

To support the social, emotional, and academic needs of National Guard children and youth

GuardEn of Youth welcomes home Soldiers of the 3-142nd



Special Interest in this issue:

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Aviation Soldiers Come Home

During the month of May, over 135 New York Army National Guard Soldiers returned home to Army Aviation Support Facilities in Latham and Long Island.

The Aviation Soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, 142nd Assault Helicopter completed their one-year of active duty for Operation Iraq Freedom. They served in Iraq for nine months.

Known in Iraq as Task Force Jester, the aircrews and Soldiers of the 3-142nd conducted aviation operations throughout central and southern Iraq to support coalition and Iraqi forces movements of troops and supplies.

The battalion of more than 320 Soldiers conducted split based operations with a company located in Basra and the remainder of the battalion at Baghdad International Airport.

By May of 2009, Task Force Jester had oversight of 62 aircraft (55 UH-60 Blackhawks and seven AH-64 Apaches), more than double the unit's normal complement of helicopters without additional staffing.

Over the course of the deployment, the aircrews from the task force flew more than 15,000 flight hours, moving more than 50,000 personnel and 1,000,000 lbs. of cargo.

These Soldiers will participate in Yellow Ribbon Reintegration program events with their families in June and July.



What is Yellow Ribbon Reintegration?



The New York Army National Guard Soldier and Family Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program began in July 2008. Soldiers are required to attend two Yellow Ribbon events approximately 30 and 60 days after their return home.

Since conception, the Yellow Ribbon Program has conducted over a dozen reintegration events throughout NY State.

For the 30-day reintegration program, Soldiers and spouses talk about the “New Normal” and how the changes they experienced during a deployment can have long term effects on relationships, work and families. These discussions include tips on how to identify issues before they become a problem and ways to help families reunite upon return.

There are also several displays and organizations on-site to provide information.

The 60-day reintegration consists of a follow-up on to the “New Normal” and discussions on how to deal with anger, compulsive behaviors and substance abuse problems, if they exist. There are also counselors available to help with job placement and financial management. Both events include a support network of providers to ensure Soldiers and their families have every opportunity for any assistance they need.

Kids are invited and encouraged to attend the “Boots Off Program”, which is available to help kids work through any issues they may have, with activities and a chance to interact with other kids going through similar experiences.



Video Program at Reintegration



LeShante Garris being interviewed by Danae Knowles at the Rochester 60-day reintegration.

ROCHESTER, NY- When New York Army National Guard Master Sgt. Edwin Garris deployed to Afghanistan in 2007, his three daughters, twelve-year-old Angelene, fifteen-year-old Valicity, and eighteen-year-old LeShante, missed him terribly.

They never imagined his homecoming would be just as difficult or that when he returned, the initial thrill of having him home would wane quickly.

"It was a big relief to know he was safe," recalled LeShante Garris. "Then it was like it was another person there and two days later, it was like, okay, when are you going back," she said. "It was tough, we had gotten used to it being only four of us at home, and then we had to put him back in the picture somehow. It was kind of awkward at first, but it's better now," she added.

"I think it's been harder for him to come home, than for us to welcome him home" said Valicity. According to Valicity, he's been having a tough time making the transition from "Army-mode" where his Soldiers moved instantly when he told them to do something, to family life where an edict to clean up their room received a response more in line with "Come on dad, do I have to?"

Other teenage children of New York Army National Guard Soldiers shared similar stories and feelings related to their deployment experiences, on video as the New York Army National Guard introduced a new component to its Yellow Ribbon reintegration program.

The New York National Guard Youth Program teamed up with the state Public Affairs office to give teenagers a chance to work in video—both behind of and in front of the camera—interviewing each other about the experience of being home while Mom or Dad served overseas.

This newest program kicked off at the Rochester Convention Center on March twenty-first during the 27th Brigade Combat team's 60-day reintegration session. The unit returned from Afghanistan in late 2008. "Doing this video helped because I was able to talk about my feelings and I think it will also help other kids know that they are not alone, that there are others out there just like them," said thirteen-year-old Danae Knowles. "I had a lot of fun and learned how to do interviews and how to use a camera.

This is something I might want to study later on, since I still haven't decided what I want to do when I grow up," Knowles said.

"This video class helps these kids talk about their experiences, address some of the concerns they faced while their loved ones were deployed and also discuss some of the issues of rebuilding as a family upon their return, in a fun and innovative way," said Shelly Aiken, Youth Program Coordinator.

The program began with a 30-minute class on video production and interview techniques, enabling the teens to visualize their final project and design their own interview questions.

