

National Guard Soldier & Family

Foundations

May/June 2011 | Vol. 3, Issue 1



SINGLE SERVING

HOW MOTHERS
JUGGLE FAMILY
& COUNTRY

TRIM DOWN, TONE UP

8 EXERCISES
FOR ARMS & LEGS

SAVORY SUMMER FIXINS

6 DELICIOUS
FAMILY RECIPES

Holding On, Letting Go

HOW THE BOWMAN FAMILY
IS SURVIVING SUICIDE



HURTS ONE. AFFECTS ALL.



**WE DON'T LET
OUR GUARD DOWN**

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Resource Center
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Feature

Holding On, Letting Go

How the Bowman Family Is Surviving Suicide

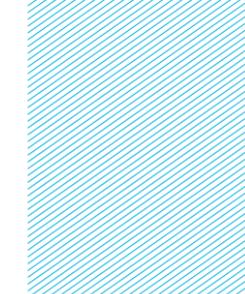
On Thanksgiving in 2005, the Bowman Family was forever changed when their son, SPC Tim Bowman, committed suicide. Now, they struggle daily to find the balance between moving forward and keeping his memory alive.

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"You could tell he wasn't the same person."

—Mike Bowman, about his son, SPC Tim Bowman

In my career at *Foundations* magazine, I've written and edited some very difficult stories—the kind that stay with you long after the article has been published. What sticks with me isn't the details of the events, but the aftermath—the emotions of the Families and victims. I've always admired people willing to discuss their tragedies in the hope that others might find solace and inspiration.

This issue of *Foundations* features that type of story. Mike and Kim Bowman were gracious enough to tell us about their son, SPC Tim Bowman of the Illinois National Guard, who committed suicide on Thanksgiving Day, 2005. They discuss how after his deployment, his personality changed—he became distant—and that despite all their efforts, they could not reach him. Mike bravely describes the events of the day his son took his life, including the pact the Family made to remain together no matter what—

divorce often follows a child's suicide.

The Bowmans were very forthright with us. They gave us some of the harsh details. Given that suicide is the biggest challenge facing the National Guard, we felt it was necessary to deliver an unfiltered view of its impact on the Families, and decided to keep the story intact as much as possible.

Foundations' mission is not only to entertain you, but also to inform you about the issues facing Guard Families and the resources available to you to help you stay resilient. Much like with last issue's feature on Ashley Crandall and her struggle with PTSD, we want to inform and educate you.

If you have a comment about an article in *Foundations*, or if you want to suggest a topic, contact me at Editor@GuardFoundations.com. What you have to say matters to me, so please send your thoughts and suggestions.

Sincerely,



Fred D. McGhee II
Managing Editor

On the Cover:

Mike Bowman lost his son, SPC Tim Bowman, to suicide five years ago.

PHOTO BY EVAN BAINES



Foundations

Mission Statement:

To serve and support Army National Guard Soldiers and their Families by providing information and resources to improve their quality of life. To provide opportunities for all Soldiers and Families to benefit from the services available to them through the National Guard by presenting timely and relevant knowledge.

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iostudio

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For address changes or to cancel mailing, please email: Editor@GuardFoundations.com.

National Guard Soldier and Family Foundations [USPS # 025-272] is published bimonthly by Iostudio, LLC, 565 Marriott Dr. Ste. 700, Nashville, TN 37214-5040. Periodicals postage paid at Nashville, TN, and additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to: *National Guard Soldier and Family Foundations*, 565 Marriott Dr. Ste. 700, Nashville, TN 37214-5040.

Dear Soldiers, Airmen, Families and Friends of the National Guard,

November 24, 2005. It was Thanksgiving Day—a day to feast with Family and friends, give thanks, and celebrate a uniquely American holiday.

For Mike and Kimberly Bowman and their daughter, Michelle, it was the day their son and brother, Timothy, took his own life. Specialist Timothy Bowman was 23. He served with the Illinois Army National Guard, mobilizing in October 2003 and returning from Iraq in April 2005.

Or, perhaps, he never really did return from war.

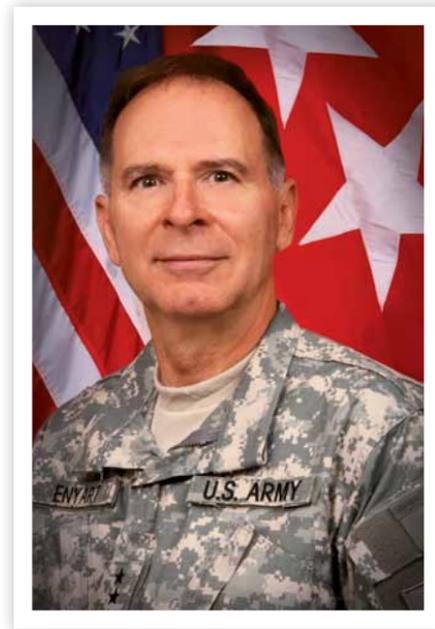
Too many of our men and women carry the invisible wounds of war with them. We, as leaders, need to find a way to help heal these wounds. The Families of military suicide victims have not been honored like other Families of war dead. It is time we honor all these Soldiers for their service and thank their Families for all they have endured for our country.

I would like to say that the Illinois National Guard took immediate action after the loss of Timothy in 2005, but that's not true. We struggled with the issue of Soldier suicide. We struggled with the stigma attached to mental health issues such as depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. And, when we did lose troops to suicide, we too often blamed the Soldier, not the invisible wounds.

We still struggle. But we are learning to be more open, more forthcoming, more honest, more accepting of all the wounds—visible and invisible.

In the last year the Illinois National Guard has not lost a Soldier or Airman to suicide. Out of the 3,000 deployed to Afghanistan from 2008 to 2009, we lost two to suicide.

To help prevent suicide and to ensure healthier and happier troops, we have aggressive and comprehensive Family deployment and reintegration programs. Our director of psychological health and



our suicide prevention manager work closely with both state and federal Veterans Affairs on suicide prevention.

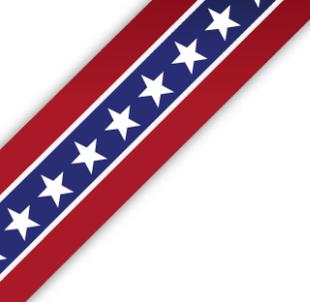
We have strategically placed our chaplains throughout the state to quickly respond to Soldier and Family needs. Family Assistance Centers have also been placed throughout the state. Emphasis from first-line leaders on up has brought awareness and more openness to the problem. But mostly it is fellow Soldiers, Family and friends who are preventing suicides in the Illinois National Guard. They are looking out for their loved ones and getting them the help they need. Many lives have been saved by these unsung heroes.

And, for them, we give thanks.

Sincerely,



William L. Enyart
Major General, ILNG
Adjutant General

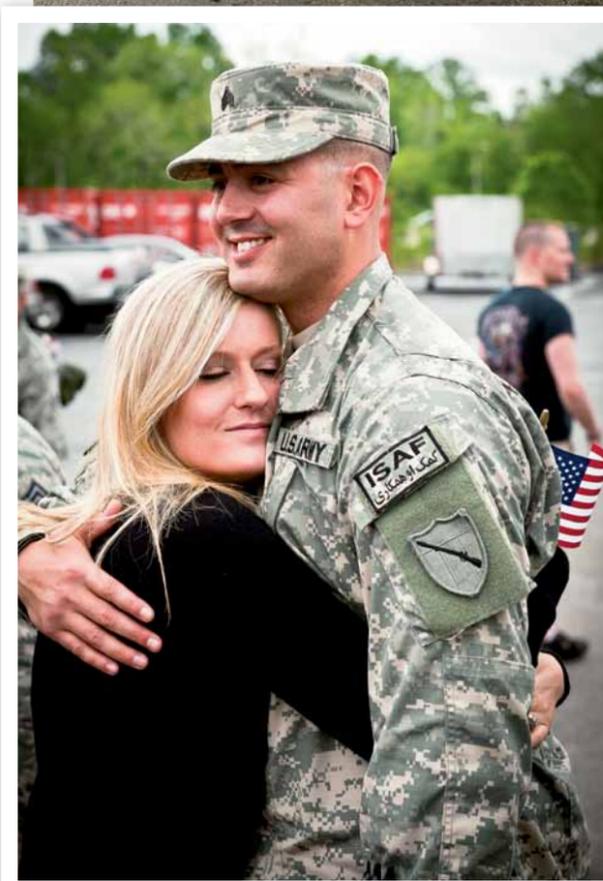


Homecoming

Honoring Those Who Serve

Kentucky.
Members of Agribusiness Development Team II receive warm embraces upon their return from a 12-month deployment to Afghanistan.

Wyoming.
Family members welcome home the 53rd Detachment from Afghanistan and the 153rd Civil Engineer Squadron from Iraq.





savory summer fixins

Kick the Season Into
High Gear With These
Mouthwatering Recipes

Summer is here—let the parties begin! This month's recipes work perfectly with every kind of warm-weather gathering, from cookouts to evening soirees, picnics to sports-fests. You'll find that I bring my own Southern flair to traditional summer staples like barbecue ribs and cornbread—and hopefully, you'll also find that they've never tasted better. For dessert, if you're feeling adventurous, try my strawberry pretzel salad—it's a guaranteed winner. **Enjoy!**

BY TESSA SMITH // PHOTOS BY ANTONY BOSHIER

Sweet & Spicy BBQ Ribs

2 SLABS BABY BACK RIBS OR
CUT SPARE RIBS

DRY RUB:

¼ CUP DARK BROWN SUGAR
¼ CUP PAPRIKA
3 TBSP. GARLIC SALT
1 TBSP. ONION SALT
1 TBSP. CHILI POWDER
1½ TSP. CAYENNE PEPPER
1½ TSP. BLACK PEPPER
1 TSP. OREGANO
½ TSP. WHITE PEPPER
½ TSP. CUMIN

MARINADE:

1½ CUPS PINEAPPLE JUICE

FINISHING GLAZE:

½ CUP "FAVORITE"
BARBECUE SAUCE
3 TBSP. HONEY

Place slab of ribs bone-side down on table. Slide knife under the membrane and against the end bone to separate the two. With a dry paper towel or rag, grasp the edge of the thin membrane and pull. The entire membrane should separate from the rib.

Combine rub and mix well. Generously apply rub onto the front and back sides of ribs. Gently pat to ensure that rub will adhere. Preheat barbecue or smoker grill to 250 degrees. Place ribs meat-side up on grate and cook for 2 hours and 15 minutes.

Remove ribs from smoker. Place each rib meat-side down on its own doubled aluminum foil square. Foil should be large enough to completely wrap rib.

Stir the marinade. Pour ¾ cup of pineapple juice over each rib. At the same time wrap and seal each rib tight. Place back in smoker for 1 hour.

