



VT Family Readiness Newsletter

Green Mountain
Guard Families

October 2006

Ethical FRG Fundraising

Family Readiness Groups' events, many times are one of the few contacts local residents and businesses may have with the Vermont National Guard. What that FRG does, not only reflects on the individuals involved, but by extension, the Department of Defense and the VT National Guard. Extra care should always be taken when FRG members request donations from the local business community and holding events in a public place.

"Ethics are standards by which one should act based on values. Values are core beliefs such as duty, honor and integrity that motivate attitudes and actions. Not all values are ethical values (integrity is: happiness is not). Ethical values relate to what is right and wrong and thus take precedent over non-ethical values when making ethical decisions." This paragraph, excerpted from the Joint Ethics Regulation, DOD 5500.7-R describes ethics. Adherence to ethical behavior must be the standard of your Family Readiness Group.

Ethical conduct and man-

agement of an FRG are essential for its continued operation. Members of the FRG have a responsibility to ensure it does not engage in illegal or unethical practices. Since all FRG members are members of the DOD family, it is even more important on a personal basis that individuals abide by all standards and regulations on ethical conduct. Failure to abide by the standards and regulations on ethical issues can result in serious consequences both to the unit chain of command and to the individual members engage in the behavior.

As volunteer FRG members, active duty and DOD Civilian members must adhere to the ethical standards of conduct at all times, not only when they are in a duty status.

One area where fundraising and ethics continuously cross paths is in voluntary giving. Remember, all giving is voluntary. Coercive activity cannot be used to raise funds.

Coercive activities include, but are not limited to:

-Solicitation of Service Members by their commander, supervisor, or any individual in their supervisory chain.

-Supervisory inquiries about whether or not an individual contributed and/or the amount contributed. Participation or non-participation cannot be used in performance appraisals or evaluations.

-Developing and using lists of non-contributors.

-Providing and using contributor lists for purposes other than the routine collection and administration of contributions.

-The granting of special favors, privileges or entitlements, such as special passes or leave privileges which are an inducement to contribute.

It is impossible to address all the ethical issues in this document. This merely serves as a reminder of your responsibility to conduct FRG business in an ethical manner. If your FRG questions whether a particular action is ethical, DON'T DO IT! Seek clarification first!

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Tara's Tale on Military.com



Tara Crooks hosts a weekly podcast sharing resources, tips, conversation, and encouragement for the military spouse & family.

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Oct 5—Elaine Dumler of "I'm already Home Again"

Sept 28—Beverly Roman on Military Moves
Sept 13—Laurie Puhn—Part 2

Sept 6—Laurie Puhn—Part I

Aug 31—Anne Freeman

Aug 22—PCS

Aug 18—Challenges of

Military Relocation

Aug 2—Introducing Military Spouse Tara Crooks
http://www.military.com/Opinions/0,,TTale_Index,00.html

The Search for Americas WWI Veterans

Time is running out to find and recognize the last remaining veterans of "The Great War." The rolls of World War I veterans have declined so rapidly that the day is fast approaching when there will be one remaining, then none. The VA, with assistance from histori-

ans, state agencies and others, is keeping a roster of those veterans. Three years ago, there were about 250 remaining WWI American veterans. Yet, there may be other WWI veterans out there, perhaps in private nursing homes or in the care of

family members, who have not been identified by VA. If you know of any WWI veterans in your area, please contact VA's Office of Public Affairs in Washington, DC, at <mailto:opaweb@va.gov>.



USA Cares Receives Grant

USA Cares has received a \$2.5 million grant came from the Iraq Afghanistan Deployment Impact Fund administered by the California Community Foundation. USA Cares helps bridge financial gaps for families of

Service members deployed anywhere in support of operations in Iraq or Afghanistan. Currently eligible families can receive up to \$750 in assistance for family needs, including food, diapers, formula, electricity and rent. When it

comes to mortgages, USA Cares can offer a maximum of \$7,500 in assistance to homeowners.

For more information, visit the USA Cares website at <http://www.usacares.us>.

VFW Audio Essay for High School Students

Every year, hundreds of thousands of students participate in the Veterans of Foreign Wars' Voice of Democracy Scholarship Competition and the Patriot's Pen Essay Contest, which award more than \$3.4 million in scholarships and incentives. The Voice of Democracy (VOD) scholarship program is an audio-

essay contest for high school students in grades 9-12 that provides scholarships. Patriot's Pen, a youth-essay writing contest, is a nationwide competition that gives students in grades 6, 7 and 8 the opportunity to write essays expressing their views on democracy. The entry deadline for both contests is November 1,

2006.

