



**Survivor Outreach Services**  
Serving Survivors of Illinois' Fallen Soldiers  
“Never Forgotten.....Never Alone”  
June 2011 Bulletin – 14th Issue

**Survivor Outreach Services (SOS)**

SOS 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.

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

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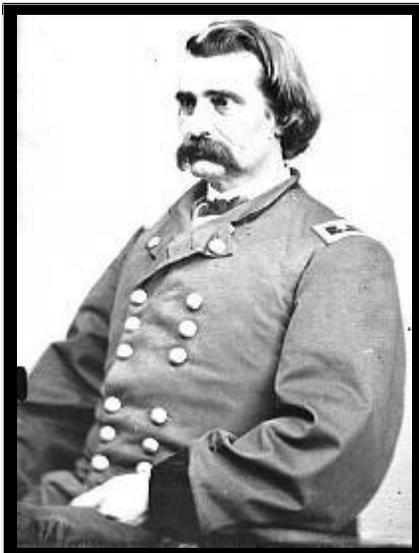
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**Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, is a day of remembrance for those who have died in our nation's service.** There are many stories as to its actual beginnings, with over two dozen cities and towns laying claim to being the birthplace of Memorial Day. There is also evidence that organized women's groups in the South were decorating graves before the end of the Civil War: a hymn published in 1867, "Kneel Where Our Loves are Sleeping" by Nella L. Sweet carried the dedication "To The Ladies of the South who are Decorating the Graves of the Confederate Dead" (Source: Duke University's [Historic American Sheet Music, 1850-1920](#)). While Waterloo N.Y. was officially declared the birthplace of Memorial Day by President Lyndon Johnson in May 1966, it's difficult to prove conclusively the origins of the day. It is more likely that it had many separate beginnings; each of those towns and every planned or spontaneous gathering of people to honor the war dead in the 1860's tapped into the general human need to honor our dead, each contributed honorably to the growing movement that culminated in Gen Logan giving his official proclamation in 1868. It is not important who was the very first, what is important is that Memorial Day was established. Memorial Day is not about division. It is about reconciliation; it is about coming together to honor those who gave their all.



**General John A. Logan**  
Library of Congress, Prints &  
Photographs Division, [LC-  
B8172- 6403 DLC (b&w film  
neg.)]

Memorial Day was officially proclaimed on 5 May 1868 by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, in his [General Order No. 11](#), and was first observed on 30 May 1868, when flowers were placed on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery. The first state to officially recognize the holiday was New York in 1873. By 1890 it was recognized by all of the northern states. The South refused to acknowledge the day, honoring their dead on separate days until after World War I (when the holiday changed from honoring just those who died fighting in the Civil War to honoring Americans who died fighting in any war). It is now celebrated in almost every State on the last Monday in May (passed by Congress with the National Holiday Act of 1971 (P.L. 90 - 363) to ensure a three day weekend for Federal holidays), though several southern states have an additional separate day for honoring the Confederate war dead: January 19 in Texas, April 26 in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and Mississippi; May 10 in South Carolina; and June 3 (Jefferson Davis' birthday) in Louisiana and Tennessee.

In 1915, inspired by the poem "[In Flanders Fields,](#)" Moina Michael replied with her own poem:

We cherish too, the Poppy red  
That grows on fields where valor led,  
It seems to signal to the skies  
That blood of heroes never dies.

She then conceived of an idea to wear red poppies on Memorial day in honor of those who died serving the nation during war. She was the first to wear one, and sold poppies to her friends and co-workers with the money going to benefit servicemen in need. Later a Madam Guerin from France was visiting the United States and learned of this new custom started by Ms. Michael and when she returned to France, made artificial red poppies to raise money for war orphaned children and widowed women. This tradition spread to other countries. In 1921, the Franco-American Children's League sold poppies nationally to benefit war orphans of France and Belgium. The League disbanded a year later and Madam Guerin

approached the VFW for help. Shortly before Memorial Day in 1922 the VFW became the first veterans' organization to nationally sell poppies. Two years later their ["Buddy" Poppy program](#) was selling artificial poppies made by disabled veterans. In 1948 the US Post Office honored Ms Michael for her role in founding the National Poppy movement by issuing [a red 3 cent postage stamp](#) with her likeness on it.

