders in the US. The celebration was first designated via congressional bill on June of 1977, and on 5 October 1979, President Jimmy Carter signed a Joint Resolution designating the first 10 days of May to commemorate the celebration. To honor this month the Asian Pacific American Heritage committee of McGuire Air Force Base will be holding their annual Luau at the McGuire All Ranks Club on May 10, 5-9 p.m. The buffet dinner and show will be \$22 for adults, children 6-10 will be \$10.50. (5 and under are free) Please call Master Sgt. Ferdinand Bautista 108th Air Refueling Wing, 609-754-2044 for reservations/tickets or email felicitas.shuler@mcguire.af.mil.

Class 28 begins at the N.J. Youth ChalleNGe Academy

On April 14, 109 students began the residential phase of the N.J. Youth ChalleNGe Academy on Fort Dix. There they will attend classes which will help them attain their goals of earning a State of New Jersey High School diploma. Additionally, the cadets will receive training in the following eight core components: Academic Excellence, Life Coping Skills, Job Skills, Health and Hygiene, Responsible Citizenship, Service to Community, Leadership and Followership and Physical Fitness.

The next Youth ChalleNGe class is scheduled to begin in mid-September 2008. N.J. Youth ChalleNGe is open to all who:

- have ceased to attend high school and have officially withdrawn one month prior to attendance
- are residents of the State of New Jersey and a citizen or legal resident of the United States
- are drug and alcohol free
- are between the ages of 16-19 (may not turn 20 while in the Academy)
- do not have any pending legal matters to include parole and probation, and
- enter the Academy voluntarily.

Best of all, attendance at Youth ChalleNGe is free! If you are aware of someone who meets the eligibility criteria and would like to earn their High School diploma in a military environment, they may contact the Academy's Recruitment Office at one of the following numbers: 609-562-0580/0577/0582/0190.

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

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

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:
Staff Sgt. Barb
Harbison

DEADLINE IS
NOON
WEDNESDAY

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

Or Call
609-530-7088

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.

More education benefits coming to Guardsmen

WASHINGTON - Some members of the National Guard and the Reserves who serve on active duty will see a significant increase in their educational benefits, thanks to improvements announced today by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

"Reservists and National Guardsmen who serve multiple tours on active duty may get an increase in their educational benefits, in keeping with the value of their service to our nation," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake.

Under new provisions, members who accumulate three years on active duty, regardless of breaks in service, may be eligible for the maximum payment under the Reserve Education Assistance Program (REAP). Previously, reservists and guardsmen had to serve two continuous years on active duty to receive the highest payment.

The new eligibility rules are retroactive to October, 1, 2007. The top payment under REAP is currently \$880.80 per month.

The new law, part of the National Defense Authorization Act, also expands the period of eligibility for certain Guard and Reserve members who complete their service obligation before separation from the selected reserve.

Members meeting these criteria may be eligible to use REAP benefits for a period of ten years following discharge. Benefits typically end upon separation for members who do not complete their full, obligated service.

Additionally, some REAP-eligible National Guard and Reserve members may now make an extra contribution to the Department of Defense to increase their monthly benefit rates.

Service members receive an additional \$5 per month for each \$20 contributed. With the maximum \$600 contribution, this option can add up to \$5,400 to a member's total 36-month education benefit package.

Beginning on October 1, 2008, participants in REAP and the Montgomery GI Bill program for the Selected Reserve who pursue non-degree programs lasting less than two years may also be eligible to receive accelerated payments.

During FY 2007, more than 60,000 National Guardsmen and reservists were paid under REAP, more than 41,000 were paid under the Montgomery GI Bill program for the Selected Reserves, and approximately 344,000 participants were paid under the Montgomery GI Bill for active-duty members.

For more information on changes to VA's GI Bill benefits, go to www.GIBILL.va.gov or contact VA directly at 1-888-GIBILL1 (or 1-888-442-4551).

For Your Calendar

Trees do more than you wood think!

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

Hersheypark invites Guard to day at park April 20

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

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

Hersheypark will be closed to the general public on this day.

To purchase your tickets you may:

Order from the e-ticketing link: <https://tickets.hersheypa.com/hersheypark/store.jsp?merchant=PANational#ceShop>, User name is paguard and password is hersheybar 2008.

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

Purple Heart Memorial of Union County to be dedicated

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

Great Adventure's Military Appreciation Day is May 17

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

Great Adventure Military Appreciation Day will be on Armed Forces Day, Saturday, **May 17**. There will be meal vouchers for \$9.50 each which can be used at six of the food vendors in the park. Tickets will be available for Great Adventure on April 15 in the State Family Programs Office. Tickets are good for the Theme Park and the Safari. The price of each ticket is \$20.

