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## NATIONAL GUARD REGIONAL VOLUNTEER TEAM

The duties of the NGRVT are to assist the National Volunteer Coordinator by representing the 10 Joint Family Program regions at meetings via webinars and phone conferences to share accumulated information and “best practices”. Through an awards program directed by the NGRVT, the Team determines the criteria for the national Family Program Awards selection process, facilitates and selects the recipients for awards and assists in the presentation of awards at the annual Family Program Workshop and Youth Symposium.

The NGRVT designated 2011 as the first year to rotate members. The call for nominations went out to the states in Regions 4, 6, 8, 9, and 10 in October and closed October 15. We are pleased to welcome the following volunteers to the National Guard Regional Volunteer Team: Region 4, Jenny Testerman, Tennessee; Region 6, Debra Boynton, Texas; Region 8, Sue Giskaas, Montana; Region 9, Valerie Claude-Murray, California; and Region 10, Terrylee Kay Cox, Washington.

Many thanks to those members of the team who are leaving us due to their rotation date of service. They will be missed! Those who have served for the past three years include: Region 4, Wallace Paschal, Alabama; Region 6, Dennis Schroeder, New Mexico; Region 8, Arla Ruitter, South Dakota; and Region 10, Chris Yriarte, Oregon. Region 9 has been served for the past year by Pati Montemayor, California.

## MEET THE NEWEST NATIONAL GUARD REGIONAL VOLUNTEER TEAM MEMBERS

**Region 4**



**Jenny  
Testerman**

**Region 6**



**Debra  
Boynton**

**Region 8**



**Sue  
Giskaas**

**Region 9**



**Valerie  
Claude-Murray**

**Region 10**



**Terrylee  
Cox**

## NATIONAL GUARD REGIONAL VOLUNTEER TEAM PROFILES

Jenny Testerman will be representing Region 4 on the NGRVT. Region 4 includes Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee.

Jenny has served a three year term as the Regional Volunteer Coordinator for Family Readiness Groups in the TN Army National Guard. She continues to serve National Guard families by serving on the TN National Guard Family Programs Advisory Council as a member and recorder.

Jenny currently serves on the National Newsletter Team and will be taking a leave from the National Volunteer Training Team during her term. She is a member of the East TN committee of Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR). Jenny also serves on the board of the East TN Veterans Memorial Association. She is a member of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and Military Order of the Purple Heart. Jenny was presented the Commander's Award for Public Service, the Seven Seals Award by ESGR and the Army National Guard Family Member of the Year.

Jenny has a full-time administrative career. Jenny's husband retired in August 2011 with over thirty years of service with the TN Army National Guard. She has two sons and two daughters. Her oldest son is currently serving with the 278th ACR, TNARNG. She has two adult stepchildren and two grandchildren.

Debra Boynton will be representing Region 6 on the NGRVT. Region 6 includes Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas.

Debra is the wife of a Texas Army National Guardsmen and mother of five wonderful children. Debra and her husband have been married for almost 29 years. She says she's blessed to get to stay home with her last child and she's able to volunteer, as well as assist her 92-year-old dad with his needs.

She has served since 2002 as a Battalion FRG Adviser for the following Battalions with the Texas National Guard : 636 BSB, 136 MP BN, 372 FSB, and the 3/144 Mechanized Infantry BN. She has served as the Family Readiness Group Company Adviser/Senior Spouse for C Co 372 FSB. She volunteers with her state's youth program, Operation Military Kids and as a Strong Bonds Youth Coordinator.

She has been presented with the following awards: Department of the Army Commanders Award for Public Service, Texas Military Forces Volunteer Award Exceptional Volunteer Award, Texas Military Forces Adjutant Generals Spirit Award, Texas Military Forces Texas Star Award, and Texas Military Forces Continuing Service Award.

## NATIONAL GUARD REGIONAL VOLUNTEER TEAM PROFILES

Sue Giskaas will be representing Region 8 on the NGRVT. Region 8 includes Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming.

Sue has served since 2003 in various positions of her local FRG. At the NGB National Workshop, she has served four years as a delegate and three years as a member of the Volunteer Support Staff. Sue is currently serving as the 120<sup>th</sup> Montana Air National Guard's (MTANG) Volunteer Point of Contact (VPOC) for the Logistics Readiness Squadron. She also currently serves as a member of the State Advisory Council, and the NGB Volunteer Training Team, although she will be taking a leave of absence from the VTT until the completion of her duties with the NGRVT.

