



Families in Focus

Family Programs Staff

Virginia Army & Air National Guard

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Message from the J1

The beginning of 2008 closes a very demanding year for our Families and Soldiers. I thank all of you for the invaluable leadership, assistance and self sacrifice you provided. We welcome all of our returning Soldiers from Bosnia and Kosovo and anxiously plan for the return of those deployed until spring and summer.

The New Year promises to be very productive with the combined efforts of our volunteers and staff. Our collective efforts will guarantee a benchmark program that meets your needs and those of our commanders. My family and I wish you a safe and joyous time this Holiday Season and a Happy New Year.

Inside this issue

Upcoming Events	2	Strong Bonds	6
TRICARE New Online	3	Strong Bonds Application	7
Deployment Journals for Kids	3	Turbo Tap	7
FRG Basic Training	4	FAC Information	8

Commissary Scholarship Applications Available

Applications for the Defense Commissary Agency's 2008 Scholarships for Military Children are now available in commissaries worldwide. The \$1,500 scholarships are for children of active-duty and retired military, as well as children of Guard and reserve Soldiers. Applicants must plan to attend an accredited college or university full time in the fall of 2008. The deadline to apply is 20 February 2008. At least one scholarship will be awarded at every commissary location with qualified candidates. Applications and further eligibility requirements are available in commissaries and online at <http://www.commissaries.com> or at <http://www.militaryscholar.org>



MyArmyBenefits Website

MyArmyBenefits Website Is the Single Source for All Army Benefits The MyArmyBenefits website is the official Army benefits resource for Regular Army, Army National Guard, Army Reserve, Family Members, and Retirees. Active duty Soldiers with AKO accounts can access personalized reports on the survivor, disability, and retirement benefits through MyArmyBenefits. The Army created this official one-stop, Web-based resource to integrate benefits information and resources into one location on the Web. <http://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil>

Source: MyArmyLifeToo.Com

Upcoming Events

2-183d CAV Midwinter Social

Date: 12 January 2008
2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Location: Norfolk Armory
Norfolk, VA 23501

Basic One Day FRG Training

Date: 19 January 2008

Location: Fort Pickett, Building 317
Fort Pickett, VA 2382

Strong Bonds Retreat

Date: 26-27 January 2008

Location: Courtyard by Marriott
Alexandria, VA 22304

January 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

New Online Resource Can Help TRICARE Beneficiaries Deal with Life's Challenges

A new online educational resource offers TRICARE beneficiaries a secure, safe environment to seek information, educational materials and self-assessment tools on behavioral health, addiction and recovery, life events and daily living skills. "AchieveSolutions" can be accessed through the behavioral health link in the beneficiary resources area of the Humana Military Healthcare Services' (HMHS) website at <http://www.humana-military.com>. HMHS is

the managed care contractor for the TRICARE south region. Resources provided on the Website, which are offered in both English and Spanish, include: access to self-referral tools, behavioral health program information, interactive self-assessment applications with solutions, health risk assessment tools and benefit information. "AchieveSolutions" also contains over 6,000 articles covering more than 200 topical areas such as: information on advocacy, emotional well-

being, family concerns, dealing with illness, loss and grief, alcoholism and substance abuse. For more information, visit: <http://www.tricare.mil/pressroom/news.aspx?fid=328>.

Source: MyArmyLifeToo.Com

HUMANA MILITARY
HEALTHCARE SERVICES



Deployment Journal for Kids

Health Net Federal Services, LLC (HNFS), the government operations division of Health Net, Inc. and MHN, Inc., Health Net's behavioral health subsidiary, has released My Life, a Kids Journal designed for military children whose parent or loved one is deployed. The journal was developed

as part of Health Net Federal Services' new children's initiative in an effort to provide additional resources to help children successfully navigate the unique challenges military families face, particularly deployment. The 44-page journal, designed in vivid colors, guides children through the process

of formulating and making sense of their feelings during a loved one's deployment and helps establish important dialogue with their parents. The journal is meant to serve as a keepsake for the child or as a gift to their special person who is deployed once it is completed.

Sesame Workshop Creates New DVD for Children of Injured Veterans



The Sesame Workshop, the non-profit organization behind the popular children's TV show Sesame Street, has created a new DVD kit to help the children of injured veterans adjust to the changes in their parents. The new DVD follows upon the success of the "Talk, Listen, Connect" DVD, which was designed to help military parents with preschool children discuss deployment. In the new DVD, the Muppet character Rosita is upset because her father has returned home from an absence in a wheelchair. With

help from her friends, Rosita begins to talk to her Family about how she feels and gradually learns how to adjust to the new situation. To learn more about the Sesame Workshop's efforts to support military Families and to obtain a copy of "Talk, Listen, Connect", please visit <http://www.sesameworkshop.org/tlc>.

Source: MyArmyLifeToo.Com

BASIC FAMILY READINESS GROUP TRAINING



WHO: THE BASIC COURSE IS FOR NEWLY
COMMAND APPOINTED FRG LEADERS.

WHEN: 19 JANUARY 2008, 0900-1600

WHERE: FORT PICKETT, BUILDING 317

WHY: THE FRG BASIC COURSE WILL PRESENT
INSTRUCTION ON HOW TO BEGIN AND
OPERATE AN EFFECTIVE FRG.