Traditional observance of Memorial day has diminished over the years. Many Americans nowadays have forgotten the meaning and traditions of Memorial Day. At many cemeteries, the graves of the fallen are increasingly ignored, neglected. Most people no longer remember the proper flag etiquette for the day. While there are towns and cities that still hold Memorial Day parades, many have not held a parade in decades. Some people think the day is for honoring any and all dead, and not just those fallen in service to our country.

There are a few notable exceptions. Since the late 50's on the Thursday before Memorial Day, the 1,200 soldiers of the 3d U.S. Infantry place small American flags at each of the more than 260,000 gravestones at Arlington National Cemetery. They then patrol 24 hours a day during the weekend to ensure that each flag remains standing. In 1951, the Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts of St. Louis began placing flags on the 150,000 graves at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery as an annual Good Turn, a practice that continues to this day. More recently, beginning in 1998, on the Saturday before the observed day for Memorial Day, the Boys Scouts and Girl Scouts place a candle at each of approximately 15,300 grave sites of soldiers buried at Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park on Marye's Heights (the [Luminaria Program](#)). And in 2004, Washington D.C. held its first Memorial Day parade in over 60 years.

To help re-educate and remind Americans of the true meaning of Memorial Day, the "[National Moment of Remembrance](#)" resolution was passed on Dec 2000 which asks that at 3 p.m. local time, for all Americans "To voluntarily and informally observe in their own way a Moment of remembrance and respect, pausing from whatever they are doing for a moment of silence or listening to ["Taps."](#)

**Department of Veterans Affairs – Office of Survivors Assistance**  
*“Helping Our Survivors Through Their Time of Transition”*

For everyone, the death of a loved one is a life changing event – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Office of Survivors Assistance (OSA) is here to assist survivors in making the necessary transition with benefits assistance.

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki said “Taking care of survivors is as essential as taking care of our Veterans and military personnel.” He added, “By taking care of survivors, we are honoring a commitment made to our Veterans and military members.”

The Office of Survivor Assistance (OSA) was established in October 2008 by Public Law 110-389, Title II, Section 222, and is the primary advisor to the Secretary on all matters related to policies, programs, legislative issues, and other initiatives affecting Veterans’ survivors and dependents of survivors.



Debra A. Walker  
OSA Director

OSA monitors VA’s delivery of benefits to survivors, makes appropriate referrals to VA offices for survivors seeking benefits and explores innovative ways of reaching survivors who are not receiving VA benefits for which they are eligible to receive. Some of these benefits include, but are not limited to, education assistance, home loan guaranties, health care insurance and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC).

“We are your advocate to ensure fairness, equity and appropriateness of all survivor benefits and to serve as the liaison for inter- and intra-agency collaboration and coordination on survivor issues,” said OSA Director Debra A. Walker. “We are also fully committed to staying in step with the needs of survivors to advocate for the survivor community.”

To fulfill its mission, the Office of Survivors Assistance has been working closely with senior VA leadership to provide up-to-date information on the issues faced by the survivor community. Always at the forefront, OSA gleans much of its information through direct interaction with the survivor themselves.

On many occasions, OSA is called upon for assistance with an individual’s claim. While the thrust of OSA operations calls upon it to serve in a policy capacity, OSA staff knows that every VA employee has the responsibility and privilege to provide the excellent customer service that our clients so deserve. On any given day, OSA staff may be found rolling up their sleeves, and working the issues of individual survivors who have contacted OSA directly.

As a rule, OSA sees these service opportunities as mutually beneficial; the survivor obtains the necessary assistance with their particular issue, and OSA benefits by reviewing the trends in requests for assistance, which helps identify possible gaps in programmatic services. Strategy-wise, by working on the micro level, OSA is better able to advise VA leadership at the macro level.

