



GuardEn Of Youth

September
and October
2009

To support the social, emotional, and academic needs of
National Guard children and youth



Youth Symposium participants (below) take a break in the action during Saturday's all-day training event at Shiloh's Edge high ropes challenge course.



HALFMOON--Kids participating in the New York National Guard Family and Youth Program Symposium walk the wires at the Shiloh's Edge high-ropes challenge course here.

The 75 children of National Guard Soldiers and Airmen participating in the symposium spent the day at Shiloh's Edge negotiating a number of obstacles to build teamwork and confidence and just have fun.

Symposium—NOT Mandatory Fun Day

Anyone with a parent in the National Guard has probably spent at least one mandatory fun day with their family and their Guard unit. Summer picnics, holidays parties, they have their purpose; getting Soldiers and families together for some down time and a way to get to know each other.

But for kids older than 10, they get old quick. This was not the case with the Symposium. This year what some thought would be a day spent hanging out together while their folks talked about volunteer programs to help families of National Guard Soldiers, was a full day spent at Shiloh's Edge high ropes challenge course learning how to maneuver through numerous obstacles. It took working as teams and learning to communicate and it was a great time.

(See Story page 3)

Special Interest in this issue:

- 2009 Family and Youth Symposium
- NY Family Program thanks Walter Reed Fischer House
- Radio City Rockettes

Family Readiness Group donates to Youth Symposium

NY National Guard Family Readiness Council President, Cherie Murphy presented a check to Sabrina Lombardo, NY National Guard Youth Program Teen Council member, September 8. The Family Readiness Council donated over \$1,300.00 to the National Guard Family Program to be used during the groups Volunteer and Youth Symposium, September 19th and 20th in Saratoga Springs, NY.



L to R: Shelly Aiken, Director of New York National Guard Youth Programs, Cherie Murphy, New York National Guard Family Readiness Council President, and Sabrina Lombardo

The Symposium was a fun packed weekend for National Guard Family Readiness Groups, military points of contact and youth volunteers. The weekend included lectures, training and discussions on building better Family Readiness Groups, before, during and after deployments.

The Youth Program (for children ages 6-18) included a field trip to challenge youth at Shiloh's Edge, activities with a National Guard Recruiting team, learning survival skills with the National Guard Corp Cadets and a chance to meet other National Guard kids from NY, creating lasting lifetime memories.

National Guard Youth Symposium



By Sabrina Lombardo

Saratoga Springs--I was so excited to be at the Youth Symposium this year. It was announced a few months earlier that we would be going to Shiloh's Edge this year, a high-ropes course. It was going to be amazing, and I was really looking forward to seeing old friends I had made in the past, and meeting new friends.

The hotel lobby was classy, with polished floors and comfy-looking chairs. The lighting was soft and the staff seemed friendly. Upon entering and finding Shelly Aiken—the spectacular, outstanding, ravishing director of the youth program, I was informed that I was going to be the youth leader for a group of teenagers. *Great.* So I was briefed in what would happen for the next two days; the itinerary, contact numbers, etc. After everything was sorted out for the next few days, my mother (ie: my chauffeur, chaperone, and credit card) and I went in search of food. We finally found a small hole-in-the-wall bar & grill where the locals ate. We went in, ordered food at the bar, and then I pumped the jukebox full of quarters to blast Nickelback.

After a wonderful dinner, we walked back to the hotel, where there was a small social going on, with everyone at the symposium getting together and talking and laughing. They had music playing—dance-y pop music—and at one point, this little kid went around dancing—it was so adorable! My mother and I socialized with the people for a few minutes, and then went up to the room in the hotel to crash—exhaustion was starting to creep up on me.

The next morning, breakfast started at seven. We were down there by eight a.m. to get plates full of scrambled eggs, bacon, hash browns, and pancakes. There were a lot of families there, still eating. I finished my hash browns quickly and went off to find Shelly to see if there was anything I could do to help; The buses to Shiloh's Edge were about to start loading.

Once everyone was done with breakfast, the kids and teens were instructed to go and wait in the main lobby. There were five different groups—red, orange, blue, green, and brown—mine. Everyone was scattered around the room, checking in, talking to each other. There was a little boy in one of the other groups who was crying for his mother, not wanting to leave her. He was so cute, and it was so sad to watch as she tried to tell him that they'd be together again later that day and he clutched at her shirt.

I saw a few people with brown shirts on. I started introducing myself and handing out nametags. I was really nervous, like I always am around new people. There was a girl in a turquoise hooded sweatshirt over a brown shirt who was standing with her little brother who was in the Blue Group.

She smiled reassuringly at me, which made me smile. I was a little less nervous now. I went around to a few other people and handed out nametags, getting a little less sheepish with every friendly smile and “hello”. I talked to a few of them—“hi”, “how are you?”, “where are you from?”—that kind of stuff—and then we loaded onto the buses.

It was a half-hour ride to Shiloh's Edge, but it seemed like longer in the bumpy bus. The driver was playing good music over the radio and everyone was chattering and laughing, excited to do the ropes course.

When we got to Shiloh's Edge, everyone was really energetic. The people who worked there introduced themselves and briefed us on a few regular rules and safety precautions, and then our "leader", Adam, took us off to our first *challenge*. We trekked down a path in the woods until we came to four trees connected by thin, strong wire in the form of a "Z" about half a foot off the ground.

