General Norton Schwartz, Chief of Staff, United States Air Force keynotes the 24th Annual Recognition Dinner

The 24th Annual Recognition Dinner was held Thursday evening, May 12th with General Norton Schwartz, Chief of Staff, USAF serving as the keynote speaker. General Schwartz' awareness of the many programs & services available to our nation's military and family members goes back to the time he served as Commander of the Special Operations Command-Pacific, as well as Alaskan Command, Alaskan North American Aerospace Defense Command Region.

Gen. Norton A. Schwartz is Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C. As Chief, he serves as the senior uniformed Air Force officer responsible for the organization, training and equipping of 680,000 active-duty, Guard, Reserve and civilian forces serving in the United States and overseas. As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the general and other service chiefs function as military advisers to the Secretary of Defense, National Security Council and the President.

General Schwartz graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1973. He is an alumnus of the National War College, a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, and a 1994 Fellow of Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Seminar XXI. He has served as Commander of the Special Operations Command-Pacific, as well as Alaskan Command, Alaskan North American Aerospace Defense Command Region, and the 11th Air Force. Prior to assuming his current position, General Schwartz was Commander, U.S. Transportation Command and served as the single manager for global air, land and sea transportation for the Department of Defense.

General Schwartz is a command pilot with more than 4,400 flying hours in a variety of aircraft. He participated as a crewmember in the 1975 airlift evacuation of Saigon, and in 1991 served as Chief of Staff of the Joint Special Operations Task Force for Northern Iraq in operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. In 1997, he led the Joint Task Force that prepared for the noncombatant evacuation of U.S. citizens in Cambodia.

“Proud Heritage – Exciting Future - 2011 marks the major milestone of 150 years of dedicated service to America’s military and their families. The Armed Services YMCA mission to support the military began in 1861 when a handful of YMCA volunteers provided relief services to Civil War soldiers. For 150 years, the ASYMCA’s programming has adapted to the ever changing needs of our Armed Services by providing support and services where the need is greatest: to junior soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen and their families. The ASYMCA continues to enrich the quality of life and resiliency of our service members and their families by providing educational, recreational, social and religious support services across the nation.”
Report of the Chairman of the Board

Since 1861, the Armed Services YMCA has been committed not only to serving military service members and their families, but also to helping them succeed. As a part of our ongoing strategic plan, in 2010 we aggressively endeavored to provide services to our community to insure they felt connected to something greater than themselves.

As our Armed Services YMCA branches and affiliated community YMCAs have responded to the needs of family members of our deployed warriors, we sense a renewed pride in our mission and purpose. These are tough times for our military families and the ASYMCA is proud to be a part of making a difference in their lives.

2011 marks one hundred fifty years of continuous uninterrupted service to our nation's military service personnel and their families. Every hour an ASYMCA staff member or volunteer spends at the ASYMCA translates into the caring attention a child or teen needs to grow up healthy and resilient. It all translates into support for our military families so that they can be successful and strong. This means healthier lives for people of all ages, backgrounds, abilities and incomes, and a safer, more viable community that's a good place to live and work.

In 2010, our 14 ASY branches provided more than 400,000 individual services to military family members throughout the world. Through collaboration and partnerships with churches, schools and other community groups and organizations, the ASYMCA has been able to extend its program opportunities deep into the heart of every neighborhood where we are located. We are helped every step along the way by the nearly 8,400 volunteers who provided over 98,000 hours of service to assist us in meeting our goals. The value of volunteer service has been recognized since the Civil War and continues to be a constant source of meaningful and much needed support to ASYMCA programs and services.

As this is my last year as the Chairman of the ASYMCA National Board, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all those who have made such a vital contribution to the life of this great organization and used their special talents to make a difference in so many lives! The Armed Services YMCA is well positioned to positively impact the next 150 years of service to our military service personnel and their families.

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YMCA Military Outreach Initiative

The Armed Services YMCA (ASYMCA) continues to administer the Military Outreach Initiative with the Department of Defense (DoD). This program provides eligible military families and active duty personnel with access to youth development, family strengthening, and health and well-being programs through memberships at community YMCAs and some private fitness companies nationwide. Membership fees are underwritten by the DoD and administered through the Armed Services YMCA. The network of over 1,407 YMCAs have provided overwhelming support for this initiative and over 35,000 military families and some 70,000 children were served in 2010.

The ASYMCA-DoD Outreach Initiative grew from a provision in the National Defense Authorization Act of 2008, which requires the Secretary of Defense to develop a plan to support military family readiness and to ensure military family readiness programs and activities are available to all military families, including those of the National Guard and Military Reservists.

Those military families and singles eligible to participate in the continuing initiative include:

- All interested families of joint deployed National Guard and Reserves
- Active Duty Independent Duty station personnel (single or family members)
- Relocated spouses and family members of deployed Active Duty personnel
- Community Based Warrior in Transition Unit (single or family membership)
- The Military Outreach Initiative will continue to run through September 30, 2011 and the contract has a provision for an additional 2 Option Years through 2013.