In 2005, Sue's family was nominated for and received the Military Family Association's Family Award. Sue has received the Montana National Guard's Patriotic Service Award. Other community volunteering she has done has been with the PTA, her church and currently Sue volunteers with the Eagle's Club.

Sue's father was in the Air Force and her husband retired from the Air National Guard after over 36 years. Her oldest son has served 10 years with the Montana National Guard, nine years with the Air side and one year with the Army side, and Sue's youngest son has been serving for eight years with the Montana Air National Guard.

She recently accepted a position as a Tax Preparer with H&R Block to do taxes this coming year. Sue says, "I love new challenges and cannot wait to start working with the NGRVT."

Valerie Claude-Murray will be representing Region 9 on the NGRVT. Region 9 includes Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada and Guam.

Valerie Claude-Murray is a master's-level educator and dedicated volunteer. As a Special Education Teacher for over seventeen years, she has been instrumental in implementing effective programs to facilitate student achievement. As a volunteer, she has been active in both the military and civilian communities where she demonstrates her insatiable passion to help others.

Valerie has worked at the company and squadron levels as a Family Readiness Group volunteer for over eight years in the California Army National Guard. She has participated in family readiness and volunteer trainings and in child/youth train-the-trainer courses. In addition to having coordinated Yellow Ribbon events, she was selected as a delegate for two National Volunteer Workshops (NVW), three California Family Symposiums, and working group participant at the Army Family Action Plan (AFAP). As a state volunteer, she has contributed her experience to TAG and Commander of the California Army National Guard meetings.

In the community, Valerie has served in various leadership roles with Girl Scouts. She has taught canoeing and kayaking at summer day camps, and she served as a teacher representative to the Parent Teachers Association Board. As a new NGRVT member, she desires to continue to work, create, and communicate a strong chain of concern for Family Readiness Groups.

## NATIONAL GUARD REGIONAL VOLUNTEER TEAM PROFILES

Terrylee Cox will be representing Region 10 on the NGRVT. Region 10 includes Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington. She describes herself in this way:

Terrylee became a Family Readiness Group volunteer with the Washington National Guard in November of 2003. Her son's unit, 81st Brigade Combat Team, deployed to Iraq in early 2004. Terrylee was the Volunteer Coordinator for Brigade HHC for half the deployment and became the Brigade Volunteer Coordinator for the remainder of the first deployment and maintained the position through the second deployment between 2008 and 2009.

Over the eight years as an FRG volunteer, Terrylee received the Volunteer Performance Award in 2007, Commander's Award for Soldier Support in 2006, Commander's Award for Public Service in 2009, and the Gold Award in 2010. Terrylee has volunteered in her community with the Red Cross, PTA, Boys Scouts, Girl Scouts and many community fund raisers.

She has three married children, eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Terrylee was widowed in 2001 and she retired from a public school district in 2003. In addition to volunteer work Terrylee also enjoys gardening, cooking (from scratch), crossword puzzles, camping with family, and spending as much time as possible with her grandkids.

## HOW DID YOU CELEBRATE NEW YEAR'S EVE?

New Year's Eve is December 31 of every year. It is celebrated in countries that use the Gregorian calendar with the United States, Australia, British Isles, North & South America, Europe, Scandinavia and (the former) Soviet Union as the main regions in the world who welcome in a new year.

It is exactly at the stroke of midnight on December 31 of the current year that marks the transition to the New Year ahead. Celebrations may be wild parties or solemn times of prayer. Some participants will dress up in silly outfits and wear comical hats, drink champagne or other liquors of choice and use traditional items called "noisemakers" to express their joy and hope for the new year ahead. Others might attend religious services of their choice or get together in large crowds such as New York City's Time Square to watch the "ball drop". In London, crowds gather in Trafalgar Square to count down the closing of the old year and welcome in the new. In Atlanta, Georgia a giant Peach is dropped. This began as a competition with New York's Apple.

Some historians feel that our New Year's Eve celebrations can be traced back to an ancient Roman observance around the time of the Winter Solstice in December called "Saturnalia." This pagan holiday was known for totally letting go all discipline and rules for behavior and was known to get out of hand. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, New Year's Eve revelry in cities like Philadelphia, New York and Baltimore often ended with street demonstrations, violence and vandalism. Groups of men and boys were known to toot tin horns, shout, scream, yell, set off firecrackers, knock down barricades such as fences and gates, break windows and in a few cases burglarize the homes of some wealthy citizens in the area.