Remove wrapped ribs from smoker. Remove from foil, and apply a light shake of rub to the

meat-side of the ribs. Place uncovered in the smoker meat-side up for 30 minutes.

Remove ribs from smoker. Brush finishing glaze on both sides of ribs. Place ribs in smoker for 15 minutes or until sauce caramelizes.

Pulled Pork Barbecue Sandwiches, Alabama Style

1¼ LBS. PORK TENDERLOIN,
TRIMMED
½ CUP APPLE CIDER VINEGAR
¼ CUP WATER
3 TBSP. BROWN SUGAR
2 TSP. KOSHER SALT
¾ TSP. FRESHLY GROUND
BLACK PEPPER
½ TSP. GROUND
RED PEPPER
½ TSP. CHILI POWDER
¼ TSP. GARLIC POWDER

To prepare pork, cut it in half lengthwise; cut crosswise into 2½-inch pieces.

Combine apple cider vinegar and next seven ingredients (through garlic powder) in a medium saucepan; bring to a boil. Add pork to pan. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer 1 hour or until tender. Remove pork from cooking liquid; shred with two forks. Place pork in a serving dish; pour cooking liquid over pork.

Southern-Style Baked Beans

LARGE (DICED) ONION
2 (16 OZ.) CANS PORK
AND BEANS
3 TBSP. YELLOW MUSTARD
¼ CUP MAPLE SYRUP
¼ CUP LIGHT BROWN SUGAR
¼ CUP KETCHUP
1 TBSP. LEMON JUICE
½ POUND BACON STRIPS,
CUT INTO ½-INCH PIECES

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

In a Dutch oven, combine onion, pork and beans, mustard, maple syrup, light brown sugar, ketchup, and lemon juice; mix well. Top with the bacon pieces.

Bake, covered, 45 to 60 minutes.

Potato Dill Salad

3 LBS. CUBED
RED SKINNED POTATOES
½ LB. FRESH GREEN BEANS
1 CAN SLICED OLIVES, DRAINED
½ CUP CELERY, CHOPPED
½ CUP RED ONION, CHOPPED
¼ CUP OLIVE OIL
2 TBSP. WHITE WINE VINEGAR
1 TSP. SEASON SALT
½ TSP. SEA SALT
¼ TSP. GROUND BLACK PEPPER
2 TSP. DILL WEED
2 TSP. DRY MUSTARD

Boil potatoes in water for 5–6 minutes. Add beans; boil for 2 minutes and drain.

In a large bowl, combine potatoes and beans with olives, celery and onion.

In a small bowl, combine remaining ingredients. Toss with vegetables.

Chill 4 or more hours, stirring occasionally.

Good Ol' Southern Cornbread

1 CUP YELLOW CORN MEAL
1 CUP FLOUR
2½ TSP. BAKING POWDER
⅓ CUP SUGAR
1 TSP. SALT
1 EGG
1 CUP MILK
3 TBSP. MELTED BUTTER OR
SHORTENING

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Combine corn meal, flour, baking powder, sugar and salt until well mixed and no streaks remain.

Beat egg well; add milk. Pour milk and egg mixture into the dry ingredients, stirring until mixed. Add melted butter or shortening.

Bake in a well-greased shallow pan in oven or in heated muffin tins. Well-seasoned cast iron muffin tins or frying pans work well. Bake until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean (about 20–25 minutes for muffins, depending upon size, and about 45 minutes for a frying pan).

Strawberry Pretzel Salad

1½ CUPS CRUSHED PRETZELS
4½ TBSP. WHITE SUGAR
¼ CUP BUTTER, MELTED
1 CUP WHITE SUGAR
2 (8 OZ.) PACKAGES CREAM
CHEESE
1 (8 OZ.) CONTAINER FROZEN
WHIPPED TOPPING, THAWED
1 (6 OZ.) PACKAGE
STRAWBERRY FLAVORED
GELATIN
2 CUPS BOILING WATER
1 (16 OZ.) PACKAGE FROZEN
STRAWBERRIES

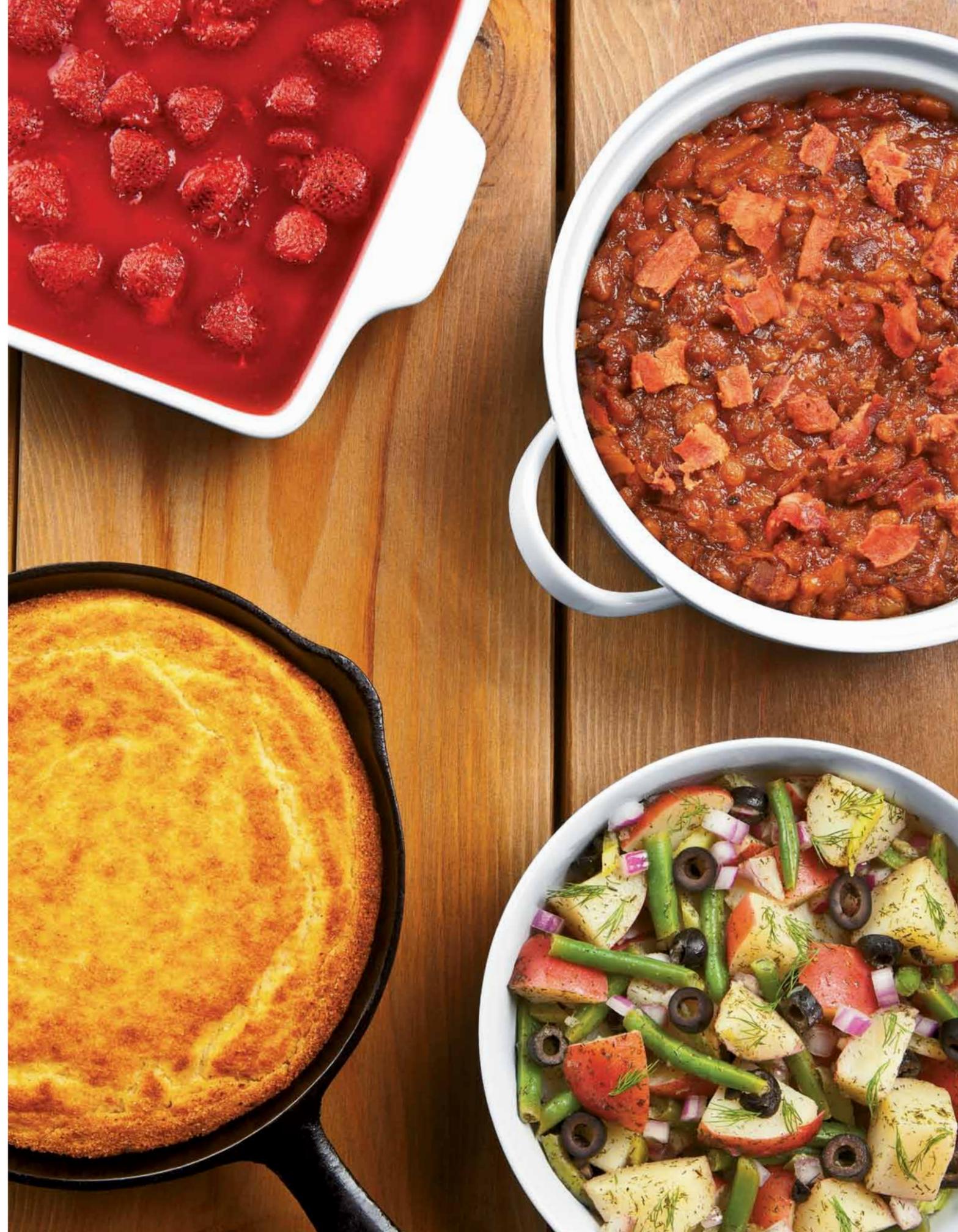
Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix together the pretzels, 4½ tablespoons sugar and melted butter. Press into the bottom of a 9 x 13-inch pan.

Bake for 10 minutes, or until lightly toasted. Set aside to cool completely.

In a medium bowl, beat the sugar and cream cheese until smooth. Fold in whipped topping. Spread evenly over the cooled crust. Refrigerate until set, about 30 minutes.

In a medium bowl, stir together the gelatin mix and boiling water. Mix in frozen strawberries, and stir until thawed. Pour over cream cheese mixture in pan.

Refrigerate until completely chilled, at least 1 hour.



families in bloom

Reap the Benefits of Gardening With Your Loved Ones

BY ERIN SORROW

Gardening doesn't have to be a solitary activity. It's great for groups too—especially Families. As a natural source of exercise, stress reduction and recreation, yard work can foster delightful quality time. So grab your trowel, corral the kids and get outside.

As much fun as gardening can be, it's also educational. Younger children can master counting, colors and plant types. Older children can learn applied math and science. Putting a child in charge of a project can teach them organizational and leadership skills.

HEALTHY LIFESTYLE HABITS

Like traditional exercise, gardening can reduce the risk of heart disease and obesity. Put away the video games, and go play in the dirt. Gardening advances fine motor skills and eye-hand coordination in young children. People with special needs and the elderly use the activity to maintain dexterity. Veterans Affairs hospitals have been providing garden spaces for rehabilitation since WWI.

It's good for the body in other ways, too. Children who help grow fruits and vegetables are more likely to eat them.

BONDING, PLAYING, LEARNING

Families bond when they work and play together. As you exchange ideas, you learn about each other. And, by nurturing the garden together, you learn to nurture each other.

Children learn through playing, so plan projects like building birdhouses and creating mosaics. Children love to explore; roll up your sleeves and show them that it's OK to get dirty. Give each person their own space, where they can dig a hole just for mud or sow a crooked row of tomatoes.



Kids who eat healthy are more likely to eat healthy as adults. Families who grow food together tend to eat together—which means more bonding. Knowing your food source encourages conscious eating. Being aware of your food's origins and nutritional benefits can result in consuming fewer and more nourishing calories.

Growing a garden also benefits our immune system. Organically grown fruits and vegetables have higher nutritional content, and eating locally decreases the risk of asthma and seasonal allergies.

RELAX AND UNWIND

When we see green, we calm down. It's part of our DNA. Looking at a pretty landscape can positively affect heart rate, brain waves, blood pressure and muscle tension. Often, these benefits occur within minutes.

As an active form of meditation, gardening relieves stress. Negative thoughts dissipate, making way for confidence, satisfaction and appreciation.

When parents deploy, it can cause confusion and disruption. Green space encourages a sense of well-being and belonging in children. Though always evolving, a garden is a place of stability. Ecologist Rachel Carson said, "There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature, the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter."

