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September/October 2009
Volume 1 • Issue 5

National Guard Soldier & Family

FOUNDATIONS

Notes from

MG and Mrs. Raymond
W. Carpenter, Acting
Director, Army National
Guard



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WE ALL SERVE



Jim Ainsworth of Nevada ESGR and Mike Williams, Operations Vice President of Nevada based REMSA, with employees and U.S. Army National Guardsmen Specialist Tyler Teese, Sergeant Steve Park, Sergeant Kevin Basta, Sergeant Nich Hammond, and Specialist Mike Roen.

**ARMY NATIONAL GUARD * ARMY RESERVE * NAVY RESERVE * MARINE RESERVE
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We all serve. Whether serving our communities or our country, members of the National Guard and Reserve depend on their military units, families, and employers for support. Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve is a Department of Defense agency that seeks to promote a culture in which all American employers support and value the military service of their employees by recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of the law and resolving conflict through mediation.



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Meet couples who find strength in the face of deployment.

“I try to talk to them every day about the deployment, and ask them for their opinion on what’s happening.”

—MICHELLE SPURGEON

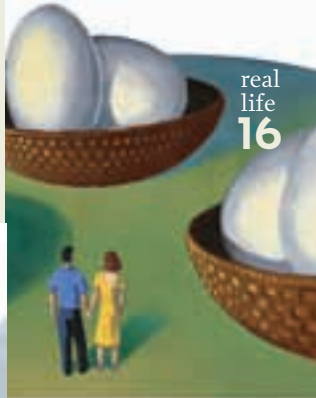
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“Families make a tremendous sacrifice, too ...”

As the deputy editor of *Foundations*, I have the opportunity to hear phenomenal stories of military courage and dedication. What makes these stories so special is that they come from you—the Family members of Soldiers.

I receive stories about deployments, homecomings and the importance of community support, but nothing is as inspiring as the letters I receive from Guard children explaining their love and admiration for their deployed parents. I don't come from a military background, so these letters provide me with a vivid picture of the sacrifices you make.

Our mission at *Foundations* is twofold: to tell these inspiring stories, and to provide Families with information on the many resources available—resources that can help you remain strong and resilient.

Foundations understands that Guard Families serve, too, and the Guard is dedicated to ensuring that Families not only endure, but thrive.

In this issue's Above and Beyond section, you will read the words of Guard children displaying wisdom beyond their years. They explain how their support for their deployed parents keeps the Family connected and how communication—through email, care packages and phone calls—enables them to stay resilient during a long separation.

In our feature, three Guard spouses detail their experiences and offer advice on how to handle the pre-, during and post-deployment phases.

Words cannot express my appreciation for your sacrifices.

If you have suggestions or comments, please contact me at Editor@GuardFoundations.com. I need your feedback to make *Foundations* an even greater resource for Guard Families.

Fred D. McGhee II
Deputy Editor



ILT Bradley and Taryn Pray rely on each other, friends and Family to endure deployment.

PHOTO BY
CHRISTIAN
ANDERSON

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Dear Soldiers, Families and Friends of the Army National Guard,

In my 40-plus years in the Army National Guard, I've seen our nation challenged in unimaginable ways—including the attacks of 9/11 and the devastating wake left by Hurricane Katrina.

But true to the adage, we find out what we are made of during the tough times. And you, our Army National Guard Soldiers, rise to the occasion—and beyond it—every time. Without hesitation, you unfailingly put the well-being of your community and country above your own, adopting the spirit of selfless service not just as an Army Value, but also as a way of life.

I believe it is more than duty that compels us to serve; it is inspiration. Inspiration that stems from knowing our service holds this great country together and our deeds ensure the continuation of peace, safety and freedom for Americans, now and always.

I know I could not have chosen a better path in life than serving in the Army National Guard. I hope you feel the same, because everyone in this historic organization is making a profound difference.

Thank you and best wishes,



Major General Raymond W. Carpenter, Acting Director
Army National Guard

When I learned *Foundations* was not solely for Soldiers, but their Families as well, I was thrilled. Such inclusion acknowledges what spouses, parents, siblings and children of Soldiers have always known: We serve, too. And we are proud of this service, because we know our support and encouragement are a big part of both our Soldiers' individual capabilities to grow professionally and their overall ability to better serve the country.

Never underestimate the importance of your role in the Army National Guard. While the duties for Soldiers are very different throughout the ranks, the job of the Family is always the same—providing love and support in whatever way necessary and through whatever means available. Oh, and something else I learned from years of experience: Keep your sense of humor! Laughing together is a great way to strengthen your bond, keep your spirits high, and stay resilient.

Thanks to all the Soldiers and Families for your commitment to America. We are all in this together.

Mrs. Mary Carpenter

Who Is Your Hero?

Intro By FRED MCGHEE II

Foundations magazine asked members of the 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team to tell us about their hero—the person who motivated them to serve their country. These Soldiers, who are currently deployed in Iraq, were more than willing to explain.

Their answers were enlightening and inspiring, exhibiting the qualities we've come to expect from our Citizen-Soldiers. It's our honor to share their letters with you.



My hero is more of an idea than an actual person. I look up to the people who go about their business quietly and make our country work, civilians and military included. It's the people who take adversity in stride that impress me the most. I have a huge sense of obligation to those people, and my service is my thanks to those people.

SSG Richard Morris, Company B, 86th Military Intelligence Brigade, Colorado Army National Guard

My hero is the late CW5 Michael Moore. He inspired me to join the Guard after spending four years out of the military following four years of active duty.

I was an air traffic controller with the FAA when Moore flew into my airfield and said, "We could really use a guy like you in our unit." I ended up serving for 18 more years.

Moore was in the military 38 years. He was the most senior pilot in the Colorado Guard. He was the chief instructor and mentor, and trained everyone who flew in the Colorado Guard aviation. He talked to everybody, from private to general. No one was below him. And when he talked to you, he made you feel important.

He passed away about a year ago. He was still in the Guard. He believed in the Guard. He made me feel like they really wanted me, really needed me.

CW2 Darryl Della Rossa, 86th Military Intelligence Brigade, Colorado Army National Guard



There are many people I look up to for different reasons, but one person that stands out as my influence for joining the West Virginia Army National Guard is my grandpa. He served 17 years in the 1/150th ARS, and I can remember how proud I was as a young boy to say that my grandpa served in the military. I've always looked up to him, as he taught me the value and benefits of hard work and determination. In him, I could see the strength, leadership and sense of pride that the military instills in a Soldier.

It makes me proud to know I can follow in his footsteps and make a difference in the world, as well as in my community, through my military service.

SPC David Martin III, 1/150th Armored Reconnaissance Squadron, West Virginia Army National Guard



My hero is my 6th-grade math teacher, Mr. James Hardy. I would see him outside doing

Physical Training every afternoon at a football field, and I asked him one day what he was doing. He explained that he needed to stay in shape because he was in the National Guard. I really respected his devotion and discipline. He was one of my favorite teachers. He always treated students fairly and with respect. He was very professional.

SPC James Britt, Company A, 252nd CAB, 30 HBCR, North Carolina Army National Guard

My hero is my father, Robert Jones. I lost him to cancer when I was about 10. After losing him, we used to receive his Veteran mail, which I often read while growing up. My senior year in high school, I decided to follow in his footsteps and join the Army.

I had a very enjoyable active duty career until I got married and had to choose a path that did not involve the military.

After 15 years, I wanted to make a difference in Iraq, so I returned to the military. After joining the Guard, I was privileged to serve under SFC James Masey, who inspired me to extend for additional years and strive for 20 years of service.

I now enjoy holding up my end of the obligation by serving here in Iraq for our country's cause.

SSG Lionel Jones, HHT, 1/150th Armored Reconnaissance Squadron, West Virginia Army National Guard



Darwin Harper, my head basketball and assistant football coach at Bertie High School, is truly a hero to me.

Coach Harper wore many hats: coach, teacher, mentor, father figure. It seemed like a day never passed that he didn't share meaningful life experiences or quotes with us. One that stood out was, "Look, and you will see something; listen, and you will hear something."



There is never a time when I see my former teammates that we don't share something that Coach Harper inspired in us. He purposely instilled in us the Army values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage. Several seniors joined the Army National Guard.

Coach passed the "baton of values" to many, and it's up to us to pass it on to others.

MAJ Calvin R. Moore, HHC, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, North Carolina Army National Guard

COURTESY OF READERS



How has the Guard changed your life? We want to hear from you!

Email your answer to Editor@GuardFoundations.com, and it could appear in the next issue of *Foundations*.



Sky's the Limit:

CPT Kirk E. Regina of the Maryland National Guard shows off his OH-58 helicopter to campers at the Homefront Challenge camp.

always ready, always willing

Maryland National Guard is on a Mission to Help Guard Families

Story and Photos Courtesy of Maryland Army National Guard

The mission of the Maryland National Guard's Family Readiness Program (FRP) is to establish ongoing communication, involvement, support and recognition between members of the Maryland National Guard and their Families in a partnership that promotes the best for both.

The full-time staff of FRP handles questions and concerns from any member of the Guard Family, or any other military Service Member. The teams are trained and equipped specifically to provide resources to assist with health, financial and legal issues, with a particular focus on Families of deployed Service Members.

One of the major ongoing accomplishments of the FRP is the teamwork in conjunction with the Reintegration Office to facilitate the Yellow Ribbon Program. Soldiers of the Maryland National Guard who deploy and return home face incredible challenges—the stress of separation from loved ones; the stress of being deployed; and the stress of trying to establish a new norm in all respects, including relationships and civilian careers.

The June 2007 report of the Department of Defense Mental Health Task Force found that 49 percent of National Guard members reported psychological problems at 90 to 120 days after redeployment. Additionally, within

Members of the Reintegration Team meet face-to-face with every returning Maryland National Guard member 30, 60 and 90 days after his or her return.

* * *



12 months, 10 to 25 percent suffered from clinically significant post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and 20 percent planned to separate or divorce within the same 12-month period following this return from combat.

The Maryland National Guard developed its Reintegration Office to educate and provide resources to every combat Veteran and their Family for a safe, healthy and successful reintegration into their Family, community, school and job following deployment.


Members of the Reintegration Team meet face-to-face with returning Maryland National Guard members 30, 60 and 90 days after their return. They attend reintegration events along with their Families, loved ones or significant others.

The events are held at local hotels, where they receive education, training and professional assistance to cope with potential issues that may await them throughout the deployment cycle.

The Maryland National Guard also runs five Family Assistance Centers located regionally across Maryland. They are spread across the state to give full coverage to Guard Families near Baltimore, Towson, Annapolis, Hagerstown and Essex.

Individual military unit commanders also operate Family Readiness Groups (FRGs) throughout the state. The FRP provides training to FRGs and commanders throughout the year. The State Workshop in Solomons, MD,

provided training to FRGs, commanders and volunteers on topics including connecting with volunteers from various generations, understanding issues affecting parents of single Service Members and utilizing resources across the state.

A Youth Symposium was held in conjunction with the State Workshop in March, and a youth camp called the Homefront Challenge was held this summer at Rock State Park, Harford County. In addition, the State Youth Coordinator is responsible for educating teachers and counselors about what it's like to be a military child and the potential effects deployments can have on their school-work and interpersonal relationships. 

Attention!:
BG James A. Adkins, the adjutant general for Maryland, talks to campers at the Maryland National Guard's Child and Youth Program for children of National Guard members.



For more information, contact the Maryland Family Programs office at (410) 576-2992. Go to www.Md.ngb.army.mil and click on "Family Members."

Attention, Soldiers and Families!

Below is information regarding programs and services available in your state.

Please check each issue for updates.

Alaska

www.guardfamily.org
(907) 428-6680

- Sept. 1** School District Presentations, Fairbanks
- Sept. 1** School District Presentations, Anchorage
- Sept. 3-4** Victim Advocate Training, Anchorage
- Sept. 12-13** Strong Bonds for Couples (8 Habits), Anchorage
- Sept. 25** Friday Film Night, National Guard Armory Drill Hall at Fort Richardson, Juneau
- Oct. 10** Yellow Ribbon 30-Day Post-Deployment Reintegration Event, Anchorage
- Oct. 14-19** Alaska Days, Sitka
- Oct. 30** Friday Film Night, National Guard Armory Drill Hall at Fort Richardson, Juneau

Friday Film Nights are a chance for all National Guard Families to come together and share in free pizza, snacks, drinks and a Family film. Crafts and other entertainment for those not interested in the movie are also available. This is a great opportunity for parents to have some adult time while the kids are watching a movie!

