



# SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES

**November 2014**

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## **Veterans Day Parade, Springfield IL**

November 11, 2014—Starts at 10:20 am  
Parade route will begin at 10th St. and Capitol Ave. heading west towards the IL State Capitol. There will be Military Units, Local Bands, Color Guards and Veterans from all Branches of Service. The Public is encouraged to come on this day and salute our veterans! A program will follow the parade at the Rotunda inside the IL State Capitol.

Don't like waiting for the monthly newsletter? Be sure to like us on Facebook:

<http://tinyurl.com/IllinoisSOS>





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**The City of Chicago Veterans Day Ceremony will be held on November 11 at Soldier Field.** The ceremony will once again take place just inside Gate 0 of Soldier Field in front of the Doughboy statue.

Along the wall are benches to provide seating and moments of reflection. The benches contain notable quotations regarding the efforts of those who serve our country. Actual Military Medals of Honor representing the various branches of the armed forces are cast into the backrests. Soldier Field was named as such at the request of Gold Star Mothers to honor those men lost in World War I. The Doughboy statue, originally placed in Garfield Park, was restored and installed in Soldier Field as part of the stadium renovation. Doughboy is an informal term for a member of the United States Army or Marine Corps, especially members of the American Expeditionary Forces in World War I.

Veterans Day is the one day set aside to thank and honor living veterans who have served honorably in the military in wartime and peacetime. Originally known as Armistice Day and so declared by President Woodrow Wilson, it was created to mark the signing of the Armistice which ended World War I. Following World War II, it was declared a day to honor all veterans and in 1954, renamed Veterans Day by Congress.

**Date:**

Tuesday, November 11, 2014

**Hours:**

Begins at 10 am

**Location:**

Soldier Field, Gate 0  
1410 Museum Campus Dr.  
Chicago, IL 60605

**Admission:** FREE

**Parking:**

FREE parking is available at the Waldron Parking Deck; exit at 18th Street from Lake Shore Drive.



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**YOU'RE INVITED!**

**CENTRAL ILLINOIS GOLD STAR FAMILIES**

**CHRISTMAS POTLUCK**

**SATURDAY DECEMBER 6, 2014**

**11:30 AM – 1:30 PM**

**NORTHWOODS COMMUNITY CHURCH**

**10700 N ALLEN RD., PEORIA**

**PLEASE BRING A DISH TO PASS AND YOUR FAVORITE  
CHRISTMAS COOKIES**

**MEAT, DRINKS, TABLE SERVICE PROVIDED**

**FOOD, PRESENTS FOR CHILDREN, CHRISTMAS CAROL SING  
ALONG AND SURPRISES!**

***MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW AND PLAN TO JOIN US!***

\*\*\*\*\*

**IN ORDER TO HAVE ENOUGH FOOD/PRESENTS FOR  
CHILDREN RSVP BY WEDNESDAY DEC. 3 TO**

**PATTI 309-231-5090 OR [PATTIDC@YAHOO.COM](mailto:PATTIDC@YAHOO.COM)**





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**Remembering Our  
Fallen**

**Remembrance  
Ceremony**



The 416th TEC Family Programs and Survivor Outreach Services cordially invite you and your family to attend our 2nd annual Remembrance Ceremony.

In this special candle light ceremony we will recognize the sacrifice of our Fallen Soldiers and honor their Families.

Please join us for this special event

**December 6, 2014**

**1:30pm**

**St. John Lutheran Church**

**7214 S. Cass Ave**

**Darien, IL 60561**

Please RSVP by Friday November 28 to Ms. Dawn Sands, Support Coordinator at 630-739-7287 or [dawn.m.sands.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:dawn.m.sands.ctr@mail.mil)



**NEVER FORGOTTEN**



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## [Announcing Snowball Express 2014](#)

When: December 11 to December 15

Where: Fort Worth, Texas

If you already know that you want to register for the 2014 Snowball Express event, please continue to the [Families page](#). If you're not sure, please visit the Testimonials page or the [FAQ page](#) to learn more about the family experience.



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**Operation Homefront Central Midwest is giving away \$50.00 gift cards** on November 8th to military families that are E1-E6, wounded warriors of any rank, and families of the fallen. They will be distributing them in Peoria/Bartonville, IL in the morning and in Milan, IL that afternoon. send an email to [centralmidwest@operationhomefront.net](mailto:centralmidwest@operationhomefront.net) with the following information: Service member's name and rank, Number of family members, Location where they would like to pick up a gift card.

## Supporting those who serve

In honor of Veteran's Day,  
Operation Homefront Central Midwest  
will distributing Walmart gift cards to  
military families (E1-E6) at the reserve  
center in Peoria, IL on November 8, 2014,  
9-11am.

To register, please send an email to  
[centralmidwest@operationhomefront.net](mailto:centralmidwest@operationhomefront.net)  
with your name, rank and size of family.