OSA has also established multiple partnerships with the Department of Defense agencies, Veterans Service Organizations and other non-government organizations to explore ways to ease the transition of survivors into the VA system, and to make a difference in survivors’ lives.

OSA was a key driver in the addition of the term “survivors” to the title of the informational 2009 Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors Book, which was symbolic of VA’s commitment in

advocating for survivors both inside and outside of VA. It spearheaded updates to the benefits book by clarifying the language regarding bereavement counseling for survivors, which will ultimately make counseling more accessible for all survivors. OSA maintains a Web site to help survivors navigate through resources that may be available to them, and will continue to monitor policy and legislative issues as well as pursue outreach to survivors to ensure that survivor issues are fully understood and addressed at the appropriate level.

“It is our mission to make sure Veterans’ survivors do not fall through the cracks as VA’s mission to serve those who have borne the battle is not over when Taps is played. More information can be received by calling 202-461-1077 or visiting our Web site at [www.va.gov/survivors](http://www.va.gov/survivors). If you would like to write us, contact us at [officeofsurvivors@va.gov](mailto:officeofsurvivors@va.gov).

### **Ft. Leonard Wood – Survivor Memory Project**

The Ft. Leonard Wood SOS is doing another annual Survivor Memory Project. This year it is a book that is a compilation of your stories, memories, photos, drawings, and your Service Members favorite recipe, anything you want to share with other Survivors.

If you want to share your story about your wonderful and amazing Service Member, please do so!!! Some have already sent things like; recipes that their loved one used to ask to be made when they were home and the story of how that became their favorite food, photos of their Soldier's favorite coffee house before he was deployed and when he found one in Iraq, how her father would always find a space to fire up the BBQ grill, no matter how small their yard or balcony was where they were stationed.

They have been funny, and/or touching. Anything you want to share will be welcome.

If you are not a writer, you can call me and tell me over the phone at (573) 596-0195 and I will write it for you.

If you have it written somewhere else and don't want to re-type it, you can fax it to me at (573) 596-0551, Attn: Jody, SOS

All photos can be color copied and mailed to: Jody Carmack, 486 Replacement Avenue, Ft. Leonard Wood, MO 65473 or emailed to [Jodeen.carmack@us.army.mil](mailto:Jodeen.carmack@us.army.mil).

The Book will be presented to the public at the Ft. Leonard Wood 4th of July celebration. A day of family fun, thousands of Service Members, a concert from our 399th Army Band, to include their Rock Band, and hopefully the Army Soldier's Show. All topped off by the largest Fireworks display in Missouri. You all are welcome to attend!!!

## Military Teen Adventure Camps



For Military Youth, ages 14-18

If you are looking for an exciting summer adventure register for one of the Illinois Adventure Camp experiences! All camps begin and end at Camp Wartburg, near Waterloo, Illinois. Whether you are a water lover, are interested in looking at the world from an angle high above the ground; or you are a risk-taker who likes to live life on the edge, we have a camp for you!

Complete the on-line pre-registration form to secure your spot today! The information included in the pre-registration form will be used to make camper selections.

For more information contact:

Linda Kupferschmid, Adventure Camp Coordinator

[lkupfers@illinois.edu](mailto:lkupfers@illinois.edu)

217-265-8209

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## Wild Water Adventure Camp

July 10-15, 2011

Join other teens on a river adventure as you canoe the great Current River in southern Missouri. This week of wild water adventures, will begin at Camp Wartburg near Waterloo, Illinois. You will spend the first day being trained to maneuver a canoe while working with new friends. On Day 2 you will travel by van to southern Missouri to continue this memorable water adventure. Beyond the river adventure, you will be involved in opportunities for team-building as you work together in setting up camp and assisting as meals are prepared in the great outdoors!