Florida

www.floridaguard.army.mil, click on "Programs," then "Family Programs"
(904) 823-0360

- Sept. 11-13** Strong Bonds for Couples Workshop (Enrichment), Ft. Lauderdale
- Sept. 12** Yellow Ribbon Pre-Deployment Event for the 2/124th IBCT, Eustis
- Sept. 12** Yellow Ribbon Pre-Deployment Event for the 2/124th IBCT, Orlando
- Sept. 20** Yellow Ribbon Pre-Deployment Event for the 2/124th IBCT, Ft. Lauderdale
- Sept. 27** Yellow Ribbon Pre-Deployment Event for the 2/124th IBCT, Ft. Lauderdale
- Oct. 2-4** Yellow Ribbon 30-Day Post-Deployment Reintegration Event for the 256th ASMC, Jacksonville

Georgia

www.gahro.com/familyprogram
(678) 569-5065

- Sept. 19** Yellow Ribbon Pre-Deployment Event, Swainsboro

Hawaii

www.guardfamily.org
(808) 672-1442

- Sept. 20** Yellow Ribbon 30-Day Post-Deployment Reintegration Event, Oahu
- Sept. 26-27** Yellow Ribbon 30-Day Post-Deployment Reintegration Event, Island of Hawaii
- Oct. 3** Yellow Ribbon 30-Day Post-Deployment Reintegration Event, Maui
- Oct. 4** Yellow Ribbon 30-Day Post-Deployment Reintegration Event, Kauai

Indiana

www.in.ng.mil, click on "Family Programs"
(317) 247-3192

- Sept. 11-13** Strong Bonds Couples Retreat, Indianapolis
- Sept. 17** Indiana National Guard Relief Fund Golf Outing, Greenwood
- Sept. 25-27** Strong Bonds Couples Retreat, Indianapolis

Iowa

www.iowanationalguard.com/family
(515) 252-4416

- Sept. 26** Family Readiness Group Youth Separation and Grief Training Event, Des Moines
- Sept. 26** Yellow Ribbon Pre-Deployment Event, Des Moines
- Oct. 3** Yellow Ribbon 30-Day Post-Deployment Reintegration Event, Waterloo
- Oct. 24** Yellow Ribbon 60-Day Post-Deployment Reintegration Event, Waterloo

The Iowa National Guard Services Branch, in partnership with the Military Child Education Coalition, will be offering a Family Readiness Group one-day training for those interested in learning more about supporting youth and teens through grief, trauma and separation. For more information, please contact Jeremy Van Wyk, State Youth and Teen Coordinator at (800) 294-6607 ext. 4040.

Kentucky

www.dma.ky.gov/ng/family
(502) 607-1555

- Oct. 23-25** Strong Bonds for Couples (Enrichment), Louisville

Maine

www.guardfamily.org
(207) 626-4410

- Sept. 11-12** Yellow Ribbon 60-Day Post-Deployment Reintegration Event, Rockwood
- Nov. 7-8** Yellow Ribbon 30-Day Pre-Deployment Event, Rockwood
- Nov. 21-22** Yellow Ribbon 30-Day Pre-Deployment Event, Rockwood

Massachusetts

<http://states.ng.mil/sites/ma/pages/default.aspx>
(508) 233-7222

- Sept. 12-13** Yellow Ribbon Pre-Deployment Event, Taunton
- Oct. 19-20** Military Children Education Coalition (MCEC) presents Supporting Children in the National Guard and Reserve Institute (GRI), Taunton
- Oct. 21-22** Military Children Education Coalition (MCEC) presents Living in the New Normal (LINN), Taunton

The MCEC™ fosters a compassionate understanding among educational professionals and military child and youth specialists regarding the intensity and severity of stressors related to the deployment of a parent or parents and the potential for trauma or grief related to illness, injury or death. LINN supports and promotes an environment of resilience and non-victimization, establishment of a new normal, recognition of the elements of courage, and identification of effective resources.

Michigan

www.michigan.gov/dmva, click on “Michigan National Guard”
(517) 481-8361

- Sept. 12-13** Yellow Ribbon Pre-Deployment Event, Taylor
- Sept. 25-27** Yellow Ribbon 45-Day Post-Deployment Reintegration Event, Lansing

The Lansing Reintegration Event is a two-day workshop offered approximately 45 days after a unit’s return. This event is hosted at a hotel and offers adult breakout sessions and youth and child programs. Adult workshop topics include: Reintegration and Work, Anger Management, Peer Reintegration Support groups, Family Stress and Communication, and Welcome Back Parenting just to name a few. We also have approximately 12 vendors that attend to provide additional resources. The child and youth programs are supported by Operation Military Kids, Military Family Life Consultants and the State Youth Coordinator.

Minnesota

www.MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/Families
(651) 268-8200

- Sept. 3** Primary School Staff Training, Isanti
- Sept. 7** Military Day at the State Fair, Falcon Heights
- Sept. 11** Tee it up for the Troops, Mendota Heights
- Sept. 11-13** Strong Bonds for Couples Workshop, Minneapolis/St. Paul
- Sept. 19** Yellow Ribbon Monthly Reintegration Training, St. Paul
- Sept. 20** World Record Flag Line, Camp Ripley, Little Falls
- Oct. 19** Community Based Warrior Transition Unit (CBWTU) Conference, Minneapolis/St. Paul

Mississippi

www.guardfamily.org
(601) 313-6379

- Sept. 11-13** Strong Bonds for Couples (Laugh Your Way to a Better Marriage), Meridian
- Sept. 11-13** Strong Bonds for Couples Workshop, Olive Branch
- Sept. 12-13** Yellow Ribbon 60-Day Post-Deployment Event, 1/204th ADA, Jackson

The deployment events will include topics of discussion such as staying connected throughout long-term separations, coping with deployments (sessions for adults and children), financial readiness and taking care of yourself so you can care for others. Childcare and youth activities will be provided.

Missouri

www.moguard.com/familyreadiness
(573) 638-9827

- Sept. 11-13** National Guard Family Team Building, Lake Ozark

Montana

www.montanaguardfamily.org
(406) 324-3239

- Oct. 23-25** Family Readiness Group Youth Leadership Retreat, Great Falls

This is an annual opportunity for highly involved volunteers with Family Readiness and Youth Programs to enhance their skills through Team Building and Professional Development.

Nebraska

www.NeGuard.com/Familyassistance
1-800-432-6778

- Sept. 1** Adult Emotional Support Groups, Kearney
- Sept. 22** Adult Emotional Support Groups, McCook

- Sept. 24 Adult Emotional Support Groups, O'Neill
- Sept. 29 Adult Emotional Support Groups, Lincoln
- Oct. 15 Yellow Ribbon Pre-Deployment Event, Lincoln
- Oct. 25 Yellow Ribbon 60-Day Post-Deployment Reintegration Event, Kearney

Nevada

www.nv.ngb.army.mil/family.cfm
(775) 887-7346

- Sept. 11 Yellow Ribbon 180-Day Pre-Deployment Event, 45th OSA, Washoe County Armory
- Sept. 12 Yellow Ribbon 30-Day Post-Deployment Event, Embedded Training Team, Las Vegas
- Sept. 12 Military Fun Run, Reno
- Sept. 19 Yellow Ribbon 30-Day Pre-Deployment Event, 168th Aviation, Washoe County Armory
- Oct. 4 Yellow Ribbon 360-Day Post-Deployment Event, 72nd Military Police, Henderson County Armory
- Oct. 4 Retiree Appreciation Day/Ceremony, Carson City
- Oct. 10 Yellow Ribbon 60-Day Post-Deployment Event, Embedded Training Team, Las Vegas

New Hampshire

www.guardfamily.org
(603) 225-1340

- Sept. 12-13 Yellow Ribbon Pre-Deployment Event, Meredith
- Sept. 18-20 Yellow Ribbon Post-Deployment Reintegration Seminar, Meredith

New York

www.dnna.state.ny.us/family/famredi.php
(518) 786-4525

- Sept. 12-13 Strong Bonds for Couples Workshop (Enrichment), Westchester
- Sept. 18-20 Strong Bonds for Couples Workshop (Enrichment), Saratoga
- Sept. 18-20 Family Program Volunteer and Youth Symposium, Saratoga
- Sept. 18-20 Yellow Ribbon Hybrid Event, Latham
- Sept. 19-20 Strong Bonds for Couples Workshop (Enrichment), Lake George
- Sept. 26-27 Operation Military Kids Cosmic Camp, Buffalo

The Yellow Ribbon Hybrid Event is designed for redeployed Soldiers who have not attended the 30- or 60-day Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Events for their redeployed units. This event will provide redeployed Soldiers with the information and resources necessary to assist them and their Families with the reintegration process.

North Dakota

www.guardfamily.org
(701) 333-2058

- Sept. 11-13 Strong Bonds for Couples (Marriage Relationship Enrichment), Medora
- Sept. 17-19 Strong Bonds for Couples (Premarital Interpersonal Choices and Knowledge), Fargo

Located on North Dakota's famous Family resort, the Marriage Relationship Enhancement retreat is designed to assist couples with effective communication skills and tools. It is an outstanding program that attempts to give tools to National Guard couples that will result in fewer broken marriages and ultimately more prepared units. The training assists couples with reintegration and reunion in particular.

Ohio

www.ong.ohio.gov/family
(614) 336-7352

- Sept. 12 Reduced Admissions for Military Families at the Zoo, Akron
- Sept. 19-20 Troop and Teen Camp, Clarksville
- Sept. 25-27 Troop and Family Camp, Oregonia

The Troop and Family Camp was designed to provide an opportunity for the whole Family to spend a fun-filled weekend together strengthening ties and building camaraderie with other military Families.

Oklahoma

www.ok.ngb.army.mil/famprog
(405) 228-5843

- Sept. 11 Yellow Ribbon Job Fair, Tulsa
- Sept. 12-13 Yellow Ribbon 90-Day Post-Deployment Reintegration/PDHRA Event, Oklahoma City
- Sept. 18-30 Strong Bonds for Couples (Enrichment), Oklahoma City
- Sept. 19 Yellow Ribbon 30-Day Post-Deployment Reintegration Event, Lawton
- Sept. 26 Yellow Ribbon 30-Day Post-Deployment Reintegration Event, Enid
- Sept. 27 Yellow Ribbon 30-Day Post-Deployment Reintegration Event, Weatherford
- Oct. 3 138th Fighter Wing Family Day, Tulsa
- Oct. 17 Yellow Ribbon 60-Day Post-Deployment Reintegration Event, Enid
- Oct. 24 Yellow Ribbon 60-Day Post-Deployment Reintegration Event, Lawton
- Oct. 25 Yellow Ribbon 60-Day Post-Deployment Reintegration Event, Oklahoma City

Oklahoma National Guard's Yellow Ribbon 90-Day Reintegration Event is coupled with the Post-Deployment Health Reassessment (PDHRA). Service Members are provided with an opportunity to complete the PDHRA process and attend the final Reintegration event. The Veteran's Administration is available to register all Service Members and educate them and their Families about the benefits offered. For more information, log on and register at www.GuardFamily.org or call the toll free number (866) 649-6031.

Pennsylvania

www.guardfamily.org
(717) 861-0676

- Sept. 11-13** Strong Bonds for Couples Workshop (Enrichment), Scranton

Strong Bonds Weekend Retreat is facilitated by Chaplains where you'll gain practical, useful information based on a world-class curriculum developed from years of research. In small groups, you'll participate in activities that renew bonds with your peers. And, as a couple, you'll practice communication and relationship-building skills.

South Carolina

www.scgard.com/family
(803) 806-1750

- Sept. 27** Yellow Ribbon Pre-Deployment Family Briefing for the 1/178th FA, Clinton
- Oct. 3** Yellow Ribbon Pre-Deployment Family Briefing for the 1/178th FA, Hemmingway
- Oct. 3-4** Yellow Ribbon Pre-Deployment SRP Training, McCrady
- Oct. 4** Yellow Ribbon Pre-Deployment Family Briefing for the 1/178th FA, Manning
- Oct. 9** Yellow Ribbon Pre-Deployment Family Briefing for the 2/263rd ADA, Anderson
- Oct. 9-11** Yellow Ribbon Pre-Deployment SRP Training, McCrady

South Dakota

www.guardfamily.org
(605) 737-6728

- Sept. 4-5** Strong Bonds for Couples Workshop (Enrichment), Sioux Falls
- Oct. 24** Basic and Advanced Family Readiness Volunteer Training, Sioux Falls

This training session covers topics like Family Readiness Groups, Telephone Trees, newsletter and Family Readiness Group funds and fundraising. Recommended for all levels of volunteers. Military members are welcome.

