

Our Military Kids
Small Grants Yield Big Results

Tackling Debt
Advice for Financial Survival

Rebuilding Lives
Homes for Our Troops

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National Guard Soldier & Family

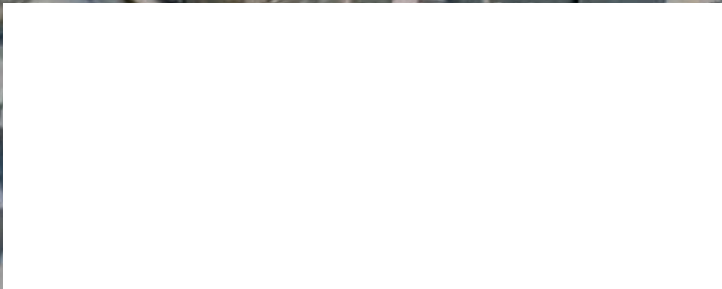
FOUNDATIONS

**+ YOUR
BEST
BODY**
A Comprehensive
Plan to Look
Your Best

A NOTE FROM
Major General
Terry Haston, Adjutant
General, Tennessee
Army National Guard

Sense of Purpose

APPRECIATION IS AN
EVERYDAY THING



ATTN: ARMY KIDS*

You've Got... math homework

english

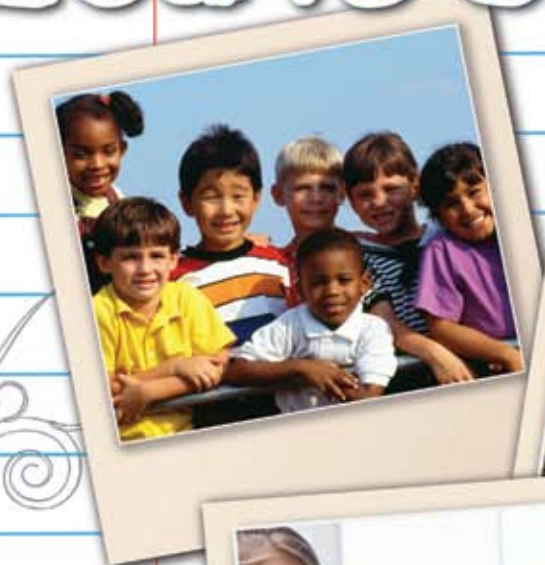
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Sense of Purpose

Appreciation Is an Everyday Thing

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—SSG Chaz Garcia

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How my Family continues to thrive during deployment.



COMPREHENSIVE SOLDIER FITNESS

STRONG MINDS ★ STRONG BODIES

Physical

Emotional

Social

Spiritual

Family

FAMILY



Being part of a family unit that is **safe, supportive** and **loving**, and provides the **resources** needed for all members to live in a healthy and secure environment.

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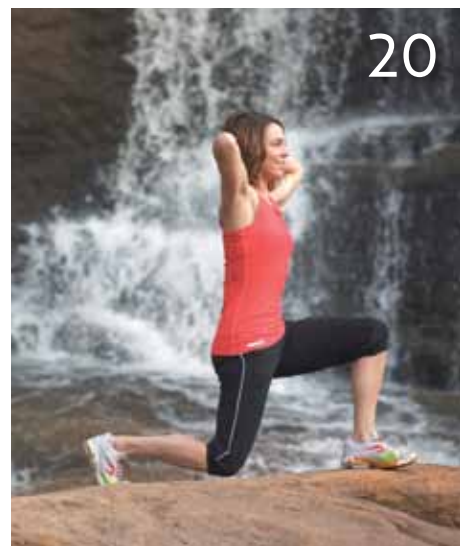
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editor's letter

Hopefully, one success story will inspire others.

Putting together *Foundations* presents many challenges. Paramount among them is how to keep the content fresh and entertaining from one issue to the next. It's not an easy task.

What I've learned is that deployment has many facets and can be covered from numerous angles. The key is to provide our readers with a fresh perspective, one they may not have considered.

For example, one FRG counselor told me that her biggest obstacle was that Families experiencing deployment were often too proud to ask for support. It never occurred to me that Family support programs experienced this type of difficulty. So this issue of *Foundations* contains an article combating the stigma associated with seeking help. My hope is that reading one success story will inspire others to reach out.

This issue also brings you information on resiliency and the Post-Deployment Health Reassessment—both integral for a Soldier's long-term health.

The feature provides an uplifting story, called "Sense of Purpose," about how the Guard has benefited the life of two Service Members and their Families. The Soldiers explain how their Guard service inspired them to give back to their communities.

For *Foundations* to continue to be a great resource for Guard Soldiers and Families, I need your suggestions and comments. Please contact me at Editor@GuardFoundations.com. I value your feedback.

Sincerely,

Fred D. McGhee II
Deputy Editor



SSG Chaz Garcia of the Kentucky Army National Guard teaches the values he's learned in the Guard to high school youth.

PHOTO BY ADAM LIVINGSTON

National Guard Soldier & Family **FOUNDATIONS**

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

From the “shot heard ’round the world” on April 19, 1775, to the most remote areas of Iraq and Afghanistan, the National Guard has continued to demonstrate that we are “Always Ready, Always There.” Our National Guard has transformed itself from a strategic second cousin to a full team player, standing shoulder to shoulder with our Active Duty counterparts and defending our nation’s interests worldwide.

Our National Guard Soldiers and Airmen continue to successfully balance their civilian careers and unquestioned service to our states and nation.

The linchpin that holds all this together is the National Guard Family. Without the support of our spouses, children, parents and employers, we could not be successful. They also serve, and their service is sometimes more difficult. I commend *Foundations* magazine not only for your unwavering support of our Soldiers, but also for your tireless efforts in keeping our Soldiers’ Families current and informed.

The National Guard has been utilized more in the past eight years than in any other time in our history. They have been measured by combat, weighed by action and found to be absolutely the “best bang for the buck.”

It is indeed an honor for me to serve beside these outstanding volunteer Americans.



Major General Terry “Max” Haston
Adjutant General
Tennessee Army National Guard



we've *got* mail

How My Family Continues to Thrive During Deployment

We asked. You answered.

I lived 21 years of my life without truly knowing what the word “dedication” meant. I heard stories about it from my husband, but the meaning hadn’t sunk in yet.

My husband’s father was deployed in 2005. It was tough for me, because I knew nothing of this lifestyle where your Family is together one day and separated the next. Then, in 2006, my husband decided to follow in his dad’s footsteps and joined the Army National Guard.

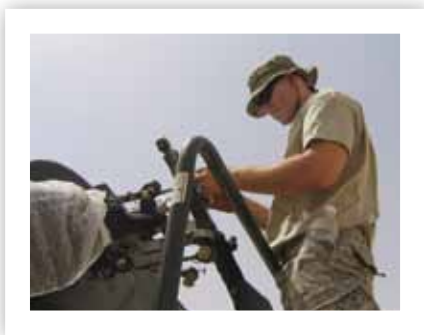
Even though his seven months of training were hard for me, I realized that it was an opportunity to become more than I was. I was learning the hard way what dedication meant—that I would have to be dedicated to my Family if we were to support my husband’s decision.



My husband’s dedication to America is beyond imagining. He is there at a moment’s notice, fighting for our safety and training other Soldiers.

He gives of himself every day to protect our lifestyle—not because of what he receives in return, but because of who he is. He is a leader and protector. He is a lighthouse shining brightly to keep us on the right path.

*Cyndi Cawrse
Wife of SGT Chris Cawrse
642nd Aviation Support Battalion
New York Army National Guard*



I have changed my perspective about my remaining time deployed. It’s natural to miss home, which inspired me to create tasks to help bridge the gap between my current reality and going home. I utilize a calendar. I mark each day as I reach it, rather than after it’s over. It’s a manipulation that doesn’t affect actual time—only how I feel about its perpetual delay.

Eventually, my goal will be met—I’ll go home. Then, these days will transform to foggy memories. I imagine that the feeling of inconvenience about being here won’t prevail. I think my views will soften and a minute part of me will miss what I currently long to escape. This concept feels almost foreign as I consider the length at which my heart begs to return home to my wife.

But I also realize what it is that allows me to remain sane—my fellow Soldiers. My only regret in leaving would be not realizing how profoundly these relationships have affected my life. We’ve become Family. It’s a bond so profound, it could probably never be known under any other circumstance. Who is willing to die for co-workers, college friends or the

various acquaintances you encounter throughout life? Here, you would, without hesitation.

With that in mind, I proceed cautiously toward the end of this deployment and its trials, tribulations, success, failure and laughter.

As we move into the next phase of our lives, we’ll probably head in different directions. But one common thread will bind us: We came together as a collection of strangers, served, and walked away as brothers. Time can’t steal this. Because of that, I’m not going to miss being here—but I am going to miss being here with my fellow Soldiers—my new Family.

*SGT Scott Crofts
1/130th Aviation Battalion
North Carolina Army National Guard*



No two pregnancies are the same. Yet, each one contains lessons for the next.

It's the same with deployments. I remember how my husband's first deployment overtook our house. It was as if it had become a deployment "nursery" that had been painted Army green. There were magazines, gear and huge black boxes stuffed with things that seemed useful at the time. Homemade calendars displayed the countdown. A type of tension in the air hinted at uncertainty—and fear.

I was suddenly saying goodbye to the life I knew. Like an unexpected contraction, the pain hit me, along with an overwhelming desire to ever-so-sweetly wring my husband's neck and scream, "Why did you do this to me?"

I would now learn how to handle everything, from changing tires to long, restless nights of concern. What was most important was learning how to thrive through continual changes. This is a lesson non-military Families learn, but not the same way we do.

With all this understood, we begin round two—the next deployment. A new unit, new job, new mission, new country. I breathe a sigh of relief knowing we made it through the first one and hold on tight as a new life full of new lessons begins.

*Cheryl Montgomery
Wife of SGT Mark Montgomery
193d Military Police Battalion
Colorado Army National Guard*

I totally agree with the statement, "Two is better than one." That is, unless you're newly married to a Soldier and trying desperately to live two lives at one time during a deployment.