In the topsy-turvy world of the military, watering the plants and feeding the birds can give children a sense of ownership and confidence. When a parent is overseas, a child can feel isolated; gardening together builds connections and helps children feel appreciated. So spend time in the garden as a Family—for the benefit of your mind, body and relationships. **f**

TEN TOOLS Your Garden Can't Grow Without



Gloves
Proper fit is of utmost importance

Hoe
Tills, weeds and loosens soil

Rake
Great for finishing touches

Trowel
Make sure it fits in your hand



Shovel
Keep it sharp

Gardening fork
Moves leaves and mulch, and turns compost

Bulb planter
We all love the colors of spring

Bypass pruners and shears
They both cut like scissors



Hose and watering wand
Lightweight and durable

Wheelbarrow
Saves your back



5 Top Cost-Cutters

• Create your own compost.

• Use a small portion of seed; save the rest for next year.

• Invest in good tools so you don't have to keep spending.

• Avoid buying supplies on impulse.

• Purchase perennials in the fall, when they're on sale.

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“I’ve been in the Guard for 22 years. I’m dedicated, and I love serving. But on the other hand, it’s really difficult to leave your kids behind.”

—SSG Paula Tacker

◀ SSG Paula Tacker’s children took on several adult responsibilities while she was deployed.



single serving

How Mothers Juggle Their Kids and Their Country BY RACHEL GLADSTONE

Being a single mother is one of the most daunting challenges a woman can embrace. Not only is she the head of the household, but she is also the chief cook and bottle-washer, and both mother and father to her children. On top of that, if she’s a Soldier in the National Guard, you’re looking at a woman who has to juggle a lot of responsibilities at once.

In February, *Foundations* spoke with three such women: SSG Paula Tacker, SFC Natasha McZeal and SGT Erika Clayborn. Among the many things they had in common was the pride they take in their children, their military service and their life choices. But the ways in which they manage their time and balance their lives are unique.

SSG Paula Tacker Perfecting the Art

SSG Paula Tacker, from Castalian Springs, TN, deployed with the 1128th Finance Detachment in 2004 to Afghanistan and then to Kosovo in 2006 with the 1130th Finance Detachment. She has four children: Chelsea, 19; Rebekah, 15; Wyatt, 13; and Wesley, 12; and works for the Guard as a technician in the Family Programs Office.

PHOTOS BY ADAM LIVINGSTON

Originally joining the Guard to help finance her college education, Tacker stayed for the career advancement and satisfaction she gets from serving her country. “The [Soldiers] I work with and those I’ve deployed with are my extended Family,” she said. “And I find a great sense of pride in being able to help Soldiers and their Families.”

Although Tacker is divorced now, during her deployments her husband shouldered the parental duties. However, most of the tasks at home fell to her eldest daughter, as her husband was working full time.

“Chelsea took care of her brother and sisters to the best of her ability, but I know it was very difficult for her,” she shared. “The kids had to grow up quickly. They really had to learn to fend for themselves, and it kind of breaks my heart to think about that. But that’s just the truth.”

“I felt extremely guilty for them being without me,” she continued. “Of course, I am proud of what I do. I’ve been in the Guard for 22 years. I’m dedicated, and I love serving. But on the other hand, it’s really difficult to leave your kids behind.”

Both Paula and Chelsea sought counseling through Military OneSource, and while deployed, Paula stayed in touch with her Family via email and weekly phone calls. But sometimes, making those calls was problematic.

“The hardest thing is the time difference, and there was just one phone room, so time was limited,” she said. “Also, you don’t want your children to miss out on things they’re doing at home [to wait for a phone call from you]. As a parent, I wanted them to be engaged in as many activities as possible or spending time with friends.”

SECOND TIME AROUND

Preparing for deployment the first time was a bit hectic, but by the second go-round, Tacker had it down. “I bought a lot of groceries before I left, a lot of staples. And I spent as much time with the kids as I could. We talked about what was happening [and] where I was going. I didn’t want them to be worried, so I never let on that it was a dangerous place or that I might not come back.”

As far as finances go, Tacker suggests keeping control of your money and using the Internet for your banking needs. “It’s easy to transfer funds into anyone’s account,” she said.

When deployed, Tacker developed some strategies to keep her focused on the job at hand as opposed to the Family she had to leave behind. “You really have to detach from your loved ones, because you can worry yourself crazy while you’re gone. You have to just tune a lot

of stuff out, because if you don't, it can be hard to handle," she said.

Even though she's working stateside these days, Tacker's job demands a certain amount of traveling. But there's an upside to that.

"Whether it's a Youth Camp, Strong Bonds or Yellow Ribbon event, I just load up the kids and go," she said. "Of course, I have to work, but it's like a mini-vacation. That's been a blessing, because I get to take them along and they get to see what I do. I think they're proud of me and can see the value in the service I've given to the National Guard. Who knows? Maybe someday they'll follow in my footsteps."

Staying Busy

During a deployment, single mothers find that keeping busy helps make the time go faster. They find that the same is true for their children, so taking advantage of programs such as Our Military Kids is beneficial. This organization provides funding for extracurricular activities by offering a grant program for children of deployed Soldiers. Any activity in which a child wants to participate, from karate to folk dancing, is covered, and parents find that interacting with others in these types of activities is not only fun, but it takes the kids' minds off deployment.

"It's important to be able to take off the uniform and feel like a woman again."

— SFC Natasha McZeal

SFC Natasha McZeal On Tour but In Touch

SFC Natasha McZeal, who joined the Guard in 1997, has deployed to Iraq twice, in 2004 and 2010, with the HHC 256 Infantry Brigade Combat Team out of Lafayette, LA. McZeal is the mother of two boys, Brandon, 16, and Cleveland, 10, and while deployed she was fortunate to have her mother's help in taking care of her sons.

"My mom moved into my house, which was great because we didn't have the upheaval we would have had if the kids had to move and change schools," she said. "It was an adjustment for her; it took about a month for her to get used to everything. But my sister was there to help out—she's the enforcer," she laughed.

Juggling her job as an NBCNCO (Nuclear, Biological, Chemical Noncommissioned Officer) with motherhood and her personal life was a challenge for McZeal, but she met it with the help of fellow Soldiers, keeping busy and staying connected with her Family. She called home once a week and also relied on the Internet.

"My boss really helped me when I was deployed," she shared. "We had sit-down talks on many occasions. Also, I was in a little church choir [over there], which kept my mind focused and off of things back home. It helps to have something like that to keep you grounded so you don't let your problems, or the absence of your loved ones, overwhelm you."

Having a plan in place was paramount to a successful deployment, and McZeal shared some of her strategies. "Make sure you have a good Family care plan

and can trust whoever is caring for your children during your absence," she said. "Make sure you leave that person with enough money to support your kids. If you can, keep your kids in the same school and keep their routine in place, because it's good for them to be in their own house with their friends and Family close by."

SELFISH OR SELFLESS?

Of course, as any working single mom will tell you, there are some emotional bumps that come with the territory. "Sometimes, you feel like you're being selfish [being away for so long]," she shared. "But I think that's an emotion a lot of single parents feel. It comes with the job."

McZeal is proud of her service in the Guard and feels lucky to have been afforded the education and career opportunities the Army offers. "I've developed friendships with a lot of good folks in the Guard, and it's rewarding to be able to lead troops and receive my promotions," she said.

In the end, McZeal believes that balancing her career, parenthood and her personal life is paramount. "Don't go to work and ignore your home and life," she said. "It's important to be able to take off the uniform and feel like a woman again. When I got back, I put on makeup and did my hair every day. Even if I was just going to school to pick up my son, I'd get a bit dressed up. People noticed, and it made me feel good."

McZeal is proud of her sons and believes her service in the Guard has set an example for them that keeps them grounded. "I count myself lucky to have the Family and the resources I have,"

Earning My Degree

Motivations for joining the Army National Guard are as numerous as the women who do so, but furthering their education is a component that's shared by most. The Guard affords women a variety of opportunities, both professionally and economically, that they might not otherwise have had. And although they do have to sacrifice time away from home and Family, in the end it's a win-win for everyone. Not only are these women able to afford college, but they also acquire leadership skills that can later translate to good jobs in the civilian market or a continuing career in the Guard.

she shared. "You need to stay positive. I'm trying to teach my kids to be more grateful, and that helps them stay positive. I tell them, 'Count your blessings in everything you do because you may not be as fortunate as some people, but you are fortunate.'"

SGT Erika Clayborn Mother, Student, Soldier

SGT Erika Clayborn lives in Fort Worth, TX, and is with the HHC 56th IBCT (Infantry Brigade Combat Team). Although she joined the Guard to further her education, Clayborn has since learned that being a Soldier



SGT Erika Clayborn,
with her son, Kaiden.

enriches her life in a variety of ways.

"I am very proud to be a member of the Guard, because wearing the uniform represents things like courage, discipline, honor, strong-mindedness and determination," she said.

Despite the fact that she's the single mother of a 2-year-old boy, Kaiden, Clayborn feels the Guard has prepared her for the challenges that come with the territory.

"The Guard has helped me set an example in my Family by being the first to serve in the military and the first to obtain an undergraduate degree. It has built my confidence, and will allow me to pave the way for my son and give him every advantage I possibly can.

"It's difficult being a single parent, but rewarding," she continued. "It's extremely stressful to juggle working full time, being a full-time student and [being] a full-time mother. There are a lot of sleepless nights and lots of tears."

PROGRAM FOR SUCCESS

Luckily, Clayborn's son spends weekdays at a daycare facility that her cousin operates. But in order to deal with the other challenges in her life, Clayborn takes advantage of several Guard programs.

"I use Military OneSource, which assists with counseling, childcare and medical needs, among other things," she told us. "I also use the JCEP [Job Connection Education Program], which assists with resume writing, mock interviews, job referrals and placement.

"It's important to believe in yourself and your abilities," Clayborn said. "It's important to surround yourself with individuals who believe in you just as much as you believe in yourself. Think big, dream big and never settle for less. It's very possible to be a successful single mom and a successful woman in the Armed Forces at the same time, because when you determine your worth, the sky's the limit." 📌

family interrupted

Despite Deployment, the Lathams' Glass Is Half-Full

STORY BY RACHEL LATHAM // PHOTOS BY ADAM LIVINGSTON

The two weeks before my husband, SFC Kenneth Latham, left for his third tour in Iraq, our Family was in a suspended reality. The kids were out of school for Christmas break, Ken was using two weeks of vacation time and I canceled all “extra” activities. With our normal pattern of school, work, karate, Scouts and horseback riding all off the schedule, we were suddenly faced with blissful nothing. We slept late, did Family activities when we felt like

it—and on some days did nothing. We cooked new recipes and enjoyed a white Christmas, which is nearly unheard of in Tennessee. We ignored the calendar.

Time did still pass, though, and we were almost surprised to look up and see that he would leave in only three days. There was a flurry of activity as we made the final preparations, until we reached that last night at home. Sleep escaped me, knowing what we would face in the morning. The bags were lined up on the living room floor. The alarm clock was

set. The backup alarm clock was set. But I never really slept.

