



Ready Families... Anytime, Anywhere

BUCKEYE FAMILIES

January 2009

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Educate, Communicate and Market Family Readiness

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If you would like to contribute to the Buckeye Family Newsletter about what's happening in your unit, please forward your submission to the editor. The next edition is scheduled for April 2009.



The 2009 Calendar of Family program events will be delivered to every Soldier and Airman in the Ohio National Guard in January. This helpful guide will list a vast array of programs scheduled throughout the year from marriage enrichment and single service member weekends to all our youth events and family program training seminars.

- ✓ **ML, Commanders and FRG Leader Teams - Mark your Calendars for the 2009 Annual Family Readiness Conference, 3-5 April 2009, in Columbus.**
- ✓ **Annual Reports and Volunteer Award Nominations due 1 February (reports are based on annual training year of Oct. 1, 2007 to Sept. 30, 2008).**

From LTC Buck Bramlish... First, Happy New Years. It has been a great year in the family readiness office – new programs and initiatives, great unit FRGs throughout the state, and six of our staff members have welcomed home their Soldiers or Marines.

I need a little marketing help from the FRGs and our Families. The 2009 Calendar mentioned above is a first class tool to help every Soldier or Airman build a stronger self or Family. It simply takes action on their part. So, as it is often our Families or spouses that get things going, please ask your Soldier or Airman to pass this calendar to you – and dive into it. 10 Marriage Enrichment weekends, Family Camps, Troop and Teen Camps, Single Service Member Retreats... the list goes on and on.

This past weekend I took Team Bramlish (my bride and the two little ones) to Salt Fork Park. We started off with a one mile day hike through a beautiful ravine. Took a dinner and rest break, and then went back to the same trail for a 2030 hour night hike. We were a sight. All of us had our red headlamps, walking sticks, reflective bands etc. We all had a blast. The children had not experienced such a night hike (other than at our rural home) and every noise was an adventure. We stopped for awhile and after a few minutes of silence, we brainstormed all the "usual" sounds that we did not hear. We even practiced our own "battle drills;" one of us would yell "grab" and we would all immediately cling to each other as though we were suddenly encountering a wild animal or slipping down a ravine.

What's the point? Well, while I was in Hungary a few months back, one of the Hungarian Soldiers commented to me... how well do you take care of your Family, and then spoke of an old universal saying... "it is often the cobbler who wears the worst shoes as he is always too busy to fix his own." Ouch! I am sure that all of us as Citizen Soldiers or Airmen sometimes struggle with balance and Family life. The point is... Take Action! The Calendar of Events we are distributing this month and then the Strong and Ready 2009 monthly calendar we are distributing in February are two tools for you to use to plan and take action.

Key Volunteers Announce Retirement

The Family Programs office would like to announce the recent retirement of three of our most valued volunteers serving on the Joint FR Advisory Council. Lillian Collins, Southeast Volunteer and Joint Council Member, Tina Lee, Joint Council Treasurer, and Bonnie Swaney, Southwest Volunteer and Joint Council Member all announced their retirement at a recent Joint Council Meeting. These ladies served the Ohio National Guard in a number of volunteer capacities over the years. Each of these ladies spent many hours and touched many military lives through teaching, mentoring FRG's and supporting the service members and families of the Ohio National Guard. Please join us as we extend best wishes to Lil, Tina and Bonnie. Thank you so much for your service and devotion; you will certainly be missed.

Family Programs adds New Staff

Thomas Whiteman, MA, PCC

Tom Whiteman is the Military Child and Youth Consultant for the Ohio Joint Family Service and Assistance Program. Tom is a Professional Clinical Counselor and has worked in private practice and the community mental health fields since 2000.

Tom received a Bachelor of Science from Indiana Wesleyan University in 1993 and received a Master of Arts from Ashland University in 2000. Prior to entering the counseling field, Tom served 5 years as a youth pastor. He has spent the majority of his professional career in service to families with children.

Tom and his wife have three sons, ages 13, 11 and 8. They currently reside in the Columbus, Ohio area.

