



NEWS YOU CAN USE

Weekly News for National Guard Families

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National Guard Family Program Online Communities for families and youth:

<http://www.guardfamily.org/>

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TRICARE website for information on health benefits

<http://www.tricare.osd.mil/>

Civilian Employment Information (CEI) Program Registration for Army and Air National Guard, Air Force, and Coast Guard Reserve

<https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/esgr/index.jsp> (Note to those viewing this page in Word or PDF format: You may have to copy this address and paste it into your browser's address window.)

Cumulative roster of all National Guard and Reserve who are currently on active duty

<http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Mar2004/d20040331ngr1.pdf>

Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) contains links and information about schooling, distance education, scholarships, and organizations devoted to the military family

<http://www.militarychild.org/>

Militarystudent.org is a website that helps military children with transition and deployment issues. It has some great features for kids, parents, special needs families, school educators, and more—even safe chat rooms for kids.

<http://www.militarystudent.org>

Disabled Soldiers Initiative (DS3)

This website provides information on the new DS3 program. Through DS3, the Army provides its most severely disabled Soldiers and their families with a system of advocacy and follow-up.

<http://www.armyds3.org>

Have an article, announcement, or website that you'd like to share with the National Guard Family Program Community? Send your suggestions in an e-mail to Michelle.Bohlen@ngb.ang.af.mil.

Indiana Guard Receives Award For Training Troops

Indianapolis Star

20 May 2005

The Indiana **National Guard** received an Army award this week for Camp Atterbury's mobilization efforts during the Iraq war and other missions.

Camp Atterbury, a 33,000-acre base 25 miles south of Indianapolis, has trained thousands of soldiers from Indiana and across the country.

The former camp commander, Col. Kenneth Newlin, and other officials traveled to Washington this week to accept the Army chief of staff's Combined Logistics Deployment Excellence Award. The base was chosen for the award in the **National Guard** supporting-unit category.

Newlin credited Camp Atterbury's staff for the base's transformation into a large-scale mobilization site since early 2003.

"It is amazing what these soldiers have accomplished in so little time," he said in a news release. "They literally established logistic functions from nothing more than some rough plans, with initially only minimal and, in some areas, no supporting infrastructure."

Guard Readies New Emergency Communications Tools For DoD Approval

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Inside the Pentagon

May 19, 2005

The **National Guard** is readying a suite of communications tools for Pentagon approval that would enable first responders to communicate better with civilian and military agencies in the aftermath of a terrorist incident.

After a catastrophic attack or natural disaster within the United States, the **National Guard** is likely to be the first military responder on the scene, Col. Kenneth McNeill, director of the **National Guard** joint C4 support division, told Inside the Pentagon May 12. But a capability to communicate requirements and a common operational picture from the responding unit across the chain of command is lacking, he said.

Guard officials envision a capability that allows units to transmit information seamlessly to the state level, national level, U.S. Northern Command and other agencies.

To create that capability, the Guard has developed a concept of operations for a suite of information technology and communications capabilities, called Joint CONUS Communications Support Enterprise.

The JCCSE umbrella comprises a variety of information technology efforts for homeland defense and civil support missions, but "the key piece that we are missing right now is the communications capability in the states and territories," McNeill said.

In their effort to enhance communications abilities at home, Guard officials are not now anticipating assistance from active-duty forces. Army and Air Force units stationed in the different states are loaded with tactical communications gear, but they take this capability with them when they go overseas, McNeill said. "When they deploy, there is no capability in the state to do what we are trying to do."

With two major military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the number of states affected by the exodus of communications equipment is hard to estimate due to the fluctuation of units deploying and returning, McNeill said. "To give a number would not be accurate at this time."

Those existing active-duty capabilities would not meet the Guard's requirements anyway, he said. "The [Army's] tactical communications equipment does not have the bridging capability that is needed to talk to civilian first responders. It was not designed to do that." McNeill said.

To implement the JCCSE communications capability, McNeill said no new development would be necessary. "We would be using approved Defense Department systems that are pretty much already developed," he said. "The technology is already there, and it's actually used and deployed."

National Guard Bureau Chief Lt. Gen. Steven Blum and other Guard officials have already briefed lawmakers and Pentagon officials about the project, including Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense Paul McHale.