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

The Foundation for the National Guard Militia Museum of New Jersey invites everyone to support the First Annual Gala which will benefit the museum and its mission.

The Lawrenceville Armory is the setting for the gala on **May 17**. Tickets cost \$75 per person. Military personnel will pay \$50 for their tickets. Tables of 10 cost \$750 and include special recognition at the event. RSVP for the event has been extended to April 15.

Other ways to support the gala include –

Become an advertiser or booster sponsor in the gala's souvenir commemorative ad journal

Donate a gift or service that can be auctioned off during their Silent Auction or Live Auction during the event.

If you would like to purchase tickets, place an ad in the journal or have an item for the auctions, contact Bob Dennin at dennin@oponline.net or retired Col. Donald Kale at the Lawrenceville museum, 609-530-6802.

All proceeds from the event will directly benefit the museum. Your support of the event will help the museum to continue to tell the story of the military history in New Jersey, and the New Jersey Army and Air National Guard.

HRD presents seminars for training

From the desk of Paul Serdiuk, DMAVA Human Resources Division

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

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

May 15: Preventing Identity Theft – A representative from the Department of Banking

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

and Insurance will present a one hour overview on what you can do to prevent identity theft and what to do if you should become a victim of identity theft.

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

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

Military Training, Schools, Opportunities

RTS-Maintenance offers training to Army Guard members

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

Schoolhouse: Regional Training Site-Maintenance

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

School Code: 967

Unit Phone: 609-562-0566/0568

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

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

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

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

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

254th Regiment announces upcoming courses

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

Active Duty Training (ADT) Courses:

11B10 MOS-T Infantryman

May 3-17, 2008 - 34 openings

11B40 Infantryman ANCOG

June 7-21, 2008 - 31 openings

If you have any questions, contact Master Sgt. Gary Davidson, 732-974-5912 or gary.davidson@nj.ngb.army.mil.

QUOTES

*My failures
have been
errors in
judgment, not
of intent.*

- Ulysses S.
Grant

*Any fool can
criticize,
condemn and
complain and
most fools do.*

- Benjamin
Franklin

*I have learned
to use the
word
impossible
with the
greatest
caution.*

- Wernher von
Braun

*Only the
shallow know
themselves.*

- Oscar Wilde

*Truth is the
safest lie.*

- Yiddish
proverb

Honorable Mention

Use your mouse to find all sorts of things on DMAVA Web site

Have you taken the time to visit www.nj.gov/military lately?

You can find job announcements, publications, forms, information for families, information for veterans and information on both the New Jersey Army and Air Guard.

With a simple click of a mouse button, you can check out the most recent issues of DMAVA Highlights, Guardlife and Veterans Journal. Past issues are also archived on the Web site.

With another click, you can find blank DMAVA forms, TAG memorandums and policy letters and a variety of publications.

Another click gets you to the area where you can discover information on our three Veterans homes, the Doyle cemetery, the three war memorials we oversee, Veterans Haven, the medals we present to New Jersey combat veterans and more.

Two more clicks let you see all the benefits of joining the New Jersey Army and Air National Guard.

Click! Click! Click! You can find the pages on Family Support; Youth ChalleNGe; job announcements for state, federal, active Guard and Reserve; apply for a N.J. National Guard fishing license; look up the location of your local Veterans Service Office and so much more.

Take the time to visit the Web site that takes you around the New Jersey National Guard and Department of Military and Veterans Affairs; you will discover an abundance of information and assistance.

N.J. licenses, registration extended for deployed troops

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

Discounts offered for State employees

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

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

For the Families

Camp Noble Cause serving children, spouses of deployed Guard members

From the desk of Amanda Balas, State Youth Coordinator

Camp Noble Cause is a three day camping experience that will serve the children and spouses of the New Jersey National Guardsmen and women being deployed this summer. Our mission is to provide a no-cost summer camp experience, for a weekend of fun and camaraderie.

It will be held on **August 22-24** at Camp Winnebago, 102 Timberbrook Road, Rockaway, N.J., approximately 12 miles from Wayne. It is being hosted by the Scouts of the Patriot's Path Council, Boy Scouts of America and Operation Noble Cause.

All children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Overnight camping



capacity is limited to 300 and the day camp can accommodate an additional 200. Children must be old enough to tent camp comfortably to attend.