In 2004, when my husband, Lieutenant Billy Carpenter, deployed the first time to Afghanistan, we were still dating. He was still young, so many adult responsibilities hadn't caught up with him yet, and we had not started to build our life together. So, for me, the first deployment wasn't the same as the Iraq deployment I'm currently experiencing.

Now, I'm responsible for both of our cars' registration and licensing renewals, both sets of bills, the issues that arise from both of our full-time jobs and communicating with both of our Families and friends. My husband is also a full-time student online. Since his deployment, I have communicated more with his school than I have with him. Everything from his class schedules and books, to applying for financial aid, are now my responsibility.

Because he is halfway around the world, I have to deal with both his time zone and mine, which is difficult, since I'm going to bed when he is waking up and vice-versa. There are other circumstances that arise daily that I thought I'd never have to deal with. Last week, both his truck and my car had flat tires at the same time—what are the odds of that happening?

What I'm learning from all of this is that our two lives are very difficult to live by myself. As an extremely independent woman, I have to be unashamed and courageous enough to admit when I need help. I must rely heavily on the kindness of

friends and use the services available to Guard Families. I must always be prepared for things to be difficult and know that this is only temporary. Knowing and accepting this helps to ease the stress of living two lives at once.

*Melissa Watson Carpenter
Wife of 1LT Billy Carpenter
Engineer Troop, 1st Battalion,
278th Armored Cavalry Regiment
Tennessee Army National Guard*



*** How has the National Guard benefited your Family? We want to hear from you!**

Email your answer to Editor@GuardFoundations.com, and it could appear in the next issue of *Foundations*.



For MSG Jay and Kathleen Anderson of the North Carolina Army National Guard, Our Military Kids became a way to pay for their son, Riley, to participate in a community baseball league.

Our Military Kids

Small grants yield big results

By RACHEL GLADSTONE, STAFF WRITER

Unsung heroes are common when it comes to National Guard Soldiers. But it isn't only Soldiers who fall into this category. Often, their children are the heroes, enduring long periods of separation from a parent who is deployed.

No one knows this better than Our Military Kids (OMK), an organization that reaches out to the sons and daughters, ages 3–18, of deployed Soldiers, offering grants of up to \$500 for extracurricular activities, such as sports, fine arts and tutoring. These activities can help the children cope with the stresses deployment often brings.

COURTESY KATHLEEN ANDERSON

Working for a Living

Kathleen Anderson

Founded in 2004 by Linda Davidson and Gail Kruzel, and funded by various corporations, foundations and individual donors, Our Military Kids has distributed more than \$5.7 million to nearly 15,000 children.

Kathleen Anderson, of OMK, gave *Foundations* an overview of this marvelous organization and all it does for the Families of deployed Soldiers. Her husband, MSG Jay Anderson, was one of those Soldiers.

“My husband was deployed to South America last year, and I heard about OMK through our [Family Readiness Group] leader. After I’d received grants for my children to participate in sports programs, OMK invited us to a fundraiser, and that’s when I approached Linda about a job. They’d helped me out so much, and I thought it would be a great place to work.”

Anderson went on to explain how any child of a deployed Soldier can receive a grant.

“The first thing you do is find a program your child would be interested in and get a registration form from [the provider of the activity]. Then, visit our website, OurMilitaryKids.org, and download an application. It’s just one page, and you fill that out and return it via mail, fax or email, along with a copy of the child’s birth certificate, a copy of the Soldier’s orders and the registration form from [the activity provider].

“We start to process the applications almost immediately. Within 10 days, a check will go out to the organization your child has chosen. Then, the child gets a packet in the mail saying they’ve been accepted. They also get an award certificate and a patch [that can be sewn onto a garment], and it makes them feel really good.

“When the Soldier deploys, your Family goes from a two-parent to a one-parent household—often with only one income. So there’s not a lot of money to pay for extracurricular activities,” Kathleen continued. “Our Military Kids has given a lot of children the ability to do what they might not have been able to otherwise. Plus, it gives them a focus—something to achieve when their parent is overseas. From the comments we’ve heard, they’re more well-adjusted and they do better at school. We get nothing but great feedback from the kids as well as the parents. And people can’t believe how easy the process is.”

Getting the Word Out

One of the challenges Our Military Kids faces is to make Guard and Reserve Families aware of them and to keep growing as an organization.

“Doing outreach and letting people know about Our Military Kids is one of the most difficult parts of my



Karate class provides a welcome distraction for the four boys of PFC Robert and Cindy LeBel of the Oregon Army National Guard.

job,” Kathleen admits. “Right now, we’re trying to expand in order to help the Families of fallen Soldiers as well. That’s the next big project we’re pushing for. We’re actually working with one of our corporate sponsors to implement a contest so we can do that.”

Little Men

Cindy LeBel

Speaking with Cindy LeBel, we heard much praise for Our Military Kids and the extraordinary work they do. When her husband, PFC Robert LeBel, deployed almost a year ago, she heard about OMK and went online to investigate. It wasn’t long before she was able to enroll her four sons in karate. Those classes changed their lives for the better.

“We couldn’t have put all the boys in karate if it hadn’t have been for OMK, because it wouldn’t have been financially doable,” explains Cindy.

Her son Bobby had already been taking karate, in order to treat a mild form of Tourette’s syndrome. His doctor had advised against medicating him, suggesting instead that he participate in a physical activity. Thanks to grants from OMK, the LeBels were able to enroll the other three boys in karate as well.



For more information, contact Our Military Kids at OMKInquiry@ourmilitarykids.org or call toll free (866) 691-6654.



Brianna is eager to show her father, SSG Albert Garcia, of the California National Guard, the dance moves she learned in Ballet Folklórico class.

"It's kept them busy and distracted, and it's been something positive they can share with their dad when he comes home," LeBel told us.

The entire OMK experience has also been uplifting for her husband. "While he's been gone, we've emailed some pictures and a demonstration we recorded, and he's getting excited to get home and see them in action," LeBel said. "They've become the little men of the house since their dad's been gone."

Personal Perks

Like so many recipients of the OMK grants, LeBel was shocked to hear how few Families know about the program. "It's fantastic that the word is getting out there,

because it's such a great organization. [Working with] OMK is the most positive thing we've had happen to us since Robert's been deployed," shared Cindy.

Cindy also enjoys a few personal perks. "It's good for me because for the hour [they're in class], I can actually read a book or just sit quietly and not hear anyone say 'Mom!' for a while," she laughed. "Our Military Kids has definitely made a difference in our children's lives, because it's been hard for them to go a year without their dad. [OMK] has been a real lifesaver."



COURTESY CASANDRA GARCIA

Life's a Dance

Casandra Garcia

Casandra Garcia and her husband, SSG Albert Garcia, of Woodlake, CA, found support through Our Military Kids. Enrolling their eldest daughter, Brianna, 6, in Ballet Folklorico, a type of Mexican folk dance, was rewarding for her, but it had other benefits as well.

"It offered a kind of support group [for me]," Garcia said. "The other moms [whose children were in class] knew my husband was deployed, and having other adults to be with after work, instead of home alone with my girls, was comforting. OMK brought me closer to the community that I live in. There are a lot of programs [the military offers], but most times, you have to live in a certain area [to participate in them]. With OMK, you can be in your own area and still be eligible."

Looking Back

Garcia shared how tough the first months of her husband's deployment were for the Family. She began noticing behavioral changes in her daughters almost immediately, especially Brianna.

"Different things would remind her of her dad and she would start crying," she said. "All she wanted to do was sit in front of the TV and eat. That really concerned me, and I realized that I needed to do something to give her some special attention." The classes turned her daughter's behavior around. "Brianna looks forward to going to dance. On performance night she'd get all dressed up, and it built up her confidence to perform in front of people."

Garcia was overjoyed with Our Military Kids.

Before applying for a grant, she hadn't considered the benefits of enrolling Brianna in a dance class. "It made me see I needed to do this for her. It kept us busy and involved."

It's So Easy

Tammy Criddle

Tammy Criddle, of Amory, MS, is the mother of six children. Her husband, SSG Thomas J. Criddle, has been deployed for the last year. Her children, whose ages range from 3 to 15, are all enrolled in karate, thanks to Our Military Kids.

"I'm a youth coordinator for the 1st of the 230th of Mississippi, and I went to an FRG get-together last April, where a representative from OMK was speaking. I asked if there were any limitations on the grant. She said that income and rank weren't a consideration, and there have to be at least 60 days left on a 365-day order. That's it."

Tammy was amazed that each of her children would be eligible for a \$500 grant. "It was so easy to do," she said. "I



SSG Thomas and Tammy Criddle of the Mississippi Army National Guard used grant money from Our Military Kids to pay for their six children's extracurricular activities.

"... it has opened [my kids] up to a whole new area that they wouldn't have had a chance to experience otherwise."

—Tammy Criddle

* * *

filled out the paperwork and faxed it in. The grant covered their uniforms, their belts—everything. You can get it twice in a year. The classes gave them an opportunity to stay busy, and it has opened them up to a whole new area that they wouldn't have had a chance to experience otherwise."

Respect Yourself

Not only has karate taught her children a sense of discipline, but it's also taught them other lessons.

"They were starting to get angry that [their dad] was gone, and they were crying a lot. I began noticing some behavioral problems with my 6- and 7-year-olds. But, when I put them in karate, all that changed. It's taught them respect. Not only respect for others, but it's also taught them to respect themselves, and it's teaching them honor and to keep their word," Tammy said.

"All I can say is my kids have grown," she continued. "They've grown spiritually and they've matured. I'm very thankful for Our Military Kids. I don't know where I'd be without them." 🙏



COURTESY TAMMY CRIDDLE

familyroom

Building Ready Families

Strong Bonds training produces healthy relationships

By MELISSA KERBY, PRODUCER, THOMAS WRIGHT PARTNERS



Strong Bonds helped LaTesse Hall find proper balance in her life, allowing her to become a better mother to her son, Jaylon.



“It was worth my time to attend a Strong Bonds event,” said single Soldier SGT LaTesse Hall, a paymaster at Fort Pickett in Blackstone, VA.

“I got a lot out of it and stopped myself from making a bad decision.” After attending the weekend singles retreat, she made the difficult choice to end her engagement.