It was cold when we loaded the bags, with freezing rain to match our moods. I took a picture of Ken with each child individually. I have done this with every deployment, meaning for it to be an encouragement and a special thing for each child. I haven't told them it's because I want them to have a last picture in case the unthinkable happens.

Our drive to the armory took about three hours. We talked and laughed, ate snacks, and admired the beautiful Tennessee scenery. As we got closer, though, there was more silence in between the laughter. The mile marker signs on the highway confirmed the closing distance.

We didn't stay long at the armory. We decided at previous deployments that those drawn-out ceremonies of goodbyes were simply too painful. I watched other Families with their Soldiers, and I couldn't help but notice the shocked, tired look on everyone's face. I expected we looked the same. I didn't know these people, but we had a bond nonetheless, as our Soldiers would spend the next year together.

PARTING PRAYER

We helped Ken unload his bags, hugged and kissed in the parking lot, and left. I watched Ken's back as he walked into the armory, a shape I could pick out of any crowd. I memorized him again, prayed for him and hoped we could survive the year ahead.

The drive home was quiet at first, and then punctuated by bickering. The kids had held it together long enough. The stress came out in arguments about nonissues. The imbalance of one parent suddenly trying to do the job of two was immediately clear. I tried to offer encouragement that I didn't really feel. My words fell flat.

Back home, we confronted the evidence of our hurried morning. Ken's water glass was still on the dining



▲ Rachel Latham reminds her children daily that their father loves them, despite his absence.

room table, half-full. Dirty coffee mugs were in the sink. The unneeded items from Ken's wallet left on the counter-top. It seems that everywhere we looked, his absence was the biggest thing we saw.

The children were exhausted, but it was only 4 p.m. Too early for bed. No one was hungry. We watched TV to kill time and to fill the room with noise.

At one point I realized I couldn't find our youngest son, Alex. I didn't have the energy to yell for him, so I walked around looking. I found him curled up on Ken's side of the bed, head on his pillow, with a vacant stare. My heart broke that his little heart was breaking.

It was in this moment that I realized I can't be both parents. No matter what I do during the course of the year, I would not be able to fill the void. I decided in that moment, as I watched Alex cry softly on his daddy's pillow, that I would be the best mother that I could be.

Nothing I could do would fill the void in a little boy's heart for his daddy, and I didn't want to try. That part of his heart was not for me.

I did decide that I would do all I could to help keep the bond between father and son strong. The children don't need me to fill that gap. They just need me to hold the space open for when he returns, and to fill it with communication, loving thoughts and support as much as possible.

I let Alex cry and reminded him how much his daddy loves him.

GENTLE REMINDERS

I remember what I learned from the previous deployments. When the older children bicker and fuss, I recognize it as stemming from the stress they're under. I remind them of the rules set by both parents, and that none of that has changed. I tell them lovingly, and they respond.

For those who tell me that deployment is like single parenting, I would argue that it's not. Ken's role in our Family hasn't changed. And that space needs to be maintained. It's a relief to think of it this way, because if I tried to be both mother and father, I know I would fail.

That night, I tucked the children in and began the first of many nights on my knees, praying for the hearts of my husband and children. The image of the other Family members I saw at the armory flashed through my mind. I wondered how they were managing this first night, and I prayed for them too. There is a common bond among Soldiers' Families, one that crosses normal boundaries.

People are always asking, “How do you do it?” I tell them, we just do. We love our Soldiers and what they stand for. So, one day at a time, we'll get through this, until Ken is home and the empty space is filled. 🙏



trim down, & tone up

Simple Exercises
to Get Your Arms and Legs in Shape

BY 2LT HOLLY DI GIOVINE
PHOTOS BY ADAM LIVINGSTON

It's remarkably easy to improve muscle tone in your arms and legs as long as you combine exercise knowledge, perfect form and the right amount of weight. The most common mistake I witness at the gym is lack of intensity. Just going through the motions of a full body circuit is not enough to stimulate your muscles into becoming tightened, toned, calorie-burning machines. In general, if your goal is to develop muscle tone, you must meet the following criteria:

Fatigue the muscle in 10–15 repetitions.

By definition, “fatigue” means you would not be able to perform another rep at that time. This doesn't require a lot of fancy or heavy equipment—consider that you probably weigh 140 pounds, plus or minus—that is enough to train most muscles in your body.

Maintain form throughout the entire set.

The body is trained to do everything efficiently, but this leads to cheating and incorporating “helper” muscles that let the muscle group you are training off the hook. Before beginning each exercise, it is essential that you understand what muscle group you are trying to target and which muscles should not be involved. The exercises here include a list of which muscles are being trained. Concentrate on those muscles, or watch in a mirror during each rep to help focus the intensity where you want it.

Select a weight that allows you to combine the previous two criteria. Most people err on the side of not enough weight. It is inappropriate to use the same weight for each muscle group (your chest is much stronger than your tricep), or to use the same set of weights indefinitely. I recommend buying a starter set of 3-, 5- and 8-pound dumbbells and then increasing as your fitness improves.

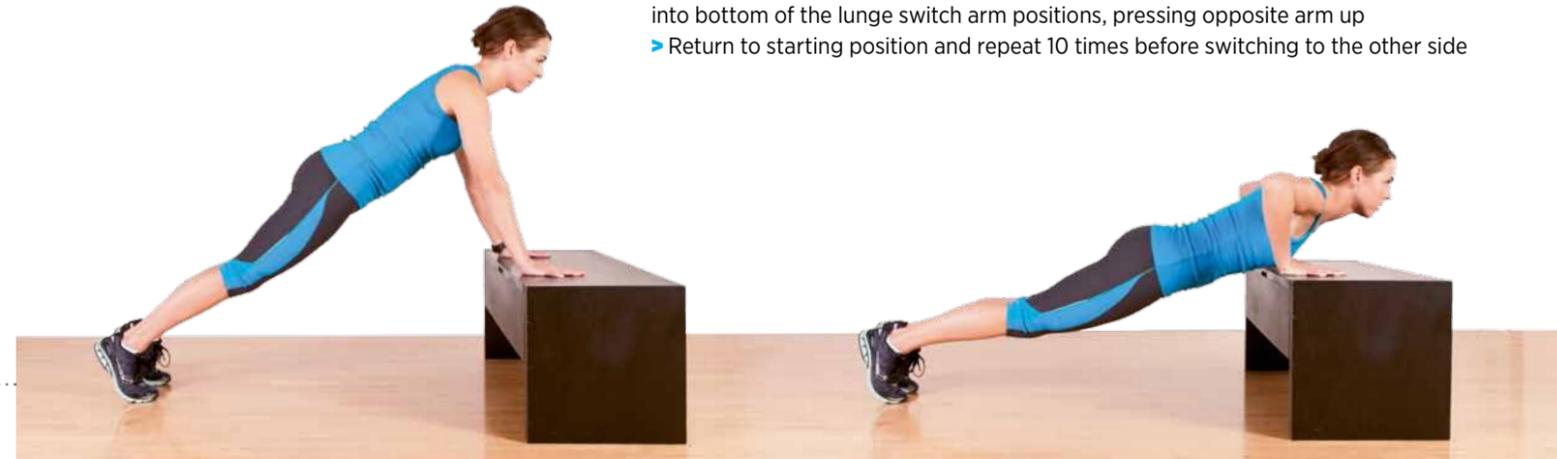
Rest between sets should be limited to changing equipment and grabbing a drink. When performing a circuit, wait to rest until the end of each round—avoid finding excuses to stop in between exercises.

Getting Started

Perform as a circuit, completing all exercises in a row, and then repeating the order. It's tough to get the proper stimulus to tone the muscle if your weights are too light; if you can perform an exercise while still maintaining a conversation for more than a minute, then you need to increase your weight. The last few reps of every set should always be difficult and demand your concentration.



1. Stationary Lunge With Pulley Shoulder Press (shoulders/triceps/thighs/glutes) Start with legs in a split stance; front foot is flat, back heel is lifted; both feet straight ahead > Hold dumbbells level with the ground; the arm on the same side as front leg is lifted > As you lower down into bottom of the lunge switch arm positions, pressing opposite arm up > Return to starting position and repeat 10 times before switching to the other side



2. Elevated Push-ups (chest/triceps/core) Place hands wider than shoulder-width on a stable surface 1-3 feet off the ground > Feet are together and heels are lifted; body is straight from head to toe > Lower down for three counts, keeping head lifted > Exhale, pull abs in toward spine and return to starting position > Repeat as many times as possible in one minute, maintaining straight position even if you can't push anymore

3. Side Arm Planks With Leg Lifts (shoulders/triceps/upper back/inner & outer thigh) Bottom arm is extended directly under shoulder with bicep rotating toward direction of head to open the shoulder > Lift the hips to form a straight line from head to toe either with both legs extended or with bottom leg on ground > Maintain position as you lift the top leg, keeping knee facing directly forward > Hold for 3-5 deep breaths



* Modified Position

2LT HOLLY DI GIOVINE of the South Carolina Army National Guard earned her fitness certification from the National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM) and works as a personal trainer and as a fit camp leader.



4. Bent-Over Fly

(back of shoulders/triceps)

Start with feet hip-width apart; bend forward at the waist with slight bend in knees and flat back
 ▶ Use a weight that allows you to hold your body position; if it's too heavy, you will lose form and posture
 ▶ On an exhale, raise arms up to shoulder-height with palms facing down; pause at top as you squeeze across the back of your shoulders, then lower to starting position with control



5. Bridge Skull Crushers

(hips/glutes/hamstrings/triceps/core)

Use a ball or bench to support your upper back/neck
 ▶ Extend both arms straight up over shoulders, pulling shoulders deep into socket
 ▶ Slowly lower dumbbells to a 90-degree angle; pause at the bottom then return to starting position, focusing on engaging the back of the upper arms

6. One-Leg Bicep Curl / One-Leg Squat With Front Raise

(quads/hips/biceps/shoulders) Balance on one leg, holding dumbbells, palms forward, at sides
 ▶ Keep elbows in stationary position at side and pull tops of shoulders away from ears at all times
 ▶ Slowly raise dumbbells as high as possible without moving elbows; squeeze bicep at top of motion and lower with control
 ▶ After 10 reps on each leg, transition to a one-leg squat as you raise your dumbbells shoulder-height to the front



7. Lateral Shuffles

(inner and outer thighs/quads/glutes) Place cones 15 feet apart and stand between with feet shoulder-width apart, legs bent and back flat
 ▶ Keep low as you shuffle to each side and squat to touch the cone with outside hand
 ▶ For more of a challenge, see how fast you can shuffle each way five times and then beat your time three times in a row with 60-second break in between

8. Mountain Climbers

(shoulders/chest/triceps/core/quads) Alternate keeping one leg straight and the other leg bent in a climbing motion
 ▶ Pull abs into spine throughout entire set and pull torso forward to maintain a long neck; limit how much your hips bounce up and down
 ▶ Time how long it takes to complete 10 of each



Got Only Five Minutes?

