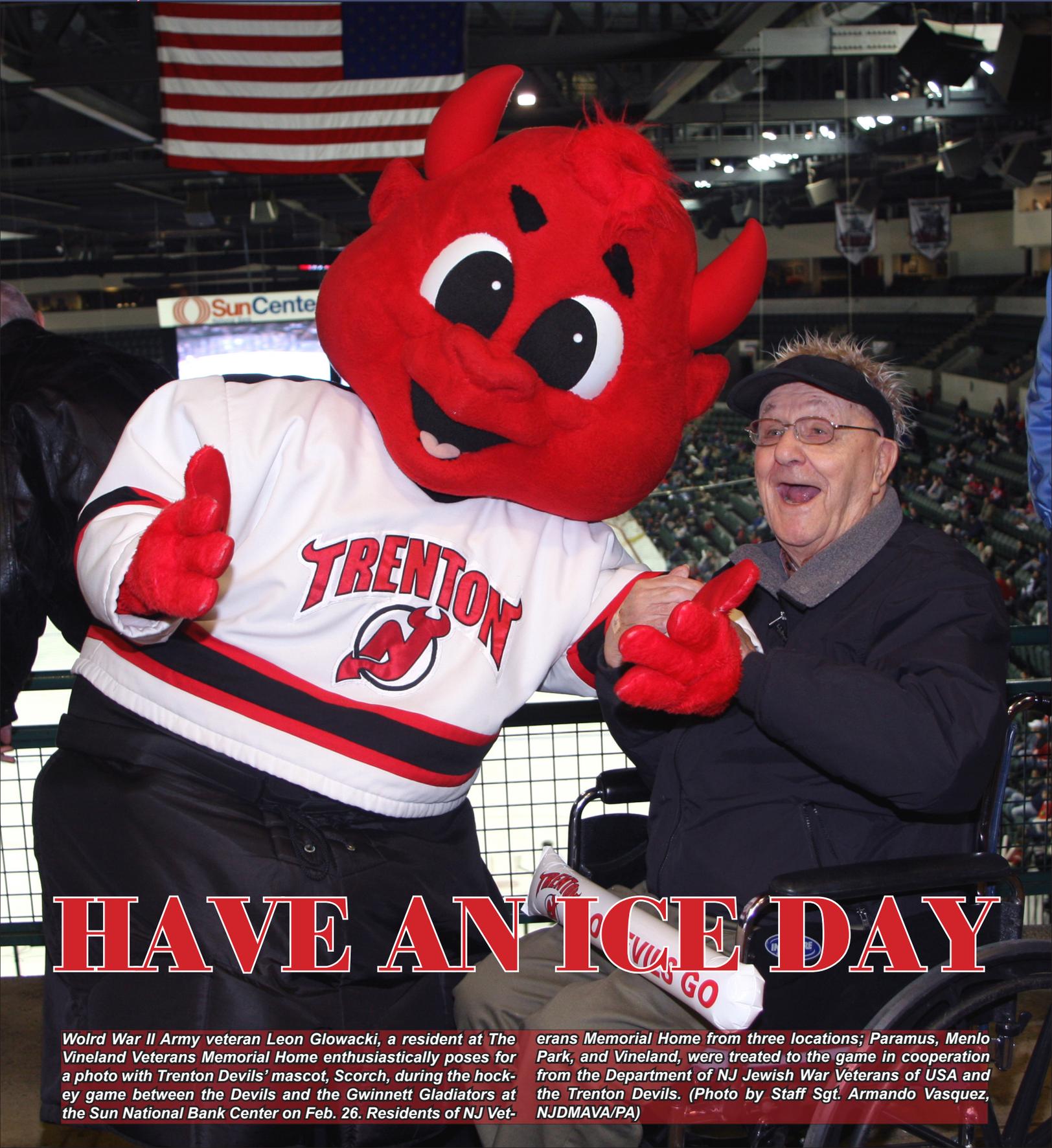


DMAVA HIGHLIGHTS



MARCH 3, 2011



HAVE AN ICE DAY

World War II Army veteran Leon Glowacki, a resident at The Vineland Veterans Memorial Home enthusiastically poses for a photo with Trenton Devils' mascot, Scorch, during the hockey game between the Devils and the Gwinnett Gladiators at the Sun National Bank Center on Feb. 26. Residents of NJ Vet-

erans Memorial Home from three locations; Paramus, Menlo Park, and Vineland, were treated to the game in cooperation from the Department of NJ Jewish War Veterans of USA and the Trenton Devils. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Armando Vasquez, NJDMAVA/PA)