Texas

www.agd.state.tx.us
(800) 252-8032

- Sept. 12** Yellow Ribbon Pre-Deployment Event, San Antonio
- Oct. 10** Yellow Ribbon Pre-Deployment Event, Austin

During this Yellow Ribbon event Families will receive briefings on benefits and services available to them and on personnel actions required by their Service Member prior to deployment, such as wills, power of attorney, I.D. cards and TRICARE.

Vermont

www.vtguard.com/famread
(802) 338-3391

- Sept. 12** Adjutant General's BBQ and Vermont Remembers Annual 10K Run, Colchester
- Oct. 13-14** Living in the New Normal (LINN) Community Engagement Forum, Montpelier

Virginia

<http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil>
(434) 298-5551

- Sept. 10** Regional Military Family Workshop, Farmville
- Sept. 17** Regional Military Family Workshop, Mechanicsville
- Oct. 6** Regional Military Family Workshop, Fredericksburg
- Oct. 22** Regional Military Family Workshop, Emporia
- Nov. 12** Regional Military Family Workshop, Farmville

Washington

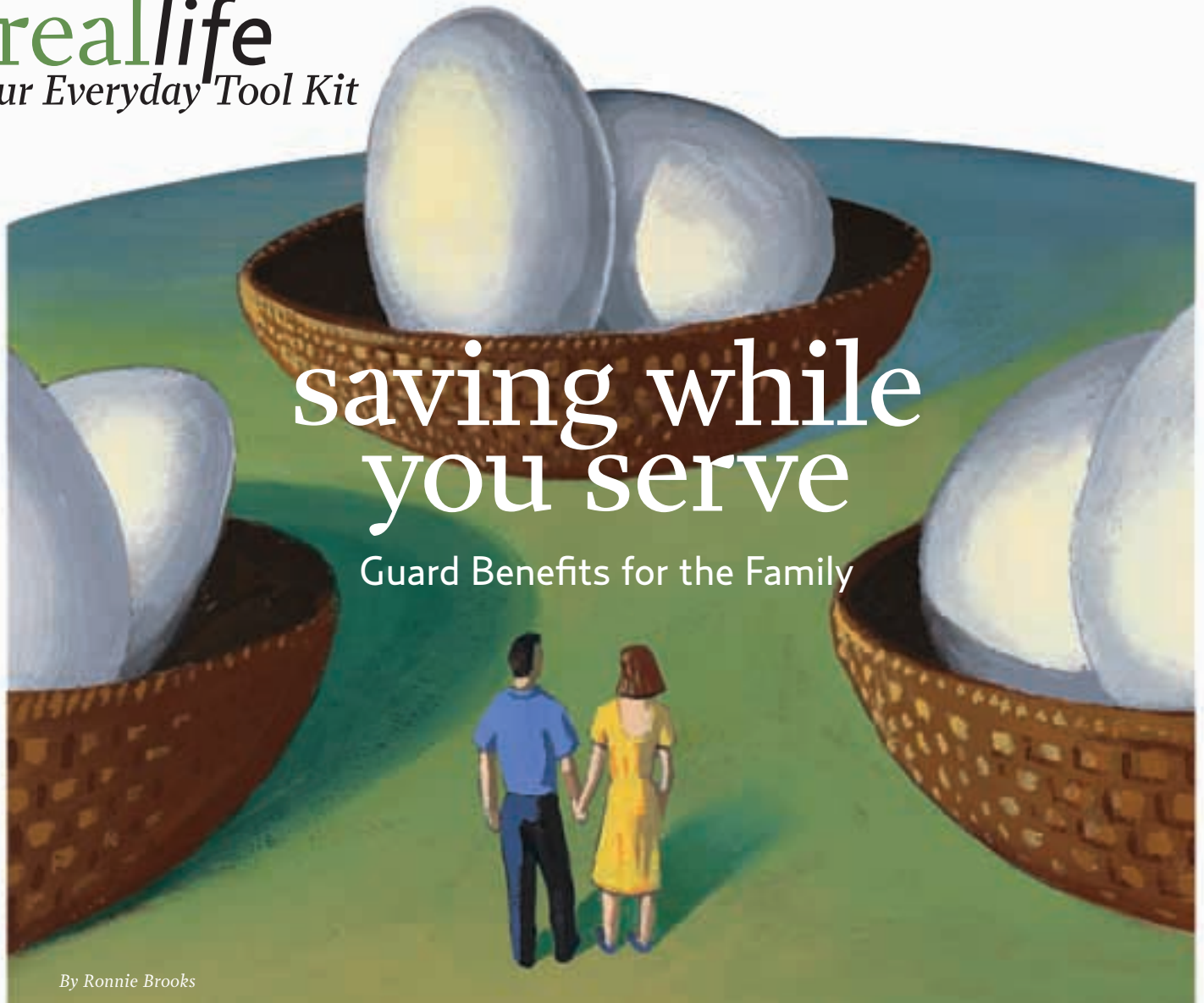
www.guardfamily.org
(253) 512-7600

- Sept. 11-13** Family Readiness Group Post-Deployment Event, Tacoma

The unit has returned from a deployment ... now what? This workshop will focus on the role of the Family Readiness Group when the unit returns. Many are under the impression that there is no need for an FRG when the unit is here, when in fact the FRG is always needed.



Don't see your state here?
Let us know what events or programs are benefiting your Soldiers. Email Editor@GuardFoundations.com.



By Ronnie Brooks

saving while you serve

Guard Benefits for the Family

As the Family member of a Soldier, you are entitled to Guard benefits. From college tuition to home loan assistance, the Guard provides many valuable services that will make your life easier and save you money.

Installation Discounts

National Guard members and Families can enjoy privileges at military installations around the world. Benefits include tax-free unlimited discount shopping at any Military Exchange (department store) and commissary (grocery store).

And that's not all. Check out these other perks (may vary from base to base):

- * Discount lodging, cabins and campsites (available on most installations)
- * Camping equipment and sports activity gear for loan or rent
- * Craft, automotive and hobby shops, with tools and space to work on personal projects

Health Insurance

Military members and Families can purchase inexpensive health insurance from TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS). Additional information is also available at your Guard unit's personnel office.

Life Insurance

Low-cost life insurance plans are available for Guard members and their Families. The insurance plan offered to Guard members is the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI), which provides coverage for Guard members 24/7. Here are some additional details:

- * Soldiers are eligible for up to \$400,000 of insurance.
- * Smaller amounts of coverage are available.
- * Coverage is available through age 60, upon receipt of your first retirement check or 120 days after a Soldier's ETS.
- * Family coverage is available through Family

Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (FSGLI). This program is available to spouses and dependent children of Soldiers insured under the SGLI program.

- * FSGLI provides up to a maximum of \$100,000 of insurance coverage for spouses (not to exceed the SGLI amount of the insured member)
- * Family coverage provides \$10,000 for dependent children
- * Spousal coverage is issued in increments of \$10,000; coverage costs vary among plans

Financial Benefits

Veterans Administration (VA) Home Loans—Guard members may be eligible for home loans from the Veterans Administration with minimal or no down payment. VA loans make buying a home easier financially, and are available for purchases and refinances. A VA loan eliminates the home buyer's need to make a down payment and purchase private mortgage insurance for homes up to \$359,650.

VA-guaranteed loans are made by private lenders, such as banks, savings and loans, or mortgage companies to eligible Veterans for the purchase of their own personal home, which must be for occupancy. To obtain a loan, a Veteran must apply to a lender. If the loan is approved, the VA will guarantee a portion of it to the lender. This guarantee protects the lender against loss up to the amount guaranteed and allows a Veteran to obtain favorable financing terms.

Qualified Veterans need to obtain a certificate of eligibility from the VA, or your lender may be able to obtain one for you online. Members with six or more years of Guard service, or those with 90 days of continuous federal active duty service (Title 10), are eligible for the "VA Home Loan Insurance Program." Explore your options online at HomeLoans.va.gov.

Federal Retirement Plan—You may not be thinking about retirement for many years, but consider this: The Guard can continue to pay you every month after you've finished serving. Considering that retirement will probably mean time to travel, play or even start a business, financial security would be a nice part of your plan.

And it's a pretty simple plan. According to National Guard Bureau figures, if a Soldier were to retire at the rank of E-7 (Sgt. 1st Class) following 20 years of service (four years of active duty and 16 years in the Guard), their estimated monthly retirement pay will be \$1,825, starting at age 60.

This is on top of any benefits from your civilian career. You'll still receive those and any other retirement funds you may have coming. So, you can see how it all adds up. Serving part-time in the National Guard is like money in the bank.

State Benefits—As a Guard member, you serve a dual mission: You're a member of the only military branch that answers the call for both federal and state missions. Many states and territories offer their own incentives in addition to the benefits available from federal programs. To find out more about state benefits, contact your local recruiter.

Guard Education Benefits

For Guard Members:

- * Federal Tuition Assistance—up to \$4,500 per fiscal year (Oct-Sept)
- * Montgomery G.I. Bill—additional \$329 monthly allowance paid directly to the Soldier for books, supplies or other expenses
- * Army National Guard Kicker—another \$350 per month for living expenses
- * Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP)—can pay up to \$50,000 in student loans

The *ARNG Education Benefits Handbook*, available from your Education Services Office, provides information regarding the GI Bill, Education Assistance and Examination Programs. The *Guide to Paying for Your College Education*, available from your recruiting office, also lists state-specific benefits available to Guard Soldiers in addition to these federal benefits. Check with your state Education Services Office or recruiter for details and eligibility.


Spouses-to-Teachers:

This program is currently available to military spouses in six pilot states—California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Texas and Virginia. The Spouses-to-Teachers program provides funding and support services to allow Guard spouses to obtain their teaching license.

Also, the Department of Defense (DoD) recently released information regarding its policy for transferring educational benefits to the spouses and children of Service Members under the Post 9/11 GI Bill, which took effect Aug. 1, 2009.

"This is as it should be in a volunteer force where Families also serve," said Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Military Personnel Policy Bill Carr. "Transferability of G.I. Bill benefits is the most requested initiative we receive from our Service Members, and we believe it will assist us in retaining highly qualified military personnel."

The bottom line is, career Service Members on active duty or in the selected reserve who are eligible for the Post 9/11 GI Bill may be entitled to transfer all or a portion of their education entitlement to one or more Family members.

To be eligible, Service Members must have served in the Armed Forces for at least six years, and agree to serve four additional years, from the date of election to transfer. 

* Information for this article courtesy of www.NATIONALGUARD.com. Payment amounts, benefits and terms may change. To discuss in greater detail, contact your local recruiter.

back to school

Keeping the Kids Focused for Fall

By SUMMER HUGGINS

As the fall begins, you're sure to hear a few groans and moans from the children in your house who are now back in school. Here are a few tips to keep in mind that might make their transition a smooth one.

For Younger Kids

Establish a Routine

At home and at school, teachers and education professionals agree that routine and structure are important.

"Routines play a huge role during the day for us at school and should at home, too," says Katie Goodchild, third-grade teacher at Lake Bluff Elementary School in Lake Bluff, IL. "Children need structure, something they can count on."

Goodchild posts a schedule of events and lessons in her classroom each day. The students expect it and keep a close eye on it.

"It's funny," she says, "if I forget to change something like the date or put up 'music' instead of 'Spanish,' they catch it almost the moment they walk in the door. It shows me that the

schedule is the first thing they look at each day. They need the security of having it there."

The Comforts of Home

Many educators also encourage a little bit of love from home to make a student—especially a younger one—feel comfortable at school.

A nice note of encouragement in their lunchbox or a picture of a favorite pet taped inside a social studies folder will provide great comfort as they ease into their environment away from home.

For Older Kids

Continued Learning

Learning shouldn't occur just within the confines of a classroom.

"The schedule is the first thing they look at each day. *They need the security of having it there.*"

—KATIE GOODCHILD, third-grade teacher



There are a few things that can be done to help high-schoolers.