<http://webs.extension.uiuc.edu/registration/?RegistrationID=5506>

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## New Heights Adventure Camp

July 31 – August 5, 2011

Be prepared to experience a new level of adventure as you climb high above the ground and gain a whole new perspective of the great outdoors! You will start your adventure week at Camp Wartburg near Waterloo, Illinois where you will work extensively to master the on-site high ropes course and climbing wall with trained guides before you travel by van to Shawnee National Forest in scenic southern Illinois. Once there, you will be introduced to Australian-style rappelling and put all of your new skills into action. In addition to having an adventure you will never forget, you will also have the opportunity to develop life-long friendships as you work together at the base camp, prepare meals together in an outdoor setting, and support each other as you climb and rappel nature's rock walls.

<http://webs.extension.uiuc.edu/registration/default.cfm?RegistrationID=5509>

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### **On the Edge Adventure Camp**

October 7-10, 2011

If stepping out of your comfort zone and living on the edge sounds exciting, then make sure you register to be a part of On the Edge Adventure Camp! This edgy adventure offers training on the climbing wall, workouts on a high ropes course, and maneuvering mountain bike trails. This adventure camp experience will be held at Camp Wartburg, near Waterloo, Illinois where you will be engaged in a variety of "on the edge" experiences in a team environment ; learning what it is like to support one another in a risk-taking challenge. At the end of the week, campers will have the opportunity to demonstrate what skills they gained as they work together in teams to complete a mission developed just for them.

<http://webs.extension.uiuc.edu/registration/default.cfm?RegistrationID=5510>

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### **Cost of Camp**

All three Adventure Camps are for youth from military families and are free for those military youth to attend. The Department of Defense, Purdue University, University of Illinois, Camp Wartburg Staff, and Operation: Military Kids are working in partnership to bring these camps to you

**MOVING SOON?**

**Please update your address with  
your local SOS Coordinator.**

**Are you interested in joining or  
forming a support group?**

**Contact your local SOS Coordinator  
for information or assistance.**

## Springfield Ceremony Remembers Fallen Servicemembers

Story by Sgt. Charlie Helmholt, 139th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

SPRINGFIELD, IL (05/15/2011)(readMedia)-- Military leaders from the Illinois National Guard joined Gold Star Families in a ceremony to honor fallen Illinois Soldiers and Airmen at the Illinois State Military Museum in Springfield on May 14.

The Illinois National Guard has lost 33 Army National Guardsmen and one Air Guardsman since 9-11. Family members and friends from 12 fallen heroes were in attendance.

The men and women who gave their lives will not be forgotten, said Maj. Gen. William Enyart, the 37th Adjutant General of the Illinois National Guard.

A display case with pictures, keepsakes and descriptions of Illinois' fallen heroes sits outside of Enyart's office and serves as a constant reminder of their sacrifice.

The ceremony reached an emotional high point when a letter written by Illinois Army National Guard Sgt. Scott Stream of Mattoon was read aloud. The letter read, in part...

*We who joined with vague notions of protecting our country see how desperate the peril, how hungry the enemy and how frail the security we have is. So the more I love you all the more I feel I must keep fighting for you. The more I love and long for home, the more right I feel here on the front line standing between you and the seething madness that wants to suck the life and love out of our land.*

*Does that mean I cannot go home? I hope not, because I want this just to be the postponement of the joy of life, not the sacrifice of mine. If it costs me my life to protect our land and people then that is a small thing, I just hope that fate lets me return to the promise land and remind people just how great our land is.*

*War is a young man's game, and I am getting an old man's head. It is a strange thing. I just hope that I am not changed so that I cannot take joy in the land inside the wire when I make it home. I want to be with you all again and let my gun sit in the rack and float on my back in a tube down a lazy river...*

Stream died Feb. 24, 2009, when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle. He is survived by his wife Rasa and a daughter Laura who was only five years old at the time of Stream's death. Both in attendance at the ceremony.

Also in attendance was Regina Byther, of University Park whose daughter, Sgt. Simone Robinson, also a fallen hero, was honored at the ceremony.

Byther explained that although it is still very hard dealing with her daughters' death, ceremonies like this help keep her daughter's story and memory alive.

"I'm really proud of my daughter," said Byther. "I'm very proud of all the Soldiers."

This ceremony was the 2nd annual Fallen Heroes Event held at Camp Lincoln.

