

Military Family Network News: November 2010

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A MESSAGE FROM YOUR MFN TEAM

Wow! Has your MFN Team been busy! We just returned from our yearly trek to Washington DC where we participate in the Association of the US Army's Annual Meeting and Family Program forums. It's a huge affair, takes months in the planning and we always return equipped with new friends, resources and valuable information to help us better serve our service members, veterans and military families. Over 35,000 were in attendance this year alone! In addition, Military Family Network coordinated a walking tour of the nation's capital for more than 500 Family



Readiness Group Leaders, Family Readiness Support Assistants and other special guests as a part of the Army's training and team building exercises for this important group of family support professionals that culminated in a visit to Arlington National Cemetery where we presented a wreath to the Tomb of the Unknowns.

A big thanks to the businesses who honored our military with their support in helping to make this happen: K12, Eat'n Park, Sarris Candies, Sears, Wal-Mart, Giant Eagle, Sam's Club and Shop'n Save. Thank you for your generous contributions. We encourage the military community to patronize these patriotic businesses because they recognize your sacrifice and offer support to you and your family. Blessings to all of our veterans and military families - This month we celebrate you!

Until Next Month (or email us at connections@MilitaryFamilyNetwork.com if you just can't wait!),

Megan, Luis and Darrell

ORGANIZATION IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Nominate Your Employer for the 2011 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award

It is only possible for our Guard and Reserve members to perform at

their best with the support of loved ones, friends, neighbors and, particularly, employers. Thousands of employers across the nation employ Guard and Reserve members, fully aware that at any moment they may be called to serve. And when this happens, both the employee and employer face challenges. We are grateful for the many employers who remain patriotically steadfast in support of their military employees, both financially and emotionally, going well beyond the law. Supportive employers allow service members to perform their duties while alleviating concerns about their jobs and loved ones back home.

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), a Department of Defense agency, invites nominations for the 2011 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award, the highest recognition given by the U.S. Government to employers for outstanding support of their employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve. Guard and Reserve members and their families are eligible, and encouraged, to nominate their employers now through January 17th, 2011 at www.FreedomAward.mil

Freedom Award recipients support their Guard and Reserve employees and their families in important ways, both large and small. Past recipients have provided differential pay during deployments, continued insurance benefits and sent comfort items in care packages. Some of the most valued assistance has been the support extended to deployed service members' families.

K¹² CORNER

Meet K12!

K¹² is the largest provider of online education in America for grades K through 12. Today, many military families have discovered online education as a way to reduce the angst of relocation and bring consistency to their children's education. If a family relocates anywhere in the world, their children's "school" can now go with them.



Latest News:

•K¹² Teachers Honored

K¹² teachers have been chosen as nine of the fourteen state winners of the second annual American Pioneer of Teaching Award! [Find out more and meet the winners.](#)

•2010-2011 Enrollment is Now Open!

K¹² has launched enrollment across the country for the 2010-2011 school year. See the [schools in your state that offer the K¹² program](#) and find out how to enroll.

•Middlebury College and K¹² Team Up

These education leaders will create innovative, high-quality online language programs for pre-college students. Read the full [press release](#)

•Study Finds Online Students Possess Strong Social Skills

A new study finds that students enrolled in full-time, online public schools possess social skills superior to, or not significantly different than, students enrolled in traditional public schools. Read the [report summary](#).

•To learn more about K¹²'s latest news go to <http://www.k12.com/>

Informative Events: Learn About K¹²

•K¹² has great options for online learning. And great, free seminars to learn about them!

Choices, choices! Are you interested in our virtual public schools, now available in over half the States? Want to learn about our outstanding private academy? Perhaps you simply want to purchase a single course to meet a specific need? Or, do you need multiple courses to create your own full-time, at-home curriculum?

K¹² has it all, and the choice is yours. To help you on your educational journey, please review the one-hour, interactive, online seminars below to find out more. Then, simply sign up and attend from the comfort of your own home!

www.k12.com/take-a-peek/information-events/

When one Guard member was deployed, his employer filled his seat at his sons' sports games. After another service member's family hit hard times during a deployment, his employer stacked gifts under the family's Christmas tree. And during the deployment of a single father, his employer sent his daughters off to school each morning with a wake up phone call. These seemingly small acts have a significant impact on the lives of Guard and Reserve members and their families.

