



NC NATIONAL GUARD

FAMILY PROGRAMS NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2025



"EMPOWERING FAMILIES ON THE HOMEFRONT"

Issue #38

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 9 December 2025 - Teen Council - Raleigh, NC/Virtual
- Pending Events:
- 17 January 2025 - Joel Fund Family Art Workshop
 - 24 January 2025 - TDVAM Lock-in Kick-off Event

HAPPY
Holidays!

Sharing of resources in this newsletter does not constitute an endorsement by NGB, NCARNG, NCNG Family Programs, CYs, or its staff

THIS DAY IN HISTORY...

- **December 7, 1941-** The Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and other military sites in Hawaii killing over 3,000 Americans. This event brought the United States into World War II.
- **December 15, 1791-** The Bill of Rights, the first 10 amendments to the U.S. Constitution, was ratified.
- **December 16, 1773-** The Boston Tea Party occurred as Americans disguised as Mohawk Indians boarded British ships in Boston Harbor and dumped 342 containers of tea overboard.
- **December 20, 1989-** The U.S. invaded Panama during Operation Just Cause.
- **December 25-** Christmas Day:

Dad Jokes 101!

- How do you wash your hands over the holiday? **With Santatizer!**
- My wife said I'm the cheapest guy in the world. **I'm not buying it!**
- Why did Santa's helper get depressed? **He had low "elf" esteem.**
- Two fish are in a tank. One turns to the other and says, **"Any idea how to drive this thing?"**

November's Thanksgiving items count was: 9

How many holiday items do you see?



From the State Family Programs Director's Desk:

Throughout the holiday season it's important to take a few days to embrace one another, grateful for the gifts and opportunities of the past year. The core of the season is not the receiving of gifts, but the sharing of them. Take a moment to reach out to friends, past and present, to express your appreciation for the part that they have played in our lives. Simply reflecting with friends and family can demonstrate our gratitude to them and allow us to improve our own sense of self.

Across our ranks, there are families that struggle during this time of year, challenged by separation and loss. After the longest lapse in appropriated funding we have endured, reach out to those that may have been impacted. Secretary of the Army Driscoll said it simply and to the point: **Just pick up.** Whether it is your car keys or your phone, check on the families around you. Remember these families and reach out to them, your efforts and engagement mean the world to them. Happy Holidays, and I look forward to the prospects of the coming year!

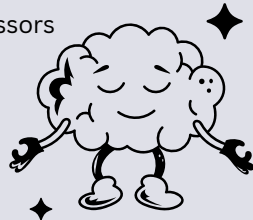
Sincerely,
SGM Shook



Teen Council Corner

During the November Teen Council meeting, we discussed the stressors surrounding holidays, extended family, relationships, and self-care. Making sure your wellbeing is in check and supporting others in need are always important but especially during the holidays.

1. Express emotions openly
2. Make supportive food choices
3. Make time for movement
4. Schedule self-care time
5. Practice meditation or positive affirmations
6. Spend some time outside if possible
7. Set healthy boundaries with friends and family
8. Prioritize rest and sleep
9. Stay hydrated
10. Be mindful of alcohol consumption
11. Try a preemptive strike with your stressors
12. Practice deep breathing exercises
13. Stick to a budget
14. Take social breaks
15. Cultivate gratitude
16. Seek support when needed



To read more visit the link below.

<https://blog.calm.com/blog/holiday-self-care>

Deployment Resource Reminders

Our Military kids funds activities for eligible military kids. Children of National Guard or Reserve service members who are experiencing an overseas deployment OR activation on a stateside named mission AND Children of Veterans or military in any branch of service who are receiving care for combat-related injuries or illness.

Only applies if the Service Member meet eligibility *requirements above.*

<https://www.ourmilitarykids.org>



ASYMCA - Our Mission

The Armed Services YMCA enhances the lives of military members and their families in spirit, mind, and body through programs relevant to the unique challenges of military life.

Our focus is to provide needed programs and services for single or married junior enlisted personnel and their family members. The Armed Services YMCA empowers military families, no matter who they are or where they're from, by ensuring access to resources, relationships, and opportunities for all to grow and thrive. For more information about military programs visit <https://asymca.org/>



RESOURCE HIGHLIGHT - FISHER HOUSE

The Fisher House Foundation's Scholarships for Service program helps military families find education funding that matches their goals. By completing a short questionnaire, students receive a customized list of scholarships, fellowships, and grants designed specifically for military-connected students.

A key opportunity is the Scholarships for Military Children Program, which awards 500 scholarships valued at \$2,000 each for the 2026–2027 academic year.

The application window opens December 10, 2025, and closes February 11, 2026. .

For more information:

<https://www.fisherhouse.org/programs/scholarship-programs/>

If you would like additional scholarships resources, contact your Child and Youth Staff.



NCNG Child & Youth Services (CYS)

Operation Homefront is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting military families with the resources they need to remain strong, stable, and secure. The organization provides direct assistance to active-duty families and wounded, ill, or injured veterans, offering emergency financial help, transitional and permanent housing programs, and essential family services. Through well-known initiatives like the Back-to-School Brigade, Holiday Meals for Military, and seasonal family support events, Operation Homefront works to ease financial burdens and strengthen the well-being of those who serve. Their mission ensures that military families can thrive in the communities they call home.

For more information:

<https://operationhomefront.org>



Would you like Child & Youth resources at your fingertips...

Download the ARNG Child & Youth Program App today!

Search "ARNG CYP"



Local Adventure Awaits

Coastal NC (Outer Banks, Wilmington, Crystal Coast, Brunswick Islands)

- **Enchanted Airlie (Wilmington)** - gorgeous holiday lights and garden walks at Airlie Gardens.
- **Southport Winterfest** - parades, concerts, historic home tours and waterfront holiday cheer.
- **Beaufort & New Bern Christmas Flotillas** - illuminated boat parades along the water.
- **Outer Banks WinterLights at Elizabethan Gardens (Manteo)** - one of NC's most beautiful holiday light displays.
- **Quiet Beach Walks** - OBX, Carolina Beach, Emerald Isle, and Topsail are calm, peaceful, and great for off-season exploring.

Piedmont (Central NC – Raleigh, Durham, Charlotte, Greensboro, Lexington)

- **Charlotte Motor Speedway Christmas Lights** - drive-through light show with over 4 million lights.
- **Raleigh's North Hills & Downtown Holiday Events** - parades, marketings, pop-up shops, and ice skating rinks.
- **Durham's American Tobacco Campus Lights** - festive displays, music, and riverwalk decorations.
- **Hallmark-style small town events** in places like Lexington, Salisbury, and Mebane.
- **Carolina Ballet's *The Nutcracker*** and other seasonal performances across the region.

Mountains (Western NC – Asheville, Boone, Banner Elk, Blue Ridge)

- **Biltmore Estate Candlelight Christmas (Asheville)** - iconic holiday decor, evening tours, and festive displays.
- **Small-Town Christmas Festivals** in Boone, Blowing Rock, and Hendersonville with parades, markets, and tree lightings.
- **Winter Hiking** in Pisgah or the Blue Ridge Parkway overlooks (weather permitting).
- **Sugar Mountain & Beech Mountain** - skiing, snowboarding, tubing, and ice skating as the ski season begins.
- **Holiday Craft Markets** featuring local handmade art, pottery, and mountain goods.

To find more adventures across the state go to: <https://www.visitNC.com>