"The best thing a parent can do is keep the idea of school in the air at home," says Debra Larson, lead Advanced Placement English teacher, Ysleta ISD and Bel Air High School, El Paso, TX. "Many classes have summer projects or reading that must be done for the upcoming year. Make sure you know the requirements, as few high school students will offer the information voluntarily."

Learning can be done outside the home as well. "Go to the zoo, the museums in the area or even visit a local college library," Larson says. "Watching TV is a primary activity for kids, so require them to watch at least one educational program each day."

Parental Involvement

Your high school student might never admit it, but they still need



How was your day?

4 questions to ask your children about their school day

NINE TIMES OUT OF 10 when you ask your children how their day at school was, they will reply: "Fine."

Instead, ask them questions that require more than one-word answers. Here are four to consider that will get the after-school conversation rolling:

What was the...

- **MESSIEST THING** you did in school today?
- **LAST THING** you did before you left school?
- **MOST INTERESTING** thing you learned today?
- **BEST THING** about your day?

and want you to be involved.


"Student success is a direct result of active parental participation in their education, regardless of grade level," Larson says.

Larson suggests requiring a reasonable bedtime and a time to be up in the morning.

Looking Ahead

Once students reach high school, they begin to plan their life after graduation. Larson suggests working with your student to plan for the years ahead while he or she is still in the early years of high school.

"Counselors have a list of what classes students need to take in order to graduate," she says. "Request a copy and keep it on the refrigerator for easy reference."

Planning ahead in high school will help prevent a scramble to fulfill requirements as graduation nears. 

In just one minute!

ONE MINUTE EACH DAY CAN INCREASE A CHILD'S VOCABULARY AND PIQUE HER IMAGINATION

Sharon Darling, president and founder of the National Center for Family Literacy in Louisville, KY, encourages parents to take a minute to engage their children in learning activities as part of their daily routine.

"A minute can be used to increase vocabulary, expand reading skills and add an extra dose of fun to an otherwise routine day," Darling says.

You already pack a lot into every 24-hour period, but Darling suggests the following ideas can help your child throughout the school year and beyond:

- Name a letter of the day and make up silly sentences using only words beginning with that letter. (Elephants eat eggplant. Martians move moons.)
- Play "guess who" with the student in your house. Through a series of clues, describe a cartoon character, favorite celebrity or historical figure. Let them offer up a guess after each clue. Expand your child's vocabulary by using unusual words, and then explain their meaning. Then, let your child give the clues while you guess.
- If you're stuck in traffic, make up a story about the things you see around you by taking "word turns." It's as simple as the name suggests. You and your child each add a word until the scene is described: A ... yellow ... convertible ... with ... a ... big ... dog ... in ... the ... back ... seat ... is ... going ... to ... the ... mall.

an ESGR how-to for Guard Soldiers

By MAJ ELAINE GULLOTTA

CPL Thomas Johnson of the Texas National Guard remembered hearing a briefing about the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), the agency set up to promote understanding of the Uniformed Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). But he paid little attention since he wasn't thinking about mobilizing. Besides, he thought the law applied only to large businesses, not the small, family-run bakery that he worked for.

When Johnson's unit was alerted, he knew his employer wouldn't be happy, so he didn't tell him until two weeks before he left for his deployment. His employer was angry because the late notification left no time to hire a replacement. When Johnson returned from mobilization, he didn't even try to return to the bakery. He was out of work for months and had to rely on his wife's income to pay the bills.

This scenario is typical of the cases reported to ESGR. "If we could eliminate just one of these types of misunderstandings, the number of cases reported to the ESGR call-center would be significantly reduced," said Curtis Bell, Director Ombudsman, National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (NCESGR).

Members of the National Guard and their spouses must understand the law and how it applies to them. All Reserve personnel must provide notice to their employers in advance of a deployment. Bell recommends that notice be provided in writing at least 30 days in advance of the deployment.

Take Advantage of Available Resources

To assist Service Members with this task, ESGR provides a sample Deployment Notification Letter and Military Leave of Absence Form on Esgr.mil under the "Resources" section. Service Members and spouses can download and complete these forms and provide them to the civilian employer so employers have the information they need regarding deployments and the law.

The Notification Letter often functions as a tool that starts the communication process between the Guard employee and the employer. Typically, it is a lack of open communication early on that leads to late notifications and tension between the Guard Soldier and the employer.

"The employer may be angry that the member is leaving, but waiting to tell the employer only makes things worse," Bell says. "By starting the process early and providing timely written notification and resources, the Guard member can significantly reduce the chances for problems later on."


Even with USERRA, Service Members and their spouses need to know that they are not protected against economic problems and resulting effects. If a company conducts layoffs, closes a branch or goes bankrupt, Service Members may lose their job as a result. However, employers must ensure that their decision to lay off an employee is not based on the employee's association with the military.

Consider Your Boss

Guard Soldiers must also consider the impact on their employers when volunteering for military duty. Unit commanders should monitor for repeated requests to volunteer for military duty. Eventually the Guard Soldiers will return to civilian employment and should therefore strive to maintain a positive relationship with their employers. Commanders may consider requiring their troops to provide employers with timely notification documents.

A Department of Defense (DoD) organization based in Washington, D.C., NCESGR encourages military members to create win-win situations. Guard members who are the most successful with employers are those who consider their employer a strategic partner who supports their efforts to serve our nation.

One way to bring employers into the partnership is to encourage them to sign an ESGR "Statement of Support" or to attend an ESGR-sponsored BossLift so they can learn more about Guard culture. Ask the employer to link to the ESGR Web site from the company Web site. This link provides company management with quick access to ESGR resources and information.

The mission of ESGR is to develop and promote a culture in which all American employers support and value the military service of their employees. The program recognizes outstanding employer support, increases awareness of USERRA and resolves conflict through mediation. 



Eternal Bond PFCs Joseph and Samantha James will serve side-by-side during their yearlong deployment in Iraq.

“Honestly, I’ll still be a little bit unfocused worrying about my wife, but I’ll be more focused knowing that she is here and not back home thousands of miles

away,” he explained. “It will be easier for me to concentrate on the mission and get done what we need to do.”

Samantha said she is anxious about the mission since this is her first deployment, but having her husband with

her will help make the time spent overseas go by faster.

“I’m a little nervous, but it’s going to be a lot easier since we’ll be together and we have close friends going with us,” she said.

PFC Ancharad Shoon, 21, and PVT Rashida Shoon, 22, have been married for three months and said that since they joined the military together it was only natural for them to deploy for the same mission.

“The likelihood of us getting deployed with different units was extremely high, so we just volunteered to go with one unit,” Rashida said. “Instead of us being separated, we would be together.”

She noted that deploying together will have both pros and cons for the couple.

“Even though we’re going together as a married couple, we can’t go on the same missions together; someone has to stay back at the rear,” Rashida explained. “You’ll still be a little nervous and scared wondering what’s going on and if they’re

united they serve

Florida Couple Deploys to Iraq Together

By TECH. SGT THOMAS KIELBASA, FLORIDA NATIONAL GUARD PUBLIC AFFAIRS

When PFC Joseph James deployed to Iraq in July, he didn’t have to say goodbye to his wife Samantha—she is serving beside him throughout the year-long mission in Iraq.

The Jameses—both privates first class and members of the Florida Army National Guard’s 1218th Transportation Company—are one of three married couples deploying together with the West Palm Beach-based unit.

All of the couples were truck drivers assigned to the Guard’s 3/116th Forward Support Company, and volunteered for the transportation mission to Southwest Asia.


The unit left Florida on July 8 and is currently at Camp Atterbury, IN, for additional training before heading to Iraq. Currently no Army regulation prohibits married couples from deploying together if they volunteer for the same mission.

Joseph, 18, and Samantha, 19, met during military training and were married this past April. Joseph said one of the reasons they volunteered to deploy together was so they wouldn’t be separated for a year. He said he will feel better serving overseas knowing his wife is near him.

“I’m a little nervous, but *it’s going to be a lot easier* since we’ll be together ... ” —PFC SAMANTHA JAMES

OK, but it’s a lot better than him being deployed to another country.”

Ancharad said having his wife with him during the deployment will help ease the stress many couples have when they are separated by lengthy deployments.

“There will be less of a headache from wondering if she’s OK at home and her wondering if I’m OK overseas,” he said. “She’ll be right there with me, so she’ll know firsthand what’s happening with me.” 

SGM Daniel Job, right, of the North Dakota Joint Force Headquarters, shakes hands with SGT Andrew Horning of the 191st Military Police Company. The Soldiers in the 191st Military Police Company are being honored with the Freedom Salute for their service during a recent deployment to Iraq.



The Freedom Salute is the Army National Guard’s formal thank-you to Soldiers and their Families for the sacrifices they make while preparing to deploy, serving in combat and then returning home again.

It also marks the climax of Family participation in the New York Army National Guard Yellow Ribbon

“This ceremony is as much about *community and Family* as it is about our *military service*.”

—COL GARY YAPLE

Reintegration Program. The program doesn’t officially end for Soldiers until their first drill weekend.

Like other 27th BCT families, Mike and Kerstine attended 30- and 60-day Yellow Ribbon events. The goal was to let the Families and Soldiers know what to expect once they got back together after a year apart, starting with the 27th’s mobilization in January 2008.

“It was a little awkward, because I had gotten used to living my life without him,” Kerstine said. “But I was really excited.”

Kerstine said the reintegration events—held at 30 and 60 days post-deployment—that led up to the Freedom Salute helped make her husband’s return from combat duty much easier, for him and for the rest of the Family.

“I found out what was going on is normal, and I thought, ‘OK, I can do this,’” she said. For Kerstine, the Freedom Salute marked “the official beginning of ‘the new normal.’”

During the ceremony, the command presented honors to all the Soldiers who had deployed, as well as to members of the Syracuse community who provided material



MSG DAVID H. LIPP

thanks for your service

Freedom Salute Honors Soldiers and Their Families

By SPC IAN BOUDREAU

For Kerstine Brignone, wife of CW2 Mike Brignone, Saturday, May 16 marked the official start of the “new normal.”

Mike and the other members of Headquarters, 27th Brigade Combat Team (BCT) officially marked the end of their train-up, deployment to Afghanistan and reintegration into civilian life with a Freedom Salute at the Syracuse Oncenter.


moving forward

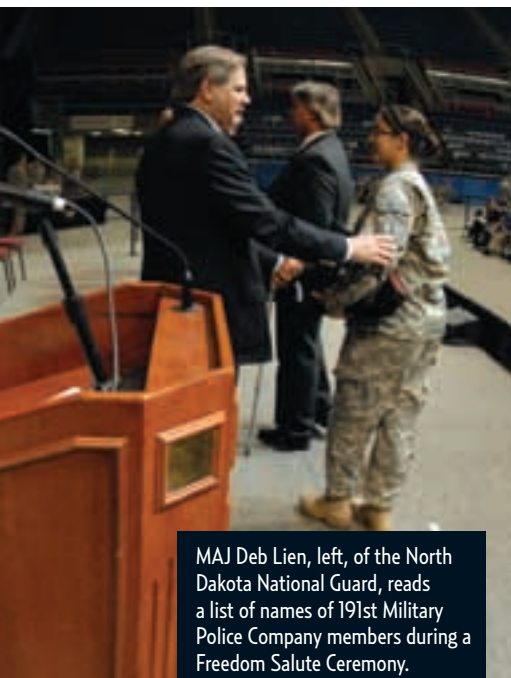
Army Spouse Employment Partnership

By FRED D. MCGHEE II

and financial and moral support to the deployed Guard members. The Eagle Association of Central New York, a Veterans' organization, the Towpath Quilters' Guild and Wegmans' Markets all were presented with tokens of the brigade's thanks.

The brigade presented the reunited Soldiers with lapel pins, Defender of Freedom Certificates signed by the Director and Sergeant Major of the Army National Guard, and coins from CJTF-Phoenix command group. The Freedom Salute packages also included cased American flags, lapel pins for spouses and significant others, and "Future Soldier" games for children of military Families.

"This ceremony is as much about community and Family as it is about our military service," said COL Gary Yapple, the brigade's deputy commander. "To build, sustain, protect and grow a community is probably among the highest callings for us as residents and as people who care about freedom." 



MAJ Deb Lien, left, of the North Dakota National Guard, reads a list of names of 191st Military Police Company members during a Freedom Salute Ceremony.