Of the Guard’s 450,000 members, 52 percent are married, and 56 percent of single Warriors will marry while on Active Duty. Guard members are on call every day for service at home and abroad. The stress of impending deployment, actual deployment and reintegration, anxiety about the future, and desire to have a support person at home lead many Soldiers to rush into marriage. This contributes to the stark reality that more military marriages than civilian ones end in divorce.

Improving the Odds

Changing this statistic and helping build strong military Families are the primary goals of the chaplain-led program. The proactive, holistic training encourages healthy relationship evaluation and mature decision-making. Sometimes, the outcome—though not easy—is prudent.

“The Strong Bonds event actually let me know that there has to be balance in areas such as love, trust, dependency, emotions—and [my situation] wasn’t balanced at all. I was giving 90 percent, and he was giving 10,” Hall observed. “So I had to let it go.”

The event—which was led by Chaplain James D. Moore, full-time support chaplain for the Virginia National Guard—also helped Hall with her son, Jaylon. “Strong Bonds helped me balance authority and friendship, and now the relationship ... is better than it has ever been,” she said.

Recognizing the unique stresses on military relationships, the Army introduced a couples program in 1999 called Building Strong and Ready Families. Satisfaction among attendees was extremely high—95 percent. In 2005, the training evolved into Strong Bonds. Since then, it has expanded to include training for the specific needs of singles and Families, and the stresses of deployment and reintegration. The program was subsequently extended to include the National Guard and Reserve.

After following a group of military marriages for several years, studies released in 2009 showed a significant drop in the divorce rate for couples who had completed Strong Bonds.

Chaplain James D. Moore of the Virginia National Guard was instrumental in helping LaTesse Hall balance her military service, Family and relationship.



These results have contributed to the program’s growing popularity and increasing support.

“I encourage commanders at every level to embrace this program [and make it] available to all their Soldiers,” said MG Terry M. “Max” Haston, speaking at a Strong Bonds event in Franklin, TN. “[And to] make sure they understand it, [commanders] themselves need to participate in it. It makes our units stronger, it makes our Families stronger.”

Moore echoed Haston’s sentiment. “I would encourage commanders to [attend] with their wives ... to actually see what’s taking place, so that they can advertise and encourage their Soldiers and Airmen to attend.”

Moore estimates that 550 couples and singles have attended events in the past five years in Virginia alone.

Singles Thing

Strong Bonds for Singles offers National Guard members a free weekend retreat of relationship and communication training. According to Chaplain Moore, too often, singles

aren’t careful about their relationship choices. This “leads to a lot of damaged relationships and a lot of time spent with the wrong person,” he observed. Strong Bonds helps singles set goals for solid relationships.

What Strong Bonds is not, Moore emphasizes, is a workshop. “We don’t ask anybody to get up and divulge their personal information in front of everyone,” he noted. “We try to make it safe and fun, so that we’re not opening up any wounds. And, we make it clear we’re just providing tools ... that they can take home and apply to their lives as single Soldiers.”


Event leaders try to keep information pertinent to the average attendee and provide practical information that can be applied to real situations. “We try to address issues where the rubber meets the road, such as, “Why do I keep dating the wrong people?”

Since its beginning, over 100,000 Warriors and Family members have participated in over 2,500 events. In 2009, 3,000 Strong Bonds events were scheduled, and nearly \$30 million is budgeted for events throughout all components of the Army in 2010.

One thing Moore hears repeatedly from participants is that Strong Bonds shows that the Guard really cares.

Hall agreed. “I’ve been through two deployments and witnessed almost every situation, from broken bonds with children to marriages ending in nasty divorces.

Strong Bonds gives you ways to prevent these situations from happening. It is basically a stepping stone to better relationships in every form.”

 To learn more about Strong Bonds or to find an upcoming event in your area, contact your unit chaplain or visit StrongBonds.org.

The STRONG BONDS SINGLES programs arm Warriors with decision-making and relationship-building skills prior to marriage.

- Strong Bonds Family includes singles, couples, spouses and children, and helps them work together to face the challenge of military life. Children ages 8 and up are invited to participate.
- Strong Bonds Pre- and Re-Deployment helps keep Families close throughout deployment and helps reintegrate them after long-term separation.

- These events are scheduled in conjunction with the Yellow Ribbon program to coincide with the Army Force Generation Cycle so that skills can be practiced prior to separation. Events are also scheduled 30, 60 and 90 days after return from deployment.



The Courage to Ask for Help

Vermont Family Readiness Groups go the extra mile

By JUDY HARRIS, HEALTH EDUCATION CONSULTANT TO THE ARNG DECADE OF HEALTH PROGRAM



Family Readiness Groups are ready and willing to help Families through deployment.

Vermont deployed the most Guard members per capita of all U.S. states during the Iraq and Afghanistan conflict. In a largely rural state, supporting Guard Family members can be a huge challenge.

Fortunately, Vermont has a strong and well-organized Family Readiness Program (FRP). The state and federal government jointly fund a core of highly trained staff, who, in turn, support the all-volunteer Family Readiness Group (FRG) system.

Currently, Vermont has 30 FRGs and is building toward a total of 51. The FRGs are commanders' programs and follow guidelines established by both the National Guard Bureau and the state. Usually, the FRG leadership is command-appointed and consists of a chairperson, secretary and treasurer, plus coordinators for areas such as phone tree, youth activities and special events. These volunteer leaders and other dedicated volunteers stay in touch with their member Families through regular member meetings, planned events and "well-check" phone calls. Families of deployed Soldiers receive a monthly call from an FRG

familyroom

volunteer as well as one from an FRP staff member (Family Readiness Assistant or Support Assistant). In addition, at the commander's request, FRG staff members communicate command messages via the phone tree.

Mission Possible

Communication is one of the FRGs' primary missions. An equally important mission is building community for Families who are scattered throughout the region and in communities that are relatively unaware of the hardships imposed by the deployment cycle. Actual deployment is only one aspect of the busy lives of Guard personnel. They also have to be away for training, state missions and monthly weekend

drills. The FRP and FRG staffs work together to identify Families in need and help with financial issues, high levels of stress, Family emergencies, social and emotional support, and readiness for deployment.

The knowledge of their communities helps the strong network of FRG volunteers to search for Families who need support and guide them to appropriate services.

Many Families are unaware of the support available. Others are reluctant to seek help. Valerie Sample, a Vermont Family Readiness Assistant herself, has had extensive experience with deployment.

"My husband has been on two deployments and each time I've had a baby in my arms as we waved goodbye,"

says Valerie. "Our boys are now 4½ and 8 years old and we're gearing up for another deployment separation. The last deployment was tough. The FRG kept me busy and focused. The Family Readiness Center was nearby and the staff was there to welcome me and, in all honesty, save my sanity ... by getting me out to social events and activities."

But, she admits, it isn't always easy to ask for help. "I [like most] suffered from high levels of stress. It took a lot of strength for me to hold it together. I knew that opening myself up to ask for help would make me vulnerable. It took me some time. But when I did ask for help, I was extremely grateful."

Valerie sees a desire to maintain privacy as another barrier to reaching out to the FRGs. Financial, emotional



Support and guidance from Family Readiness Groups will help Families cope with deployment.

U.S. NAVY PETTY OFFICER 1ST CLASS CHAD J. MCNEELEY

“People felt understood and were grateful to be in a group of peers going through a similar experience.” —Valerie Sample

and Family issues are examples of situations Families are reluctant to share. A typical quote might be, “I don’t want people knowing my business. If I tell someone in the system, it could get back to my spouse’s commander and affect his career.”

Many Good Turns

But, as Valerie puts it, “Our FRG leadership [knows] what resources are out there and is empowered to put that knowledge to great use. Several volunteers told me that they felt good about sharing their knowledge with others. Soon, they’ll tell others, and the word will spread like wildfire.”

As Vermont’s FRG program has grown, Families have noticed the difference. Positive feedback about the wealth of resources available is plentiful. “It’s definitely different than the last deployment,” Valerie notes. “The connection is there. The communication and support are excellent.”

The hard work of the Vermont Family Readiness Program and its enthusiastic FRGs is well-received and appreciated. “People felt understood and were grateful to be in a group of peers going through a similar experience,” Valerie shared. 📍

Reintegrating into civilian life after deployment can be difficult, but the caring and patience from loved ones can help ease the transition.



 To find your local Family Readiness Group, visit ArmyFRG.org.

Your Best Body

Part 1 of 4

A comprehensive plan to look your best

By 2LT HOLLY DI GIOVINE, SOUTH CAROLINA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD
Photos by SGT ROBERTO DI GIOVINE, SOUTH CAROLINA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

Most of us desire to be the best version of ourselves that we can. When it comes to our bodies, our “best self” is typically a lean, mean version from our past. Or, perhaps it’s a visual we never fully realized.

It’s a relatively simple process to drop body fat and achieve a lean physique, if you commit to doing the work and getting out of your comfort zone.

This article is the first in a series of four designed to help you create a fitness foundation you can build on. The goal is to provide simple instructions that, if you apply them with consistency and dedication, will lead to a healthier lifestyle in the long term.

The Drive

In order to stay motivated about losing weight, you have to understand why you’re doing it. Ask yourself, “What is my motivation?” Write the answer on a note card and post it where you can see it on a daily basis.

Pull out your calendar and pick three days each week when you’ll have 30 minutes to spare—preferably with at least one day in between. These blocks of time are the foundation of your fitness program. You can always add to this schedule over time, but commit to setting this as your baseline. Improvement in flexibility, strength and aerobic condition occurs when incorporated a minimum of three times per week.

Circuit training provides the most bang for your buck in terms of time. By alternating short bursts of high intensity exercises with toning and core exercises, you will

simultaneously burn fat calories and increase muscle tone. As you progress week to week, you’ll notice an increase in stamina, coordination and strength. This will help you get motivated to advance to more challenging exercises.

Another key component in building a body that looks and feels good is acquiring flexibility. By adopting a basic, daily stretching routine, you can begin to undo years of bad posture, overuse and bad habits. Common tight zones in the body are the chest and shoulders (from slouching and carrying things); hip flexors (from sitting and driving); and lower back and calves. When one area is tight, it affects the others.

