

COMMUNICATING INFORMATION AND RESOURCES



Bells Across America For Fallen Service Members

By Stephanie Hunter, Navy Gold Star Program Analyst

In association with Gold Star Mother's and Family's Day, which is celebrated the last Sunday in September, the Navy Gold Star Program, along with Navy Mutual and in coordination with Navy installations across the country, will host the 7th Annual Bells Across America for Fallen Service Members ceremony on Sept. 22.

Bells have been used for centuries by the Navy for timekeeping, safety and communication, to sound alarms, in ceremonies and events, and to signal the presence of important persons. However, during these ceremonies, the bells rung will not signal anyone's presence; instead, they will toll in their absence.

Bells Across America provides service members, survivors and members of the community an opportunity to commemorate the life and service of those who died while on active duty. The primary focus and mission of the Navy Gold Star Program is to provide an unprecedented level of service and commitment to our Navy Gold Star families. Bells Across America For Fallen Service Members is one way the Navy recognizes the sacrifices of our fallen heroes and the Gold Star families left behind.

For more information on ceremonies, please contact your local Navy Gold Star coordinator, or send a message to www.facebook.com/navygoldstar or www.navygoldstar.com. No Navy endorsement of sponsors implied.



Adventures at Home Create Lasting Memories

By Patsy Jackson, NDW Gold Star Coordinator

I once read that the perfect vacation is one that includes the people of your choice, a good itinerary, and time management, meaning it doesn't need to be rescheduled. There are so many things that contribute to a vacation such as location, weather, activities, mood, etc. If money is tight or you don't want to travel due to the uptick in illnesses, think about adventures at home and letting go of the TV, computer games and tablets.

A common theme for a staycation is swimming and water play. But, what if you don't have access to a large swimming pool or don't have a big yard for a blow-up pool? You can always us a bathtub and decorate it with island decorations from the local discount store or pictures drawn by your children. Take your phone and put on some soothing island music, put on your bathing suits, and have a cool retreat in your bathroom.

The bathtub doesn't sound appealing? Try filling some water bottles to go outside and play. You can go to a local park and have fun cooling off with your water bottles. You can even make the trip to the park a scavenger hunt filled with educational opportunities. Learn the history of the scenes, buildings and things along the way. Be sure to take pictures and scrapbook the vacation day with your kids so that you can talk about their favorite activity of the day.

Having a fantastic adventure in your home does not even have to involve water. If you have children, take some old blankets and tack them to the wall to make a tent. Decorate the inside of the tent in different themes using items from your home or local discount store. Visit each other's tent (paradise) and talk to your children about why they chose the items in their tent (such as colors, foods, music, decorations, etc.). When my children were little, my husband and I did this with them. We ended up having the tents up for a week. It was a great vacation without breaking the bank. Our grown children still talk about their tents to this day. My oldest daughter now does this with her daughter. Not only did we create a great memory, we started a tradition that goes on and on.

With that said, take a cheap vacation or staycation yourself and create lasting memories with your families!





The Power of Positive Thinking

By Ken Boben, CNRMA Gold Star Coordinator

Have you ever thought about things you could do and control that could help with positive results? How about positive thinking?

Some people think of "thinking positive" as just another cliché that does not carry as much weight as terms like diligence or persistence. Research is beginning to find that positive thinking is considerably more than just being cheerful or exhibiting an upbeat frame of mind, and can provide true value to your life.

Did you know that you can learn to turn negative thinking into positive thinking with practice? Have you ever really thought about the endless stream of unspoken positive or negative thoughts that run through your mind every day? Thoughts that run through your mind daily can affect your outlook on life.

Positive thinking does not mean ignoring life's less pleasant situations or memories, but instead guides your thoughts and approach to unpleasant thoughts or memories in a more positive and productive way. As research continues to explore the effects of positive thinking on health, here are some possible outcomes of thinking positive: It could possibly lower levels of depression, lower levels of distress, help with resistance to illnesses, and improve coping skills during hardships and times of stress.