While returning Soldiers and spouses met throughout the day with military and civilian counselors discussing issues such as substance abuse prevention and anger management, nearly a dozen teens spent their time scoping out interview settings and videotaping individual interviews.

In the end, the teens made a 10-minute video, which they will share with other children of deploying National Guard Soldiers, in hopes that it will help them identify and cope with issues they may also face.

With dreams of becoming a journalist, Valicity Garris viewed the class as an educational opportunity.

"I really loved learning about the camera, learning about how to do interviews and talk on camera. It was like going to school, only better, because this was not just having a fun time with your friends, it was an actual experience. How many kids can say they made a real video and got to do interviews?" Garris asked.

"It was like a dream class, we were able to interact closer than if we were just in the room playing around with other kids and it was great to finally sit down and talk about my feelings about my dad's deployment."

New York Air Guard Members Help NASA Reach for Stars



Space Shuttle Atlantis lifts off from Kennedy Space Center, May 11, 2009.

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla.-- Eight para-rescue men aboard "King 2" an HC-130 from the New York Air National Guard's 106th Rescue Wing released a collective breath as the space shuttle Atlantis, traveling over 3,000 miles an hour, reached orbit at 2:07 p.m. (EDT) May 11th for NASA's final visit to refurbish and restore the Hubble Space Telescope.

It was the hundredth time Airmen from the Long Island-based rescue wing have watched a Space Shuttle climb into orbit and stood by to rescue the crewmen just in case something went wrong. The New York Air National Guardsmen have been standing by to retrieve shuttle crew members since December 1988, when NASA conducted the first post-Challenger disasters launch of the space ship.

"Every member of the 106th Rescue Wing is proud of this mission," said Col. Michael Canders, commander of the 106th. "Our unit has played a critical role in the exploration of space for the last 20 years and we look forward to continuing to support this effort."

The highly trained rescue crew eagerly awaited Atlantis' lift-off from Cape Canaveral, Florida, where they remained alert and prepared to retrieve shuttle astronauts, should a mishap occur that prevents the shuttle from reaching orbit. If that happened, the seven members of the Atlantis crew would have used an escape hatch to bail out into the Atlantic. While "King 2" stands ready at Patrick Air Force base, a short distance from Kennedy Space Center, a second HC-130, "King 1", orbited the eastern sea coast prepared to rush to the projected impact area or splash point, if necessary.

National Guard personnel from the 106th Rescue Wing, based at Gabreski Field Air National Guard Base in Westhampton Beach, NY routinely practice this emergency procedure, known as Mode 8 Egress, which is, essentially, a parachute descent to safety.

Should an eject happen, the shuttle crew would be spread out roughly a mile apart, given the speed the shuttle would be traveling as the astronauts exited. Once located, the pararescuemen, known as para-jumpers or PJ's for short, deploy in two teams via parachute, along with a Zodiac inflatable boat, to retrieve the astronauts.

"I am always grateful for the outstanding job the 106th Rescue Wing does for NASA's Shuttle launches. They are a critical part of our overall launch contingency planning and I am absolutely certain that if called on, they would perform their job in a flawless manner," said NASA Launch Director Mike Leinbach. "Although we're ready, we're relieved we don't have to rescue the astronauts. It's a mission you train for and hope you never have to execute," said Lt. Col. Jim Kelley, 106th navigator and King 2 AIRBOSS or mission commander, responsible for controlling the rescue package and helicopter refueling plan for this mission.

The PJs on King 2 are from the 129th Rescue Wing, Sunnyvale, California, filling in for 106th PJs deployed forward to Spain, on-site to support a Transatlantic Landing Site should the shuttle need to land there.

Knowing the PJ's are close by is important, said Air Force Col. Lee Archambault, who commanded a Shuttle mission in March 2009 and flew on another one in 2007.

"Because of the amount and level of egress training and rescue procedures we receive, we know we are well taken care of should we need to get out of the vehicle if the worst of the worst happens", Archambault said. "We very much appreciate the support of the 106th Rescue Wing and all the rescue personnel on station throughout the world, without your support we couldn't do what we do."

The Shuttle had been redesigned to include an escape hatch, which would allow crewmembers to exit the spaceship in an emergency. Rescue crews were now needed to locate those downed crewmen and pluck them from the waters off Cape Canaveral. The 106th Rescue Wing volunteered for the mission, developed and validated the astronaut search and rescue procedures, and has been there for nearly every shuttle mission since.



