

National Guard Soldier & Family

# FOUNDATIONS

*A Note from*

CSM & Mrs. John D.  
Gipe, Command  
Sergeant Major,  
Army National  
Guard

**ABOVE AND  
BEYOND**

Minnesota First Lady  
Mary Pawlenty

**WALK  
THIS WAY**

Steps to a  
Healthier Future

# Model For Success

*Advice on How to Be a  
Happy and Successful  
Guard Family*

**FINAL  
SALUTE**

Military Funeral  
Honors

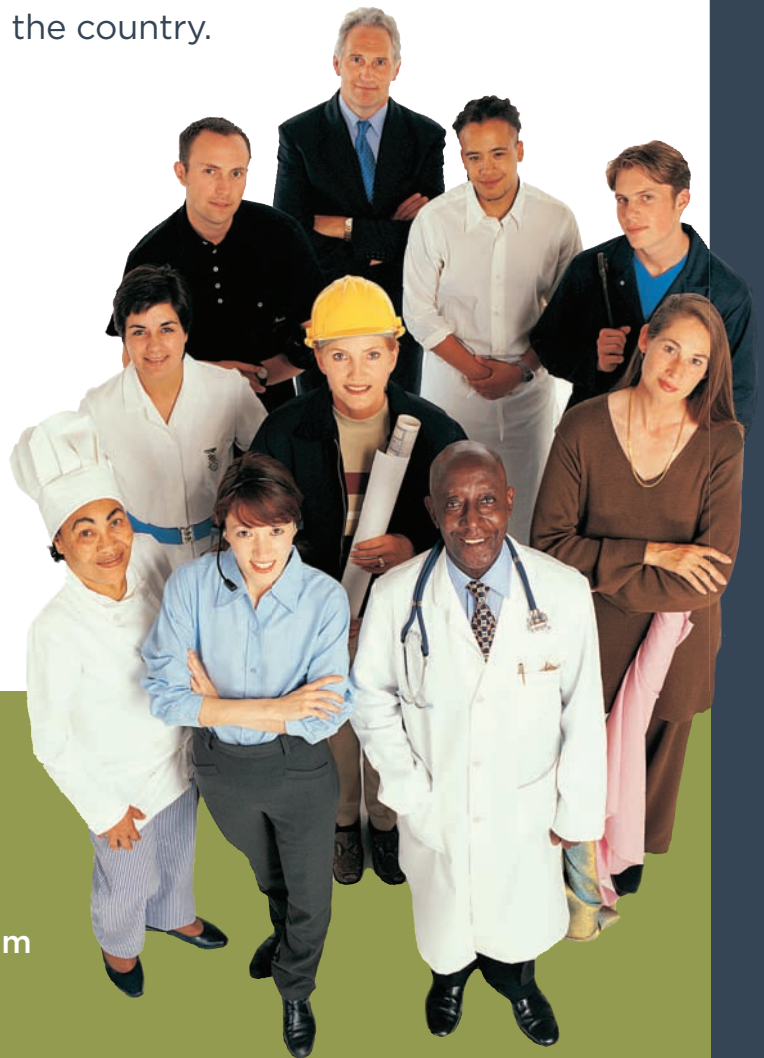


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The Guard's new **Career Mentor** volunteer program will expose educators and students to the diverse civilian occupations held by members of the Guard.

Signing up in the **Career Mentor** database is fast and simple—but the impression you can leave on a student will be long-lasting.



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R E S P E C T • R E M E M B E R • R E C O G N I Z E

# MAY is NATIONAL MILITARY APPRECIATION MONTH

A P P R E C I A T E • C E L E B R A T E • E D U C A T E



It is with great appreciation and admiration that the nation honors, remembers and recognizes the service and sacrifice made by the Armed Forces of the United States of America – the most prominent presence in the world today. The inspiring strength and dedication demonstrated by the over 90 million servicemen and women and their families, both past and present, is deserving of the nation's gratitude.

May has been designated by Congress as National Military Appreciation Month (NMAM). This is a time for the nation to express their thanks, encourage patriotism and educate others on the historical impact of the Armed Forces; a time to pay tribute to our Soldiers and their families for the selfless commitment they exemplify each and every day.

## May 2009

- 1 May – Loyalty Day
- 8 May – VE Day
- 8 May – Military Spouse Appreciation Day
- 16 May – Armed Forces Day
- 25 May – Memorial Day



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## “I Forgot to be Afraid”

By *Marcia Beene Dickerson*

I was single when I deployed in 2003 for Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Although I was “alone” in a military world geared toward couples, I never felt like I was on my own. What was the key to making it through my deployment? Support.

My greatest support came from my mom, dad and my sisters. They were very brave when I received my deployment orders and told me how proud they were of me. Additionally, once I hit the desert, I received all kinds of material support with the likes of cards, books, DVDs, CDs and food (especially bread—for peanut butter sandwiches). When I called home, my parents and sisters were always upbeat and shared the latest “Family gossip.”

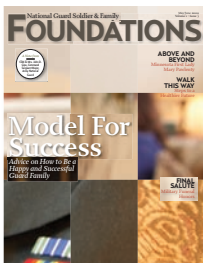
The next level of support I received was from my friends. They constantly sent notes with photos, checked on my parents and kept me up-to-date on their lives. My employer, the university where I was a graduate teaching assistant, supported me by holding my place in the program and letting me pick up my studies and my job where I left off after my return.

All of these people sent care packages with things tailored for me—especially food (do you see a pattern here?).

Another support network was my fellow National Guard members who were deployed with me. We were “in it together,” and it was great to know that someone else understood what I was going through. We supported each other by becoming “Family”—looking out for one another, sharing our things (yes, even food) and sometimes just listening.

Even though I was 9,000 miles away from home, I knew my support network was in place. This left me free to concentrate on my job and the mission, and as Lady Bird Johnson once said, I “became so wrapped up in something that I forgot to be afraid.”

Marcia Beene Dickerson  
 Managing Editor  
 (Marcia serves as a staff sergeant in the Tennessee National Guard.)



Models For Success: Military Families share secrets for staying together and finding happiness.

PHOTO BY DAN CAMPBELL

**MISSION STATEMENT:** To serve and support Army National Guard Soldiers and their Families by providing information and resources to improve their quality of life. To provide opportunities for all Soldiers and Families to benefit from the services available to them through the National Guard by presenting timely and relevant knowledge.

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

I am honored to contribute to *Foundations*. I enjoyed the first two issues and am proud to be a part of the third.

I spend most of my time visiting our Guard Soldiers. I listen to their stories, watch them in action and keep abreast of what they are going through. My goal is to help create new and better ways to improve life for every member of the military Family. *Foundations* magazine is one of those avenues.

As we all gear up for summertime celebrations, let's remember the many Soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice to protect our freedom. Without their heroism, we wouldn't have reason, or more pointedly, even the means, to celebrate. Let's also remember our Brothers and Sisters currently deployed, whose sacrifices, and those of their Families, continue to make a real difference in this world.

I want to thank each of you for your integrity, courage, resilience and patriotism. It's because of you that the Army National Guard continues to be the greatest military force in the world.



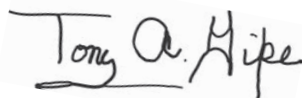
John D. Gipe, Command Sergeant Major,  
8th CSM of the Army National Guard

As the wife of a Soldier who travels frequently, I've learned a lot about keeping the homefront running. This issue of *Foundations* is filled with programs and tips for helping Families of deployed Soldiers do the same.

I can't stress strongly enough the value of support from extended Family, Friends, and communities nationwide—both military and civilian. From lending a sympathetic ear to suggesting practical solutions, they can help you in ways you might not even imagine.

Remember, your deployed Soldier needs support, too. Use modern communication means to stay in touch! Get involved with your unit's Family Readiness Group, even virtually, and attend the Yellow Ribbon events before, during and after your Soldier's deployment so you can stay informed of the support and resources available to your Soldier and your Family.

I'm deeply proud to be part of this outstanding organization. We are making a difference.



Mrs. Tony Gipe



## What three things helped you get through deployment?

My first deployment was in 2003. I was 19 at the time. Receiving packages and letters from home—and from complete strangers (sometimes it really didn't matter who it was from)—helped out a lot. Also, being able to call home and talk to friends and Family helped get my mind off of things. The other thing that really helped me was my fellow Soldiers keeping each other going because we were all in it together. The last thing that really got me through my deployment was that whenever we had some downtime, I did something constructive. For me, it was going to the gym or doing some physical training.

—SGT Travis W. Snider TNARNG 1-107th AOB, Smyrna, TN

Friendships, both old and new. Family waiting at home. And the daily mission and workload keeping me busy enough not to dwell on being away.

—1LT Matthew D. Parrino, C Co. 1/133rd Infantry Battalion, IAARNG



SGT Travis W. Snider serves in the National Guard Airfield Operations Battalion in Smyrna, TN.

Knowing that my wife was home waiting for me; a close relationship with the chaplain and others in the battalion; and lots of emails and cookies from home.

—SSG Chris A. Durney, 875th Engineer Battalion, ARARNG

The first thing that really helped me was a personal computer. It gave me something to do when I wasn't working. My laptop was my connection to home. Internet connections allow you to use your laptop as a telephone, have video chats with Family, and send and receive email. Second was the team I work with, the friends I made and the relationships that resulted from living with fellow Soldiers. Being able to share my days with them helped get me through a long deployment. The last thing was the enjoyment of the job. As a squad leader, I loved working for and with the Soldiers that I had. Staying busy and working hard takes your mind away from missing home and gives you something to look forward to the next day.

—SSG Jeffrey J Frisby, 39th Brigade, S-3, Operations NCO, ARARNG



We want to hear from you! Your answer to the question below could appear in the next issue of *Foundations*. What National Guard support programs have had the most impact on your Family throughout your deployment? Email us your answers at [Editor@GuardFoundations.com](mailto:Editor@GuardFoundations.com).



# chocolate for breakfast

By ADRIENNE DICKEY

I know how to cook, and I can cook quite well when I want. During my husband's deployment, my thinking about food and its nutritional value may have become a little skewed. If you are a nutritionist, please quit reading, otherwise you may suffer from a heart attack or small stroke. To those parents who wonder how certain feeding habits during deployment affect their children, all I can say is that my boys are still alive.

When Don, my husband, first deployed, my three rowdy boys were ages 11, 9 and 7. Besides mothering I worked full-time as a Family Assistance Coordinator for the Kansas National Guard and was on call 24/7. The pride and joys were involved in wrestling and soccer, and my job kept me on the road a lot.

With that being said, I also lost the ability to cook at times. I could not figure out how to portion Don's intake out of the meal preparation. This meant leftover meals were abundant and usually thrown out when they reached a certain ripening (read: moldy) stage.

During this time, it was just easier to have something quick and simple, or pick up a meal. I now have the uncanny ability to tell you what healthy alternatives to french fries each chain establishment provides. I can also order by number only and get exactly what the kids want without ever having to ask them, all the while justifying that this meal-in-a-bag is healthy.

For instance, there was one weekend when I was recouping from an extremely bad week and could not drag my heavy-leaded rear end out of bed. This is when I justified my children eating leftover chocolate hearts for breakfast as actually being nutritious.

"Milk chocolate is made out of nuts, which is a protein," I rationalized. "It has the word milk in it, so calcium must be provided in some way."

***"To those parents who wonder how the feeding habits during deployment affect their children, all I can say is that my boys are still alive."***

\*\*\*

I continued further into my delusions ... "It has to be better than that cookie cereal. Really, protein and milk, compared to cookies and milk."

Yes, thank you: I am a genius.

But I also taught my children to cook. Granted, this involved a microwave and toaster, but it was cooking. The boys were not allowed to use the stove. So, I purchased


those lovely microwavable cups of macaroni and cheese. The boys thought this was awesome: They could cook tasty mac and cheese at any time.

They learned to put bread in the toaster, place a piece of cheese in the middle, pop it in the microwave for 20 seconds, and voila! You have now made grilled cheese. Add a piece of ham, and

you have ham and cheese. The options were endless.

You may be shaking your head, but think of the ages of the boys then—this is all my mind could safely allow.

Of course, the boys are older now, and their cooking abilities have progressed to boiling water and using the stove. But I encourage parents to start with the basics. Know which fast-food places have healthier options, and teach older children how to use the microwave.

My Family survived, but dang it, why did they change the value meal numbers? 



**Say Cheese**  
Kids at the 2008 Youth symposium were all smiles. The event was sponsored by the Iowa Army National Guard.