POINT OF CONTACTS ARE

DANA IVORY AT DANA.IVORY@US.ARMY.MIL OR
434.298.5330 AND JULIA ALARIC AT
JULIA.ALARIC@US.ARMY.MIL OR 434.298.6336



Strong Bonds Retreat

*Courtyard by Marriot
Alexandria, Virginia*

Who: Married couples of the Virginia National Guard

What: Marriage Enrichment Retreat

When: 26-27 January 2008

Where: Courtyard by Marriott Pentagon South
Alexandria, Virginia

Why: Marriage Enrichment Retreat is specially designed for returning soldiers and their spouses. Through the partnership with the Family Programs Office and the State Chaplain's office, this program offers tips and guidance on keeping a marriage strong and nurturing a lasting love after a long deployment. The retreat will serve as a platform for couples to communicate and spend time together in a very comfortable setting. The 2 day retreat will include the Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program (PREP®) as well as other lessons that concentrate on knowing your soul



For more information on how to register or if you have questions, please contact Dana Ivory via email dana.ivory@us.army.mil or by phone 1-888-483-2682 ext 5330.

"A valuable and enjoyable investment of time in our family's future." C.D.

"I encourage all couples to attend. I have a wonderful marriage, but it was good to learn some new techniques to make it better. It was wonderful to be able to spend time as a couple"

"This seminar is a wonderful way to help re-integrate previously deployed soldiers with their spouse." Anonymous

Strong Bonds Retreat Registration Form Courtyard by Marriott Alexandria, Virginia

We're doing pretty well. Why should we consider attending a Marriage Enrichment Retreat?

Because the Marriage Enrichment Retreat is **NOT** therapy. Every couple starts off their relationship committed to make it work. The Marriage Enrichment Retreat provides concrete strategies and tools to help building strong relationships for married couple after deployments.

Soldier's Name _____
Last First Middle initial

Rank: _____ Unit: _____ Soldier's SSN: _____

Spouse's: _____ Spouse's SSN: _____
Last First Middle initial

Address: _____ Home Phone: _____
Street

City State Zip Work Phone: _____

*Soldier's Email: _____ *Spouse's Email: _____

Please complete and return by 11 January 2008

***Registration confirmation and correspondences will be sent via email.**

Please fax this form to Dana Ivory at 434.298.6202 or mail to:

Virginia National Guard
ATTN: Family Programs –Dana Ivory
Building 316, Fort Pickett
Blackstone, VA 23824



Guard and Reserve Transition Assistance

• All Transition Resources in One Place

TurboTAP is an easy to use, interactive Web portal that provides life-long support to separating military servicemembers (Active Duty, Guard and Reserve) and their families. It is a single source starting point for accessing key resources available for servicemembers transitioning out of the military at any point in their military career – these include Department of Defense, Department of Labor, Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Education, Small Business Administration, the National Veterans Corporation and the National Guard Bureau.

Features Include:

Guard/ Reserve Transition Guide

Active Duty Preseparation Guide

Personalized Individual Transition Plan

Employment Hub

Benefits Hub

Calculators

Useful Checklists

Site Tutorial

Helpful E-mail Reminders



• Access When & Where You Want - Support for Life

Each transitioning servicemember is encouraged to establish a TurboTAP Account within 48 hours of attending a Transition Assistance Program or as soon as they learn about this important resource. If you are overseas, deployed, or in the states, you are able to use TurboTAP. Once registered, TurboTAP is available for life.

For more information go to www.TurboTAP.org or email TAPHelp@military-inc.com.

TURBOTAP AREAS

Introduction to Transition Assistance

Effects of a Career Change

Employment Assistance

Entrepreneurship

Relocation Assistance

Education and Training

Health Care

Life Insurance

Personal Finances

Guard/Reserve

Veterans Benefits

Disabled Veterans

Retirees

Employment Restrictions

Leaving the Service

Family Assistance Centers



Family Assistance Centers (FAC) were originally established to provide assistance and support to soldiers and their families at times of contingency call-up, mobilization and large scale deployment. However over the past years the FACs have branched out to assist any and all military members and their families during times of need regardless of deployment status or branch affiliation. Each FAC is staffed with a professionally trained FAC Specialist who is dedicated to providing assistance to service members and their families. Each of Virginia's FAC specialists has the added first hand experience of what it means to be either a military service member or member of a military family.

The FACs are considered one-stop shopping for those who need services and support. Through partnerships with agencies such as Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), The American Legion, The Red Cross and other local and national organizations and working closely with military personnel such as chaplains, commanders, JAG officers and family readiness group leaders, the FAC specialists are able to provide the very best assistance possible. Some of the areas in which a FAC specialist can provide assistance includes but is not limited to; TRICARE, DEERS, ID cards, financial and legal assistance, service and family member employment/re-employment and crisis intervention referral.

Family Assistance Centers are located through out the state. FAC specialists are available to soldiers and family members experiencing a crisis or emergency no matter when it may occur.

Family Assistance Centers Location



New FAC Location coming in
January
Powhatan Armory

FAC Coordinator Norfolk FAC

Mrs. Tina Harrison
(757) 455-0829 *812
(757) 416-2095 (M)
tina.a.harrison@us.army.mil

Manassas FAC

Mrs. Kat Higgins
(703) 392-8858 *41
(703) 554-5520 (M)
kat.higgins@us.army.mil

Chatham/Southwest VA FAC

Ms. Knyla Robin Harris
(434) 432-7228
(434) 770-3284 (M)
knyla.harris@us.army.mil

Sandston FAC

Mrs. Tricia Riggs
(804) 328-3004 *811
(804) 380-6343 (M)
tricia.riggs@us.army.mil

Staunton FAC

Mr. Maurice Harrison
(540) 332-7959
(540) 292-2636 (M)
maurice.harrison@us.army.mil

Roanoke FAC

Melody McGhee
(540) 983-6838
(540) 521-0966 (M)
melody.mcghee@us.army.mil

Abingdon FAC

Jami Kinkead
(276) 628-7698
(276) 698-8213 (M)
jami.kinkead@us.army.mil

Virginia Beach FAC

Amy Wingfield
(757) 961-6545
(757) 353-9621 (M)
amy.wingfield@us.army.mil

Emergency 1.800.542.4028