SECFOR deployers finish training

Soldiers, families ready to spend time together before long deployment

By Sgt. Landis Andrews, 444th MPAD

“Rollover! Rollover!” were the shouts that echoed through the speakers from the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicle Egress Trainer area at the Joint Training and Training Development Center at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., as other Soldiers donned elbow and knee pads in preparation to be the next group to be inverted in the simulator.

The training offers a realistic simulation to develop the proper skills and confidence in all service members’ ability to safely egress from an overturned vehicle and survive on a battlefield.

And that’s exactly what the Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 113th Infantry were doing on Friday Feb. 28.

The infantrymen had been in pre-deployment training for three weeks at JBMDL and were ready to savor their final days with their families before deploying to Afghanistan.

Although their heads were in their helmets and they were focused on the training, their hearts were with their families, as they knew that soon they would be separated for a significant period of time.

“Let’s get this training done right so we can get out of here,” Staff Sgt. Ethan Letz belted out in front of the group. “That is our motivation for today.”

Pvt. Cardon Edwards, 20, was also eager to get back to his mother and one-year old daughter.

“I want to get home and spend as much time with my family as possible,” the East Orange native said. “The hardest part of the deployment will be missing everyone during Christmas time.”

But that thought did not distract him from his current mission.

“This training is excellent,” said Edwards.



Sgt. Armando Nogurira, right, assists Sgt. Andrew Clayton exit the simulator after a spin inside the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicle Egress Trainer. Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 113th Infantry finished pre-mobilization training at the Joint Training and Training Development Center at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J. on Friday, Feb. 25 as they prepare for a deployment to Afghanistan later this month. The training offers a realistic simulation to develop the proper skills and confidence in all service members’ ability to safely egress from an overturned vehicle and survive on a battlefield. (Photo by Kryn P. Westhoven, NJDMAVA/PA)

“This is my first time going overseas and I am confident that our leadership is preparing us well.”

“I’m not scared, at all, of going over there,” concluded Edwards.

Sgt. Nestor Villamar, preparing for his fourth tour, will do his best to be Edwards’ new family.

“What’s important is the bond you build,” said Villamar, a team leader at the battalion. “I’m having my whole team do all of our training together so we can build that bond before we even get over there.”

“We are all we have in country so we’re going to have to lean on each other now,” said Villamar.

Relationships in theater are important,

Villamar said, because he’s not leaving much behind. “I’m a single man. All I’m leaving behind is a dog and he’ll be fine with my parents.”

The family and friends at home is what motivates Sgt. Trident Villanueva for this upcoming deployment.

“I serve so the mothers and fathers can be safe,” said Villanueva proudly. “I do this, so brothers and sisters don’t have to.”

As a combat veteran with experience on his side, Villanueva is comfortable with the mission he is about to undertake.

“You have to expect the worst and hope for the best,” Villanueva said. “When things get crazy, that’s when experience and training kicks in.”

DMAVA Highlights is published weekly by the Public Affairs Office of the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. The views and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Department of Defense, the Army, the Air Force, the National Guard, Veterans Affairs or the state of New Jersey. Letters may be sent to: NJDMAVA, DMAVA Highlights, Public Affairs Office, PO Box 340, Trenton NJ 08625-0340. e-mail at pao@njdmava.state.nj.us.

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Division of Pension, Benefits to implement new procedure

The Division of Pensions and Benefits is implementing a significant change to the purchase of service credit and withdrawal application process for all members effective April 1.

Effective April 1, all requests to purchase service credit and/or pension withdrawals must be submitted online using the Purchase Application program and/or the Application for Withdrawal program of the Member Benefits Online System (MBOS).

