



SMSD Information and Resources

Service Members and Military Families

November 3, 2020

Month of the Military Family Virtual Event

November kicks off the Service Member Support Division's virtual learning event series. Every month a new quality of life topic will be presented by a Soldier & Family Readiness staff member. This month's feature focus is Military Families, presented by S&FRS Jesse Klement. Explore how the Soldier & Family Readiness team can answer many of your questions on how to connect to our extensive database of military family resources. Join other Military Families and share your story, your tips and how to survive the Military Life. Please use the links below to pre-register for the events. If you're having difficulty signing up, contact Jesse Klement by email at Jessica.a.klement.nfg@mail.mil or 1 -800-292-9464 OPT 1.

Please register in advance:

Monday, November 9th @ 7:30AM

<https://militaryfamilysalute1.eventbrite.com>

Tuesday, November 17th at 11:30AM

<https://militaryfamilysalute2.eventbrite.com>

Wednesday, November 25th at 7:00PM

<https://militaryfamilysalute3.eventbrite.com>

Sunday, November 29th at 7:00PM

<https://militaryfamilysalute4.eventbrite.com>

Military Families: The Force Behind the Force

By Lisa Kluetz, Family Program Director

During the month of November, across the Nation, Service member and their families will celebrate expressions of gratitude for a successful harvest, perhaps a fruitful deer hunt, veterans who fought for our freedom, and being thankful for our many blessings. Those that currently serve as well as those who have never served will also recognize the sacrifices and dedication of military families. Throughout Military Family Appreciation Month (November), the Service Member Support Division will be highlighting the flexibility, strength, and silent service of the men, women, and children that support the force behind the force.

As we near the end of 2020, I think that many of us will agree that it has been a year like no other. Our Soldiers and Airmen have supported operations globally, across the country fighting wildfires, locally during the pandemic and periods of civil unrest, as well as remaining flexible and changing how we do things in the home, in the office, or even in day to day business. I am not sure about you and your family, but this year has been challenging for me and mine. I know that I may not be able to get together with my family and celebrate gathering to join in a meal and break bread, watch the big NFL game, or even catch a break on the hottest Holiday Gift on Black Friday. Instead of dwelling on negativity of this prospect, I hope that I can put a positive spin on things with a request. I would like to challenge everyone to start a gratitude jar. When our lives are somewhat back to normal, just think how much fun and heartwarming it will be to gather and share our expressions of blessings and gratitude. We can capture the moments that we cherish for many years to come when we reflect back on 2020.

Within your family, individually, or as a group, I challenge you to write on a piece of a paper why military families are unique and special. Your gratitude jar can be plain or bedazzled as you wish. Even your blessings and gratitude statements can be crafted to reflect the personality of you or your family. At the end of the month, I hope you will share your gratitude jars and thoughts on our Facebook Page <http://www.facebook.com/WIFamilyPrograms>.

During the month, the Service Member Support Division will also be recognizing the dedication and resilience of military families. The Family Program Office is kicking off a four-part series for military families and the Child and Youth Team is sponsoring a Virtual Leadership Academy each Monday during November. The last youth segment will be our military youth addressing issues, concerns, and gaps in support to military youth in a "Shark Tank" format. For information or register for upcoming events, visit <http://www.facebook.com/WINGYouthProgram/>



Nominate Your Employer

The Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award nomination season is an exciting time of year. Thousands of testimonials are submitted about employers who regularly go above and beyond to support their employees in the National Guard and Reserve.

For those of you who have already nominated your supportive employer, thank you! And, for those of you who'd like to, go to [the website](#) and click on the "Nominate Employer" tab.

During these times of significant change and hardship brought on by COVID-19 it is important to recognize those supportive employers who continue to provide unparalleled support to you and your family members.

The Freedom Award is the highest honor the Department of Defense gives to employers for supporting National Guard and Reserve employees. The employers chosen exemplify what it means to go above and beyond federal requirements in support of military employees.

The nomination form takes about 10-15 minutes to complete. Nominations must be submitted by Dec. 31, 2020.