"They fought for our freedom," said Capt. Mindi Ernst, the director of family programs here. "We want to recognize their ultimate sacrifice."

**For video log onto:** <http://www.dvidshub.net/video/115340/memorial-ceremony>

**For high resolution photos, please contact the Illinois National Guard Public Affairs Office at**  
[ngilstaffpao@ng.army.mil](mailto:ngilstaffpao@ng.army.mil)

**Photo 1:** Photo by Sgt. Charlie Helmholt, 139th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment/ A memorial at the Illinois State Military Museum in Springfield honors the memory of Illinois Soldiers and Airmen who have made the ultimate sacrifice. The monument was created in 2010 by Allen Dilworth of Springfield as part of his Eagle Scout project. The Illinois National Guard will hold annual ceremonies at the memorial to remember their fallen.

**Photo 2:** Photo by Sgt. Charlie Helmholt, 139th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment/ Maj. Gen. William Enyart, the Adjutant General of the Illinois National Guard talks to the Gold Star Families during the May 14 remembrance ceremony at the Illinois State Military Museum in Springfield. The annual ceremony pays homage to Illinois Soldiers and Airmen killed in Iraq and Afghanistan since 9-11.

**Photo 3:** Photo by Sgt. Charlie Helmholt, 139th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment/ Rasa Stream (right) of Mattoon, the wife of former Illinois Army National Guard Soldier Sgt. Scott Stream, was one of 12 Gold Star families that took part in the May 14 remembrance ceremony at the Illinois State Military Museum in Springfield. Stream was killed Feb. 24, 2009 in Afghanistan. The couple had one daughter together, Laura (left), who was five years old when Stream was killed.

Permalink: <http://readme.readmedia.com/Springfield-Ceremony-Remembers-Fallen-Servicemembers/2321704>

Related Media

- [http://app.readmedia.com/news/attachment/30678/20110515-A-3694H-001\\_lo\\_res.jpg](http://app.readmedia.com/news/attachment/30678/20110515-A-3694H-001_lo_res.jpg)
- [http://app.readmedia.com/news/attachment/30679/20110515-A-3694H-004\\_lo\\_res.jpg](http://app.readmedia.com/news/attachment/30679/20110515-A-3694H-004_lo_res.jpg)
- [http://app.readmedia.com/news/attachment/30680/20110515-A-3694H-003\\_lo\\_res.jpg](http://app.readmedia.com/news/attachment/30680/20110515-A-3694H-003_lo_res.jpg)

**Check out the Illinois Families of Fallen Service Member Task Force  
"Community Connections" Resource Guide!**

[http://www.nchsd.org/libraryfiles/HDAFiles/Veterans%20Project/IN7511\\_Resourcesguide.pdf](http://www.nchsd.org/libraryfiles/HDAFiles/Veterans%20Project/IN7511_Resourcesguide.pdf)



## SOS Financial Counseling Services

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Mark Dunlop  
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[mark.dunlop1@us.army.mil](mailto:mark.dunlop1@us.army.mil)

# Building Your Financial House

## Financial Position

In last month's newsletter we covered the steps you should take to develop financial goals. Once you've specified your goals, the next step in building your financial house is evaluating and establishing a solid financial position. Things you should evaluate:

1. **Cash Flow:** Shows if you spend more or less than income and tracks expense categories. Prepare by tracking all income and expenses for a set time period.
2. **Debt-to-Income Ratio:** Shows how much of your gross income goes to debt payments. Should not exceed 36%.
3. **Liquidity Ratio:** A measure of how long your cash savings could meet expenses if income stopped. Divide your liquid assets by monthly expenses. An ideal goal is to cover at least 3 months of expenses in savings.
4. **Asset-to-Debt Ratio:** Shows if you are solvent. Solved by dividing total assets by total debts. Ratios less than one means insolvency and the ratio should increase over time.
5. **Net Worth:** Value of your assets minus liabilities. Provides a snapshot of your financial health, and should increase over time.
6. **Credit Rating:** Used by creditors to evaluate your approval and cost for credit and loans. Free report can be obtained once every 12 months at [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com)

Part of establishing a solid financial position also includes developing a budget. A budget is simply a spending plan, and can be used to help you reach your financial goals. It can help control spending and maintain a positive cash flow. There is no right or wrong budget other than the one that helps you achieve your goals. Your budget should include an amount you set aside to pay yourself. This will go a long way to improving your cash position for unforeseen expenses.