As a Child and Youth Consultant, Tom is available to provide presentations or briefings on common life-circumstances and issues faced by military families. He is also available to provide direct, solution-focused counseling to service members and their families. For additional information please call 614-336-7479 or 614-787-4022 or email at thomas.x.whiteman@mhn.com.

Military One Source iCanAchieve program for Teens

The iCanAchieve program for Teens focuses on helping teens ages 13 and older set goals and put healthy habits into place. This program can help teens achieve their goals of reaching a healthy weight, choosing nutritious foods, improving sports performance, or getting started with a fitness program. This program helps teens learn how to:

- * understand the change process
- * set realistic and measurable goals for themselves
- * find their motivation to change
- * monitor their progress
- * meet roadblocks with resilience and celebrate their successes.

PROGRAM FEATURES:

1. TELEPHONIC HEALTH COACHING - Telephonic health coaching is conducted by our professional team of experienced health coaches. During telephone sessions our coaches will help your teen set goals and put new eating and physical-activity habits in place. Your teen's health coach will also provide long-term follow-up at 3, 6, and 12 months.

2. ONLINE HEALTH ASSESSMENT - The online health assessment, specially designed for teens, provides a foundation for coaching discussions and goal setting. Your son or daughter will receive a personal report immediately upon completion of this self-assessment.

3. SUPPORTIVE ONLINE CONTENT AND TOOLS - Your son or daughter will have access to a variety of online content to support weight management, including:

- * Food diary

- * Step tracker
- * Articles and personal success stories of teen weight management
- * Educational information
- * Recipes to promote healthy eating
- * Message board that lets your teen post questions and comments to the coach and receive a private, personal response.

To participate in the iCanAchieve program, teens under age 18 need consent from a parent or guardian. The first step for teens to join the program is to register either online at www.militaryonesource.com or by telephone at 1-800-342-9647.

It was a Grand Homecoming for the Returning 838th MP CO! **By Sherry Carnahan**

The 838th MP CO out of Youngstown, OH had been deployed in Afghanistan for nearly a year and the welcome home celebration held on Thursday, Sept 25, 2008 was the kind that all military units should come home to. The celebration started when three charter buses carrying the 838th MP CO soldiers pulled into rest stop area 45 off I-76, to a flashing sign reading "Welcome Home 838th MP CO!" put up by the Ohio State Highway Patrol who was there waiting to escort the unit home along with the Patriot Guard and Vietnam Veterans motorcycle riders, and the Austin Town Police and Fire Departments, together they made a mile long escort with flashing lights, horns, sirens and whistles.

As the unit drove down I-680 to their exit at 9A in Youngstown, they were greeted by yet another large homemade sign displaying the words "Welcome Home 838th MP CO - The Heart of It All!" The sign was just the beginning as the bus turned right onto E. Midlothian Blvd to Lake Park Rd, where they were greeted by streets lined with hundreds of flags, homemade signs and cheering community and business members. The soldiers had no idea that there was over 1000 family, friends and community members waiting for them at the Trinity Fellowship Church just a few minutes away.

As the escort rounded the corner onto South Ave at 5:55pm the waiting crowd cheered wildly, their soldiers were almost home! Soon the headlights of the first bus started to round the corner and screams of joy and waving flags filled the air as the buses carrying waving soldiers rolled in front of them. Family and friends quickly rushed to the back of the church to the staging area where they waited for the first bus door to open and out step the first of 168 soldiers into the arms for their loved ones.

It will be a day to remember for all the soldiers and their families but for the community members as well. Reporters from TV channels 21, 27 and 33 and several local papers were on hand to cover the reunion. Several reporters expressed that they had never covered such a celebration and how they would always remember the town that knows how to honor their soldiers and the sacrifices they have made to protect and keep our country free!

Welcome Home 838th MP CO, We THANK YOU!