You Are Here, Thankfully

Every year, Thanksgiving kicks off a whirlwind tour of dinners with family, visits with friends, checking off shopping lists and filling up every cookie jar with treats. The first few weeks of November are often the calm before the holiday storm. If a calendar is a map for our lives, this time of year is like a "You Are Here" moment. A time to evaluate our place in the universe both small and large. A brief moment is given to rest before heading toward the next destination at 100 mph!

But this year is different. With many families practicing social distance, it may be difficult for loved ones to gather in one place together to celebrate. Holiday plans may already be altered, leaving them to bare little resemblance to those past. That peaceful time which once meant self-reflection may be replaced by anxiety of the unknown. You may be bombarded with messages of thankfulness on social media or others telling you to "Be thankful for ___!" or "You should feel so thankful because ___!!" Perhaps it's difficult to feel that way right now –and it's okay.

It's okay. Losing something so dear to us brings it's own kind of grief. Take the time to grieve, to feel. Give yourself permission to feel the shock of change, the sorrow, the anger and not feeling like your usual self. Eventually you will reach a way to make things better –build yourself up –with hope for the future. You may Skype with family and eat Thanksgiving dinner together, while apart. Holiday shopping and baking may be moved up in the schedule to be sent through the mail and arrive on-time for a "live on Facetime" holiday.

But what if the relief never comes? What if the sorrow stays and never gives way to do-able solutions? Maybe you don't quite feel like yourself for weeks at a time? What if it's all too much? If you're feeling this way please reach out to your regional professional with the [Directors of Psychological Health](#): Central Wisconsin 608-504-6027, Eastern Wisconsin 608-640-9317, Southern Wisconsin 608-640-8344, Northwestern Wisconsin 608-640-9315. You can also call the Suicide Hotline at 1-800-273-8255. If there is an emergency, please call 911.

This is the "You Are *Still* Here" moment –and I am so thankful that you are.



Military OneSource Special Events for November

At Military OneSource, we're hosting special events to celebrate military families –spouses, partners, parents, co-parents, children, extended family members and even friends. Tune into our virtual events on Facebook throughout November, and spread the word about these special online broadcasts to the families in your community.
<https://www.facebook.com/military.1source>

Each November, the military community observes National Veterans and Military Families Month to celebrate how special military families are and recognize all the ways they support their service members.

Join Military OneSource for virtual events all month long:

11/5: Sleep Strategies for Stress

11/10: Family Fact-Finding: Explore Ancestry.com

11/17: Storytime with Bella (ages 3-6)

11/19: Family Picture Day

11/19: Storytime with Ryan (ages 7-10)

11/19: MilSpouse Secrets

11/20: Easy and Nutritious Meals for Your MilFam



Access virtual events by clicking [here](#).

Deer Hunting Safety and Regulations

Recognized nationwide as one of the country's premier white-tailed deer hunting states, Wisconsin has both an abundant herd and a proven reputation for producing some of the largest bucks in the world. With over seven million acres of land open for public hunting across a diverse range of habitats, you can pursue the experience that suits you. From walking all day on a fresh track in the great Northwoods, to sitting the fertile river bottoms and agricultural lands in the south. Whether you are new to hunting or preparing for your fiftieth season, Wisconsin has what you need for great hunting and a lifetime of memories in the deer woods.

The [Wisconsin DNR website](#) offers a plethora of information on the current regulations for 2020 deer harvesting. By visiting their website you can purchase a [deer hunting license](#) online and, if you're successful, [register the deer](#) on their website too. If you have smartphone access, you can register your deer before you even leave the woods!

Gun deer hunting will run from November 21st through November 29th this year. As usual, it's important to remain visually identifiable to fellow hunters by wearing blaze orange. Acknowledging proper weapon handling and shooting techniques is also conducive to a safe hunt. The [USDA Forest Service](#) offers a list of other safety precautions to consider this deer season:



- Check weather reports before visiting the forest.
- Tell someone where you will be hunting and when you will return.
- Be familiar with the area you want to hunt.
- Dress properly and be prepared for the worst possible conditions.
- Carry a spare set of dry clothing. Use layering techniques to prevent moisture while retaining body warmth. Always bring rain gear.
- Carry a first aid kit.
- Clearly identify your target before shooting. Prevent unfortunate accidents or fatalities.
- Put hunting plans in writing (dates, times, location and expected time of return).
- Be alert when hunting near developed areas and trails. Other recreationists are in the forest as well.