Now officials are in the process of preparing the JCCSE concept of operations for validation by the Joint Requirements Oversight Council so funds can be budgeted in time for the fiscal year 2008 program objective memorandum cycle, according to May 2005 JCCSE briefing slides provided by McNeill.

Exact funding requirements are not yet calculated. "We are still going through the cost analysis and the cost estimate. So that's . . . a work in progress right now," McNeill noted.

After validation, the Joint Staff would select a service as an executive agent to manage the program, McNeill added. -- Sebastian Sprenger.

Alabama and Georgia National Guard Troops Deploy to Iraq

WTVM9

Valley, Alabama

Sunday marks the largest deployment of Alabama and Georgia National Guard troops since World War II. More than 135 members of the Valley National Guard will be leaving for Iraq from Fort Stewart, Savannah.

The troops have been training for over six months for the mission.

The deployment will be at least a year. While in Iraq , the soldiers will provide support for the 3rd Infantry Division as it battles with insurgents and tries to keep the peace.

Lt. Ryan Smith said the troops are ready for the dangerous days ahead. The army hero wear two metal bracelets to remember his friends who died while fighting in Somalia and Iraq.

"We are taking it one day at a time," said Lt. Smith. "They are going to get the job done and then get back home to their families."

Joy Jolly's husband is one the soldiers leaving for the war. The mother of four said this is a difficult time but she tries to be positive for her children.

"It is a roller coaster ride, you are lending all your support, you run the gamete of emotions," said Jolly. "You are sending you're loved-one off, and there is a chance they may not come back."

Jolly said it is important for the community to provide a support system.

"It is real easy to remember when it first happens but six months down the road people need to remember your next door neighbor does not with her husband," said Jolly.

To support 167th Infantry Alpha Company you can make a donation to 1 st American Bank in Opelika , Alabama or contact Lt. Ryan Smith at 706-570-7838 or

RParker1@aol.com

All donations are tax-deductible.

Kristi Angevine, WTVM, NewsLeader 9, **kangevine@wtvm.com**

On Their Last Day, Kansas Lawmakers Push Through Guard-Benefits Bill

Associated Press

TOPEKA - Legislators wasted little time Friday in overwhelmingly passing a bill providing \$250,000 to families of Kansas National Guard members killed in combat, sending it to Gov. Kathleen Sebelius, who promised to sign it.

Legislative leaders called the measure a temporary solution and said they would consider other ideas next year, including the state paying for special life insurance policies with a \$250,000 death benefit.

Three Kansas guardsmen have been killed in Iraq, and more than 1,400 others are there.

Sebelius said the bill "sends a message to those who serve our state and nation, offering their lives in defense of our freedom, that Kansas takes care of its own."

The bill was considered during the Legislature's closing day, normally a ceremonial affair with a handful of lawmakers present. This year, Senate leaders decided to use the day to push the Guard proposal, which the House had refused to consider three times this year.

The renewed push was an abrupt turnaround from earlier this month, when lawmakers agreed to pay \$125,000 each to the families of two guardsmen. The third guardsman died the same day lawmakers agreed to the watered-down version.

On Friday, it took 1 ½ hours to push the bill through both chambers. The bill, which expires in 2007, also exempts from state taxes the \$250,000 paid to families from the state's emergency fund.

"It's the right thing to do," said Senate President Steve Morris, R-Hugoton. "It's the least we can do."

House Speaker Doug Mays, R-Topeka, and Morris said lawmakers will study the issue over the summer, and one option would be for the state to pay the cost of additional life insurance for all guardsmen going into combat. Mays said it would cost the state about \$400,000 to pay for the premiums for all Kansas guardsmen in Iraq.

Sen. Tim Huelskamp, R-Fowler, agreed that would be a better approach.

"Let somebody else carry the risk, and the benefit would be the same," he said.

Kansas is among a few states providing such benefits to guardsmen.

Last year, Illinois expanded death benefits to a maximum of \$250,000 for families of guardsmen or other military personnel killed in combat; New Mexico provides \$250,000 of life insurance for guardsmen, and Massachusetts is considering a bill providing \$100,000 in death benefits for families of fallen guardsmen.

Guard Families Offered Help

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The Neshoba Democrat

Wednesday, May 18, 2005

By Debbie Burt Myers

Managing Editor

Local and state organizations are joining hands in an effort to alleviate much of the stress and strain felt by members of the National Guard and their families as a result of deployments in the war on terror.