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[www.flags4fallenmilitary.com](http://www.flags4fallenmilitary.com)

The purpose behind Flags For Fallen Military is to provide a lasting honor and tribute to those families who have lost a loved one in the line of duty. We discreetly seek out families who wish to honor their loved ones and engage them in a respectful manner. We hope that the process leads the family to accept, at no cost to them,

For greater detail on our program or to set up a meeting, please call David Larson at 888-616-3420, or email David at [dlarson@flagsforfallenmilitary.org](mailto:dlarson@flagsforfallenmilitary.org).



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## **Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014**

### **Section 701: Expansion of Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship**

On August 7, 2014, President Obama signed into law the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-146) ("Choice Act"). Technical revisions to the Choice Act were made on September 26, 2014, when the President signed into law the Department of Veterans Affairs Expiring Authorities Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-175). The Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) goal continues to be to provide timely, high-quality health care for Veterans.

Section 701 requires that VA allow certain surviving spouses to take advantage of educational benefits under the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

#### **Background**

VA educational benefits have been expanded under Section 701 of this Act. Specifically, this section extends the Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship to surviving spouses of military personnel who die in the line of duty after September 10, 2001. Prior to this Act, only children of those who died in the line of duty were eligible for this benefit.

#### **Eligibility Changes**

Eligible spouses will be entitled to up to 36 months of the full, 100% level, of the Post-9/11 GI Bill. This includes the tuition and fee payment, a monthly housing allowance, and a books and supplies stipend.

#### **Timeline**

These eligibility changes will be implemented effective January 1, 2015.

#### **Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q: How will the expanded benefits under Public Law 113-146 affect eligible spouses?**

**A:** The Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014, includes a provision that allows certain surviving spouses to take advantage of educational benefits under the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

The provision extends the Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship to surviving spouses of military personnel who die in the line of duty after September 10,



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2001. Prior to this legislation, only children of those who died in the line of duty were eligible for this benefit.

Eligible spouses will be entitled to up to 36 months of the full, 100% level, of the Post-9/11 GI Bill. This includes the tuition and fee payment, a monthly housing allowance, and a books and supplies stipend.

**Q: How will this affect surviving spouses who previously used the Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance Program (DEA)? Will they still get the full benefit? Can they switch to the Fry Scholarship if they have previously used any or all DEA benefits?**

**A:** The Fry Scholarship provides 36 months of Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to eligible surviving spouses. The DEA program provides 45 months of educational benefits. All surviving spouses eligible for DEA and the Fry Scholarship must make an irrevocable election for terms beginning on or after January 1, 2015. When a surviving spouse elects to convert to the Fry Scholarship, he or she loses all remaining DEA benefits. If a spouse elects to use DEA instead of the Fry Scholarship, he or she forfeits all future entitlement to the Fry Scholarship.

**Q: Is a spouse that has never received education benefits required to make an election between DEA and Fry Scholarship benefits?**

**A:** Yes. The law states that an individual who is eligible for both DEA and Fry Scholarship must make an irrevocable election of which benefit he or she wishes to receive. An election to receive DEA will forfeit the individual's right to receive Fry Scholarship in the future, and an election to receive Fry Scholarship will forfeit the individual's right to receive DEA in the future. The election cannot be changed once it has been submitted, so VA encourages individuals to carefully review eligibility and entitlement under both programs before making a decision.

**Q: How will surviving spouses with both DEA and Fry Scholarship eligibility be notified on the requirement to make an election?**

**A:** VA will identify surviving spouses receiving Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) who have eligibility for both programs and send them a letter with comparative information on the benefits available and the process for electing.

**Q: Will spouses remain eligible to receive the DIC benefit while receiving benefits under the Fry Scholarship or DEA?**

**A:** Yes. There is no statutory provision prohibiting concurrent receipt of DIC and Fry Scholarship or DEA benefits. Eligible spouses may receive both payments concurrently.

**Q: What is the difference between DEA and Fry Scholarship benefits?**

**A:** Please see the DEA and Fry Scholarship Benefit Education Comparison Chart below. More detailed information regarding DEA and the Fry Scholarship is available on our website at [www.benefits.va.gov/gibill](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill).



