



Family Deployment Supplement to the Connecticut Guardian

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Officials introduce war on terrorism medals

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Servicemembers serving at home and abroad in the war on terrorism will now be recognized for that service. Department of Defense officials announced Feb. 26 the final approval of two new medals and their criteria.

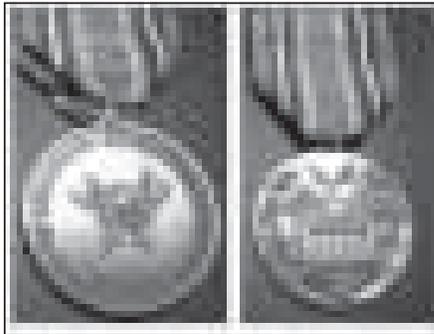
Individuals who have deployed for operations Enduring Freedom or Iraqi Freedom will be awarded the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal. The Global War on Terrorism Service Medal will be awarded to those who served in airport security operations in the United States following the Sept.

11, 2001, attacks or who supported operations Enduring Freedom, Noble Eagle or Iraqi Freedom.

The front of the Global War in Terrorism Expeditionary Medal features a shield adapted from the Great Seal of the United States. The back includes the eagle, serpent and swords from the medal's front-side design along with the inscription "War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal."

"These medals recognize the significant contributions members of the armed forces bring to bear in combating terrorism in all forms throughout the world — for both current and future operations," stated a DOD news release.

Individuals can receive both medals if they meet the individual criteria, officials said.



To be awarded the expeditionary medal, individuals must have been deployed outside the United States for OEF or OIF for 30 consecutive days or 60 nonconsecutive days. The time requirement is not needed if the individual engaged in combat, was wounded or killed in action, or was medically evacuated for any reason, officials said.

The area of eligibility encompasses the U.S. Central Command area, (excluding the lower Horn of Africa) Middle East, eastern Turkey, Philippines, Diego Garcia and all air spaces above the land and adjacent water areas, according to the release.

Each day aircrew members fly sorties into designated areas counts as one day of deployment toward the 30- or 60-day requirement.

Individuals engaged in actual combat may be eligible for battle stars on the expeditionary medal. Only a combatant commander can initiate a request for a battle star, and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the approving authority for them, the release states.

Servicemembers eligible to receive the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal must have participated in or supported operations on or after Sept. 11, 2001. Service medal eligibility dates run from Sept. 27, 2001, to May 31, 2002, for individuals who served in airport security operations.

The same 30- or 60-day requirements apply to the service medal as to the expeditionary medal.

"Each military department will prescribe appropriate regulations for processing awarding and wearing of the medals and ribbons for their servicemembers, to include application procedures for veterans, retirees and next-of-kin," the DOD release stated.

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DFAS to process retroactive civilian-pay increase

Defense Finance and Accounting Service officials have begun processing the 2.1 percent retroactive pay increase for the federal civilian employees they serve.

President George W. Bush signed an executive order March 3 identifying the new pay-increase percentages. The updates are being processed into the DFAS pay system as soon as they are received from personnel offices, officials said.

Because of the number of general-schedule employees involved, DFAS officials said they will process the retroactive portion of the increase for prior paydays during at least two pay periods. The increase is retroactive to Jan. 11 for general-schedule employees.

To maintain quality control in processing the hundreds of thousands of pay actions related to this retroactive increase, agencies and major commands will be designated to a specific pay period for processing. Because of the relatively small size of some activity

types, some processing will be completed during the first pay period. The large sizes of some agencies and major commands require their pay actions be processed during two pay periods. DFAS officials will publish a timetable for the payroll changes once processing is initiated.

For federal wage-system employees, DFAS said they anticipate completing all of the retroactive increases during the pay period in which personnel action is received and processed by the pay system.