Any employer supportive of its Guard and Reserve employees or their families is eligible for Freedom Award nomination. Past recipients of the award have ranged from a small family-owned farm in Iowa to large corporations, including Chrysler and Microsoft, to public sector employers including the City of Austin, Texas.

The 2011 recipients will be announced in the spring and honored in September at the 16th annual Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award ceremony in Washington, D.C. Recipients of the 2010 award met with Vice President Joe Biden and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, and received their awards at a ceremony with special remarks by Hawaii Senator Dan Inouye.

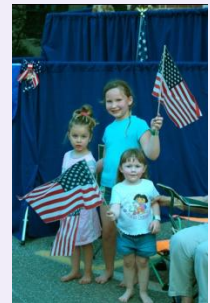
[Click here to submit a nomination.](#)

BUSINESS FEATURE

MFN Helps Businesses Reach Military Families

We all know how the Military Family Network serves military service members, veterans, and their families by providing resources, information and trusted expert and community advice to help them navigate through military life.

But did you know that MFN also helps businesses with their outreach as well? By introducing the military community to trusted businesses, MFN can help you tap into a market that is traditionally hard to reach, but desires your services. And with our new website nearly ready to go, we will offer even more possibilities, both for businesses and the community we serve.



For military and family friendly businesses, we offer a variety of communication services that allow you to promote your programs, products and services while demonstrating your support for our military service members, veterans and their families. MFN encourages its business partners to offer military deals and discounts as their way of thanking our military community for their

For more information...

K¹² offers many education opportunities to military families, no matter where you are stationed in the world. Tuition-free, full-time public schooling is available in more than half the states and D.C. K¹² also offers an accredited, full-time online private school and over 200 courses available by direct purchase—including AP®, world languages, and electives. Military families receive a 15% discount on single courses or private school.

For more information, go to <http://www.k12.com/military>, or call 866-667-1262



Military families make great sacrifices. With K¹², your child's education doesn't have to be one of them.

THIS MONTH'S FOCUS

Veterans Day – November 11

[Courtesy of USA.gov]

The 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918 marked the unofficial end of World War I. The anniversary of this event—initially named “Armistice Day” and later named “Veterans Day”—gives us a chance to honor America's veterans. Learn more about the history of this [federal holiday](#).

American veterans can find resources on benefits, health care, career transitions, and other topics on [USA.gov](#).

Feliz Día de los Veteranos

November is National Military Family Month!

By Presidential Proclamation on October 29, 2010, President Barak Obama proclaimed November 2010 as Military Family Month and he called on "all Americans to honor military families through private actions and public service for the tremendous contributions they make in support of our service members and our Nation."

Military Family Network couldn't agree more and we were delighted when he upheld the following Military Family Network pledge and mission:

"During Military Family Month, we celebrate the exceptional contributions of our military families, and we reaffirm our commitments to these selfless individuals who exemplify the highest principles of our Nation...As America asks ever more of military families, they have a right to expect more of us -- it is our national challenge and moral obligation to uphold that promise. If we hold ourselves to the same high standard of excellence our military families live by every day, we will realize the vision of an America that supports and engages these

service to our nation. And, while MFN can provide the sophisticated marketing reports that you've come to expect from your campaigns, your biggest reward will come from knowing that your advertising dollars are taking care of military service members, veterans and their families. In fact, your support saves lives.

For our military community, there are numerous new features to look forward to like improved and simplified navigation, enhanced forums, the ability to add your own blog, and a dedicated server giving MFN much more bandwidth and processing power to provide you with a greatly improved user experience.

You've already seen the ever increasing number of experts in various fields who are coming on board with MFN to give you the information you need. Now, enhanced search and tagging capabilities will make it easier for you to find this information.

And there is so much more. How many times have you read one of our news articles and wanted to respond? Or perhaps you saw an informational piece on our site, and wanted to contribute your own knowledge and experience? Well, now you will be able to! You will be able to leave comments, discuss topics with your fellow community members, easily syndicate the content to your RSS feeds, and a few surprises that, well, our lips are sealed!

So as they say in show-biz: Don't Go Away! There's More to Come!

MONEY, EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Writing and Formatting a Scannable Resume

Because we are living in an information age where technology drives most interactions, resumes sent via E-mail and traditional paper are likely to be scanned for key information by a machine, not a human being. Read more...

