



Mercer County Veteran

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The County of Mercer, New Jersey

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In This Issue

- Letters To Our Nation's Heroes
- Dates to Remember
- Support Our Troops

Page 2

- Mercer County T.R.A.D.E.
- United Services Organization

Page 3

- Our Senior Veterans
- Mercer County Veterans Task Force
- Mercer County Veteran Services

Page 4

Dear Friends,

I hope that all of you enjoyed a wonderful holiday season with your friends and loved ones. As we begin the New Year, I look forward to working with all of you to continue improving the services and amenities we offer to veterans in Mercer County.

As most veterans and those affiliated with veterans organizations are aware, this past year was one of the busiest in years. As more and more veterans returned from Iraq, Afghanistan, and other assignments abroad, our Veteran Services office became inundated with calls and visits for assistance. Similarly, with the economy struggling, many veterans turned to us for assistance in searching for jobs or obtaining unemployment benefits. Mercer County prides itself on being a foundation of support for those who have served our country, and with the diligent work of Chief of Veteran Services Ed Mazzeo and his staff in 2008, the County was able to assist each veteran who needed it. I would like to thank those



Mercer County Executive
Brian M. Hughes

veterans who we have already assisted for putting their trust in us, and I would invite any veteran or family of a veteran who may need assistance to visit or call us at our Veterans Center in Hamilton any time.

We plan to continue serving our veterans through job fairs catered toward their interests, assistance with obtaining benefits, their housing needs, obtaining their military records, and any other service we can provide.

We will strive to make this year even better. I wish all of you the best for a happy and healthy 2009.

Sincerely,
Brian M. Hughes
County Executive

A Special Thank You

I would like to take this opportunity to say THANK YOU to all corporations, veteran Organizations, Auxiliary Units, and private citizens who made donations to our Holiday Meal Drive.

Your generosity enabled us to reach our goal of \$5,000.00. We were able to supply food vouchers to 50 veterans and their families to have a decent meal for Thanksgiving. With the funds collected we are able to do the same for Christmas and Easter as well.

The freedom and liberties we have today are for the most part taken for granted. There are some who never give freedom a second thought when the call comes. Freedom is not cheap, it comes at an expensive price.

It is because of our veterans, we live free. It is because of our veterans we are able to attend the church of our choice. It is because of our veterans we can come and go as we please.

Yes, freedom is not cheap. It is the veteran who gave each and every American that gift. Now it is our responsibility to help a veteran whenever we can. A few dollars will not make or break us.

We need to help the families whose loved ones have been called to defend our nation in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. Don't let them down, because they did not let us down. We do hope next year your generosity will continue.

Many Thanks!
Edward Mazzeo, Chief
Mercer County Veteran Services



“Some people live their entire lifetime and wonder if they ever made a difference to the world. Marines don't have that problem.”

President Ronald Reagan
(1981–1989)

A Letter To Our Nation's Heroes

Each of you has placed this Nation's security and the freedom of others before your own lives. You are, indeed, a national treasure.

At this hour, a new generation of American heroes has taken up the fight in defense of our values and ideals. They are deployed to defeat our enemies before they can attack us again at home. Your Army is a hugely resilient, professional and combat-seasoned force that has been stretched by the demands of the current conflict. We will do what it takes to win and to preserve this magnificent force.

And you, as Veterans, are doing your part. You are lending your critical voice. By coming together—from all Services and so many different backgrounds—you are part of the national dialogue on the state of the America's military and its role in 21st Century conflict. You do so with a level of credibility and wisdom that few can match.

You also know that today's troops are tomorrow's Veterans. The U.S. Army takes this responsibility to you and today's Soldiers seriously. To that end, we are working hand-in-hand with the right people, including health care specialists, Veterans Affairs, and others to provide the care, benefits and support you so deserve. Together, our mission is to get this right. Your participation in this collaborative process counts immensely. And, by using your voice here and in your communities, you not only serve the living, but you honor the fallen and safeguard their proud legacy.

May God bless you.

Gen. George W. Casey Jr.
Chief of Staff, U.S. Army

(Letter originally published Aug. 27, 2008)

Dates to Remember

Jan. 19	Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday
February	African-American History Month
Feb. 1	National Freedom Day
Feb. 4	USO Birthday
Feb. 5	Boy Scouts founded - 1910
Feb. 12	Lincoln's birthday
Feb. 14	Valentine's Day
Feb. 16	Presidents' Day
Feb. 22	Washington's birthday
March	Women's History Month, American History Month
March 1	Peace Corps established - 1961
March 3	Star Spangled Banner adopted as National Anthem - 1931
March 4	US Constitution takes effect - 1789
March 8	Daylight savings time begins
March 17	St. Patrick's Day
March 20	Spring begins

Support Our Troops

Following are websites, which offer ways to support our troops who are stationed all over the globe.