Taking Charge of Your Money CD



In today's world of financial instability, it's so easy to lose control of our money—to let credit card balances swell or to be knocked off track by an unexpected expense or a cut in income. On this CD, financial expert Amelia Tyagi offers down-to-earth money tips that can work for anyone, whether you make \$20,000 or \$200,000. The CD includes real-life stories from others, including a service member, who have faced money challenges and found ways to deal with them. To receive your free CD see www.militaryonesource.com or call 1800-342-9647

Take Me Out to the Ballgame!!!

Through a generous donation from Sports Time Ohio and facilitated by Operation Home Front and the Region 1 Family Assistance Center, the family of CPT Larry Smith was treated to a night in the fantastic DUGOUT Suite at Progressive Field for a Cleveland Indians Baseball game. CPT Smith is currently deployed with HHC 237th BSB. The unit's home station is Cleveland also home to the Cleveland Indians. The unit FRG, when contacted about the event, held a "lottery" of hopeful participants and the Smith Family was the lucky winner.

Cassandra Smith, wife of CPT Larry Smith was quoted as saying, "My daughters and I would like to thank you again for the baseball tickets. We were at the game yesterday and the seats were fantastic. We were in the dugout suite beside the Detroit Tigers. All the food and drinks you wanted.

Pictured below are CPT Smith's Brother Larry, Wife Cassandra, and Daughters Ericka and Ariel.



New Online Library Resources from Military OneSource

Not near a library? Access hundreds of titles in our new and growing Online Library Resources, with departments devoted to auto repair, home improvement, and selections your kids can read or listen to online, plus handy new Playaway® books and a variety of fiction and nonfiction books that Military OneSource users can order at no cost. The online collection is large, growing fast, and easy to use, with selections like:

- **TumbleReadables online books** for kids K-12, with audio read-along.
- **Customized college and distance-learning searches** to identify schools and programs that offer what you're looking for.
- **Auto Repair Reference Center** with care and repair information specific to vehicles by year and type.
- **Home Improvement Center** that shows you how to build a patio, replace window glass, stop a running toilet, and perform just about any other home-maintenance task you'll ever face.
- **Prep for standardized tests** like the SAT, ACT, GRE, and CLEP.

To access these resources and more, go to www.MilitaryOneSource.com and type "online library" in the search box.

Ohio BMV Offers Important Service

Below you will find a link to a new and very important service the Ohio BMV is offering. They have established a secure, online database for individuals to enter next of kin contact information that law enforcement can access in the event that you are in a serious accident. The database allows you to enter information for up to two individuals you would like to be contacted in such an instance.

Two very amazing women are responsible for this. They both had loved ones killed in accidents and were not able to be notified for several hours, as authorities could not locate correct contact information. They were able to help get the legislation necessary for the creation of this database through the Ohio legislature and to the Governor very quickly. This database is one of the first of its kind in the nation.

Please take the time to add your next of kin contact information and pass along to loved ones, friends, coworkers, etc.
<https://www.dps.state.oh.us/netsys/netdb/ENGLISH/MMENU.asp>

Ohio Tourism Industry Salutes Military Families

The Ohio Tourism Division has partnered with Tourism Industry members across the state to provide military families the opportunity to make new memories together at an affordable price. DiscoverOhio.com's discounts offer veteran and current service members an array of opportunities, from discounted rates on hotel rooms to specials on admission to some of Ohio's greatest attractions.

"Since Sept. 11, 2001, more than 20,000 current Ohioans have been deployed to war zones and other parts of the world," said LTC Robert Bramlish, state family program director of the Ohio National Guard Family Readiness Program. "As our men and women deploy, the gift of quality time with their families, whether it be prior to deployment, during a short leave mid tour, or the weeks or months after a deployment, strengthens our troops and builds family resilience," Bramlish said. "Having a weekend getaway or taking a vacation is a great way for Ohio service members to reconnect with their families, and the military specials on DiscoverOhio.com will help them to do just that."