Altus ASYMCA cited as one of best non-profits

Altus Armed Services YMCA was cited as one of the 27 best non-profits in the state from a pool of 19,000 in Oklahoma at the prestigious Oklahoma Non Profits for Excellence (ONE Awards). Oklahoma’s Governor Mary Fallin joined with former Governor Henry and philanthropic leaders from across the state to recognize the finalists and view a presentation of the programs and activities of the Altus AFB Community Based Warrior in Transition Unit (single or family membership).

Altus Air Force Troops and their families were treated to a special luncheon celebration of poetry with Oklahoma Poet Laureate Eddie D. Wilcoxen. Wilcoxen performed selections from his acclaimed Oklahoma Proud and everyone enjoyed the chance to visit. The Q & A session that followed, sparking a resurge of interest for the AF Base Poetry Club.

The 8th Annual Daddy & Daughter’s Valentine Ball was a resounding success, as dozens of couples swept across the dance floor, and enjoyed having their “Prom Pictures” made, and then enjoyed the non alcoholic champagne fountain, cheesecake, cupcakes, chocolates and party favors with their first prom date, their own Daddy!

Eminent Post Traumatic Stress Disorder authority Dr. Ed Tick was the featured speaker at a special Altus Armed Services YMCA luncheon at AAFB. Author of War and the Soul, Dr. Tick presented an exploration of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, and discussed the most current treatments for resolution of this problem affecting so many returning veterans. Future retreats with Dr. Tick at Quartz Mountain are in the planning stages.

The Armed Services YMCA is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, focusing on providing social services to military members and their families, particularly below the rank of E-5. This subscription is provided to donors and other organizations that may be interested in the welfare of America’s troops. To correct or remove your name from the mailing list, contact the Armed Services YMCA, 6359 Walker Lane, Suite 200, Alexandria, VA 22310; phone, 703-313-9600, or fax, 703-313-9668. Call or email the staff of the Armed Services YMCA for additional information, or visit our website at www.asymca.org.

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Proud Heritage . . . exciting future
... a Message from the Executive Director

Perhaps it is fitting that as the Armed Services YMCA turns 150 years old, I, too, will enter a new phase of my life. For the past sixteen years, I have had the distinct privilege and honor to serve as National Executive Director of the Armed Services YMCA.

Moving to the retirement phase of one’s life does provide an opportunity to reflect upon all that has transpired over the last decade plus years. Many of you are aware that I had never heard of the Armed Services YMCA before being approached by Admiral Wes McDonald back in 1994. My respect for him and his love of the ASYMCA impressed me deeply. And, it didn’t take me long to see why he cared for this organization.

I learned quickly about the rich heritage the YMCA had in its work with the military... a history reaching back to the Civil War and continuing uninterrupted up through today. I read accounts of soldiers, nurses, doctors, serving during World War II. I’ve heard stories from volunteers and staff telling how the YMCA played a significant role in the life of their father, brother, grandfather or uncle.

Being able to visit the branches and affiliates and see, first hand, the programs and services provided has made my job much easier. But the single most important aspect of the entire sixteen years has been the people I’ve met. A child’s smile, a spouse’s thank you... have made it all worthwhile.

To the corporate community, thank you so very much for believing in what we do and backing that belief with your generous contributions. You make it possible for us to keep the promise “to serve those who serve America.”

To the dedicated staff who give so much... day in and day out... just know you are appreciated. I have had the distinct privilege to work with some extremely talented individuals over these past sixteen years.

And, last, but by no means, least... the ASYMCA volunteer. We couldn’t do it without you. Your time, talent and treasures go beyond what I could have ever imagined. Thank you for sharing a bit of yourself with this great organization.

Sixteen years?... it hardly seems that long... JoAnne and I plan on doing a bit of traveling, but we’ll stay in touch... always wishing the best for the Armed Services YMCA. We know there is an exciting future ahead!

I.

Tom Landwermeyer joins ASYMCA as National Deputy Director/COO

The National Headquarters of the Armed Services YMCA of the USA is pleased to announce that Tom Landwermeyer will be our new Deputy Director/COO, taking over that position from Mike Landers.

Brigadier General Landwermeyer retired in May 2009, culminating a 33 year Army career as the Director of Operations for the Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management on the Army Staff at the Pentagon. He has most recently served as a DA Civilian as the Director for Executive Business Operations in the office of the Chief of Staff of the Army.

Graduating from the U.S. Military Academy in 1976, his previous command positions include: HSC and A Co, 268 Atk Hel Bn, 9ID, Ft. Lewis WA; Commander 4th Sqdn 3d ACR Ft. Bliss TX and Ft. Carson CO; Commander Avn Bde, 3ID, Hunter AAF GA and Bosnia-Herzegovina; Dir, Korea Region, IMCOM, Seoul Korea; and Asst Div Cdr-Support, 2ID, Korea. He also deployed in support of Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm as the Secretary of the General Staff for 3d Armored Division.