Adam explained that we had to get every member of our team from the first tree through the last on the wire. We could use each other—in fact, it was encouraged that we work as a team—and if anyone fell off the wire, they had to start over again at the first tree. There was a rope tied to the third tree that we could use when we reached it.

It took us about an hour to complete the challenge, but we all finally did it. People were hugging trees like a rally in southern Vermont. At one point, I was holding onto the rope and I almost fell backwards, so I was leaning back at almost a ninety degree angle, clutching onto the rope to keep myself up. I was trying to pull myself back up, but I was laughing way too hard.

After that challenge, our leader Adam led us back to the high ropes course—the Main Event, if you will. Basically, you climbed up a big rope ladder that looked like a giant spider web, and then you walk across wires more than eighty feet up in the air—you were in a harness with metal clips that clipped onto the wires, but it was still scary because of the height. I heard someone scream, "What did I get myself into!?" which was pretty funny. After you passed the wires and were back onto a solid wood platform on stilts, you zip lined down to the ground. It was possibly the most thrilling experience of my life. For the remainder of the afternoon, the team climbed the rock wall, hung out around the other courses, and later, they did the lower ropes course, which was

similar to the high one. It was an awesome day. Some of the little kids even fell asleep on the bus going home, they were so worn out.

Once everyone was back to the hotel, they spread off to dinner, to the hotel pool, or to hang out in their hotel rooms. I was exhausted and fell right to sleep, barely able to move. The next morning, we went down for breakfast and I ran around, helping to make sure everything was ready for the *closing ceremonies*, which started after breakfast. Each team was awarded certificates for completing the weekend. At the end, my mother—who was not only photographing and reporting on the weekend, but also helped set up, helped break down, and took care of some of the younger kids, while looking for a lost cell phone—to receive a special award for being awesome—if I do say so myself.

One of the little kids walked up to Shelly and Lt. Col. Hilland with a bouquet of roses and a single rose, and presented the bouquet to Shelly and the single rose to Lt. Col Hilland, for doing an amazing job setting the weekend up.

It was a great weekend all around. After many good-byes and numerous hugs, people left in crowds. I was exhausted, but it was worth it, and I couldn't wait to come back next year.



Helping Families is What It's All About



Story and Photos by Master Sgt. Corine Lombardo

Saratoga Springs, NY - Nearly 200 New York National Guard family readiness volunteers and youth leaders spent the weekend of Sept. 18-20 learning better ways to do their jobs.

"This workshop has been a great opportunity to identify lessons learned and best practices from folks who have been doing this for some time," said Lt. Col. Jeffrey Cipolla, Commander of the 204th Engineer Battalion in Buffalo. "It will definitely assist our Family Readiness Group in developing programs to help Soldiers and their families."

The weekend was designed to train the volunteers in dealing with the stresses of military life and deployments, said Lt. Col. Kelly Hilland, the director of the New York National Guard Family Program.





"The program is designed to enhance the quality of life for National Guard members, their families, and the communities in which they live," Hilland said. This is accomplished through an established network of trained volunteers allied with Active and Reserve Components; government agencies; employers; Veteran & Volunteer Service Organizations, and private businesses in support of all military Service members and their families throughout New York State, she explained.

Cipolla and his wife Sue learned a great deal from the workshop about educational opportunities and financial programs available to families of National Guard Soldiers.

"I'm here to learn so I can teach others; and getting contact names and phone numbers to get assistance for family members was very helpful," Sue Cipolla said.

While the adult leaders discussed the program's finer points, nearly 75 children, ages 5-18, shared a full day of leadership, and team and confidence building at Shiloh's Edge high and low ropes challenge course in nearby Halfmoon.

Shiloh's Edge is a non-profit organization which uses outdoor activities to enhance the physical, mental, social and spiritual lives of children.

"This was a great opportunity for our kids to challenge themselves and create lasting lifetime friendships and memories," said Shelly Aiken, NY

National Guard Youth Program Director. "They learn to work together and depend on each other, just like their parents do in the National Guard."

Sixteen year-old Skymarie Kinkle attended the Symposium thinking it was a chance to spend the weekend away from Long Island with her Mom, brother and stepdad, Private 1st Class Keith Bickmeyer from Co. B, 642nd Aviation Battalion. What she hadn't planned for was a new experience that would help her overcome her fears.

"It's all about teamwork and building trust to rely on each other to get through an immense amount of obstacles," Kinkle said. "It was a lot of fun and I got over my fear of heights."

Since the start of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the deployment of more than 10,000 members of the New York Army and Air National Guard to combat zones, the family program has expanded to include full-time consultants in child welfare and psychology and the establishment of professionally-staffed outreach centers around the state.

Family Readiness Group volunteers, meanwhile, have become an integral part of the Army and Air Guard units they support, maintaining programs that help families cope with the stress of separation during deployments, Hilland said.

Wounded Warriors Are Not Forgotten

By Sabrina Lombardo

When my mom deployed to Iraq in 2005, I worried if she would be okay and what would happen if she were wounded in combat. My mom came home without injury and over the summer I had a chance to visit other NY National Guard Soldiers who weren't as fortunate.