Adopt A Platoon:

www.adoptaplatoon.org

American Legion:

www.legion.org/national/supporttroops

America Supports You:

www.americasupportsyou.mil/americasupportsyou

A Million Thanks:

www.amillionthanks.org

Any Soldier:

www.anysoldier.com

Email Our Military:

www.emailourmilitary.com

Hugs For Soldiers:

www.hugsforsoldiers.org

Let's Say Thanks In Support of Our Troops:

www.lets saythanks.com

Military.com, Benefits/Resources:

www.military.com/benefits/resources/support-our-troops

Operation Dear Abby:

www.operationdearabby.net

Operation Gratitude:

www.opgratitude.com

Operation Iraqi Freedom Multinational Force website:

www.mnf-iraq.com

Operation Thank You:

www.operationthankyou.org

Stars and Stripes Holiday Messages:

www.messages.stripes.osd.mil

Support Our Troops:

www.supportourtroops.org

The Thank You Foundation:

www.thethankyoufoundation.org

Thank You Soldiers:

www.thankyoursoldiers.com

Thank You Troops:

www.thankyoutroops.us

Treats For Troops:

www.treatsfortroops.com/thank-you-center

Troop Support:

www.troopssupport.com

United Services Organization:

www.uso.org

U.S. Army Send Messages to our Soldiers:

www4.army.mil/ocpa/tooursoldiers

Mercer County does not intend these third party links to be referrals or endorsements. These sites are provided for convenience only. Exercise caution whenever making purchase or sending money.

Transportation Resources to Aid the Disadvantaged and Elderly

Trips to East Orange & Lyons VA Hospitals

In cooperation with the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs (DMVA), T.R.A.D.E. offers free weekly roundtrip transportation to all Mercer County veterans to the Veteran Administration (VA) hospitals in East Orange and Lyons, NJ.

- Pick-up for the VA hospital in Lyons is Tuesday mornings at 162 West State Street, Trenton.
- Pick-up for transportation to the VA hospital in East Orange is Wednesday mornings at 162 West State Street, Trenton.

To Make A Reservation

Interested veterans can contact the Division of Veterans Programs at (609) 292-5880 or (609) 292-5881. The Division of Veterans Programs is located at 28 West State Street, Room 514, Trenton.



Services for Veterans Living in Mercer County

- Regular T.R.A.D.E. transportation service is available to all Mercer County residents who are senior citizens (60+) or persons with disabilities.
- Demand response service is available with advance notice for doctors' appointments, recreation, shopping or other trips.
- Subscription trips are available to travel to destinations on a regular basis (i.e., dialysis, employment, shopping).
- Customers should call T.R.A.D.E. at (609) 530-1971, Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - noon, up to 14 days prior to their scheduled appointment to request service.

United Service Organizations

President Franklin D. Roosevelt determined, in 1941, that private organizations would better handle the on-leave recreation for U.S. armed forces. Six civilian agencies coordinated their civilian war efforts and resources to form the United Service Organizations (USO). Those organizations included the Salvation Army, Young Men's Christian Association, Young Women's Christian Association, National Catholic Community Services, National Travelers Aid Association and the National Jewish Welfare Board.

During World War II more than 3,000 USO centers were established as the GIs' "Home Away from Home." Between 1940 and 1944, U.S. troops grew from 50,000 to 12 million, and their needs grew accordingly. USO facilities opened in such unlikely places as churches, log cabins, museums, castles, barns, beach and yacht clubs, railroad sleeping cars, old mansions and storefronts. The USO became many things to many people: a lively place to dance and meet people; a place to see movies or find religious counsel; a quiet place to talk or write letters; and, of course, a place to go for free coffee and doughnuts.

Between 1941 and 1947, USO Camp Shows presented 428,521 performances on outposts all over the world. More than 7,000 entertainers traveled overseas. By war's end, the USO could claim more than 1.5 million volunteers.

The USO had all but disbanded by 1950, when the United States entered the Korean War. The USO regrouped, opened clubs worldwide, and presented USO Camp Shows in Japan and Korea for battle-weary troops and wounded GIs in hospitals. After the truce in 1953, the Defense Department requested that the USO continue providing services to the more than one million service members worldwide.

The first USO center located in a combat zone opened in

Saigon in 1963. This center, along with 22 others in Vietnam and Thailand served as many as a million service members a month and presented some 5,559 performances.