The Mississippi State Extension Service, National Guard Family Service Center and Neshoba County 4-H are partnering in a cooperative effort to help families affected by deployment by hosting a National Guard Family Resource Camp on May 21 at First Baptist Church Family Life Center in Philadelphia.

It is estimated around 900 families in Neshoba, Leake, Newton, Winston and Kemper counties have been affected by family members being called for service through local National Guard units.

“This is an effort to assist families affected by deployment with issues and concerns many of them have raised through their family service coordinators,” Karen Benson, the Child and Family Development agent with the Mississippi State Extension Service.

“There are so many things that are affected when a member of family is deployed that are unexpected and we hope to help them learn to deal with those issues better.”

The plans for the camp, she said, are to provide information in a fun and festive atmosphere by offering a noon meal, door prizes and children’s entertainment.

“We want this to be a day for families to come and spend time together as families,” Benson said. “There are several 4-H projects planned with some hands-on activities for families to participate in together.”

While children are entertained with face painting, puppet shows and other activities, parents can speak with family service coordinators about technical matters dealing with deployment.

Training will be provided to address the many challenges arising from deployment including finances, marriage and parenting issues, insurance and leave.

Benson said more than 30 families have already registered to participate and many more are expected.

Children participating between the ages of 8 and 18 will receive a 4-H backpack filled with gifts and project information.

Persons wishing to register or volunteer may do so by calling the Mississippi State Extension Service at 601-656-4011 or 601-656-4602.

HOMEFRONT: DEALING WITH THE AFTERMATH

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Great Attitude Carries Double Amputee Through Recovery

American Forces Press Service

20 May 2005

By Rudi Williams

WASHINGTON, May 18, 2005 – If Kevin Pannell doesn't answer his cell phone, you'll get the message, "You've reached the coolest amputee in the world."

Army Spc. Kevin Pannell, a double amputee from Iraq, and his wife, Amanda, and son, Hunter, pose for a picture during a visit to the Korean War Veterans Memorial on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. Photo courtesy of Kevin and Amanda Pannell (Click photo for screen-resolution image);high-resolution image available.

Ask for his e-mail address and he'll say, "Brokendownyoung."

"He signs his e-mail messages 'Kevin "Stumpy" Pannell,'" his wife, Amanda, said with a hearty laugh.

The 26-year-old Arkansas Army **National Guard** specialist who lost both of his legs and was nearly killed by two hand grenades in a narrow alley in Baghdad, Iraq, prides himself on maintaining his good attitude.

Instead of being bitter, Pannell is upbeat, self-confident and fun-loving. He said he's just happy to be alive and even jokes about having eight pairs of legs.

"I can change legs any time I want to," he said with a chuckle. "I've always been a positive, good-natured guy, but I am even more so now. I'm not under any illusions that I shouldn't be here with all the things there were wrong with me and all the injuries, blood loss and infections. There's a reason I'm still sticking around. You've only got one life, so live it up."

Pannell's trek to Iraq started when he joined the **National Guard** in 1996, while a junior in high school. He wanted to be an infantryman. "I thought it looked really cool to do," said Pannell. "I was young and naïve, but I'm glad I joined."

He served an active-duty stint in Kuwait for five months in 1999-2000 then was called to active duty again in September 2003. "We went to Fort Hood (Texas, for training) on Halloween and trained through Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Eve. We got into Iraq on April 1, April Fool's Day, and I was hit on June 13 -- which was Friday the 13th -- and I got my legs amputated on Father's Day."

A member of the Arkansas Army **National Guard**'s 39th Infantry Brigade, Pannell's company was attached to the 1st Cavalry Division.

"We were out on foot patrol through northern Baghdad when I got hit," he said. The patrol had turned down an alley when Pannell heard two "clinks" behind him. He said the

sounds were grenades landing at his feet.

"I turned around and started to yell, 'Grenade!' but somebody else beat me to it," he said. "By the time I got 'gre' out of my mouth, one of them had rolled up between my feet and went off. Then another one went off beside me."

Insurgents threw the two grenades at Pannell and three of his comrades in the 12-man patrol in the part of Baghdad the soldiers called "Little Fallujah."

"Two of them took shrapnel to the legs, but nothing really serious -- just a couple of days in the U.S. hospital in Baghdad," Pannell noted. "I was the most seriously injured."