No problem. Simply pick two or three of these exercises and perform 10 sets of each in a circuit as many times as possible in five minutes. For increasing your heart rate while incorporating muscles from head to toe, I recommend Elevated Push-ups, Mountain Climbers and Lateral Shuffles. Intensity and frequency pay off.

Half-Time Intensive

Choose workout No. 1 or No. 2 from the table at right and perform as many rounds as you can in a given amount of time. If you have only 10 minutes, then attempt to get through it two times. Make a note of your personal record and try to beat it next time. This helps to increase your focus on intensity while, of course, always paying special attention to maintaining perfect form.

	Workout #1	Workout #2
Exercise No.	1, 3, 7, 8	2, 4, 5, 6, 7
No. of Reps/Sets	Stationary Lunge With Pulley Shoulder Press 10-15 reps per leg Side Arm Planks With Leg Lifts Build up to 60 seconds per side Lateral Shuffles 10-20 in each direction Mountain Climbers 10 per leg for each variation	Elevated Push-ups As many as possible in 60 seconds; hold plank if you can't push any more Bent-Over Fly 15 reps Bridge Skull Crushers 15 reps One-Leg Bicep Curl / One-Leg Squat With Front Raise 10 per leg per position, then switch legs Lateral Shuffles 10-20 in each direction
Equipment Needed	3-to-8-lb. dumbbells, or any light object such as a water bottle	3-to-8-lb. dumbbells, or any light object such as a water bottle; two chairs or other elevated objects 2-3 feet high
Total Time	15-20 minutes, assuming 10-to-30-second rest between exercises	20-25 minutes, assuming 10-to-30-second rest between exercises

liquefy your assets

What Happens When You're Dehydrated

BY MEGAN PACELLA, STAFF WRITER

With summer temperatures climbing, your chances of becoming dehydrated are pretty high. And while you might not be able to tell when that's happening, the effects can hinder your performance anywhere from your desk job to outdoor activity.

The first step to keeping hydrated is learning how your body uses the fluids you drink. For starters, it helps to know that your body is composed of about 75 percent water and 25 percent solid matter. You need water to provide nourishment and eliminate waste, in addition to trillions of other hormonal reactions. Even a slight fluid loss can throw your system off. But, it's not difficult to get your fluids back on track.

"You absorb fluid almost immediately," says Mari-Etta Parrish, a board certified specialist in sports dietetics at Baptist Sports Medicine in Nashville, TN. "You have a maximum absorption rate of 8 ounces in 15 minutes. If the fluid contains a little bit of sugar or some electrolytes, it will absorb more quickly into your bloodstream."



Absorbing water into your blood is important, because that's how fluids are distributed throughout your body.

"Water circulates in your blood, so if you're dehydrated, your blood won't flow as quickly, and you'll have a lower blood volume," says Parrish. "It empties from your stomach into your blood and then through your body, where it is distributed to your body's cells."

THE DANGERS

Even mild dehydration is enough to affect you. You might experience thirst, loss of appetite, dry skin, dry mouth, fatigue, weakness and headache. Even a tiny bit of fluid loss slows brain function. "Your performance is impaired even by

1 percent dehydration," Parrish says. "That means you lose 1 percent of your weight to fluid loss. In the summertime, it's not uncommon for someone who weighs 150 pounds to lose 7 or 8 pounds of fluid from being active outside."

At a 5 percent fluid loss, more serious symptoms develop. These include increased heart rate, higher body temperature, extreme fatigue, headaches and nausea.

"It's easy to pass off those symptoms as lack of sleep or the result of strenuous exercise, but many times it's caused by dehydration," Parrish says.

If you have signs of dehydration, drink a glass of water. If you're only slightly dehydrated, you should feel better after

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Your performance is impaired even by 1 percent dehydration.

Bottled water.

While it's tempting to buy prepackaged bottled water when you're thirsty, Mari-Etta Parrish says that it's no different from any other filtered water. If you want to free your water from impurities, buy a filtered pitcher.

Sports drinks.

Some sports drinks contain electrolytes that help your body absorb fluids more quickly. Alex Pinto, director of athletic medicine at Baptist Sports Medicine, says sports drinks are a great alternative for people who don't like drinking water—especially kids. Just be sure to look for brands that don't contain a lot of sugar.

Are All Liquids Created Equal?

Get the lowdown on how different fluids affect hydration

Tap water.

Studies show that your body absorbs and uses tap water just like it does filtered water. Plus, fluoride in tap water is good for your teeth.

Fruit juice.

While some fruit juices have nutrients and antioxidants, others have extremely high fructose content. Look for natural juices that don't have added sugar.

Soft drinks.

While soft drinks technically count as fluids, it is difficult for your body to absorb any water from them because of the high sugar content. It's best to limit your intake of soft drinks.

a few minutes. If you're dizzy or nauseous, refrain from strenuous activity and drink something that contains electrolytes, which will help you absorb water more quickly.

KEEP HYDRATED

While many professionals recommend drinking eight 8-ounce glasses of water a day to stay hydrated, the amount actually varies from person to person.

"First and foremost, listen to your body," Parrish says. "But if you want a number of ounces [of water] to intake, I tell people to drink half their weight in ounces. That's a great place to start—you'll be surprised how much more energy you have when you drink enough water."

If your body becomes severely dehydrated, or remains consistently dehydrated, you might experience serious health problems—or even death. A few of these include:

Body drought.

When your body suffers from water deficiency, you experience a reduction in your brain's energy supply. This leads to low vital function and depression, which can cause social anxiety, stress, lethargy and anger.

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome.

This condition is a major sign of progressive dehydration of the brain. It also indicates that metabolic toxins are preserved on your brain. Luckily, it's an easy problem to reverse.

Blood vessel constriction.

When you're dehydrated, your brain produces a hormone that can constrict blood vessels in areas where there is cellular dehydration. This happens so your body can have adequate pressure that will allow water to filter to your cells. When your water levels are deficient, your blood vessels constrict and cause your blood pressure to rise.

extreme kids' edition makeover

10 tips

for redecorating your child's room on a budget

Sherri Blum, CID, works at Jack and Jill Interiors and runs her own company called Sherri Blum Designs. She specializes in designing one-of-a-kind nurseries and children's rooms.

Check out her websites: JackAndJillInteriors.com SherriBlumDesigns.com

Or follow her blog: JackAndJillInteriors.blogspot.com

Children grow up quickly. As they pass through each phase, their hobbies, interests, goals and dreams change just as quickly. They want and deserve their rooms to be a cool reflection of who they are. After all, it's often the only space they can call their own. We should allow them to express themselves through their room décor. We can even get to know them better by working on the redesign together. The project doesn't have to break the bank. There are many little touches and do-it-yourself projects that can give the room a whole new look at a very low cost. **BY SHERRI BLUM, CERTIFIED INTERIOR DESIGNER**

Repaint the room.

This can seem like a daunting task, but it really only takes a day, and is the least expensive way to completely change the look of a room. Pick out a secondary color from your child's bedding for the new paint color. One of those colors on the wall will give your child's room a designer look without the designer price.



Select new bedding.

Choose something without a theme. This will allow you to

use the same bedding throughout the years. Simple stripes, plaid or any geometric pattern will be fine and will work with any future theme they pick. Stylish, well-constructed and inexpensive quilts can be found at discount stores.

Want a theme but can't paint a mural?

Add themed vinyl wall decals to the walls, lampshades and other surfaces. These decals are removable and repositionable, and come in a variety of themes for all ages. When your child outgrows their current interest, simply peel them off and throw them away. Try InstantMurals.com.

Paint the ceiling.

Kids spend a lot of time lying on their backs, daydreaming



and playing in their room. Why not give them something interesting to look at? Find a color that complements the wall color—maybe a third color from the bedding fabric—choose a paler shade, and paint it on the ceiling. Goodbye, boring white ... hello, fun new room.

Don't forget the pillows.

A twin bed can double as a sofa when you place it lengthwise on a wall with colorful pillows. This opens



The most important tip is listen to your child.

Take advantage of this opportunity to get to know more about their personality, likes, dislikes and goals. A child's environment has a direct impact on their outlook each day.

up the floor for playtime and makes the bed more inviting for watching a movie with a friend or reading before bed. If you have sewing skills, consider using your child's old team jerseys to create your own throw pillows.

Frame your child's artwork.

Grab three large canvases from a local craft store and paint away. You'd be surprised at how professional even a novice artist can appear just by adding a chunky frame to the artwork. Line the three framed canvases up at eye level on the wall over the bed and wait for the compliments to roll in.

Spray paint is your best friend.

I've taken old ceiling light fixtures, lamp bases and picture frames, and made them fresh and stylish with a simple can of spray paint. Metallics are very popular today—why not spray an old side table, dresser or desk with a chic silver tone? Other popular colors today are turquoise and coral. Add matching photo frames on the wall and you've got a modern look for the cost of a few cans of paint.

Frame your favorite photos.

Select some family photos or vacation pics, scan, crop and

enlarge. Make them as big as possible without them becoming grainy. Use photo software to experiment with colorizing the images to match the room colors. Or you can make them all black-and-white. Print the photos and trim them to a 6 by 6 inch size. Buy 12 by 12 inch scrapbook frames and papers from a crafts store. Center the photos onto the scrapbook paper and glue in place. Frame them and hang.

Organize in style.

Use the redecorating process to have your child clean out old items and reorganize what they keep. Select matching galvanized pails from a home

improvement store or storage baskets from a crafts store. Spray-paint the bins to coordinate with the room. You can even decoupage the pails with photos, stickers or scrapbook papers. Add decorative labels to each bin and line them up on a dresser or bookcase for a finished look.

Don't neglect the floor.

Choose a fun and colorful shag rug for beside the bed. They're very "in" and can be found at discount stores for just a few bucks. Even if the room has carpeting, adding a colorful rug brings interest and warmth to the space as well as providing a soft play space. 📌

HOW THE BOWMAN FAMILY IS SURVIVING SUICIDE

STORY BY STEPHANIE INMAN
PHOTOS BY EVAN BAINES



Holding On Letting Go

S

SPECIALIST TIM BOWMAN HAD THE sights of his .50 cal machine gun locked onto the car barreling toward him. He was ready to demolish it and anyone inside.

The turret gunner of the Humvee, Tim was part of a checkpoint in Baghdad, Iraq, where U.S. Soldiers stopped and searched passing cars. However, this car wasn't stopping.

Tim, an Illinois Army National Guard Soldier from Polo, IL, was the last line of defense at this checkpoint. If he didn't stop the car, no one else would.

But he didn't want to press the trigger. He cringed at even the thought. This appeared to be a harmless Iraqi Family. Yet, he couldn't be sure they were harmless, and if he let them pass, he might be placing numerous lives in jeopardy.

