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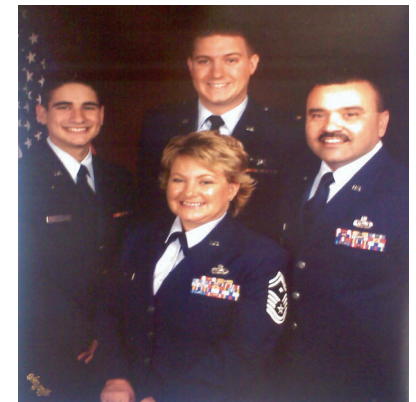
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State Family Program Director

Greeting from Family Programs!

November is Military Family Month. We can not limit our support and gratitude that we show our family in just this month, we must keep all of our military members and their families in our thoughts and prayers each and everyday. The selfless service and sacrifice you must endure does not go unnoticed because the support you provide your Soldier or Airmen is an part of successfully completing our mission and we are fortunate to have that tremendous support from our military families.

When Soldiers and Airmen know that their families are well supported back home, it allows them the ability to focus on the mission at hand. We are truly a great nation blessed with heroes like you that are willing to place service before self and support your Solider or Airmen.



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MILITARY FAMILY MONTH
"A SALUTE TO MILITARY FAMILIES"

Survivor Outreach Services (SOS)

Losing a loved one is one of the most difficult things anyone can go through. Survivor Outreach Services (SOS) connects you with people who can help you move forward and find strength.

Many times after you have lost a loved one, there are unresolved issues or questions that may surface months or years after the loss. We understand that new issues and questions may surface long after the Casualty Assistance Officer has concluded his or her duties.



SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES (SOS) demonstrates the Army National

Guard's commitment to Families of the Fallen. SOS is a holistic and multi-agency approach to delivering reference and referral services at the garrisons and communities closest to where they live.

SOS MISSION

Function as the long-term support for Survivors... For as long as they desire. Work with Casualty Assistance Officer to provide guidance and assistance to the Family in regards to benefits Provide expertise on Federal and State benefits Work with Family to arrange for estate and financial planning Work with Military Funeral Honors and contact the surviving spouse to offer support services to Survivors of our retired service members

VIRGINIA NATIONAL GUARD SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES COORDINATOR

Mr. Barney Sais is the Virginia National Guard Survivor Outreach Services Coordinator.

He can be reached at the following:

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November Is Military Family Month

President Barack Obama pledged his support of military members and their families and said Americans have a "solemn obligation" to preserve their well-being in his proclamation declaring November as Military Family Month.

The proclamation reads:

"No one pays a higher price for our freedom than members of our Nation's military and their families. As sons and daughters, husbands and wives, and mothers and fathers are deployed, military families endure with exceptional resilience and courage. They provide our troops with invaluable encouragement and love, and serve our Nation in their own right. During Military Family Month, we honor the families of our Armed Forces and thank them for their dedication to our country.

"Though only a small percentage of our Nation's population, our troops bear the great responsibility of protecting our people. They, along with their families, serve us every day with courage and dignity. Ensuring that military families receive the respect they deserve and the support they have earned is a top priority for my Administration.

"The strength of our Nation is measured not just by our success on the battlefield, but also by our ability to support those families who have made so many sacrifices for us. Time and again, military families have shown their heart in the face of adversity. We have a solemn obligation to ensure that while our men and women in uniform discharge their duties, we do all we can to promote and preserve the well-being of their families. We must also support the families of our wounded warriors and our fallen heroes who have paid the ultimate price for the freedoms we enjoy.

"This month, we celebrate the tremendous contributions of military families, convey to them our deepest respect and appreciation, and recommit ourselves to their support.

"NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 2009 as Military Family Month. I call on all Americans to honor military families through private actions and public service for the tremendous contributions they make in the support of our service members and our Nation."