Consequently, the application to purchase service credit and/or pension withdrawal will no longer be available as a printed form or on the Division of Pensions and Benefits' Web site. Paper applications received by mail as of April 1 will be returned to members with instructions to submit the requests using MBOS.

MBOS is a set of Internet applications that allow current registered members secure access to their pension account information. In addition, MBOS provides members with fast and efficient methods for requesting purchase of service credit and/or pension account withdrawals.

New members should register to this free application, which requires registration at MyNewJersey and MBOS Web sites. Both of these Web sites are accessible at www.state.nj.us.

This requirement applies to all eligible members of the Public Employees' Retirement System; Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund; Police and Firemen's Retirement System; and State Police Retirement System who wish to purchase service credit and/or terminate their employment and choose to withdraw from their pension account.

Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay extended until March 4

The deadline for eligible service members, veterans and their beneficiaries to apply for Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay (RSLSP) has been extended to March 4, allowing personnel more time to apply for the benefits they've earned under the program guidelines.

The deadline extension is included in the continuing resolution signed by President Obama, providing funding for federal government operations through March 4.

The RSLSP was established to compensate for the hardships military members encountered when their service was involuntarily extended under Stop Loss Authority between Sept. 11, 2001, and Sept. 30, 2009. Eligible members or their beneficiaries may submit a claim to their respective military service in order to receive the benefit of \$500 for each full or partial month served in a Stop Loss status.

When RSLSP began on Oct. 21, 2009, the services estimated 145,000 service members, veterans and beneficiaries were eligible for this benefit. Because the majority of those eligible had separated from the military, the services have engaged in extensive and persistent outreach efforts over the past 14 months. Outreach efforts including direct mail, engaging military and veteran service organizations, social networks and media outlets, will continue through March 4.

To apply for more information, or to gather more information on RSLSP, including submission requirements and service-specific links, go to <http://www.defense.gov/stoploss>.



Tech. Sgt. Ezzedin Bautista III of Nutley, N.J. salutes Brig. Gen. Michael Cunniff, commander of the 108th Wing, New Jersey Air National Guard, after receiving the New Jersey Distinguished Service Medal at a ceremony held at the Jersey Gardens Mall in Elizabeth on March 1. New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Division of Veterans Services Director Al Bucchi is joined by Assemblywoman Nancy F. Munoz, Assemblyman Joseph Cryan and State Senator Thomas H. Kean, Jr. in honoring the veterans at the ceremony that started a three-day visit of the veterans outreach kiosk at the mall. Bautista served in Operation Iraqi Freedom as a member of the Air Force Reserve's 514th Air Mobility Wing at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst. Veterans who missed the opportunity to visit the mall kiosk can call the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs toll free benefits information line any time at 1-888-8NJ VETS. (Photo by Kryn P. Westhoven, NJDMAVA/PA)



Maj. Jeffrey K. Brownlee, executive officer of the 250th BSB, and Mr. Anthony Testa, director of sports medicine at Seton Hall University, hold a sign dedicating the new gym room to Brownlee for his efforts in obtaining exercise equipment for the Teaneck Armory during his tenure with the Armory on Feb. 28. Seton Hall University donated several pieces of exercise equipment to the National Guard unit for use by Guard members there. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Armando Vasquez, NJDMAVA/PA)

WWP and Mets to honor military service member this season

The Wounded Warrior Project (WWP) in cooperation with the New York Mets and their "Welcome Back Veterans" program would like to honor at a Mets' home game at Citi Field this baseball season any current active duty service member or veteran who has served in the military.

The honoree will receive up to four free tickets to a Mets' home game. The seats will be located in the front row on the third base-line of the field.

Furthermore, during the third inning of the game, the honoree will be publicly recognized by the Mets, and his/her picture will be displayed on the play-by-play screen in center field while the public announcer will read the honoree's military biography.

In order to be considered for this opportunity, please send four photos along with your military biography via e-mail to Tony Ntelas, WWP alumni manager, at ntellas@woundedwarriorproject.org or contact him at 386-867-1955.

In addition, the photo must be in high resolution and, if possible, taken during your time in the military.