Space Shuttle Atlantis awaits lift-off from launch pad 39 at the Kennedy Space Center on May 10, 2009. Photo courtesy of Jim Siegel, Celebration, FL.



107th Family Readiness

Niagara Falls Galaxy Camp 2009

FUN

ADVENTURE

SURVIVOR

Camp Niagara 2009

CHALLENGES

TEAMWORK

July 20-24th

Ages 8-12

Register now by calling 236-3411 or
email

107aw.familyreadiness.ang.af.mil



Your Own Pages

GuardEn of Youth is looking for your input

Share
your
Thoughts

Here!

Share
your
Ideas

Here!

Share
your
Talents

Here!

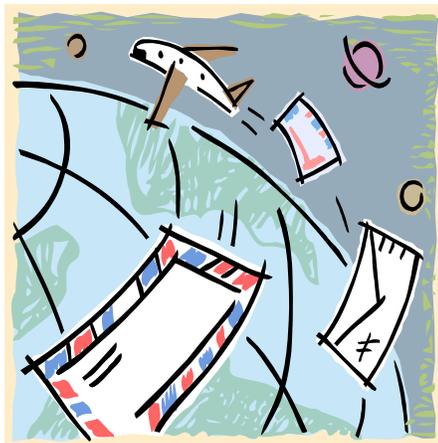
Send your entries to
shelly.m.aiken@us.army.mil,
subject line "Newsletter input"



PROJECT PEN PAL

Connecting Military Children around the Globe

With Project Pen Pal you will meet other military children around the world. You can make friends, learn about their traditions, culture's, how they feel about their schools and their hobbies. In addition, Project Pen Pal encourages you to write about the challenges you face being a Military Youth, and share those feelings with children from different backgrounds who are dealing with similar issues like, military life, deployments and relocation, just to name a few.



For more information contact:

Shelly Aiken~NY National Guard Youth Program Coordinator

shelly.m.aiken@us.army.mil

Or call: 914-744-7405

All AGES WELCOME TO PARTICIPATE!!

We have Pen Pals from New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Wisconsin, Illinois, New Jersey, Nevada, Vermont, California, Connecticut, Ohio , Wyoming ,New Mexico and now MAINE is now on board!!!

UNITY IS STRENGTH!!

If you are interested in becoming a Pen Pal, please fill out a Permission Slip on next page

PROJECT PEN PAL

Permission Slip

Would your child be interested in making a new friend and getting to know another child like him/herself? **Why not sign them up for the Project Pen Pal.** What a great way for them to share stories about Military life and learn different cultures from around the Globe. If your child is interested please fill out the information below. Parents, **please don't forget to sign** the permission slip and either fax it or mail it to the number below.

Child's Name _____

Age/Grade _____

Hobbies/Interests _____

What Language do you speak and write? _____

PROJECT PEN PAL PERMISSION FORM

I, _____ (parent/guardian) give my permission for _____ (child's name) to participate in

Project Pen Pal. I understand that it is my (parent/guardian) responsibility to supervise my child's contact with another Military child and not the responsibility of the New York National Guard Youth Program.

Date _____ **Email address** _____

Parent/Guardian signature

Address

Phone/Fax _____

***Please mail or fax this permission slip to:**

Shelly Aiken
NY National Guard Youth Program
Camp Smith, Bldg 501 R#3
Cortlandt Manor, NY 10567
Fax (914-788-7407)

*If you have questions about Project Pen Pal please **email Shelly** at:
shelly.m.aiken@us.army.mil Or Call me at 914-788-7405

Project Pen Pal Code of Conduct

- No obscenities in written or electronic correspondence
- No illegal material mailed or emailed
- No attempt to harm others in correspondence (making threats, making fun of another person, bullying behaviors, etc.)

FREE SUMMER CAMPS-2009

OPERATION PURPLE CAMP

These free, week-long, overnight camps are open to all military children ages 7-17. The program aims to help military kids experience carefree fun while also learning coping skills to deal with deployment-related stress and fostering relationships with other children who know what they are going through.

GREIG

DATES:	2-7 August 2009
AGES:	8-15 years old
CONTACTS:	David Riddell 315-364-8756 david@aldersgateny.org Joan Newlon 315-699-8715 x309 joan@ncnyumc.org

HUGUENOT

DATES:	28 June - 3 July 2009
AGES:	7-15 years old
CONTACTS:	Jenny Caiafa 845-858-2200 jcaiafa@ymcanyc.org Chris Rasmussen 845-858-2224 crasmussen@ymcanyc.org

TRANQUILLITY CAMP- Ages of 8-15

Tranquillity Camp would like to offer **FREE** scholarships for the summer of 2009 to all Military children. Camp is 25 miles south of Albany. Transportation is provided from Queens, NY or parents can drive their children directly to camp.

