



NC NATIONAL GUARD

FAMILY PROGRAMS NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2026

"EMPOWERING FAMILIES ON THE HOMEFRONT"



Issue #40

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 10 February 2026 - Teen Council
- 13 February 2026 - Spy Kids Date Night (Smithfield)
- 21-22 March 2026 - Teen Lock-in (Clinton)
- 28 March 2026 - Easter Egg-Stravaganza (Raleigh)
- 11 April 2026 - MOMC Ball (Raleigh)

Coming soon:

- Joel Fund Creativity Workshop

February

THIS DAY IN HISTORY...

- **February 3, 1870** - 15th Amendment ratified. *Guaranteeing the right of citizens to vote regardless of race or color.*
- **February 14** - St. Valentine's Day- *One of the most celebrated unofficial holidays. St. Valentine was a 3rd- century Roman saint and was buried on February 14th, which has been observed since the 8th century.*
- **February 22, 1732** - George Washington was born in Virginia.
- **February 23, 1991** - Operation Desert Storm began as the allied ground offensive began.

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

Dad Jokes 101!

- I wouldn't worry about your smartphone or television spying on you. It's that vacuum cleaner that's been gathering all the dirt on you for years!
- I have a condition where I can't stop telling airplane jokes. My doctor says it's "terminal."
- What type of meal does Cupid love to eat? An heart-y one!
- I bought a new sweater the other day that was full of static electricity. I returned it and received a new one free of charge!

January winter items count was: 6

How many heart items do you see?



From the State Family Programs Director's Desk:

Feb 2026

While we focus on the insulating of our home, we can also include the insulation around our communities and families. There are an incredible number of events occurring worldwide that impact our families and the communities we live in. From ongoing international conflicts to domestic strife our families are impacted both financially and emotionally. Take time to communicate with your family about these current events, share your perspective and listen to their thoughts and questions. These connections are the bedrock of a solid and stable home, and that leads to a healthy and cooperative community.

Seek out and engage with your own mentors and family members, regardless of distance, to discuss these events and influences. The goal is not to be 'Right', the objective is to be 'Engaged'. Those connections are what sustains and insulate us through the coldest seasons of life.

If you want to be involved in the growth of our NCNG Family Community, please reach out to your unit Family Readiness Group Leader, or the Soldier and Family Readiness Specialist in your area.

**Sincerely,
SGM Shook**



Teen Council Corner

February is all about celebrating connections, whether with peers, family, or community.

“Real Love Respects” is this year’s theme to Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month. During the month we focus on building healthy relationships through communication and connection. Communicating in a confident, clear and controlled manner while responding with authentic, active interest builds relationships. It all starts with respect for yourself and others you love.

Below are some great resource links for teens and parents to help build connections by improving communication.

<https://www.LoveisRespect.org>
<https://BloomMilitaryTeens.org>
<https://www.itgetsbetter.org>
<https://www.parentsandteen.com>



For additional questions or more information, please contact Kristi Wilson at

Kristi.L.Wilson25.ctr@army.mil or 984-664-7084.

American Heart Month

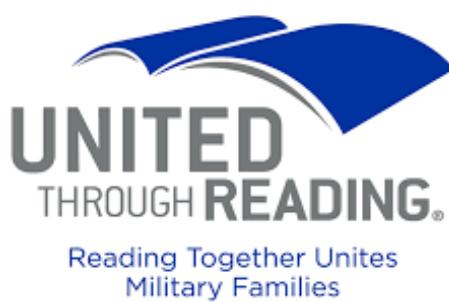


February is American Heart Month. This awareness month was established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to educate the public about heart disease and stroke. The division for heart disease and Stroke Prevention is shining light on hypertension (high blood pressure), a leading risk factor for heart disease and stroke. For more information on American Heart Month please visit the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute webpage at:

<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/educationamerican-heart-month>

United Through Reading

United Through Reading connects military families through reading. We do this by providing military service members with the opportunity to record and save story time moments for their families to enjoy, no matter the distance. Each recording comes with a free copy of the book for your family to read along with your story time recording. We also provide reading resources with tips and tricks to start a daily reading routine at home.



For More Information:
<https://unitedthroughreading.org/>

NCNG Child & Youth Services (CYS)

Random Acts of Kindness Week 15-21 February 2026

Let's all do our part to make kindness the norm. By showing gratitude and kindness to others, we build lasting relationships. A simple smile can go a long way when someone is having a rough day. We also need to show ourselves the same forgiveness and compassion since we all make mistakes. Self-care can be as simple as saying no to one more thing and allowing yourself time to rest or do something you enjoy. By being our best self, we are more inclined to be helpful and show compassion to others. We all have our own story and can probably point out specific people that showed us kindness along the way. By spreading kindness, we motivate others to do the same.

For ideas to engage all ages please visit:
<https://www.randomactsofkindness.org>

Random Acts of Kindness Day is
February 17, 2025
Share your photos of spreading kindness
Let's all be a Kindness Hero!



Local Adventure Awaits

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

- **Quiet Beach Walks** on the Outer Banks, Emerald Isle, and Topsail Island.
- **Valentine's Weekend Coastal Getaways** – oceanfront inns and historic B&Bs.
- **Historic Downtown Strolls** in Wilmington, Beaufort, and New Bern.
- **Winter Wildlife Watching** – birds, seals (OBX), and dolphins.
- **Fresh Seafood Dining** without summer crowds.