# Iowa Homecoming

## Hawkeye State Focuses on Reintegration

By MSG BOB REEDY  
Iowa Army National Guard



For more than 170 years, generations of Iowans have mustered throughout our communities, serving through the Civil War, domestic emergencies and disasters, world wars and ideological struggles.

Today, these Global Minutemen, like those who came before them, carry on this proud legacy, serving their state and answering our nation's call to duty.

As important as Iowa National Guard (IA NG) Soldiers and Airmen are to the success of today's mission, it is our Families who are our most valuable asset. In order for Citizen-Soldiers to be ready, we must ensure that their Families, friends and communities are ready as well.

And those Families, friends and communities anxiously await their return home.

### Innovative programs

"Enduring Families" was developed to help ease Iowa Soldiers and Airmen from their active duty lifestyle back to civilian life, and to assist our Families in readjusting to each other and their new roles once they've progressed through the "honeymoon" period following a deployment.

This innovative "no-rank" program features a team approach from an organized volunteer force of experienced war Veterans, Family counselors,

“Our support program enables our members and Families to have realistic deployment expectations and to assist them through all phases of the deployment cycle.”

— MAJ Kevin Kruse, Iowa’s State Family Program director

Family advocacy workers, social workers and chaplains.

“Our returning Service Members, and their Families and communities have changed as a result of these deployments,” said MAJ Kevin Kruse, State Family Program director. “We’ve found the best way to overcome the challenge of reintegration is through communication and knowledge.

“Our support program enables our members and Families to have realistic deployment expectations and to assist them through all phases of the deployment cycle—pre-deployment, deployment and, finally, reintegration.”

First and foremost, the program offers the best of all possible worlds for reunited Iowans—Service Members can discuss their reintegration challenges with their peers, while spouses and significant others can share stories with those in similar circumstances.

Another invaluable step was integrating the Services Branch within the Iowa National Guard’s Directorate of Personnel. This branch is designed to provide unity in presenting services and support resources. As the nation continues to implement the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program, our core concepts, which

initiated our Enduring Families program, remain as our foundation.


Another helpful asset was the IA NG Family Training Conference and Youth Symposium April 3–5, 2009, in Des Moines. This annual event improves personal and Family preparedness, which enhances overall readiness.

The breakout sessions include time for fun and laughter with peers, empowering all with self-esteem and readiness skills.

**Military kids are people, too**

The Youth Symposium, scheduled concurrently, is for ages 6–teens. “Color Your World,” the 2009 theme, focuses on teambuilding, leadership development and identifying resources. The program also

deals with peer pressure.

Through these unique, forward-thinking programs, Iowa is dedicating its assets to ensuring our Service Members, Families and communities realize they are not alone. We are indeed “a ready, responsive Joint Force committed to excellence, for Iowa and the nation, today and tomorrow.” 

For more information on Iowa’s Soldiers and Family Services Support program, call (515) 252-4416.



**Family First**  
Members of the Iowa National Guard pose for a group shot at the 2008 State Family Conference.

# Attention, Soldiers and Families!

*Below is information regarding programs and services available in your state. Please check each issue for updates.*

## Alaska

(907) 428-6680

June 1–5 Operation Military Kids Day Camps, Nome

June 13–14 Seven Habits of Highly Successful Military Families, Fairbanks

June 26 Friday Film Night National Guard Armory Drill Hall, Fort Richardson

July 13–17 Guard Youth Camp, Wasilla

July 31 Friday Film Night National Guard Armory Drill Hall, Fort Richardson

## California

[www.CalGuard.ca.gov/readyFamilies](http://www.CalGuard.ca.gov/readyFamilies)

(916) 361-4955

June 27–28 Family Readiness Course, Fresno

June 27–28 Strong Bonds for Couples Workshop, Sacramento

July 18–19 Strong Bonds for Couples Workshop, San Diego

## Colorado

[www.ColoradoGuard.army.mil/Family.html](http://www.ColoradoGuard.army.mil/Family.html)

(720) 250-1190

Life Skills Groups (Adult/Children/Youth)

June 2 Red Cross, Grand Junction

June 3 Hampton Inn, Montrose

June 10 City Hall, Las Animas

June 11 Pikes Peak Red Cross, Colorado Springs

June 18 Red Cross, Denver

June 24 American Military Life Facility, Longmont

July 7 Red Cross, Grand Junction

July 8 Hampton Inn, Montrose

July 15 City Hall, Las Animas

July 16 Pikes Peak Red Cross, Colorado Springs

July 23 Red Cross, Denver

July 29 American Military Life Facility, Longmont

## Florida

(904) 823-0360

Operation Military Kids Summer Camps

June 22–26 4H Camp Ocala, Ocala National Forest

July 13–17 4H Camp Timpooshee, Niceville

July 20–24 4H Camp Cherry Lake, Madison

July 27–31 4H Camp Ocala, Ocala National Forest

## Guam

(671) 735-0402

June 6–7 Yellow Ribbon Pre-Deployment Event, Fort Juan Muna

June 22–26 Youth Camp Freedom, Fort Juan Muna

June 30–July 3 Youth Camp Freedom, Fort Juan Muna

## Hawaii

(808) 672-1442

June 6 Yellow Ribbon 30-Day Reintegration Post-Deployment Event, Oahu

June 7 Yellow Ribbon 30-Day Reintegration Post-Deployment Event, Kauai

June 26–28 Strong Bonds for Couples Workshop, Maui

July 11 Yellow Ribbon 60-Day Reintegration Post-Deployment Event, Oahu

July 11–12 Youth Junior Leadership Council Symposium/Workshop, Oahu

July 12 Yellow Ribbon 60-Day Reintegration Post Deployment Event, Kauai

July 17–19 Strong Bonds for Couples Workshop, Oahu

## Idaho

(208) 272-4361

June 6 Gowen Field Day/Regional Family Days, Statewide

June 10–14 Idaho Military Youth Summer Camp, Donnelly

June 13 Idaho Military Youth Fishing Day, Boise

June 27 Veterans Affairs Welcome Home, Boise

July 1 Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee Meeting, Boise

July 6 Joint Family Support Assistance Program Meeting, Boise

July 23–24 Employer Support to the Guard and Reserve Boss Lift, Boise

July 24–26 Operation Military Kids Family Camp, Ketchum

## Illinois

[www.Il.ngb.army.mil/Familyreadiness](http://www.Il.ngb.army.mil/Familyreadiness)

(217) 761-3514

June 12–13 Central Regional, Springfield

July 19–24 Operation Purple Camp, Waterloo

## Indiana

[www.InArng.org/Family2008/indexfp2008.htm](http://www.InArng.org/Family2008/indexfp2008.htm)

(317) 247-3192

June 12–14 Strong Bonds for the Family Workshop, Indianapolis

June 21–27 Kids' Annual Training, Camp Atterbury

July 10–12 Strong Bonds for the Family Workshop, Indianapolis

July 31–Aug. 2 Annual Conference, University Place at Indiana University Purdue University at Indianapolis

## Iowa

[www.IowaNationalGuard.com/Family/default.htm](http://www.IowaNationalGuard.com/Family/default.htm)

(515) 252-4416

Jun 27–28 Family Readiness Group Volunteer Training, Burlington

July 11–12 Family Readiness Group Volunteer Training, Waterloo

July 18–19 Strong Bonds for Couples Workshop, Dubuque

July 25–26 Strong Bonds for Couples Workshop, Okoboji

July 25–26 Strong Bonds for the Family Workshop (Seven Habits of Highly Effective Military Families), Okoboji

## Kentucky

[www.Dma.ky.gov/ng/Family](http://www.Dma.ky.gov/ng/Family)

(502) 607-1555

June 21–27 Youth Development Week, Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center, Greenville

## Louisiana

(318) 641-5428

June 13–15 Youth Leadership Training, Camp Beauregard

June 16–19 Kids' Annual Training, Camp Beauregard

## Maine

[www.Me.ngb.army.mil/Family](http://www.Me.ngb.army.mil/Family)

(207) 626-4410

June 12–14 Family Readiness Group Training, Augusta

June 27–29 Teen Whitewater Rafting/Teen Leadership Training, Bog Brook, Gilead

July 12–25 10th Annual Youth Camp, Bog Brook, Gilead

## Massachusetts

[www.Mass.gov/guard/Family\\_program/Family\\_support\\_ma/index.htm](http://www.Mass.gov/guard/Family_program/Family_support_ma/index.htm)

(508) 233-7222

July 26–31 Operation Military Kids YMCA Overnight Camps, Camp Lyndon, Sandwich

## Michigan

[www.Mi.ngb.army.mil/Family](http://www.Mi.ngb.army.mil/Family)

(517) 481-8361

June 13 Regional Family Readiness Group Training, Northern Michigan

June 27 Strong Bonds for the Single Soldier Workshop, Boyne Highlands

July 5–10 Youth Leadership Camp, Alpena

July 27–29 National Volunteer Workshop and Youth Symposium, Dearborn

## Minnesota

[www.MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/Families](http://www.MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/Families)

(651) 268-8200

June 14–19 Operation: Military Kids Camp, Camp St. Croix

June 26–28 Strong Bonds for Couples Workshop, Minneapolis-St. Paul

June 29–July 3 Operation Purple Camp, Camp St. Croix

July 10–12 Strong Bonds for Couples Workshop, Minneapolis-St. Paul

## Mississippi

[www.Arng.army.mil/Familyresources.aspx](http://www.Arng.army.mil/Familyresources.aspx)

(601) 313-6379

June 6–7 Yellow Ribbon Pre-Deployment Event, Columbus

June 20 Family Readiness Group Volunteer Training, Tupelo

June 21–27 Mississippi National Guard Summer Youth Camp (KIDS AT), Camp Shelby

July 11 Yellow Ribbon During Deployment Event, Greenwood

July 11 Yellow Ribbon During Deployment Event, Gulfport

July 18 Yellow Ribbon During Deployment Event, Hattiesburg

July 18 Yellow Ribbon During Deployment Event, Batesville

## Missouri

[www.MoGuard.com/Familyreadiness](http://www.MoGuard.com/Familyreadiness)

(573) 638-9827

June 5 Yellow Ribbon Pre-Deployment Event, Kansas City

June 5–7 Yellow Ribbon Post-Deployment Event, Kansas City

June 6 Operation READY, Springfield

June 12–14 Post-Deployment Yellow Ribbon Event, St. Louis

June 16–19 Youth Camp, Jefferson Barracks

July 10–12 Yellow Ribbon Post-Deployment Event, Kansas City

July 11 Operation READY, Cape Girardeau

July 17–19 Yellow Ribbon Post-Deployment Event, St. Louis

July 17–19 Strong Bonds for Couples Workshop, Lake of the Ozarks

## Montana

[www.MontanaGuardFamily.org](http://www.MontanaGuardFamily.org)

(406) 324-3239

June 12–14 Strong Bonds for Couples Workshop, Big Sky

July 17–19 Strong Bonds for Couples Workshop, Quinn's Hot Springs, Paradise

## Nebraska

[www.Neguard.com/Familyassistance](http://www.Neguard.com/Familyassistance)

(402) 309-7331

June 27 Yellow Ribbon During Deployment Event (Reunion Training), Lincoln

June Commissary Case Lot Sale, Statewide, all month long

## New Jersey

[www.Nj.gov/military/Familysupport/home.html](http://www.Nj.gov/military/Familysupport/home.html)

(609) 530-6869

July 19–25 Youth Camp, Sea Girt

## New Mexico

[www.Nm.ngb.army.mil/frg/index.html](http://www.Nm.ngb.army.mil/frg/index.html)

(505) 853-5668

June 5–7 Raton Youth Camp, National Guard Armory, Raton

June 10–11 Family Assistance Center Meeting Prep, Kirtland Air Force Base

June 12–14 State Family Programs Workshop, Isleta

June 12–14 State Youth Workshop, Isleta

July 9–11 State Youth Camp, Santa Fe

July 31 Springer Youth Day Camp, Springer Armory, Springer

## New York

[www.Dmna.state.ny.us/Family/famredi.php](http://www.Dmna.state.ny.us/Family/famredi.php)

(518) 786-4525

June 6 Pre-Deployment Family Briefing, New York City

June 13–14 Yellow Ribbon Post-Deployment Reintegration Seminar, Long Island Marriott, Uniondale

June 20 New York National Guard Family Readiness Council Inc. Second Annual 5K Run and Walk, Loudonville

June 27–28 Strong Bonds for Couples Workshop, Rochester

June 30 Galaxy Camp 105th Air Wing, Newburgh

July 17–19 Yellow Ribbon Post-Deployment Reintegration Seminar, Westchester Marriott, Tarrytown