General Landwermeyer’s awards include the Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit (5), Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal (6), Air Medal with “V” device, the Parachutist Badge and the Senior Army Aviator Badge.

We are sure that General Landwermeyer will apply his considerable experience and skills to continue the very high standards expected as the ASYMCA begins its next 150 years of Serving Those Who Serve America.
After serving as National Deputy Director/COO of the Armed Services YMCA since 1999, Mike Landers has been chosen to fill the position of National Executive Director with the retirement of current CEO Frank Gallo.

Captain Michael J. Landers, a native of Utica, New York, enlisted in the Navy in 1968. Following selection to the Navy Enlisted Scientific Education Program, he attended the University of Missouri and was commissioned in 1973 with a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering. His post graduate education includes a Master of Arts in Public Administration from the University of Southern California and a Master of Science in Resource Management from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. He has attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Center for International Studies course in Foreign Politics and the National Interest.

Captain Landers began his service as Assistant Weapons Officer, Sonar Officer, Communicator and First Lieutenant aboard USS Alexander Hamilton (SSBN617). After numerous duties he served as Commanding Officer, USS Ortolan (ASR-22) and then as Commanding Officer, Naval Submarine Base Bangor, Washington. He returned to Washington, D.C. in August 1997 as Deputy Chief of Legislative Affairs in which position he served until his retirement from the Navy in December 1998.

During his tenure as Deputy Director/COO, Captain Landers ably contributed to the Armed Services YMCA tradition of serving the military, uninterrupted, since 1861. Working shoulder to shoulder with Admiral Gallo, Landers was instrumental in assisting the branches with maintaining the highest level of administrative, organizational and fiscal responsibility.

Captain Landers is married to the former Kristine Strum of Hazelwood, Missouri. They reside in Fairfax Station, Virginia and have three children: Tim, Megan and Michael. Captain Landers has been awarded the Legion of Merit (5), Meritorious Service Medal (3), Navy Commendation Medal (3), and Navy/Marine Corps Achievement Medal (2).

The Armed Services YMCA of the USA welcomes Marty Chanik as the newest member of its Board of Directors.

Mr. Chanik is vice president of Business Development for the Shipbuilding sector of Northrop Grumman. Named to this position in 2008, Chanik oversees all marketing, customer and government relations initiatives at the company's Shipbuilding sector. He is based in Washington, DC.

Prior to this appointment, Chanik served in the U.S. Navy for 35 years, achieving the rank of vice admiral. His most recent position was commander, Second Fleet, and director of Combined Joint Operations from the Sea Center of Excellence. He also served as commanding officer aboard the Northrop Grumman-built aircraft carrier USS Enterprise among many other fleet positions.

Chanik earned a bachelor's degree in operations analysis from the United States Naval Academy in 1973 and was designated as a naval aviator in 1974.

Vice Admiral Chanik follows in the proud tradition of talented and dedicated volunteers who have helped the ASYMCA maintain its rank as the Platinum standard for non-profits for a century and a half.

Armed Services YMCA welcomes Marty Chanik to Board of Directors

Mike Landers is chosen as National Executive Director/CEO of the ASYMCA

Mike Landers

Captain Landers began his service as Assistant Weapons Officer, Sonar Officer, Communicator and First Lieutenant aboard USS Alexander Hamilton (SSBN617). After numerous duties he served as Commanding Officer, USS Ortolan (ASR-22) and then as Commanding Officer, Naval Submarine Base Bangor, Washington. He returned to Washington, D.C. in August 1997 as Deputy Chief of Legislative Affairs in which position he served until his retirement from the Navy in December 1998.

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Armed Services YMCA welcomes Marty Chanik to Board of Directors

Marty Chanik
History of the Award Program
The YMCA National Armed Services Committee initiated a Blue Ribbon Recognition Program in 1964 as an incentive for Armed Services YMCA branches to develop creative and innovation programs for military personnel. The emphasis is still the same: recognizing those efforts that can make the Armed Services YMCA an important part of many junior enlisted families.

Raytheon provides a grant to financially reward the branches providing these special programs, under the Raytheon Program Achievement Awards. The 2011 Raytheon Awards are presented in three categories: 1) Best New Program; 2) Best Use of Volunteers; and 3) Most Improved Program. These three programs were honored at the 24th Annual Recognition Dinner.

In addition, monetary awards are presented to YMCAs not affiliated with the Armed Services YMCA for programs supporting the military. These community YMCA awards demonstrate America's resolve to support its service members.