For discount information please visit: <http://consumer.discoverohio.com/MilitaryDiscountResuIts.aspx> Don't forget to check out Discover Ohio.com before planning your next fun event in Ohio

Military OneSource In-Person Financial Counseling Now Available

In-person financial counseling is now available in most locations through Military OneSource, in partnership with National Foundation for Credit Counseling (NFCC). NFCC provides financial education and counseling services at hundreds of local offices nationwide. Military OneSource arranges for you to meet face-to-face with a financial consultant in your community.

Program Benefits

This program is specially designed to provide short-term, solution-focused financial counseling for service members and families who may be experiencing a financial setback. Whether you need advice for a specific debt problem or basic assistance with money management, a financial expert can help you analyze your situation and develop a debt management plan.

Eligibility

Six counseling sessions per issue, per calendar year are allowed for each eligible client. The sessions are available to active-duty, Guard, and Reserve members (regardless of activation status) and families. Please call

1-800-342-9647 or go to www.militaryonesource.com for additional eligibility and program details. For those unable to attend in-person counseling or in locations where in-person counseling is not available, Military OneSource will provide telephone consultations

Northwest Ohio Corn Maze a Success!

Northwest Ohio held its first annual Family Fun Night at a Corn Maze in Whitehouse Ohio. Teaming



up with the Army and Air National Guard Family Program offices was our own local philanthropist, Duke Wheeler. Trick-or-treat stations were placed inside the corn mazes and there were refreshments, freebies and activities for all of our families attending. As it was an inaugural event, we expected a rather small showing. However, much to our surprise, we had over 52 military families with a total of 216 people in attendance. Thanks to all of those who volunteered their time to make it a success. We look forward to having this event again next year and hope to see you there! - Margret Szymanski, FAC Region 5

KID'S KORNER

Ohio National Guard Youth Program

Upcoming Events

Ohio State Women's Basketball

Please join Operation: Military Kids and the Ohio National Guard at The Schottenstein Center on February 1st as the Ohio State Women's basketball team takes on Northwestern. Game time will be at 4pm. This will be our 4th year for this great family event. In the past 3 years over 600 of Ohio's military families have taken advantage of this opportunity. Friends, family, teams, groups are all encouraged to attend this event. As long as the group is tied to an Ohio Military Member, the more the merrier! We will post ticket purchasing information at: <http://ong.ohio.gov/family/>

Other activities at the game:

- Experience historic Ohio Stadium during a one hour behind the scenes tour – prior to the game
- Meet Brutus the Buckeye
- Shoot post game layups on the court
- Free Parking

- Military Youth will have the opportunity to be part of the “High-5” tunnel for the players entering the arena

For More information on this event please contact Sue Ann Carroll at 877-460-2177 or Erin Berry at 614-336-7314 or visit: <http://ong.ohio.gov/family/>

Wildlights at the Columbus Zoo 2008

This was our 4th year at the Columbus Zoo Military Appreciation night! Once again our military members and their families weathered the cold for this festive event on December 13th. Special thanks to the USO and the Cookie Lady for providing the food and drinks for the evening. The Columbus Zoo offered ½ price admission for military families for this event which has served over 4,000 military members and their families over the last 4 years!

Military families enjoyed FREE hot beverages, sandwiches and cookies at our “Warming Station” and we also took lots of “Fun Family Photos”. This was another great event offering our families the opportunity to come together with other military families and share in a wonderful evening of family fun at a great price!

Save the Date!

**Operation: Military Kids Camp @
Kelleys Island**
Our 5th Year in a row!!

We will be offering **TWO** camps in 2009. They will run simultaneously on Kelleys Island and will be age specific. We will utilize the Kelleys Island 4-H camp for youth 9-11 and Camp Patmos another residential camp on the Island for youth ages 12-15.

The age range for camp has changed. Previously, campers could not be older than 14 as of the first day of camp. In 2009, campers can be 15 as of the first day of camp.

We need counselors! Running two camps is going to double the number of counselors we'll need. If you are 15* or older or know someone who is and is interested in a great leadership opportunity, have them contact the OMK planning team at omk@cfaes.osu.edu or 614-292-3758.