Although it is unclear as to why some people who have positive thoughts experience positive health benefits, one theory is having a positive outlook on life enables people to cope better with stressful situations, which reduces the harmful health effects of stress on your body.

Begin positive thinking by just simply smiling more and identifying one small thing or event at a time in your life that you normally think negative thoughts about and focus on approaching it in a more positive way. Surround yourself with supportive, positive people you can depend on, as negative people may increase your stress level and make you doubt your ability to manage stress in healthy ways.

Practice reframing by not stressing about things out of your control. If negative thoughts enter your mind, think about things you're grateful for in your life. It will take some time, but making a commitment to practicing positive thoughts can help with becoming a more positive person.





Gold Star Mother's and Family's Day

By Stephanie Hunter, Navy Gold Star Program Analyst

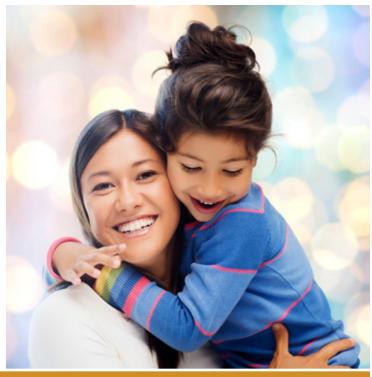
Since 1936, the last Sunday in September has been designated as Gold Star Mother's Day to recognize and honor those who have lost a child while serving our country in the United States Armed Forces. In 2009, fallen service members' families were officially recognized and added by presidential proclamation, renaming the observance to Gold Star Mother's and Family's Day.

Each year, the president signs a proclamation reaffirming our commitment to honor the individuals "who carry forward the memories of those willing to lay down their lives for the United States and the liberties for which we stand." This year, on Sept. 25, we will pay tribute to those mothers and families who have sacrificed so much.

The Navy Gold Star Program is dedicated to providing long-term assistance and fostering resiliency for surviving families of fallen service members. Navy Gold Star coordinators provide resources such as chaplain services, personal financial counseling, school liaison assistance, family employment, clinical counseling, and area survivor events, and want the families of our fallen heroes to know they will forever be a part of the Navy community.

As we observe Gold Star Mother's and Family's Day, let us all remember that that no one has given more for our nation than the families of the fallen, and let them know they will never be forgotten.

For more information on the Navy Gold Star Program, please call 1-888-509-8759, or visit www.facebook.com/navygoldstar or www.navygoldstar.com.



Writing Past Your Pain

By Susanna Del Llano, NAS Corpus Christi Gold Star Coordinator

If I could go back in time and talk with my younger self, maybe 20 years or so, at a point in my life when I experienced the worst loss in my life, I would tell my younger self that the pain might never go away completely, but that we will make it through. There are tools that are very helpful with the healing process. Picture, if you will: I was a new mom, had been married a little over a year, was taking my first semester in college, and I lost my best friend, my biggest cheerleader growing up. I experienced the loss of my grandmother. At that point in my life, I did not realize how devastating the loss I was experiencing would be to life as I knew it.

As you may have realized, grief affects each of us differently. It affects some more than others and some longer than others. For many years following the loss of my best friend from childhood into young adulthood, I would have emotional breakdowns. If I could go back to that point in my life, when my world was turning upside down and inside out, I would seriously look myself in the mirror and tell myself, "Pick up a pen, get yourself a journal, and start writing."

Journaling has been shown to be a safe way for us to "discharge" any anger that may otherwise be directed toward someone still living. Journaling may also help diminish any guilt you may be feeling about the loss. For many years following the loss of my grandmother, I felt this overwhelming sense of guilt about not staying with her "just one more day." Journaling may also be a more comfortable and private way for you to release any sorrow you are not willing to share with another person.

Journaling can lessen your pain or diminish the anger you may experience because of your loss. Journaling gives us the opportunity to preserve the memories of our lost loved one. Consider journaling as a labor of your love in honor of your departed loved one. We may not understand exactly how or what we feel until we see what we are thinking and feeling on paper.