Auld Lang Syne is our anthem. The custom of singing this song on New Year's Eve goes back to the British Isles from the 18<sup>th</sup> century when guests ended a party standing in a circle and singing this song. The custom first was rooted in Scotland because the lyrics were written in 1788 by Robert Burns, but most musicologists feel that Auld Lang Syne came from a traditional Scottish folk melody.

What does this song mean? In the Scottish dialect, auld lang syne is "old long since" aka "the good old days." The traditional lyrics begin with, "Should old acquaintance be forgot and never brought to mind." The entire song's message merely means to just forget about the past and look ahead to the new year with hope.

Symbols: Basically, an old man or Father Time is the symbol of the year that is coming to a close and a baby then becomes the symbol for the new year ahead. These serve as metaphors for the death of one calendar year and the birth of a new one.

## HAPPY NEW YEAR! THE HISTORY OF NEW YEAR'S DAY

January 1<sup>st</sup> is considered New Years Day in today's society. But this is a fairly new concept because up until the time of Julius Caesar, the Romans celebrated the New Year in March because it was the first month in the Roman calendar. However, January 1 marked the time when the Romans changed their governmental figures and new consuls were inducted into office. They had games and feasting to help celebrate the new officials, but they still used March 1 as their official mark of the new year and had a festival to their god, Mars (God of War).

It was Caesar who changed the Roman New Years Day to January 1 in honor of Janus, (God of all beginnings and gate keeper of heaven and earth). Janus was always depicted with two faces: One looking back to the old year (past) and one looking ahead to the new year (future). One of the customs in the festival honoring Janus was to exchange gifts and then make resolutions to be friendly and good to one another.

When Constantine ruled the Romans and accepted Christianity as their new faith, they kept the Festival of Janus as the New Years Day (not March as before) and turned it into a day of prayer and fasting and not parties. It was a day for all good Christians to turn over a new leaf. However, the Romans may have accepted January 1 and Janus as the New Year, but many did not accept the turning over a new leaf, prayer and fasting part of it.

However, even in 1582, Great Britain and the English colonies in America still kept March for the beginning of the year. It wasn't until 1752 that Britain (and it's colonies) adopted the new Gregorian calendar and January 1 as the beginning of the year. Many Puritans in New England felt Janus was an offensive pagan god and chose to simply ignore January 1 as a New Years Day. Instead they just made the entire month of January as "The First Month" of the months.

Today no one really considers January 1 as a fasting day. Ironically, for many it is a major day of feasting on junk food and watching football games on television.

## THE JASON FOUNDATION AND "GUARD YOUR BUDDY"



The Jason Foundation, Inc. (JFI) was founded in 1997 after the tragic suicide of Clark and Connie Flatt's youngest son Jason. JFI has now become nationally recognized as a leader in youth suicide awareness and prevention programs. With offices throughout the country, JFI is one of the nation's leading clinically-based non-profit organizations for the awareness and prevention of youth suicide. JFI programs are now in use in every state and several foreign countries. JFI uses education as a tool to create awareness and to provide the information and resources for identification and support of at-risk youth.

The Jason Foundation, Inc. is dedicated to the prevention of the "Silent Epidemic" of youth suicide through educational and awareness programs to equip young people, educators, youth workers, and parents with the tools and resources to help identify and assist at-risk youth.

In December 2010, Major General Max Haston and Clark Flatt met to discuss the program of suicide in the Tennessee National Guard family. After hearing the staggering statistics from General Haston, Clark agreed to devote JFI resources to address this problem. A dynamic team consisting of a diverse group of professionals came together, and the idea of the Guard Your Buddy project was born.

The Guard Your Buddy project has the combined mission of preventing suicide and helping in the day-to-day struggles that are specific to guardsmen and their families. On December 13, 2011, in conjunction with the National Guard's 375<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration; the "Guard Your Buddy" smart phone application pilot program was unveiled. This app is available to iPhone and Android users across the country.

While the program is currently specific to the TN National Guard, guard members and families are encouraged to review the JFI website <http://www.jasonfoundation.com> and its resources. If the information available preserves one life; it will be an invaluable asset. In future issues, articles highlighting other state's "best practices" will be featured as they are available.

