

# Survivor Outreach Services Wisconsin National Guard

Volume 1, Issue 1-A Bi-monthly Newsletter

October 2010



## Wisconsin SOS

Welcome to the first issue of the Wisconsin SOS Newsletter! We are excited to offer information about benefits, support and events for Survivors living in Wisconsin.

In the last year, we provided support to Casualty Assistance Officers, spoken about benefits to Survivors at the Wisconsin Warrior Summit, created awareness about the SOS program, and most importantly, we made a continuous effort to support and make contact with Survivors.

It is our mission to build a unified program which embraces and reassures Survivors that you are continually linked to the Military for as long as long as YOU desire. SOS is your long-term support. We offer long term support that includes, but not limited to:

- Federal and State Benefits • Referral to Financial Counseling
- Referral to Support Counseling • Recreational Events

There are now two SOS Coordinators, one in the Northern region and one in Southern region of Wisconsin. We are looking forward to serving you and your families. The SOS program is continuing to grow and we are looking at conducting support groups throughout the state in the future. We welcome Survivors from any branch of service, and offer support for any Survivor whether the Service Member was active duty or not. They are not forgotten, and you are not alone.

## Snowball Express Event

Snowball Express started in early 2006 with a simple idea: provide hope and new memories to the children of military fallen heroes who have died while on active duty since 9/11.

America should honor and pay tribute to the children of those military fallen heroes who have died while honorably serving since 9/11. In December of 2006, nearly 900 family members from all across America and the world gathered in Southern California for an unforgettable holiday gathering. Kids and widows discovered they weren't alone. And they found they weren't forgotten.

In 2009, 1500 attendees came to Dallas, Texas for Snowball Express IV. The event was held in Dallas for the first time and once again American Airlines stepped up to the plate, this time providing eight charter flights

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### Websites:

- [www.TAPS.org](http://www.TAPS.org)
- [www.survivingthefoldedflag.com](http://www.survivingthefoldedflag.com)
- [tricare.mil/mybenefit/home/LifeEvents/SponsorDies?](http://tricare.mil/mybenefit/home/LifeEvents/SponsorDies?)
- [wisconsinmilitary.org/survivor-outreach-services](http://wisconsinmilitary.org/survivor-outreach-services)
- [www.goldstarmoms.com](http://www.goldstarmoms.com)
- [www.militarywidows.org](http://www.militarywidows.org)

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Never Forgotten...Never Alone

## Snowball Express Continued

for our families. The families enjoyed a day at Southfork Ranch and an evening at the Mesquite Rodeo, an interactive day at the Dallas Convention Center capped off by a concert by Jeff Senour and the CTS Band. The final day was spent at the new Cowboy's Stadium in Arlington, Texas featuring a concert by Gary Sinese and his Lt. Dan Band.

We're already beginning to plan Snowball Express 2010. Our plans call for another, even more memorable event in Dallas, Texas where we hope we will see more and more of our families.

**\*\*\*Our Snowball Express registration is now open and ready to receive all of your information\*\*\***

Visit the website, click the Family Section, please click on Family Registration. Click and the new database will open and you may begin the registration process by clicking on —Register your Fallen Hero and create an account. The first item you will enter is your e-mail address and a password. Remember your password is case sensitive, so please write it down in a location that is easy for you to access. Your e-mail address and password is the way you will be able to reenter the site to edit or update your information. Anytime you want to update your information, just click on the Family Registration and enter your e-mail address and password. You will see your information as previously entered appear on the screen for you to review or change.

Visit the website for more information and to register:

<http://www.snowballexpress.org/Families/FamilyRegistration.aspx>

## Children of Fallen Heroes Can Apply for “Fry” College Scholarship

Washington, May 3—Congressman Scott announced that the Department of Veterans Affairs will start taking applications for The Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship, which Congress passed and was signed into law last year. The “Fry Scholarship” expands the New GI Bill education benefits to cover the full cost of a college education for all of the children of service members who have died on active duty on or after September 11, 2001. **“This scholarship honors the sacrifice of our military families,”** Congressman Scott said. **“No one is more deserving of our nation’s support than children whose parent gave their life in military service to our nation.”**

### Fry Scholarship eligibility

- All children of members of the Armed Forces who have died in the line of duty while on active duty on or after September 11, 2001, are eligible for 36 months of tuition and fees up to the maximum in-state tuition and as well as a monthly living stipend, and book allowance.
- The VA must begin making payments no later than August 1, 2010 with retroactive payments for children enrolled in college from August 1, 2009 through July 31, 2010.
- Surviving military children have 15 years to use their benefits, beginning on their 18th birthdays.

When dependents are also Veterans or service members eligible under the Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty, Montgomery GI Bill for Selected Reserves or the Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP), then they must relinquish their eligibility under those programs to receive benefits under a Fry scholarship.

An estimated 1,500 military children will be eligible for the Fry scholarship in 2010. The “Fry Scholarship” is named in honor of John David Fry, 28, a Texas native who died in Iraq in 2006 while disarming an explosive. He is survived by three young children.

For more information, visit the VA website at [http://www.gibill.va.gov/documents/fry\\_scholarship.pdf](http://www.gibill.va.gov/documents/fry_scholarship.pdf)

or call 1-888-GIBILL-1.

## Support Counseling with MFLCs

Are you looking for someone to talk to about the difficulties that you are going through? Challenges that you and your family are facing can be addressed by consulting with one of our Military Family Life Consultants (MFLC).

Licensed professionals with expertise working with couples, families and children provide in person or telephone information and referral, support, education, outreach and problem-solving counseling at no cost to you. All services are confidential. What can a counselor help me with? Loss and grief, loneliness, single parenting, stress management, school issues, problem solving, anger management, communications, and everyday situations. MFLCs are a great resource for Survivors and their families.

Nan Gardner is one of the MFLCs in Wisconsin, and is a licensed marriage and family therapist. Please feel free to contact Nan at 608-242-3746 or email her at [nan.gardner@us.army.mil](mailto:nan.gardner@us.army.mil)

"We will either provide the information and services you need or we'll connect you with resources that can."

## *Surviving the Folded Flag: Parents of war share stories of coping, courage, & faith*

### COMMENTS ABOUT SURVIVING THE FOLDED FLAG:

Deborah,

This book is wonderful, happy, sad and tragic. I can't choose enough words to describe it. Congratulations on a compilation of our fallen heroes true life stories so well done by you and the contributing Gold Star Moms.

I will be purchasing a few more books soon for friends who will appreciate it deeply and for a few friends that I hope will read it. Many people I have described your book to have expressed that it would depress them to read such stories, but for me quite the contrary has happened. Yes, I cry when I read each story, but I also feel a sense of pride knowing such wonderful people serve our country. I love reading their life's story. I hope this won't be the last and only *Surviving the Folded Flag*. I hope you will continue to compile more books like this one.

Thanks,  
Your Friend,  
Lynn, Orange County, California

Gold Medal Award Nomination by Military Writers Society of America. By: Deborah H. Tainsh, Gold Star Mom and author of AWARD WINNING *Heart of a Hawk*: One family's sacrifice & journey toward healing, [www.heartofahawk.com](http://www.heartofahawk.com)  
Proud wife USMC Sgt Maj (ret) David Tainsh, proud Gold Star Parents U.S.  
Army Sgt Patrick S. Tainsh KIA 2/11/04 Baghdad.

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