<http://www.militaryfamilynetwork.com/article.php?aid=15550>

Deadline for Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay Extended

The deadline for eligible service members, veterans and their beneficiaries to apply for Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay (RSLSP) has been extended to March 4, 2011, allowing personnel more time to apply for the benefits they've earned under the program guidelines. Read more...

<http://www.militaryfamilynetwork.com/article.php?aid=15603>

heroes now and for decades to come." Military Family Network will continue to work diligently on behalf of our nation's military families and we salute President Obama for raising awareness of this American duty and bringing it to the national stage.

Thank you for your service, Military Families!!

To read the President's proclamation in its entirety, please visit: <http://www.militaryfamilynetwork.com/article.php?aid=15599>

Thanksgiving – November 25

[Courtesy of USA.gov]

Gathering together, sharing a meal, and expressing thanks for the good things in life are the hallmarks of Thanksgiving.

To help you enjoy the holiday and minimize your hassles in getting to and from your destination, check out USA.gov's [Thanksgiving page](#), where you can:

Find popular American [recipes](#).
Check the status of U.S. [airports](#).
Get the basics on [cooking a turkey](#).
Learn interesting [Thanksgiving facts](#).
[Celebre las fiestas](#)

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Turn Clocks Back November 7

[Courtesy of USA.gov]

The first Sunday in November marks the end of daylight time <http://www.usno.navy.mil/USNO/astronomical-applications/astronomical-information-center/daylight-time>, so your mornings will be filled with a little more light and your evenings will grow dark a little sooner.

You probably know the drill, but just as a reminder: turn your clocks back one hour, starting at 2:00am on Sunday, November 7 (Congress established dates for daylight time in the [Energy Policy Act of 2005](#)). Most of the United States observes daylight time, but there are some exceptions, including Hawaii and most of Arizona.

Guidelines for Publishing Information Online

Remember that the internet is a public resource. Avoid putting anything online that you don't want the public to see or that you may want to retract.

Read more...

<http://www.militaryfamilynetwork.com/article.php?aid=15450>

R&R program reaches one million milestone

It's official: As of November, more than one million travelers have passed through the Army Life Support Area in Kuwait, marking a major milestone in the

President Signed Improvements to Post-9/11 GI Bill

To bring the educational benefits of the Post-9/11 GI Bill closer to more Veterans and Service Members, President Obama signed legislation Jan. 4 that streamlines the 18-month-old education program administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Read more...

<http://www.militaryfamilynetwork.com/article.php?aid=15592>

RELOCATION AND TRAVEL

Let LowVARates Keep You Informed!

[LowVARates.com](#) has over 20 years of experience working with active and retired military home owners. We have built a solid reputation as a company that gives back to those that have served this country.



[LowVARates.com](#) is easy to use and a very informative website that allows you to access all of the latest information regarding VA home loans. We are not a lender and we are not affiliated with any government agency, including the Department of Veterans Affairs. We bring approved VA lenders and eligible veterans together so that getting a loan is as easy as possible. We invite you to use [LowVARates.com](#) not only to apply for your VA loan, but to also keep up to date with all of your hard-earned VA loan benefits.

VETERANS

On Veterans Day, VA Secretary Shinseki Recognizes, Thanks Veterans

This Veterans Day, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki calls on America to honor its 23 million Veterans by reaching out to them and their families with heartfelt thanks and encouraging them to seek the benefits and services they have earned from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Read more...

<http://www.militaryfamilynetwork.com/article.php?aid=15582>

VA Pilots Expedite Payments to Disabled Veterans

VA has launched two pilot programs to test new procedures that will speed the payment of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) compensation benefits to Veterans with disabilities connected to their military service. These new programs are part of Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki's effort to "break the back" of the disability claims backlog. Read more...

<http://www.militaryfamilynetwork.com/article.php?aid=15583>

VA Encourages Affected Vietnam Veterans to File Claims

military's Rest and Recuperation travel program.
<http://www.militaryfamilynetwork.com/article.php?aid=15489>

Officials Announce Warrior Games 2011

Some 200 disabled active duty members and veterans will compete in the 2nd Annual Warrior Games May 16 to 21 in Colorado Springs, Colo., officials announced Sept. 20. Read More...