Volunteers, the Heart of the Program



By Julia Alaric

As the person responsible for volunteer coordination and training in the Virginia National Guard, I thought I would write an article about volunteers for this month's "Families in Focus" newsletter. I became the Family Readiness Assistant just a little over 4 years ago and during that time I have had the opportunity to meet some of the best volunteers the National Guard has. Some of the volunteers are brand spanking new, others have been volunteering for their soldiers and Families for a few months or years and some have been around since the inception of Family Readiness Group volunteers. (They know who they are and I applaud them!). Volunteers "donate" their time freely to various causes for many different reasons. Virginia National Guard volunteers support their Family Readiness Groups because each one of them has the genuine desire to help the Families of our Soldiers and Airmen serving, regardless of the phase of deployment their Soldier or Airmen is in. The mission of Family Readiness Groups is to develop "strong, resilient and self-sufficient Families" who can take care of themselves during all phases of deployment. The volunteers do this through Information, Referral and Support, or as I like to tell my volunteers, and the Commanders they volunteer for, they are the I.R.S of the Virginia National Guard!

Per Army policy there are two types of Volunteers, Statutory and Gratuitous. The volunteers that hold official positions in Family Readiness Groups are appointed in writing by unit commanders. They have a specific job to perform and are required to track their volunteer hours. These folks are statutory volunteers. The following positions are held by statutory volunteers, unit FRG Leaders/Co Leaders, Secretaries, Treasures, Newsletter writers and

Phone Tree Callers. All other unit Family members who volunteer to assist with their Family Readiness Group activities are Gratuitous volunteers. But no matter whether the volunteer is Statutory or Gratuitous, the bottom line is the National Guard Mission can not be accomplished without these awesome people who selflessly give up their time to support our Families. So to all of our volunteers, both Statutory and Gratuitous, I raise my hand to salute you, for all that you do to support our Virginia National Guard Families. You are truly the Heart of our Program and absolutely the essential piece to our success.

On 29-31 May 2009, Family Programs hosted the 2nd State Volunteer Recognition Workshop. This was an opportunity for the Family Programs staff, the Adjutant General of Virginia and unit commanders to personally thank and recognize our National Guard Volunteers for all that they have done this past year in supporting our Families. This year there were 49 volunteers in attendance. They were (hopefully) educated, enlightend, entertained and above all made to feel appreciated for all their hard work and selfless efforts. Next to the State Youth Camps, this event requires the most hours to coordinate and facilitate, but it is the most rewarding event that Family Programs hosts each year. I look forward to this event all year long because it gives me the opportunity to rub shoulders and share hugs with these wonderful, selfless individuals.

In July 2009 I had the pleasure to accompany 9 Virginia Volunteers to Dearborn Michigan to represent our state at the National Guard Bureau Family Programs Volunteer Workshop. Our volunteers represented 7 units within the Virginia Army and Air Guard as well as the Virginia State Volunteer Advisory Council. Each volunteer spent 3 days attending workshops, General Session meetings and networking amongst themselves and with volunteers from all over the country and territories. All of them walked away with new ideas and energy to begin implementing some of what they had learned into their own FRGs. I think it is also safe to say that new friendships were formed! We have just been informed that 2010's National workshop will be held in New Orleans from 2-4 August 2010. So volunteers reading this article write that date on your calendars and be on the lookout for more information.

So in closing I would just like to again say a huge "Thanks" to all of our volunteers and look forward to seeing them at the Volunteer Recognition workshop in 2010 if not before.

National Guard Joins In Celebrating the Year of the Air Force Family

The Virginia Air National Guard will be celebrating our families during the "Year of the Air Force Family" which runs from July 2009 to July 2010. The Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Air Force has set aside this time to communicate to all of families how much they are appreciated by showcasing the services we provide to them to support a positive quality of life in the Air Force and its Reserve and Guard.



This year's focus will be based on four pillars: Health and Wellness; Airman and Family Support; Education, Development and Employment; and Airman and Family housing.

The 192d Fighter Wing hosted a kickoff held at the Langley AFB Bateman Library with TAG Spouse, Becky Newman in attendance as honorary chairperson. Col Mark McCauley welcomed all of our guests and shared his support for the "Year of the Air Force Family" emphasis. Roland Taylor, Chief of Airman and Family Services at Langley AFB introduced the concept and purpose of the observance and spoke of partnering with the Virginia Air National Guard throughout the year. In recognizing that deployments haven't stopped, Mr. Taylor

emphasized that we will be bridging pieces together to reach all parts of our community with communications and events that are free for everyone. Angie Wade, Wing Family Program Coordinator, further explained the need to get the message out to our communities around Virginia that Air National Guard families are everywhere and viable members of their communities.