Nutrition

If you think your food is the problem—it is. You don’t need to follow a raw, vegan, tofu puree diet in order to look and feel your best. By adopting some key nutritional principles into your daily routine and sticking with them you’ll learn to crave food that is actually good for you.

Your body likes to be told what to do. The sooner you start giving it consistent signals, the sooner your metabolism will respond

accordingly. Eat small, balanced meals at consistent intervals throughout the day. Your body will learn to burn the food as fuel, as opposed to saving it for later in its favorite storage sites (hips, abs, glutes, back of arms).

Your nutrition habits can make or break you. Make a choice right now to clean up your diet and you’ll see faster, more extensive results.

By adopting a basic,
daily stretching routine,
you can undo years of
bad posture.


Use the Daily Nutrition Checklist to the right to rate your current eating habits. Then, set small, manageable daily goals until you rate a 10 on six out of the seven days of the week.

If you are used to eating out or on the go, it can be intimidating to begin cleaning up your diet. Start with small, easy changes, like tracking your water intake. Find a water bottle or cup you like to drink out of, and set a goal to increase your intake to the 2-liter, 64-oz. minimum. A hydrated body functions more efficiently, circulates more oxygen and more readily rids the body of the fat waste products you'll produce as your metabolism increases.

I'm a recovering junk food addict and I don't like veggies, so I've come a long way in terms of food choices and preparation. My advice: keep it simple.

Identify the fruits and veggies you like most and use those as your staples. But be open to experimenting with one or two new fruits or veggies each week. You never know what you'll discover.

For your starchy carbs, examine food labels to find choices with at least 3 grams of both fiber and protein per 100 calories. Read the ingredients, choose the product with the fewest ingredients, and avoid grains that are enriched, bleached or modified. The ingredients should read 100 percent whole grain, whole wheat, etc.

Once you find quality products, stick with them. In the beginning, you'll have to spend a little extra time at the grocery store. Go alone, if possible. You will quickly become more efficient. And as your tastes evolve, you'll start to save money too. 

My Daily Nutrition Checklist:

- Did I drink 2-3 liters of water?
- Did I eat something every three hours?
- Were all my meals between 300 and 400 calories?
- Did I supplement with 2-3 100-calorie snacks in between meals?
- Did I eat clean, low-fat protein every time I had a meal or snack?
- Did I eat at least 2-5 servings of veggies?
- Did I eat at least 2-4 servings of fruits?
- Did I eat 20 grams of fiber?
- Did I limit processed/ packaged/fast food items to 1-2 servings?
- Did I reflect on my goals and accomplishments periodically throughout the day to remind myself why this is important to me?

1. Circuit Strong & Lean



<< Elevated Pushup (pictured) chest, shoulders, triceps, core

Keep body tight and straight from head to toe, and lower toward ground for three counts; pause; exhale as you return to the start position.



Circuit (cont.) Strong & Lean

Stationary Lunge

(pictured) >>

glutes, thighs, core

Keep feet straight and ensure front knee remains above ankle at all times. Place hands on head or across chest. Slowly lower back knee toward ground for three counts; pause; exhale and engage core as you return to start position. Perform all reps on one leg, then switch.



<< **Super Man Reach** (pictured)
upper and lower back, shoulders,
glutes, core

Draw belly button to spine to engage core. Extend arms overhead with palms facing each other; rotate palms toward ground and "pull" arms back into a "W," squeezing between shoulder blades. Movement is parallel to floor. Be sure to reach through both hands and feet.



Plank-knee to Elbow

shoulders, rotator cuff, triceps, core

Place hands under shoulders and pull shoulders away from ears. Body is straight head to toe. Engage core. Slowly move one knee toward your elbow on same side, then return to start position and repeat on other leg. Continue to alternate legs.

Warning: Always seek the advice and guidance of a qualified health provider with any questions or concerns you may have prior to commencing a fitness program. This article should not be relied on or substituted for professional medical diagnosis or treatment. The exercises presented are for suggestion only. Participate at your own risk. Stop if you feel faint or short of breath.

2. Cardio Bursts

Jumping Jax

Ensure knees always point forward. Land softly. Extend arms at all times.

Ski Jumper (pictured) >>

Bend knees with feet together and hop back and forth across imaginary line or low obstacle, landing softly at all times.



<< Squat Jumps (pictured)

Begin with feet shoulder-width apart. Squat down and swing arms back with chest up. In one motion, swing arms forward and overhead as you jump straight up into the air. Land softly and repeat.

Put It All Together

Warm-up:

March in place for two minutes, followed by light stretching.

Circuit A:

- Elevated Pushups - 15 reps
- Super Man Reach - 15 reps
- Jumping Jax - 30 seconds

Repeat 2-4 times

Circuit B:

- Stationary Lunges - 10-15 reps/leg
- Plank-knee to elbow—build up from 30 to 90 seconds
- Ski Jumper - 30 seconds

Repeat 2-4 times

This base-level workout will develop joint stability and strength in your major muscle groups.



2LT Holly Di Giovine of the South Carolina Army National Guard earned her Bachelor's in Nutrition and Fitness from the University of Missouri in 2001. She earned her fitness certification from the National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM) in 2008. 2LT Di Giovine works as a personal trainer and as a fit camp leader. Recently she completed Officer Candidate School (OCS) and will attend Basic Officer Leadership Course (BOLC) in 2011. You can contact 2LT Di Giovine with your fitness questions at Holly@HollyPT.com.

 For more fitness ideas and exercises, visit HollyPT.com.

After completing his college education, SSG Garcia began teaching and inspiring youth through the Junior Guard, a pilot program launched in Kentucky.

“The Guard has taken me places I never thought I’d be.”

—SSG Chaz Garcia



Sense of Purpose

Appreciation Is an Everyday Thing

By RACHEL GLADSTONE, STAFF WRITER

Photos by ADAM LIVINGSTON AND TIMOTHY PERROUD

There's no better feeling than waking up every day with a sense of purpose and fulfillment. This is something that **MAJ Jeremy Gulley** and **SSG Chaz Garcia** certainly have in common. And when *Foundations* spoke with them in April, they shared the secrets of their success and told us why they feel that the National Guard plays a key role in their achievements.

SSG CHAZ GARCIA: Having it all

Garcia, 27, of Stanford, KY, joined the Guard because many of his Family members, including his father, had been Soldiers. Not only has his training served him in his job as a Junior Guard instructor, but his service in the Guard has given him an opportunity to see the world.

“The Guard has taken me places I never thought I’d be,” he said. “It took me to Germany and Iraq, and I’ve traveled all over the United States.”

But it’s the leadership in the Guard that Garcia has found most impressive. “The leadership I’ve had in my direct chain of command has been really positive. They’re real role models. Their work ethic trains us to become leaders, captains and heroes of tomorrow.”

After completing his college education, Garcia’s passion for teaching led him to Lincoln County High School, where he became an instructor for the Junior Guard Program.

“Going to college, I really wanted to be a math teacher. But then I got deployed, and when I came back, I didn’t think I’d find myself in the classroom,” he said. “Then I started coaching soccer, and that led me to the job I have now.”

“I love working with the kids,” he continued. “We give them leadership and responsibility, and we give them discipline and motivation. And when I see these kids growing up and becoming the leaders of tomorrow, it really gives me a sense of pride and accomplishment.”

They belong

Garcia’s girlfriend, Rebecca May, a social studies teacher, takes pride in watching him work and often gets to join him for outings. “I got to go to one of the cookouts they had for one of the drill weekends, and I met a lot of great people,” she said. “I’m happy to say I’m with him. I’m really proud of him. I appreciate what the National Guard does for us.”

Garcia couldn’t agree more. “Being in the Guard is such a positive thing. It’s one of the best things I’ve ever done. They paid for my education and they’ve given me training I couldn’t have gotten anywhere else. We’re definitely respected in the community. Every time I’m in uniform someone will come up to me and thank me for my service—for what I do. It makes me feel like I belong.”

MAJ JEREMY GULLEY: A Soldier and an educator

Gulley, a high school principal from Hartford City, IN, has been in the Guard for 19 years. He grew up in a community where his father was a Guard Soldier, so the local armory played a major role in his life. Joining the military came naturally to him.

“I wanted to be a high school history teacher and a Soldier as well, and I got to do both,” he said. “I

graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree and a commission as a lieutenant.”

But his education didn’t end in the classroom. Gulley is sure he wouldn’t have made the impact he has, were it not for his Guard training. “It has changed my life in real ways,” he said. “I’m a better officer because of my experience in education, and I’m a better educator because of my experience as a Soldier.”

At the age of 37, Gulley’s a bit surprised to find himself in a career usually reserved for someone a bit older. He credits the Guard for this.

“Usually the guy sitting behind the principal’s desk has hair a little grayer [than mine],” he acknowledged. “But, in my case, the board of trustees and superintendent were impressed with the life experiences I’ve had in the National Guard, particularly [in] leadership.”

Not only were his day-to-day experiences as a Soldier key to getting the position at Huntington North High, but translating the values he has learned in the military has enabled him to connect with his students on many different levels.

“Fundamental principles of character like trustworthiness, respect, fairness, citizenship and courage—these are the kinds of values the National Guard promotes. And those are the same values we want to teach our kids. Also, the ability to manage a complex set of tasks, to communicate, to move people toward a vision of the future that requires hard work, dedication, good



planning, good organization and good examples—those are skills military service hones in its leaders. [And those skills] are in demand both in the private and public sectors.”

Changing lives

Gulley went on to explain how his love of the Guard and connecting with students go hand-in-hand.

“Being able to create opportunities [for them] to be successful makes me passionate about my job,” he explained. “And being a principal, I get the opportunity to influence educators throughout our building. They then reach out and change the lives of our young people. Seeing that happen brings me back every day, because I know the work we’re doing is giving the next generation a chance at success.

“I’ve found that a lot of young people who didn’t find an identity in high school have done so in the National Guard,” Gulley continued. “I find it powerful to reach out to students and say, ‘If you’re looking for a place to serve, the National Guard can help you and support you with educational experiences and tuition assistance, and help you find success once you’ve become an adult.’” This is something Gulley knows from personal experience, as he has earned two master’s degrees thanks to financial assistance from the Guard.