If you are interested in camping at Tranquillity Camp, parents can contact Richard S. Lerner directly. Richard S. Lerner 518-634-7650

Email: campty@msn.com

FRESH AIR FUND

Since 1877, The Fresh Air Fund has been giving inner-city children the joy of a summer vacation with volunteer host families and at Fund camps, creating unforgettable memories and fresh possibilities. **FREE FOR MILITARY KIDS!!!**

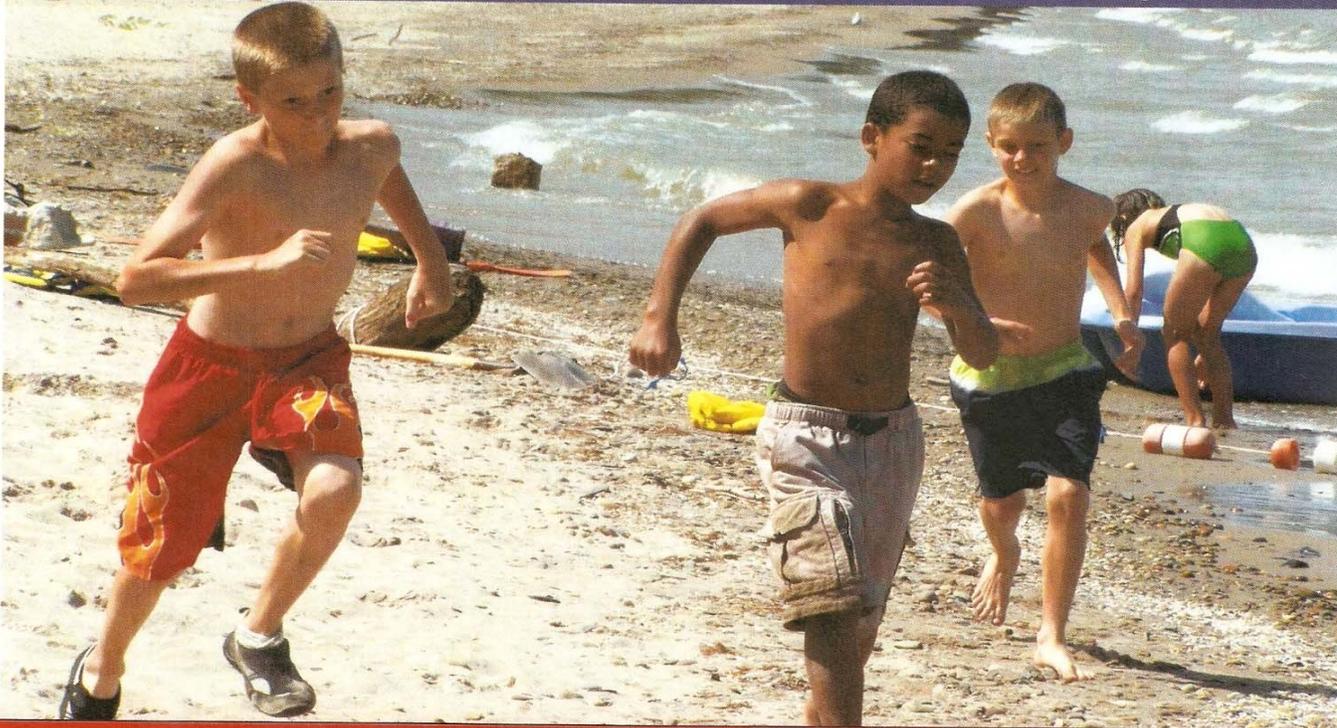
For more information please call Liz Clardy 1800-367-0003 ex.8973

"Take a Break" Camp



For Military Youth

Hosted by Pioneer Camp and Retreat Center and Operation Enduring Comfort™



July 12 - 17, 2009

Pioneer Camp and Retreat Center
Angola, NY

Registration opens April 1, 2009

For more information: Call Pioneer at (716)549-1420 or
Email at info@pioneercamp.org



Operation Enduring Comfort™

A continuing effort to find ways to personally thank and support service members and their loved ones in our area

GIFTS—"TAKE A BREAK" EVENTS—LOCAL SUPPORT



...offering multi-faceted programs and lake front facilities to all people year round!