One of the grenades rolled against Pannell's right foot and exploded, knocking him down and ripping his legs apart. "I almost had a traumatic amputation of my right leg, but it was still attached," Pannell said. "My left leg was still attached, but both of them were really messed up."

One of his buddies tied tourniquets on his legs and right arm to help stop blood loss, but estimates are that he lost about six pints of blood in that narrow alley, which equates to more than half the amount of blood in an adult's body. He was taken in a Humvee to the 31st Combat Support Hospital in Baghdad's "Green Zone."

The next two days saw him transported to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany and to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., where his wife and parents arrived shortly after he did.

His wife, mother, father and brother paced the floor at Walter Reed while surgeons amputated his left leg above the knee and the right leg below the knee.

"When he came from under sedation, he asked his mom, 'How bad am I?'" Amanda said. "The doctor told him the bad news, and he closed his eyes for a second, opened them and said, 'I can live with that.'"

Pannell said he is thankful that he was wearing a Kevlar helmet and flak vest reinforced with steel plates. "Never leave home without it," he quipped. He credits the protective gear with saving his life. "When I lift my arms up, you can see the outline of the vest on my right side -- it definitely saved me," he said, adding that he has been through 15 surgeries at Walter Reed.

Today Pannell has eight prosthetic legs; among them are legs specifically suited for swimming, a set with conventional knees, and a set of C-legs -- computerized artificial limbs -- as well as limbs with running legs and running feet. "I can change legs anytime I want to," he said.

Speaking at recent landmines survivors' convention, Pannell told the audience that disabilities are a state of mind. He said he had just watched the movie, "Warm Springs," which centers on a pivotal time in President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's life. "In FDR's day, if you were in a wheelchair you weren't even taken seriously," Pannell said. "We should be grateful for all the disabled people years ago who helped raise the awareness of disabled people today."

Pannell is a certified member of the Amputee Coalition of America, which seeks to "reach out to people with limb loss and to empower them through education, support and

advocacy." The certification means he can go to any hospital in the nation and speak to any amputee and other severely injured people.

When he visits Walter Reed, he tries to encourage new amputees. "A lot of people have misgivings about their condition," Pannell said. "You'd be surprised how many amputees don't know anything about the prosthetics they're going to get. So I like to take my extra legs with me and show them some of the stuff they can get."

Since he's both an above-the-knee and below-the-knee amputee, Pannell said, he can relate to other amputees with either condition. "An above-the-knee amputee might have trouble relating to what a below-the-knee amputee is going to go through and vice versa," he noted. "When I was learning to walk with my prosthesis on the parallel bars, a fellow 'AK/BK' amputee told me, 'You know, until I saw you do that, I never thought I'd be able to stand up again.'"

Pannell said new amputees are usually in a lot of pain when he first meets them. "When they finally get over their pain, ... I tell them to get out as much as possible," he said. "The more you keep yourself in that bed, the worse off you're going to be."

A certified plumber, Pannell said he had contemplated opening his own utility business after his active-duty service. Losing both legs changed his plan. Now he plans to earn a college degree in public speaking and creative writing and become a writer and motivational speaker. He said he wants to work with athletes with disabilities and help provide wheelchairs and prosthetic limbs to people in developing countries.

"Just because you lose a limb, or two, you don't lose your life. You gain a lot, really. I've gained more than I've lost with these two legs. I've got a complete new appreciation for life," he said.

"I'm so proud of him, and I'm glad that he hasn't let it get him down," Amanda said.

She said losing his legs changed her husband. "He wants to help more people now and wants to live life to the fullest and go out and do everything, so he's kayaking, snow skiing, snow boarding, and has ridden a hand-crank bike in a 26-mile marathon," she said. "He wants to help other disabled people in sports."

DoD Reserve Affairs Command Sgt. Maj. Lawrence Holland said Pannell is "a great spokesman for the great work that's going on in Iraq helping the Iraqi people."

"The rehabilitation people at Walter Reed use him as an example of what amputees can achieve," Holland said. "Every time I talk to him, he's usually in the rehab room with someone trying to encourage and motivate them."

Pannell said he'd like to call attention to the fact that blood donations are needed by the Armed Services Blood Program nationwide and locally at the Pentagon, National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., and Walter Reed.