July 19 Galaxy Camp 107th Air Wing, Niagara Falls

## North Dakota

[www.Guard.bismarck.nd.us/Family](http://www.Guard.bismarck.nd.us/Family)

(701) 333-2058

June 20 Annual Military Appreciation Day, Camp Grafton Training Center, Devils Lake

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



## Ohio

[www.Ong.Ohio.gov/Family](http://www.Ong.Ohio.gov/Family)  
(614) 336-7352

June 27–28 Strong Bonds for Couples  
Workshop, Toledo

July 11–12 Troop and Teen Camp, Columbus

July 18 Cincinnati Zoo Family Day,  
Cincinnati Zoo

July 18–19 Strong Bonds for Couples  
Workshop, Cleveland

July 31–Aug. 2 Air Guard Youth Camp, Yellow  
Springs

## Pennsylvania

[www.MilVet.state.pa.us/dmva/2881.htm](http://www.MilVet.state.pa.us/dmva/2881.htm)  
(717) 861-9676

June 6 Family Readiness Group Regional  
Training, Williamsport

June 14–19 Operation Military Kids Teen  
Leadership Camp, Kenbrook Camp, Lebanon

June 20 Family Readiness Group Regional  
Training, Wilkes-Barre

July 24–26 Strong Bonds for Couples  
Workshop, Pittsburgh

## South Carolina

[SCguard.com/Family/default.aspx](http://SCguard.com/Family/default.aspx)  
(803) 806-1750

July 18 Yellow Ribbon 30-Day Reintegration  
Seminar

## South Dakota

[www.SDguard.ngb.army.mil/sites/famsup/  
default.aspx](http://www.SDguard.ngb.army.mil/sites/famsup/default.aspx)  
(605) 737-6728

June 6 Yellow Ribbon 60-Day Reintegration  
Seminar

June 28 Yellow Ribbon Pre-Mobilization (Family  
Day Event), Sioux Falls

July 11 Yellow Ribbon 90-Day Reintegration  
Seminar

## Tennessee

(877) 311-3264

June 6–13 Youth Development Camp, Lavinia

June 20–27 Youth Development Camp, Smyrna

July 18–25 Youth Development Camp, Catoosa

## Utah

[www.Ut.ngb.army.mil//Family](http://www.Ut.ngb.army.mil//Family)  
(801) 523-4533

June 3 Inter-service Family Assistance  
Committee, Salt Lake City

June 6–7 Yellow Ribbon 90-Day Reintegration  
(Post Deployment Health Assessment),  
Draper

July 1–15 State Partnership Youth Visit,  
Statewide

July 6–11 Great Utah Road Tour, Statewide

## Vermont

[www.VtGuard.com/famread](http://www.VtGuard.com/famread)  
(802) 338-3391

June 7 Parents' Support Network, Family  
Readiness Center, Camp Johnson, Colchester

June 10 Family Readiness Group Support  
Training, Green Mountain Armory, Medical  
Detachment Classroom, Camp Johnson,  
Colchester

June 25 Post Deployment Support Group,  
Family Readiness Center, Camp Johnson,  
Colchester

July 8 Green Mountain Armory, Medical  
Detachment Classroom, Camp Johnson,  
Colchester

July 12 Parents' Support Network, Family  
Readiness Center, Camp Johnson, Colchester

July 23 Post Deployment Support Group, Family  
Readiness Center, Camp Johnson, Colchester

## Virginia

[www.Vko.va.ngb.army.mil/virginiaguard](http://www.Vko.va.ngb.army.mil/virginiaguard)  
(434) 298-5551

June 12–14 Strong Bonds for Couples  
Workshop, Williamsburg

July 17 Yellow Ribbon 90-Day Event, Emporia

July 17–19 Strong Bonds for Couples Workshop,  
Williamsburg

## Virgin Islands

[www.Vi.ngb.army.mil/html/Family\\_programs\\_  
main.htm](http://www.Vi.ngb.army.mil/html/Family_programs_main.htm)

(340) 712-7787

June 12–14 Crisis Response Training, St. Croix

June 22–27 Operation Purple Camp, St. Croix

July 7 Yellow Ribbon Post-Deployment Reunion  
Workshop, St. Croix

July 10–12 Strong Bonds for Couples  
Workshop, St. Croix

## Washington

[www.FamilyPrograms.washingtonguard.org](http://www.FamilyPrograms.washingtonguard.org)  
(253) 512-7600

June 27–28 Family Readiness Group Leadership  
Workshop, Leavenworth

## West Virginia

(800) 794-8273

June 20–26 Kids' Kamp, Kingwood, Camp  
Dawson

## Wisconsin

[www.WiNgFam.org](http://www.WiNgFam.org)  
(800) 292-9464

June 10 Yellow Ribbon During Deployment  
(Finances), Madison

June 13 Yellow Ribbon During Deployment  
(Family Maintenance), Appleton

July 15 Yellow Ribbon During Deployment  
(Connections), Milwaukee

July 18 Yellow Ribbon During Deployment  
(Connections), Eau Claire

July 31–Aug. 2 Yellow Ribbon Youth Camp  
2009, Volk Field

## Wyoming

[www.Wy.ngb.army.mil/Family-support](http://www.Wy.ngb.army.mil/Family-support)  
(307) 772-5208

June 6 Yellow Ribbon 30-Day Brigade  
Sustainment, Cheyenne

July 11–12 Yellow Ribbon 60-Day Post  
Mobilization, Laramie



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



# are you ready for retirement?

## Retirement Services are Ready to Help

By MAJ ZOILO J. LOPEZ, SR., RETIREMENT SERVICES OFFICER,  
ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

As an Army National Guard Soldier, you are quick to respond to your nation's call with a resounding "Yes, I'm ready." Whether it's "Yes I'm ready" to fight the Overseas Contingency Operations, or "Yes, I'm ready" to go help hundreds of homeless after a hurricane—you are always ready.

But, are you ready to retire?

Have you taken the time to plan for your future? And, more importantly, do you know that the Army has a Retirement Services program that will help you and your Family prepare for retirement and continue to support you after retirement?

Retirement is a process, not an event, and it is a complex and life-changing one. Knowing where to go for assistance will help you and your Family deal with the important decisions.

### Where Do You Start?

For Guard Soldiers and Families, support comes from ARNG State G-1 Retirement Points Accounting Management (RPAM) Offices, State Joint Force Headquarters (JFHQ) and State Military Personnel Management Officers (MPMOs). (See sidebar for Retirement Services Officer's contact information.)

There are a few things that will help you understand your benefits, or at least, help you ask the right questions.

### Retirement Points Accounting

To be ready for retirement, you need to know about the two types of retirement points and how you earn them. The types of retirement points a Soldier can earn toward his or her non-regular retirement are: Inactive

Duty (IDT) points and Active Duty (AD) points.

IDT Points may be earned by performing the following:

- > Inactive Duty Training/Unit Drill
- > Equivalent Training (ET)
- > Additional Flight Training Period (AFTP)
- > Additional Unit Training Assembly (AUTA)
- > Jump Proficiency Additional Unit Training Assembly
- > Funeral Honors Duty (FHD)
- > Junior Leader/Civil Disturbance Leadership Training
- > Nuclear Weapons Surety Readiness Proficiency
- > Training Preparation Assembly
- > Annual Training Assembly (ATA) Individual Use Other
- > Mobile Conduct of Fire Trainer (MCOFT)
- > Management/Support Assembly

Each full anniversary year earns a Soldier 15 membership points (partial years earn partial points).

The Army Correspondence Course Program (ACCP) awards one point for every three credit hours completed, provided the Soldier is not in an Active Duty status at time of completion. No points will be entered into the Retirement Points Accounting Management (RPAM) system for ACCP points earned while the Soldier is in an Active Duty status.

### Maximum IDT Points Rule

Originally established by law in 1949, the maximum number of IDT points a Soldier could earn in any anniversary year was 60 points. This rule has been modified over the years; following are the points allowed, depending on the dates of the service:

- › Before Sept. 23, 1996 = 60 points
  - › From Sept. 23, 1996 until Oct. 30, 2000 = 75 points
  - › From Oct. 30, 2000 until Oct. 30, 2007 = 90 points
  - › From Oct. 30, 2007, and subsequent years of service = 130 points
- (For more information, see sidebar.)

### The Retirement Points Accounting Management (RPAM)

Once you know about retirement points, you need to find out how many points you have earned. RPAM (formerly known as Retirement Points Accounting System or RPAS) provides an automated method to ensure timely recording and verification of all retirement points earned during your career.

Soldiers must receive an NGB Form 23A and A1 (Annual and Detailed Point Statement) every year. If you don't, you should contact your unit readiness NCO or state JFHQ RPAM (see sidebar). If you find a problem with your points statement, you should contact one of these offices to make necessary corrections in a timely manner.

### Your Next Step: Pre-Retirement Briefing

A State Military Personnel Management Officer (MPMO)/G-1 or other designated staff member will conduct a pre-retirement briefing during your 18th or 19th qualifying year of service. At your pre-retirement briefings, you'll learn about Reserve Components Survivor Benefit Plan (RC-SBP), retirement benefits, medical care,

discharge procedures and the retired pay application process. If at all possible, your spouse should attend these briefings.

One of the most important decisions you'll make for your family is your Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan (RC-SBP) election. The Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) is the only way for retired pay to continue after the death of the retiree.

### The Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP)

Congress established the SBP in 1972. Its primary purpose is to provide survivors with a portion of a retired Soldier's retired pay, in the event the Soldier dies. Retired pay stops when a retiree dies; survivors do not receive any monthly payment unless the retiree elected some level of SBP coverage before he or she retired. Retirees cannot elect SBP coverage after retirement. A Soldier can check his or her selected RC-SBP option by contacting their state Retirement Services Office (<http://www.armyg1.army.mil/rso/rso.asp>). See the following paragraphs for more details on your election options.

### RC-SBP

RC-SBP allows RC Soldiers who have received his or her letter of "Notification of Eligibility for Retired Pay at Age 60" to continue a portion of his or her future retired pay entitlement to their enrolled beneficiary (or beneficiaries) if they die before they begin to receive retired pay at age 60. There are three RC-SBP Options:

## For more information on Retirement Services visit:

›› To find ARNG State G-1 Retirement Points Accounting Management (RPAM) Offices, State Joint Force Headquarters (JFHQ) and State Military Personnel Management Officers (MPOs) information for your state, go to: [Ngb.army.mil/resources/states.aspx](http://Ngb.army.mil/resources/states.aspx).

Click on the National Guard site for your state and call the phone number listed for contact information for these offices.

›› For all components, Retirement Services Officers (RSOs) at Army installations worldwide support retiring and retired Soldiers and Families. To find information, go to: [Armyg1.army.mil/rso/rso.asp](http://Armyg1.army.mil/rso/rso.asp).

›› You can find more information and specific guidance for Department of Defense Instruction (DODI) 1215.7 at: [Dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/121507p.pdf](http://Dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/121507p.pdf).

›› Contact your unit readiness NCO or state JFHQ RPAM by going to [Ngb.army.mil/resources/states.aspx](http://Ngb.army.mil/resources/states.aspx).

Click on your state National Guard office and call the number listed to get in touch with these offices. If you find a problem with your points statement, you should contact one of these offices to make necessary corrections in a timely manner.

›› A list of Servicing Transition Centers can be found at: [Militaryconnection.com/army\\_trans.asp](http://Militaryconnection.com/army_trans.asp).

›› To receive *Army Echoes* by email, go to: [Armyg1.army.mil/rso/echoes.asp](http://Armyg1.army.mil/rso/echoes.asp).

You can also find back issues of *Echoes* at this site.





**“Retirement is a complex, life-changing process. It is important to understand the benefits and point system in place for Guard Soldiers. I’m 33 years old and I have five years until I can retire based on the current system, although I can’t collect any money until I turn 50.”**

-CPT Darrin Haas, member of the 130th military police unit out of Memphis, TN

**Option A** (Decline to Make an Election Until Age 60) (No RC-SBP participation): If you choose this option and die before age 60, your beneficiaries will not receive any portion of your future retired pay entitlement. You will be able to elect Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) when you make your application to receive retired pay at age 60. If you are married at time of election, your spouse must concur with the election not to enroll in the RC-SBP.

If you have no eligible dependents when you make your RC-SBP election and you later marry or acquire a dependent child, you have one year from the date of the marriage or acquiring the child to make an RC-SBP election. That election becomes effective upon the first anniversary of the marriage or acquiring the dependent child.