So he stiffened his arms and pressed the trigger. Loud explosions ricocheted through the air. The car rolled to a stop. No one inside was left alive.

Many Questions

This was the only story from Tim's 2005 deployment that he shared with his parents, Mike and Kim, after he returned home. They believe it was this incident, among others, that led to Tim's downward emotional spiral.

But they will never know, because in November 2005, eight months after his



SPC Tim Bowman deployed to Iraq as an infantryman from 2004 to 2005. Serving as a turret gunner, he experienced combat during his first week of deployment.

return from Iraq, Tim committed suicide. His Family was left asking the one burning question that plagues virtually everyone affected by suicide: Why?

Mike and Kim aren't alone. The suicide rate for Guard Soldiers has been rising. In 2010, there were 101 confirmed or suspected suicides among Guard Soldiers on inactive status—more than double the number of 2009.

The Bowmans now divide their lives based on what happened before that day and what happened after.

Tim's friends knew him as the "life of the party." He was a true free spirit, his father recalls.

"Timothy was always the class

clown," said Mike. "His mission in life was to make people laugh."

But despite his carefree nature, Tim longed for a little structure in his life. So in 2003, he joined the Illinois National Guard as an infantryman with the 1/202nd Air Defense Artillery, 1st Cavalry, 2nd Brigade. It was a perfect fit.

Too Much Silence

"He loved the Guard and the camaraderie within the unit," Mike recalled. "These guys were a very close-knit unit. They knew each other very well, which helped them immensely in surviving the war."

March 2004, Tim deployed to Iraq. His



unit was commanded to patrol Route Irish, one of the most dangerous roads in the world at the time. It is a brief stretch of highway leading from Baghdad International Airport to the center of the city.

When he returned to the U.S. about a year later, he spoke very little of the deployment. The Family asked him to open up, but he refused. "He [felt] incredibly guilty about the things that he had done," said Mike. "He would say, 'I can't talk to you about it.'"

They tried to reassure him that he was merely performing his duty—that it didn't reflect on him as a person. But apparently, his pain was too great.

"After he had been drinking, he would say things like, 'If I tell you what I've done, you won't love me anymore,'" Mike revealed.

There were also drastic changes in

"After he had been drinking, he would say things like, 'If I tell you what I've done, you won't love me anymore.'"

— MIKE BOWMAN, of his son, SPC Tim Bowman

Tim's behavior. Prior to his deployment he drank alcohol only occasionally, but after returning, his drinking increased significantly. Then, when intoxicated, he would become verbally aggressive, which often led to fistfights.

During his sleep, Tim would experience "night terrors" that left him thrashing and kicking.

Mike noticed these changes right away, because Tim worked for him at the Family electrical business. They were together every day.

"He was much more intense when he came home [from deployment]. We just took that as a sign that he was still coming down off the pace of combat," said Mike. "His eyes were so soft and loving before [the deployment]. When he came back, they were very cold. You could tell it wasn't the same person."

What the Bowmans didn't realize was that Tim was exhibiting signs of PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), an anxiety disorder that afflicts many Soldiers returning from combat. Like

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE BOWMAN FAMILY

Signs someone may be suicidal

When someone is considering suicide, the following signs may be present:

- ▶ Feelings of hopelessness, worthlessness, depression, poor self-esteem, guilt
- ▶ Not wanting to participate in Family or social activities
- ▶ Changes in sleeping and eating patterns
- ▶ Feelings of anger, rage, need for revenge
- ▶ Feeling exhausted most of the time
- ▶ Poor concentration
- ▶ Problems in school academically or socially
- ▶ Feeling listless, irritable
- ▶ Frequent crying
- ▶ Reckless, impulsive behaviors
- ▶ Frequent physical ailments such as headaches or stomachaches

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many other Families at that time, the Bowmans weren't properly informed about PTSD and what can happen when it goes untreated.

It wasn't until Mike checked his son's computer and found photos of mutilated bodies and craters from IED explosions that he began to realize how much Tim had endured.

Plan of Action

As the months passed, Tim's friends and Family grew more concerned. They began to discuss plans of action to help him. They finally settled on conducting an intervention, and scheduled it for the Sunday following Thanksgiving.

Then, the night before Thanksgiving, glimmers of Tim's old personality suddenly returned. The Family began to wonder if the intervention would be necessary.

"He seemed more genuine [that night]," said Mike. "He was laughing and carrying on. He picked his sister up and threw her around like he used to. We thought, 'All right, we have got some of the old Timmy back.'"

The next morning, the extended Bowman Family gathered at Mike's parents' house for Thanksgiving. The home was overflowing with people. But when they sat down to eat, they noticed Tim was missing.

Mike called Tim's cell phone, but he didn't answer. After several more attempts to reach him, Mike grew worried. He wanted to go find him. He climbed into his truck, rested his hands on the steering wheel and pondered the places Tim might be.

Deep in his gut, he had an intuition. His office, where he ran the electrical company, was less than five miles down the road. This was also where he housed all of his firearms. He put the truck in drive and sped off. When he saw Tim's truck in the driveway, he had a sinking suspicion as to what lay ahead.

Uncovering the Worst

He opened the door to his office. Tim was lying in the middle of the room in a pool of blood. He had shot himself with a 9 mm.

At first, Mike stood paralyzed. His mind had gone blank. He couldn't process the situation and didn't know what to do. Eventually, he reached down and picked up the weapon. He gently held it, and wondered whether life was worth living without his son.

"I am looking at my only son, my legacy to my Family's business, bleeding on the floor," said Mike. "I thought my life was over. At that point, grief and shock take over. You don't think about all the other aspects of your life that you have to live for."

But before Mike could do anything, he heard a gasp. It was Tim. He was still alive.

That single sound knocked Mike out of his shock and into panic mode. He called the ambulance. Then he called his wife.

Mike's wife, Kim, rushed over with Tim's sister, Michelle. Michelle had an idea about what she would see, but it was worse than she'd imagined. She says she has blocked out large portions of that day. But she remembers being on a mission, determined to see her brother pull through alive.

"When you are going through something like that, your mind starts to shut down," shared Michelle. "I was running back and forth, wondering where the ambulance was. He was still breathing, so I thought he was going to be fine."

Sadly, everything would not be OK.

Sad Goodbye

Tim, 23, was pronounced dead at the hospital. The Family was overwhelmed with shock and disbelief.

The enormous turnout at the funeral was a testament to how many lives Tim had touched. Every pew was filled to capacity. Mourners spilled out into the streets. Nearly every Soldier from Tim's unit attended, as did the firemen from the volunteer fire department where Tim worked part time.

The Bowmans asked the mourners to write either a memory or story about Tim as a way to keep their son's memory alive. The stories would later be placed in a book.

"I remember how he filled the room with his presence. He truly touched my

What should I do if I think someone is suicidal?

If you think someone is suicidal, do not leave them alone. Try to get them to seek immediate help from their doctor or the nearest emergency room, or call 911. Eliminate access to firearms or other potential tools for suicide, including unsupervised access to medications.

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heart! I loved him from the first time I met him. He was so cheerful and it was great to be around him," wrote Tim's aunt, Doreen.

Another entry was from a Soldier who served with Tim in Iraq.

"I remember all of us would be pretty uptight before we went out on [Route] Irish [in Iraq]. Timmy would always have a smile and would make my job easier," said the Soldier.

When the mourners lined up to greet the Family, Mike heard the same sentiment over and over: "I never imagined that this would happen to Timmy."

Pact of Solidarity

After the funeral, friends and loved ones came to the Bowman home. The small house was packed with people, but Mike realized they would soon be gone, leaving him, his wife and their daughter alone. If they were going to

survive this loss, he knew they would have to stick together.

So the three of them sat down in the living room and made a pact: They would not let Tim's death drive a wedge between them. No matter how difficult things became, they wouldn't give up on each other.

Mike knew the odds weren't in their favor. He'd heard that many marriages end after a child commits suicide. But Mike was determined to beat the odds.

So with the pact in place, they set forth trying to rebuild their lives.

Today, five years later, they sit in that same room, still learning to cope with the loss. It's a process that will likely never end. And the road is different for each Family member. This is one of the most important lessons the Bowmans learned after Tim's death: No two people grieve the same way.

Kim, Tim's mother, took his death very hard. She quit her job. Mike and



Michelle became major sources of support for her during that time.

Even after five years, Kim's brown eyes still tear up when she discusses Tim's suicide, and she reaches for the locket around her neck bearing Tim's photo. She's more reserved than her husband and daughter when talking about her recovery. However, she admits that she almost ended her marriage with Mike.

Some of the couple's conflicts resulted from their different grieving methods. Mike found comfort in support groups like TAPS (Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors). He also became heavily involved with the Patriot Guard Riders, an organization created to honor fallen Soldiers. But the more time Mike devoted to these pursuits, the less time he spent with his wife.

Turning to Therapy

Therapy played a significant role in the Family's recovery. Through numerous couples-counseling sessions, Mike and Kim developed a healthy balance in the way they spend their time. The sessions gave them a safe place to open up about their emotions, which included guilt and anger. They continue therapy today.

Tim's sister, Michelle, responded to her brother's death with sudden clarity about the brevity of life. Fueled by this new perspective, she enrolled in a graduate program at University of Wisconsin to pursue her dream of becoming an architect. This helped significantly with her recovery.

Despite their hardships, the Bowman pact is stronger than ever. In fact, a new chapter has opened in their lives—they

The Family's Irish setter, Cassie, became a wonderful therapeutic tool after SPC Tim Bowman's suicide.



decided to use their experiences to help others. Mike and Kim have become surrogate parents to Tim's Guard unit, inviting them over regularly for pizza and drinks. Along with being a source of comfort to all, it allows the Bowmans to watch the Soldiers for signs of distress.

In turn, the Soldiers know that if they are ever struggling with an issue, they can talk to the Bowmans.

Mike, Kim and Michelle are all certified in suicide intervention techniques, and have intervened in suicide attempts several times. They

Winning the Battle Against Suicide

The National Guard is making great strides to reduce the number of suicides among Soldiers. It has developed numerous programs to increase awareness and provide resources for Soldiers struggling with PTSD and depression.

In 2007, the Illinois National Guard Yellow Ribbon Program was established to help Soldiers and their Families cope with challenges that may arise before, during and after deployment. Thanks to these efforts,

the Illinois National Guard hasn't suffered a suicide in nearly two years.

Mike Bowman has noticed the improvements and gives thanks to the National Guard. "[The Illinois] adjutant general is a wonderful human being. I have met him several times, and I am so impressed with how this administration has tackled the issue of military Families, redeployments and demobilization for the National Guard and Reserve."



have also been actively involved in pushing the National Guard to better educate Soldiers and their Families about PTSD and suicide. Mike even testified in front of the House of Representatives to promote awareness about these issues. His moving speech about the life and death of Tim Bowman resulted in a standing ovation.