The first thing I noticed walking into Walter Reed Army Medical Center was that it didn't look like a hospital. Nor did it smell like one. The walls were dark wood, large portraits of the hospital's former presidents lined the walls, and the five flags of the (military services) Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard hung grandly from the ceiling. People in hospital scrubs, military uniforms, and civilian clothes were milling around, checking their cell phones, pushing wheelchairs, and scurrying to accomplish other various activities. We a brief tour of parts of the hospital; the food court, gift shop, and trophy cases, which were actually really cool; there were old pictures of when the hospital was first started, nurses and doctors, and one old photograph of an old-school operating room from, like, 1911. Someone had donated two teddy bears that were dressed as a doctor and a nurse, and there was a row of pictures of people who had received medals of Honor.

I learned that the Warrior Transition Program is for Soldiers' continuing care so that they can transition back to civilian life, their unit or return to combat.

There are two kinds of patients here; inpatients and outpatients. Inpatients usually have combat wounds, non-battle injuries, or an illness. The outpatients are recovering from one of the previous conditions. Soldiers are assigned a primary care physician as well as a coordinator to assist with making appointments.

Inpatients have a medical attendant, a family member who helps make decisions regarding their treatment. They can also have up to two additional three family members put on military travel orders to come stay with them. When they arrive, they are given two hundred dollar gift cards or phone cards. When the soldiers are discharged, they are moved to different housing and become outpatients, and they stay on orders until they are recovered.

In addition to physical recovery, there are psychiatrists, psychologists, therapists, and social workers available to support behavioral health issues.

They also work with Soldiers dealing with anger management or alcohol and drug abuse issues. There are a lot of activities as well. The MWR or Moral Welfare and Recreation coordinates tours of the Pentagon, trips to NASCAR, hunting trips, even Xbox tournaments.

There's also a Community Based Warrior Transition Unit that helps Soldiers get closer to home. Once they reach a certain level of recovery, they may be moved to another facility where treatment is localized.

They also work with non-profit organizations who volunteer to help families, build special needs houses, and even provide therapy dogs.

For families, they have a Soldier Family Assistance Center with resources to help children integrate into the Virginia public school system and provide after school care, organize activities and video games.

Outpatients and family members of inpatients stay at the Mologne House.

The building itself was really pretty; all red brick and flowers everywhere. I met a couple from New York, Colin and Jamie Dudziak who were sitting under one of the awnings set up behind the huge housing unit.

Colin arrived at Walter Reed after a short stay in Germany after being medically evacuated out of Afghanistan in 2007. Jamie arrived shortly after and was escorted directly from the airport. "The Mologne house took care of everything so there were no problems with the transition," Jamie said.

When asked about the services provided, they both whole heartedly agreed on the top-notch medical care. Other services they found helpful were the 'stronger bond' retreats and workshops for married couples.

They have spa days for the spouses, a calendar of events and different activities, social workers, a twenty-four hour chapel, and there's a chaplain always on call."

"It's tough being cooped up in a one room apartment for such a long time and you basically have to rearrange your life around the schedule here," said Jamie. We can't cook in the room so we use meal cards to eat at the cafeteria and have to wait to use the washing machine. "The toughest part is being away from family and your environment for so long," said Jamie.

"The only thing that really matters is that Colin is going to be ok," said Jamie. They both agree that talking to your family about what medical decisions to make, before you deploy is imperative

"Yeah, and I could see where people could start to get depressed here; if there are things being offered here—like, activates and stuff—then take it. Get involved."

As we left Mologne House, I looked back to see a twenty-something-year-old rolling down the walkway in a wheelchair; it wasn't fair—he has his whole life in front of him, and he might not walk again. I thought about how, if something had happened to my mother while she was serving in 2004, I don't know what I would have done.

It was just too easy to forget about all the Soldiers that haven't come home yet, and that wasn't right. If this trip to the Walter Reed Memorial Hospital and the Mologne House had taught me anything, it was that people back home needed to remember our wounded warriors who gave so much for our country.

Guard In Notes



Old Navy offers a 10% discount on purchases the first day of each month. Check out the link below.

http://shock.military.com/DC/DealCoupon.jsp?deal_id=25362

Eligibility: Active Duty, Veteran, Retiree, Reserve, National Guard, Government Employee, Military Families, Military.com Members It doesn't say that you need to, but I would bring your ID just in case.



Free online tutoring for Army Youth!!

This online tutoring resource is provided at no cost to Army children of: Active, Wounded, Reserve Component, National Guard and Army civilians (including Survivors). It is available 24/7 and in English or Spanish. Check out the link below for the details. It really sounds like a promising opportunity for kids who need that extra help with homework and aren't able to get it from adults at home or pay for it out of pocket. Assistance is provided in the typical subject areas for youth, and also for teens, but then there are additional topics for college students and adult learners (resume writing, budgeting, etc.) Once the youth get registered, they will get a password to login on the secure site. The students communicate with their live tutor in a format similar to Instant Messaging and have a whiteboard to draw diagrams for math or upload research papers for review.