Your military biography must include the following information:

- Branch, rank, name, Email, cell phone
- List of awards and decorations
- Date of entry in to service
- Date of discharge and type of discharge
- Duty stations and brief description of military duties

Additional information such as mode of transportation; if previously honored by the Mets in the past; and top three choices of games to attend will be required. For list of available game dates, please contact Tony Ntelas.

Please note that previous military members that have participated in this program are not eligible for this opportunity, however, you could go as a guest of the honoree.

NJ Nets discounted tickets for NJNG

Experience the thrill of an NBA professional basketball game at the beautiful Prudential Center in downtown Newark with some ticket prices starting as low as \$10 for certain seats.

How you ask? Well, the New Jersey Nets are offering discounted basketball tickets to all New Jersey National Guard members and state employees to several selected home games this season.

The offer is available directly through the NJ Nets with no added surcharges or fees.

So make plans to see the Nets play against the Golden State Warriors this coming Wednesday, March 9 at 7 p.m., or several other games.

To see a list of game dates and times available for the discounted prices, please visit http://www.letsгонets.com/tickets/groupsales/US_Army.html or contact Tony Alessandra, NJ Nets group sales account manager, at 201-806-7273 or e-mail at talessandra@nj-nets.com.

To purchase these discounted tickets, at check-out use special offer code: nets

Expo opportunity in Philly for vets

RecruitMilitary, a top full-service military-to-civilian recruiting firm, in cooperation with the American Legion, the Military Order of the Purple Heart, and the Military Spouse Corporate Career Network are sponsoring Veteran Opportunity Expo in Philadelphia on March 31.

Veteran-friendly employers, franchisors, and educational institutions will be in attendance to offer a variety of opportunities to all veterans, transitioning military personnel, and military family members.

The free event will be held at Lincoln Financial Field, which is located at One Novacare Way, Philadelphia on Thursday, March 31 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

To register for the event, please visit RecruitMilitary's candidate information Web page at www.recruitmilitary.com/expos/354-Philadelphia/candidates/information or contact Mary Beth Miller, communications manager, at 513-683-5020.

Discounted Devils hockey tickets

The New Jersey Devils are offering special discounted tickets to the men and women of the U.S. Armed Services as part of their Military Nights promotions.

Get a game ticket plus a \$10 food and beverage card for only \$30 when you purchase online at www.newjerseydevils.com/military and enter the special offer code: DEVILS at checkout. Tickets can also be purchased on day of game at the Prudential Center box office and showing your military ID.

Food and beverage cards can be picked up at the Group Sales Redemption table located at the main concourse level across from the Fire Lounge.

The following dates are scheduled as part of the New Jersey Devils' military night promotion:

Tuesday, March 8 against the Ottawa Senators; and Wednesday, April 6 against the Toronto Maple Leafs.

The New Jersey Devils play their home games at the Prudential Center located in Newark, N.J.

Tickets are based on availability. For questions, please call Samantha Davis, representative for Group Sales New Jersey Devils, at 973-757-6168.

Career fair in Newark for vets

The G.I. Go Fund has teamed up with the Rutgers-Newark Student Veterans Organization to bring you the 3rd Annual Year of the Vet Career Fair in Newark, N.J., on Tuesday, March 15 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Rutgers-Newark's Paul Robeson Campus Center.

The purpose of the Career Fair is to connect veterans to jobs, as well as benefits, job training opportunities and colleges.

Register for this free event and meet with employers, colleges, and support services and benefit providers by visiting the G.I. Go Fund's Web site at: <http://www.gigofund.org/veteransjobfairvets.html>, or contact Alexander Manis, deputy director for G.I. Go Veterans Transition Center of Newark, at 973-802-1614 or via e-mail at manisa@ci.newark.nj.us.

Candidates needed for NJESGR State Chair

The New Jersey Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (NJESGR) will be conducting a candidate search for the position of State Chair within the organization.

Current State Chair, Col. (Ret) Carmen Venticinque, has announced that he will be stepping down as the current State Chair for NJESGR.