ABOVE: Kentucky is the first state to launch the Junior Guard program for high school youth. Lincoln County is one of three nationwide using the program. LEFT: MAJ Gulley, a 19-year member of the Indiana Army National Guard, will spend the upcoming months preparing his community and family for his deployment to Afghanistan in August. BELOW: SSG Garcia readily admits that his first love is soccer. He hopes to take over the Lincoln County High School boy’s varsity soccer team next school year.



Jennifer Gulley plans to keep her Family connected through video conferencing, a technology that was not available to them during MAJ Gulley's first deployment to Bosnia in 2004.



Good deeds

For Gulley, it's all about the community in which he lives and the support those around him have provided.

"I appreciate that the Guard is a community-based organization with a long lineage and history," he noted. "The National Guard armories in small communities like Hartford City and Huntington often end up becoming trans-generational institutions unto themselves. What I mean by that is fathers, sons, daughters, nieces and nephews have had shared experiences in their Family, so there are multiple generations of stories being told through the Guard. I've met the best people I've ever known through my service. It's the main reason I continue to serve."

In order to carry these traditions forward, Huntington North High has implemented a program wherein the students can give back. "One of the ways we manifest [solid values] in our high school is through our program Serve with Learning. We've encouraged students to give back to the community with their time. We've flooded our community with student volunteers [who work for] everything from the Salvation Army, to donating blood, to cleaning up local parks."

Gulley sees giving back as a fundamental principle he's learned while serving in the Guard and something he's happy to pass along to his students.

"There's no other opportunity [like serving in the Guard]. I see it as the last remaining institution of character and quality we have. You can be a Soldier and still be fully engaged as a citizen in your community and profession. To have the opportunity to do both is like experiencing two lives—and that's very fulfilling."

Big benefits


Gulley's wife, Jennifer, also had a few things to say about the Guard, including the ways they step up to help Families of deployed Soldiers.


"There's definitely a sense of community there for us. They have a whole network that's very supportive," she said.

Describing the many benefits her local Family Readiness Group (FRG) has provided for her, her husband and their three children, Jennifer was effusive. "You go to these Family appreciation weekends and get to meet other Guard members and their Families, and it keeps you connected. So it's like your own community outside the civilian community. To have a support network like that is one of the big benefits. You know you're not alone."

Gulley will be deploying to Afghanistan later this year, and Jennifer remarked on how much better the FRGs are now than they were when he deployed to Bosnia in 2004. "Now they have a Yellow Ribbon program that's amazing. They have increased the funding, the support and the organizational aspects," she shared. "They help you come up with lists of things you need to get done before your spouse deploys. And they make monthly phone calls to all the Guard Families while [the Soldiers] are gone. I'm really impressed by that."

In addition to basic support, the FRG offers programs for children of Guard members. "The kids got to go to Camp Atterbury for camp, like a military camp. They got to experience what their dad would experience if he were there—living in the barracks, eating in the mess hall, going to drills, and things like that. It's really neat."

In addition, Jennifer enjoys seeing her husband thrive within the social network that the Guard provides. "I really enjoy the camaraderie he gets," she said. "It's almost like a fraternity for him, and that enriches his life. It's nice to have that." 

A man in a dark blue suit jacket, light pink shirt, and patterned tie stands in a school hallway. He has his hands in his pockets and is looking towards the camera. The background is a busy school hallway with many people walking, which is blurred to create a sense of motion. The lighting is bright, typical of a school hallway.

“I’ve found that a lot of young people who didn’t find an identity in high school have done so in the National Guard.”

—MAJ Jeremy Gulley

MAJ Gulley is in his second year as principal at Huntington North High School. He plans to place a link on his school’s website so students can contact him during his deployment.

support

Resources for Guard Families



Tackling Debt

Practical advice for financial survival

By JUNE WALBERT, USAA CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER

Over the last few decades amassing debt has become an American way of life. In fact, many are subsidizing their lifestyle by using credit cards—racking up the most expensive, least rewarding kind of debt.

And we use those cards a lot. The American Bankers Association estimates there are 10,000 card transactions made every second around the world.

Cards vs. Cash

Credit cards are intended to be a tool of convenience. Carrying cash can be a little clunky. Imagine whipping out 1,000 greenbacks to pay for a television. Plus, cash doesn't offer reward points. And you can lose it with no recourse.

But, I'm still a big fan of using cash because paying with actual bills tends to keep us out of financial hot water. If the cash runs out, our spending stops ... not a bad arrangement.

Using credit wisely can be beneficial, however. You can improve your credit score, hone your money management skills, and earn travel points and cash back for purchases, just to name a few.

In the not-so-smart credit use category, CreditCard.com says U.S. consumers charged an estimated \$51 billion worth of fast food on their cards in 2006. Now, that is a good time


to whip out the greenbacks instead ... or better yet, pack more lunches!

From a glass-half-full perspective, the current recession has coaxed many Americans to whittle away their debt. While we've shaved tens of billions off the total, we still owe an astonishing \$866 billion in revolving debt. The 2009 Nilson Report states that for all who carry credit cards, the average balance is a whopping \$9,700.

Owe, No

So, why, you ask, is debt such a bad thing? There are two primary reasons. First, paying down debt ties up monthly cash flow that you could use for other more beneficial—or fun—activities. Or, my personal favorite, saving for the future.

And the other? Why squander your hard-earned cash by paying interest on that hot date you enjoyed six months ago or the trip to Disney World, especially if you're still paying interest long after the memories have faded. There may be



Having too much debt can negatively impact your lifestyle and military career.

legitimate reasons for carrying debt, such as medical bills exceeding insurance coverage, helping a Family member or adopting a child. Still, the goal should be to zero out those balances as quickly as possible.

Aside from the practical reasons, having too much debt can also negatively impact your lifestyle and military career.

Heavy debt loads will drag down your all-important credit score because what you owe comprises 30 percent of the calculation. That three-digit number is an at-a-glance indicator to a financial institution as to whether or not you're a good enough risk for a loan. And—if so—at what rate?

Lifetime Investment

Let's say you want to buy a \$200,000 home. You have stellar credit and are able to qualify for a 5 percent interest rate. Financing 100 percent of that cost means your monthly payment would be around \$1,074. If your credit is marginal and you lock in a 6.5 percent rate, your payment would be close to \$1,264. A \$190 difference may not seem like much, but you sure wouldn't pass it by on the sidewalk! That extra cash could help put a dent in your card balances, allow you to build savings or mean some quality time with your Family and friends.

But beyond the monthly out-of-pocket costs, over the life of the 30-year loan you would pay an additional \$68,573 in interest at the higher rate.

If you're not in the market for a house and prefer to rent, it still matters. Your potential landlord will likely check your credit score to ascertain your credit worthiness. Why? They want the best possible chance of collecting that rent check the first of every month.

Good Credit Counts

But how can debt negatively impact your career? When I applied for my job at USAA, they checked my credit. Why? One who manages their money well may be more likely to manage their job well too.

For those of us in uniform, numerous career paths require a security clearance. Thousands of clearances have been revoked, suspended or denied based on significant debt. The government may view you as a higher security risk if you are in financial jeopardy. Another reason to ensure your financial house is in order.

One Department of Defense official stated, "Financial issues are, by far, the leading cause of clearance revocation and they are rising at a significant rate. As you might expect, it's not just younger members. Senior and established members have the same issues."

Now let's discuss how to get out and stay out of debt.



1. Gather statements. Some folks have avoided opening their credit card statements altogether. Sticking your head in the sand is not a plan. Open them. Like my mom said, and probably yours, too: You have to face the music.

2. Collect data. Review charges for accuracy and highlight the pertinent details, such as the current balance, credit limit, interest rate and minimum payment due.

3. Know what you owe. Add it up and determine where you stand.

4. Develop your plan of attack. Now it's time to figure out how you are going to actually get out of debt.


It's very tempting for many folks to turn to debt settlement. That is "settling" with your bank for less than what you owe. However, using debt settlement will destroy

you may run those balances up again and also owe on your consolidation loan. Ouch.

Never hesitate to ask for help. Debt can be overwhelming, depressing and certainly stressful. Seeking guidance through the National Foundation of Credit Counseling, NFCC.org, can be a comforting and effective way to get back in the financial driver's seat. Another option is to simply choose to pay off each card one by one. And, that is my recommendation.

5. Rack and stack. If you have chosen to pay off each card one by one, there are two separate and distinct approaches to tackling debt in this way. The one that makes the most mathematical sense is to pay all you possibly can on the card with the highest interest rate while paying the minimum on the others. Zero the debt out on the first card and then take that dollar figure and apply it to the card with the next highest interest rate while continuing to pay the minimum on the other cards. On the other hand, some people need a quick win. Taking the opposite approach of paying off the smallest balance first while paying the minimum on the other cards works, too. You will pay a little more in interest,

but let's face it ... many people accumulate credit card debt simply because they want immediate gratification. For example, if you're the type of person who doesn't want to save for a television, but wants to purchase it today, the latter tactic may work best for you.

With an average of five credit cards in our pocket, don't feel alone if you have credit card debt. The lack of discipline to pay off the entire balance each month plagues millions of Americans. But, don't become another statistic. Pay cash. Live within your means. Use credit cards only for convenience. 

Thousands of security clearances have been revoked, suspended or denied based on significant debt.

your credit score, which will cost you more money in the long run via higher interest rates on mortgage and auto loans as well as future credit cards. Additionally, that "forgiven" amount would likely be viewed as taxable income. This is a double whammy: ruining your credit and incurring a tax bill.

I like the concept of debt consolidation much better. This is packaging all of your balances into one loan with a fixed payment and a beginning and end date. Sounds great, right? It does unless you find those zeroed out cards too tempting to resist. If you haven't gotten your spending under control,



Contact June via her website, AskJune.military.com.

