



SURVIVOR

Outreach Services (SOS)

U.S. Army
Bldg. 119
Picatinny Arsenal, NJ 07806
Phone: 973-724-7247
Fax: 972-724-2614
E-mail: denise.dickinson@us.army.mil

Survivor Outreach Services Army Family Action Plan Results

On Oct. 13, 2011 in Arlington, VA 50 Survivors attended the Survivor Outreach Services (SOS) Army Family Action Plan (AFAP) Summit. Lt. Gen. Rick Lynch, commanding general of the U.S. Army Installation Management Command, along with his wife, Sarah participated in the event. "We've invested time, energy and resources into the program," Lynch said about SOS. "You've got to tell us how we're doing and that's the purpose of the AFAP Summit."

Survivors outlined their top five recommendations to Army leadership at the conclusion of the Summit, these were:

- Establish face-to-face training for Soldiers about the importance of a last will and testament.
- Refine the Casualty Assistance Officer selection method to include the Casualty Assistance Centers in the screening process.
- Remove time restrictions for survivors to contribute to tax-free growth accounts.
- Create a dedicated survivor resource website.
- Mandate the stabilization of active-duty survivors for a minimum of one year.

Other topics discussed during the Summit, but not included in the top five issues, ranged from replacing vehicle stickers for Gold Star Families with portable identification cards and training to ensure awareness of the meaning behind the Gold Star lapel button and service banners.

According to Lynch, some topics identified as issues, including Web resources, may be handled rather quickly by enhancing existing sites and making sure people are aware of them. "I'm absolutely convinced that the key to all of this is information," Lynch said. "You can have the best programs in the world, but if nobody knows about the programs, you might as well not even have the programs."

Other recommendations will continue to be evaluated, he said. Lynch acknowledged that not every issue will be attainable, but it is important to identify the ones that will better serve the Army community.



Workshops

Employment Lunch & Learn @ 11:30 2/21
Teen Job Search

Military Saves Week SHRED IT Day - Come shred your financial documents 2/22
from 8:00 - 3:00

Military Saves Week @ 4:00; Children's tour of PICA Credit Union 2/23

Military Save Week Budget 101 in a Bag 2/24
from 8:00 - 3:00

Employment Lunch & Learn @ 12:00 3/13
Private Industry Resumes

Employment Lunch & Learn @ 12:00 4/10
Career Assessments

Workshops:

- All Workshops are in Bldg. 119, unless stated otherwise.
- RSVP at (973) 724-7247; to ensure you will be notified of changes and included for a gate pass (if needed).

Picatinny Summer Day Camp Registrations

Priority registration for Surviving children and Active-duty military for Picatinny's Summer Camp begins 21 Feb to 5 Mar 2012. The Junior Camp (5 - 10 years old) and Senior Camp (11 - 14) will be in session for nine consecutive weeks, beginning 25 Jun 12. Camp activities include swimming, arts & crafts, weekly field trips, special events, 4-H club, etc. For more information contact School Age Services at (973) 724-5555 or www.pica.army.mil/mwr/CYS/SAS/Summer%20Camp.htm

Eyn Chaya Kazo!

Bereaved parents {The bereaved} are strange creatures. We are different, in some fundamental way, from people who have not shared our experience. Although we appear normal, perform the daily tasks expected of us, and seem to fit in the society in which we live, we know it is a sham. We know the design of our lives no longer fits a regular pattern. Others do not understand and do not believe that the changes to our core selves are real and that this new type of creature we feel we have become actually exists.

In October [2011] Israeli scientist Daniel Shechtman won the Nobel prize in chemistry. He had revealed that certain crystals do not link up in the symmetrical pattern that nature demanded. Quasicrystals, he called them, line up in a non-repeating fashion that was previously thought impossible. "Eyn chaya kazo!" he exclaimed, in his native Hebrew, upon first seeing this phenomenon, "There can be no such creature!" For many years the scientific community refused to believe quasicrystals existed because it altered their basic understanding of what a crystal is.

Like the scientist refusing to believe there could be a different kind of crystal, the world we face can't, or won't, comprehend that the patterns of our lives no longer fit a regular plan. We are expected, after a brief mourning period, to return to the life we lived before; doing jobs, maintaining connections, fulfilling responsibilities. Friends, family and co-workers don't understand that although we still look like a crystal we have become quasicrystals - unable to be the reliable, predictable, symmetrical souls we were before our children {loved one} died. Even so a quasicrystal can be a beautiful thing. There's a Nobel prize that says so.

Thanks to the editor of Bereaved Parents USA's national newsletter for this article.
www.bereavedparentsusa.org



Worldwide Candle Lighting

Picatinny participated in its first Worldwide Candle Lighting on Sunday, 11 Dec 11. After lighting candles at 7:00 pm for each child lost by the participants, the hour was spent remembering the children and supporting each other. Thanks to Picatinny Military & Civilian Club (PMCC) for supporting this event.

Wreaths Across America

Picatinny's Civil Air Patrol (CAP) participated in Wreaths Across America on 10 Dec 11. There was a short wreath ceremony recognizing each of the services and POWs/MIAs. Afterwards the cadets placed wreaths on all the trees at the Picatinny NJ Fallen Service Member Tree Memorial.



Eligibility Changes with TRICARE Dental Benefits for Survivor

TRICARE Dental Program (TDP) survivor benefits have changed as a result of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (Public Law 111-84). As a result, the TDP Survivor Benefit is now available to surviving children through the end of the month in which they turn age 21 or 23 (if enrolled in a full-time accredited college or university). Survivor benefit coverage for spouses continues for 3 years from the month following their sponsor's death. Current TDP enrollees do not have to take any action for the Survivor benefit to take effect. Survivors NOT enrolled in the TRICARE Dental Program at the time of their spouse's death will need to complete the enrollment process.

More information is available at:

www.tricareprogram.com/tdptws/enrollees/benefits/survivor_benefits.jsp

AER Campaign 1 Mar - 31 May

Army Emergency Relief (AER) is a private nonprofit organization founded in 1942 by the Secretary of War and the Army Chief of Staff to help Soldiers, their dependents and Surviving spouses & children with financial crises and scholarships. The annual AER Campaign runs from 1 March-15 May and counts on the support and volunteerism of military, Family members and civilians. Last year, Picatinny raised over \$70,000 thanks to you!

A flier is enclosed with the many fundraising activities that you can participate in during the campaign.

For more information, or to volunteer/sign up for an event, contact Marci Keck at marci.keck@us.army.mil or 973-724-2145.