An important thing to remember about journaling is that there are no expectations. This includes an expectation to complete a journal entry. No one is going to judge your writing ability as you contribute to your journal in your own way. When you start, the writings may be as ugly as the feelings. As you begin to make entries in your journal, do not stop to worry about punctuation or spelling, as there are no rules in journaling.

Writing allows the natural and normal grief responses to flow. Journaling helps us to become more aware of our emotions, as it forces us to slow down and really concentrate on our thoughts. When you begin journaling, try to remind yourself that journaling is a safe, judgement-free space, a place where you can genuinely retell and sometimes relive your story. Write honestly about the memories of you and your loved one.

Use the time when you are journaling to get in touch with the thoughts, memories and emotions that you may have hidden, even from yourself. Allow yourself the space and freedom for healing to take place. When we reconnect and become more comfortable with our suppressed memories, it can help calm the fear center of our brain. Journaling can also help us reduce stress and increase our problem-solving abilities as well as improve our sleep because journaling has been a proven coping tool.

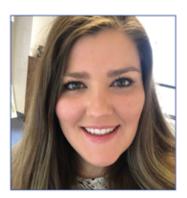
As you can see, journaling has some great benefits. It does not take specific skills, and depending on your preferred way of journaling, it usually only requires two items: paper and a writing instrument. If crayons feel right, use them. Choose a means of journaling you are most comfortable with, and remember that your journal is for you and you alone. This is your opportunity to be raw, genuine, and as authentic as possible.

It took me a couple of days to decide which journal I wanted to use, but I will have you know, my new journal is arriving at my home today. I am excited to put that first word on paper and to begin my healing process. Join me as I use journaling to begin healing the pain from the loss of my best friend.





Meet Our Newest Navy Gold Star Coordinator



Katelyn Smetana Installation Navy Gold Star Coordinator Naval Support Activity Mid-South

Katelyn provides support to Gold Star families in Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Tennessee. She comes from a big Navy family, as both her parents and oldest brother are Navy veterans. Her husband is a U.S. Navy Sailor, and she looks forward to always serving military families.

Katelyn has worked with military families in Tennessee, California and Washington, as a Work and Family Life consultant, Exceptional Family Member Program case liaison, school liaison officer, and MWR HR assistant. She has volunteered to serve as the Fleet Readiness Group (FRG) president and ombudsman for her husband's commands, and was selected in 2019 as the Mrs. Sybil Stockdale Ombudsman of the Year for U.S. Pacific Fleet. Katelyn holds a bachelor's degree in Elementary and Special Education.

Assisting military families has always been a passion of Katelyn's, and she joined the Navy Gold Star Program in support of Gold Star families and to honor their loved ones.

www.NavyGoldStar.com

www.facebook.com/NavyGoldStar • 1-888-509-8759



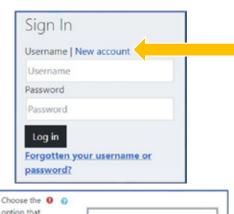
Mind-Body Mental Fitness Courses Enhance Resiliency

Gold Star families are welcome to participate in Mind-Body Mental Fitness (MBMF). These classes, which can be done virtually, are designed to enhance resiliency and mental toughness through the use of evidence-based mindfulness skills. The primary goal of MBMF is to enhance the mind, body, spirit and social domains in one's life. Create an account and register for a course. Visit MyNavyFamily.com, or call 901-671-5597 or 901-930-8290 for more information.



NAVY GOLD STAR LMS ACCOUNT AID

Use these instructions to create a new account on the CNIC FFSP LMS. https://learning.zeiders.refineddata.com



Active Duty Contractor

Ombudsman

Reservist Retiree

Civilian GS/NAF Family Member

Authorized Contractor

Navy Gold Star Family Member

best describes your

role on the LMS:

1. New Account. On the log-in page of the LMS, you will see the option to log in or create a new account. Choose "New account."

2. **Privacy Policy.** The next screen outlines your rights as a user of the CNIC FFSP. Your information will never be sold, shared with solicitors, or used in any way other than to facilitate your training. Read the privacy policy and click "Next" at the bottom.