Space A extended

TECH. SGT. MARK DIAMOND
AMC PUBLIC AFFAIRS

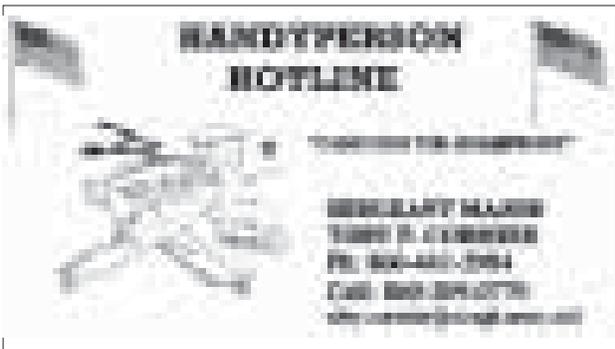
The one-year test to expand space-available travel privileges to family members of active-duty and retired personnel traveling within the Continental United States was extended, according to a Feb. 24 message released by Air Mobility Command's Air Transportation Division. In the message, Lt. Col. Darcy Lilley, Chief of the Air Transportation Division's Passenger Policy Branch, said the extension will allow the test to continue while the Office of the Secretary of Defense completes its evaluation of the test. Under the "Space-A" test phase, the family members of active-duty and retired military people are able to travel "Space-A" aboard military flights when accompanied by their sponsors, according to John Lundeby, AMC Passenger Policy Branch. He said the test does not apply to "gray area retirees" - Guard and Reserve members who are retired, but are not yet eligible for retired pay and benefits.

Lundeby explained that in December 2000, the commander of U.S. Transportation Command outlined the proposed test as a way to improve quality-of-life privileges for military service people and their families. After reviewing the proposal, Defense officials approved the one-year test period. "Prior to the test, regulations prohibited family members from flying space available within the CONUS," said Lundeby. "This privilege was available only to active-duty and retired military people. During the test period, dependents can accompany them."

To register for space-available travel, active-duty sponsors must be on leave or a pass and remain in the status while awaiting travel and through the entire travel period.

Additional Space-A travel and sign-up information is available through the Headquarters AMC Passenger Policy Branch Web site at <http://public.amc.af.mil/SPACEA/spacea.htm>

Home Depot stores, through volunteer program "Project Home Front," are providing up to \$1,000 for home repairs to families whose military sponsors are deployed. There is an application process at their website:
www.projecthomefront.org.



Handyperson Hotline for families and volunteers

Calling all soldiers and airmen, retirees or spouses. This is your opportunity to stop being a spectator and start doing something to help the Connecticut Army and Air National Guard during these unprecedented times.

Volunteer to donate some of your time and expertise to the CTNG Family Program's Handyperson Center. If you are a tradesman or an all around handyperson or a laborer, the Handyperson Center is looking for you!

E-mail your name, phone number skill, status (active, retired, spouse) and hometown to Sgt. Maj. Toby Cormier at toby.cormier@ct.ngb.army.mil or call (860) 209-0770.

The Handyperson Hotline is designed to reduce the stressors on the families of deployed soldiers and airmen by having everyday household problems diagnosed and repaired or referred to competent businesses at no cost for labor.

The program is also designed to get seasonal chores such as window air conditioners installed/removed, pools

opened/closed, leaves removed, items brought to the dump and so on.

All of this can be performed by fellow Guardsmen, retirees or spouses of Guardsmen who are willing to donate their time and expertise to this program.

Here's how the program works:

A deployed family member calls the Handyperson Hotline with a clogged drain.

The Hotline manager contacts a plumber from the Handyperson Database who will contact the family member and attempt to walk the person through correcting the problem (if possible.)

If not corrected, the Hotline will dispatch a qualified person (fellow Guardsman) to the house to correct the problem.

It is designed to give the deployed family somewhere to turn to keep the home operating smoothly without having to pay to get things done around the house that were normally done by the deployed soldier or airman.

To volunteer or for more information, call (860) 209-0770 today.



Become a Guardian Angel Today!

Uncle Sam Wants You!

Service Members returning from war are at high risk for accidental injury. Read below and find out how you can help.....During the war, Army buddies watch over each other.

When Service Members leave their buddies and return home they will need family and friends to watch over and assist them through what could be a difficult time of readjustment.

How can you help?

Easy.....Let them know you care, and appreciate their service to our country by reminding them to practice safety while they are home.

Why Service Members are at high risk after the war ?

They are returning from a war zone. Many have been there for 12 months or longer. Returning home will be a major adjustment for them. They will have to reintegrate and learn a normal life style again. Driving, social interaction and every day life will be much different than what they experienced in Iraq. Some may have a tendency to over indulge. Others may experience difficulty in relationships. These factors place them at high risk for accidents and injuries.

