



SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES

Army Survivor Outreach Services
California Spring 2012 Newsletter
Volume 1, Issue 4

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That some good can be derived from every event is a better proposition than that everything happens for the best, which it assuredly does not.
—James K. Feibleman

Spring is in the Air



Photo by www.designsdelight.com

The first day of Spring was March 20th! With Spring comes new life, new color, new hope. But for many who are experiencing a loss of some kind, the promise of Spring is difficult to envision and even harder

when it arrives. Because while many people feel light, joyful and renewed, those experiencing a loss may be deep in the trenches of grief, and find it difficult to take part in the celebration of new life, in the happiness and hope that usually accompany Spring. So, when should you be "over" all the hurt and pain? First remember it's a process, so be gentle with yourself and don't rush yourself (or anyone else). Second, know that a person never completely recovers – an emptiness may remain for years to come, and certain emotional insecurities and

issues may remain. Sadness may come back, washing over you in waves on special days or in certain circumstances. But take heart – there will come a time when you feel like the worst is over, like some healing has occurred and you are ready to move forward with your life. By Julie Fischer, MSE

Full article at:

<http://www.waupacana.com/articles/grief2.htm>

File taxes free online through MilitaryOneSource

Taxpayers have until Tuesday, April 17, 2012 to file their 2011 tax returns. File your taxes online for free through the H&R Block at Home®. The free offer is only valid through the Military OneSource website: <http://www.militaryonesource.mil>.

The following are eligible:

- All Active-duty service members of the U.S. Army, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Navy, and U.S. Air Force.
- National Guard and members of the Reserve (regardless of activation status), includes members of the Coast Guard Reserve activated as part of the Department of the Navy under Title 10 authority.
- **Spouses and dependent children of the services noted above, and who are authorized in DEERS (including Surviving Spouses and dependent children).**
- A family member who is taking care of the affairs of a service member (in one of the services noted above) when the service member is deployed.
- A severely injured service member of one of the services noted above, or a designated family member of a severely injured member who is incapable of handling his or her own affairs. Medically retired individuals are eligible until 180 days past their End of Tour of Service, retirement date, or discharge date.

Holidays and Observances

Apr 5	Gold Star Wives Day
Apr 8	Easter Sunday
Apr 22	Earth Day
May 19	Mother's Day
May 13	Armed Forces Day
May 28	Memorial Day
Jun 14	Flag Day
Jun 17	Father's Day

Army Family Action Plan (AFAP)



“Delegates also assessed which programs and services were more valuable.”

AFAP (Army Family Action Plan) delegates choose 8 issues to help military families. ARLINGTON, Va. (Army News Service, March 5, 2012)

Several Survivors attend the AFAP session last Fall; of the 8 issues chosen, 2 were initiated by those Survivors in attendance and are Survivor specific.

After opening remarks by senior Army leaders, members of the four working groups met in private to decide the priority of the top eight issues. The following is their prioritization in descending order -- with two being tied in importance.

1. Survivor investment of military death gratuity and Service Members' Group Life Insurance.

Currently under the HEART Act, or Heroes Earning Assist and Relief Tax, the survivor receiving the death gratuity and SGLI funds has the opportunity to place up to the full amount received into a Roth Individual Retirement Account or Coverdell Education Savings Account within 12 months after receipt of funds. The recommendation is to amend the HEART Act to extend this to 24 months.

5. (Tied with #4) Identification card for Gold Star lapel button recipients.

Gold Star lapel button recipients who are not authorized a DOD identification card do not have easy access to Army installations. The recommendation is to create a card that provides access to Army installations for those authorized to receive the Gold Star lapel button.

Delegates also assessed which programs and services were more valuable. Last year, the delegates were asked to focus their assessment on programs dealing with mobilization and deployment. But with the constrained resources and troops coming home, this year they were asked to pick programs and services most important now.

The top five responses for programs that are most valuable or critical were:

- Army Family Action Plan
- ***Survivor Outreach Services***
- Army Emergency Relief
- Tuition Assistance
- Fitness programs and facilities

To read the full article to go:

http://www.army.mil/article/74976/AFAP_delegates_choose_8_issues_to_help_mil

Celebrating Gold Star Wives Day April 5, 2012!

Gold Star Wives of America, Incorporated is an organization of widows and widowers whose spouses died while on active duty in the military services or as the result of a military service connected cause.