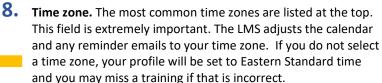
3. Policy Acknowledgement. Check the box to acknowledge the privacy policy. Note that the site uses session cookies that are active only while you are using the LMS.

4. Choose your user name and password. User names may be email addresses but cannot have capitals or special characters.

Choose Navy Gold Star Family Member. This ensures you are able to access the right information and training for your needs.

6. Email. Enter your email address twice. You will receive an email to confirm it is a valid address. If you do not receive one, write to the help desk at learning@zeiders.com

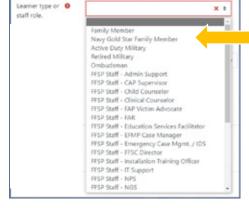
7. First Name, Last Name and Country. Fields are required.





9. Learner type or staff role. Chose Navy Gold Star Family Member for this item as well.

10. Rate/Rank. Select N/A.



If you have any problems or questions, please write the Help Desk at <u>learning@zeiders.com</u>

Tickets are answered from 7am to 8pm Eastern.

Updated 6/14/202

National POW/MIA Recognition Day

National POW/MIA Recognition Day is Sept. 16. The Defense Department remembers and honors those Americans who were prisoners of war and those who served and never returned home. DoD's POW/MIA Accounting Agency continues the search for the missing, fulfilling our nation's promise to leave no service member behind.





The History of the POW/MIA Flag

In 1971, Mrs. Michael Hoff, the wife of a U.S. military officer listed as missing in action during the Vietnam War, developed the idea for a national flag to remind every American of the U.S. servicemembers whose fates were never accounted for during the war.

The black and white image of a gaunt silhouette, a strand of barbed wire and an ominous watchtower was designed by Newt Heisley, a former World War II pilot. Some claim the silhouette is a profile of Heisley's son, who contracted hepatitis while training to go to Vietnam. The virus ravaged his body, leaving his features hallow and emaciated. They suggest that while staring at his son's sunken features, Heisley saw the stark image of American servicemembers held captive under harsh conditions. Using a pencil, he sketched his son's profile, creating the basis for a symbol that would come to have a powerful impact on the national conscience.

By the end of the Vietnam War, more than 2,500 servicemembers were listed by the Department of Defense as Prisoner of War (POW) or Missing in Action (MIA). In 1979, as families of the missing pressed for full accountability, Congress and the president proclaimed the first National POW/MIA Recognition Day to



acknowledge the families' concerns and symbolize the steadfast resolve of the American people to never forget the men and women who gave up their freedom protecting ours. Three years later, in 1982, the POW/MIA flag became the only flag other than the Stars and Stripes to fly over the White House in Washington, D.C.

On August 10, 1990, Congress passed U.S. Public Law 101-355, designating the POW/MIA flag:

"The symbol of our Nation's concern and commitment to resolving as fully as possible the fates of Americans still prisoner, missing and unaccounted for in Southeast Asia."

Displaying the POW/MIA Flag

Congress designated the third Friday of September as National POW/MIA Recognition Day and ordered prominent display of the POW/MIA flag on this day and several other national observances, including Armed Forces Day, Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day and Veterans Day.

When displayed from a single flag pole, the POW/MIA flag should fly directly below, and be no larger than, the United States flag. If on separate poles, the U.S. flag should always be placed to the right of other flags. On the six national observances for which Congress has ordered display of the POW/ MIA flag, it is generally flown immediately below or adjacent to the United States flag as second in order of precedence.



Content borrowed from our friends at the Veteran's Administration: www.va.gov

THEIR Sacrifice | OUR Pledge









recover



identify



returned



National OW/MIA Recognition Day

September 16, 2022 | #theirsacrifice | www.dpaa.mil





World Suicide Prevention Day

World Suicide Prevention Day is Sept. 10. This is a time to remember those affected by suicide, to raise awareness, and to focus efforts on directing treatment to those who need it most. The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a national network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in the United States. It is committed to improving crisis services and advancing suicide prevention by empowering individuals, advancing professional best practices, and building awareness. For more information please visit https://988lifeline.org/ for more information.