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The Post-Deployment Health Reassessment

Five Service Members' perspective on what it means

By LTC SOPHIA TILLMAN-ORTIZ, U.S. ARMY PDHRA PROGRAM DIRECTOR



<< CPT JASON LIPSCOMB

Indiana Army National Guard
Former Commanding Officer,
C Company, 1/293rd Infantry
Currently OCS Instructor,
1/138th Regiment

A commander's job is to accomplish the mission and take care of the Soldiers under their charge. When we bring our Soldiers back from a conflict, the mission is to assess their physical and psychological health, identify problems and aid them in the transition.

Since its existence, the Army has built processes and systems to assess a Soldier's combat readiness. With PDHRA, commanders are able to assess the readiness of their Soldiers to return to society after their service.

Today the Army has many great resources to aid Soldiers and their Families. We need to brief Soldiers about the importance of the PDHRA and that it's a benefit they've earned.

In my opinion, the PDHRA stands as a central method to identify issues before they become serious.

It has been five years since the Post-Deployment Health Reassessment (PDHRA) was first established to support our Soldiers and Department of Army civilians. Over the years, the program has evolved, taken shape and focused on linking Soldiers to post-deployment healthcare options.

The PDHRA is an important health screening that all Soldiers are required to take, but full compliance has yet to be reached, despite the benefits. The following highlights the PDHRA and its relevance to our Soldiers from five distinct perspectives.

support



« SGT ANGEL MALONE

Oklahoma Army National Guard
45th Infantry Brigade

Coming back from Iraq in 2008, I had no idea about the PDHRA. It wasn't until three months after I got back that I realized it even existed. Looking back at my experience, I'm glad I got the chance to gain a better understanding of the PDHRA and eventually complete the program. It made being home the way it should be—easy.

When I was first sent to a screening event with my brigade, I was irritated that I had to complete another task as part of my deployment. Having gone through so many Soldier Readiness

Programs (SRPs), I felt that I had done my duty, and I wanted to be done with the process. Regardless, I knew it was a requirement.

I quickly realized that this was a different type of SRP. I realized that I was already experiencing many of the issues the facilitators discussed.

After completing the questionnaire and meeting with a healthcare provider, they told me they felt that I was dealing with depression and that there were options for me to get help. Almost two years later, I am now the one urging my comrades to complete the PDHRA.

“I quickly realized that this was a different type of SRP.”

—SGT Angel Malone

SSgt KIRA HARRIS »

Texas Air National Guard
Texas Army National Guard Military Spouse

Have you ever noticed how Family and friends can tell when you're off? That's why it's important for Families to know how the Army can help their spouse.

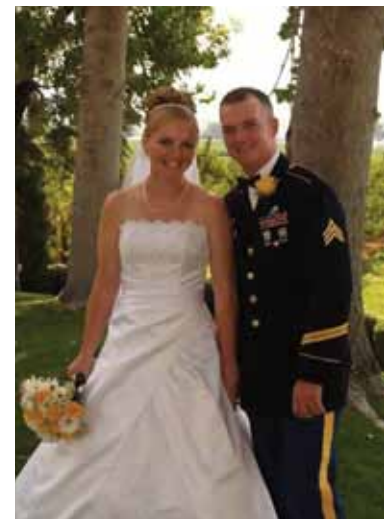
My husband and I are both military, and we can support one another when we return from a deployment. We're aware of the PDHRA because we took it after our first deployments. And, we know that after our next one, we will need to take it again.

Although I have this knowledge and comfort readily available to me, I realize that the average military spouse,

who is a civilian, will not be aware the PDHRA even exists.

We need to spread the word about resources for our loved ones. When a spouse comes back from a deployment, it's easy to think the two of you will just get back to how it once was. But it's not always that easy. We need to emphasize how important it is to communicate with each other about the resources available.

Complications due to deployment don't just go away and may even get worse. We need to tell our spouses to get the PDHRA done honestly and proactively.



“Complications due to deployment don't just go away and may even get worse.”

—SSgt Kira Harris

MSG KAREN SIMPSON >>

Arkansas Army National Guard
Arkansas State PDHRA Program Manager



As the State Program Manager, I am very passionate about the PDHRA and Soldier care. These men and women have fought for our freedom and deserve the medical care for any concerns that may be deployment related.

The Army has tons of resources available and often, people don't seek care because they don't understand which path to take. With the PDHRA, Soldiers can get a better understanding of their options.

It's also a partnership that requires active participation. Prior to the start of an onsite event, I talk to all the Soldiers about the importance of being honest when they answer the questions on the PDHRA. Many Soldiers are reluctant to express their mental health concerns for fear of

reprisal. By telling Soldiers about the importance of documenting their health issues on the PDHRA, early treatment and recovery can begin.

So many of our Soldiers just need someone to talk to who can reassure them the feelings they're experiencing are normal after a combat mission. The PDHRA offers that chance—a confidential, one-on-one conversation with a healthcare provider. And, I believe this conversation is what makes the PDHRA work.

“ The PDHRA is an opportunity to get that piece of mind that you are OK.”

—MAJ Anthony McGinthy

<< MAJ ANTHONY MCGINTHY

Army National Guard PDHRA Program Manager, National Guard Bureau

In my eyes, the PDHRA began as a requirement. But over time, it has become more meaningful. Now, it's considered a program that offers resources and benefits that matter.

The PDHRA is an outlet for getting immediate care for health issues that you may or may not be aware of.

This help and care is needed. I've seen a Soldier walk in feeling fine and not thinking they have a problem. Then, they are referred for care. It's scary, because we don't always know what's going on with ourselves.

We're all well aware of the obstacles Soldiers face when they come back from a deployment, be it role reversals at home or not feeling comfortable at work. It's for this reason that I think Soldiers are getting the point that the PDHRA isn't a check in the box. It's an opportunity to get that peace of mind that you are OK, and a chance to get

immediate care for those issues that you may have thought were nothing. I truly believe in this program.

We owe too much to our Soldiers to settle for what we have now. It's my mission to make sure Soldiers continue to see the value in the PDHRA.

What you need to know about the PDHRA

Established in 2005, the PDHRA screens for physical and behavioral health issues that may have developed due to deployment in a combat area.

All Soldiers and Department of Army civilians who have served in areas of combat are required to take this important health screening. Serving in combat situations places stress on the body unlike ever before, and there may be latent issues that need to be addressed in a timely manner.

The PDHRA should be completed 90-180 days after redeployment to effectively identify, prevent and treat any health-related issues following a deployment in a combat zone.

Specific guidance on taking the PDHRA can be obtained from your commander. However, you can begin the PDHRA by going to "My Medical Readiness" on AKO.

More information on the PDHRA can be found online on AKO under "My Medical Readiness" or at ArmyG1.army.mil/HR/pdhra.



Getting With the Resilience Program

New program strengthens Soldiers and Families

COURTESY OF SOLDIER & FAMILY SUPPORT DIVISION

Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF) has been the buzz word around the National Guard for the past few months, but what is it, and what does it mean for Soldiers and Families?

CSF was designed to build resilience in Soldiers and Family members by developing five dimensions of strength: physical, emotional, social, spiritual and Family.

The Guard does this through the key components of the program—Global Assessment Tool (GAT), Comprehensive Resilience Modules and Master Resilience Trainers—and by incorporating resilience training throughout a Soldier’s professional military education life cycle.

Master Resilience Trainers, also called MRTs, are required to complete a 10-day course conducted in Philadelphia, PA. Since November 2009, several hundred MRTs have attended and been distributed throughout the Guard. MRTs are the commander’s subject matter expert on resilience training in their home units.

And Resilience for All

“Our goal is to ensure each state has MRTs to teach resilience skills to our Soldiers and Families,” said MAJ Onesimo “Buddy” Francisco of the Army National Guard Soldier and Family Support Division.

In March 2010, the Army National Guard graduated seven new trainers for a total of 46 trainers in 21 states.

As the Guard continues to focus on better preparing Soldiers, it has not forgotten Families. In January 2010, CSF started reaching out to Family members. The first step in making the program available was a modification of the GAT. The GAT is a self-assessment survey that

provides a baseline in the dimensions of strength. The tool is available to Family members via the CSF website at Army.mil/csf.

Dana Whitis, the Department of the Army subject matter expert for the Family component of CSF, said that although the Family GAT is slightly different from the Soldier GAT, it fulfills the same function.

“The Family GAT talks specifically to Family members so Soldier-centric language is removed,” Whitis said. “However, as far as measuring strengths ... that hasn’t changed.”

The Family GAT provides a baseline in four dimensions of strength—emotional, social, spiritual and Family—and provides an opportunity to track self-development and growth in these areas over time.

After completing the confidential survey, Family members may take online self-development modules to improve their knowledge and skill-set in the dimensions of strength. Currently, four modules per dimension have been developed, but more will be added as the program

grows. Guard Soldiers who completed the training felt that the resilience skills learned are valuable to both Soldiers and Families.

“This is excellent training for Soldiers and their Families,” said SFC Steven Mashack, a recently graduated MRT from the Army National Guard Soldier and Family Support division. Noting the broad range of benefits, he added, “If you apply these skills, they will definitely help resolve issues within the Family as well as at work.”

All agreed the course taught them new skills and reinforced what they already knew. SSG Jaclyn Musgrove,

Global Assessment Tool:
The Global Assessment Tool (GAT) and the Comprehensive Resilience Modules are available online at:
SFT.army.mil/sftfamily
(requires CAC or AKO)



SSG Melissa Davis-Martin of Company C, 113th Support Battalion, gets a welcome home hug, from her son, Trevor during a 76th Brigade Combat Team arrival ceremony.

CSF develops five dimensions of strength: physical, emotional, social, spiritual, Family.

a training noncommissioned officer for the 129th RTI, Illinois Army National Guard, and recent MRT graduate, added, “I found that many of the techniques were things I already do but didn’t have a name for. This course will be very beneficial to Soldiers.”


Family Focus

“We are looking at expanding this training to Families by exploring ways to make it fit within our Family Readiness Assistant Program, and other Family support programs like Strong Bonds and Yellow Ribbon,” said Francisco.

Melissa Pounding, an Army National Guard spouse, added, “Resilience training is a great ‘tool set’ for

communication. It forces you to do a stop, look and listen to your emotions and how you are expressing yourself. It goes beyond military skills. These are skills that make you a better person. The resilience training is important for all Soldiers and Families of the Army National Guard.”