<http://www.myarmyonesource.com/ChildYouthandSchoolServices/CYSServicesFreeOnlineTutoring/default.aspx>



The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) - The AAP is pleased to bring you the Improving Mental Health in Primary Care Through Access, Collaboration, and Training (IMPACT) Children's Mental Health E-News. The IMPACT Children's Mental Health E-News is funded through a grant from the Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB). For more information go to The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) website at www.aap.org, and search "IMPACT E-News".



Zero to Three - Deployment and Coming Home: The Realities for Infants and Toddlers in Military Families Being a part of a military family presents a multitude of unique stressors. Military families live in an ongoing state of anxiety and tension, which at times can be significantly emotional and cause uncertainty for everyone in the family. In particular, deployments and homecomings create a highly emotional situation that impacts every family member, including those who may be too young to clearly communicate their concerns or needs. For infants and toddlers, the separation or frequent changes often associated with being part of a military family can have a significant impact on their development. "Deployment and Coming Home: The Realities for Infants and Toddlers in Military Families," a feature article from ZERO TO THREE, details the challenges families face before, during, and after deployment, as well as policy recommendations that support infants and toddlers in military families.

For more information go to Zero to Three, www.zerotothree.org, and search "deployment and coming home".

Guard Fr Notes



AfterDeployment.org Summer Newsletter

AfterDeployment.org (AD) is a 24/7 self-care solution targeting typical problems faced by the military community following a deployment. This newsletter was launched in August 2008, and each quarterly newsletter delivers the latest information about AD development, content, special features, facts and figures, topical articles, and upcoming events. To read the newsletter, go to:

<http://www.mmsend9.com/lis.cfm?r=126565275&sid=7141576&m=792354&u=AUSA&s=http://t2health.org/pdf/AfterDeployment_Newsletter_Summer_2009.pdf>



Scholarship Opportunity

The QuestBridge National College Match

The QuestBridge National College Match program helps outstanding low-income high school seniors to gain admission and full four-year scholarships to some of the nation's most selective colleges. We would be grateful for your support in informing the students you work with of the upcoming National College Match application cycle.

Last year, QuestBridge's partner colleges offered admission and over \$100 million in financial aid to more than 1,000 students who applied to the National College Match. Our 25 partners include many of the nation's top-ranked universities and liberal arts colleges, such as:

- § Amherst College
- § MIT
- § Pomona College
- § Princeton University
- § Stanford University
- § Yale University

The National College Match application will be available online at www.questbridge.org starting in early August and due September 30, 2009. The application is free of charge.

QuestBridge is a non-profit program. Our organization has worked for 15 years to help outstanding low-income students to gain access to top-tier colleges. We rely on fellow non-profit organizations like yours to help us reach qualified students who can benefit from the opportunities we offer.

We would welcome your support in any of the following ways:

- § Direct qualified students to the QuestBridge website at www.questbridge.org.
- § Include the text of our announcement (see below) in the appropriate section of your newsletter or other publication. The electronic text of the announcement is also available at www.questbridge.org/access/collegematchtext.
- § Send the announcement in an e-mail to qualified students.
- § Post the announcement on your website.

Thank you for working with us to support the educational goals of high-achieving low-income students. If you would like any further information, please feel free to contact us at partners@questbridge.org.

Kind regards,

Michael McCullough, M.D.

Co-Founder and President

Operation: Military Child Care

Operation: Military Child Care is a Department of Defense (DoD) initiative to support the child care needs of parents who are **activated/deployed**.

WHY is Child Care needed?

When military parents are **activated/deployed**, their needs for child care often increase and so do their **out-of-pocket** child care expenses.

HOW does Operation: Military Child Care support activated/deployed parents?

-  Helps eligible families locate child care options in local communities
-  Reduces child care fees for eligible families who are already using licensed or legally-operating community child care programs and providers

WHO is eligible to participate?

-  Families/Child Guardians of National Guard & Reserve Service Members who are **activated/deployed**
-  Families/Child Guardians of **deployed** Active Duty Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines who are unable to access child care on military installations are eligible during the deployment period and for **60** days after the return of the Military Parent

Note:

The fee assistance program is intended to help support military spouses' employment, education, or special medical circumstances. Fee assistance will only be provided to single military families, dual military families, and military families with a spouse who is working or enrolled in school. It will also be provided to military families where the spouse is looking for work for a period of up to **60** days.

HOW much will child care fees be reduced?

Fee assistance will vary for each family depending upon total family income, location, DoD child care fee policies, and available funding.



For more **INFORMATION** contact
the National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies
(NACCRRRA)

Call Toll-Free 1 (800) 424-2246

Log on at www.NACCRRRA.org/Military

Question? Send an email to: OMCC@naccrra.org

Note: **Operation: Military Child Care** services are not an entitlement and are subject to geographic availability of child care and DoD/Military Service Funding.

Military Child Care Programs



Caring...while you are away

Why is child care needed?

Many Active Duty Service Members live in communities where no military child care is available or where there are long waiting lists for child care on the installation.

To meet their needs, the Department of Defense (DoD) has asked the National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) to partner with state and local Child Care Resource & Referral agencies (CCR&Rs) to refer military families to nationally accredited civilian child care programs and help additional civilian child care programs in selected communities become accredited.

The Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood (MCCYN) program also supports the cost of high-quality civilian child care for eligible Service Members.