Operation Guardian Angel is a program designed to help protect our Service Members once they return home.

What is Operation Guardian Angel?

A national campaign that encourages families, friends, neighborhoods and communities to remind Service Members to practice safety when they return home.

What's the objective?

- To help protect Service Members from injury or accident.
- Let them know we are proud of them, and we care.
- Provide citizens an opportunity to get involved.

Who can be a Guardian Angel ?

Anyone that cares enough to help our Service Members stay safe once they return home. We need you to be a Guardian Angel. Please help and pass this message along to others!

What can a Guardian Angel do?

- Guardian Angels can talk to Service Members they know.
- Guardian Angels can remind Service Members to:
 - Drive with caution, and have a plan for DUI avoidance if they intend to consume alcohol.
 - Offer to call a cab to help get them home safely
 - Use the appropriate safety gear and buddy system during recreational activities such as hiking and swimming.
 - Anything you can think of that will help ensure their safety.

We need your help getting the message out!

- Help recruit Guardian Angels in your community by:
 - Contacting your local radio and TV stations to make public service announcements.
 - Asking groups and local clubs such as the VFW, American Legion, AM Vets, PTA, Jaycees, and other community action organizations to participate.

Thank You for your selfless service.

For more information on Operation Guardian Angel, and to receive your participation certificate, visit www.us.army.mil (AKO) and click on the Operation Guardian Angel link.

CHAMPVA policy for some surviving spouses extended

VA PRESS RELEASE

An extended deadline will allow more time for some remarried surviving spouses of veterans to seek health care insurance under the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA).

"I am pleased that this extension will allow VA to provide health care benefits to more widows and widowers of veterans," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony J. Principi. "This is another illustration of VA's long-term commitment, not only to veterans, but also to their surviving family members."

The extension applies to CHAMPVA-eligible spouses who remarry after a veteran's death. The surviving husband or wife lost access to CHAMPVA benefits if they remarried before their 55th birthday and before Feb. 4, 2003.

Under rules announced last March, those survivors had until Feb. 4, 2004, to apply for reinstatement of their CHAMPVA coverage. Today's announcement gives them until Dec. 16, 2004, to apply for reinstatement.

To be eligible for CHAMPVA, people must be family members of veterans who have a permanent and total service-connected disability, who died of a service-connected

condition or who were totally disabled from a service-connected condition at the time of death.

In general, CHAMPVA covers most health care services and supplies that are medically and psychologically necessary. People who want an application for this benefit or more information can contact VA's Health Administration Center at 800-733-8387.

Surviving spouses who remarry at a younger age and lose their CHAMPVA benefits can have these benefits restored if their later marriage is annulled or ends due to death or divorce. Similarly, widows or widowers of any age who lost benefits under VA's Dependency and Indemnity Compensation

(DIC) program due to remarriage are eligible for reinstatement of monthly DIC payments if their subsequent marriage ends.

This restoration policy has been in effect since 1998, but VA officials are concerned widows or widowers may overlook this benefit if a subsequent marriage ends years later. VA's average payment to surviving spouses is about \$12,720, including adjustments for minor children, survivors who are housebound or who need a home aide, and other factors.

THE MILITARY ANGELS

Barbara Cox

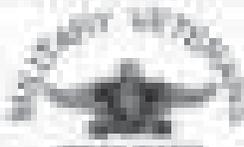
God made special Angels, Their purpose to be
The soul mates of those in the Military
They will be understanding, Their wills shall be strong
To handle the hardships, as they come along

They were given a talent to make anywhere home
Far away from their families, and some times alone
To move on short notice, to a strange new place
And able to make a new life, at a new post or base

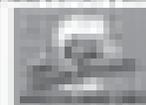
They must be loving, caring, trustworthy and wise
And to any occasion, they are ready to rise
They handle the long times of being alone
Writing letters, making packages, and sit by the phone

They have pride in their country and the uniform
For this is the reason, for which they were born
They will keep the car running and mow the grass
Until the troops are home at last