Though not mandatory for Family members, they are strongly encouraged to participate in the program. Family involvement is extremely important because the demands on our Citizen-Soldiers have increased tremendously since 9/11. To date, more than 1,300 Family members have completed the survey.

Multiple deployments have placed tremendous stress on Soldiers and Families. Family members play a significant role in a Soldier’s life by supporting their resilience and well-being. The Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program provides Family members with tools to help manage the challenges in their personal lives, and to continue to be our Soldiers’ pillar of support. 

>> Resources National Guard Bureau Point of Contact:
NGB-Soldier and Family Support Division Resilience and Risk Reduction Branch
MAJ Onesimo “Buddy” Francisco (Program Manager): (703) 607-0934
111 South George Mason Drive, Arlington, VA 22204



support

above&beyond

Rebuilding Lives

Homes for Our Troops helps Soldiers reclaim their independence

By RACHEL GLADSTONE, STAFF WRITER

It may be hard to imagine one man changing the lives of dozens, but in the case of John Gonsalves, seeing is believing.

In 2003, Gonsalves, a construction supervisor, found himself face to face with a situation that needed to be handled. “I happened to be watching the news and they were interviewing a Soldier at Walter Reed who was a double amputee. And that really got me thinking that lots of severely injured men and women were going to need [specially adapted] housing.

“But it didn’t really start out with me looking to start a charity. I just wanted to volunteer for an organization I assumed was already in place. But when I went online to do research, I found there wasn’t an organization like Homes for Our Troops. That’s when I decided to start Homes for Our Troops.”

Figuring It Out

Not knowing anything about forming a nonprofit organization, Gonsalves decided to figure it out. “Building homes I knew, but the charity aspect I didn’t know, and there’s a lot to learn,” he shared. Before long, Gonsalves had two major Boston law firms working with him pro bono, and Homes for Our Troops (HFOT) was up and running—sort of.

“The main missing piece then was wondering who we were going to build for. Then I saw a segment on ‘NBC Nightly News’ about SGT Peter Damon, a double amputee [from Massachusetts] just two towns from where I grew up.”

Gonsalves found a way to contact the injured Veteran, but it took a while to get a return call.

“He thought I was probably just a job,” Gonsalves said.



All homes provided by Homes for Our Troops are given at no cost to Veterans.

But the builder persevered, eventually convincing Damon to be the first recipient of the HFOT program. “He called NBC and told them about me. They contacted me, did a story, and we started getting national headlines. It really took off from there.”

Before long, HFOT was getting calls from the Pentagon, the Department of Defense and the White House. The program was well under way.

Maneuvers

To date, HFOT has finished construction on 57 specially adapted homes in more than 30 states and is currently working to complete 40 more.

“The homes we build are barrier-free, which means an open floor plan. We have various sets of plans we’ve developed over time. They have roll-in showers and

“Hundreds of people come out to help.”

—John Gonsalves, President and Founder of
Homes for Our Troops

* * *

roll-under stoves, and they’re set up so someone in a wheelchair can easily maneuver around the furniture,” Gonsalves said.

Community Is Key

In order to apply for a grant from HFOT, a Veteran must first qualify for the Special Adapted Housing Grant the Veterans Administration (VA) provides. The next step is to visit the HFOT website at HomesForOurTroops.org and apply for the program. Once you’re accepted, the organization takes it from there.

“First, we research the area [where the Veteran wants to live],” Gonsalves explained. “We look into land opportunities, contact developers and get a grass-roots movement happening in the community. We generally try to get the land donated or heavily discounted. Then, we put our marketing campaign out there, mailing information to all the contractors and supply houses in the area, and get some momentum happening.”

The Veteran and their Family not only get to choose the parcel of land for their new home, but also the floor plan and colors. And once the details are worked out, it’s time to move on to The Build Brigade.

“The Build Brigade’s a way for the community to come together in a big way,” Gonsalves shared. “Hundreds of people come out to help. We start with a slab. [Then,] over the next three days, we do the framing, the roof, and the interior wall framing, and install the doors, windows and siding. The home is totally watertight.”

From there, construction takes 60-90 days, at which point a “Key Ceremony” is held and the Family moves in.

Money Matters

Of course, none of this great work is done by magic. It takes money, and lots of it. Gonsalves and his staff of 27 work tirelessly to get the word out and raise money, but much of it’s done through third parties.

“People have done things [from] kids having birthday

support

parties requesting donations for HFOT rather than gifts, to bake sales and garage sales, to golf tournaments, concerts and motorcycle runs, and everything in between,” he told us.

One of the reasons for this is HFOT’s superior ratings with The American Institute for Philanthropy and Charity Navigator, which are organizations that rate charities.

“We’ve received top-rated status from both organizations for several years in a row,” he continued. “It’s made an enormous difference in our fundraising. Early on, the one piece I didn’t count on was how skeptical people would be about this construction guy from Massachusetts. It took me a year just to get our first house built.”

But now, it looks like there’s nowhere to go but up. “We’ve grown every year, and we want to encourage as many people as possible to get involved by visiting our website,” Gonsalves said.

Can’t Wait

SSG Michael Downing of Middleboro, MA, is a double amputee who was injured in Afghanistan. His HFOT home was completed in February. Although he is still recovering at Walter Reed, his wife and four children have moved into their new home and he can’t wait to join them.

“The Key Ceremony was very emotional for us. There were over 100 people there. Just the fact that people who had no idea who I was took the time, money and effort to build us a home was a pretty incredible thing,” Downing shared. “It was a huge weight off my shoulders knowing that the biggest piece of the puzzle was something I wouldn’t have to worry about.”

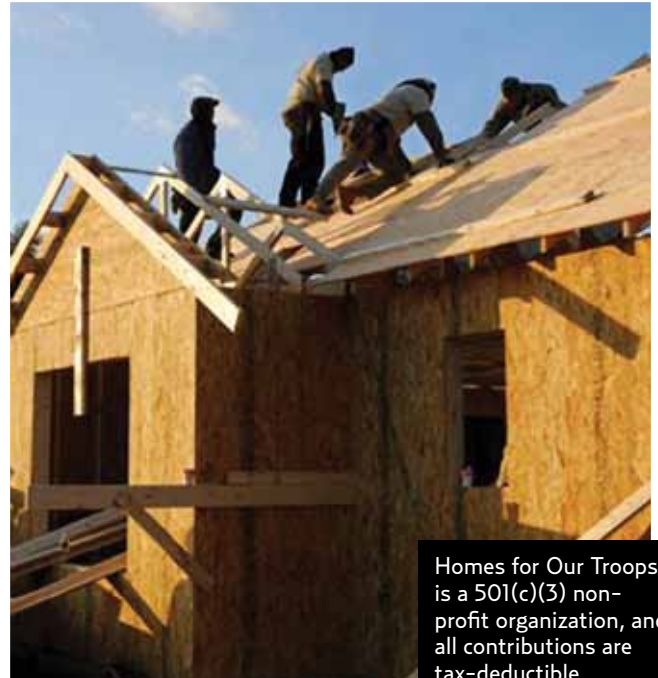
The Simple Things

Downing first learned about HFOT when he read an article in a local newspaper. At that time he and his Family were living in a two-story house, which presented many challenges.

“I had to pull myself up the stairs one step at a time, and someone would have to carry my wheelchair up the stairs ... just [so I could] go to the bathroom or to bed,” he said. But now that HFOT has completed his specially adapted house, all that will be different. “It will make things so much easier,” he continued. “I’ll be able to do those little day-to-day activities by myself—simple things like the laundry and cooking.”

Not only did builders and suppliers donate time and materials for the Downings’ home, they insisted the Family choose higher-end materials like granite countertops.

“They just went way above and beyond,” Downing said. “And my wife played an immeasurable part in every aspect



Homes for Our Troops is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and all contributions are tax-deductible.

“I can help my wife take care of our 5-month-old son more easily.”

—SGT Chase Matthews

from the design to construction, so I didn’t have to worry about anything.” When asked what is next for him, Downing replied, “I may go to work part-time for HFOT. Other than that, I’m just enjoying getting to watch my kids grow up.”

“It’s a Lot Better”

For SGT Chase Matthews, his wife and their two children, moving into their new home in Eddyville, KY, changed everything.

“It’s a lot better. It lets you be in a wheelchair and accommodates your needs for getting around,” he said. Injured in Iraq, Matthews is a double amputee who also sustained severe damage to his left forearm and hand. “I can get in and out of the house without having to worry about steps, and I can help my wife take care of our 5-month-old son more easily.”

Check It Out

“People came from Nashville and several other towns in Kentucky [to help],” he shared. “To know they wanted to

Homes for Our Troops has built more than 50 specially adapted homes for severely injured Veterans. Currently, the organization has approximately 30 homes under construction across the United States.



support the troops was wonderful.”

The Key Ceremony was attended by the mayor of Eddyville, as well as high-ranking officers from the Guard and a couple of Congressmen.

“I would tell other Veterans that they should go to the HFOT website and check it out. It’s an amazing organization.”

In Process


SGT Marco Robledo lost his left forearm and left leg while serving in Iraq. Currently, he’s living in Maryland, where he’s going for his degree in psychology at the University of Maryland. Meanwhile, HFOT is in the process of looking for a parcel of land for his new home in Arkansas.

“I was in Walter Reed for two years, trying to decide where I wanted to live my life. I realized I wanted to go home to Clarksville, [AR,] where I grew up. My parents and everyone are very excited about me coming back,” he said.

“The place I’m living in now is somewhat handicapped-accessible, but I still have to hop into the bathroom and use a shower bench to take a shower,” he shared. “The hardest thing is trying to get up and down the stairs when I’m carrying

groceries or something—I have a hard time balancing.”

But he looks forward to all that changing when he moves into his new house.

“I’ll have a little place I can call home and finally have a garage. And it will give me a sense of freedom. I feel very honored to have been chosen for this program and very grateful that HFOT is there to provide such a great service for wounded Veterans.” 

For more information about Homes for Our Troops or to get involved, visit HomesForOurTroops.org or call (866) 7-TROOPS.

community

Partners in Service



Konny Zins watches as North Dakota Army National Guard members rally to her aid.