**Option B** (Deferred Annuity): Under this option, if you die before your 60th birthday, your RC-SBP beneficiary is entitled to an RC-SBP annuity on the day you would have reached age 60. If you die after age 60, the annuity is payable immediately. Option B RC-SBP election becomes your SBP election at age 60. You do not make a second election at age 60. If you are married when you make this election, your spouse must concur.

**Option C** (Immediate Annuity): Under this option, annuity payments to designated beneficiaries begin immediately upon your death, whether you die before or after age 60. Option C election categories become the Soldier’s SBP election at age 60. You may not make a new SBP election at age 60 retirement. The spouse must concur with this election if the retiring Soldier elects to cover less than full retired pay.

What happens if your spouse doesn’t concur with your SBP election? You are automatically enrolled in Option C, covering full retired pay.


You must complete the DD Form 2656-5, Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan (RC-SBP) Election Certificate within 90 days from receipt of the eligibility notification letter to make an election for RC-SBP.

### Making the “Gray Area” Clear

For National Guard Soldiers and Families, military retirement is a two-part process. Before reaching age 60 and the start of retired pay and medical care, you are in the “gray area”. As a “gray area” reserve retired Soldier, you will have some benefits: You’ll be able to use commissary, exchange and installation facilities, and space-available travel (but your spouse is not eligible for these benefits until you reach age 60).

In the “gray area,” you have the option of purchasing coverage in both the non-subsidized retiree dental plan and the federal long-term insurance program. You will also start receiving the Army Retirement Services bulletin for retired Soldiers and Families, *Army Echoes*. You’ll be able to choose to receive *Echoes* by email or by hard copy (for more information, see sidebar).

If you choose to retire from the Guard before age 60, you are not eligible for dental and long-term insurance programs or benefits. You must keep the Human Resources Command-St. Louis informed of your address and status both for mobilization purposes and to ensure that they have your address when it’s time to mail your retirement packet. The phone number is (800) 318-5298, ext. 4.

To learn more about the retirement process, contact your Unit Readiness NCO or the State Joint Force Headquarters Retirement Points Accounting Management office. 

# familyroom

Caring for the Homefront



Positive Vibrations: Military kids bond with Guard Soldiers while attending Operation Purple Camp.

# taking a break

## With Operation Purple® Camps

Courtesy of NATIONAL MILITARY FAMILY ASSOCIATION

War affects everyone—not just service members, but their spouses and children as well. As an organization dedicated to serving military Families, the National Military Family Association (NMFA) has recognized the need for more resources to support military children. In 2004, the Operation Purple summer camp program was created as a way to help military children struggling with a parent's deployment.

During the 2004 pilot season, NMFA implemented 12 different Operation Purple camps across the country. Due to the success of these camps, NMFA expanded the program and has since hosted more than 10,000 military children who have experienced or will experience deployment.

NMFA realizes that these children and their Families need resources and outlets to deal with the effects of their current situation. NMFA's free Operation Purple summer camp program gives children a unique experience where they can learn coping skills, build a support network of peers and share in the kind of carefree fun that they need and deserve.

According to NMFA, more than **155,000** kids have at least one parent who is deployed in Overseas Contingency Operations.

\* \* \*

In 2008, there were 100 weeks of camp held in 62 locations across 37 states and territories.

More than 155,000 kids have at least one parent deployed in Overseas Contingency Operations; this staggering figure doesn't even include those dealing with routine, but often lengthy, deployments and separations from loved ones. Many children are experiencing multiple deployments or have more than one parent or Family member deployed.

Children who have a deployed parent or Family member face challenges. In the course of their parent's service to our nation, these young people also make sacrifices so we can retain the freedom that is the cornerstone of American life. Fear, worry, heavy responsibilities, isolation, loneliness, missed birthdays, holidays and special events—these are just some of the things that these brave military kids face. Giving them an opportunity to take a break and have fun is a small way to give back.

For more information on locations or to sign up for a camp, visit [OperationPurple.org](http://OperationPurple.org). 

*NMFA's Operation Purple summer camp is free to all military kids.*

## ARNG Enters a New Partnership

The Army National Guard (ARNG) and the National Science Center (NSC) have forged a new partnership to publicize how NSC programs can help ARNG educators and provide programs for children of deployed Soldiers. The NSC is a joint venture between the Army and the not-for-profit National Science Center, Inc., with a national mission to increase math and science proficiency in students.

The NSC is seeking teachers to host week-long Fast Track Science camps in local communities for students in grades 4-5 and 6-8. NSC provides the curriculum, kits, teacher training and compensation, and you provide the students and host facility. If interested, contact the NSC POC Rhonda Carroll directly at 706.821.0213 or 800.325.5445 ext. 0213; [carrollr@nscdiscovery.org](mailto:carrollr@nscdiscovery.org). You can also contact your State Family Program Director or State Child and Youth Coordinator for more information.



“  
Savor that  
you share  
a love  
for your  
country  
and each  
other.”

—WO1 Charlene Ricketts  
and SSG Cary Ricketts

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# so long as we both shall serve

## Double Time for Dual-Military Couples

By LYNNE YORK

**L**ess than a year after LTC William Wynns' return from Afghanistan, his wife, CPT Dianna Wynns, is readying for deployment to Iraq. While CPT Wynns is away, LTC Wynns will have double duty back home in Lebanon, TN—taking care of their three children as well as performing his job as a Deputy Human Resource Officer.

Welcome to life as a dual-military couple. It's a demanding lifestyle, but one with unique rewards and benefits.

What gets the Wynns, and couples like them, through the challenges and sacrifices that come with being a two-Soldier household?

"We both know each other's military situation," said CPT Wynns.

Her husband agrees. "The best thing is: We both understand the requirements."

Each partner has an intimate knowledge of what the other is experiencing during deployment and a shared understanding of the Guard.

It's a bond found among other double-duty couples.

### Meeting of the Minds

"This has been the best relationship I have ever been in because we're both in the Guard and know what is expected of one another at work," said WO1 Tina Price, who, along with her fiancé OC Gary Francisco, lives in Springfield, IL. Francisco likes that there is little need to explain anything military-related.

"We have a shared mental state," he said.

MAJ Brian Bobo and his wife, CPT Teresa Bobo, of Woodbury, MN, met in the military. Both believe mutual understanding is key to their relationship. "We can help each other and share the additional bond of being Soldiers as well as spouses," said MAJ Bobo.

This understanding became stronger during MAJ Bobo's deployment to Iraq.

"We talked every day on my lunch break—his bedtime—and every night, he would call to tuck me in—morning for him," shared CPT Bobo. "Some people say that's too much, but that's what made us happy, and that's what we both needed," she added.

### Inspiration to Serve

For many of these couples, the strength to handle being a dual-military couple lies in what inspired them to serve their country.

The Wynns both had Family members who served. "My father was in the Guard, and I wanted to continue that tradition," said CPT Wynns.

SGT Amy Parker, of Ashland, KY, always wanted to be in the military. Meanwhile, her other half, SFC Joseph Parker found that "in the Guard, there is so much more that the Soldiers bring to the table."

Others volunteered for the job opportunities and benefits, or to complete their service obligation. CPT Bobbie Mayes, of Lawrenceburg, KY, signed up because, "My brother told me it was like band camp!" In addition to that, she discovered that the Guard would pay for law school.

Mayes' husband, CPT Jacob Mayes, had a similar reason for joining—tuition for college. However, he encountered two great mentors who pushed him toward military success. "The Guard came to be a big part of me ... and I decided to become an officer."

"I love that we can understand each other so well with the military jargon."

—CPT TERESA BOBO

\* \* \*

### Separation Anxiety

A common hardship among dual-military couples is time away from each other and their Families due to separations. The reasons vary—deployments, drills, temporary duties, training, schooling—but the outcome is the same: one leaves, the other stays behind.

"It is tough ... not only are you a spouse without your partner ... but you are also a Soldier with all the responsibilities

you already had,” said CPT Tijuana Cookston, whose husband, Chief Warrant Officer Chad Cookston served in Afghanistan from April 2005 to July 2006. The Cookstons live in Harrison, TN.

When LTC Wynns deployed for a year, his wife also faced some stressful events. She learned she was pregnant, moved twice, her mother was hospitalized and her father-in-law passed away.

And yet, CPT Wynns found a silver lining. “I have the world’s greatest mother-in-law ... and I’m also blessed with great friends.”

She also got through the separation by having a set routine and sticking with it as much as possible. “It made things at home seem more normal,” she shared.

Soldiers often become temporary single parents.

“I had to pick and choose parenting battles like bed times and chores,” shared

WO1 Charlene Ricketts, wife of SSG Cary Ricketts, both of Cedar Hill, TN.

“I tell everyone, ‘I take a lot of vitamins just to keep up with the demands of work, kids, social activities and housework!’” said SGT Amy Parker, whose husband is serving in Afghanistan.



Side by Side: MAJ Brian Bobo and CPT Teresa Bobo credit communication and understanding as the key to their successful marriage.

### Rewards

But even with separation and sacrifice, there are upsides to being doubly “married” to the military. Many of the couples shared that although they are “Soldier first, spouse second,” there are benefits.

“I love that we can understand each other so well with the military jargon,” said CPT Bobo.

“It is an amazing feeling to have someone in my corner who understands my sacrifices, doesn’t hold them against me and believes I deserve to be at the top,” replied 1SG Diane Webb.

“The Guard has been great to both of us,” said LTC Wynns. “We are paid well and enjoy a good life due to our service.”

SGT Parker loves “watching my children learn pride in their country, pride in their mom and dad.”

### Sacrifice

In conjunction with separation comes the fact that these couples, and their Families, have to sacrifice certain aspects of their lives in order to complete their missions.


“We have often missed birthdays, anniversaries and special events due to deployment or temporary duty,” said CW4 Tracy Webb and 1SG Diane Webb of Murfreesboro, TN.

SPC Felicia Lovings and her husband, SPC Gary Harris, of Frankfort, KY, disagreed on his transitioning to active duty due to her current career. “I have a full-time federal job with the Guard that would not allow me to transfer to another state.” Harris kept his part-time Guard status to allow Lovings to maintain her position.

### Advice

When asked if these Soldiers have any advice for fellow dual-Guard couples, their collective voice answered: Spend as much time together as possible; know each other’s goals; keep work and home separate; support each other; and celebrate the small victories.

Or, as the Ricketts responded, “Savor that you share a love for your country and each other.”

For better or for worse, when all is said and done, these dual-military couples hold a deep love of their country and their partners—so much that they’re willing to work through whatever may come their way. 

## EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE FOR GUARD SPOUSES

Thanks to the Army Spouse Employment Partnership (ASEP), a mutually beneficial partnership between the Army and corporate America, military spouses are better equipped to achieve their personal job goals.

Currently, 31 corporations, along with military and federal government agencies, pledge their best efforts to increase employment and career opportunities for Army spouses. Since its October 2003 inception, ASEP partners have hired more than 23,000 military spouses.

ASEP will be officially introduced to the Army National Guard shortly, according to Martina Salazar, Family Programs Analyst, National Guard Bureau.

For more information on ASEP, contact Martina Salazar, (703) 601-7846, or visit [MilitarySpouseJobSearch.org](http://MilitarySpouseJobSearch.org).

# bridging the gap

## A Single Soldier's Deployment

By LYNNE YORK

**D**eployments are never easy on any Citizen-Soldier, but for those who are unmarried, they can present a unique set of challenges. For example, without a spouse, they must find outside parties to take care of their home, pets, personal finances and legal obligations.

So how do single people in the Army National Guard handle a deployment? To find out, *Foundations* spoke with one such Soldier.

### SSG Matt Sciranka

In 2001, at the age of 17, SSG Matt Sciranka joined the Guard because he wanted to serve his country. He has been deployed twice since then—to Tikrit, Iraq, and to Camp Arifjan, Kuwait—and the transition from part-time to full-time duty required some reorganizing of his life.

“The biggest thing I faced [before deploying] was making sure my bills got paid while I was gone,” he said.

Matt’s father, George Sciranka, volunteered to manage his son’s finances during both deployments. “I had everything paid off for Matt by the time he got back,” he said.

One thing that couldn’t be delegated to friends or Family was Matt’s car lease, which was due to expire while he was in Iraq. “I had to break the lease and return the vehicle,” he explained.

### Survivor Instincts

Service overseas created other challenges in Matt’s world. During his first deployment, the only time he could call home to check in with his dad was around 2 a.m. This interrupted George’s sleep, and sometimes, it alarmed him.