Susy Rotkiss, wife of Col Pat Deconcini, shared that as part of active, real world missions, our families are important. We are not just part of the Total Force Integration (TFI), our families are also a part of the Total Community Integration (TCI). Marcia Potas, wife of Major Dan Potas, Chief Jimmy Landers, Major Andrea Stewart of the 192d Fighter Wing Mission Support Flight, Vickie Sais, State Family Program Director and Pat Thorne, Military and Family Life Coordinator along with four members of community partner, VFW Post # 824 also attended the kick-off.

The Adjutant General for the Virginia National Guard, Major Robert Newman dropped by to give closing words of support for our airmen and their families.

For more information on the Year of the Air Force Family and the Air National Guard program support, please visit YOAFF Website <http://www.af.mil/yoaff/index.asp> and click on the link for updates, calendar and services provided for members of the Air Force Family.

Military OneSource Webinars Are Coming

Health Coaching: What's it all about?

November 19, 2009

Maintaining Balance During the Holiday Season

November 12, November 17

Special Needs Resources for Military

Families December 10

Flu Toolkit – As fall turns to winter, it's important to know how to find expert information about seasonal flu and the H1N1 virus. The new Flu Toolkit on Military

OneSource Online contains links to sites with extensive, current information about both kinds of flu, information about immunizations, and RSS feeds from www.Flu.gov. The link is located under "Resources" in the right hand navigation of the homepage.

New Military Recreation Pages – New MWR pages highlight vacation getaways, libraries, YMCA programs, single service member programs and non-profit partners. Check out the new section:
www.MilitaryOneSource.com/militaryrecreation
www.MilitaryOneSource/MWR.

Prevention, Treatment, and Outreach Program (PTO)

SGT Danny Joyner (Prevention Coordinator) danny.joyner@us.army.mil

BLDG 472 FORT PICKETT, BLACKSTONE VA 23824 434-292-8527/804-658-9365

The PTO mission is to provide prevention training, outreach to military families, and treatment resources to service members in an effort to increase military discipline, individual performance, and combat readiness.

Prevention – Providing prevention education to Units/Wings and their families.

Treatment – Assisting service members and their families with finding proper treatment facilities or resources, using SAMHSA Treatment locator.

Outreach – Working with service members and their families to reduce the abuse of substances or activities are harmful to the welfare of the service member and their family members. Encourage the healthy well-being of all Guard service members and their families.

What does the Prevention Coordinator do?

Facilitate and coordinate with Soldiers and Airman to be a tool of education and prevention.

Provide a source for all our service members that will give them the tools they need to recognize or change hazards along the pathway to readiness.

Develop a roadmap to recovery for soldiers and this map prevents problems.

Develop an extraordinary rapport with key leaders to enhance transfer of core principals as a facilitator.

Impacts all Soldiers/Airman with prevention education.

An effective resource to find services to help service members and family to fulfill their needs.

Build partnerships and coalitions with agencies outside the military to help provide more resources for the service members and their family.

Help support with pre & post deployment events.

Note: IF YOU FIND YOURSELF IN NEED OF ANY TYPE OF SERVICES, EX. DRUG/ALCOHOL ABUSE, FINANCIAL PROBLEMS, DEPRESSION, GAMBLING ADDICTION ETC... PLEASE CONTACT YOUR PREVENTION COORDINATOR , SGT DANNY JOYNER .

Joint Family Support Assistance Program

What are Regional Reach Outs?

It is a way for Military Families – and those who care about them - to come together. It is place and time to “Meet & Greet” your neighbors who also wear the uniform and learn from each other. From time-to-time specific topics are chosen by the Facilitator or when requested by you, the Military or Family member. We look forward to your joining us! Child are welcome.

November 12, Farmville VFW Post # 7059 Rt. 15 Main St. 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM

November 19 Gate City Community Fellowship Baptist Church, 614 Broadwater Ave 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM

November 19 Mechanicsville VFW Post # 9808, 7168 Flag St. (Bells Creek & Cold Harbor Hwy 156) 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM

December 10 Fredericksburg VFW Post # 3103, 2701 Princess Anne St @ Hwy 1, 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM

For more information contact:

Kaye.carney@militaryOneSource.com (804) 926-7604

Congressional Award For Youth Ages 14-23

Established by Congress in 1979, the Congressional Award recognizes initiative, achievement and service to others by America's youth. A nonpartisan, voluntary, and noncompetitive program, the Congressional Award is open to all 14-23 year olds. Youth, who have registered for the program, set personally challenging goals in four program areas: Voluntary Public Service, Personal Development, Physical Fitness, and Expedition/Exploration. Once all four program areas are complete, participants are recognized with a Bronze, Silver or Gold Certificate or Medal. Congressional Award Medals are presented by the youth's Member of Congress.