The Family continues to push forward, always with Tim in mind. They make a point to remember how he lived, not how he died. Framed photos of him line the walls of their home. One is from his senior year of high school, in which he's holding a guitar. In another, he's proudly displaying his biceps. But one image stands out from the rest—a painting of him in his BDUs.

Each Family member has their own way of maintaining a connection with Tim. Mike and his daughter, Michelle, visit the gravesite. Kim does not.

"For whatever reason," said Kim, "it's just not a thing for me. He's not there." She touches her heart. "He's in here."

Kim also rarely sets foot in the room where Tim died. When she does, she is instantly overcome with grief. Mike, however, spends every day there—it's still his office. And he's kept it almost exactly as it was the night Tim died. The small changes include a few replaced



boards where the bullets entered. Tim's tool belt hangs on the wall. The flowers from his funeral, carefully dried by the Family, line one side of the room.

Sacred Space

When asked why he wanted to keep the room as it was, Mike explained that initially, he didn't. He wanted to have it gutted. But then, soon after Tim's death, Mike learned that the room held a special significance for Tim and decided to keep it intact.

"We found out some very special things about Tim and that office in the days after he died. He'd leave his apartment in town ... and drive out to sit in that office, because, for whatever reason, he found peace there," Mike shared. "That was his little haven where he could get away and just think. So I consider that room to be holy ground."

Mike also says that surrounding himself with Tim's memory gives him the courage to fight for PTSD and suicide awareness.

"When we were in the House [of Representatives] in 2007, my wife and I testified that day," said Mike. "I could never have done that before Tim died. It's hard for people who are still grieving heavily to understand that there is good that can come out of it. But [there is]. You just have to be receptive to it."

TAPS

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors

(TAPS) is an organization for Families who are grieving the loss of a fallen Soldier. It offers support groups, seminars, grief camps and other resources. The Bowman Family relied heavily on TAPS after Tim's death.

Since Families of suicide victims are often affected differently from Families of Soldiers fallen in combat, TAPS developed programs and events geared directly for this group.

Kim Ruocco, manager for suicide outreach and education programs at TAPS, often draws on her own experiences in helping grieving Families. Her husband, U.S. Marine Maj. John Ruocco, hanged himself in 2005 after returning from Iraq.

"You have to grieve," said Ruocco, the mother of two boys, about losing a loved one. "You have to go through it. You can't go around it or over it. I think sometimes a parent tries to put their grief aside [for the kids' sake], but you have to [go through] it. And it's OK for your child to see you grieving. Kids have to know how to grieve. You have to model it for them."

For more information about TAPS, visit taps.org.



making the move

Owning a Home Is Within Your Reach

BY JUNE WALBERT,
USAA CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER

Despite the housing crisis, the dream of owning a home still shines brightly. The combination of lower home values and historically low interest rates may be tantalizing, but for first-time homebuyers applying for a mortgage, it can also be daunting. Homeownership means loads of decisions, learning terms, signing papers and financial responsibility.

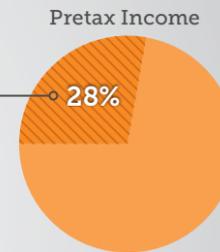
So, homeownership is a big, long-term decision. Buying a home, living in it for a few years and selling for a profit has retreated to dreamland. It's best to think of a home as a place to live, raise a family and enjoy life. Not make a quick buck.

Buying a house—probably the largest purchase of your life—may generate anxiety. Knowledge helps mitigate those unwelcome physical symptoms. If homeownership is in your sights, there is a lot to consider. How much can you afford? What type of loan should you consider? Is buying the right decision at all?

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How much house can you afford?

Realtors say location, location, location. Financial planners say budget, budget, budget. The industry rule of thumb is **no more than 28 percent of your pretax income should be dedicated to house payments.** That includes principal, interest, property taxes and insurance. For example, if you make \$5,000 per month, no more than \$1,400 should cover those expenses. Alternatively, the total debt-to-income ratio, which includes debt like car payments, student loan payments and credit cards, shouldn't exceed 36 percent. Regardless of which ratio is used, you should feel comfortable with the amount of debt you're assuming. Ideally, dual-income couples would sign for a mortgage they can cover with one income in the event that stay-at-home parenting becomes a priority, a job loss occurs or someone becomes ill. The option to remain in the home could become critical.



Loan selection

It may be confusing, but it's wise to do research and give due consideration. Typical choices are:

30-year fixed:

The most common mortgage, it generally requires a 20 percent down payment and provides the ability to budget for the long term because the first payment is the same as the last payment. Additionally, it provides flexibility in that a little extra can be added to your payment and applied directly against the principal, thereby paying off your home sooner.

15-year fixed:

Many want to own their home outright as quickly

as possible. It's a worthy goal that could cut interest expense significantly because the shorter loan warrants lower interest rates. A potential downside is homebuyers will have higher monthly payments until the mortgage is eliminated. Falling on hard financial times may make this a tough proposition.

Adjustable rate mortgage:

This type of mortgage adjusts as interest rates change. The borrower

benefits in a rate-lowering environment and loses if interest rates climb.

Interest-only mortgage:

Aptly named, this mortgage requires that only interest payments be made for a set period, after which you may convert the loan to a 15- or 30-year mortgage or another interest-only loan. No payment against the principal is required. Two major pitfalls include not building equity in the home and rising interest rates.

VA home loan:

If you served in the National Guard for six or more years, you should be eligible for this loan. Advantages include no down payment, no private mortgage insurance and competitive interest rates. A "funding fee" is charged, but reduced with a down payment or eliminated in the case of a service-connected disability. Veterans must still pass muster from a credit standpoint. For additional eligibility rules, visit Benefits.va.gov/homeloans.

Once the budget is set and your credit report is shipshape, it's a good idea to get bank preapproval. This ensures shopping for the appropriate price point. Even with a VA loan, it still makes sense to save for a down payment. Building equity efficiently is a key to making this American dream come true.



This material is for informational purposes only and is not investment advice, an indicator of future performance, a solicitation, an offer to buy or sell, or a recommendation.

Credit History

This plays a starring role in determining whether you can secure a loan, and at what interest rate. The sooner you get a copy of your credit report and examine it for accuracy, the better.

This essential task should be completed at least six to 12 months before a mortgage application. You can get a free copy of the three major reports at AnnualCreditReport.com. Dispute any errors you find. Since higher scores equate to lower rates, you may be able to buy more house for the same dollars—in other words, more of your payment is applied to principal instead of interest.



Do you have a financial question for June?
Visit June's website:
AskJune.military.com

the joy's in the mail



**Operation Gratitude
Delivers Packages
of Hope to Soldiers**

The day after 9/11, Carolyn Blashek began looking for ways to serve her country. After several attempts to join the military (she'd been refused because she was over 40), she eventually began volunteering at an airport lounge in Los Angeles, which provided a place for Soldiers in transit to hang out.

On March 3, 2003, she was working there by herself when a very agitated Soldier walked in, asking to speak with a chaplain. "I got panicky thinking I wasn't prepared for this," Blashek said. "I told him I'd make a call. But he said, 'Please, just talk to me. My plane's about to leave and I don't have time to wait.' So I sat with him while he explained that he was returning from emergency leave and had just buried his mother.

"His wife had left him, his only child had died as an infant and he had no one in his life," she continued. "He told me, 'For the first time in a 20-year career, I'm going into a war zone, and I know I'm not going to make it back. But it doesn't matter because no one would even care.' And then he was gone, boarding a plane headed overseas."

Unfortunately, Blashek didn't get his name because he'd forgotten to sign in.

A REASON TO RETURN

"After he left, I fell apart," she continued. "I started thinking about all the Soldiers I'd met, and realized that many of them were going into harm's way without support systems. They were willing to die for [their comrades], but what would give them the strength and courage to survive? And I realized it was the belief that someone, somewhere, wanted them to come home. I felt compelled to find a way to make sure [that happened], but I knew it would take more than serving hot dogs in a lounge."

Remembering the care packages she'd sent to her children at camp, Blashek had the idea that she could do the same for the troops. This proved to be more difficult than she thought, because security standards require each package to be addressed to a specific name. Blashek didn't know anyone in the military. After some digging, she was able to gather a few names and sent her first four packages.

Soon, others with the same idea sought Blashek out. "Within a very short period of time my house was filled with donations," she recalled. "That kept going for about six months. By the end August of 2003, I was sending 50 packages a week."

PARTNERS IN CHEER

Blashek was out of materials to send when she heard about a donation of sunscreen being stored near her home, at the National Guard armory in Van Nuys, CA. That was when she met SSG Elizabeth Cowie, who worked at the armory, and the two decided to team up and organize a drive to send packages to the troops for Christmas.

"We decided to open the armory to the public [over a long weekend] and set a goal of 1,500 packages," Blashek said. "Hundreds of people showed up with donations, and by the end of three days we had assembled and shipped 3,000 packages."

It was then that she decided to make Operation Gratitude an ongoing organization. Blashek and Cowie began opening the armory every Friday and by January 2004, they'd sent over 8,000 packages.

"Then we had Memorial Day and Armed Forces Day leading up to July 4th, so we started a 'patriotic drive' and sent out 13,000 more packages," Blashek told us.

To date, the organization has sent over 650,000 packages, with items like toiletries, food, books, CDs and hand-knit scarves. Also, every package

includes a letter written by volunteers. The letters are prescreened by the Operation Gratitude staff.

"Anyone can visit our website, OperationGratitude.com, and go to the 'Get Involved' link," Blashek said. "There's an array of ways they can help. Operation Gratitude has a twofold mission. First, to put a smile on a Service Member's face and let them know the American people appreciate their service. And second, to provide an avenue for every American to be able to say thank you to the troops and make a connection. It's incredibly rewarding to see the inspiration the troops have given to every American who reaches for something greater than themselves."

GROUP EFFORT

Boasting a roster of over 12,000 volunteers who contribute 250,000 hours of assistance a year, the organization employs only six "independent contractors." Blashek, who works 18-hour days, seven days a week, never takes a penny. She credits her husband, Robert, an Operation Gratitude board member and volunteer, for his financial and moral support.

"I couldn't have done it without him," she said.

Donations come from corporations, as well as individuals, schools, churches and community organizations that do collection drives. Individuals also donate their old cell phones, which are sent to a recycler who gives Operation Gratitude cash for every phone. This program alone has netted them \$100,000. There's also a car donation program that works the same way.

As far as the Soldier who started it all, Blashek had this to say. "I don't know what happened to him, and it breaks my heart. I don't even know his name. My first prayer is that he's OK, and my second prayer is that someday he'll read one of my interviews and realize he started this whole thing. But my ultimate prayer is that he'll walk into the armory one day and greet us."