<http://www.militaryfamilynetwork.com/article.php?aid=15461>

FAMILY SUPPORT

What can be done to destigmatize PTSD in veterans?

[Source: Gift from Within]

In this webcast, Dr. Ochberg discusses why we need to destigmatize, and normalize, symptoms of PTSD. War changes a person. Service members train everyday to serve their country, to fight and win America's wars. Prolonged exposure to hazardous environments, daily exposure to violence and death has a deep affect. There's nothing morally wrong or physically wrong with the person who gets PTSD.

About Gift from Within.org: Gift from Within is a non-profit organization dedicated to those who suffer post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), those at risk for PTSD, and those who care for traumatized individuals; develops and disseminates educational material, including videotapes, articles, books, and other resources through its website; maintains a roster of survivors who are willing to participate in an international network of peer support; is designated by the Internal Revenue Service as 501(c)(3) public charity, eligible to receive tax-exempt grants, gifts, and donations.

Gift From Within's compassionate support for survivors of trauma depends on your donations. [Please give freely](#) . Thank you.

Getting Out of a Funk: Fighting Depression

Everyone has days when they feel sad, low or down. When these days last for two or more weeks; it's time to consider getting help. Life is full of ups and downs. Read more...

<http://www.militaryfamilynetwork.com/article.php?aid=15561>

Army, Major Mortgage Financers Sign 'Forbearance' Agreement

The Army, Fannie Mae and several of the country's largest home financiers signed a memorandum of commitment Sept. 27 at the Pentagon which will help Soldiers and their families who are in trouble with their mortgages. Read More...

<http://www.militaryfamilynetwork.com/article.php?aid=15470>

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has begun distributing disability benefits to Vietnam Veterans who qualify for compensation under recently liberalized rules for Agent Orange exposure. Read more...

<http://www.militaryfamilynetwork.com/article.php?aid=15577>

COMMUNITY

DeCA: Are You Eligible to Claim Sunday Premium Pay?



If you are a current or former part-time employee and answered yes to both of those questions, you may submit a claim for a lump sum payment of Sunday premium pay.

<http://www.militaryfamilynetwork.com/article.php?aid=15567>

This Week in the Pentagon (Parts 1 and 2) Suicide Prevention

This 90-minute special entitled "Restoring Hope" takes an in-depth look at servicemembers and suicide. Can be viewed in full screen. View more...

<http://www.militaryfamilynetwork.com/article.php?aid=15471>

New Spanish Language PSA's Highlight the Importance of Preparing Today

No matter where you live, emergencies can happen anytime, anywhere. Whether it's a personal emergency, a car accident, or a large scale disaster, an earthquake, taking a few simple steps now to prepare, can keep your family safe and secure. Read more...

<http://www.militaryfamilynetwork.com/article.php?aid=15457>

Mail Delivery Reaches Record High

Mail delivery in Afghanistan sets new yearly and holiday records as joint sustainment forces bring holiday cheer to U.S. service members. Read more.

<http://www.militaryfamilynetwork.com/article.php?aid=15562>

Military Friendly Deals.

The ABSensation: Soldier Engineered Portable Fitness Equipment

Do you do curls without weights? How do you expect to get great abs without weights?

The New Absensation, of course! Its inventor is a deploying Army soldier and ab sensationalist who saw a

Once upon a time; 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit Connects with Families Using United Through Reading Program

Deployments are difficult for service members and spouses, but can be especially difficult for their children. Marines and sailors with 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit have an opportunity to alleviate that stress and connect with their families through reading. Read more...
<http://www.militaryfamilynetwork.com/article.php?aid=15463>

TRICARE AND HEALTH

Get a Flu Shot!

[Courtesy of USA.gov]

To avoid the fever, body aches, fatigue, and other symptoms that characterize the seasonal flu, get the [flu vaccine](#).

At its best, getting the flu is a miserable experience that passes within a few days or weeks, but at its worst, getting the flu can be fatal. On average, 23,600 people in the U.S. die from flu-related causes each year. The most vulnerable populations include young children, pregnant women, people with underlying health problems, and those who are 65 years and older.

Find a [flu vaccine site near you](#) to stay healthy this flu season.