The civilian child care programs that provide MCCYN are comparable in quality to military-operated on-base programs.

How much will Service Member's costs be reduced through MCCYN?

Fee reductions will vary depending upon total family income, geographic location, DoD child care fee policies and available funding. The fee assistance program is limited to single parent families, families with a working spouse, or a spouse who is enrolled in school. Spouses looking for work are eligible for fee assistance for 60 days.

Examples of programs eligible to participate in MCCYN:

1. Nationally accredited child care centers or accredited family child care (FCC) homes
2. FCC homes with a CDA-credentialed provider or an FCC provider with an Associate's degree or higher in Early Childhood Education or Child Development

NOTE:

Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood is not an entitlement and is subject to geographic availability of child care and DoD/military Service funding.

MILITARY CHILD CARE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

is an initiative to locate and help pay for child care when on-base child care programs are not available or accessible.

Who's eligible?

Children of geographically dispersed Active Duty families with no access to on-base child care. Examples include children of Active Duty Recruiters, ROTC Instructors, MEPCOM personnel, Service Members on independent duty assignments and Service Members living in communities that are not within reasonable commuting distances to military installations.

Children of Active Duty families who are wait-listed per Service policy and not currently enrolled in on-base child care.

Note: MCCYN programs may not be available in all locations.

Child Age Groups Served: 6 weeks - 12 years

Child Care Options:

Children may attend civilian child care centers, FCC homes and after-school programs. Children may use full-day, part-day and hourly child care.

This program is subject to geographic location and vacancy.



How does the program work?

1. The Service Member, spouse or legal guardian contacts Child Care Aware, a division of NACCRRA, at 1-800-424-2246 or via the web at www.naccrra.org/military/assistance.php.
2. Staff will ask for some initial information to determine eligibility and child care needs.
3. When the child's eligibility is determined, NACCRRA staff will link the Service Member Family to their local CCR&R for help locating an available high-quality child care space.
4. Once the child care space is found, the family will complete the fee assistance application.
5. Copies of the following documents must be provided as part of the application process:
 - Signed copy of the application
 - Leave and Earnings Statement (LES) for the Service Member
 - Spouse's most recent pay stub or proof of enrollment in school
 - Child(ren)'s birth certificate(s) or self-certification of parenthood
 - Child care provider fee assistance application and required documentation
6. As soon as the application and documents are received, the enrollment process begins.
7. The enrollment process takes between one and five business days to complete, following receipt of the family's completed application and information from the participating civilian child care program.
8. The Service Member Family pays a reduced fee directly to the child care program. The difference is paid to the child care program by the Military Service through NACCRRA.



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Opportunity for College Admission and Full Four-Year Scholarships through QuestBridge The QuestBridge National College Match helps outstanding low-income high school seniors to gain admission and full four-year scholarships to some of the nation's leading colleges. If you are a student who has achieved academic excellence in the face of economic challenges, we encourage you to apply at www.questbridge.org.

AUSA Family Programs is pleased to announce we will participate in the Operation Thanksgiving Eagle (OTE) event again this year. Operation Thanksgiving Eagle is a project to thank the children of the military for their daily sacrifices by providing free copies of Debbie Fink's children's activity book, It's a Family Thanksgiving! A Celebration of an American Tradition for Children and Their Families. Through the generous sponsorship of Raytheon and BEA Systems' Electronics, Intelligence & Support's (EI&S) Operating Group, we were able to launch Operation Thanksgiving Eagle during the Family Forum events last year and are able to continue OTE again this year. The book will be provided to Army families at no charge on a first come, first serve basis. Numbers are limited so order early by going to:

<http://www.ausa.org/family>



Dear Military Families,

I hope this letter finds you well and organized for the beginning of another school year. As our military youth balance the demands of school and extra curricular activities, they may also face some additional stress and challenges associated with the deployment of a loved one. If you have not done so already, please consider advising the teachers, principal and/or school counselor who work with your children that a soldier in your family is deployed. While children and teens are often resilient, if your child is exhibiting any unusual behaviors of concern, please feel free to call me to discuss information and referrals which may be of help to you.

I would like to share the following exciting educational programs you may wish to encourage your children to participate in:

Operation Thanksgiving Eagle is a project to thank the children of the military for their daily sacrifices by providing free copies of Debbie Fink's children's activity book "It's a Family Thanksgiving! A Celebration of an American Tradition for Children and Their Families". The book will be provided to military families at no charge on a first come, first serve basis. Please order it at www.ausa.org/family

DeCA (Commissary) has joined several organizations to promote the 2009 Constitution Day Poster Contest. The poster contest is open to youth in grades K-12 (including homeschoolers) to celebrate Constitution Day, Sept. 17, 2009. Contest entrants must design a poster showing how they benefit from the freedoms embodied in the U.S. Constitution. Entries must be postmarked by Oct. 1, 2009.

Details, resources and entry forms are available at www.govdocs4children.pbwiki.com

Teens preparing for their SAT/ACT can take advantage of a generous offer sponsored by eKnowledge, NFL Players, & Department of Defense. This offer provides FREE SAT/ACT test preparation assistance to all active duty and retired military and their dependents nationwide. This initiative has already donated and shipped over \$16,000,000 of the SAT/ACT programs to more than 80,000 U.S. Military and their dependents.