Whether you are entering the job market for the first time or returning after an absence, you're fully aware that finding work can be tough right now. The economic downturn has led to myriad layoffs and hiring freezes that have left many Americans scrambling to maintain their careers. But for Guard spouses seeking employment, there's help. The Army Spouse Employment Partnership (ASEP), founded in 2003, brings corporate America and Guard spouses together in a mutually beneficial partnership.

The ASEP partners with Fortune 500 companies and federal government agencies that make a commitment to hire Army spouses. Currently, ASEP has 31 corporate partners, and aims to increase the number of partner companies to 50, giving spouses more support. Some corporate partners include Starbucks, Dell Computers, H & R Block, AT&T, Home Depot and the Army Civilian Personnel Office.

The Army realized in 2003 that Service Members were leaving the military because their spouses could not maintain their careers after being relocated.

The ASEP, along with its corporate partners, will make every effort to help spouses maintain their careers with their current employer. The ASEP also offers a resume-sharing program where the spouse's resume is sent to one of the other partner companies in case their current employer does not have a presence at the new location.

Corporate partners are provided the capability to tap into a readily available, diverse and talented pool of candidates.


The Army is the only military branch to offer this type of service. More than 41,000 spouses have used the ASEP since its inception. Last year, 8,200

spouses were hired by corporate partners. But according to Dr. Lillie Cannon, ASEP Program Manager, that's simply not enough. "That's not a lot when you look at how many spouses we have looking for jobs," she says.

Cannon explained that the current economic environment has not decreased enthusiasm for the program among corporate partners. That's important for couples where both spouses have to work. "Military Families need a second steady income to meet today's economic challenges," Cannon said.

ASEP has emphasized reaching out to the spouses of Guard Soldiers. The program's portability and accessibility make it attractive.

Cannon says ASEP is using Employment Readiness Program Managers, Family Assistance Center coordinators and Yellow Ribbon events to disseminate information about the program.

"We will go anywhere to brief Guard Families on the ASEP program," she continues. "All program managers and coordinators need to do is contact their local installation Employment Readiness Program Manager." 

Not located near an installation? Don't worry. Guard spouses can visit the Army OneSource Web site (myarmyonesource.com) and find information by navigating under the "Education, Careers and Libraries" tab to the Army Spouse Employment Program (ASEP), then click on "Spouses." Army OneSource community support coordinators or the Employment Readiness Program Manager at your local installation can also assist spouses needing more information. Also, look for information on how YOU can get money for college in the next issue. The new Post 9/11 GI Bill and Career Advancement Accounts are both ways to pay for spouses to get some education benefits.

Guard Power: Members of National Guard Cycling gather for a group ride. The club promotes fitness, community and Soldier support. National Guard Cycling is open to Soldiers, Airmen, their friends and Families. For more info, go to www.nationalguardcycling.com



get out and ride

Bicycling for Beginners

By CHRISTIAN ANDERSON

In the past decade, bicycling has become a popular sport in the U.S., thanks in part to Lance Armstrong and his seven Tour de France victories.

Recognizing the health benefits that accompany cycling, many Americans have pulled their old bikes from the garage and hit the streets. Not only can you burn hundreds of calories during a 30-minute to one-hour ride (see “Feel the Burn” chart), but biking causes less stress on knees, ankles, hips and lower back than running.

Safety First

Although bicycling is fun and exhilarating, it can be dangerous. Always buckle up—by buckling your helmet strap. Just like a seatbelt in a car, a helmet is a bicyclist’s best friend.

Depending on the laws in their area, some people skip the helmet, but this can be a fatal decision. If you fall and your head hits the pavement, your helmet can protect you from head injury.

Crash Protection

Helmet.org, an informational and promotional site to spread awareness of bicycle-related crashes, strongly recommends the use of helmets while cycling.

Check out these stats:

Non-helmeted riders are **14 times more likely** to be involved in a fatal crash than helmeted riders.

Head injuries account for more than **60 percent of bicycle-related deaths**, more than two-thirds of bicycle-related hospital admissions and about one-third of bicycle-related hospital emergency room visits.

Hitting the Road in Style—and Comfort

Getting into bicycling is simple. All you need is a bike, a helmet and a road. But you’ll find it’s more enjoyable if you plan ahead.

Stop by your local shop to get fit for your bicycle. A fit is an adjustment of your saddle (or seat) height, stem and handlebar height to match your body type and other specifications.

Most people are amazed at how much more comfortable their bicycle is with just a few millimeters of adjustment. Getting a proper fit, which can cost as little as \$30 at a bike shop, not only allows you to ride more comfortably for longer distances, but can help prevent injuries.

Quality Counts

Any bike will do, but sometimes it pays to upgrade and purchase a bicycle from a reputable dealer. A bicycle with a price tag of \$300 or more might sound high to some people, but these bikes usually have quality components and a warranty. You can buy less expensive bicycles, but they generally have cheaper components that won’t last as long.

Group Rides

Whether you’re a beginner wanting to learn the ins and outs of riding, or a seasoned pro wanting to brush up on your skills, go to your local bike shop and ask about group rides. The shop can help you find one that suits your needs and skill level. From short, easy rides to your local coffee shop, to treks across the next county and back, there’s usually an option for everyone.

The biggest benefit of a group ride is camaraderie, as you will meet people with the same passion as

Feel the Burn

According to Bicycling.com, bike riding is an efficient way to burn calories. Here are some stats to tell you how many calories you can burn by riding a bike.

Average male:

- 10 mph pleasure riding (30 minutes) 163 calories
- 10 mph pleasure riding (60 minutes) 327 calories
- 14 mph moderate effort (30 minutes) 327 calories
- 14 mph moderate effort (60 minutes) 654 calories
- 20 mph racing effort (30 minutes) 654 calories
- 20 mph racing effort (60 minutes) 1,309 calories

Average female:

- 10 mph pleasure riding (30 minutes) 145 calories
- 10 mph pleasure riding (60 minutes) 290 calories
- 14 mph moderate effort (30 minutes) 290 calories
- 14 mph moderate effort (60 minutes) 581 calories
- 20 mph racing effort (30 minutes) 581 calories
- 20 mph racing effort (60 minutes) 1,163 calories

yours. Plus, the old adage “there’s safety in numbers” comes into play when you ride with a group.

So pump up the tires, strap on your helmet and hit the streets to stay fit, have fun and enjoy life! 🚴

there's no race like 'hometown'

New York Fundraiser on Track for Success

Story and Photos By NEW YORK NATIONAL GUARD PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

Combine T-shirts, bottled water and the chance to run 5 kilometers (3.1 miles) on a Saturday morning, and you've got the perfect recipe for fundraising success, according to members of the New York National Guard Family Readiness Council Inc. In 2008, the first "Hometown Heroes 5K Run," with 250 participants, netted \$11,000 from runners and corporate sponsors. This June, almost 270 runners participating in races in two locations brought in \$7,000.

"This is a great idea," said Kim Manion whose husband, CPT Sean Manion, mobilized with his Military Police

Company for service in Iraq on June 24. "It gets the Families together to show support. It's a great cause."

Mrs. Manion's mother and her sister also came out to show their support for the National Guard.

"This is my Family unit," Manion said proudly.

The money can be used to aid the Families of deployed Soldiers and Airmen who are in financial need, said Council President Susan Taluto, wife of New York National Guard Commander MG Joseph Taluto. The goal of the group was to establish a kind of Army Emergency Relief fund for the 17,000 members of the New York Army and Air National Guard.

The Home Stretch:

Children of New York National Guard personnel participated in a 1K run during the Guard's Family Readiness Council "Hometown Heroes 5K Run." Brigadier General Michael Swezey started the race, held in Colonie, NY.



Photo Finish: Donald Bowman of Niverville, NY, completes the Family Readiness Council "Hometown Heroes 5K Run." Bowman is the spouse of Master Sgt. Kimberly Bowman, a recruiting supervisor with the 109th Airlift Wing, Scotia, NY.

"We chose a race [to raise money] because 5K races have a good track record of fundraising for not-for-profits," Taluto explained. "It is focused on our military members and, as you know, military members have an obligation to stay in good physical condition. We felt it was a good fit."

Same Race, Different Places

The 2009 race was held in two locations: Colton Crossings Park in a suburb of Albany, NY, on June 20, and Stewart Air National Guard Base outside Newburgh on June 28. The long-term goal for the program is to have many races across the state.

There were 195 runners signed up for the event in Colton, while 82 people ran a course around Stewart Air National Guard base that ended up inside a C-5 with the nose hatch raised.

Latham, NY, residents Pam and Joe Fitzsimmons turned up to race on June 20 to show their support for the National Guard. Last year, their neighbor, LTC Andrew Stewart, went to Afghanistan with the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat team and the neighborhood rallied to support him. "Running in this year's National Guard fundraising race was a way to continue that support," Pam explained.

Navy Lt. Commander Mark Shoemaker joined his brother, Brian, who ran in the 2008 Hometown Heroes 5K Run.

"We try to run a 5K once a month or so. It gives us a chance to race together, and it's for a good cause," Shoemaker said.

New York Air National Guard Staff Sgt. Jonathan Peck, a member of the 109th Airlift Wing, won the Colton race. He finished with a time of 18 minutes and 48 seconds. Peck was running the race as part of his training for a marathon later in the year.

Kevin Portillo, the nephew of New York Air National Guard Staff Sgt. Fernando Cruz, won the race at Stewart Air National Guard Base. 📍



The *long-term goal* is to have many Hometown Heroes races across the state.



food safety for all seasons

By KEVIN T. MASON, MD, MPH AND ANN STARK

Some people think the risk of food poisoning is cause for concern only in the summer months and maybe in November when cooking the traditional Thanksgiving turkey. But that's not true—food safety is for all seasons. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that one in four Americans is exposed to food safety failures annually.

The number of cases is astounding, and many more may go unreported. The media does an exhaustive job of tracking the food safety chain from farm-to-table and consistently covers controversies surrounding irradiation, genetic modification, animal cloning and importation of foreign sources. This news captures our attention, but most of us really would like to know why and how food could make us sick. Let's find the culprits.

It's Alive!

The main things in food that can make you sick are living organisms, the toxic waste products of living organisms, chemicals and food components that you can't tolerate or are allergic to. Living organisms surround food.

Sometimes food is made better by partnering with living organisms, but some organisms are harmful. Simple organisms like viruses, bacteria, fungi and protozoa are microscopic but in sufficient numbers can make you sick.

Larger, more complex living organisms called parasites are easy to see without magnification, but their eggs might be too small to be noticed.

Sometimes living organisms are not a direct threat but excrete toxic waste products that are poisonous to humans. To make things worse, these toxins may resist inactivation by heat or cold, so, despite proper storage and cooking, you may become ill. Botulism and E. coli are common examples of food toxins.

Intolerable Treats

Some of us are intolerant to certain food components, such as milk lactose, soy protein or wheat gluten. We may also develop food allergies, most notably to fish, shellfish, nuts and berries. Unfortunately, these problems usually do not surface until the offending food is ingested.

Some of us are also sensitive to chemicals in food that are used to raise, preserve and enhance the taste and appearance of food.

Sometimes environmental contaminants get into foods, like lead and mercury. Some foods absorb and concentrate chemicals more than others, like the brown fat in striped bass or some crops that are raised in the ground. It's difficult to avoid foods rich in man-made chemicals, and it's wise to read food additive labels.

Consider a healthy snack-making routine that involves the entire Family.

Getting back to basics by making wholesome, preservative-free snacks like popcorn, pretzels and baked vegetable chips is a fun, inexpensive activity. Enjoy guilt-free, healthier treats that are lower in fat and sodium than store-bought foods that may contain several chemicals.

Recipe for Good Health

Finally, food safety is not the same as food defense. September is not only National Food Safety Month, but is also National Emergency Preparedness Month. Awareness of defensive measures to protect the food supply should be part of food-safety awareness education, and should be considered when compiling an emergency preparedness plan.

A visit to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Centers for Disease Control Web sites can put excellent educational food safety resources at your fingertips.

It is important to put a food-safety risk-reduction plan into practice and share that with Family and friends. Remember, food safety failures can not only cause short- and long-term discomfort, but can also be fatal. 📞

For information on handling foods safely, call (888) 723-3366, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition's 24-hour information line.

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Going

*Finding Strength
When Facing Deployment*

By JULIE ZEITLIN

Second Time Around:
Michelle and Missouri
National Guard CPT
Bob Spurgeon are
preparing for their
second deployment.