"During my recovery time, I myself used 41 whole-blood units and eight units of platelets," he said. "Our men and women are still returning home wounded and need our care and support.

HOMEFRONT: DEALING WITH DEPLOYMENT

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Guardsmen's Families Must Learn How To Cope

Associated Press

May 23, 2005

By Andrew Hellpap

the reporter ahellpap@fdlreporter.com

When members of the National Guard "Red Ar-row" Infantry Brigade report for active duty on June 6, they will leave behind family members who must learn to cope with their loved one's departure.

To help make that transition easier, The National Guard and American Red Cross held an informational session Sunday morning at the armory on Sullivan Drive.

About 135 members of the 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry, Unit C, based in Fond du Lac are part of the call up of about 600 members of the 32nd Infantry Brigade. Units from Wau-pun and Ripon are also part of the mobilization.

After they report to active duty next month, they are expected to serve 18 months, with one year of that time overseas.

Families of those soldiers met Sunday in Fond du Lac to learn about the resources available to them. A second session began at noon in Waupun for families of soldiers in that unit.

Capt. Eric Schack said the sessions are an invaluable resource for families.

"This is heavily encouraged for the families especially because most of the families are new to this," he said. "It's much harder for the families in a deployment than it is for the soldier."

The meeting addressed insurance issues, services available from the Red Cross and how to cope with media reports of the war.

"You have to cut yourself from some media," said Schack. "Otherwise, you will drive yourself crazy."

While media reports may make it difficult to cope when a loved one is overseas, the Red Cross provides a vital means of communicating with the soldiers, he said.

"The Red Cross is the sole means of communication with soldiers for the families," he said.

A Menasha woman attending the session with her children said the information she learned would help her immensely in dealing with her fiancé's tour-of-duty.

"This is the first time anything like this has happened to our family," she said, adding that the ideas provided Sunday for coping helped her the most. For the safety of the families,

the National Guard did not release the names of families in attendance.

A woman from Campbellsport said the meeting would help give her guidance at this difficult time.

"We learned how we can contact our loved one," she said. "It was informational and answered some questions. It helps to know who to turn to."

The National Guard also used the session to provide information about common family practices the military does not encourage – such as placing yellow ribbons on cars or in home windows.

Those symbols, meant as support for the soldiers, may alert criminals that someone in the household is not there, Schack said.

GENERAL

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National Guard Generals In Omaha Discuss Equipment Needs

The Associated Press

May 18, 2005

By Joe Ruff, Associated Press Writer

OMAHA, Neb. - The nation's top **National Guard** generals discussed equipment needs Wednesday in the midst of war in Iraq and peacekeeping duties in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Kosovo.

The Army **National Guard** needs more guns, trucks, armored vehicles and Humvees, said Maj. Gen. Roger Lempke, Nebraska's adjutant general, after meeting with about 12 other adjutants general from around the country.

A lot of Guard equipment is being used in Iraq and is not available for training and other purposes elsewhere, Lempke said.

Congress will need to weigh in with more funding, Lempke said, and the **National Guard** is preparing to speak with one voice about its needs.

Other issues to be discussed in the five-day conference of more than 50 adjutants general or their staffs include homeland defense, handling the threat of terrorism and the Pentagon's proposed closing or downsizing of 62 major military bases and more than 700 smaller installations.

Lt. Gen. Steven H. Blum, chief of the **National Guard** Bureau, is scheduled to address the conference on Thursday.

A congressionally chartered commission is studying the Pentagon's proposals, which were announced Friday, and it could change the report before sending it to President Bush and Congress this fall.

The Pentagon wants to save \$48.8 billion over 20 years by streamlining services across

the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps.

A major part of the proposal is closing Guard and reserve facilities across the country and putting those units in joint buildings.

In Nebraska, for example, four Army and Navy Reserve centers are slated for closing - in Columbus, Kearney, Grand Island and Lincoln - as well as a naval recruiting support site in Omaha.

In addition, eight **National Guard** armories - in Hastings, Grand Island, Crete, Fairbury, Falls City, Columbus, Kearney and McCook - could be closed, the Pentagon said. Their **National Guard** units would move to five new joint facilities that could be built in the state.

However, concerns have been raised about increased travel for members of Guard and reserve units who would be reporting to centralized facilities, and about possible loss of a connection between smaller cities and the military.