God made special Angels, they are to be
The Brave men and women of our Military
God wanted wanted the best for his service in life
So, He created the Military husband and wife



MILITARY VETERANS MC
FIRST ANNUAL
POKER RUN
MAY 20-21-22, 2004
SUPPORTING THE VA
MEMORIAL HALL



MEMBERSHIP: \$100.00 (Includes 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th, 35th, 36th, 37th, 38th, 39th, 40th, 41st, 42nd, 43rd, 44th, 45th, 46th, 47th, 48th, 49th, 50th, 51st, 52nd, 53rd, 54th, 55th, 56th, 57th, 58th, 59th, 60th, 61st, 62nd, 63rd, 64th, 65th, 66th, 67th, 68th, 69th, 70th, 71st, 72nd, 73rd, 74th, 75th, 76th, 77th, 78th, 79th, 80th, 81st, 82nd, 83rd, 84th, 85th, 86th, 87th, 88th, 89th, 90th, 91st, 92nd, 93rd, 94th, 95th, 96th, 97th, 98th, 99th, 100th)

NOW EAR THIS!
Breakfast with the
Easter Bunny

Available: April 20th, 2004
Camp Kinnard, Middletown, CT
Cost: \$10.00 per person
Includes: Breakfast, Easter Bunny, and more!

Join the Easter Bunny
Easter Egg Hunt by Bob Gandy
Bring Home Your Easter Bunny

Adults: Please do not let
your children get up
before Camp Kinnard

Family Assistance Center locations

Family Assistance Centers are set-up in the following armories around the state:

Bristol Armory
61 Center Street, Bristol, CT 06010
(860) 582-1206 Toll Free 866-347-2283
1st Lt. Lynda Hedenberg & Sgt. Michael Bertoli

Waterbury Armory
64 Field Street, Waterbury, CT 06702
(203) 574-2406 Toll Free 866-347-2291
Sgt. Jonathon Duffy & Spec. Tamara Jex

Manchester Armory & AVCRAD
330 Main Street, Manchester, CT 06040
(860) 646-0780 Toll Free 866-347-2286 Capt. Lauri Tinelle

103rd FW, Bradley ANG Base
Bldg 8, East Granby, CT 06026
(860) 292-2730 Mrs. Donna Rivera

Hartford Armory
360 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06105-3795
1-800-858-2677

Mrs. Kim Hoffman, Mrs. Michelle McCarty, Mrs. Marina Sedor, Mrs. Karen Somes,
Spec. Calude Hibbert and Sgt. Jessica McKenna

Norwich Armory
38 Stott Avenue, Norwich, CT 06360
(860) 823-1342 Ext. 12 Toll Free 866-347-3357
Mrs. Andrea Lathrop

103rd Air Control Squadron
206 Boston Post Road, Orange, CT 06477
(203) 795-2983 Charlie and Jane Solomon

118th Medical Company
Location to be announced
Sgt. Geanabelle Burmudez (860) 883-6936
Sgt. Elizabeth Crouthamel (860) 883-6935

Volunteers are needed in each facility.
Those wishing to help out can contact Mrs. Kim Hoffman, Family Program
Manager at 1-800-858-2677.

Any family member or loved one of a deployed soldier who has questions about
benefits or deployment issues may also get answers to their question at the
following email address: kim.hoffman@ct.ngb.army.mil

TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE

The next time you write to your favorite soldier, ask him/her to help you solve these special riddles! Wait for a reply to check answers, or take a peak and see if you and your favorite soldier think alike! Either way, have fun and try to make up some new riddles for yourself! (Hint: All answers rhyme)

1. A big brown wild animal who looks at you.
2. A yelling white shape in the sky.
3. A mad pig.
4. A sneaky insect.
5. A human vehicle.
6. An automobile that is many miles away.
7. An amphibian on the track.
8. A puppy that eats too much.
9. An August musician.
10. A high round toy.

Kids' Creative Corner

A MONTHLY FEATURE OF
FUN AND EDUCATIONAL
ACTIVITIES

ANSWERS: 1. A bear stare 2. A loud cloud 3. A sore bore
4. A sly fly 5. A man van 6. A far car 7. A turtle
hurdle 8. A dog hog 9. A summer drummer 10. A tall
ball