If you're married to a Soldier,

deployment is probably lingering in your past, present or future. From strange routines to changing emotions, you already know it can be stressful. But did you know it can also strengthen you—and your marriage? *Foundations* interviewed three couples in various stages of deployment. The Spurgeons were preparing for it, the Prays were in the midst of it and the Reeds were putting it behind them. From their darkest fears to amazing triumphs, their stories are a testament to the courage and strength in us all.

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Foundations interviewed three couples in various stages of deployment.

Getting Ready:

Michelle and Bob Spurgeon

We met Michelle Spurgeon in June. Her husband, CPT Bob Spurgeon, was getting ready to deploy to Afghanistan in September, and is scheduled to return September 2010. The couple has four children: Caleb, 11; Solomon, 9; Abigail, 6; and Josiah, 2.

Preparations were already well under way when we spoke.

“Bob and I are constantly reminding each other what is expected of us while

the

we're separated,” shared Michelle, who home-schools her three school-age children. “We constantly go over our goals with the finances, what our children will accomplish this coming school year and the respect between each of them needing to be established now, rather than later.”

“But it's not all business,” she quickly added. “We're enjoying every day with each other.”

Although she feels fairly well prepared for Bob's deployment, Michelle has her share of anxieties, too.

KID CONCERNS

“I'm getting a little bit nervous about how my children will handle it,” she confided. “Our daughter was just a baby during the first deployment, so this will be a new experience for her. She's 'daddy's girl.' Our baby, Josiah, who is 2, has never been separated from his dad.”

But, Michelle knows that communication is empowering, and she's proactive about it. “I try to talk to them every day about the deployment and ask them for their opinion on what's happening,” she shared. “Our oldest son will help me with the finances and

RANDY BACON

help take care of the younger ones. He already feels very special about it.”

An active participant in her local Family Readiness Group (FRG)—the lead volunteer for her husband’s unit—Michelle plans to remain as busy as possible.

She’ll also rely on Family and friends, and strongly recommends to other spouses that they rely on such a support system. “Let your Family and friends know that your Soldier is leaving,” she stressed. “Give them the

opportunity to support you while your spouse is deployed. They can help if they know you need them.”

MONEY MATTERS

Michelle learned a lot about money from the first deployment. “Don’t spend all the money earned during the deployment,” she urged. “Use some of it to eliminate debt. And save some. Save up for a mini-vacation after the deployment. If practical, take advantage of military benefits.”

As for helping your kids through it, Michelle shared a unique success story from the past.

“During the first deployment, I rotated my husband’s T-shirts in our 7-month-old’s crib, between the mattress and the crib sheet. Each time she lay down and woke up, she would smell his scent. When he came home, his scent was a comfort object. This helped with bonding,” she explained.

“The more exposure, the better,” she added. “Get them on the webcam.

Distance

“Let your Family and friends know that your Soldier is leaving. Give them the opportunity to support you while your spouse is deployed.”

—MICHELLE SPURGEON

Show them pictures of the deployed Soldier often.”

Holding Steady: Taryn and Bradley Pray

Taryn Pray is a music publicist living in Nashville, TN. Her husband, 1LT Bradley Pray, deployed March 31 to Iraq for a one-year tour. This is his first deployment.

With no children, Taryn thinks handling the household without Bradley is easier for her than for Families with kids. Still, she’s not leaving things to chance, and is being proactive about putting plans in place.

CHECK IT OUT

Having received notice a year in advance, Taryn and Bradley had a lot of time to prepare for the deployment. They tried to put that time to good use by getting prepared psychologically, logistically and financially. One tool they found very useful was checklists.

“MilitaryOneSource.com and USAA have comprehensive lists to help you prepare for a deployment in



Family Stand: The Spurgeons spend their time together focusing on Family and enjoying every day as they prepare for Bob’s deployment.



Ever Vigilant: Taryn sits in her husband 1LT Brad Pray's Black Hawk helicopter at the March departure ceremony for the 1/230th Air Cavalry of the Tennessee National Guard.

Taryn also reaches out to her Family and friends.

"Surrounding yourself with friends and Family definitely helps," she said. "They are my lifeline. I had my best friend move in with me so I wouldn't be alone in the house for a year."

She also takes advan-

I also just sent him a portable DVD player. I was spending a lot of money on greeting cards, so I started to make my own silly cards. I can't draw and they look terrible," she joked, "but I think he likes them more, because they're personal."

GETTING REAL

Despite all efforts to be positive, there's still the reality that we're only human, and fears do arise. For Taryn, the trick is to be OK with that.

"Some days, I get emotional," she said. "But I think it's important to allow yourself to be sad or worried. The key is to not dwell on the scary things. Part of the reason I fell in love with him was his commitment to his country and his bravery. I am extremely proud of him."

terms of getting your finances in order, and taking care of the house, children and more," Taryn said.

GET CONNECTED

Participating in Family Readiness Group (FRG) programs has also been immensely helpful.

"Working with my FRG and seeing the strength that some of the other spouses have is just incredible," said Taryn. "I'm the FRG leader for my husband's troop, and we have meetings and social activities planned every month or so. We also do fundraising.

"I have met some amazing people through the FRG. It's so helpful to have friendships with people who are going through the exact same thing that you are," she continued. "Especially if their spouses are in the same unit.

"Sometimes it's hard for Guard Families, since we're so spread out and don't live on a base," she added. "We don't have an automatically tight-knit community to depend on.

"So working with the FRG and developing those relationships has made this process a lot easier for me."



Settling Back Home: Judy and Bruce Reed

We spoke to Judy Reed in June, right after her husband, Chaplain LTC Bruce Reed, had returned from his second deployment. We chatted with her about the separation and the readjustment period upon his return. We learned a lot—so did Judy and Bruce.

FILLING IN THE BLANK

The first few days of Bruce's absence were hard for Judy. "It was very lonely," she recalled. "Almost like losing a loved one. All kinds of thoughts run through your mind. At times, it was like a roller coaster—and I don't do well with roller coasters."

Judy is the Family Assistance Center (FAC) coordinator for her husband's unit, and her job is to help spouses of deployed Soldiers—spouses dealing with the same types of experiences she was going through. During Bob's absence, she soon found this work very therapeutic.

"They'd call me, or stop by my office, and [share about how] they were having a bad day, for whatever reason,"

tage of the fact that her in-laws have military experience. "My father-in-law is in the Air Force," she shared, "so I talk to my mother-in-law quite a bit about how she copes with deployment, since she has been through so many."

LIVE WIRES

Taryn and Bradley contact each other as frequently as possible. "We use Skype a lot, and Yahoo Messenger," Taryn explained. "I hear from him almost every day in some capacity."

Care packages keep the connection going, too. "I send him some of his favorite things—mostly baked goods!



“I told him, ‘I just want the old Bruce to come back.’ [Then] we talked about it, and I realized I needed to be patient and understanding.” —JUDY REED

she said. “They’d talk about how they felt alone, or how everything was breaking in their house or their child wasn’t doing well in school. I loved to be able to just listen—to be the person who understands what they’re going through. So I was always helping others, which, in turn, helped me.”

Staying connected to Bruce in a variety of ways also strengthened her spirit.

“We used webcams, emails and phone calls,” she recalled. “I’m so grateful for all of those modes of communication. We also chose a scripture together, which we both read daily. That made us feel more connected spiritually.

“Open communication plays a big role in how spouses withstand the separation,” she noted,

an observation she has made working with other spouses at the FAC.

She also reached out for support from her church, family and friends,



Reunited: Open and honest communication was key in helping Judy and Bruce reconnect after Bruce’s deployment with the West Virginia National Guard.

and frequently went to dinner with a small group of other military spouses.

WORKING HIS WAY BACK

When Bruce returned from this deployment, it was bliss—at first.

“In the beginning, it was wonderful,” Judy recalled. “I guess you would call it the honeymoon phase. It felt like we had just gotten married. We took a couple of trips right afterward. We had a great time getting re-acquainted and spending every minute of the day together.”


But, for many couples, the reintegration process isn’t always forward-moving. Sometimes, it’s one step forward and then a few back. The Reeds soon found this out.

“When we returned home from the trips, at times, the connection wasn’t there,” Judy said. “I felt like most of the time, he was there physically, but not mentally. [He wasn’t] attentive in conversation.

“One day, I told him, ‘I just want the old Bruce to come back.’ [Then] we talked about it, and I realized I needed to be more patient and understanding.”

With this epiphany, they began to make real progress. “We took it slowly as we got to know each other again. We tried to be patient with each other. We shared openly about our feelings

and needs, and gave each other space when needed,” she added. “We made it through the adjustment period through [communication] and spending quality time together.

After a year, I think we are back to our ‘new norm.’” 

For information on Pre-, During and Post-Deployment Events near you, contact your state/territory’s Family Program office by accessing the Resource Locator Map at guardfamily.org, selecting your state, and choosing “State Family Program Directors” from the pull-down menu.

can you hear me now?

Seven Tips to Being a Better Communicator

By EMILY MCMACKIN

Ever feel like you're talking, but no one is listening or taking what you have to say seriously?

If so, you're probably having trouble communicating. But, just because you have some static in your lines doesn't mean you can't get your message across. It's important to learn to communicate well because, "Ultimately it's good for your health and well-being," says Jennifer Henczel, a communications consultant based in Vancouver.

Here are her seven tips for improving your skills:

1. Understand your motivation

To improve communication, it helps to understand what you hope to achieve. Are you trying to avoid an argument? Reason with someone? Persuade another person to your point of view? Do you want to express yourself better, build trust or connect on a deeper level?

Defining your goals from the beginning will help you reach them.

2. Evaluate what's working and what's not

Assess or "diagnose" the way you currently communicate with others. What's working? What are you struggling with? Identify problem areas, and see where you're doing things right, and where you might improve.

3. Get perspective

Learn about your strengths, weaknesses and approaches to interacting with people. When you can take an objective look at yourself, "It helps you see others in a new light," Henczel says.

Also, learning about the personalities and preferences of those you're speaking with can help you understand their perspective. Instead of viewing them as "wrong," you can start to grasp why they see things the way they do.

"We all have filters that may alter the information we receive, due to our unique life experiences," Henczel says. "We perceive things differently."

4. Take small steps

Once you have a better handle on how to communicate with someone, practice! Start by planning an appropriate time to talk.

"You have to look at the situation and the environment," Henczel says. "If it's a busy time and you need to get into an in-depth topic—like discussing finances while driving the kids somewhere—it's best to reserve a time to talk about it later."

Be prepared for the discussion. It may help to write your thoughts out ahead of time, so you can express yourself clearly and concisely.

Once you're face-to-face, give the person your complete attention. The biggest mistake you can make when trying to communicate is not listening. Keep your thoughts to yourself until the other person finishes and don't interrupt. "We have two ears and one mouth for a reason," Henczel says.

Stay aware of your body language and tone of voice, and maintain eye contact. Remember to be assertive but tactful, and ask questions. "Go beyond their words; try to understand the meaning and essence of what they're saying," Henczel says.

5. Set goals

Like anything, effective communication takes planning and strategizing. Clarify your expectations, and make sure the other person knows what you want (and vice versa). Determine what changes you hope to see and give yourself a time frame to achieve those results.

"If you're arguing every day, try to reduce that to once a week or once a month," Henczel says. Meanwhile, set aside two to three times a week to have a meaningful, frank conversation.



Tennessee National Guard Soldier SSG Hank Meek treasures the trust and support he receives from his wife Courtney.

* Quick tip

"If it seems like a conversation with someone is going nowhere or escalating into a shouting match, starting over is often the best thing to do," Henczel says.

"After a while people tend to talk in circles, and the only way to get anything resolved is to give it a break and come back to it," she says. "Give yourself a five- to 10-minute breather, and go into a different room or take a walk around the block. Once you're calm and collected, come back and start from the beginning."

Separation Anxiety

How to communicate during and after a deployment

Being away from home for long periods of time is part of the sacrifice Soldiers are willing to make to defend our freedom. But that doesn't mean it's easy. How do you keep the lines of communication open during and after a deployment? Henczel offers these suggestions for Soldiers and their Families:

If you are a Soldier ...

While deployed, make the most of the limited amount of time you have to communicate with a spouse or loved one. Before making a phone call, sending an email or logging on for a Web cam chat, "Think about what you really want to say," Henczel says.

Keep your communication clear and concise, especially with young children. Henczel suggests jotting down a few things beforehand, so you can focus on what you want to express.