Best New Program
CARES
Armed Services YMCA of Missouri
Fort Leonard Wood Missouri

CARES (Creative Activities to Reinforce Early Skills) began as a one year pilot with Y of USA. The pilot Y’s were given much latitude to develop their program to meet the needs of their population. The interest in the program was so intense that it was essential to continue. A certified teacher was hired part-time to facilitate the CARES sessions. Each session takes 6 weeks, 1-2 times per week depending on the needs of the class. Class size is kept small to enable the facilitator to give each family the attention necessary to ensure mastery of the skills presented. Caregivers and children attend together but may be separated at times during the session.

Learning tools and gifts are given after each session to reinforce the learning of that session. A snack time and circle time are also a part of the session.

This is a great example of the Y taking the initiative and embracing the education of young children in a meaningful way. Not all parents choose to enroll their children in the CDC and Child Youth Services for various reasons, many cannot afford private childcare or nursery school environments. Instead, children spend hours in front of TV watching videos or movies.

CARES is a great opportunity to “promote strong kids, strong families and strong communities.” In addition, the new branding revitalization of the Y addresses Youth Development, Healthy Living and Social Responsibility. Here is a program that demonstrates those principles.

Best Use of Volunteers
“The ASYMCA Military Family Advisory Committee”
San Diego ASYMCA
San Diego, CA

The San Diego Armed Services YMCA’s Military Family Advisory Committee is a dedicated group of active duty military family members that work to identify needs, create solutions, and strengthen resources while encompassing the true spirit of community with respect, support and unity. In addition to attending bi-monthly meetings, Military Family Advisory Committee mem-

Raytheon
Raytheon Awards Continued

bers are expected to:

- Act as a liaison between the military community and the ASYMCA staff to promote useful and enjoyable programming and services
- Volunteer to assist with ASYMCA programs and events as availability allows
- Recruit qualified volunteers and potential committee members as needed
- Promote the ASYMCA within the San Diego Military community

The Military Family Advisory Committee identifies needs and shares resources while volunteering within several ASYMCA programs such as the Neighborhood Exchange, as well as at events such as the Maria Shriver Million Meals Initiative and the ASYMCA SuperParent Holiday Shopping Day. The Neighborhood Exchange is a monthly food distribution program at the ASYMCA. In the coming months, the committee is also looking into additional ways to promote ASYMCA programs to the military community and especially are interested in expanding services for teens.

Committee members display and promote the core values of Caring, Responsibility, Honesty, and Respect while at events and programs.

Most Innovative Improvement

“ASYMCA of Honolulu Preschool”
Honolulu Armed Services YMCA
Honolulu, HI

The goal of the ASYMCA Preschool is to prepare each student with the skills to be successful in kindergarten and throughout their elementary years. Currently the program serves 20 children daily but the plan for this program is to serve up to 100 children every day. This expanded program will be developed into three phases, beginning with a class which requires 100% participation from the parent. Parent participation in the learning process reinforces these concepts at home. The second phase, Kinder-Prep, occurs after an evaluation process and admission to a class with a similar curriculum but with limited parent involvement. During the third phase, Advanced Kinder-Prep, the students enter into a more rigorous and traditional preschool setting; the hours are longer, and it is four days a week. Parental involvement involves bringing the child to class and saying goodbye at the door. By this phase, insecurity is almost nil and the confidence of familiarity and structure has been established.

Community YMCA Awards

West Suburban Y
Newton, Massachusetts
“Military Assistance Program”

Somerset Hills YMCA
Basking Ridge, New Jersey
“Flag Football League for Military Service Members”

YMCA of Greater Des Moines
Des Moines, Iowa
“The Home Guard”

YMCA of the Rockies
Estes Park, Colorado
“Project Sanctuary Partnership (to help Military Families)”
5th Annual Angels of the Battlefield

Our Dedicated Sponsors who made it all possible.

Back Row, L to R: MajGen Tom Travis, USAF; BrigGen Carl Mundy, II, USMC; Gen Raymond Odierno, USA; Gen Norton Schwartz, Chief of Staff, USAF; ADM Mike Mullen (Ret), Chairman of the Board, Armed Services YMCA.
Front Row, L to R: SGT John C. Curtis, USA, SSGT Devon A. Poole, USA, HM3 Peter A. Gould, USN, HM2 Shabir Nawabi, USN, SSgt Abraham Jara, USAF, HS2 Kevin Bishop, USCG, HM2 Bryan Bambach, USN, CTSgt Christina Wiskowski, USAFR, SrA Candice Cook, USANG

Mr. Steve Comber, Senior V.P., SAIC, introduces keynote speaker, General Raymond Odierno, USA, Commander, Joint Forces Command

General Eugene Habiger, USAF (Ret), ASYMCA National Board Chairman presents General Raymond Odierno, USA a plaque honoring our Angels of the Battlefield.
Battlefield Gala (cont’d from Page 16)

Admiral Mike Mullen, USN, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff and General Eugene Habiger, USAF (Ret) congratulate Silver Star Recipient PO3 Peter Gould, USN.

RADM Frank Gallo, USN (Ret), National Executive Director welcomes everyone.