When the draft ended in the early '70s, the need for the USO was questioned. A major review of USO programs and services by the Defense Department concluded that, "If there were no USO, another organization would have to be created.... Isolation of the military from civilian influences is not, in the interest of this nation."

A 1987 Memorandum of Understanding between the USO and the Department of Defense names the USO as a principal channel representing civilian concern for U.S. armed forces worldwide, under the auspices of the President of the United States and the Secretary of Defense. Since 1941, every U.S. president has served as the USO's Honorary Chairman.

During peacetime, programs were developed to smooth frictions between military and local communities, and help military personnel transition to civilian life. The USO established Family and Community Centers to support military families at home as well as abroad.

The Persian Gulf War challenged the USO to create such unique programs as USO Operation Phone Home, Operation USO Care Package, United Through Reading, Operation Enduring Care, Mobile USO Program, Gifts From the Homefront, USO CarePages, Pro vs. GI Joe, MEGS, and USO Parachute Team.

As the USO celebrates 68 years of service, its mission remains strong: to providing morale, welfare and recreation-type services to U.S. men and women in uniform.

For more information about programs and services, volunteer opportunities, please visit www.uso.org.



Mercer County Veteran

The County of Mercer, New Jersey

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Articles are welcome for consideration.
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To receive your free copy of
Mercer County Veteran,
please call (609) 989-6120.

Mercer County Office of Veteran Services

2280 Hamilton Avenue
Hamilton, New Jersey 08619
(609) 989-6120

Brian M. Hughes, Mercer County Executive Mercer County Board of Chosen Freeholders

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Anthony P. Carabelli, *Freeholder Vice Chair*
Dan Benson • Ann M. Cannon • Tony Mack
Pasquale "Pat" Colavita, Jr. • Keith V. Hamilton

Edward Mazzeo

Chief, Mercer County Veteran Services

Graphic Services courtesy of Martha Runyon

WWW.MERCERCOUNTY.ORG

Our Senior Veterans

As I attend these Veteran meetings and look
at the attendees there,
I often sometimes wonder what
experiences are imbedded there just
waiting to be imparted if only someone would ask.

Now you can't quite tell about these Veterans -
listen to what they have to say..
In the evening, after supper -
oh what stories they could tell...
Of how they met with General Eisenhower
the night before the final hour
of the historic invasion of Normandy
and the gallant deeds performed that day
Oh how I know that one so well!

So you can see, you can't quite tell about
these Veterans - listen to what they have to say
They may not be with us much longer as
time is taking them away.

~SGGT Stephen Lipski, WWII Veteran

Mercer County Veterans Task Force Members

Mission Statement

We are a committee of representatives from County, State, Federal and Non-Profit agencies located in Mercer County. Our mission is to assist veterans with access to all services available, regardless of their need, through countywide collaboration.

Martin Denero/Director, T.R.A.D.E.

Linda Greenstein/State Assemblywoman

Anne Hamilton/Manager, TASK & Catholic Charities

Keith V. Hamilton/Mercer County Freeholder

Darryll Johnson/Trenton Veterans Center

Roseann Loforte/Mercer County Board of Social Services

Col. Norman Mathews (ret.)/Air Force Association

Edward Mazzeo/Chief, Mercer County Veteran Services

Lucille Pagano/Marine Corps League Det. 207

Patricia Richter/Chief, Veteran Benefits, NJDMAVA

Ivy Brown Rovner/Office of the 14th District

Albert Stahl/Mercer County One-Stop Career Center

Marvin M. Trotman, Jr./Mercer County One-Stop Career Center

Wendy Sturgeon/Allies, Inc.

Ronald F. Wolff/S.V.P., Caliper Corporation

Mercer County Veteran Services

State Veterans Service Office

28 West State Street
5th Floor, Rm. 514
Trenton, NJ 08625-0671
(609) 292-5880/5881

Mercer County Veteran Services

2280 Hamilton Avenue
Hamilton, NJ 08619
(609) 989-6120

Mercer County One-Stop Career Center/Veterans Unit

26 Yard Avenue, 1st Floor
P.O. Box 954
Trenton, NJ 08625
Supv., Veteran Services
(609) 292-6743

Trenton Vet Center/Readjustment Counseling Center

934 Parkway Avenue
Ewing, NJ 08618
(609) 882-5744
Fax (609) 882-5743
www.va.gov/rcs

Trenton Veteran Medical Clinic

171 Jersey Street, Building 36
Trenton, NJ 08611-2425
(609) 989-2355