Once you return home, don't be discouraged if you have to get reacquainted with your loved ones and remind each other of your personalities and preferences. Set aside time each week to reconnect with everyone and get the lines of communication flowing again.

If you are a spouse or relative of a Soldier ...

It can be hard to sit at home while the person you love is far away, but it's even harder when you only get to talk to them occasionally. Naturally, you want to keep things positive and light.


Patience is key, even when your Soldier returns home. "There is so much to say on both sides, but remember to give [your Soldier] time to talk," Henczel says. "If they don't want to talk right away, that's OK; they're probably open to listening to you."

6. Evaluate your efforts

As you put your new approach into action, watch what happens. Pay attention to the outcomes and positive results of better communication. Recognize what's working and celebrate your success with everyone involved.

7. Refine your objectives

No communication is perfect every time; you can always find areas on which to improve. Once you have the basics down, here are some other questions to ask yourself:

- * Do I communicate relevant information to others?
- * Am I listening actively?
- * Do other people want to listen to me? Why or why not?
- * Am I willing to change my view if the other person has something useful to contribute?
- * Am I honest with others?
- * Do I feel free to tell others what I think, and do they feel free to do the same? 

**BOOK
REVIEW**

As You Were:
To War and Back with the
Black Hawk Battalion of the
Virginia National Guard
by Christian Davenport

*Follow Five Soldiers and Their Struggles
With Dual Roles as Citizen-Soldiers*
Reviewed by Amanda Powers



Answering the call to military duty is a sacrifice that more than 99 percent of U.S. citizens may never comprehend.


The Army National Guard has been called time and again—now, more than ever—to take a stand for our nation and to defend the rights of others, often deploying overseas and leaving their Families behind.

Christian Davenport, a reporter from *The Washington Post*, embedded with the Virginia Army National Guard in 2005 during their year-long deployment to Iraq and return home. His book, *As You Were: To War and Back with the Black Hawk Battalion of the Virginia National Guard*, follows the experiences of five members of the 2/224th Aviation Regiment, with their own stories, backgrounds and individualized struggles to integrate back into the civilian world after war.

Davenport focuses on the sacrifices of five National Guard Soldiers—Miranda, Ray, Kate, Craig and Mark—as they deploy to Iraq, survive combat and come home to try to pick up where they left off.

Miranda was a member of a sorority at William and Mary College when she was called up during her senior year. Ray, a Vietnam Veteran, decided at age 58 to deploy with the troops he had trained. Other characters include a teacher, a natural-born leader and a young female medic.

As You Were gives readers a chance to absorb the intimate details of war and its effects on the Guard Service Members and their Families as they readjust into the civilian world. Davenport follows his characters long after they return home and describes their financial issues, difficulty securing jobs, and struggles to relate to their peers and to a society that doesn't know how to help.

Along with severe combat situations, frontline emotions, Black Hawk door gunners, unforgettable violence and insurgent gunfire, Davenport reveals another world where we can witness the patriotism and courage of local heroes who too often go unnoticed. 

new
wheels

Three Tips for Smart
Car-Shopping

By LENA ANTHONY

Sluggish new-car sales is bad if you're a dealer—but great if you're a buyer.

Now is the time to get a great deal on a car—new or used. “But that doesn't necessarily mean you'll snag one,” says Jack Nerad, executive market analyst at Kelley Blue Book (Kbb.com).

“As a buyer who's qualified to buy a new car, you're in a position of absolute strength,” Nerad says.

But he also explains that many people still purchase new cars only a few days after making the decision to buy, which can translate into spending too much due to uneducated impulse buys.

To land the best deal, follow Nerad's three tips for smart car-shopping.

1. Do research—lots of it: “There's no reason to go into a car dealership without having a list of what you want and what you can expect to pay for it,” Nerad says. Web sites like Kelley Blue Book, Edmunds.com and Cars.com put all of this information, including invoice prices, suggested retail prices, recent prices, and consumer and expert

As You Were gives readers a chance to absorb the intimate details of war and its effects on Guard Service Members and their Families as they readjust into the civilian world.



reviews, at your fingertips. If you're buying a used car, be sure to check out its history, available on Carfax.com.


2. Focus on the overall value: "A big mistake car shoppers make is dwelling on the monthly payment—and

car dealers are banking on that," Nerad says. "When you walk into a dealership, one of the first questions they ask is 'How much can you afford per month,'" he points out. Car dealers can use that information to figure out how to make the most money while still meeting your monthly budget needs.

Determine the *overall price* you're willing to pay—and *how many months* you're willing to make payments.

MARC ROMANELLI/GETTY IMAGES

To avoid this trap, determine the overall price you're willing to pay—and how many months you're willing to make payments.

3. Take your time: As with any major purchase, it's a good idea to sleep on it. "There are very few unique, once-in-a-lifetime deals out there," Nerad notes. "The deal you're offered today will be there tomorrow. Or it could be even better somewhere else. One of the most important weapons you have is your feet. If you don't like something, just walk out." 

new vs. used

Conventional wisdom says it's always better to buy used. But Jack Nerad, executive market analyst at Kelley Blue Book (Kbb.com), says that's not the case right now.

"Used car values have stayed relatively strong," he acknowledges. "But the new car market is so challenged right now. With so many dealer incentives, new cars are actually offering better value overall!"

Of course, that doesn't mean you should rule out used cars entirely. But if you weren't considering both options, you should.

preparing for disaster

What to Do in Case of an Emergency

by BILL HUDGINS

The three key words to dealing well with a disaster are “Prepare, Prepare, Prepare.”

For National Guard Families, there may be extra levels of preparation, since a Soldier may be called up to assist other victims of the disaster.

While some kinds of disasters are likely only in certain areas—such as volcanoes, tsunami, earthquakes and dam failures—others can occur nearly anywhere. These include fire, wildfire, flood, heat, winter storms, hurricanes, landslides, thunderstorms and tornadoes, as well as manmade disasters such as hazardous material spills, terrorism or even nuclear explosion. The recent concern over H1N1 influenza virus is also a kind of disaster, in that it can seriously disrupt everyday activities, business and travel.

Blueprint for survival

Preparation starts with creating a disaster plan. It should include detailed evacuation procedures, escape routes, family communication information, copies of important

papers such as birth certificates, insurance forms, wills, powers of attorney, passports, and an inventory of your home’s possessions. You should also have plans for dealing with pets or livestock.

Along with your plan, you should prepare disaster kits that will provide basic needs for you and your Family for three to five days—water; food; first aid supplies; clothing, bedding and sanitation supplies; tools; medications and health and hygiene needs; batteries and chargers for electronics; supplies for infants and young

“ ... Planning guidance includes stockpiling three days of non-perishable food and water, flashlights, radios and batteries ...”

—COL WILLIAM J. BEISWENGER JR.,
Florida Army National Guard





children; important documents; cash, credit cards and travelers' checks; and books or games for children and adults. The Federal Emergency Management Agency provides detailed advice for disaster planning at its Web site, Fema.gov.

As the frequent target of major hurricanes, Florida has much experience in coping with disasters. "The state's Division of Emergency Management has extensive information on its Web site, FloridaDisaster.org, that emphasizes having a plan for each person's safety, fortifying the home in advance of an event and, for businesses, planning how to continue work, or options if the workplace is not available," said COL William J. Beiswenger Jr. of the Florida Army National Guard Joint Directorate of Military Support.

"Some of the planning guidance includes stockpiling three days of non-perishable food and water, flashlights, radios and batteries, as well as setting up 'phone trees' that predetermine who calls whom," Beiswenger said.

Major weather and other natural disasters can fell trees and power lines, knocking out power and causing structural damage ranging from minor to catastrophic. Mobility may be limited because of flooding, debris or damaged roads and bridges.

"Survivors caught in the strike zone of a hurricane, for instance, can expect to be without power, phone and water services for weeks or even months," Beiswenger said.

Ready for that rainy day

In the past year, National Guard units have responded to fires, floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, ice storms and blizzards. "National Guard Soldiers often use their wartime training and equipment to respond to events or incidents in their home states as well as nationwide," Beiswenger said.

"For example, the transportation, communications and administrative areas translate directly to Defense Support to Civilian Authorities missions," he said. "Other missions, such as security, and search and rescue, require a modification of the training to fit our response in the United States or Florida because of unique equipment or more stringent rules for the use of force.

"We, as the Florida National Guard, because of the

"Soldiers ... must take extra care to ensure their Families' safety ... so they can be free to do their jobs ... without having to worry about their own loved ones."

—COL WILLIAM J. BEISWENGER JR.,
Florida Army National Guard


training standards and equipment used for the federal mission, feel that we can always meet the state's and nation's needs when responding to events or incidents that occur in our country.

"The National Guard's duty places additional responsibilities on Soldiers and their Families," he added.

"Guard Families are unique—not only in the support they show their Soldiers, but also in preparation in advance of a storm," Beiswenger said.

"For example, Soldiers often live in the impact area, so they must take extra care to ensure their Families' safety by evacuating them ahead of everyone else, so they can be free to do their jobs helping other survivors without having to worry about their own loved ones," he explained.

"No matter the nature of the event or incident, National Guard Soldiers in Florida and elsewhere are equipped and prepared to support the efforts of civilian emergency management agencies and local law enforcement to protect and bring relief to disaster-beleaguered citizens," Beiswenger said.

"Whether it's as a force multiplier or as a unique military asset, the National Guard stands ready when a state or the nation calls." 

above & beyond

kids are heroes, too

Children of Deployed Soldiers Share Their Inspiring Stories

By JULIE ZEITLIN

When Soldiers deploy, the children they leave behind feel the impact. They worry. They change. They struggle to strike a balance between their fears and their desire to be strong.

It's not easy. Yet, time and again, with the help of their parents and others around them, they find ways to cope, thrive—and even inspire others.

Foundations spoke to several military children of deployed parents to find out how they accomplish this. Their answers are filled with honesty, intelligence, humor and charm.

SHELDON KEEL

Sheldon may be living at home with his mom in Illinois, but the way he sees it, he's serving alongside his dad, Tony. This perspective infuses him with a sense of purpose.

His mom, Lisa, explained. "Sheldon and I see ourselves as an extension of the Guard. I think that point of view gives children a sense of belonging. They're not just sitting around, waiting for dad to come home."

Taking initiative

And it's true—Sheldon, 14, isn't just sitting around. He helps daily throughout the house and yard, especially with military-related tasks. "I make sure that our American flag, deployment flag and the yellow ribbon all stay clean and clear of debris," he explained.

Occasionally, he said, kids at his school make derogatory remarks to him about the war. When they do, he sometimes relays to them insights he has learned from his father. "I try to educate them about the importance of the military when they make unsubstantiated comments," he said.

Tasks along these lines help a Soldier's child feel like part of the mission.

Dialogue

Communication is also key to Sheldon's enduring strength.

"The most important thing is to check on your child," said Lisa. "I check in with Sheldon daily."

Plus, there's plenty of interaction between father and son.

"I am very close to my dad, and we stay in contact," said Sheldon. "I update him about everything I'm doing with football, wrestling and the Police Explorers [law enforcement] program. I talk to him on the phone and we email. We send lots of care packages with pictures and letters in them. And we send movies back and forth."

But, though Sheldon opens up easily, not all kids do, his mom pointed out. So it's important for the parent to be proactive. "If children aren't bringing up their feelings to you, bring it up with them," she emphasized. "Just asking how they feel isn't going to bring on depression."

Sheldon's parents include him in important decisions as much as possible. When the Guard requested that Tony extend his deployment, he and Lisa consulted with their son before deciding.

"We wanted to know how he felt about it," Lisa stressed. "That was empowering for him."

Sheldon gave the thumbs-up, and Tony accepted the extension.

"Sheldon and I felt that if Tony's mission wasn't done, our mission wasn't done," Lisa said.

Accentuate the positive

Like many military kids, Sheldon tries to look at the bright side—especially the meaning and importance of his father's work.

"He is fighting for our freedom and keeping us safe," Sheldon emphasized. "He is accomplishing so much and

“I’m proud of my dad because he is fighting for our country—and is still able to call me on my birthday.”

—SHELDON KEEL, 14



The Keel Family



Deployed parent:

1LT Tony Keel
Illinois Army
National Guard

Deployed:

Afghanistan,
August 2008

Mother:

Lisa Keel, clinical
psychotherapist

Son:

Sheldon Keel, 14



pursuing a life that I can only feel proud of. He has educated me a lot about the importance of freedom and democracy.”