“My heart would go up in my throat because it’s usually only bad news [when the phone rings] at that time of day,” said George. “After my heart would settle down, I could go back to sleep.”

Fortunately, Matt’s second deployment was less nerve-racking. Father and son not only had a better idea of




“The biggest thing I faced [before deploying] was making sure my bills got paid while I was gone.”

—SSG Matt Sciranka, Ohio National Guard

what to expect, they discovered that Matt would be at the same base camp as his twin brother, Marc.

“I felt a little bit better the second time around because [Matt’s] brother was over there with him,” George said.

### Duty Bound

Home since February 2009, and now working as a Human Resource Assistant with the Ohio National Guard Family Program, Matt knows there’s a chance he may be called overseas again. Today, it’s a reality he’s prepared to face—single-handedly or otherwise. 

COURTESY OF SSG MATT SCIRANKA



The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program offers various programs and online resources for single Soldiers, including single Guard-member workshops and Strong Bonds Single Soldier Retreats. To learn more, please call or visit your state’s Joint Forces Headquarters.

# back to work!

Employer support group helps bring  
Soldiers and employers together

By FRED MCGHEE II

**W**hen Army National Guard and Reserve members deploy—which is now taking place in record numbers—questions and complications can arise between Soldiers and their civilian employers.

The Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) can help. This organization exists to promote cooperation and understanding between employers and Soldier employees by addressing the challenges that arise. A division of the Department of Defense, ESGR provides free education, consultation and mediation, including information on labor laws and regulations, to all parties.

For example, if a Soldier lost his or her job due to deployment, ESGR would refer them to the Uniformed

Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). This measure provides job protection and rights of reinstatement.

ESGR assists employers and employees equally. “We don’t choose a Soldier’s side or an employer’s side,” said Cara Divilbliss, program support specialist for the Mississippi ESGR. “We just state the law.”

## Bigger Stage, Expanded Role

With the average deployment lasting 10 months—and some being extended to well over a year—ESGR’s role in maintaining employer support for Guard and Reserve members has grown.

The organization is also busier due to the current



Soldiers, Airmen and employers of the Ohio National Guard's Joint Employer Readiness Program smile, March 7, for a group photo near static military displays at the Blue Ash Air National Guard Station in Cincinnati, OH.





Jim Sheble, vice president of NUCOR Steel (center), received the prestigious Freedom Award from the ESGR for his service and loyalty to deployed National Guard Soldiers. The award earned him a 52-minute face-to-face meeting with former President George W. Bush at the White House.

financial crisis. “Because of the economy, there have been several layoffs,” explained Divelbliss. “Soldiers want to know whether it was because they’re being deployed, or due to the economy.”

### Evolving Mission

Established in 1972, ESGR was originally a 9-1-1/emergency program for Soldiers. That changed after 9/11, when the National Guard evolved into a fully operational force. The surge in deployments forced ESGR to change the way it carries out its mission.

“The change has placed more requirements upon our Guard and Reserve Service Members, and more sacrifice is placed upon their employers,” said L. Gordon Sumner Jr., executive director for ESGR.

“Our focus now,” he continued, “is to transform ESGR into a 4-1-1 program—educating employers and employees about what is expected of them.”

### Volunteer Spirit

ESGR volunteers, according to Sumner, are the backbone of the organization, and bring a vast reserve of diverse experience to the program. Among them are attorneys, small businessmen, politicians, and former Guard and Reserve Service Members.

“Most of them found out about our mission through word-of-mouth and fell in love with it,” said Divelbliss of the volunteers. She estimated that 80 percent of Mississippi’s 58 volunteers are retired military members, and said they have successfully mediated 81 of 83 cases. “Successful” mediation is defined as keeping the cases from reaching the department of labor.

### How Employers Become Heroes

When facing deployment, Soldiers worry about their Family. Civilian employers can play a significant role in their emotional and psychological well-being by complying with the laws that protect the Soldiers’ rights.

“For a Soldier to be away and know that the company they worked for is taking care of their family is comforting,” said Steven Ryan Garrett, retired

National Guard Soldier.


He knows from experience. A former sergeant in the 204th Air Defense Artillery based in Forrest, MS, Garrett learned of ESGR while deployed for Hurricane Katrina. His employer, NUCOR Steel in Jackson, MS, is the largest recycler in North America.

“For me to be away and know that the company I worked for is taking care of my Family in my absence is comforting.” —Steven Ryan Garrett

Garrett appreciated NUCOR’s support so much that he nominated its leader, Jim Sheble, for the ESGR Patriot Award, which recognizes outstanding employer leadership and personnel practices in support of Guard and Reserve employees.

Sheble won the Patriot Award and later, the Freedom Award—the latter being the ESGR’s most prestigious national recognition.

Sheble contended that Guard Soldier employees are an invaluable asset to him because they provide his company with several advantages.

“With a National Guard member,” he said, “you get someone who is sharp, disciplined and loyal, and who understands safety. And above all, you get someone who knows how to work as [part of] a team.” 



# kids serve, too

## Military Kids Cope With the Stress of Deployment

By ANN M. STARK

**H**aven't we all entertained daydreams of the "good old days" and revisited memories of what most of us would consider a carefree childhood?

Dealing with worry and stress might seem like a task for adults only, but they sometimes forget that stress is not an adult phenomenon. Children, teens and young adults today may experience more stress than we realize.

Perhaps no segment of the U.S. population has been placed under more stress than the children of Service Members. They have made many contributions and sacrifices as their parents serve. According to the National Military Family Association (NMFA), a nonprofit organization that represents Families of all ranks and services, there are 3 million people serving in the Armed Forces, and there are nearly 1.8 million children of Active Duty, National Guard and Reserve parents.

Deployments affecting military Families bring a unique set of challenges, not just for the Service Member or spouse, but also, undeniably, for their children. Deployment, while not a new experience for most Active Duty military Families, may be uncharted territory for many Army National Guard Families.

Multiple and lengthy deployments are difficult for everyone, but are particularly unsettling for children who have never experienced cycle of deployment changes. As hard as one may try to protect young Family members from these changes, some stressors will trickle down. Remember ... kids serve, too.

When we hear the word "stress," we often label it a bad thing. However, some stress might be considered healthy and normal. Not all stress is created equal, according to an article by Arlene Fulton, Ph.D., a child development specialist and author of *Helping Children Cope: Children and Stress*. Ordinary stresses are those that, as a general rule, kids can handle as part of their daily routine, such as


waking up, dressing and making it to the bus on time.

Developmental stresses, or those related to growing and changing, require mastery of certain skills and adaptation to new habits and routines—for instance, learning new skills. The third type of stress is characterized as being unique to the individual, and deployment would fit into this category. Coping with unique stress requires trust and good communication between parent and child.

Most children can learn, and accept, that everyday living will present certain challenges, and they either possess or can develop stress management and coping skills to make them stronger and more resilient. Here are a few building blocks to enhance stress management for children:

- **Acknowledge that children, teens and young adults experience stress.** Brushing off stress as normal or routine could bury more serious problems.
- **Be open to discussing concerns or behavior change.** Encourage a half hour of individual time with each child a week to communicate, connect and learn.
- **Care.** Set reasonable expectations and enable success. Children thrive when everyday routines are manageable and successes are rewarded.

Regarding military children, Leslye A. Arsht, Deputy Under Secretary for Military Community and Family Policy, said, "Growing up in a military Family offers some challenges, but it also provides some special rewards and pride for their parents' service.

"It's essential to recognize that military children make significant contributions for the country while their parents are away on long deployments," she continued. "Despite multiple moves throughout their school years, military children are resilient and self-confident. They have strengths admired by many—especially their parents." 

# Make Preparedness a Family Mission.

All Families are invited to join the ARNG Decade of Health community at [www.decadeofhealth.com](http://www.decadeofhealth.com) during the 2009 launch of a Family-focused campaign, ARNG Ready and Resilient.®



**ARNG**  
Ready & Resilient®



Always Ready, Always There...  
**Always Healthy.**

[www.decadeofhealth.com](http://www.decadeofhealth.com)





## walk this way

### Stepping Your Way to Fitness

By LYNNE YORK

Most people begin walking when they're around 14 months old. I started in my mid-40s.

Yes, you read that right: mid-40s. That's how long it took me to motivate myself to get up off my rear end and start fitness-walking. But boy, am I glad I finally made the move!

Walking is the shortcut to several health benefits—so many that I'm sorry I didn't start sooner. It can improve your mood, lower stress, increase metabolism and manage weight—and it's great for the heart!

But what really inspired me is the fact that there's no gym membership required—just the right shoes and comfortable clothing! (See opposite page.)

Whether you're relatively new to walking, like I am, or advanced enough to tackle a marathon, there are guidelines you should follow to keep yourself injury-free and safe:

- > Never stretch cold muscles. Wait until the end or middle of your walk.
- > Find a comfortable stride and keep your body in line—chin up, shoulders back, arms bent at the elbow and swinging, heel of your foot touching the ground first.
- > Start out slowly, then gradually increase speed.
- > Drink plenty of fluids to keep the body hydrated.
- > Avoid wearing headphones or earbuds when outside. They may be great for listening to music, but they also block out the sounds of oncoming cars, bicyclists, runners and dogs.
- > Speaking of dogs, a repellent spray works wonders in stopping any aggressive canines.
- > Carry a cell phone and identification for emergencies.

To be honest, even though I know this low-impact workout is highly beneficial, there are days I don't want to train. My excuse list is long: I'm tired; I'm sick; I don't have the time; it's boring; it's too cold/hot/rainy/snowy/windy outside.

According to Stephanie Brooks, a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist with 10 years of coaching experience, there are numerous ways to stay motivated:

- > Keep a journal of your mileage and time.

You can also use a pedometer to measure your steps. Doing so helps you see the progress you're making. Try [Runstoppable.com](http://Runstoppable.com), a great online tool to track your every move.

- > Set realistic daily, weekly and monthly goals. Write them into your schedule.
- > Vary your route. Speaking from personal experience, this tip is what most keeps my boredom at bay and my motivation high. Some days, I tackle the hills in my neighborhood, while others are spent in the park. On occasion, I'll walk on the treadmill indoors. Variety is the spice of life! Or at least that's what I tell myself.

Who knew that putting two feet in front of each other was so easy? Well, actually, toddlers do. Which means there's no excuse for those of us old enough to be reading this article not to walk out the door and get physical!

# Set realistic daily, weekly and monthly goals.

## The Last Stretch

Stretching is a great way to avoid injuries. We've included a few stretches below, to help you stay loose and limber. But remember—stretching is exercise too, so you'll want to follow these important tips from Stephanie Brooks, Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist:

**Stretch slowly.** It's better to take time stretching than to waste time healing from an injury.

**Never bounce or overdo your stretches.** If at any point you don't feel flexible enough to follow the suggestions below, stop!

**Simplify your stretch.** After a long, challenging walk, you may want to take a warm bath and stretch your legs in the tub.


### Calf stretches

**1.** Stand facing a tree (or pole), and gently lean forward against it. Keep your right heel on the ground, but point the toes upward and support them against the tree. Slowly lean your body forward to stretch the calf muscle. Hold for 20-30 seconds and release. Repeat with left leg.

**2.** Use a curb (or a step) for this one. Face the curb and place your right leg in front of your left leg. Rest the sole of the right foot on the curb, with your heel touching the ground. Gently lean your body forward to stretch the calf muscle and hold 20-30 seconds. Repeat on left leg.

**3.** The following stretch works best if you're inclined slightly, either facing uphill, or hands on curb or step. Drop into push-up position: facing down, hands shoulder-width apart. Keeping your weight on the balls of the feet, gently push back toward your heels, slowly stretching the calf muscle. Hold for 20-30 seconds and ease forward toward your toes. Repeat. You can also bring one foot forward, even with the other knee, and then alternate legs.

### Lower back stretch

You'll want to sit down for this one. Cross your left leg over the right leg, so that the ankle is resting on your right knee (your left calf and shin should now be parallel to the ground). Keeping the left calf and shin horizontal, use both arms to slowly pull the leg up toward your chest. You'll feel the stretch in your lower back and the top of your glutes. Don't overdo it, and stop if you feel any strain in your back or knee. Gently lower the leg back to the original position and repeat with the other leg. 

## Start Off on the Right Foot

Shoes are the only equipment a walker needs, but they're also the most important. To be sure you're wearing the correct footwear, get fitted at a running shop.