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For more information, please visit www.eknowledge.com/military.

As always, if you would like to contact me personally with concerns or issues you might have please do not hesitate to contact me anytime!!

Have a youthful day,

Shelly Aiken

New York National Guard

Youth Program

Shelly.m.aiken@us.army.mil

914-788-7405



NATIONAL GUARD FAMILY PROGRAMS NEWIST EDDITION!!!

*Someone tiny, someone sweet
we would like for you to meet*

WOC Scott and Crystal Walker are the Proud Parents of
Hannah Rose Walker, DOB: March 10, 2009



Congratulations and Many Blessings from our Family to yours!!!

Guard Fr Notes

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FT.DRUM

The PREVIEW Magazine

Fort Drum's Premier FMWR Entertainment Guide "The Preview" is available as a insert in the Fort Drum newspaper, The Blizzard, the third issue of each month, and is also available through out the month at Fort Drum FMWR facilities. The [PREVIEW](http://www.drummwr.com/ClassesandEvents.htm) <http://www.drummwr.com/ClassesandEvents.htm> is now available on-line as a downloadable PDF.

Contact the Marketing Division at 315-772-2154 for more information.

WEST POINT

Check it out: www.WestPointMWR.com

FT. HAMILTON

Check it out: <http://www.fthamiltonmwr.com/default.htm>

Sesame Street Family Connection

Sesame Street Family Connections is a bilingual, (English/Spanish) child centered online space where both children and adults can interact and stay connected when distance makes everyday communication difficult. With the help of their favorite Sesame Street friends, family members can compose encouraging messages to each other, share artwork and videos, upload photos, and get answers to some questions they may have but didn't know how to ask. Sesame Street Family Connections will serve as the common and private online place to keep military families connected across the globe. Visit the Sesame Street Family Connection website at: <http://www.sesamestreetfamilyconnections.org>



GuardEn of Youth is looking for your input

Share
Your
Thoughts

HERE!

Share
Your
Ideas

HERE!

Share
Your
Talents

HERE!



The Guard En of Youth Newsletter is asking its readers for submissions. If you have poetry or short stories you've written, drawings you've created, letters to the editor, or anything else you'd like to add, send your entries to **shelly.m.aiken@us.army.mil**, with "**Newsletter input**" in the subject line.

**The Holiday's
hottest ticket
has arrived!**



Tickets now on sale at ITR for
Radio City Christmas Spectacular

Tickets are limited and only available for the performances listed below:

Wednesday, December 9, 5pm show - 3rd Mezzanine
\$59 each with coach/bus transportation
(bus leaves ITR at 1pm, leaves NYC immediately after show)

Tuesday, December 15, 8pm show - 2nd Mezzanine
\$69 each with coach/bus transportation
(bus leaves ITR at 4pm, leaves NYC immediately after show)

Thursday, December 17, 5pm show - 2nd Mezzanine
\$69 each with coach/bus transportation
(bus leaves ITR at 1pm, leaves NYC immediately after show)

ITR, 695 Buckner Loop, West Point
(845) 938-3601
www.westpointmwr.com

VISA / Master Card accepted.
No Refunds - No Exchanges - All Sales Final





eKnowledge & MLB Players Hit a Grand Slam with SAT & ACT Test Prep

Chipper Jones joins eKnowledge sponsorship program offering FREE SAT/ACT Test Prep Programs to military families!

Atlanta, GA, September 12, 2009 - Thanks to eKnowledge and concerned professional athletes, free \$200 SAT/ACT PowerPrep™ programs are available to military service members and their extended families. In its fourth consecutive year, the eKnowledge NFL and MLB sponsorship has donated over \$25 million of SAT/ACT software programs to 120,000 recipients.

It was announced today that six time all-star and future Hall of Fame baseball player Chipper Jones has joined the SAT/ACT PowerPrep Sponsorship Program. Jones is a patriotic supporter of America's military, and welcomed the opportunity to raise awareness of the availability of the FREE SAT/ACT Test Prep Programs. "I believe in using my gifts and public image to help the military community" stated Jones.



eKnowledge also recently announced the release of the completely new PowerPrep™ version 6extra. The v6x was in development for two years and cost over \$1.5 million. The new v6x SAT/ACT software includes more than 20 hours of video instruction and 3,000 files of supplemental test prep material, thousands of interactive diagnostic tools, sample questions, practice tests and graphic teaching illustrations are indexed for easy use. The new PowerPrep™ software is also completely MAC and PC compatible.

Families interested in ordering FREE SAT/ACT PowerPrep™ Programs should visit: www.eknowledge.com/military

There is a small fee of \$13.84 (per standard program) which enables eKnowledge to provide technical and customer support, registration, licensure, processing, handling and shipping. This nominal charge allows the sponsorship program to continue helping tens of thousands of students every year.