Chairs are responsible for all aspects of State's ESGR operations. Chairs organize, lead, direct, supervise, and motivate ESGR members with various backgrounds, abilities and interests. Chairs must have excellent leadership and communication skills, as they frequently address influential people, or groups of influential people, including governors, State Adjutants General, Guard/Reserve general/flag officers, federal, state, and local officials, legislators, mayors, chief financial officers, business and industry leaders, Chambers of Commerce, and civic groups. Chairs also develop and execute the State's Annual Spending Plan and budget.

Any candidate interested in this position should provide to the selection committee a copy of their resume or biography; a letter stating his/her willingness to accept the position, reason(s) for interest serving, and thoughts and plans for leading the State ESGR; other supporting material as appropriate (letters of recommendation, photos, etc.)

The material must be submitted to Carol Beske via mail to ACT Engineers Inc., 1 Washington Boulevard, Robbinsville, NJ 08691 or Email at clbeske@actengineers.com no later than March 16.

Anyone with questions regarding the process should call Carol at 609-918-0200.

Retirement made easy

The Division of Pensions and Benefits has created a presentation called "Retirement Made Easy". This presentation is provided on their Web site and it is an overview of the planning and application process for retirement from the Public Employees' Retirement System or the Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund.

The presentation is hosted by GoToMeeting® and requires an Internet connected PC with Windows® 7, Vista, XP or 2000; or a Mac with OS® X v10.4 (Tiger®) or newer, as well as a Web browser of Internet Explorer® 6.0 or newer; Mozilla® Firefox® 3.0 or newer; or Safari™ 3.0 or newer. Also, you will need speakers for the VoIP audio part of the presentation.

Note: The recorded presentation is a summary of the benefits available to most PERS and TPAF members. Specific benefits may vary based on a member's individual circumstances.

To find forms, publications and useful links referenced in the presentation, go to:

<http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/retirement-made-easy-links.shtml>

To view the Retirement Made Easy Presentation, click on the link below and enter your email address and complete your registration.

<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/405050984>

National Guard Militia Museum Celebrates

Women's History Month

Exhibits at Sea Girt, Lawrenceville focus on pioneering role

SEA GIRT, N.J. - The National Guard Militia Museum of New Jersey (NGMMNJ) will open two Women's History Month exhibits celebrating the service of New Jersey's female Soldiers, sailors, Marines, and Airmen. From the American Revolution forward, "Volunteering for Service: New Jersey Women in War" will highlight more than two centuries of service through photographs, primary source correspondence, period uniforms, and video excerpts from the museum's award-winning Center for U.S. Veterans' Oral Histories.

The free exhibit opens March 1 and runs until March 31 at the National Guard Militia Museums in Sea Girt and Lawrenceville.

"Be it on the battlefield or the home front, the contributions of women in the major conflicts of American history must not be underestimated," said 1st Lt. Vincent Solomeno, museum curator and historian of the New Jersey National Guard. "In many ways, they are the unsung heroines whose dedication and bravery are examples to us all."

The museum at Sea Girt presents a chronological account of the contributions of New Jersey women to the U.S. Armed Forces. From the Battle of Monmouth Court House to female soldiers deployed in Iraq, the exhibit focuses on, among others, New Jerseyans Clara Barton, Clara Maass, and Maj. Gen. Maria Falca-Dodson, current commander of the New Jersey Air National Guard. Falca-Dodson holds the distinction of being the first woman promoted to the rank of general officer in the New Jersey National Guard.

The Lawrenceville Field Artillery Annex exhibit focuses on the ground breaking career of Col. Christine Haycock, who in 1952 became the first woman officer to serve as a physician in the U.S. Army Medical Corps. Following the Korean War, she became the first woman to hold a major command in New Jersey, with responsibility for the Army's 322nd General Hospital. The exhibit features photographs, memorabilia, and uniforms from Haycock's 38 years in military service.

The museum in Sea Girt is open Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., and the first, second, and third weekends of the month from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Lawrenceville Field Artillery Annex is open Tuesdays and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information, please visit the NGMMNJ Web site at <http://www.state.nj.us/military/museum/> or call 1st Lt. Vincent Solomeno at 732-974-5966.

E-mail your Highlights submissions to
wayne.woolley@njdmava.state.nj.us OR armando.vasquez@njdmava.state.nj.us