Feel free to contact a SOS financial counselor if you need additional guidance. Next month we'll look at evaluating your protection needs.

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*The below is for informational purposes only, and is not intended to imply endorsement by the Illinois National Guard or Survivor Outreach Services Program of any event, organization, corporation, or product.*

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**Chicago's Memorial Day Ceremony and Parade**

May 28, 2011

Daley Plaza

Ceremony begins at 11:00 AM

Parade begins at 12:00 PM

**17TH ANNUAL TAPS NATIONAL MILITARY SURVIVOR SEMINAR  
AND GOOD GRIEF CAMP FOR YOUNG SURVIVORS**

Memorial Day Weekend | May 27<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011

Crystal Gateway Marriott

Jefferson Davis Highway | Arlington Virginia

[www.taps.org](http://www.taps.org)

(800) 959-TAPS (8277)

**Discussion/Support Group**

June 4, 2011 1:00 – 3:00 PM

Illinois Families of Fallen Service Member Task Force

Institute for Psychoanalysis

122 South Michigan Avenue, Room 1323

Chicago, IL 60603

RSVP to Polly Everett\* 312-922-7474, ext. 309

or Judy Schiffman\* 312-922-7474, ext. 310

**PFC Geoffrey Morris**

**Memorial Governor's Cup Fishing Tournament**

2011 Tournament Dates

*24 - 25 June - Pro Division*

*Saturday, June 25 – Am Division (1 Day Only)*

*Heroes of Freedom Fishing Derby - Sunday, June 26, 2011*

<http://www.gsmtournament.com/>

**SECOND ANNUAL GOLD STAR FAMILY PICNIC**

TRIBUTE TO THE TROOPS

JULY 17, 2011 -- BEACH PARK ILL.

**Run for the Fallen**

August 20 & 21, 2011

[www.runforthefallen.org](http://www.runforthefallen.org)

**Gold Star Mother's Day**

September 25, 2011

## **National Wreaths Across America Remembrance Ceremony**

December 10, 2011; 12 Noon EST

[www.wreathscrossamerica.org](http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org)

877-385-9504

## **Helpful Contacts and Resources:**

### **Military & Family Life Consultants**

Central/South (217) 720-0268

North: 708-638-2068

Providing free, confidential problem solving to all service members and their families. MFLC's travel to your home town. (12 free sessions)

### **Military OneSource**

12 free sessions per issue from a counselor in your area (no cost)

1-800-342-9647 or [www.militaryonesource.com](http://www.militaryonesource.com)

### **Department of Veterans Affairs**

Free counseling for all family members including spouses, children, parents and siblings (no cost) 1-800-827-1000 or <http://www.va.gov>

### **TRICARE**

Health and Dental Insurance

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

### **Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)**

1-800-959-TAPS (8277) or [www.taps.org](http://www.taps.org)

### **Social Security Administration**

1-800-772-1213 or <http://www.ssa.gov>

### **Defense Finance & Accounting Office**

1-800-321-1080 or [www.dfas.mil](http://www.dfas.mil)

### **National Military Families Association (NMFA)**

<http://www.militaryfamily.org>

### **Gold Star Wives of America**

1-888-751-6350 or <http://www.goldstarwives.org/>

### **American Gold Star Mothers**

202-265-0991 or <http://www.goldstarmoms.com/>

**Please feel free to email me at [bobby.gillmore@us.army.mil](mailto:bobby.gillmore@us.army.mil) with any comments, information, or events that may benefit other Survivors. If you know other Survivors that would like to receive future additions of this bulletin, please have them send me an email with the following information:**

**Name:**

**Fallen Heroes Name & Branch:**

**Relationship:**

**EMAIL Address:**