My Brother's Keeper

North Dakota Guard members save fellow Soldier's home

By SSG AMY WIESER-WILLSON, NORTH DAKOTA NATIONAL GUARD PUBLIC AFFAIRS
Photos by MSG DAVID H. LIPP, NORTH DAKOTA NATIONAL GUARD

"I've been deployed before. I know what it's like to worry about back home."

With those words, SFC Larry Jacobson, of Fargo, ND, and his crew of seven set to work. It was March 17, their second day on duty in Lisbon, ND, where they were providing five traffic control points to facilitate the steady truck movement needed to build a dike against the quickly rising Sheyenne River.

The mission brought them to town. Their concern for the family of a fellow Soldier they had never met brought them to Poplar Lane.

There, Konny Zins and her three rambunctious boys—Trevor, 14, Nicholas, 12, and Brady, 10—were watching the

river quickly rise toward their house. It's something they dealt with just last year, when their entire basement flooded with 12 inches of water. Despite new sump pumps, a similar challenge seemed inevitable this year.

"When I was cleaning my room yesterday, the walls were a little wet," Trevor said.

This year is different, though—and more challenging. Konny's husband, SGT Darin Zins, deployed to Kosovo last fall and can do little more than empathize during his Skype calls with his family. He serves with the 231st Maneuver Task Force's Company B, part of the NATO peacekeeping forces in Kosovo Force 12. He doesn't expect to be home until late July.

“I first want to thank each and every Soldier who has taken the extra effort to help another brother out.”

—SGT Darin Zins



SPC Tim Sybrant of the 817th Engineer Sapper Company, left, and PFC Scott Ness of the 188th Engineer Company build a sandbag flood barrier to hold back rising water from the Sheyenne River.



Konny Zins and her three sons—Trevor, 14, Nicholas, 12, and Brady, 10—stand by as North Dakota Army National Guard members work to save their home from flood waters.

Damage Control

“He can’t do it, so we’re going to do it for him,” Jacobson said of the help needed at the Zins’ house. “When Guard members are gone and their Families need help, we help them out.”

So, after their shift running traffic control points, Jacobson’s crew headed over to the Zins’ house to move the furniture out of the basement and then start sandbagging.

“It’s ... nice to have the support of the Guard,” Konny said.

She had called Rod Olin with the Guard’s Family Assistance Center in Jamestown the day before, saying she

could use some help. Olin said he’d figure something out and then started making calls.

At 3 p.m. on March 17, Guard members started their volunteer mission to help one of their “brothers”—one they have never met but with whom they serve the same state and nation.


They hauled out the Zins’ belongings and built a sandbag dike about 2 feet high, with the promise that they would be back to add more as the water rises.

Major Thanks

“It’s really nice to see all the support and all the help that the Guard is able to give me,” Konny said. “I’m happy somebody is going to save my house because I can’t do it alone.”

From Kosovo, Darin was thrilled to see the help, too. He read about it and saw photos online, where he offered his thanks.

“I first want to thank each and every Soldier who has made the extra effort to help a brother out,” he wrote. “You are all leaders, and I have the utmost respect for each and every one of you. I thank you for helping my wife and children out.

“When I got up this morning and came back to my room from eating breakfast, one of my members in my platoon told me I was a celebrity [and] made the front page of the National Guard website. So, I checked it out quickly, and it just brought tears to my eyes when I read the news. Because I know ... all the many long days I put in last spring when we flooded. So, again, God bless each and every one of you, and I will meet you in the future.” 

Living a Dream

Hospitalized youth becomes "Honorary Guardsman"

By SSG GINA VAILE-NELSON, 133rd MOBILE PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT, KENTUCKY ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

Justin Gilpin isn't scared of anything. He dreams of hanging out of a Blackhawk or flying in an Apache, and says the height wouldn't bother him one bit.

Neither do the needles and tubes, or constant poking and prodding from doctors that Justin receives on a regular basis for treatment of testicular cancer.

"He hasn't cried. He has never said he's scared," his dad, Randy Gilpin, said. "I just don't know where he gets the strength."

Justin's strength to make it through chemo treatments comes from within. He has the energy of a whirlwind and the strength of an ox, derived from his personal courage.

"I don't get scared easily," he said.

Justin, a true fighter, says he thinks to himself, "I'm going to get through it quickly."

Kentucky National Guard officials, including MG Edward W. Tonini, Kentucky's adjutant general, visited Justin during his recent stay at the University of Kentucky Children's Hospital in Lexington.

"I was told his one desire in life is to be a Soldier," Tonini said. "We did our very best to get as close as we could to make his dream come true.

"His eyes lit up. It was a very special experience for me. I suspect it was a special occasion for him as well," Tonini said.

"One of the most rewarding things I am able to do as adjutant general is to spend a little bit of my time doing something that I believe will really make a difference in a young person's life," he said.

Tonini presented Justin with an Honorary Guardsman certificate, military uniforms, coins and other Guard keepsakes, including autographed NASCAR and IRL items signed by National Guard drivers Dale Earnhardt Jr. and Dan Wheldon.

While many Guard Soldiers spend days with recruiters getting into the Guard, Family Readiness Group (FRG) leader Amanda Herald, of the 1/617th Military Police Company, based in Pikeville, KY, said the process to make Justin an Honorary Guardsman happened very quickly.

It all began when Justin's nurse, Annie Lee, mentioned to her young patient that her husband, Timothy, was in the military police (MP) in the Kentucky Guard. Justin wanted a set of dog tags, so Annie contacted the FRG to see what could be done.

"We decided we'd get him a whole uniform, with nametapes and patches and everything," Amanda said. "So, I contacted [Community Outreach Director] Freddie Maggard to see if he could work up an Honorary Guardsman certificate. It all happened so quickly."



An Honorary Guardsman certificate is just one of many gifts MG Edward W. Tonini, adjutant general of Kentucky, presented to Justin Gilpin.



Friends and Family marvel at Justin Gilpin's resolve and support him in his goal of joining the Guard in the near future.

“We did our very best to ...
make that dream come true.”

—MG Edward W. Tonini, adjutant general of Kentucky

That was on a Wednesday. By Saturday, the Lee Family, Amanda and her husband, SPC Anthony Herald, and Kentucky Guard dignitaries converged on the hospital to make Justin a Guardsman.

“I will never forget the smile on his face or the pride his Family had when Tonini presented him with the Honorary Guardsman certificate,” said Maggard. “We went there to present Justin with coins, certificates and uniforms. When we left, we were the ones who received the most.”

Chaplain Bill Draper describes Justin as a “surprisingly optimistic young trooper.”

“If you need to be inspired, talk with our newest Honorary Kentucky Guardsman,” he said.

Justin’s parents say his attitude is what keeps them going.

“It’s kind of just a day-by-day thing,” Randy said. “You never know when a fever or something is going to end you up in the hospital for weeks.”

Justin was diagnosed in August 2008 after a bike accident landed him in the hospital with stitches and staples.

“When he went to have his staples removed, the doctors ran some tests and found a cancerous tumor,” he said.


Since the initial tumor was discovered, others have been found in Justin’s abdomen and kidney. He’s had numerous surgeries and treatments.

“His chemo and radiation treatments are hardest on us,” Randy said.

“But you haven’t seen anything until you’ve seen him in his uniform. It was a happy time in Justin’s life when that happened. It’s neat to think that MG Tonini would come all that way to see Justin just because of the interest he has.”

Randy and Renee know that they aren’t the only couple in the Bluegrass State with a sick child.

“Stay strong, like your kids,” Randy advises those parents. “That’s what keeps me going with Justin. I have problems myself and he makes a difference with them.”

Another testament to Justin’s unbridled spirit. 

A Life Less Ordinary



Tips for surviving the stress of deployment from a Guard spouse

By MICHELLE REITEMEYER

Modern life is hectic. Work and other obligations demand our time and energy. Children have social calendars—sports, clubs—and require a full-time chauffeur. Health experts remind us to exercise and get a good night’s sleep. Aging parents need care. Spouses tend to get grumpy if you neglect them for too long.

It’s very easy to become overwhelmed with all the things we feel we must do. Since bi-location and cloning are not yet options, how do you decide on your priorities in caring for yourself and your Family?

Here are a few ideas.

Food. Drive-through burgers and carry-out pizza might get you through one really bad week, but it’s not going to cut it for an entire deployment. Even if the meal plan is simple and repetitive—every Wednesday night is taco night at my house—it’s cheaper than dining out.


Clothing. Everybody has their own system of doing laundry, but the main point is to stay on top of it. Few things are worse in my mind than a 10-year-old fishing his sweaty athletic support out of the hamper to wear to his next baseball game.

Shelter. When things are busy, home maintenance tends to drop in priority. However, I do like to keep at least one section of my home looking decent. On the rare chance that I get five minutes to relax, I need a fairly tidy space somewhere out of sight of the dirty dish pile in the sink.

Downtime. Ten minutes on a porch swing. A walk around the neighborhood. Mini-breaks give our bodies and our minds a chance to relax and prepare for the next round. Try turning the electronic gadgets off for just a little while.

Physical Touch. Children and spouses tend to enjoy frequent hugs and other signs of affection, but this is easy to forget as we rush through our days. There may be no time for a story before bed, but don’t forget the kiss goodnight.

Memories. In 20 years, all anyone will remember is the general atmosphere: Were we together? Were we happy? Were we loving? Consider a simple Friday night Family “date” at the local ice cream shop to strengthen the bond.

Having a husband who serves in the military has helped me to appreciate the time we have together. Between his recent deployment and other trips, I frequently manage the house solo. Although I generally take care of food, clothing and shelter, I struggle to accomplish the other three priorities while he’s gone. When he’s home, I can do all of these things and usually more. It’s still a hectic life, but it’s a shared hectic life. 



“Mini-breaks give our **bodies** and our **minds** a chance to relax.”

Make Preparedness a Family Mission.
 All Families are invited to join the ARNG Decade of Health community
 at decadeofhealth.com during the 2010 launch of a Family-focused
 campaign, ARNG Ready and Resilient II - Strength from Within!®



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THERE WHEN YOU NEED US

The Soldier and Family Support 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.



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