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**Comparison Chart for Surviving Spouses with both DEA and Fry Scholarship Eligibility**

	DEA	Fry Scholarship
<b>Benefit Payments</b>	<p>Monthly amount paid directly to the student. The current monthly payment for full-time training is \$1,018.</p>	<p><b>Tuition and Fee Benefit (Paid to School) –</b> Full in-state tuition costs covered for training pursued at public institutions. Up to \$20,235.02 per year for training at private institutions</p> <p><b>Books and Supplies Stipend (Paid to Student) –</b> Up to a \$1,000 a year for books and supplies. Paid to the student proportionately for each term.</p> <p><b>Monthly Housing Allowance (Paid to Student) –</b> Stipend based on local BAH for E-5 with dependents and paid monthly. Online students receive half of the BAH national average.</p>
<b>Duration of Benefits</b>	Surviving spouses of those who died in the line of duty may use benefits for up to 20 years from the Servicemember's date of death.	15 years from the Servicemember's date of death
<b>Maximum Months of Benefits</b>	45 months	36 months
<b>Concurrent receipt of DIC and education benefit for spouse</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Programs Covered</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College, Business Technical, or Vocational Programs</li> <li>• Certification tests</li> <li>• Apprenticeship/on the job training</li> <li>• Tutorial assistance</li> <li>• Work-study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College, Business Technical, or Vocational Programs</li> <li>• Certification tests</li> <li>• Apprenticeship/on the job training</li> <li>• Vocational flight training</li> <li>• Tutorial assistance</li> <li>• Work-study</li> </ul>

**Q: How will remarriage affect eligibility?**

**A:** Remarriage will terminate a surviving spouse's eligibility to the Fry Scholarship. The law explicitly states that the benefit will expire on the date in which the spouse remarries. This new rule does not apply to surviving children. Children, as always, will not lose eligibility if they marry.



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**Q: Will it be retroactive similar to how the Fry Scholarship was for children?**

**A:** The law does not grant retroactive benefits. Although eligibility will be established by the death of a spouse in line of duty on or after September 11, 2001, the law only allows VA to pay for training that the surviving spouse begins on or after January 1, 2015.

For example, if a Servicemember's spouse died on January 1, 2010, the surviving spouse is eligible for the Fry Scholarship but, as of January 1, 2015, the surviving spouse will only have 10 years remaining in which to use the benefits.

The surviving spouse can only receive Fry Scholarship benefits for training beginning on or after January 1, 2015. In this example, if the surviving spouse went to school between January 1, 2010, and January 1, 2015, the spouse cannot receive Fry Scholarship benefits for that training.

**Q: When will the application be available and when will VA start accepting applications?**

**A:** VA will begin accepting applications on November 3, 2014. Applications must be completed and forwarded to the appropriate regional processing office (as indicated on the form) via postal mail, fax, or email.

VA will post additional information as procedures are developed on how to apply for and use this benefit, as well as provide notice on VA's website as soon as the application is available.



Survivor Outreach Services was created to embrace and reassure Survivors that they are continually linked to the Army Family through a unified support program that enables them to remain an important part of the Army for as long as they desire.

The SOS program continuously strives to provide the highest quality of services to surviving Family members of fallen Warriors. As such, we want to provide you with information on the SOS program in your area. We stand ready to serve you and answer your questions.

**Survivor Services Available:**

- Provide Expertise on State & Federal Survivor benefits
- Arrange for estate and financial advice
- Connect Survivors with mental health support/counseling
- Provide assistance in obtaining military reports
- Provide Survivors with resource referrals for:
  - Peer Support
  - Bereavement Counseling
  - Emergency Financial Services
  - Military Legal Assistance
  - TRICARE
  - Educational Benefits
  - Benefits Assistance

Check us out online at:

<http://www.il.ngb.army.mil/family/survivoroutreach>

Don't like waiting for the monthly newsletter? Be sure to like us on Facebook:

<http://tinyurl.com/IllinoisSOS>

## Helpful Contacts and Resources:



**ILLINOIS CONNECTIONS FOR  
FAMILIES OF THE FALLEN (ICFF)**

**Check out the Illinois Connections for Families of the Fallen (ICFF)  
“Community Connections” Resource Guide!**

[http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/ilcff/pages/17/attachments/original/1397143619/  
ICFF\\_Community\\_Resource\\_Guide\\_2014\\_IN14013\\_FINAL2.pdf?1397143619](http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/ilcff/pages/17/attachments/original/1397143619/ICFF_Community_Resource_Guide_2014_IN14013_FINAL2.pdf?1397143619)



U. S. A R M Y  
**SURVIVOR  
OUTREACH  
SERVICES**

*Helping Survivors cope with their loss for as long as they desire.*

Visit your local SOS Office.

Christine Cooper, SOS Support Coordinator

Joint Forces Headquarters, 1301 N. MacArthur Blvd, Springfield, IL 62702-2399

(217) 761-3382 office, (217) 316-1191 cell,

email: [christine.m.cooper10.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:christine.m.cooper10.ctr@mail.mil)

Keith Rogers, SOS Support Coordinator

3702 New Era Road, Murphysboro, IL 62966

(618) 457-5686 office; (217) 725-4100 cell, email: [keith.e.rogers.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:keith.e.rogers.ctr@mail.mil)

Jim Frazier, SOS Support Coordinator

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(708) 646-5933 cell, email: [james.l.frazier61.ctr@us.army.mil](mailto:james.l.frazier61.ctr@us.army.mil)

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