For the third consecutive year, Jim Robbins, K-BEAR, 104.1 FM, Anchorage, Alaska, has served as emcee.

Country music sensation Barry Michael sings his original song, “Heroes & Angels”, a song written for just such an audience as those attending.
10 Armed Services YMCA

El Paso ASYMCA expands to meet needs of community

The Airman Ministry Center is a new program on Holloman Air Force Base, Alamogordo, NM. This new program is an extension of the El Paso Armed Services YMCA. With just one year of hard work the program has grown and expanded beyond what was expected.

The mission of this new center is to provide a clean and positive environment for the Airmen on Holloman Air Force Base while promoting community and boosting morale through programs and events that support spiritual wellness. The center is in the process of constructing a new AMC café within the Airmen dorms that will be called “Grin & Brew It”. This café will provide a homey, alcohol and smoke free environment, with free internet access, coffee beverages, espresso beverages, smoothies, pastries, and more! It is expected to be completed in summer 2011.

The Fort Bliss Boy Scout Troop conducted a food drive in March to help restock the El Paso ASYMCA Junior Enlisted Family Center food pantry. The Boy Scout Troop collected nearly 2,000 pounds of food for the center.

The center has gone from helping an average of 60 families a month to over 90. “I don’t know what I would have done if the Junior Enlisted Family Center wasn’t here to help us”, wrote a military spouse to the Fort Bliss Garrison Commander. The center not only provides emergency food, clothing, and household items, it also provides craft classes, Mommy and Me, home cleaning and much more.

Branch Bits

El Paso Armed Services YMCA. With just one year of hard work the program has grown and expanded beyond what was expected.

Hampton Roads receives grant from Southwest Virginia Community Foundation

Hampton Roads ASYMCA is partnering with the United Way and Virginia Cooperative Extension to offer a personal financial management course entitled “Financial Fitness” to military families. The course meets for six sessions, led by financial professionals, on subjects such as: Making Spending Choices; Developing a Spending & Savings Plan; What is Credit & Understanding Your Responsibilities; Building Consumer Skills & Taking Action; and Nutrition. The final session will be devoted to a review and how to continue practicing the new financial skills learned during the course.

The initial course, which began in April, is attended by five spouses of military members and so far the course is a success. Once the initial course concludes we will survey the participants to determine how to improve the course and make it more useful to military families in Hampton Roads.

The Southeast Virginia Community Foundation, formerly Portsmouth Community Foundation, awarded Hampton Roads a grant of $6,560.00 to help local military families with emergency food. The funding for the grant comes from The Chisholm House fund. The funds will become part of our “Virtual Food Pantry.” The “Virtual Food Pantry” provides military families with gift certificates to the Defense Commissaries to purchase emergency food and or other required household items. Military families are referred to the Armed Services YMCA by military commands and or service connected social services organizations.

This grant will permit us to help approximately 65 families and when these funds are exhausted we will have helped over 400 Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard families. The generosity of the Southeast Virginia Community Foundation will help us continue “Serving Those Who Serve America.”
**Ft. Campbell ASYMCA offers Fashion at your Fingertips**

Do you love digging for treasure? Get excited about hitting the thrift stores and yard sales for undiscovered bargains? The Armed Services YMCA Backdoor Boutique offers a unique shopping opportunity for Soldiers and Families E-5 and below. Walk in the door and you may find anything from clothes, shoes, and accessories in all styles and sizes to furniture, books, toys, and house wares. Families may sign up and receive a patron card and a recycle bag that they bring back each week. With this card, patrons can come in and shop for items that they need. They have the opportunity to fill up their ASYMCA recycle bag as well as take one “carry-out” item per week (usually a larger item such as a lamp or a toy). Best of all, it’s FREE!

Qualifying Families can register at the Backdoor Boutique with their end of the month Leave and Earning Statement (LES) and valid ID card. Other Families above the grade of E-5 may qualify for these services with special circumstances and/or a memorandum from their command.

Not finding that piece of furniture that you need? The Backdoor Boutique keeps a “wish list” for these larger items. Patrons are called when the items become available.

Not only does the Backdoor Boutique help out with clothing, but they can help you out if you have a new baby. The Backdoor Boutique receives diapers and formula through generous donations which they happily pass along to Families in need. If you have had a baby at Blanchfield Army Community Hospital (BACH) you have probably received one of their wonderful baby bundles; a bag of goodies put together by caring volunteers to help you on your way to parenthood.

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**Camp Lejeune ASYMCA proves a haven during stormy weather**

The end of 2010 was very busy for our branch. The BackDoor Boutique was revamped, bringing in more customers. The Great Turkey Give Away, sponsored by Alaska Structures, provided fifty 25-pound turkeys to our junior enlisted Marines, and Operation Holiday Joy served a record number of families at Camp Lejeune.

Our new website and Facebook pages are up and running, enabling us to reach out to more families.

Home School Art Class, Mini-Movers and Kid’s Club enrollment is up, due in part to our aggressive marketing campaign and partnerships with other base agencies.