[Vacúnese contra la gripe](#)

TRICARE Assistance Program is Here for You during the Holidays

The holidays are a great opportunity to bond with family members and reconnect with old friends, but this time of year can also present significant stress, particularly if a loved one is deployed for the holidays. An empty seat at the dinner table, holiday shopping, minus one or unwrapped gifts under the Christmas tree can cause the holiday blues. Joyous reminders of the holiday season can also bring pain and loneliness.

In a four-minute video, "Getting the Help You Need, When You Need It," at www.tricare.mil/mentalhealth, Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, encourages service members and family members to reach out for help if they are struggling with feelings of stress, anxiety or depression. Read more...<http://www.militaryfamilynetwork.com/article.php?aid=15595>

Calling All Veterans, Retirees, and Their Families To Quit Tobacco

need for this simple, yet effective fitness device. Its strap was created as a necessity for weight assisted crunches without a gym and for maximum safety. This strap will eliminate the dangerous need to try and balance a dumbbell between your feet!

Get the ABSensation at the introductory price of only \$14.95. To order, visit Absensation or http://cgi.ebay.com/ABSensation-patent-pending-/110574675568?pt=LH_DefaultDomain_0.

Get one today and amaze everyone with your new, ripped, toned and quality abs!

Ask MFN's Military Family Specialist!

Robin is MFN's Military Family Specialist. She is a regular feature to our monthly newsletter to help connect you with solutions to challenges in your military life. So, please meet Robin, a soldier of eighteen years and a family programs specialist. She will be your guide to keeping informed, being prepared and, well, mopping up messes if that's what it takes! You can reach her by emailing connections@militaryfamilynetwork.com for some good old Q&A or you can sit back and keep reading as we introduce some of her fine work right here in MFN's monthly newsletter. So, as they say, "On with the show!"

Dear Robin,

I have no idea who to talk to about my issue and if anyone can even help. My husband will possibly be underway when I give birth to our first child. Is there any chance he will get flown off the boat to be with me during the birth or after so he can spend time with his son? He is getting out of the navy a few months following the birth. I just don't think I will be able to go through it without him by my side.

Thanks, Polly

Hi Polly,

I'm so sorry to learn that your husband will be at sea during this very important moment in all of your lives. Welcoming a newborn is truly a joyous celebration. Unfortunately, just as the name Fleet and Family implies, the Fleet, or your Sailor's duty, comes first.

Since your husband's retirement may be close at hand to your delivery date, you (actually your husband) could appeal through his chain of command for relief, but these decisions are made on a case by case basis and never a guarantee. He might also try discussing this with his unit's Chaplain.

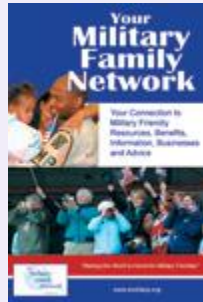
Cassandra, there is no way to step softly around this issue: you are not alone. Many military spouses have

As we get ready to honor our Nation's veterans this Veterans Day there is even more cause for celebration. Now veterans, retirees and their family members can get all the quit tobacco benefits previously available only to active-duty military personnel at the DoD Quit Tobacco—Make Everyone Proud campaign web site, www.ucanquit2.org. This means that even more people can get the help they need to become tobacco-free, once and for all. Read more...
<http://www.militaryfamilynetwork.com/article.php?aid=15598>

MFN Book Club

Your Military Family Network [Order Your Copy Now!](#)

"Your Military Family Network reference book is the most complete source of information for the active military, veterans and their families that I have seen. At first I just skimmed through it, but when I read the contents and your instructions on how to use this book, I realize this book was worth much more than the purchase price. Thank you for providing a helping hand for our military who have sacrificed so much for our freedom. Your book it is a treasure for me and for all military personnel." - Curt M.



given birth to children of fathers who are away because of their service. I would suggest that you begin to reach out to those that can help you make the most of a situation like this in the event that duty calls and your husband is unable to be present.

For instance, there are programs where a new birth could be live streamed or videotaped. There is Skype and other creative ideas used by many families. Reach out to your Ombudsman and Fleet and Family Support Services. They have a lot of support mechanisms in place for moments like these. In addition, there are also groups like United in Reading who will record a deployed parent reading to his child. And many, many more.

While there is nothing that can replace the desire to be together as a family for this moment, there are some things that can help make it tolerable. I really suggest that you reach out in the event you need that kind of support.

I wish I had better news for you. Take care and God Bless you, your husband and your new son,

Peace out, Robin