The Congressional Award recognizes not only the importance to serve the fellow man, but also the need for self development and personal growth. It is my feeling that members of the Virginia National Guard are among our young Virginians who would be our best ambassadors and would benefit most from participating in this worthy program.

Please take a few minutes to visit the Congressional Award website at www.congressionalaward.org and learn more on how to get started with the Congressional Award!!

Postage Deadlines

For military service members stationed around the globe, holiday gifts are a big morale boost. To help the families and friends of U.S. military personnel, the Postal Service offers a discount on its largest Priority Mail Flat Rate box.

The recommended mailing date for the most economical postage to overseas military installations, including Iraq and Afghanistan, is Nov. 13.

Mail sent to overseas military addresses is charged only domestic mail prices. The domestic mail price for the Priority Mail Large Flat Rate Box is \$13.95, but for packages to APO/FPO addresses overseas the price is reduced to \$11.95. Additional discounts are available for customers printing their Priority Mail postage labels online at [Click-N-Ship](#).

Flat-Rate boxes are free at any Post Office, or can be ordered online at shop.usps.com. Postage, labels and customs forms can be printed online any time using [Click-N-Ship](#).

The Postal Service continues to show support to those serving in the armed forces by offering free Military Care Kits, designed specifically for military families sending packages overseas. The mailing kits can be ordered by phone by calling 1-800-610-8734 and asking for the Care Kit. Each kit includes two "America Supports You" large Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes, four medium-sized Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes, six Priority Mail labels, one roll of Priority Mail tape and six customs forms with envelopes.

For online ordering of the Large Priority Mail APO/FPO Flat Rate boxes featuring the "America Supports You" logo and APO/FPO addressing block, [Click here](#). More information about mailing letters and packages to military destinations is available online at [Supporting Our Troops](#).

"To ensure delivery of holiday cards and packages by Dec. 25 to military APO/FPO addresses overseas, the Postal Service recommends that mail for service members be entered no later than the mailing dates listed below. Mail addressed to military post offices overseas is subject to certain conditions or restrictions regarding content, preparation and handling. APO/FPO addresses generally require customs forms. To see an online table of updated APO and FPO addresses and mailing restrictions by individual APO/FPO ZIP Codes, [Click here](#), select "Pull-Out Information" and click on "Overseas Military/Diplomatic Mail."

Family Resource Corner

Joint Services Support	www.jointservicesupport.org/fp/
Armed Services YMCA	www.militaryymca.com
Operation Kid Comfort	http://www.asymca.org/Programs.aspx?pgmID=28&mid=27
eKnowledge	www.eknowledge.com/nfl
After Deployment	http://www.afterdeployment.org
Veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan	http://www.oefoif.va.gov/
Issues Impacting Pregnancy and Young Children	http://www.theparentreview.com/DoD/
Virginia Child Care Resource and Referral	http://www.vachildcare.org/
Free Military and Family Guides	http://www.govamerica.org
Healthy Way of Living	http://www.ymca.net/healthyfamilyhome/welcome.html
My GI Bill	http://www.mygibill.org

Veterans Suicide Prevention Hotline 1-800-273-TALK

Crisis Link—Arlington	http://www.crisislink.org/	703-527-6603
Help Line ACTS—Dumfries	http://www.actspwc.org/	703-221-1144
Crisis Link—Norfolk	http://www.theplanningcouncil.org/	757-622-9268
Crisis Center—Bristol	http://www.crisiscenterinc.org/	276-466-2312
Crisis Line of Central VA—Lynchburg	http://www.crisislineofcentralvirginia.org/	434-947-5921