Proper walking shoes should have:

- > Ample heel cushioning
- > Roomy toe area
- > Arch support
- > Slip-resistant soles

### Dress for success

When it comes to exercise and attire, comfort should be your priority, not fashion. However, loose-fitting and layering is always in season! Layering allows you to peel away items as you warm up. And new fabrics designed for exercise keep moisture away from the skin, insulate the body and protect you from the elements. Be sure to accessorize with plenty of sunscreen.

### Buddy up

Boost your workout using a buddy system! Exercising with others can help you stick to your walking program by alleviating boredom and providing motivation, inspiration and accountability. Walk with a friend or join a local walking group.

### Calculating calories

Walking and weight loss go hand-in-hand. The reason: We expend energy with every step we take, which burns calories, which leads to losing weight! Approximately 100-200 calories are burned per mile, depending on your weight, pace and distance. If you are using a pedometer, approximately 2,000 steps equals one mile.



# zero tolerance

## The National Guard's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program

By JANE LUX, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU'S SAPR COORDINATOR


**T**he National Guard's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program is focusing this year's prevention efforts on bystander intervention. The program's training teaches Soldiers how to intervene in and prevent sexual assaults.


The SAPR is enlisting the help of fellow Soldiers who are able to recognize how offenders plan and target trusting fellow Soldiers. We are hoping that this will send a strong message to potential perpetrators that their fellow Soldiers will not tolerate this type of behavior in the National Guard.

The program is led by 54 Joint Force Headquarters Sexual Assault Response Coordinators, or SARC's, who have the responsibilities of managing the individual programs within the states. If an assault occurs in their state, they have a victim's advocate to lead the effort in providing vital resources that care for the victim after an assault.

The program features two primary areas of focus: prevention and response.

A small number of our Soldiers are being sexually assaulted by fellow Soldiers. The Secretary of the Army, who recently spoke at the Army Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Summit, made it clear that it will not be tolerated.

"We see every Soldier as part of a brotherhood," said SSG Michael T. Noyce Merino, who was recently named Noncommissioned Officer of the Year. "Sexual assault is a violation of that trust. There is no leeway for that. We don't accept that. Every Soldier knows what the standards are and what is expected of them. Sexual assault is not tolerated in any way." 

 If you have any questions or wish to report a sexual assault, please call (703) 607-2211 or (866) 601-0577.

### Do you know the difference between sexual assault and sexual harassment?

#### Sexual harassment:

A form of gender discrimination that involves one or more of the following:

- Unwelcome sexual advances
- Requests for sexual favors
- Verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature

#### When it occurs:


Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a person is used as a basis for career or employment decisions.

The behavior, situation or circumstance creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

#### Sexual assault:

Intentional sexual contact, characterized by use of force, physical threat or abuse of authority or when the victim does not or cannot consent.

Sexual harassment complaints are handled differently from sexual assault reports. If you're unsure whether your incident is assault or harassment, consider speaking with your System Acquisition Review Council, Veterans Administration, chaplain, or health care provider before making your statement. They may be able to help you make the distinction.



Every Soldier knows  
what the standards are and  
what is expected of them.  
**Sexual assault is not  
tolerated in any way.**

—SSG MICHAEL T. NOYCE MERINO



All for One: SGM Adelita Gallardo, sergeant major for the Texas National Guard State Family Program, credits her Family's success with their active participation in Guard life.

# MODELS FOR SUCCESS

★ ★ ★  
Military Families Share Their Secrets  
★ ★ ★



By LYNNE YORK  
Introduction by MARCIA BEENE DICKERSON

*In our rushed world, we barely take time to breath. And if you're a Soldier or you have one in your Family, even breathing can be a daunting task. Having a successful Family means getting involved in each other's lives, honoring your respective commitments, establishing solid communication skills and understanding that your spouse needs Family support to be successful. Recently, three successful military Families spoke with Foundations about how they balance their lives.*

#### FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

**SGM Adelita Gallardo** has been with the Army National Guard for 27 of her 46 years. During that time she married, divorced, deployed twice, raised two daughters and battled liver cancer (and won).

Today, Adelita cares for her 5-year-old grandson, Anthony, and her 76-year-old mother, while holding down a full-time job as sergeant major for the Texas National Guard State Family Program.

This single parent and her Family have faced a lot of challenges. However, with each one, they banded together and made their way through successfully.

According to Adelita, much of the Family's success is because she began including her daughters and grandson in all aspects of her Guard life when they were very young.

"Throughout my [time] in the military, I have involved my daughters, and now [Anthony], in everything I do," Adelita said.

She believes her children's involvement is important because "they too are serving 'proudly' and 'honorably:'"

"My younger daughter, Valerie, was 16 at the time of my first deployment. Bringing her in ... on the deployment process was important," said Adelita. Valerie became even more involved during her mom's second deployment by agreeing to take charge of the Family's finances.

Adelita's older daughter, Vickie, had power of attorney while she was away. Vickie now works as a Family Assistance Center specialist in the same Family program that employs Adelita.

Anthony has become the Guard mascot, according to Adelita. He visits

Wounded Warriors and, after each trip, asks his grandmother if they can go back, so he can "play with the Soldiers with boo-boos."

#### COMMITMENT

Ask **MSG Miner Roth** what makes his Family of four successful, and he'll



Soldier in Training: Texas Army National Guard Soldier SGM Adelita Gallardo spends quality time with her 5-year-old grandson Anthony.

**"Throughout my [time] in the military, I have involved my daughters, and now [Anthony], in everything I do."** —SGM Adelita Gallardo

“It has taken me time to understand that I am not less important. It’s that my husband has the spirit of a Warrior. To ask him to give up this part of himself would be like asking him not to be who he really is.”

—Army National Guard Special Forces Wife



**Proud to Serve:** Michigan Army National Guard Soldier MSG Miner Roth has proudly served his country for 39 years. Miner’s current service includes working as a contractor for the National Guard Bureau Yellow Ribbon program.



Everlasting Love: MSG Miner Roth of the Michigan Army National Guard sits lovingly with Cheryl, his wife of 38 years.

COPE OR CRUMBLE

Spouses of Soldiers know how much courage, patience and understanding it takes to make the marriage work. Here are some suggestions from one Army National Guard Special Forces wife, whose name is withheld to protect her identity:

At a Family dinner once, I asked my husband this question: If he had to choose between the military or me, which would he choose? My father, the wise man that he is, leaned toward me and said, “Honey, some things you don’t ask, if you don’t really want to know the answers.”

I have thought about those words of wisdom several times throughout our military marriage. It has taken me time to understand that I am not less important. It’s that my husband has the spirit of a Warrior. To ask him to give up this part of himself would be like asking him not to be who he really is.

Understanding this has allowed me to change my perspective. I now see my support for him and his service as a way I, too, can serve my community and my nation. Often, it has simply been this shift in focus that has enabled me to move from victim to victor.

Yes, there are challenges in being a military wife. And the solution to overcoming those challenges, just as with any other challenge in life, comes down to a simple choice. You either cope or you crumble. And YOU are the only one who has the power to decide which it will be.

**Knowing, understanding and supporting what makes your Soldier exceptional minimizes those challenges. It is also what empowers you to be an exceptional spouse.**

TOM GENNARA

immediately answer: “Commitment to each other and the Family.”

And when it comes to commitment, Miner knows what he’s talking about: What began as “just another piece of his life” soon turned into a job, and then a 39-year career with the Michigan Army National Guard. Currently, Miner is employed as a contractor for the National Guard Bureau Yellow Ribbon program, helping deploying Soldiers and their Families.

And then there’s his marriage and Family. Miner met his wife, Cheryl, when they were both freshmen at Grand Ledge High School in Michigan. Two years after graduation, when they married, Miner was already in the Guard.

Cheryl noted that, from the beginning, she “had to think of the Guard as part of our life.”

The couple’s first child, Stacey, was born in 1975. A son, Eric, followed four years later. When they were younger, both children attended Guard functions with their parents. And Cheryl, in her spare time, supported various military events.

“I loved the years I was in a Family Readiness Group. It was great fun ... and I got to know Miner’s Guard Family. It was really rewarding,” said Cheryl.

**Home Sweet Home:** Michigan Army National Guard Soldier 1LT Adam Spina and his wife Angela relax on their front steps after a day of yard duty.

Cheryl’s continued commitment to the Guard helps Miner as well, who admits he’s not very outgoing. “When we’re at an event or a conference, Cheryl talks a lot, [which is] my weak area.”

This couple is so dedicated to each other and to the Guard that they will celebrate their wedding anniversary this year by attending a Strong Bonds for Couples Workshop in Maine.

**MUTUAL SUPPORT**

**1LT Adam Spina** and his wife Angela are a young couple actively involved with each other, and with the Guard.


Adam is the Company Commander of the 144th Military Police Company (QRF) in the Michigan Army National Guard, and a full-time teacher. Angela

is employed as the Michigan State Child and Youth Coordinator.

They both agree that the key to their Family’s success is communication.

“I’m always gone when he’s home, and he’s always gone when I’m home,” shared Angela. “We keep each other posted on what we have going on. I think we’re successful with our communication.”

The Spinass are also very involved in the Guard. “Angela and I have done a lot of [Guard-related] things together ... including working summer camps for the children,” said Adam.

“If you have a spouse who becomes involved [in the Guard], whether it’s through Family Readiness Groups or working full-time in the Guard ... you come into a better understanding of what it all entails,” he emphasized. 

**Soldier First, Teacher Second:** 1LT Adam Spina of the Michigan Army National Guard not only is Company Commander of the 144th Military Police Company (QRF) but also a 7th-grade social studies teacher.



TOM GENNARA

# support

## Resources for Guard Families

# all lines open

## How to Communicate Effectively With Your Teens and Tweens

By MEGAN PACELLA

**One moment** you're having a pleasant Family dinner; the next, you and your teenager are caught in a screaming match about whose turn it is to clear the table. Sound familiar?

Communicating with teens and pre-teens has its ups and downs, and it can be especially difficult in Guard households when one parent is deployed.

"The main thing to remember is that teens are trying to create a sense of identity and independence," says Dr. Mike Riera, a doctor of counseling psychology and the author of *Staying Connected to Your Teenager*.

"Whenever parents encroach on that, they get their hands slapped, so the manner in which you communicate with teens and pre-teens is absolutely critical," he says.

Riera also stresses the importance of keeping communication lines open with kids ages 8 to 12, often called "tweens," who tend to be more vulnerable than teenagers—and even less likely to open up sometimes.

### Try Dr. Riera's tips to improve communication with your teens and tweens:

- Make conversation less structured and more relaxed.
- Create a comfortable atmosphere that will allow you and your teen to talk comfortably. "Kids will talk only when their defenses are down and there are no competing interests."
- Find a neutral place to talk to your teen, like a lengthy car ride, or while they're in their bedroom.

"Parents should perfect the art of hanging out in their kid's room before they go to sleep," Riera says. "Make it a point to ask them how their day was and how things with their friends are going. A teen's bedroom is usually where he or she feels safest, so your chances of having a positive interaction are high."

**Schedule family time.** According to Riera's research, most healthy Families find a way to schedule 20 minutes of Family time five times a week. Gathering on weeknights for dinner is an easy way to facilitate quality time—even if



your Family's hectic schedule has every member running in a different direction.

Don't be surprised if teens and tweens don't always open up, Riera warns. "Your kids won't always talk to you, and that's okay," he says. "The most important thing is that they know they can partake at any point—that gives them a sense of belonging."

**Avoid giving lectures.** No matter how well your check-in times go, it's inevitable that you'll argue with your teen from time to time.


"When you get to the place in an argument where you're finding different words to say the same thing or you feel your voice escalating, that's when you stop," Riera explains.

GETTY IMAGES

The result of taking a few minutes to calm down? Usually both parties involved will apologize after taking some time apart, and reaching an agreement will be much easier.

**Let go.** One root cause for many arguments between parents and teens is that teenagers are searching for a way to become independent young adults, and some parents have a hard time letting go.

“It’s a parent’s job to let go of their role as a manager in a teen’s life and become more of a consultant,” Riera says. “You have a lot of influence over your teen, but not much control.”

Instead of trying to manage every aspect of your teen’s behavior, engage in productive, respectful conversation—it will go a long way toward improving communication and strengthening the influence you have in your children’s lives. 

## Dealing With Deployment

*Communicating well with teens and tweens is especially important if a parent is deployed. Dr. Riera suggests the following:*

### Be honest

>> When a parent is deployed, it’s natural for a child to feel anxious. If your teens and tweens are worried that your spouse might not come home safely, be honest with them, but highlight the good points.

>> “Point out that operating zones are safer than they used to be, and assure them that your Family is strong enough to make it through anything,” he suggests.