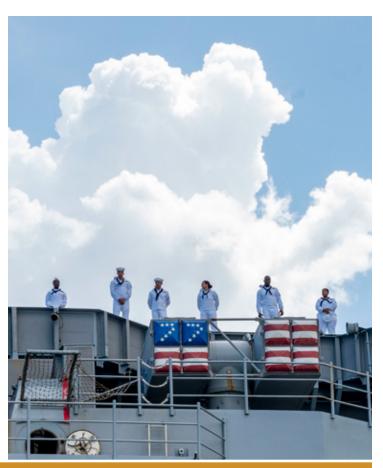
We Remember

In this edition of Survivor's Link, we honor those lost during several key moments in military history that occurred during the months of September and October.

Sept. 11: Patriot Day - On Patriot Day, our nation continues to honor, recognize and remember the nearly 3,000 people who lost their lives during the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001. As the towers fell, the Pentagon burned, and the ground smoldered in a rural Pennsylvania field, our nation rallied to stand arm-in-arm. Each year on 9/11, officially designated Patriot Day, we stand together again and vow to "never forget."

Oct. 12: USS Cole Remembrance Day - On the morning of Oct. 12, 2000, USS Cole (DDG 67) was attacked by terrorists while moored for refueling in the Port of Aden, Yemen. Seventeen Sailors lost their lives and 37 more were injured that day. Commemoration events remember and honor the 22nd anniversary of the 17 Sailors who were lost from the attack, the Gold Star families, and the crew who so valiantly fought to save their ship and return it to service.

Oct. 26: USS Oriskany - On Oct. 26, 1966, a deadly fire broke out aboard the San Diego-based aircraft carrier USS Oriskany while it was stationed off the coast of Vietnam. The fire started after a lit flare was locked in a flare locker. The fire swept through five decks, killing 44 men, mostly air crew, and injured 156 more.





Make a Difference Day

Observed on Oct. 22, Make A Difference Day shows that anyone, no matter their age or background, can take action that improves their community. Big or small, every project makes a difference. Here are some simple ways to celebrate Make a Difference Day.

- Perform an act of kindness. Even the smallest things can make somebody feel so much better.
- Volunteer in your community.
- Give someone an uplifting compliment.
- Organize a cleanup in your community.

- Donate blood.
- Mentor someone.
- · Help a neighbor.

International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day – Nov. 19

Talking about suicide and being able to process the grief in a safe, trusted setting can be instrumental in the healing process. If you are a survivor who is who is seeking support, know you are not alone. To learn more about Survivor Day events, view resources, or find a host location or chapter near you, please visit the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention website at https://afsp.org/find-a-local-chapter/.

If you have endured the suicide loss of a military service member, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) can also offer help at 1-800-959-TAPS (8277) or visit www.taps.org/suicide.



Children's Grief Awareness Day - Nov. 17



WHAT IS CHILDREN'S GRIEF AWARENESS DAY?

It's a day to think about the impact that a death has on children, and of their need for support. Today (and across the year) we can all work to:

- EDUCATE the community about grieving children.
- EQUIP peers and adults to support grieving children.
- HONOR these children and their loved ones who have died.

WHEN IS CHILDREN'S GRIEF AWARENESS DAY?

The third Thursday of November every year (the Thursday before the U.S. holiday of Thanksgiving).

WHY OBSERVE CHILDREN'S GRIEF AWARENESS DAY?

Grieving kids don't just "get over it." They need support – more support and for a longer time than most people assume.



Here are some ways you can support grieving children:

- FOLLOW or LIKE @childgriefday on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.
- Wear BLUE, the color of Children's Grief Awareness Day – add a butterfly, the symbol of HOPE.
- Organize an event at your school, business, or organization.
- For more ideas and activities, visit
 www.childrensgriefawarenessday.com/participate.