For more information, visit the VFE

Scholarships and Programs webpage at <http://www.vfw.org/index.cfm?fa=cmtty.levelc&cid=1836&cfid=3209333&cfToken=20488681>.



Military OneSource Use Exceeds Expectations

Military OneSource is a virtual community support service that the Army implemented in August 2003, which is available world-wide 24 hours a day to Soldiers, deployed Department of Defense (DoD) civilians, and family members. Each military service has its own OneSource. The DoD created Military OneSource as a portal to access all the military services' OneSource pro-

grams. Utilization shows strong gains in 2006. From the time MOS was first provided to the Army in August 2003 to May 2006 there have been 111,285 calls to the daily 24 hour call center, 302,258 visits to the website, and 28,754 referrals for non-medical counseling. Current utilization in 2006 (259,541 uses) has already reached 23.6 percent, far exceeding the 2006 target of 15 percent.

The Army leads the other branches in referrals for non-medical counseling with a monthly referral rate of 0.2 percent. Nearly two-thirds of all users (65.9 percent) are Soldiers, and 6 percent are repeat users. For more information on Military OneSource, visit: www.militaryonesource.com. For assistance from Military OneSource, call 800-342-9647.



Haunted World Tour '06

In Conjunction with the Vermont National Guard Berlin Family Assistance Center the Waterbury Rotary Club announces it's Haunted Forest and Halloween Party.

On October 27 and 28th

From 6pm—9:30pm Kids of all ages can be entertained at the Waterbury Armory.

There will be a costume parade, refreshments, games and prizes for the best costumes.

For the older kids there is a haunted forest—be prepared to be scared!

Cost per Victim \$5

FREE for Military Families.



Military.com—Field Problems Q & A

Hello Tara and Star,

I am a National Guard wife. When my husband was deployed, I quickly discovered I was very alone. Most Guard units have members scattered all over the state and most families never meet until the bus pulls out with our soldiers in them for a deployment.

I discovered something that struck me as unusual when my husband returned after a 13-month deployment. I suffered from something that may have been a form of PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder). While my husband was in Iraq, my whole life revolved around him. I worked like a crazy person to help raise funds ... to help his unit. I lived and breathed to make his life easier. Upon his return I began having horrible nightmares, panic attacks, and so on, all relating to his deployment in Iraq. I was terrified to leave the house without him for fear he would not be here when I got home. I had nightmares that he was still in Iraq and hurt or worse.

I don't know how common or uncommon this is, but I wonder if there is any information relating to deployment and how it affects family members?

Thanks So Much!

Trudy, Michigan Army National Guard wife, 10 years

Dear Trudy:

I hear you. I have been through three of my husband's deployments with the Guard. I commonly tell people that my most difficult times have been in the 90 days before and after when I actually hugged my husband "hello." It is hard to keep your emotions from complicating a complicated time. This is true for active duty soldiers, deployed reservists, their spouses, extended family, and even close friends. If you know a soldier and have a heart, I venture to say that it would be impossible for you not to be affected by the deployment of that soldier.

As I see it, there are three factors working against an easy transition: poor communication, fear, and altered expectations. When asked how I know my husband is "ok," I tell people that we talk about everything. Oftentimes, soldiers do not want to share the details of a deployment with their spouse, not because they can not trust their spouse, but because they are trying to spare the spouse from the ugly things that may have happened. A spouse must understand this but encourage the soldier to talk to someone and find someone to talk to as well. One thing you can always talk about is Life, "from this point." Realign your goals and life ambitions; get to know each other again.

Recently, a chaplain at our Strong Bonds retreat said, "Soldiers are raring to change things when they get home and spouses are ready for things to return to normal." This is a perfect example of how expectations that may have held true at the start of a relationship change after a life-altering experience such as a deployment. However, you will never know this if you don't communicate. The last, fear, can somewhat be subsided by talking too. The more you talk about the feelings of fear, anger, and anxiety, the easier it is to sort out what is rational versus irrational and identify what is more or less common. If your spouse can not listen objectively or is having problems of their own, find a friend, chaplain or FRG member.

From my counseling training, I do know that individuals can suffer PTSD if they feel an imminent threat imposed on their loved one, for instance, a soldier in a combat zone. Also, there are other disorders such as the Acute Stress Disorder, which is similar to PTSD but does not last as long. These are mental health diagnoses that may require the help of a professional. So I caution you, and everyone else, when you start experiencing those symptoms that feel severe and disrupt your ability to manage everyday life, you should see your primary care manager (PCM) for an assessment and referral.