## UNITED THROUGH READING® - CONNECTING MILITARY FAMILIES



United Through Reading, the nation's first nonprofit to promote the read aloud experience for separated military families, offers the opportunity for parents to be video-recorded reading storybooks to their children from nearly 300 locations around the world including FOBs in Afghanistan, bases and installations worldwide, deployed Navy ships, and in more than 70 USO centers. Since 1989 United Through Reading has served over one million beneficiaries.

One of the most difficult things a child can experience is having a parent deployed to a war zone for an indeterminate period of time. When a deployed parent takes the time to read a story to his or her child at home, the effects are far-reaching and long-lasting.

United Through Reading believes that when a parent reads a story during deployment the following happens:

- Helps ease the stress of separation
- Helps build family resiliency
- Helps make homecomings easier
- Helps cultivate a love of reading

For more information please visit United Through Reading's website at [www.unitedthroughreading.org](http://www.unitedthroughreading.org)

## MILITARY SAVES: START SMALL. THINK BIG

Financial stability is about a lot more than knowledge -- it takes consistent action over time. Most of us do better when we have a supportive environment. Military Saves is a campaign to make every military community that supportive environment. When enough military members, civil servants, contractors, retirees, other veterans, family members, military organizations, private organizations, and companies belong to Military Saves, the entire military culture will be changed. The U.S. Armed Services will have become a saving community!

Military Saves is a social marketing campaign to persuade, motivate, and encourage military families to save money every month, and to convince leaders and organizations to be aggressive in promoting automatic savings. The campaign is a growing network of organizations and individuals committed to helping and supporting military members and their loved ones build personal savings arsenals to provide for their immediate and long term financial needs.

Military Saves was developed and tested by its non-profit sponsor, Consumer Federation of America (CFA) and the military services from 2003 to 2006 and launched throughout the Department of Defense (DoD) on February 25, 2007. It is part of two larger campaigns -- the DoD Financial Readiness Campaign, and the national America Saves campaign.

While it is an ongoing campaign, the entire military community comes together to focus on financial readiness during Military Saves Week, the last full week in February Sunday to Sunday. Set your calendar for February 19-26, 2012. For more information and resources please go to <http://www.militarysaves.org>.

## DOES YOUR MOOD CHANGE WITH THE SEASON?

Seasonal blues, cabin fever or winter blues are a few of the nicknames for Seasonal Affective Disorder commonly known as SAD. SAD was first researched in the 1970's and formally recognized in 1984. Those at higher risk for SAD include people with a family history of this disorder or with a history of clinical bipolar or depression. Women are more likely to be diagnosed with SAD, but men can have more severe symptoms. The further you live from the equator the more common SAD is.

There is no test to determine if you suffer from SAD, although there are many symptoms you can look out for. Changes in your appetite, fervor for work or activities, changes in your sleeping pattern, social anxiety or changes, a feeling of unhappiness or anxiety and a heavy physical feeling are all key symptoms. Recognizing symptoms and seeing a medical professional is the first most important step.

After seeing your doctor, some great ideas that could help alleviate symptoms are going for walks during the daylight. Exercise is a great way to boost your energy level. Walking with a friend is also a great way to have fun and do your body good as well as finding new hobbies or renewing activities that involve seasonal weather. Stay active in your social circles even if you feel as though you want to withdraw. Remember to first seek your doctor's advice if you think you or a family member may have symptoms of SAD.

## WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY? MILITARY ACRONYMS DECODED

Acronyms are words that are formed by using the first letter of a name or by combining initial letters or parts in a series of words.) Military acronyms are a "shortened", convenient way of conveying information. Service members, civilians, and family members associated with the military use acronyms as a special language.

Consider if your service member came home and said this to you:

"The **CSM** called the **FRG** leaders this morning to pass on the **TAG**'s approval for the **NG** 9-12 Year Youth Camp. All planning meetings will be held at the **JFHQ** main conference room at **0900**. Support for the camp will be provided by various offices such as **PAO** and **MPs**. We are trying to get transportation through the **TMP**. Since **DFAC** can't provide food, we are looking for donations. Everything will be finalized **NLT COB** 15 May. Expected start for Youth Camp is 12 July. Per camper cost will be determined. Activities will include rides in a **Deuce and a Half, Humvee, APC, M1A1**, and a tour through a helicopter **Sim Center**. We will need to get approval from **TAG** to use **barracks** and range areas for a rifle safety course and to have an **RSO** on duty. Personnel are needed for **reveille** and **retreat** ceremonies."