**military youth who are 15 have the option attending camp OR being a counselor-in-training for the younger kid's camp (ages 9-11).*

Dates: August 10-14, 2009

Online Registration Begins: April 1, 2009

For more information visit:

<http://operationmilitarykids.ohio4h.org/> or
<http://www.ong.ohio.gov/family/>

Contact: Sue Ann Carroll @ 614-336-7456 or
Erin Berry @614-336-7314.

Hero Camp and STRONG Family Workshops

What are Hero Camps and STRONG Family Workshops?

Hero Camps will serve to make our youth more resilient and better prepared to manage the stresses of growing up in a military family. We will provide a fun filled day that builds leadership skills while promoting camaraderie and building a sense of community among military youth.

Parents have the option to drop the kids off for the day or to attend the STRONG Family Workshop. The Family workshops have been developed to run alongside the Hero Camps and provide the opportunity for parents to attend six fun, interactive sessions and obtain more information on building stronger family units.

More about the Strong Family Workshop...

While there will be a lot of content offered at these workshops, we intend to make the sessions discussion based, fun and interactive. Some of the parents who attended the 2008 family workshops had this to say:

“Take your kids, bring yourself and expect to gain a new reflection on life” – Service member and Dad

“This was very informative, and a good way to meet other families that are in the same boat.”

“GO, JUST GO! You will not regret it! Service members should make sure to attend with their spouse.”

What activities will my child participate in at the Hero Camp?

We will offer a full day of camping fun planned just for you, each location offers unique opportunities for campers with everything from high ropes courses, team challenge courses, canoeing, hiking/orienteering, crafts and much more. There is also a special session built into the program that provides extra tools to help them deal with and communicate the unique challenges of being a military child.

Is there any cost involved?

No this camp is offer at no cost.

When and where will these events occur?

The TY09 schedule includes 4 Hero Camp/STRONG Family Workshops.

**April 25, 2009 - Camp Chof in Akron, Ohio

May 16 - Camp Palmer in Fayette, Ohio

May 30 - Camp Wesley in Bellefontaine, Ohio

**August 22 - Camp Mary Orton in Columbus, Ohio

*** Indicates that this Hero Camp will run at the same location and timeline as a Regional Foundation Course.*

How do I register for this event?

Registration will open on February 1, 2009, you can register on the Family Programs Website at: <http://ong.ohio.gov/family/youthprogram.htm> or contact Erin Berry at 614-336-7314

Troops & Teens Camps and Troops & Family Camps!

What are Troops & Teens Camps and Troops & Family Camps?

These camps will serve our Teen population and our entire family dynamic by providing a weekend camp called Troops and Teens for the service member and one teen dependent or the Troop and Family Camp that will provide a weekend camping experience for the whole family to enjoy.

Why should I sign up for Troop & Teen or Troop & Family Camps?

Do you ever feel like you just need to spend some time with your teenager? Or do you ever feel like your family is always going in different directions just trying to keep up with everyone's schedule? These camps are designed just for you as military families to give that much needed time to work on your family relationships and to spend that time together doing activities and projects that will create lasting memories for years to come!

What activities will my child participate in at the Camps?

We will offer a full weekend of camping fun planned just for you, each location offers unique opportunities for Troops and their teens/families with everything from high ropes courses, team challenge courses, canoeing, hiking/orienteering, fishing, crafts and much more.

Is there any cost involved?

These camps have a \$25.00 per family registration fee.

When and where will these events occur?

The TY09 schedule includes 2 Troop and Teen Camps and 1 Troop and Family Camp.

Troop & Teen Camps 2009

July 11-12 – Region 6 at Camp Mary Orton and Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio

September 19-20 – Region 3 at Camp Joy in Clarksville, Ohio

Troop & Family Camp 2009

September 25-27 – Region 3 at Camp Kern in Oregonia, Ohio

How do I register for this event?

Registration will open on February 1, 2009. You can register on the Family Programs Website at: <http://www.ong.ohio.gov/family/youthprogram.htm> or contact Erin Berry at 614-336-7314