Beyond your PCM, there are three other resources I would like to share here. These are resources that were born out of post-deployment studies and after action reviews (AARs). This is just information on a few, but as I said, the military is trying to develop more and better services. For example, as recently as December of 2005, the National Military Family Association (NMFA) participated in a Congressional Briefing on the impact of PTSD on Military and Veteran Families. This is due to individuals like you making their difficult experiences known on surveys and studies conducted by entities like the National Defense Research Institute, www.rand.org/nsrd/ndri.html.

Here are those three ways I mentioned:

DoD's Mental Health Self-Assessment (MHSA) Program This is an online survey that soldiers and family members can take to assess for alcohol use, PTSD, etc. Individuals can print out their results and a resource list upon the completion of the survey. It is completely anonymous and available 24 hours a day/7 days a week. Find the MHSA at www.MilitaryMentalHealth.org.

Military OneSource Soldiers and family members can access this assistance for consultation and counseling referrals. Case managers are master's level professionals with extensive knowledge of the military lifestyle and probably have heard it all. They are also available anytime at www.militaryonesource.com and 1-800-342-9647.

Vet Centers also provide assessment and counseling for soldiers and families. These services are in almost every community. You can visit your local Vet Center as a family member to educate yourself on what your soldier has endured as well as to fill your own military-related, counseling needs. For Health Care benefits call 1-800-827-1000.

These are not the only services. I focus on them because they were brought about by the military and should endure. Community agencies, educational institutions, private practitioners, and local governments are working independently or in tandem with the military to respond to the needs of families. I hope, if you still need help, that you will follow through on these services, educate yourself, and receive a professional assessment. Just know that you are not the only one, and we are so glad that you chose to share your experience with us for the benefit of others.

Here are more resources for dealing with deployments:

www.nmha.org National Mental Health Association, "Operation Healthy Reunions"

<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2006/coming.home/resources/> Coming Home: Families and War

<http://www.pdhealth.mil/> Deployment Health Clinical Center, "Family and Friends" link

Most links have resources for children, severely injured soldiers, and widow(er)s as well.

Have other questions? For more information or to submit your Field Problem, visit www.FieldProblems.com or e-mail FromTheField@FieldProblems.com. Please include your first name, location, branch of service, and years in/associated with the military. Questions may be edited for length and clarity.

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We're on the Web
www.vtguard.com

Calendar of Events:

October:

7, 9am, Aviation Reunion Briefing, Camp Johnson
12, 6pm, Financial Planning Seminar CJ FRP
14, 9am, TF Saber & TF Catamount Awards Ceremony
14, 4:30pm, Air Guard FRG Volunteer Appreciation, VFW Essex
15, 1pm, Fundraising Training, Berlin Armory
19, 6pm, Financial Planning Seminar CJ FRP
24, Military, Family, Community Network Forum, Bennington
26, 6pm, Financial Planning Seminar CJ FRP
27-29, Relationship Enhancement Retreat, Lake Morey Resort
29, 131st Engineers FRG Meeting, Berlin

November:

2, 6pm, Financial Planning Seminar CJ FRP
3, Maintenance FRG Potluck Dinner. Location and Time TBA
4 & 5, Commissary Sale
9, 6pm, VTANG Wing Advisory Council

December:

10, Family Readiness Holiday Party, Sheraton Burlington

Lending Library

The Family Readiness Center now has a lending library. We have books related to deployment, reintegration, volunteers, children, parenting and much more. If you're interested in borrowing a book from our library, or you'd like to get a list of what we have available, please email or call Tamra Augostino at tamra.augostino@us.army.mil or 802-338-3164.

Some books we have on hand include: Surviving Deployment, Ned and the General, Life Strategies for Teens, 101 Ways to Raise Resources, Daddy, Mill you Miss Me?, KidStress, While They're at War, Chicken Soup for the Volunteer's Soul, Fundraising for Non-Profits, How Deployments Affect Service Members and Helping People cope with Tragedy and Grief.

Become a Guardian Angel

Operation Guardian Angel is a national campaign that encourages families, friends, neighborhoods and communities to remind servicemembers to practice safety when they return home. Anyone can

become a guardian angel if they care enough to help our Servicemembers stay safe once they return home.

To become a guardian angel and apply for an official "Guardian Angel"

Certificate of Appreciation, visit the Operation Guardian website at <https://crcapps2.crc.army.mil/guardianangel/index.html>.



Sign up to receive our newsletters and announcements by emailing tamra.augostino@us.army.mil.