Our first Healthy Kid’s Day was held in April and more than 500 people braved the 50-mpg wind gusts, enjoying quality family time. Children and parents had their faces painted, competed in sack races and hula hoop contests, learned about nutrition, healthy teeth and fire safety. Hours after our event, a tornado ripped through Tarawa Terrace destroying the primary school and more than 30 homes, leaving many families without shelter. Working closely with the base, we were able to provide food, water, clothing, household items and commissary gift certificates to many in need.

Thankfully our building was spared any damage, but it will be awhile before our base will fully recover. We will continue our mission to assist where we are needed, and meanwhile, we are diligently planning our first Mother/Daughter Tea & Fashion Show that will take place in June.
Camp Pendleton Armed Services YMCA provides stress relief

The Camp Pendleton Branch concluded another full year in 2010 providing stress relief from the many combat deployments to increasing the quality of life for our military families. From September until the end of the year, there was a lot of activity with the start of the academic year for the Kindertyme Preschool, after school tutoring and mentoring programs Operation Hero and Little Hero in addition to many events to include the Ball Gown and Bike Give A Ways, Christmas holiday program Secret SANTA, and the events for the Marine students at the School of Infantry with the Thanksgiving Home Hospitality and Super Bowl pregame party. This year’s Ball Gown event, we added shoes, purses, and shawls for the ladies to help prepare them for the Navy and Marine Corps Birthday Balls. The Camp Pendleton branch completed the year serving over 53,500 Marines, Sailors, Soldiers, and their family members.

Our program, Mothers In Transition, which supports women who have been screened for potential prenatal or post partum depression expanded by adding a monthly continuation group, First Fridays for those who have completed the ten week support group to reinforce the skills learned and to extend social networking among new mothers. In late 2010, the branch started a new program, Operation Kid Comfort for the many families deploying from Camp Pendleton. Since beginning the program in November, our quilting volunteers have provided over 60 quilts during the first quarter of the year.

Coming attractions for the spring and summer will include the Fifth Annual Father Daughter dance with theme being the Bayou Ball. It will be the largest ever with over 400 fathers and daughters. The summer will follow with the popular Camp Hero and activities for the Exceptional Family Member Program with Camp Flashhh. We will be partnering with the local community YMCA to provide day and resident camps for military children throughout the summer.

Killeen Armed Services YMCA Celebrates Opening of Teen Club

The Killeen Armed Services celebrated the grand opening of the new YMCA Teen Club on March 4, 2011, in the City of Harker Heights, Texas. The Harker Heights Chamber of Commerce and Ambassadors performed a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony.

The City of Harker Heights leased the previous City Library Building to the YMCA in 2010. The YMCA has since renovated the building and plans for this membership-based facility to be for ages 12 through high school. Activities to be offered include trips, Dances and Events after High School Football Games, Movie Nights, Youth Committees and Community Service. Amenities include Cardio Equipment, Computer Lab, Movie area, Concession area, Table Games, Wii systems, Homework/Study area, and pool tables. The Center also provides a place to “hang out” as an alternative to gangs, drugs, crime and delinquency.

The opening of the facility is a landmark for a partnership between the City of Harker Heights and the Armed Services YMCA. The city initially gave the old city hall building to the YMCA, which was located next to the Teen Club location. “The building was damaged beyond repair from termitie infestations and had to be torn down” Harker Heights Mayor Ed Mullen said.

The YMCA built a pool and splash park on the site of the old city hall. But officials still wanted a YMCA facility in the area. An opportunity presented itself when the city opened a new public library. The city all but donated the building to the Armed Services YMCA, leasing it at a rate of $1 per year. With the YMCA completed and plans for a park nearby, Mullen said the city and the YMCA are creating a kid-friendly block. “The whole area will be dedicated to children’s recreation,” Mullen said.

Executive Director Tony Mino said that “providing a place for teenagers to hang out and enjoy themselves is the main goal of the facility.”

The Armed Services YMCA plans to build a second center in Harker Heights and is now in the middle of a Capital Campaign to begin raising funds for the facility.
Ft. Bragg/Pope AFB ASYMCA Holiday Joy program closed out 2010 on a great note and kept us sprinting right into 2011 without a break. The new year saw Picerne Military Housing's renovation of the Tween Center going full speed ahead – building cabinets, laying the floor, installing blinds and new furniture, in preparation for our Ribbon Cutting on March 31st. Garrison Commander Stephen Sicinski and Deputy National Director Mike Landers spoke at the ‘standing room only’ ceremony, welcoming everyone to our center which will house children 8 – 13 after school at no cost. The Tween Center offers supervised fun and features three flat screens with Wii systems, Dance Revolution, karaoke, board games and a snack bar. Eventually the center will open for birthday parties and special events.