For further information, contact Lori Caputo, 951-256-4076, LoriCaputo@eknowledge.com



Supporting Children of the National Guard and Reserve Institute®

Helping Children Thrive Through Mobilization and Deployment

Military Child Education Coalition™

Registration Form – November 16-17, 2009 Ronkonkoma, New York

The Military Child Education Coalition's™ **Supporting Children of the National Guard and Reserve Institute®** is a professional development program for educators and professionals to reach out in a support network to the children and families of the National Guard and Reserve. The conference includes two continental breakfasts, two lunches, two break refreshments and conference materials (no registration, meal, or resource material cost to participants). The curriculum, content, process, and delivery are correlated with the National Staff Development Council's Standards and the National Standards for School Counseling Programs. Because the Institute is very interactive and participation is required to fully benefit from this training, participants must commit to attend both days.

Date: **November 16-17, 2009** (training is a two-day session (12 full seat hours required for institute credit – attendance both full days required – no partial attendance accepted)

Training: *Supporting Children of the National Guard and Reserve Institute®; Helping Children Thrive Through Mobilization and Deployment*

Location: Courtyard by Marriott Long Island MacArthur Airport
5000 Express Drive South
Ronkonkoma, NY 11779
631-612-5000

Time: **8:30 am – 4:00 pm** (registration and continental breakfast at 8:00 am)

Deadline for registration: November 6, 2009 Register on line at <http://www.militarychild.org> (Upcoming Trainings)

Cost: None – your registration fee, materials and conference meals are covered by funds provided through a grant with **The Bob Woodruff Foundation** and in cooperation with **The Florence and Robert A. Rosen Family Wellness Center for Law Enforcement and Military Personnel**

For your information, educational credits are available. Fees are to be paid at the G&R Institute.
1.2 Continuing Education Credit through IACET, certification costs \$25.00
1 Graduate Credit through a branch of Texas A & M University costs \$175.00

Name: _____

(Used for name badge, PLEASE PRINT legibly)

Title/ Assignment: _____

District & School Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email address: _____

Register on line at <http://www.MilitaryChild.org> or fax registration to 254-953-1925, Attn: Linda Neault.

Confirmation: You will receive an email confirmation, within 10 business days

For more information about the Supporting Children of the National Guard and Reserve Institute®, please contact Linda Neault or Lina Smith at 254-953-1923 or Linda.Neault@MilitaryChild.org or Lina.Smith@MilitaryChild.org

Disclaimer

I understand that participants are required to attend both full days of training. No partial attendance is accepted due to conformance with IACET standards.

Printed Name (as will appear on certificate)

Signature

Date



Supporting Children of the National Guard and Reserve Institute©

Helping Children Thrive Through Mobilization and Deployment

Military Child Education Coalition™

Registration Form – November 19-20, 2009 Roslyn, New York

The Military Child Education Coalition's™ **Supporting Children of the National Guard and Reserve Institute©** is a professional development program for educators and professionals to reach out in a support network to the children and families of the National Guard and Reserve. The conference includes two continental breakfasts, two lunches, two break refreshments and conference materials (no registration, meal, or resource material cost to participants). The curriculum, content, process, and delivery are correlated with the National Staff Development Council's Standards and the National Standards for School Counseling Programs. Because the Institute is very interactive and participation is required to fully benefit from this training, participants must commit to attend both days.

Date: **November 19-20, 2009** (training is a two-day session (12 full seat hours required for institute credit – attendance both full days required – no partial attendance accepted)

Training: *Supporting Children of the National Guard and Reserve Institute©; Helping Children Thrive Through Mobilization and Deployment*

Location: Roslyn High School
475 Round Hill Drive
Roslyn Heights, New York 11577

Time: **8:30 am – 4:00 pm** (registration and continental breakfast at 8:00 am)

Deadline for registration: November 6, 2009 Register on line at <http://www.militarychild.org> (Upcoming Trainings)

Cost: None – your registration fee, materials and conference meals are covered by funds provided through a grant with **The Bob Woodruff Foundation** and in cooperation with **The Florence and Robert A. Rosen Family Wellness Center for Law Enforcement and Military Personnel**

For your information, educational credits are available. Fees are to be paid at the G&R Institute.
1.2 Continuing Education Credit through IACET, certification costs \$25.00
1 Graduate Credit through a branch of Texas A & M University costs \$175.00

Name: _____
(Used for name badge, PLEASE PRINT legibly)

Title/ Assignment: _____

District & School Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email address: _____

Register on line at <http://www.MilitaryChild.org> or fax registration to 254-953-1925, Attn: Linda Neault.

Confirmation: You will receive an email confirmation, within 10 business days

For more information about the Supporting Children of the National Guard and Reserve Institute©, please contact Linda Neault or Lina Smith at 254-953-1923 or Linda.Neault@MilitaryChild.org or Lina.Smith@MilitaryChild.org

Disclaimer

I understand that participants are required to attend both full days of training. No partial attendance is accepted due to conformance with IACET standards.

Printed Name (as will appear on certificate)

Signature

Date

PROJECT PEN PAL

Connecting Military Children around the Globe

With Project Pen Pal you will meet other military children around the world. You can make friends, learn about their traditions, culture's, how they feel about their schools and their hobbies. In addition, Project Pen Pal encourages you to write about the challenges you face being a Military Youth, and share those feelings with children from different backgrounds who are dealing with similar issues like, military life, deployments and relocation, just to name a few.