Planned activities include: mountain biking and nature walks, crafts, astronomy, shooting sports (archery, rifle, shot gun), rockwall climbing, waterfront activities (boating, swimming, fishing), Geocaching (GPS "hide and seek"), sports (softball, volleyball, basketball, soccer and more) and campfire activities.

A Web site is being created for registration and more information.

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 trosenthal@fsmc.org or 973-538-5260. We are privileged to work with you who have given so much for your country!

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.

Support for military children of deployed and injured Guard members

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

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

Program offers grant funds to spouses of deployed military

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

Applicants should contact Fawn Mutschler at 609-543-6200 ext. 325 or wocmilitarygrant@ymca-bc.org to obtain an application. In addition to the completed application form, applicants will also need to submit the following documentation: LES/paystub for applicant and spouse; statement of Financial Need (i.e. reason for

applying and how the grant will help); bill or pricing of expenditure as well as any other supporting information the applicant feels may be helpful. Additional information can be found at: www.state.nj.us/dca/dow/depmilspouseasst.shtml

YMCA Burlington County offers drop off program April 27

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

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

RSVP is a must, and there are 40 slots still available. RSVP must be done by 2 p.m., April 22. For more information or to RSVP, contact Amanda Balas, Youth Coordinator, 609-562-0742 or Amanda.balas@us.army.mil.

Honoring Military Children

From the desk of Amanda Balas, State Youth Coordinator

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

- April 19 – America Supports You! sand art make and take
- April 26 – Creative Hands foam make and take

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

Family Deployment Briefing schedule updated

The following is the updated Family Deployment Briefing Schedule presented by the Family Programs Office at various armories throughout New Jersey. Any family member that is interested in learning more about important information, who to contact and ways to cope through this upcoming deployment are welcomed to attend ANY of the briefs, no matter where the Soldier's home station is located, as all the information will be the same at every brief.

Children, ages three and up, are welcome to attend too! For more information, please contact your local Family Assistance Center by calling 1-888-859-0352.

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

**Any family that will be experiencing a deployment may attend ANY of the above briefs as all the information will be the same no matter where the Soldier's home station is located in the state. All youth are welcomed to attend. We will have established youth programs, in a separate area, for youth ages three and older.

4-H conference open to middle school students

From the desk of Amanda Balas, State Youth Coordinator

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

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

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

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

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

From the desk of Amanda Balas, State Youth Coordinator

Kids – come tour the Battle Lab – learn about flags, military jobs, weapon marksmanship, walk through the urban, desert and woodland fighting lanes and drive the virtual combat convoy trainer. On **June 7**, from 9:15 a.m. to noon, 20 slots are open for youths 10 and older to tour the Joint Training and Training Development Center (JT2DC) on Fort Dix. Parents may drop children off or walk through with the group. Hot dogs, chips and drinks fill the lunch time menu after the tour. Contact Amanda Balas to register for the tour at Amanda.balas@us.army.mil or 609-562-0742.

Packages of thanks for military kids

From the desk of Amanda Balas, State Youth Coordinator

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

Time is near to register for Purple Camps

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

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

Strong Bonds program helps strengthen relationships

From the desk of Marie Durling, Family Programs Specialist

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

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

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

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

Time is here to apply for Youth Camp

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

This year's youth camp will be held from **July 13-19** at the National Guard Training

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

Spend a weekend with your family at Great Wolf Lodge

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

Cost: \$250 tax included Sat-Sun
\$500 tax included-Fri-Sun

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

Happenings from the Teaneck FRG

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

Teaneck Family Readiness Group meeting dates are:

April 17 7 p.m.
May 15 7 p.m.

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

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

Now the U.S. Postal Service is making it easier for families to send care packages with a larger flat rate box and a special discount to FPO/ APO addresses. The new boxes can be used beginning March 3. They are 50 percent larger than the current flat rate box and can be sent to any domestic address for \$12.95. A special military version of the box will carry the "America Supports You" logo and can be shipped to any FPO/ APO address for \$10.95. The new Priority Mail Large Flat-Rate Box is "12 x 12" x 5½". For complete guidelines on mail services to military members overseas visit the USPS website at: <http://www.usps.com/supportingourtroops/welcome.htm?from=household&page=troopsupport>.

Federal grant for spouses of deployed military

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

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

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

Sports

Play ball - Veterans Appreciation Day with the Trenton Thunder

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

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

Come watch baseball at its best.