Our 11th Healthy Kid's Day brought in approximately 1,800 families, despite the chilly weather. A slight drizzle in the morning had us concerned, but at Ft. Bragg, it NEVER rains on Healthy Kid's Day, and the rain did clear out before kick-off. The kids always have a great time with the Home Depot table, face painting, arts & crafts, and the activities such as the climbing wall and bouncy castle. The biggest draw though is always tye-dying and The Snake Man. The kids absolutely LOVE the snakes but they’re not a favorite with the parents!

The Armed Services YMCA and Picerne partnered to provide the hotdogs, hamburgers, chips and drinks for the families of our fallen soldiers for the 2nd year in a row at the Survivor Outreach Services Picnic. The event was held at Smith Lake the same day as Healthy Kid's Day, which would have been impossible without the great volunteers supporting us.

We are now gearing up for our Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon and the 1st Annual Family Fishing Derby.

It was a bleak mid-winter at Armed Services YMCA of Alaska

The winter was cold and dark in Alaska, but that didn’t keep us from working hard to serve our troops!

In February the Armed Services YMCA of Alaska hosted the 33rd Annual Salute to the Military, where 12 distinguished junior enlisted members from each branch, both active, guard and reserve were honored for their exceptional accomplishments in front of community members and dignitaries. We also partnered with many local businesses and community members to host a Military Family Fun Faire at Begich Middle School in Anchorage. Military families participated in many craft projects, hands on activities, enjoyed hot dogs and bounce houses spending a day having fun together as a military family.

In March we began ramping up for the 5th Annual Combat Fishing Tournament – the largest military appreciation fishing tournament in the nation. We held an auction – both silent and live – to raise money for the tournament in May, where nearly 300 active duty military members will spend the day fishing with the Seward Charter Fleet.

In April we hosted two Father Daughter Galas, one in Anchorage and one in Fairbanks! The Gala in Anchorage was attended by 411 fathers and daughters with a special "Under the Sea" theme and a visit from Princess Ariel! In Fairbanks, 410 fathers and daughters attended the “Secret Garden” gala and met the Fairy Garden Princess. It was a special night for those who attended, getting a beautiful and fun opportunity to strengthen the father daughter bond.

Branch Bits

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Army Spouses get “Cabin Fever” Cure at Liberty County ASYMCA

About 500 Army Wives of all ages acted like carefree, giggly school girls on March 16 at the Richmond Hill City Center, as part of the Liberty County Armed Services YMCA & Operation Homefront-Gorgia Cabin Fever Festivity. Soldiers’ spouses from Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Air Field were given an opportunity to decompress from the stress of military life.

Spouses started off with a bingo scavenger hunt to get to know one another and then went into enjoying free neck and shoulder massages, zumba and belly dance lessons, a catered lunch, minute to win-it games, and each received a goody bag filled with Arbonne skin-care products, a scented candle, as well as a terrycloth robe as just a “Thank You” for all that they do to keep the Homefront sane during a deployment.

While the spouses had a carefree day, their children were cared for by the Liberty County ASYMCA Child Watch staff. Jamie Leasure, wife of SPC Robert Leasure with the 3rd Sustainment Brigade, said her husband deployed to Afghanistan last May. Leasure said “The separation has been tough, but this event was great for all of us wives to come out and come together!”

San Diego ASYMCA “Fills the Bus” for victims of Japanese Quake

This past March, many military families traveled back to San Diego from Japan after the March 11th earthquake, many with only some of their belongings. The San Diego Armed Services YMCA provided assistance to support these displaced families through a “Fill the Bus” event to collect needed items such as diapers, children’s toys, and calling cards. Donations poured in from local military families and community organizations, and not one but two buses were filled with items that were then distributed to families.

The early months of 2011 were also filled with family bonding events such as the Valentine’s Day Party for Spouses of Deployed and Father & Daughter Dance.

At the 5th Annual Father & Daughter dance girls and their fathers spent special moments on the dance floor. One family shared: "This dance could not have come at a better time...as Daddy deploys again on Tuesday. For a 13 year old who is a total daddy’s girl these nights are important to her. This dance makes memories that last a lifetime!"

Wounded, injured and ill service members at Naval Medical Center San Diego enjoyed several outings and thanks to a generous donor, Naval Medical Center’s female patients, and wives and mothers of wounded warriors were pampered with a special Spa Day outing.

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) celebrates Social Work month to raise public awareness of the social work profession. The Family Outreach team of social workers took this opportunity to hold a luncheon meet and greet.

The Active Duty Program Department welcomed home the USS Halsey and the USS Cape St. George. Families enjoyed free crafts, stickers, balloons and activities while they waited for their loved ones to return home.

As more families participate in our programs, we remain grateful for strong community support. Last month, The Spiva Family Foundation made a generous $25,000 donation to assist us in supporting an increase in program participation. Thank you Spiva Family Foundation!
The Thanksgiving Holiday saw the Whidbey Island Armed Services YMCA giving out monetary assistance and food baskets to families E-4 and below with children. And our Military Christmas Gift Program provided gift cards to E-5 and below families, to augment their Christmas gift buying. With a total of 39 families with 68 children, hopefully we helped make it a wonderful Holiday for those we served. The funds for these programs were provided through the Woman’s Day Holiday Drive.