Operation Kid Comfort Quilt Request

Operation Kid Comfort Quilts are for children of deployed service men and women. To receive a quilt, please submit this completed form along with nine photographs (digital format that is emailed is preferred) that will help the child cope during the parent's deployment. As all materials and services are donated, there is no fee for this program.

Parent/Guardian Last Name: _____ Soldier/Airman Name _____

First Name: _____ Military Unit: _____

Please check branch of service:

Army USMC Navy Air Force USCG National Guard Air Guard Reserve

Child(ren) Name and Age: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

ASYMCA/Operation Kid Comfort Release:

The Armed Services YMCA is actively pursuing corporate, business and individual support for Operation Kid Comfort and the many other programs we offer. With your permission, we may use photographs provided for these projects, as well as photographs of the finished quilts and photographs taken at Operation Kid Comfort workshops and events for these purposes. Please read our privacy statement and approve or disapprove the use of your image, the image of your child(ren) and/or your spouse below. Please note that 6-9 high resolution digital photos are preferred and we will NOT be able to return any hard copies of photographs sent.

Armed Services YMCA Privacy Policy

We do not disclose any nonpublic personal information about you to anyone, except as permitted by law. We restrict access to your personal information to those employees and volunteers who need to know that information to provide products and/or services to you. We maintain physical, electronic and procedural safeguards that comply with federal standards to guard your nonpublic personal information.

I give permission for photographic images of my spouse, my child(ren), my family and myself to be used for ASYMCA/Operation Kid Comfort media, promotional and fundraising purposes.

I DO NOT give permission photographic images of my spouse, my child(ren), my family and myself to be used for ASYMCA/Operation Kid Comfort media, promotional and fundraising purposes.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please return form to:
Project Strong Communities
Fairgrounds YMCA
585 Rand Drive
Watertown, NY 13601-3323
Phone: (315) 755-2016
Fax: (315) 755-9623
okcfordrum@yahoo.com

Operation Kid Comfort Wish List

If you would like to make a contribution a list of the following items are always needed:

- ___ Material (100% Cotton preferred)
- ___ 100% Cotton Batting (Warm & Natural)
- ___ Monetary Contributions

- ___ Jumbo 2.5 Gallon Zip Lock Bags (Hefty)

Operation Give a Hug

and U.S. Army Child, Youth & School Services



What did we do today?

Keeping deployed loved ones close during deployment, *Give a Hug dolls* allow little Heroes to take the Soldier they miss with them wherever they go!



got a BIG kiss



had a chat



had play time



dressed up



took a nap



Army Family Covenant



Request *Give a Hug dolls* for Your Army Unit by emailing dollrequest@operationmilitarykids.org

Priority given to Units in the pre-deployment phase.

Also available for school counselors, deployment support groups and behavioral health professionals working with Army children.



Request Operation Give a Hug Dolls



Keeping deployed loved ones close during deployment, **Operation Give a Hug** dolls allow little Heroes to take the Soldier they miss with them wherever they go!!

Give a Hug dolls can be requested as a support element to pre-deployment and deployment events. The dolls are available at no cost for children of Army Active Duty, Army National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers.

Please complete the information below and email to: dollrequest@operationmilitarykids.org
All requests must be submitted 30 days prior to the pre-deployment or deployment event.

Unit Identification: _____
State/Army Garrison: _____ **Unit #/ Organization:** _____

Primary Point of Contact for this Order: (i.e. FRG Leader, OMK Project Director, Unit Member)
Name: _____

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

Date of Deployment: _____

Date of Pre-Deployment/Deployment Event: _____

Unit Commander: _____
Name: _____

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

Number of Dolls Requested: _____

Address to Ship Give a Hug dolls: _____

Attention: _____

Address #1: _____

Address #2: _____

City, State: _____ **Zip Code:** _____

Phone Number at Shipping Location: _____

NATIONAL GUARD FAMILIES, Need help paying for child care costs? We can help!

We appreciate the sacrifices that National Guard families make and are honored to help these great families with the application process that will connect them to the funding that can relieve the financial burden of child care, especially during deployment. Call 1-888-642-2799 today to determine your family's eligibility and supplement amounts. It's free, it's easy and it's worth it.

The Advocates of the National Guard Child Care Program, want to ensure that every eligible family of the National Guard is aware that these supplements are available and assist them with the application process.

Supplement rates are based on several factors including child care cost and family income. All income levels may be eligible to receive a *minimum of \$100 per child per month for full time child care while the spouse is working, going to school full time, or looking for work. Guardians may also apply.