"Small communities lose sight of the armed forces," said retired Army Gen. Wesley Clark, who unsuccessfully sought the Democratic presidential nomination last year. Clark spoke in Arkansas the day after the Pentagon's proposal was announced.

Some states and congressional delegations concerned about **National Guard** closings have cited a law that says in part that Army and Air **National Guard** units can't be "relocated or withdrawn under this chapter without the consent of the governor of the state."

The Pentagon has argued that another law authorizing the latest round of base closures takes precedence and allows Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld to close or downsize **National Guard** bases without approval from governors.

Lempke said the legal dispute involves Guard units on federal property, and Nebraska's armories are on state property. Gov. Dave Heineman would have to approve any changes to those Guard facilities, Lempke said.

The Air **National Guard**'s 155th Air Refueling Wing based in Lincoln is on federal land, but it has not been part of the Pentagon's base realignment proposals, Lempke said.

America Supports You: Donated Computers Help Families Keep in Touch

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New York Daily News

American Forces Press Service

NEWPORT NEWS, Va., May 20, 2005 – Remember mail call during M*A*S*H? Radar would walk around and hand out little dollops of home to Hawkeye, Trapper John, and Henry Blake. The mail was always old, sometimes months, and the newspapers that often came along were much more "papers" than "news," arriving long after the stories were relevant.

Of course, e-mail has changed mail call in the military, with the Pentagon setting up more

than 500 e-mail kiosks around the globe to enable troops to connect to home.

What happens on the back end though? The average E-1 family lives on a meager \$14,750 a year. What are the chances that they can afford a computer with broadband wireless access to speak to deployed loved ones?

Despite the e-mail kiosks erected by DoD, families at home often lack the connectivity to read the communications from loved ones, and they must rely on each unit's "Radar O'Reilly" to place an expensive phone call or to distribute the mail.

For 100 junior-enlisted military families stationed around Fort Eustis, Va., this reality changed today.

"Operation Homelink," in cooperation with CDW Government Inc. and the United Service Organizations of Hampton Roads, presented 100 refurbished computers to families of soldiers and airmen stationed locally.

Families of soldiers in the Army's 7th Transportation Group and 8th Transportation Brigade at Fort Eustis, as well as airmen in the Air Force's 1st Fighter Wing at Langley Air Force Base, received free computers.

While most servicemembers have access to e-mail on ships or other remote outposts, the situation often is different for their families back home. Junior enlisted military families are often not able to afford computers, and must rely on slow postal service or expensive phone calls to stay in touch, officials said.

Operation Homelink, an all-volunteer nonprofit organization, strives to link American troops deployed overseas with their families through e-mail using donated computers.

Operation Homelink's technology partners provide professional refurbishment services and ensure existing information is wiped clean from the computers' hard drives. The computers are then tested, reloaded with new operating systems and modems, and shipped in bulk to the selected unit.

"Operation Homelink is always looking for a few good companies, such as CDW-G, to support our military families by donating old computers," said Dan Shannon, president and founder of Operation Homelink. "Not only does this type of donation allow a company to support the military community, it reduces unnecessary costs for storing the unused computers and reduces waste."

So far, Operation Homelink has been able to successfully link more than 800 families with their troops overseas. Spouses or parents of troops within the junior-level pay grades (E-1 to E-5) are eligible to receive donated computers. The USO and other military-support agencies help determine which specific units will receive computers.

"Operation Homelink is a great program to keep families close while separated due to deployments. We are proud to be a partner in such a worthwhile program," said John Gentile, president and CEO of the USO of Hampton Roads. Operation Homelink accepts donations of qualified end-of-life computers from corporations.

Large donations (minimum 25) of used computers are needed to effectively connect the thousands of military families wishing to communicate with their soldiers. Donated computers must be at least Pentium II laptops or Pentium III desktops. Such donations

are tax-deductible and have the added benefit of reducing the number of computers filling landfills, program officials said.

"A letter to a loved one may take weeks to transit from the United States to a loved one on deployment in Iraq or Afghanistan," said Max Peterson, CDW-G vice president of federal sales. "These machines will take an infrequent, multi-week process of communicating with families, and turn it into a daily, 30-second activity."

"Now that is an information revolution," he added.

(Courtesy of Operation Homelink.)

End

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