### Be patient

>> Sometimes your children will take their anxieties and anger about missing a parent out on you. “Your child might curl up with you and tell stories about dad one night, and then the next morning act extremely angry with you,” Riera says. “The only answer is that they’re scared, and they miss their parent—they take it out on you because you’re present, so don’t be offended.”

### Be connected

>> Realize it is more important to communicate with your children during a deployment than at any other time.

>> “Write letters together or update a Facebook profile with Family photos, so your child feels connected to you,” Riera advises.

>> Don’t forget that email and instant messaging can be great ways to keep communication flowing no matter how far away a parent is stationed.

## BOOK REVIEW

### Mom’s Field Guide *What You Need to Know to Make it Through Your Loved One’s Military Deployment* by Sandy Doell

Reviewed by Marcia Beene Dickerson

When you’re deployed, your Family often has no idea what to do or where to turn. But have no fear because in Sandy Doell’s book, *Mom’s Field Guide: What You Need to Know to Make it Through Deployment*, a mom, dad, brother, sister or anyone else interested in supporting a Soldier will find plenty of help.


Sandy’s son, David, deployed in 2004 with his military police unit to Iraq, and like most parents, she was full of anxiety. But to conquer her worries, she kept herself busy by turning her energy toward supporting her son.

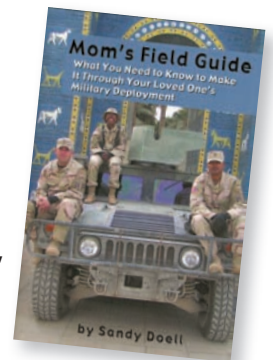
As a writer and editor, Sandy used her research skills investigating ways to support her son. Through lessons learned from other Families, as well as her own experiences, she shares her knowledge with others in the same situation.

Interspersed with her sage advice are emails from David that add a “story” to the information. Each chapter centers on what her son asks for or suggests in his emails.

For example, in chapter two, David asks for cookies and snack cakes. Sandy then speaks about what to send and how to send it—as well as offering recipes that travel well to a hot climate.

The path Sandy follows takes her from worried mom to proactive mom as she learns: how to “pack the box”; things to do before deployment; how to stay busy during a Soldier’s absence; finding support from organizations as well as individuals; and most important, finding emotional support for everyone involved.

*Mom’s Field Guide* is well-written, engaging and chock-full of great information for any mom or Family facing a loved one’s deployment. 



“Freedom isn’t free ... it’s being paid for in flesh and blood and tears and plain old sweat at temperatures over 120 degrees.”

—SANDY DOELL

# headed back to class?

## Five Tips for Adult Students

By JAMIE ROBERTS

**T**hinking about going back to school? There are dozens of reasons why it could be a great move to return to the classroom: to finally earn that elusive college degree, to advance your career, or to make more money at your job. But before you buy those first textbooks, make sure you're aware of the challenges and strategies for overcoming the stresses you'll face as an adult student.

"Besides the academic challenges—dealing with instructors that you don't like and disciplining yourself to study when you have other responsibilities—there are a lot of non-academic challenges as well," says Al Siebert, Ph.D., co-author of *The Adult Student's Guide to Survival and Success* (Practical Psychology Press, 2003). "You feel like you don't fit in. You'll need Family support. You might have childcare to manage. You may be working your way through school."

Obviously it can be tough to balance those work responsibilities with classroom and homework responsibilities. But even if you're taking a break from your career to go back to school, you still have to find financial assistance and student loans.

Faced with so many competing priorities, you have your work cut out for you! Try these five tips to make your back-to-college experience a little less stressful:

**1.** Build support from your friends and Family. You will need others to help you through the tough academic calendar, so tell Family members when you have an important presentation so that they can encourage you, or when you ace a test so they can celebrate with you.


"It's important to have a talk with your Family and ask for their support before starting classes," Siebert says. "You'll need them in a variety of ways: for transportation, home computer use, a quiet time and place to study, and encouragement."

**2.** Manage time wisely. Set aside time to study just as you would any other appointment. Getting back into study mode "requires creating an active study

plan that emphasizes asking and answering questions in writing, studying to pass test questions and then learning to stop," Siebert says. "Endless hours spent reading the textbook and other materials is not the right thing to do." It's also a good idea to go online to look at different note-taking strategies—try certain styles until you find the one that helps you retain the most information.

**3.** Create a support and study group with other adult learners. Joining other students who are at your station in life can help you find a sense of community. It can also help you stay focused: You can collaborate on assignments and share strategies for dealing with difficult professors or classes.

**4.** Ask a lot of questions. Don't worry about being overly assertive when you don't understand an assignment. The other students in the classroom will probably be glad you took the initiative and asked for clarification. Work on forming relationships with your professors—they always appreciate eager, engaged students who don't just sit there like bumps on a log!

**5.** Research financial assistance. Money can be tight when you are trying to pay tuition on top of your regular bills, so carve out some time to research your options. The DAN TES Web site (Dantes.doded.mil) includes information on tuition assistance programs for Guard members. 

Find more tips for ensuring your academic success as an adult student at [AdultStudent.com](http://AdultStudent.com).



*PFC Jessica Duplantis, LAARNG, 415th Military Intelligence Battalion, is looking forward to her upcoming basic combat training. According to her mom, Ann Ricks, ever since Jessica was little, she has had "such a compassion at heart for service."*

*Jessica heads to Fort Leonard Wood, MO, on August 6th.*

# basic rules

## Supporting Your Soldier During Basic Combat Training

By FRED MCGHEE II

When someone joins the Army National Guard, it can be a stressful time for both the Soldier and his or her Family. In particular, loved ones may not know how to be supportive of the new Soldier during the nine-week basic combat training (BCT) period.

*Foundations* has several excellent suggestions for you. The most important thing you can do is to be a steady source of positive reinforcement for your Soldier during the initial weeks of BCT. You may notice a psychological change in his or her demeanor, such as depression, anxiety or hypersensitivity. These are normal reactions to the stress and loneliness of being away from home and living in a challenging environment. Helping your Soldier remain emotionally stable is vital to his or her mental well-being.

Use discretion before delivering any bad news from home to them, as this can distract your Soldier, and cause him or her to lose focus on his or her daily tasks.

Letters of encouragement to your Soldier can help his or her peace of mind, and yours as well. Keeping in touch this way can reduce loneliness and minimize the impact of the distance between you. Soldiers don't have much free time at BCT, so they may not be able to reply to every letter, but keep writing. These notes mean the world to them.


Care packages can also boost Soldier's morale tremendously. Photographs of special Family moments and children's drawings help your Soldier stay emotionally connected.

According to CPT Shannon Cummings, RSP action officer, National Guard Bureau-Army Strength Maintenance Division, Family members can also be supportive by ensuring their Soldier's bills are paid on time while they're away.

"Reassuring your Soldier that his or her belongings and affairs are organized will greatly reduce his or her stress levels," Cummings said.

There are innovative alternative ways to be supportive, too. In one recent example, the Recruit Sustainment Program, RSP, held a workshop in Bossier City, LA, for family members of new Soldiers. They witnessed their Soldiers go through BCT for a day, which helped create understanding—a key component in being supportive.

Encourage your Soldier to participate in the RSP. The Army created RSP in 2005 to help prepare Soldiers mentally for the rigors of BCT. RSP lowers the Soldier drop-out rate by providing them with the skills they need to successfully complete training. The program also educates Families on the support programs available to them.

"BCT is the first step toward a very challenging and rewarding experience in service to the nation," said Cummings. "The Army National Guard believes a better-informed Family will foster a better-informed, and ultimately a better-prepared, Soldier." 



For more information, call 1-800-Go-Guard, contact your State Family Program Director or visit [MilitaryOneSource.com](http://MilitaryOneSource.com). Also, get involved with your unit's Family Readiness Group.



**Solemn Salute:**  
Fellow Ohio  
Army National  
Guard Soldiers  
SFC Jason  
Edwards,  
MSG Robert  
Woodard and  
SFC Charles  
McGrevy  
preside over  
services for  
CPT R.L.  
Wallace.





# final salute

## Military Funeral Honors

By LYNNE YORK

On any given day, thousands of military ceremonies take place across this country. They're filled with the pomp and circumstance typically associated with graduations and other rites-of-passage, but instead of festivity, the atmosphere is one of respect and reflection.

Soldiers stand at attention. In the distance, a bugler sounds the bittersweet notes of "Taps." With precision, a U.S. flag is folded into a symbolic tri-cornered shape and then presented to the Family on behalf of a grateful nation.

It's only right that Veterans should receive such a reverent and fitting send-off for their final journey.

### Honoring those who served

The rendering of military funeral honors is our country's way of showing respect and gratitude to those who, in times of war and peace, faithfully defended this nation.

However, until 10 years ago, some Veterans weren't receiving proper ceremonies. The reason: Since 1997, the number of funeral honors requests has steadily increased—in part due to the aging of the Soldiers who served during WWII and the Korean War.

Yet, as requests had risen, the available manpower to assist with services had decreased, creating one of the military's most challenging domestic missions.

To correct this dilemma, in 1999, Congress approved Public Law 106-65, which stated that, upon a Family's request, every eligible Veteran would receive a respectful and dignified tribute.

Congress also authorized both the National Guard and Veterans Service Organizations to perform the ceremonies under the Department of Defense program "Honoring Those Who Served."

**"It's a *privilege and honor to pay tribute to Soldiers* who have given so much to our nation."**

—SSG MICHELLE WHITE

The Army National Guard (ARNG) Military Funeral Honors program renders professional military funeral honors, in accordance with service tradition, to all eligible Veterans when requested by an authorized Family member. Currently, the program conducts 79 percent of Army funeral honors and 51 percent of all services combined.

### Stately honors

Established as a National Program by the Army National Guard in 2006, this program is active in 52 of the 54 States and Territories. Funding, policy and standardization are provided by the ARNG at the national level. Each state is responsible to oversee that the funding is utilized appropriately and compliant with national policies and standardization.

In Georgia, three full-time and nine part-time teams handle funeral honors requests. “Our Soldiers stretch the borders of the state and can react in a timely manner to the needs of our Veterans and their Families,” said 1SG Bryan Hise, Georgia National Guard Military Funeral Honors Coordinator.

He estimates that Georgia Army National Guard Soldiers will support approximately 1,600 services this year.

“We will not shortchange the standard in order to meet the increased need,” he emphasized. “We will work harder and train more.”

The Ohio National Guard program is composed of seven full- and part-time teams, divided into five regional areas.

“Each year that the program has grown, we have increased the number of Soldiers involved,” said Robert L. King, Ohio’s State Military Funeral Honors Coordinator.

King is proud of his teams and rightly so. In 2008, they fulfilled 4,140 requests.

Instead of teams, Kentucky utilizes Soldiers at the unit level.

“In addition to our own resources, we work closely with Veterans Service Organizations to ensure that all requests are honored and supported,” MAJ Lance Grebe, Kentucky National Guard Plans Officer, Military Support, told *Foundations*.

### Proud to serve

In order to provide a professional tribute to fallen Service members, the Soldiers who participate in honors ceremonies must meet a demanding set of standards and be prepared to perform perfectly at every event.

Applicants first have to pass the Army Physical Fitness Test and then successfully complete the 40-hour Military



Honored to Serve: Soldiers from the Oregon Army National Guard Honor Guard Program prepare the American Flag for presentation.

Funeral Honors training course conducted within the state. These courses cover required performance measures such as the two-, three-, and six-man flag fold; proper presentation, remarks and movements; firing party detail; pall-bearing; and uniform preparation.

In addition, Soldiers must possess the self-discipline and fortitude to properly conduct ceremonies, which at times includes standing perfectly still in any weather conditions.

“I am proud of the Soldiers who everyday ... go to work in the rain, sleet, ice, snow and extreme heat, and stand vigilant to properly and professionally honor their fallen comrades,” King stated.

However, the high standards aren’t a deterrent to recruiting new Service members into the program. “We ask for unit participation, and there has never been a shortage of volunteers,” said Grebe.

SGT Joshua Meadors of the Kentucky National Guard is one such exemplary volunteer. Asked to participate last March, Meadors sees his role as “an opportunity to support our fallen troops and the nation’s Veterans and give something back to the Families.”

In addition to the 40-hour course, Meadors’ training included attendance at an 80-hour Train-the-Trainer course conducted at the ARNG’s Professional Education Center located at Camp J.T. Robinson, North Little Rock, AR.