Guard Family Examples:

- E4 with two children is receiving **\$200** per month for toddler and school age care.
- E4 with one child is receiving **\$210** per month for full time infant care.
- E7 with three children is receiving **\$310** per month for full time day care.
- O3 with two children is receiving **\$100** while spouse attends school part time.

What We Will Do For You:

- Conduct a brief 10-minute phone interview to determine your family's needs and eligibility.
- Answer your questions and research your options.
- Help you locate eligible care if needed.
- Complete the applications for you.
- Work with your child care provider and explain the process so that you won't have to.
- Support and defend your family's unique situation when necessary.

**Minimums vary
depending on branch of service.*



"It was easy! Didn't take much time at all. I'm really pleased with the program." – Elisha B

"You guys are awesome! I would never have been able to do this without you. Thanks so much." – CPT R

"It is amazing to actually talk to someone right away and not a machine! The process is quick and the information needed is basic stuff with the military." – Tom S

**Don't wait until child care costs and military commitment take a toll on
your finances, or your spouse's career or education.**

Call 1-888-642-2799 or NGCCP@GuardFamily.org

Free weekend retreats for military families!

Bring your family to Pioneer Camp in Angola, NY for a weekend of relaxation and family fun! "Take a Break" and join us for campfires, games, swimming, boating, relaxing, and more! Family friendly housing, delicious meals, many optional family activities, and free time opportunities will be provided at no cost!



Dates available are:

June 19-21 June 26-28
August 21-23 August 28-30

(Space is limited...registration granted on a first come first serve basis)

** To Register please fill out the form to the right and return it to:*

Pioneer Camp and Retreat Center
9324 Lakeshore Rd. Angola, NY 14006



** For more information or questions
please email us at:*

info@pioneerencamp.org or call (716) 549-1420



Registration Form : "Take a Break" Family Weekend Camps

Last Name: _____

First Name: _____

Address _____
(street)

(city) _____ (state) _____ (zip)

Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

Service Member: _____

Branch of Service: _____

Date you wish to attend: _____

Attending: # of _____ adults #of _____ children

Photo & Video Release: During the run of it's programs, Pioneer staff may take photographs of various program activities and participants for future promotional use. If you DO NOT consent to having your family's image/likeness used in promotional materials, check the box to the left. (Consent not required for attendance.)

Pioneer Camp & Retreat Center is excited to partner with Operation Enduring Comfort to offer these "Take A Break" family weekends. Pioneer is located directly on Lake Erie with waterfront/beach access and is 30 minutes from Buffalo, 45 minutes from Niagara Falls and 90 minutes from Rochester. Please visit our website at www.pioneerencamp.org for additional information.



Pioneer Camp and Retreat Center is excited to partner with Operation Enduring Comfort to offer these "Take a Break" family weekends!

Date Rec'd _____

Ack Sent: _____

Summer Riding Camps



at Morgan Farm



Dates

Week 1 June 29-July 1

3-day Mini-Camp (Western)

Week 2 July 6-10

Beginner Western

Week 3 July 13-17

Beginner English

Week 4 July 22-24

3-day Mini-Camp (Beginner Western)

Week 5 July 27-31

Advanced Beginner/Intermediate English

Week 6 August 3-7

Beginner Western Camp

*English & Western
Style Riding*

Grooming

Tacking

Mucking

Proper TLC

*A stepping stone for children who have completed beginner camps at Morgan Farm or elsewhere. Requires a 1/2 hour lesson with our instructor to determine level of ability.

Levels defined on reverse.

Hours:

5-day camps - Mon-Fri 9am-3pm

Minicamp - Mon-Wed 9am-3pm

Rates:

	Mil/DoD	Dependents of deployed Soldiers	Non-DoD
5-day Camp	\$230	\$207	\$235
3-day Minicamp	\$145	\$130.50	\$150



For more information, call 845-938-3926

GuardEn of Youth

The logo for the National Guard Child and Youth Program, featuring stylized figures of a child and a youth holding hands, with the text "National Guard Child and Youth Program" in a blue and purple font.

This Memorial Day was celebrated on May 25th.

The editors of this newsletter would like to extend their gratitude for all those who have served and are serving our country overseas and at home.

Thank you for all you do for our country.

We also thank the families of deployed personnel, for all they do and all they sacrifice while their loved ones are away from home.

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Sabrina Lombardo
Editor – GuardEn of Youth
New York National Guard
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Did you know?
Guard En of Youth
is online!



<http://www.dmna.state.ny.us>