For more information contact:

Shelly Aiken~NY National Guard Youth Program Coordinator

shelly.m.aiken@us.army.mil

Or call: 914-744-7405

ALL AGES WELCOME TO PARTICIPATE!!

We have Pen Pals from New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Wisconsin, Illinois, New Jersey, Nevada, Vermont, California, Connecticut, Ohio , Wyoming ,New Mexico and now MAINE is now on board!!!

UNITY IS STRENGTH!!

If you are interested in becoming a Pen Pal, please fill out a Permission Slip on next page

PROJECT PEN PAL

Permission Slip

Would your child be interested in making a new friend and getting to know another child like him/herself? **Why not sign them up for the Project Pen Pal.** What a great way for them to share stories about Military life and learn different cultures from around the Globe. If your child is interested please fill out the information below. Parents, **please don't forget to sign** the permission slip and either fax it or mail it to the number below.

Child's Name _____

Age/Grade _____

Hobbies/Interests _____

What Language do you speak and write? _____

PROJECT PEN PAL PERMISSION FORM

I, _____ (parent/guardian) give my permission for _____ (child's name) to participate in Project Pen Pal. I understand that it is my (parent/guardian) responsibility to supervise my child's contact with another Military child and not the responsibility of the New York National Guard Youth Program.

Date _____ **Email address** _____

Parent/Guardian signature

Address

Phone/Fax

***Please mail or fax this permission slip to:**

Shelly Aiken
NY National Guard Youth Program
Camp Smith, Bldg 501 R#3
Cortlandt Manor, NY 10567
Fax (914-788-7407)

*If you have questions about Project Pen Pal please **email Shelly** at: shelly.m.aiken@us.army.mil Or Call me at 914-788-7405

Project Pen Pal Code of Conduct

- No obscenities in written or electronic correspondence
- No illegal material mailed or emailed
- No attempt to harm others in correspondence (making threats, making fun of another person, bullying behaviors, etc.)



Operation Kid Comfort Quilt Request

Operation Kid Comfort Quilts are for children of deployed service men and women. To receive a quilt, please submit this completed form along with nine photographs (digital format that is emailed is preferred) that will help the child cope during the parent's deployment. As all materials and services are donated, there is no fee for this program.

Parent/Guardian Last Name: _____ Soldier/Airman Name _____

First Name: _____ Military Unit: _____

Please check branch of service:

Army USMC Navy Air Force USCG National Guard Air Guard Reserve

Child(ren) Name and Age: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

ASYMCA/Operation Kid Comfort Release:

The Armed Services YMCA is actively pursuing corporate, business and individual support for Operation Kid Comfort and the many other programs we offer. With your permission, we may use photographs provided for these projects, as well as photographs of the finished quilts and photographs taken at Operation Kid Comfort workshops and events for these purposes. Please read our privacy statement and approve or disapprove the use of your image, the image of your child(ren) and/or your spouse below. Please note that 6-9 high resolution digital photos are preferred and we will NOT be able to return any hard copies of photographs sent.

Armed Services YMCA Privacy Policy

We do not disclose any nonpublic personal information about you to anyone, except as permitted by law. We restrict access to your personal information to those employees and volunteers who need to know that information to provide products and/or services to you. We maintain physical, electronic and procedural safeguards that comply with federal standards to guard your nonpublic personal information.

I give permission for photographic images of my spouse, my child(ren), my family and myself to be used for ASYMCA/Operation Kid Comfort media, promotional and fundraising purposes.

I DO NOT give permission photographic images of my spouse, my child(ren), my family and myself to be used for ASYMCA/Operation Kid Comfort media, promotional and fundraising purposes.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return form to:
Project Strong Communities
Fairgrounds YMCA
585 Rand Drive
Watertown, NY 13601-3323
Phone: (315) 755-2016
Fax: (315) 755-9623
okcfordrum@yahoo.com

Operation Kid Comfort Wish List

If you would like to make a contribution a list of the following items are always needed:

- ___ Material (100% Cotton preferred)
- ___ 100% Cotton Batting (Warm & Natural)
- ___ Monetary Contributions

- ___ Jumbo 2.5 Gallon Zip Lock Bags (Hefty)

Operation Give a Hug

and U.S. Army Child, Youth & School Services



What did we do today?

Keeping deployed loved ones close during deployment, *Give a Hug dolls* allow little Heroes to take the Soldier they miss with them wherever they go!



got a BIG kiss



had a chat



had play time



dressed up



took a nap



Army Family Covenant



Request *Give a Hug dolls* for Your Army Unit by emailing dollrequest@operationmilitarykids.org

Priority given to Units in the pre-deployment phase.

Also available for school counselors, deployment support groups and behavioral health professionals working with Army children.

GuardEn of Youth



THE NATIONAL GUARD YOUTH PROGRAM WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL OUR VETERANS FOR THE SACRIFICES THEY HAVE MADE FOR OUR GREAT NATION AND STATE!!!!

Sabrina Lombardo
Editor – GuardEn of Youth
New York National Guard
Youth Program

Shelly Aiken
New York National Guard
Youth Program
Camp Smith, Bldg 501
Cortlandt Manor, NY 10567
(914) 788-7405

Did you know?
Guard En of Youth
is online!



<http://www.dmna.state.ny.us>