GSW has approximately 10,000 members within 8 regions and 53 chapters located in 26 states.

The primary mission of GSW is to provide service, support and friendship to the widows and widowers of military personnel who died on active duty or as the result of a service connected cause.



Gen. Raymond T. Odierno, chief of staff of the Army



American Fallen Warrior Memorial Foundation: The Memorial Project

The American Fallen Warrior Memorial will be built in Kansas City, Kansas. Norman Schwartz of Plantation, Florida is the Memorial designer. The concept behind his design is very symbolic. The main concept of the memorial is based on the gold service star which represents the Fallen Warrior (History: Families display a service flag which is: red border with a field having a blue star in the center for each member of a family on active duty). This blue star changes to gold (with a blue edge) which represents a family member that died during service, without specifying cause of death.

The memorial is partially recessed to create a physical and emotional change in the visitor's orientation. The Memorial will focus inward always keeping the visitor connected with the large flag, state flags and Fallen Warrior Plaques bearing the pictures of each Fallen Warrior. The Surrounding sounds are quieter and with the sound of water at the seating areas the state flags waving in the air are amplified to provide a serene atmosphere.

The large flag archway serves as both a landmark and a starting point of entry into the memorial. The structure stands 130' feet tall and is adorned with the seals of each branch of the military.

The center of the memorial contains all 55 flags representing the states and territories of the US. These stand in the middle of a pentagon, which is the shape of the Department of Defense.

Seating areas are created in between the memorial walls to function both as a fountain and seats. The fountains are low in profile to let the visitor experience both the touch and sound of flowing water over stones.

The Secondary access to the memorial is created at the apex of each point of the star and leads to ramps, this provides the visitor different view and vistas to experience the memorial form.

The large circular path goes around the memorial and links all of the other access points created by the Donor and the "MyThankYouCoins" Wall. The wall will carry the names of all people, corporations, schools and organizations who contributed to the building of the memorial.

Two buildings will flank the archway on either side and will house the information center, auditorium and exhibit hall. The other will be the foundation administration, outreach and library center.

The AFWM is solar and wind powered and meets LEED specifications providing an eco friendly environment.

For more information about the American Fallen Warrior Memorial Foundation visit their website at <http://afwmf.org/>

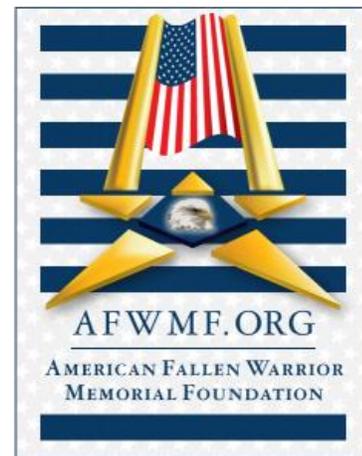
Feel free to contact:

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"This blue star changes to gold (with a blue edge) which represents a family member that died during service, without specifying cause of death."

“Purple Up! For Military Kids”

“OMK hopes everyone will take this opportunity to appreciate and celebrate these young heroes.”

April marks the nation’s “Month of the Military Child,” a time to honor youth impacted by deployment. In celebration, California’s Operation: Military Kids (OMK), part of the University of California 4-H Youth Development Program, invites you to join us for the 2nd annual

“Purple Up! For Military Kids.”

We are encouraging everyone across the nation and especially California to wear purple on Friday, **April 13th**, as a visible way to show support and thank military children for their strength and sacrifices. Purple is

the color that symbolizes all branches of the military, as it is the combination of Army green, Coast Guard blue, Air Force blue, Marine red and Navy blue. OMK hopes everyone will take this opportunity to appreciate and celebrate these young heroes.

American Gold Star Manor in Long Beach

The Manor is a unique and very special home to American Gold Star Mothers, Dads, Veterans, as well as, other active seniors of modest means. It is the only residence of its kind in the entire United States and here it is in sunny Southern California! Housed on over 25 beautifully landscaped fenced acres, our

residents are able to enjoy a huge recreation center, swimming pool, computer center, library, private chapel, and more, all within a very short stroll from their apartments; amenities generally unheard of in this price point of housing. Gold Star parents Kathleen and Dave C. moved into their two bedroom unit a couple

of months ago and can't stop saying, "this is so wonderful."

There is a waiting list. However, Gold Star parents and Veterans always go to the top of the list. If you would like more information please call Bethann at the Manor 562-426-7654 and she will fill you in on all the details.