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

- **College Basketball Rivalries** – UNC, Duke, and NC State games are in full swing.
- **Museums & Indoor Attractions** in Raleigh, Durham, and Charlotte.
- **Valentine's Day Events** – wine tastings, prix-fixe dinners, and live music.
- **Theater, Comedy, and Concerts** throughout the Triangle and Charlotte areas.
- **Outdoor Walks** on Mild Days at Umstead State Park or city greenways.

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

- **Skiing, Snowboarding & Tubing** at Sugar Mountain, Beech Mountain, and Appalachian Ski Mountain.
- **Romantic Cabin Getaways** with fireplaces, mountain views, and hot tubs (popular for Valentine's Day).
- **Winter Hiking** on clear days in Pisgah National Forest and lower-elevation trails.
- **Asheville Breweries & Dining** – great cold-weather stops after outdoor fun.
- **Winter Festivals & Craft Events** in mountain towns (dates vary).

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



EMPOWER MILITARY YOUTH

with Boys & Girls Clubs of America's (BGCA)

Mission: Youth Outreach Program

Boys & Girls Clubs should be on your radar as the ideal after-school and/or summer camp experience solution for your family. At local Clubs, you can expect:

A FOUNDATION OF CONSISTENCY	PROVEN, SUCCESSFUL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS
SAFE SPACES	TRAINED AND CARING ADULTS
A SENSE OF COMMUNITY AND BELONGING	ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND TUTORING

With BGCA's consistency, safety measures, proven youth development approach and community-building initiatives, these Clubs offer a haven of support for your child.

Flip over for detailed information. To find a Club near you, visit BGCA.org/military or click the QR code:



Eligibility:

- Military dependents ages 5-18 (biological, step, adoptive, foster or youth of guardian)
- Military personnel can be on Reserve status or active-duty status

bgca.org | MYO@bgca.org

PARENTS NIGHT OUT!

13 FEBRUARY 2026
1800-2100 (6PM-9PM)

Location: Smithfield Area



Give yourself a well-deserved break! Drop the kids off for a fun evening of supervised youth programming and spy kids activities while you enjoy a night out.

We've got the kids covered - date night awaits!

Open to all NCNG dependents ages 6 & up

Registration Required

<https://www.cognitoforms.com/FamilyPrograms2/DateNight>

If you have any questions, contact the CYS Team.
Kristi Wilson 984-664-7084
Desmond Williams 984-664-6082

SIGN UP FOR OUR E-NEWSLETTER!

STAY UP TO DATE ON WHAT'S HAPPENING



• GO TO: WWW.ARNGCYS.COM

• SCROLL DOWN TO THE SUBSCRIBE LINK



Subscribe to receive updates and information related to the ARNG CYS Program!

SUBSCRIBE

• ENTER YOUR EMAIL - IT'S THAT EASY!





National Military Family Association
Together We're Stronger®

Registration for Operation Purple Camps Open
February 11th

visit the website for additional details:
<https://www.militaryfamily.org/state-of-the-military-family-programs/operation-purple>



Easter Egg-Stravaganza

Fun Activities - Crafts - Egghunt - Easter Bunny

Open to All Ages, Registration Required!!

28 March 2026

1000-1200

Location: Raleigh Area

<https://www.cognitoforms.com/FamilyPrograms2/FY26EasterEggStravaganza>

If you have any questions, contact the CYS Team.
Kristi Wilson 984-664-7084
Desmond Williams 984-664-6082





MilTax

FREE TAX SERVICES

- FREE e-filing tax software to account for MiLife – everything from multiple moves to combat pay
- FREE support from MiLife consultants, specially trained in complex tax situations
- Prep and file anytime, anywhere and save your progress as you go.
- Software calculations are 100% accurate, guaranteed by the software provider.



TAKE COMMAND OF YOUR TAXES.

To get started, visit MilitaryOneSource.mil
or call 800-342-9647 to schedule a consultation.



MilTax is a benefit provided by the Defense Department exclusively for eligible service members and family members through Military OneSource.

North Carolina are you prepared for Winter Weather....

G1 Medical Cold Weather Force Health Protection Guidance

The COLD mnemonic for layering clothing ensures warmth and safety in cold conditions by reminding users to keep clothes Clean, avoid Overheating, keep clothes Loose and layered, and stay Dry. This system helps manage body moisture and insulation, preventing both sweating (which causes freezing) and hypothermia.

Here is a breakdown of the **COLD** (and expanded **COLDER**) mnemonic:

- C** - Clean: Dirt and grease fill the air pockets in clothing, reducing its insulating ability.
- O** - (Avoid) Overheating: Sweating makes you wet, and wet clothes lose their insulating value. Remove layers before you start sweating and add them before you get cold.
- L** - Loose and Layered: Several thin layers are warmer than one thick one because they trap air between them. Tight clothing can restrict blood circulation.
- D** - Dry: Moisture, whether from sweat or outside precipitation, drains body heat.
- E** - Examine (in COLDER): Check gear for damage.
- R** - Repair (in COLDER): Fix damage to maintain effectiveness.

Layering System Summary:

Base Layer (Wicking): Moves sweat away from the skin (avoid cotton).

Middle Layer (Insulation): Traps body heat (fleece or down).

Outer Layer (Shell): Protects against wind and rain.

Calories and Hydration:

The body can burn greater than normal the number of calories when keeping the body warm.

Dry, cold air can pull moisture from the body quickly.

Make sure your Soldiers are eating their meals and drinking plenty of HYDRATING fluids.



<https://www.fema.gov/blog/5-ways-safely-weather-storm>

<https://www.weather.gov/safety/cold-wind-chill-chart> <http://www.ready.gov/winter-weather>

<https://www.cdc.gov/winter-weather/safety/index.html>

<https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/winter-storm.html>