Upcoming Events

YOAFF Holiday Event	12 Dec 2009	Langley AFB	Angie Wade
Marriage Retreat	22-24 Jan 2010	Shenandoah Valley	Kay Baber
Single Soldier Retreat	5-7 Feb 2010	Shenandoah Valley	Kay Baber
Marriage Retreat	12-14 Feb 2010	Shenandoah Valley	Kay Baber
Marriage Retreat	19-21 March 2010	Shenandoah Valley	Kay Baber
Annual Volunteer Recognition Workshop	30 April to 2 May 2010	Shenandoah Valley	Vickie Sais
Single Soldier Retreat	21-23 May 2010	Shenandoah Valley	Kay Baber
Abington Youth Camp	TBA May 2010	Abington	Dana Ivory
Evening Under The Stars	TBD May 2010	Hampton	Angie Wade
Marriage Retreat	25-27 June 2010	VA Beach	Kay Baber
Wilderness Adventure Teen Camp	TBD June 2010	Eagle Landing New Castle	Dana Ivory
Marriage Retreat	16-18 July 2010	VA Beach	Kay Baber
Single Soldier Retreat	23-25 July 2010	VA Beach	Kay Baber
Junior Youth Camp	TBD	VA Beach, Camp Pendleton	Dana Ivory
Marriage Retreat	6-8 Aug 2010	VA Beach	Kay Baber

Let's Talk Facts About the FAC'S

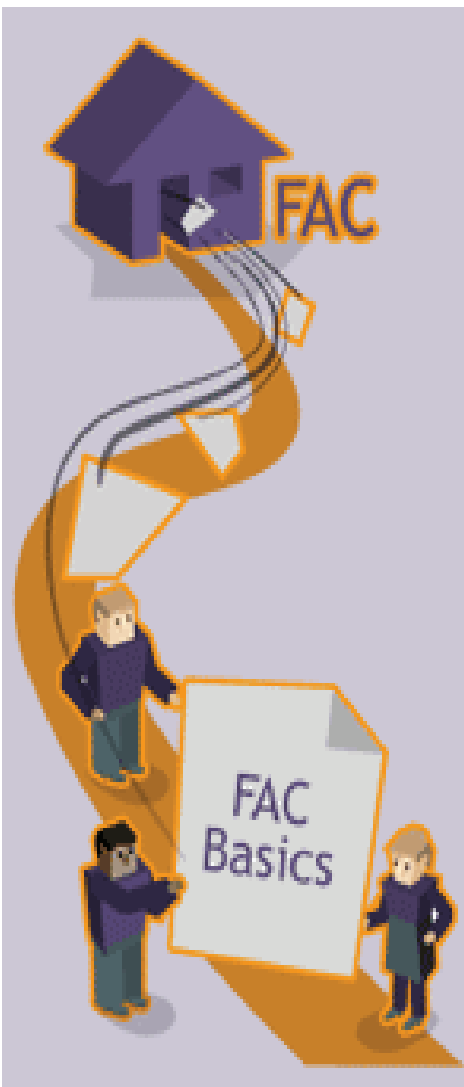
By **Tina Harrison**

The Family Assistance Center or "FAC" is your One Stop Shop for assistance and referral. From questions about TRICARE to financial needs, the FAC can assist you with a variety of different issues. There are 7 FAC offices strategically located throughout the Commonwealth to serve you no matter where you live. The FAC is available Monday-Friday, 8:00am to 4:30pm. Your call is important to us! If you call a FAC office after office hours, please leave a message so that your call may be returned the following business day. Everyone is always welcome to stop by one of the FAC offices for assistance or just to pick up information on a variety of topics pertinent to being a National Guard Family Member.

The FAC Specialist work with many organizations such as local VFW posts, American Legion, Operation Homefront just to name a few. The FAC Specialist will also work with the soldier's unit leadership to assist with issues as necessary.

In the event of an emergency, you may contact the FAC hotline at 1-800-542-4028. You may use this line if you are calling after office hours or are unable to contact a FAC Specialist right away.

The FAC Specialists are here to assist any military member and their Families, so do not hesitate to call!



State FAC Coordinator

(757) 455-0829 *812

(757) 416-2095 (M)

Powhatan FAC

(804) 598-8037

(434) 294-5764 (M)

Abingdon FAC

(276) 628-7698

(276) 634-7386 (M)

Roanoke FAC

(540) 983-6838

(540) 718-5888 (M)

Chatham FAC

(434) 432-7266

(434) 770-3284 (M)

Staunton FAC

(540) 851-4164

(540) 292-2636 (M)

Manassas FAC

(703) 392-8858

(540) 718-2417 (M)

Virginia Beach FAC

(757) 961-6545

(757) 353-9621 (M)

For Emergencies only call 1.800.542.4028

Serving All Military Families