PHOTOS COURTESY OF OPERATION GRATITUDE



one call away

New Help Line Assists Homeless Veterans

BY CPT HOLLY LYNN HIRSEL,
OHARNG BEHAVIORAL HEALTH OFFICER

Ending homelessness among Veterans is a top priority for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Congress and President Barack Obama. In 2009, the VA established a goal to end Veteran homelessness within five years and to help those at risk for becoming homeless. One initiative in the VA's plan is the creation of a national 24/7 call center for homeless Veterans—(877) 4AID-VET (877-424-3838). This center provides homeless Veterans with access to VA and community services, and distributes information to concerned Family members and non-VA providers about the available programs and services. Operators connect callers to their nearest VA homeless program, followed by the development of a comprehensive assistance plan. The call center operates in conjunction with the National Veterans Crisis Line.

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Common Risk Factors for Veteran Homelessness



- ▶ Unemployment, underemployment, difficulty staying employed
- ▶ Loss of income, increase in financial burden, difficulty managing finances
- ▶ Loss of housing, such as foreclosure or eviction
- ▶ Behavioral health issues, such as substance abuse/dependence or mental illness
- ▶ Legal or other problems that may present obstacles to obtaining housing
- ▶ History of domestic violence or sexual assault
- ▶ Divorce
- ▶ Physical illness, injury or disability that may impact work, income or job skills

National Call Center for Homeless Veterans

☎ 1-877-4AID-VET
1-877-424-3838

Homeless Veterans Chat www.va.gov/homeless

💬 Are you a homeless Veteran?
Chat live 24 hours a day,
7 days a week.

WIDE-RANGING RISK

Army National Guard Soldiers are part of a fully operational fighting force and are sometimes called upon for multiple deployments. These deployments may disrupt housing, employment, Family and social support systems. Some Soldiers return from deployments with physical or mental health issues that could lead to an increased risk of homelessness.

Unlike Regular Army Soldiers, Army National Guard Soldiers and their Families face the unique challenge of serving in the military without the support and resources that an Active Duty installation provides. So when they leave military service, many of them do

so without a clear and long-term financial, employment or housing plan.

MAKING THE CALL

Army National Guard Soldiers who have jobs and attend drill every month may not seem to be at risk. Yet, if there is instability in their lives—such as difficulty obtaining or maintaining adequate housing—there could be trouble ahead. Fortunately, help is only a phone call away. 📞

Contact Information:

Holly Lynn Hirsell, LISW-S, LICDC
(216) 701-4921
Holly.Hirsell@va.gov or
Holly.Hirsell@us.army.mil

Final Salute

Helping Homeless Women Vets

There are currently 13,000 homeless female Veterans nationwide. Final Salute is an organization that provides them with safe and suitable housing.

Final Salute Focus

- Prevention of Homelessness
- Emergency Shelter
- Transitional Housing
- Emergency Financial Assistance
- Independence

Final Salute Approach

Final Salute uses every available resource within their communities before allocating funding toward building their own communities. They believe in and promote community involvement and resources to achieve their mission. This approach allows us to keep our operating expenses and overhead low and in turn, we can assist more Veterans.

Facts About the Females

- Of homeless Veterans living in shelters with at least one child, 59 percent are female.
- Female Veterans are more likely to be homeless than female non-Veterans in the U.S. and female non-Veterans in the poverty population.
- Female Veterans are more likely to be homeless than their male counterparts.
- Of the 500 transitional housing programs for male Veterans in the United States, a little over half can accept women; most do not accommodate children.
- Female Veterans who have experienced military sexual trauma (MST) may not be comfortable staying in coed facilities.

the desert turns green

Arizona Educates Children on the Environment

BY LIISA SULLIVAN, STAFF WRITER



The Arizona National Guard is committed to educating the public about environmental protection and preservation.



Children explore the inside of a Black Hawk helicopter at the Earth Day event.

Protecting Arizona's citizens and its environment is the core mission of the Arizona Army National Guard's annual Earth Day event. For the past 13 years, they have hosted this "green" event; this year they invited 500 school-age children to participate.

"We not only had 500 local area schoolchildren, but civilian/military employees and their Families as well. Estimated attendance was 1,000 plus," said Dorenda Coleman, Arizona National Guard's sustainability coordinator.

GAMES AND GILA MONSTERS

On Tuesday, April 19, the event was held at the Papago Park Military Reservation. Activities included an arts and crafts area for making things out of recycled items, Earth Day puzzles and games, a rock-climbing wall, a Black Hawk helicopter display, an electric car display, and various animal presentations.

Additionally, more than 50 vendors attended. They included Phoenix Herpetological Society; Liberty Wildlife Rescue; The Home Depot; the cities of Phoenix, Scottsdale and Tempe; the Arizona Electric Car Association; and the Sierra Club.

The event also found support from many volunteer groups—among them, American Airlines.

"American Airlines chose to participate in the Earth Day project because it's always an honor to support our community. And, compared to the sacrifices that these fine men and women have made, we feel this was the least we could do," said American Airlines/Phoenix Station General Manager Michele Henry.

SERVE AND CONSERVE

"The [Arizona National Guard] understands that part of our duty is to educate our personnel about their impact on the

environment and how to lessen that impact," Coleman explained. "With all of the executive orders requiring us to implement energy conservation, water conservation and more, we felt this was a fun way to get the message out to everyone who works for the [Guard]. It is also a great way to bring in our community and show them that the Guard protects not only Arizona citizens, but its natural and cultural assets too."

School-age children are the future, and by inviting them to attend this celebration, the Arizona Guard sets the stage and instills the importance of protecting natural resources. Without the children on board, it's a losing battle. By inviting the kids, the Guard accomplishes the following:

► Educates them about the environment and how they can positively affect it

Allows them to visit and play with animals that they might never be able to see, such as bald eagles, alligators, snakes and Gila monsters.

► Teaches them about recycling, energy and water conservation

Encourages them to interact with Soldiers on multiple levels. Kids can ask Soldiers for their autograph, pose with them for photos and ask personal questions.

► Info exchange

This event is also an ideal way for civilian and military personnel to become familiar with various community groups—whether it's an animal rescue organization, energy provider, hybrid or electric vehicle seller, or home store—people will learn how to save energy.

The community also has the opportunity to see that the Guard has people dedicated solely to the purpose of protecting the environment.

"When you talk to people, most of them have no idea that the Guard has an entire environmental department," Coleman said. "When they find out, most are pleasantly surprised.

"In many cases," she continued, "this leads to companies wanting to work with [us] on different projects. It's a positive impact all the way around. In fact, because of this event, [we are] now invited to three other Earth Day events that local communities hold."

EARTH DAY POPULATION

With more than 1,000 people in attendance, this event has evolved into a major success.

"The National Guard is sustainable," LTC John Ladd, environmental program manager for the Arizona National Guard, said. "We sustain the defense of our country, our community in times of emergency, and the environment, in all that we do. Earth Day is just a manifestation of the concept of sustainability. In taking care of our installations and training lands, we ensure that they will continue to be available for training for years to come."

Ladd believes that getting the children involved is also key. This is the fifth year that children have been invited.

"We are able to demonstrate the following to the kids: You're never too young to have a positive impact on the environment; organizations exist with the protection and sustainment of the environment as their primary goal; the National Guard is as active in protecting the environment as it is in protecting our communities and nation; and taking care of the earth can be fun and rewarding," Ladd summed up.



► Solar panels hooked up to light bulbs to show how the sun makes energy

► Pony Rescue Group: Attendees could feed and walk the ponies, nurturing respect for animals that have been abused

► The Arizona National Guard's environmental office had a log from Camp Navajo where people could pull out a core and learn to read the rings

► Show-and-tell animal skeletons

► An electronic recycling event so attendees could view types of recyclable items

► Liberty Wildlife: bald eagle, hawks, owls, birds of prey

► Phoenix Herpetological Society: alligator, Gila monster, monitor lizards, rattlesnakes, spiders and more

► An F-16 cockpit display for the kids to explore

► A Coca-Cola recycling truck

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE ARIZONA NATIONAL GUARD

back to the past

The Hermitage Museum Offers Glimpse Into Colonial America

BY MARC ACTON



▲ The log cabin that served as Jackson's home was replaced by a brick house in 1819; when this burned in 1834, the present Hermitage building, in a Greek Revival style, was erected on the old site.



The Hermitage

is a 1,120-acre National Historic Landmark which was the home of President Andrew Jackson from 1804 to 1845

Location

Nashville, TN

General Admission

Active Military & Children (5 and under): FREE
 Adults: \$17.00
 Students (13-18): \$11.00
 Children (6-12): \$7.00

For More Information

Visit www.thehermitage.com

Housed on just over 1,000 acres of rolling Nashville landscape, The Hermitage does not just call to mind older times—it takes you to them.

Known as the primary residence of our seventh president, Andrew Jackson, this beloved National Historic Landmark is a story of preservation. While the official recognition as a registered landmark did not come until December of 1960, the site has been conserved as a monument to Americana since the 1850s, which puts it in a select group of locations around the country.

This has allowed it to stand alongside such pearls of American history as Pennsylvania's Independence Hall and Virginia's Mount Vernon, snapshots of a time before the art of preservation was perfected.

The Hermitage was sold to the state of Tennessee in 1856, shortly after President Jackson's death, and since then it has hosted countless visitors, all looking for a glimpse of the rich history housed

there. Among the wide variety of tenants throughout the years are a Tennessee National Guard airport, a Confederate Soldier's home and a church.

The history of all these interesting details, and many more, can only be fully appreciated onsite, where the informative nature of the museum is perfectly balanced by the immense beauty of the Tennessee countryside.

The plantations of the 19th century were more than just residences. They were microcosms of American colonial life. As one of the very earliest-preserved of these plantations, The Hermitage is worth experiencing. According to their website, the goal of its staff is to restore the farm to its condition during Jackson's lifetime so that its visitors have a better understanding of Andrew Jackson, his Family ... and life during Jacksonian America.

If you are ever in the Nashville area and want to spend some time getting to know Jacksonian America, The Hermitage is the perfect place to do it. 📍

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE HERMITAGE



COMPREHENSIVE SOLDIER FITNESS

STRONG MINDS ★ STRONG BODIES

Physical

Emotional

Social

Spiritual

Family

FAMILY



Being part of a family unit that is **safe, supportive** and **loving**, and provides the **resources** needed for all members to live in a healthy and secure environment.



THERE WHEN YOU NEED US

The Soldier and Family Support Division

is a diverse division focused on the care of Soldiers and their Families. Some of the programs we handle are: Child and Youth Services, Spouse Employment and the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration program. We have several other programs that are equally as important, and we continue to expand our role in Soldier and Family care issues and Deployment Cycle Support.



NATIONAL 
GUARD

**SOLDIER AND FAMILY
SUPPORT DIVISION**

If you need information about these programs or have comments about *Foundations* magazine, please send them to ngb-sfss@ng.army.mil.