In March the major Pioneer Way Street rebuilding construction commenced. New sewers, storm drains, water lines with all the above street utilities such as telephone, electric, and cable will all be placed underground. When it is completed it will be turned into a one way configuration West to East towards the Seaplane Base. The children have had a great time watching the construction crews and their heavy equipment tear everything up, sometimes with 3 or 4 excavators working at the same time. Hopefully our end of the street project will be completed by the first of June so we will be able to have the 4th of July Food Booth and Pancake breakfast this year. This is our fun for the next 2 months or so... hard hats for all the flying gravel!!!

At Fort Leonard Wood, we LOVE family camping! In March, 25 families (100 people) attended a Family Camping Weekend at Camp Lakewood in Potosi, Missouri. This was our third camping weekend and the popularity continues to grow.

Checking in on Friday evening, families chose from a variety of activities for their family. Activities included: archery, riflery, zip line, rock climbing, nature center, water ecology, pony rides, trail rides, geocaching, and a scavenger hunt. On Friday evening, we host a pajama party and movie night. Popcorn and drinks are provided to all.

Saturday is a full day of activities, and many children, AND ADULTS, try things they have never done before. It is a day of learning and challenging yourself. Many walk away with renewed confidence and self assuredness. One family writes, “This camping weekend gave us the chance to come closer together as a family. Mom and Dad did things that the boys never thought we would have done.” And another, “Thank you so much for allowing us this wonderful gift of being together!”

Saturday evening there was a Magic Show that provided all of us with entertainment and laughter. We followed that with a campfire and s’mores. Board games, crafts and coloring activities were available throughout the weekend for use in the lounge or back at the family cabins.

Activities conclude on Sunday morning and families depart after lunch.

We are working to replace the Sierra Club funding and continue our Family Weekends. We believe they are essential to our military families.
General Raymond Odierno, Commander, U.S. Joint Forces Command, keynotes the 5th Annual Angels of the Battlefield Gala

For the fifth consecutive year, medics and corpsmen, often unrecognized, yet so routinely save the lives of military service personnel worldwide, were honored at a fund-raising gala for the Armed Services YMCA on March 30.

The ASYMCA Angels of the Battlefield Gala honored all medics and corpsmen representing all branches of service, including the Reserve and Guard. The event was held at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center in Washington, DC.

One member from each service received the Angel award, a gold pan with medic/corpsmen artwork on behalf of their Service’s medics or corpsmen.

“In every war, corpsmen and medics have saved the lives and limbs of service members, as well as many enemy prisoners and civilians,” said retired Air Force Gen. Eugene Habiger, chairman of the National Board of Directors of the Armed Services YMCA. “On the battlefield, these men and women serve the medical needs of the wounded, and when the fighting is over, they are at the forefront of rebuilding and improving the health systems of the disputed lands.

“The Armed Services YMCA recognizes their significant contribution and feels their noble actions deserve acknowledgement.”

Accepting the statue on behalf of Army medics were Sergeant John C. Curtis & Staff Sergeant Devon A. Poole; for the Navy, Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Shabir Nawabi, and Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class (FMF) Peter A. Gould; for the Air Force, Staff Sergeant Abraham Jara; for the National Guard, Army Sgt. Jason Mike; and for the Coast Guard, Health Services Technician 2nd Class Kevin Bishop; for the National Guard, Army Sgt. Jason Mike; for the Navy Reserve, Hospital Corpsman 1st Class (FMF) John Morrison; for the Air Force Reserve, Command Tech Sergeant Christina Wiskowski; for the Army National Guard, Sergeant Antoine King; and for the Air National Guard, Senior Airman Candice Cook.

General Raymond Odierno, Commander, United States Joint Forces Command, served as the keynote speaker for the evening. Mr. Jim Pfaff, from the office of Congressman Tim Huelskamp, read the Silver Star citation recently awarded HM3(FMF) Peter A. Gould, USN, the Navy Corpsman accepting the Angel Award on behalf of Navy corpsmen around the world.

Barry Michael, noted country singer, offered the National Anthem plus his recently released single, “Heroes and Angels.” Our thanks to Health Net Federal Services for making this possible.

The evening also featured the video “Angel Flight”, a song written by Radney Foster.

The evening’s gala was made possible by BAE Systems, Health Net Federal Services, SAIC and TriWest Healthcare Alliance. Other sponsors included Armed Forces Services Corporation, Bechtel, GEICO, General Dynamics, Greenberg Traurig, Humana, Lockheed Martin, NAI Michael, Pitney Bowes, Rolls-Royce of America, Sodexo, and United Concordia.

(See pages 8 and 9 for photos of the evening’s event.)