Join children, teens and adults across the nation and the world in helping grieving kids know they're not alone!



www.childrensgriefawarenessday.org • (f) (9)

Veterans Day - Nov. 11



Navy Gold Star Program Directory

| Name | Phone | Address* |
|--|-----------------------|--|
| NAVY REGION SOUTHWEST REGIONAL COORDINATOR | 619-705-5980 | FFSP / CNRSW N40 750 PACIFIC HIGHWAY SAN DIEGO CA 92132 |
| NB VENTURA COUNTY INSTALLATION COORDINATOR | 805-982-6018 | FFSC / 1000 23RD AVE BLDG 1169 CODE N91 PORT HUENEME CA 93041 |
| NAVBASE CORONADO INSTALLATION COORDINATOR | 619-767-7225 | FFSC / BUILDING G SAUFLEY RD SAN DIEGO CA 92135-7138 |
| NB SAN DIEGO REGIONAL COORDINATOR | 619-556-2190 | NB SAN DIEGO FFSC 3005 CORBINA ALLEY STE 1 BLDG 259 SAN DIEGO CA 92136-5190 |
| NAVY REGION NORTHWEST INSTALLATION COORDINATOR | 360-396-2708 | FFSC / 610 DOWELL ST BLDG 35 KEYPORT WA 98345 |
| SMOKEY POINT SUPPORT COMPLEX INSTALLATION COORDINATOR | 425-304-3721 | SMOKEY POINT SUPPORT COMPLEX 13910 45TH AVE NE SUITE 857 MARYSVILLE WA 98271 |
| NAVY REGION SOUTHEAST REGIONAL COORDINATOR | 904-542-5712 | FFSC / BLDG 919 LANGLEY ST NAS JACKSONVILLE FL 32212-0102 |
| NAS JACKSONVILLE INSTALLATION COORDINATOR | 904-542-5706 | FFSC / BLDG 27 RANGER ST BOX 136 NAS JACKSONVILLE FL 32212-0136 |
| NSA MID-SOUTH INSTALLATION COORDINATOR | 901-874-5017 | FFSC / 5722 INTEGRITY DR BLDG 456 MILLINGTON TN 38054-5045 |
| NCBC GULFPORT INSTALLATION COORDINATOR | 228-871-4569 | FFSC / 5301 SNEAD ST GULFPORT MS 39501-5001 |
| NAS CORPUS CHRISTI INSTALLATION COORDINATOR | 361-961-1675 | FFSC / 11001 D ST CORPUS CHRISTI TX 78419-5021 |
| NAVAL DISTRICT WASHINGTON REGIONAL COORDINATOR | 202-433-3059 | FFSC / 2691 MITSCHER RD SW BLDG 414 WASHINGTON DC 20373 |
| NAVAL DISTRICT WASHINGTON INSTALLATION COORDINATOR | 901-671-6521 | FFSC / 2691 MITSCHER RD SW BLDG 414 WASHINGTON DC 20373 |
| NAVY REGION MID-ATLANTIC REGIONAL COORDINATOR | 757-445-3073 | FFSC / 7928 14TH ST SUITE 209 NORFOLK VA 23505-1219 |
| NWS EARLE INSTALLATION COORDINATOR | 732-866-2110 | FFSC / 201 RT 34 BLDG C59 COLTS NECK NJ 07722 |
| NAVSTA GREAT LAKES INSTALLATION COORDINATOR | 847-688-3603 ext. 111 | FFSC / 525 FARRAGUT AVE STE 300 BLDG 26 GREAT LAKES IL 60088 |
| NB NORFOLK INSTALLATION COORDINATOR | 757-322-9182 | FFSC / 7928 14TH ST SUITE 102 NORFOLK VA 23505-1219 |
| SUBASE NEW LONDON INSTALLATION COORDINATOR | 860-694-1257 | FFSC / BLDG 83 BOX 93 GROTON CT 06349-5093 |
| NAS OCEANA INSTALLATION COORDINATOR | 757-492-8282 | 2073 TARTAR AVENUE, BUILDING 585, FFSC AT DAM NECK ANNEX, VIRGINIA BEACH VA 23461-1917 |