The National Military Family Bereavement Study

“first scientific study of the impact of a U.S. service member death on surviving family members.”

The National Military Family Bereavement Study is the first scientific study (Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program) of the impact of a U.S. service member death on surviving family members.

While certain similarities between civilian and military bereavement exist, families impacted by a U.S. military death may possess unique risk and protective factors that affect their bereavement process and experience of loss. The study of bereavement in the civilian population is

extensive; however there is a lack of substantive empirical research on the impact of the death of a family member serving in the U.S. military.

Given the unique nature of military family life, the study will investigate the impact of community support and services on the bereaved and how available resources impact resilience or vulnerability in surviving families.

Those eligible to participate will include: parents/step-parents/adoptive & custodial parents/in-loco

parentis; siblings/step-siblings; spouses/ex-spouses; children/step-children (including adult children over the age of 18) whose related service member has died by all circumstances of death (such as KIA, accident, illness, homicide, suicide) on active duty status in the U.S. Military (Army, Navy, Air Force & Marines — active, guard & reserve) on or after September 11, 2001.

For the full article see the web-site at: www.militarysurvivorstudy.org.

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Fort Hunter Liggett

Les Toth

Office (831) 386-2375

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Inyo & San Bernardino Counties

Lori Picard (Fort Irwin)

Office (760) 380-8357

Orange & Los Angeles Counties

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San Diego, Riverside, & Imperial Counties

Dawn Lessley (San Diego)

Office (858) 573-7055
Cell (619) 384-9806

Survivor Outreach Services Financial Counselors

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(Moffett Field)
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Southern California

Kane Nquyen

(Los Angeles)
Office (310) 235-4193
Cell (714) 548-6300

We're on the Web!

See us at:

<http://www.calguard.ca.gov/G1/SOS/Pages/default.aspx>

Resources

California Department of Veterans Affairs: <http://www.cdva.ca.gov>
DEERS: 1-800-538-9552
Employment Development Department: www.edd.ca.gov
Gold Star Dads: <http://www.GoldStarDads.org>
Southern California: California1@goldstardads.org
Gold Star Moms: www.goldstarmoms.com
California (Southern), CA-HI – President: Sue Pollard: wmpollard@cox.net
Antelope Valley GSM, Lancaster: dawndana@juno.com
Bakersfield, Bakersfield - Pres. Gay E Nacca
Inland Empire, Riverside & San Bernardino counties: LKlasno@iegs.com
Long Beach, GSM Home: wmpollard@cox.net
Saddleback Valley, Lake Forest: wmpollard@cox.net
San Diego: Pennybento@gmail.com
Ventura County, Oxnard: jbright94@earthlink.net
Northern California: kensmomkm@gmail.com
San Jose, San Jose: kensmomkm@gmail.com
Gold Star Wives: <http://goldstarwives.org/>
California: LBKenney1@verizon.net
ID Cards <http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsi/owa/home>
Medals Flags and Memories: <http://www.MedalsFlagsAndMemories.com>
Medicare: 1-800-633-4227; <http://www.medicare.gov>
Military One Source: 1-800-342-9647; <http://www.militaryonesource.com>
Military Records Request: <http://vetrecs.archives.gov>
National Military Families Association (NMFA) <http://www.militaryfamily.org>
SBP Pay inquires: 1-800-321-1080; <http://www.dfas.mil>
Social Security Administration: 1-800-772-1213, <http://www.ssa.gov>
Tragedy Assistance Program: 1-800-959-TAPS (8277); <http://www.taps.org>
TRICARE Dental Plan: 1-888-838-8737; <http://www.trdp.org/siteMap.html>
TRICARE West: 1-888-TRIWEST (8749); <http://www.triwest.com>
VA Education Benefits: 1-888-442-4551; <http://gibill.va.gov/>
Veterans Affairs Benefits: 1-800-827-1000; <http://www.va.gov>



About our Program

Survivor Outreach Services demonstrates the Army's commitment to Families of the Fallen by providing support and standardized services to Active, Reserve, and Army National Guard Families. Survivor

Outreach Services is a holistic and multi-agency approach to delivering services by providing access at garrisons and communities closest to where Families live. Our mission is to embrace and reassure Survivors that

they are continually linked to the Army Family through a unified support program that enables them to remain an important part of the Army for as long as they desire.