This national training program certifies over 200 Soldiers annually as trainers. These trainers are responsible for in-state certification of Soldiers before they are authorized to perform funeral honors. This training ensures that each funeral honor rendered by the ARNG is completed in a professional and dignified manner.

“[The training] was an intense, tightly regimented experience ... and just as demanding as the Army’s Air Assault School,” said Meadors.

SSG Michelle White, Ohio National Guard Coordinator, Southwest Ohio Military Funeral Honors team, believes she has one of the greatest jobs in the Guard: “It’s a privilege and honor to pay tribute to Soldiers who have given so much to our nation.”

### Helping others

Although military funeral honors are rendered as a tribute to Service members who have died, they also serve the Families left behind.

In 2003, Lynn Romans’ son, SGT Darrin K. Potter, was Kentucky’s first Army National Guard combat casualty since the Vietnam War. Before and after Darrin’s service, Lynn and her Family received guidance and support from the Kentucky National Guard personnel.

“The Guard was right there for my Family, walking us through the procedures. Any time I had a question, someone was at my side with an answer,” she said.

Due to the outpouring of support Lynn received six years ago, she has since made it her personal mission to attend other Kentucky Soldiers’ memorials. “I make it a point to talk to the mothers and tell them that this is a very honorable loss,” Lynn noted.

In January, on a bitterly cold day, Almut Halscheidt attended the burial service of her father-in-law, Army Veteran John Milakovich. She was impressed with the professionalism of the funeral honors team.

After the flag folding, the team members went out of their way to escort the flag to her husband, who was wheelchair-bound and waiting in their car a considerable distance away.

“The honors were very touching, and we appreciated the three Soldiers being there,” Halscheidt said.

### Day’s end

The honoring of our fallen Soldiers is important to so many people on so many levels.

For the Veteran, funeral honors are an affirmation of their service to the country.

For the Family, there is closure, combined with acknowledgment of the service rendered by their loved one.

For the attending Soldiers, there is the chance to show their respect for fellow brothers- and sisters-in-arms.

For the nation, it is one final salute to those who have sacrificed to ensure our individual rights and collective freedom.

May we always remember our fellow Veterans. 



**Honoring His Service:** The Family of SFC Richard McAvoy receives a symbolic tri-cornered U.S. flag from MSG William Ansley, a member of the Central Ohio National Guard Military Funeral Honors Team.

Last year, more than **1,700 military funeral honors** took place daily. Of those, approximately **1,100 were for WWII Veterans**.

During FY2008, the ARNG has supported over 96,900 Veteran Funeral Honors and 220 honorable transfers and funerals for Soldiers killed in action.

### Who’s Eligible for Military Funeral Honors?

- Military members on active duty or in the Selected Reserve.
- Former military members who served on active duty and departed under conditions other than dishonorable.
- Former military members who completed at least one term of enlistment, or period of initial obligated service in the Selected Reserve, and departed under conditions other than dishonorable.
- Former military members discharged from the Selected Reserve due to a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

### Military Funeral Honors Minimum Requirements:

- The ceremony requires a minimum of two uniformed military members, in addition to a bugler, if available. One of the uniformed military members shall be a representative of the parent service of the eligible beneficiary, who shall present the flag to the next of kin or other appropriate individual.
- The sounding of “Taps,” the military’s bugle call to signal day’s end.



For more information on the Military Funeral Honors program within your state, contact the ARNG Honor Guard offices normally located at the National Guard Joint Forces Headquarters or visit [MilitaryFuneralHonors.osd.mil](http://MilitaryFuneralHonors.osd.mil).

# above & beyond

## Mary Pawlenty's Military Family Care Initiative

By FRED McGHEE II

**As the First Lady of Minnesota**, Mary Pawlenty is expected to attend public events in support of her husband, Gov. Tim Pawlenty, but she is not expected to grab headlines herself. That's the plan most first ladies follow: be seen but never heard, and never make the news. Mary Pawlenty has bucked that trend by stepping out front and creating initiatives that benefit the Families of her home state.

Mary Pawlenty was born Mary Anderson in 1961, in Edina, MN, a suburb of Minneapolis. The youngest of five daughters, she grew up fishing for trout and hiking the many trails in one of the many beautiful parks and recreational areas in Edina. She graduated *summa cum laude* from Bethel College with a bachelor's in political science. She later earned a law degree from the University of Minnesota, where she met her husband, Tim Pawlenty.

After practicing law in Houston for a year, she returned to Minnesota and married Gov. Pawlenty. In 1994, she was appointed district court judge, serving in that post until 2007. Currently, she works as a mediator of civil disputes, helping Minnesota citizens resolve conflicts through



mutual agreement rather than through litigation.

Pawlenty is active in the community, visiting elementary schools to teach students about the three branches of government, focusing on the judiciary. But it was at the annual governor's meeting in 2003 that Pawlenty got the idea for what has become her cornerstone initiative.

"I have to credit Laura Bush with planting the seed in my mind," Pawlenty said. "She spoke to the governors' wives about the importance of supporting military Families."

Inspired by that meeting, she created the Military Family Care Initiative. The initiative is a database of community organizations that have volunteered

their services to help the Families of deployed Soldiers. The Families can access the database to view volunteer services available in their county. The services include yard care, automotive care and day care. "The services offered are the types of things one neighbor would naturally do for another neighbor," Pawlenty said.

Families learn about the services through deployment ceremonies, which are a good venue for communicating the availability of the services because large numbers of Families attend these programs. A second way Families learn of the services is through National Guard Family readiness groups.

In addition to the services volunteers are providing the Families, Pawlenty said that volunteers are establishing a real human connection with the Families. She often receives reports of how the community organizations went above and beyond what was expected of them. "I can't say I'm surprised by the generosity of Minnesotans. They are warm-hearted and willing to help anyone in a time of challenge," Pawlenty said.

For her work with military Families, Pawlenty has earned the "Patrick Henry Award" from the National

**"I am deeply appreciative and committed to military Families. They have been in my heart for the last six years."**

—MARY PAWLENTY, FIRST LADY OF MINNESOTA



**High Exposure**  
A Minneapolis news station videos Minnesota First Lady Mary Pawlenty as she greets the Family of a deploying Minnesota National Guard Soldier on the steps of the State Capitol.

Guard Association of the United States. This award recognizes the contributions local officials or civic leaders make to the National Guard or Armed Forces. Pawlenty also received the Order of St. Maurice Civic Award from the National Guard Association of the United States for her initiative in 2005. This award is given to civilians who have made significant contributions to the U.S. Infantry.

While Pawlenty is pleased with the success of the initiative, she admits that it's a challenge providing volunteer services for so many Families. Minnesota has experienced record deployments, something that was not anticipated in the plan's inception back in 2003. Despite the strain of record deployments, a majority of the organizations have stayed strong


in their commitment, continuing to provide services, she said.

Other states are taking notice of the program's success. Fellow first ladies from Ohio, Kansas and Michigan have contacted Pawlenty about her Military Family Care Initiative, looking to recreate the program in their states.

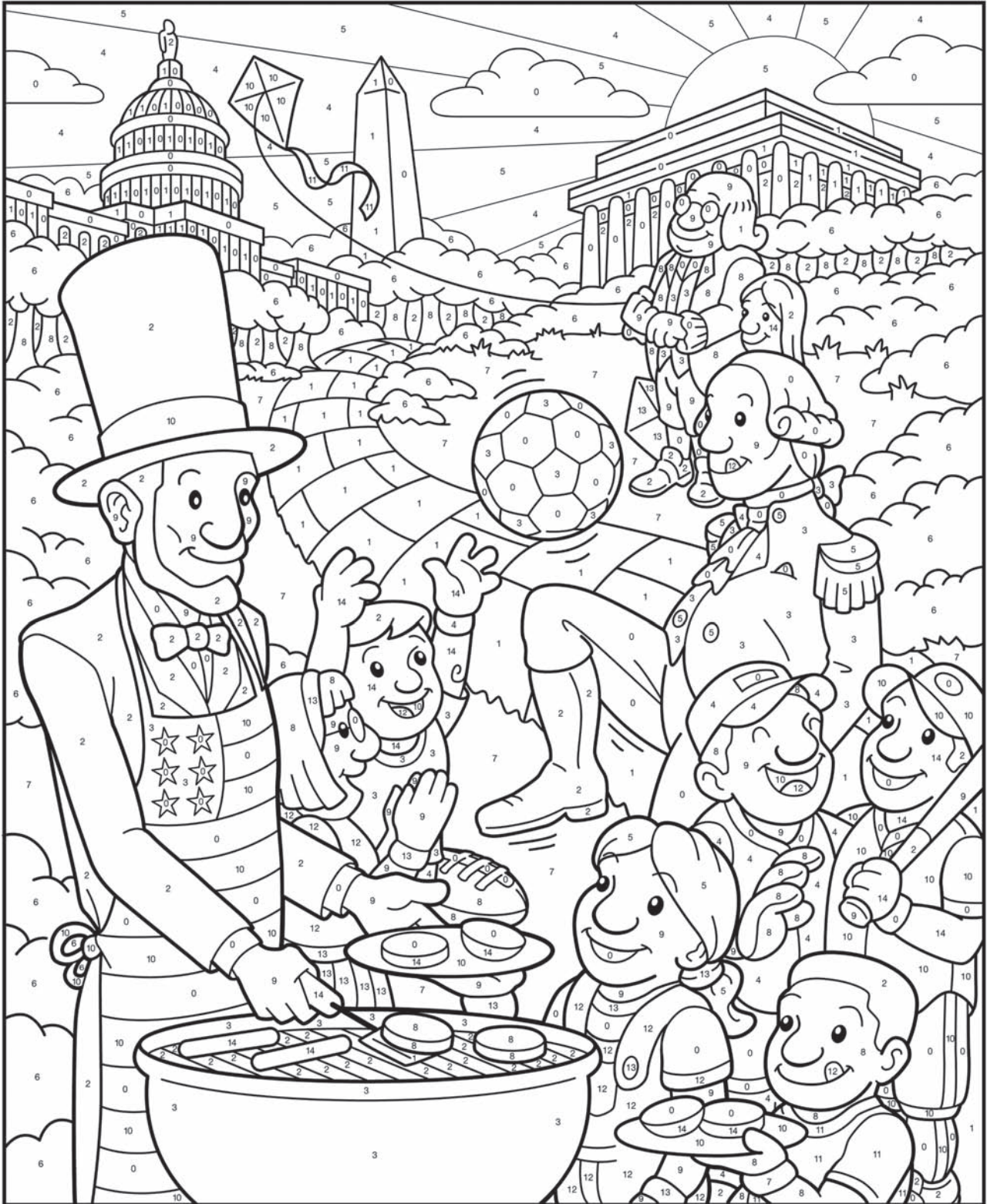
"By my being able to express how well this is working in Minnesota, I think it has given other governors' spouses the idea to create their own type of program," Pawlenty said.

Going forward, Pawlenty says that she would like to see one of the

community organizations take control of the program as she transitions out of office. Conversations between her and some of the organizations have already begun. She also would like to expand the program to include businesses that might want to provide free services to Families of deployed Soldiers.

Pawlenty will leave office in 2010, but hopes to continue working with the initiative in some fashion. "I am deeply appreciative and committed to military Families," said Pawlenty. "They have been in my heart for the last six years." 

For more information on Minnesota's Military Family Care Initiative, visit: [FirstLady.state.mn.us/initiatives\\_MilitaryFamily.html](http://FirstLady.state.mn.us/initiatives_MilitaryFamily.html)  
Also visit: [Arng.army.mil/Familyresources.aspx](http://Arng.army.mil/Familyresources.aspx).



### Picnicking With Patriots

- |          |               |                |            |                 |
|----------|---------------|----------------|------------|-----------------|
| 0. White | 3. Dark Blue  | 6. Dark green  | 9. Tan     | 12. Pink        |
| 1. Gray  | 4. Light blue | 7. Light green | 10. Red    | 13. Violet      |
| 2. Black | 5. Yellow     | 8. Brown       | 11. Orange | 14. Dark Orange |

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# THERE WHEN YOU NEED US

## The Soldier Family Support and Services (SFSS) Division

is a diverse division focused on the care of Soldiers and their Families. Some of the programs we handle are: Child and Youth Services, Spouse Employment and the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration program. We have several other programs that are equally as important, and we continue to expand our role in Soldier and Family care issues and Deployment Cycle Support.



**NATIONAL**   
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**SUPPORT and SERVICES**

If you need information about these programs or have comments about *Foundations* magazine, please send them to [ngb-sfss@ng.army.mil](mailto:ngb-sfss@ng.army.mil).