In an encouraging message to other kids of deployed parents, Sheldon offered, “Be proud of your military Family. Your military parent is a hero. Stay positive and remember that your parent is doing this for good reasons. Freedom is what we all must appreciate and fight for. It is the most important thing about our country. Encourage your parent with loving support.”

KAREN & MAKAYLA CLARK

Karen Clark is dealing with deployment for the second time. She was five the first time her dad deployed in 2002. She learned a lot then—lessons she feels she can use now.

Her sister, Makayla, was just 5 months old during the first absence, but now she’s old enough to understand, to feel the emotions and to learn to manage them.

Staying connected

Communication is one key to the girls’ well-being. They’re home-schooled, so mother and daughters spend lots of quality time together, and the floor is always open for the topic of Terry’s deployment. In fact, Jamie makes sure they share their thoughts often. “I probably talk to them too much,” she laughed.

But, they’re also encouraged to talk to other leaders in their lives.

“It doesn’t have to be me,” assured Jamie. “Sometimes they might be able to open up to someone else better than they would with me, such as the pastor, the Sunday school teacher or the youth director.”

The girls also interact often with their dad, especially on Web cams using Skype, an online communication software program. In fact, because they’re home-schooled, Terry is their math teacher—and on duty even 6,000 miles away.

“He’s, like, ‘Just Skype me Karen’s math,’” Jamie laughed.

Have a little faith

Spirituality plays a big role in the girls’ lives, and has given them an unselfish perspective on their dad’s deployment.

“I think my family will mature a lot while he’s away. We’ll be stronger in our relationship with each other.”

—KAREN CLARK, 12

Deployed parent:
SGT Terry Clark,
Mississippi Army
National Guard
Deployed:
Iraq, July 2009
Mother:
Jamie Clark, author,
Sunday school
teacher
Daughters:
Karen Clark, 12;
Makayla Clark, 6
★★★



Karen, who Jamie says is wise beyond her years, calmly stated, “They probably need him over there more than we do over here.”

Added Jamie, “We know that it’s for a much higher purpose than what we can see and understand. It’s happening for a reason.”

Accepting change

Another coping skill for the girls involves learning to accept that life goes on while their dad is overseas. “We will grow, and we will change,” Jamie said. “When Terry comes back, we’ll all be different. We just pray it’s for the better.”

To keep the girls occupied and moving forward, Jamie is looking into the military’s many Family programs—particularly, Our Military Kids (OurMilitaryKids.org). “I wish I had known about it the first time he deployed,” she mused. Among the girls’ many interests are tennis and guitar.

Are there tough times? Yes. Both girls are dancers—Karen is an advanced performer—and their dad has missed some

A Daughter's Love "I miss him so much, I love him so much and I don't want him to get hurt."
—Makayla Clark, 6.

recitals, a disappointment to all. Or, sometimes Makayla will ask, "Why did daddy have to sign on the dotted line? I don't want him to get hurt."

So they experience the same stressors as any other military Family.

Still, as much as possible, they focus on the positive, and the big picture. They listen to their mom when she explains that it's their dad's calling to help others. And they listen when she reminds them that they're not alone. "There are a lot of us going through it," Jamie sighed.

BRADEN FUSZEK

Braden, a 3rd-grader, reads at the 8th-grade level. He has "adult" conversations about life with his mom. All in all, he's just plain smart.

Reading above grade level can have its disadvantages, because one of Braden's biggest challenges with his dad, Caleb's, deployment is worrying—the way adults do. He worries about Caleb.

your day?' It seems to help us deal with the issues early, so they don't fester in his mind."

Calendar boy

Megan finds that certain tools and activities help keep Braden's anxiety at bay.

"A calendar is a great tool for us," Megan said. "It's filled with items like 'Picnic at the park,' 'Operation Purple Camp,' 'Camping with grandparents,' et cetera. This helps Braden focus on small steps, instead of looking at [the schedule] and seeing that it will be six or seven months until Caleb gets home.

"I try to keep it full," she continued, "even if [one day] only has 'Go to the library.' That way, each day has something going on. It helps break up the time and gives him something to always look forward to. It helps make life more predictable."

Megan said she believes it's good for children to interact with other kids who are dealing with the same kinds of issues, and she strongly recommends connecting with other military Families.

"We are all going through the same thing," Megan emphasized. "Friends and Family members don't quite understand this the way military Families do."

Seeking counsel

"Once Caleb was deployed, it seemed like Braden's thoughts and feelings changed," Megan explained. "It was like a button switched off in him. I think the deployment has forced him to live in a grown-up's mind, and he tries to fix problems. The biggest thing was to get him to remember that he is a kid. He needs to enjoy that and let the adults do the worrying."

So both mother and son entered counseling. And it has helped.

Deployed parent:

SGT Caleb Taylor,
Oregon Army
National Guard

Deployed:

Iraq, April 2008

Mother:

Megan Taylor,
stay-at-home mom

Sons:

Braden Fuszek, 9;
Jordin Taylor, 2

★★★

"I talk to the counselor about how hard it is to be the older child in the house—the more responsible one—and always being the one to do the chores because [my dad's] not there to do them," shared Braden, an avid reader and future pro-baseball hopeful.

Along with talking to the counselor, Braden communicates regularly with his mom. Megan shared, "Every day, I try to ask him, 'What was the best part of your day?' and 'What was the worst part of




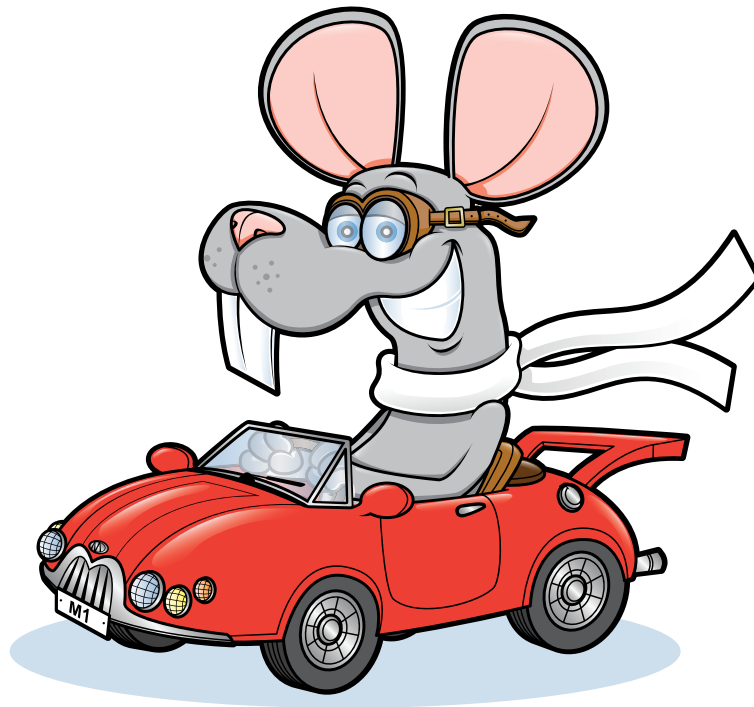
"I feel proud of my dad—how he protects America. And he's a medic. If anyone gets hurt, he will go help them out." —BRADEN FUSZEK, 9

Words of hope

On the positive side for Braden, deployment has strengthened the Family connection—an experience not everyone gets to have.

"Deployment has brought the three of us closer and formed a bond that is unlike any relationship I have ever had," Megan noted. "We turn to each other for love, comfort, advice, faith, opinions and strength."

When we asked Braden for a word of advice to kids of deployed parents, his response was inspiring: "Stay strong and don't let anything get in your way," he said without hesitation. 



a squeak in the engine

By ADRIENNE DICKEY

I do not like rodents. Mickey Mouse is fine, because he’s a cartoon figure. However, those “cute” (as my boys call them) gray field mice are not my friends. I don’t like them and have always had my husband, Don, take care of them. But Don’s deployed.

Evidently, though, they’ve started to miss my husband and are looking for entertainment. They developed a plan for how to scare me to death while providing entertainment to everyone around me.

Last Sunday, the boys and I were driving to the grocery store after church. I was chatting with them about the sermon, when all of a sudden a mouse popped up from the hood of the car.

This made me start screaming hysterically—with the windows down at a stoplight. The couple in the truck next to us started laughing, and the boys started yelling, “Where is it? Where is it? We don’t see it!”

The light turned green, and I had to go. I was scanning the dashboard instead of the road, when the mouse appeared again. I started screaming again.

The couple in the truck tried to keep up with us. They were pointing and laughing at me. The boys tried to assure me it wasn’t going to hurt me, but I was still freaking out.

So I pulled into a parking lot and yelled at my son Skylar to jump out and open the hood. Then I called my friend Julie and explained what was happening. She started laughing, too. All the boys were now out of the car trying to find the mouse.

My next fear kicked in—I thought the mouse was making its way into the car. I started yelling and attempted to jump out of the car because I thought I spotted the mouse on the floorboard. More entertainment value for all, because, as my son Caleb pointed out, it was just a piece of plastic wrap.

The mouse was now switching between hiding and emerging for quick peek-a-boo moments. I finally realized that if I turned the car back on, the noise of the engine might scare him out. Sure enough, he popped up again, Skylar honked the horn, and the mouse ran off into the lovely green grass.

But the entertainment didn’t end there. The boys were in love with my hysteria. As I pulled into the store parking lot, my son Kayden yelled, “There’s another one!”

Of course, I screamed and jumped, only to realize they were all laughing at me. I’m so glad my fear brought everyone so much joy.

Until next time, this is Adrienne saying, “What’s the number for Orkin?” 🐁

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Fort Polk	July 10 - 7:30 p.m.
Fort Polk	July 11 - 7:30 p.m.
Fort Hood	July 23 - 7:30 p.m.
Fort Hood	July 24 - 2 & 7:30 p.m.
Fort Hood	July 25 - 2 & 7:30 p.m.
Fort Sam Houston	July 28 - 7 p.m.
Fort Sill	July 31 - 7:30 p.m.
Fort Sill	Aug. 1 - 2 & 7:30 p.m.
Fort Sill	Aug. 2 - 2 p.m.
Fort Carson	Aug. 6 - 7 p.m.
Fort Carson	Aug. 7 - 7 p.m.
White Sands	Aug. 11 - 7 p.m.
White Sands	Aug. 12 - 1 & 6 p.m.
Fort Bliss	Aug. 14 - 7 p.m.
Fort Bliss	Aug. 15 - 2 p.m.
Fort Huachuca	Aug. 18 - 7 p.m.
Fort Huachuca	Aug. 19 - 2 & 7 p.m.
Fort Irwin	Aug. 22 - 7 p.m.

Fort Lewis	Aug. 28 - 2 & 7 p.m.
Fort Rucker	Sept. 30 - 7:30 p.m.
Fort Rucker	Oct. 1 - 11 & 7:30 p.m.
Fort Benning	Oct. 3 - 7 p.m.
Fort Stewart	Oct. 6 - 7 p.m.
Fort Stewart	Oct. 7 - 7 p.m.
Fort Bragg	Oct. 9 - 7 p.m.
Fort Bragg	Oct. 10 - 12 noon
Fort Drum	Oct. 14 - 6:30 p.m.
Fort Drum	Oct. 15 - 6:30 p.m.
Fort Hamilton	Oct. 16 - 8 p.m.
Fort Hamilton	Oct. 17 - 3 p.m.
USMA, West Point	Oct. 20 - 7 p.m.
Fort Monmouth	Oct. 22 - 1:30 & 6:30 p.m.
Fort Lee	Oct. 27 - 7 p.m.
Fort Lee	Oct. 28 - 2 & 7 p.m.
Aberdeen Proving Ground	Oct. 31 - 2 p.m.
Aberdeen Proving Ground	Nov. 1 - 2 & 7 p.m.
Fort Monroe	Nov. 4 - 2:30 p.m.
Picatinney AR	Nov. 6 - Time TBA
Fort Belvoir	Nov. 8 - 2 p.m.

*Schedule subject to change. Go to armymwr.com for the latest details.



Can you unscramble the letters to spell the military words?



OTOSB



YAFMIL



FUMRINO



EHOTREICLP



MIERACNA GLAF



EVEHMU



ATNK



ELMHTE



LIEROSD

Answers: Boots, Family, Uniform, Helicopter, American Flag, Humvee, Tank, Helmet, Soldier

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