Jewish War Vets taking Guard members, family to baseball game

From the desk of Marie Durling, Family Programs Specialist

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

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

Send requested information to:

JWV

NJ Dept Commander Sidney Lichter

96 Franklin St

Verona NJ 07044-1923.

114th Regimental Association golf outing May 12

From the desk of Michele Daisey, Woodbury Family Assistance Center

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

The 1st Annual 114th Regimental Association Golf Outing will be held **May 12**, at the Pitman Golf Course, 501 Pitman Road, Sewell, NJ. Registration begins at 7:30 a.m., shotgun start at 9 a.m. with an 18-hole scramble format. The entry fee is \$95, cocktails and lunch is only \$45. There are also sponsorship opportunities available. For more information on the golf outing and sponsorship opportunities, contact: Horace MacAdams, Regimental Association Rep., 856-779-0610, exarmy@earthlink.com; Robert Nordaby, Regimental Assoc. Rep., 856-981-8338, RNordaby@verizon.net; or Karen Russell, FRG Fundraiser Rep., 856-430-0852, KGabby@hotmail.com.

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

Travel Help, Ideas

Armed Forces Vacation Club offers affordable lodging

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

Shades of Green offers Disney for military

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

One place to consider if Florida is one of your next vacation places is Shades of Green

in Orlando. Minutes from the Disney attractions, this resort is also close to golf, dining and other Florida attractions.

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

Scholarship, Education News

Quad A Scholarships Available

Scholarships from the Monmouth Chapter of the Army Aviation Association of America are available. The scholarships are available for military members of Quad A and their spouses, siblings, and children. (AAAA membership must have been activated on or before May 1, 2007).



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

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

Enlisted Association announces scholarships

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

Enlisted Association of the National Guard of New Jersey
ATTN: Scholarship Committee
3650 Saylor's Pond Road
Fort Dix, NJ 08640-7600

Prior recipients are not eligible to apply.

Education news for NJARNG

Education Services Brochure Booklet (ESB2)

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

G.I. Bill Notice of Basic Eligibility

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

American Legion offers scholarships, booklet on their Web site

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

Association News



Enlisted Association wants YOU!

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

The Enlisted Association National Guard-New Jersey is off to a good start for 2008 as we have realigned all the committees and filled both the

Executive Council and Committees with a cross section of Army and Air, uniformed and retirees, and several junior NCOs. Everyone appears to be enthused and pledges to support the Association in all its efforts. All we need now is for you to get on board as a member and bring your fellow soldiers and airmen with you.

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

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

NGANJ group life insurance available to members

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

Veterans Information

VA announces SGLI, VGLI premium reductions

WASHINGTON (April 7, 2008) - Veterans and military personnel with life insurance policies managed by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will see a reduction in their premiums, thanks to improved investment earnings and a reduction in non-combat claims.

The premium cuts affect military personnel covered by Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) and veterans covered by the Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI).

On July 1, 2008, the premiums for basic SGLI will be 6.5 cents per month for \$1,000 of coverage, down from 7 cents per month for \$1,000. This translates into a 7 percent savings.

Servicemembers with the maximum \$400,000 of coverage will see their monthly premium reduced from \$28 to \$26. Servicemembers are also covered against severe traumatic injury for an additional dollar each month.

The reduction in SGLI premiums is made possible by lower, non-combat-related claims and increases in investment earnings. VA officials believe this premium reduction will help maintain the nearly universal participation in the program.

VGLI provides renewable term policies for people after their discharges from the military. Veterans pay premiums according to their age for this coverage.

On July 1, 2008, VGLI premium rates will be reduced for veterans aged 30 to 64, who make up 85 percent of those insured under the program. Premium rates for those under age 30 are already competitive.

Premium reductions, ranging from 4 percent to 12 percent, are a result of fewer claims being received. The reductions will ensure that VGLI remains highly competitive with similar insurance offered by commercial insurers.

More than 2.4 million people currently participate in the VA-managed SGLI program, with another 433,000 in VGLI.

To obtain more information about the SGLI and VGLI premium reductions or to view a table with the new VGLI rates, visit the VA insurance Web site at www.insurance.va.gov, or call the Office of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance at 1-800-419-1473.

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.

DMAVA Veterans Outreach Campaign continues

The DMAVA Veterans Outreach Campaign continues with kiosk displays at selected malls throughout New Jersey. The schedule is as follows:

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

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

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

- ❖ June 5-6, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. – Elks State Convention
- ❖ June 11-13, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. – American Legion State Convention
- ❖ June 18-20, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. – VFW State Convention

N.J. Vietnam Veterans Memorial

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

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

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

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

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

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