Here's a quick translation of the bold words and acronyms:

CSM: Command Sergeant Major	FRG: Family Readiness Group	TAG: The Adjutant General	NG: National Guard
JFHQ: Joint Force Headquarters	0900: 9:00 am	PAO: Public Affairs Office	MPs: Military Police
TMP: Transportation Motor Pool	DFAC: Dining Facility	NLT: No Later Than	
COB: Close of Business	Deuce and a Half, Humvee, APC, M1A1: (all types of military vehicles)		
Sim Center: Simulation Center	Barracks: Place where a soldier lives	RSO: Range Security Officer	
Reveille: Bugle call / ceremony at the beginning of the day	Retreat: Bugle call / flag ceremony at the end of the day		

Military acronyms are an interesting component to our military lives. Some are very easy to remember, and some are downright baffling. With a little bit of practice and patience, you too will be speaking and understanding this "secret language" with ease. Look for more military acronyms to be decoded in future issues.

### Resource Corner:

<http://www.militarysaves.org> Military Saves encourages the military community to meet immediate needs and build long-term wealth through saving and debt reduction. Military Saves Week is scheduled for 19-26 Feb 2012.

<http://www.vets4warriors.com> The Vets4Warriors peer support line, 1-855-838-8255 (1-855-VET-TALK), provides easy access to supportive, non-attributional conversations with trained veteran peers representing all branches of the military. A variety of services will be provided to include non-clinical (legal, financial) and referrals for clinical services (substance abuse, behavioral health).

[http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/doddict/acronym\\_index.html](http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/doddict/acronym_index.html) DoD dictionary of military acronyms.



# VOLUNTEER WEBINARS: ON LINE VOLUNTEER TRAINING



## Volunteer Training Team "By Volunteers - For Volunteers"

VTT webinars are online/web-based seminars (visual online and audio with a toll free telephone number) and discussions offering resources and tools for volunteers. Each month is a different TOPIC that consists of 1 to 3 sessions.

For more information on future VTT trainings please go to [www.jointservicessupport.org](http://www.jointservicessupport.org) and click on Events and then Calendar, or e-mail Deanna Cole at [deanna.l.cole@us.army.mil](mailto:deanna.l.cole@us.army.mil) or Tammy Chase at [tammychase.vtt@gmail.com](mailto:tammychase.vtt@gmail.com).

### JANUARY 2012

#### **TOPIC: Volunteer Management (VM) How to do Community Outreach with Local Organizations**

Where are you going? When are you going? How are you going to get there? How much is it going to cost? Are there connections? What's the game plan? Who's in charge? Sounds like planning a vacation doesn't it?

These are the same questions volunteers ask themselves when thinking about community involvement and support. Join us this month as we teach you how building trust, effective communications, commitment and community collaboration efforts combine to Connect the Flights between your FRG Volunteers and Community in support of your families and service members.

#### Session 1

##### **January 10th**

10:00 AM -11:00 AM, Eastern

<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/454385474>

##### **January 12th**

9:00 PM – 10:00 PM, Eastern

<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/161425106>

#### Session 2

##### **January 17th**

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM, Eastern

<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/956444554>

##### **January 19th**

9:00 PM – 10:00 PM, Eastern

<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/132879234>

### FEBRUARY 2012

#### **TOPIC: Everyone Ready! (ER) It Takes Two to Tango: Building Successful Relationships Between Volunteers and Paid Staff (including Commanders) by: Ivan H. Scheier**

Despite best intentions and goodwill, tension between employees and volunteers seems to be a universal issue. In *It Takes Two to Tango*, originally written for *Everyone Ready* by the much-missed Ivan Scheier and now updated by Susan Ellis, the authors discuss the truths, myths, and prejudices that may explain why friction between the two roles exists. To follow, they offer practical steps for obtaining successful teamwork such as clarifying work roles and effectively designing work for volunteers and staff.

#### Session 1

##### **February 14th**

10:00 AM -11:00 AM, Eastern

<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/523206266>

##### **February 16th**

9:00 PM – 10:00 PM, Eastern

<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/761992810>

#### Session 2

##### **February 21st**

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM, Eastern

<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/881457714>

##### **February 23rd**

9:00 PM – 10:00 PM, Eastern

<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/244207546>

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Cara Wheeler