



FORCECOM Newsletter

December 2014



Holly Aber,
Ombudsman

fcombudsman@gmail.com



Wishing you and your family a wonderful holiday season!

Happy holidays from our family to yours!

The holiday season can be chaotic, stressful, and not quite so merry for some. For others, it is their favorite time of year. Everyone has their own traditions and ways of celebrating this holiday season. This newsletter has tips, holiday information, and other bits of info for the month of December. However you celebrate, I hope you have a wonderful holiday season.

Happy Holidays!

Holly

Holiday Information

-It's the time of year for holiday parties and meeting Santa. Most MWR offer a type of meeting with Santa, or family holiday gathering that is separate from the typical office party. Check with your local MWR on time and dates. Base Portsmouth is having a Breakfast with Santa on December 13th at 0900; tickets are \$5 for adults, \$3 for children.

-Trees for Troops will have trees available to those who meet the criteria (rate, deployed spouse, etc.) Visit www.treesfortroops.org to find a base near you. Base Portsmouth and Ft. Story are a couple in the Hampton Roads area.

-As the holiday parties begin, take the time to plan to celebrate responsibly. Work parties, social gatherings, ugly sweater parties, New Year's parties, and the list goes on. Designate a driver, have the number for a cab company, or make it a night out and get a hotel room near the party. Also, know your limit. Do not put yourself in a situation that could end in trouble.

-Travel is another part of the holiday season. Make sure your car is ready for the trip- tires, breaks, etc.- and that all luggage is secure. Check weather conditions frequently, and take the advice of travel advisories. Plan for unexpected delays. Check road conditions and construction delays. Obey road signs, and don't text and drive.

FORCECOM

300 E. Main St

Norfolk, VA 23510





Scholarships available!

The Scholarships for Military Children Program is entering its 15th year, with over 8,000 students receiving \$13 million in scholarships. Applications for the 2015-2016 school year will be available December 15th at commissaries worldwide, or at <http://www.militaryscholar.org>.

Applications are due by February 13, 2015. Visit the website for eligibility requirements and other FAQs.

The Coast Guard Foundation has announced scholarship opportunities to Coast Guard spouses. For eligibility requirements and application, visit http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg1/cgi/civilian/spouse_grant.asp.

Holiday Needs

Holidays can bring stress to families. As the push for shopping and buying is all over, many feel overwhelmed, especially if finances do not allow for the picture perfect holidays that commercials portray. There is help available, whatever the need may be. Coast Guard Mutual Assistance is available to help with emergency financial needs and free financial counseling. Information can be found at <http://www.cgmahq.org/>

Some other resources for families are Operation Homefront, who has programs to help with toys and meals <http://www.operationhomefront.net/>

or the National Military Family Association gives a list of resources at <http://www.militaryfamily.org/features/articles/holiday-financial-help-for.html> to link you with organizations to help with holiday needs.

Also, there are always local groups doing toy drives, food drives, or coat drives. Check with your local base family services on how you can get plugged in to one of these organizations to fill your needs.

If you know a family that could benefit from any of these, help them out. Or, volunteer with one of the organizations to spread some holiday cheer!

Suicide Prevention

The Commandant, MCPOCG, and all leadership share a duty to educate one another and assist those in need. As shipmates and family members, we must be proactive when there are concerns. There is help available; asking for help, seeking help, or voicing concern takes courage. Know that everyone is valuable to the

mission, even the spouses. Resources include your ombudsman, chaplain, or CG SUPRT at <https://www.achievesolutions.net/achievesolutions/en/cgsuprt/Home.do>

Please take the time to talk to someone if you or someone you know could be suicidal. All it takes is one person to make a difference, to save a life.



Childcare Subsidy

The Coast Guards has been informed of the delays in processing applications and responses to customers by the General Services Administration in regards to the Coast Guard Child Care Initiative. The delays may impact CG families, and know there might be some financial need while waiting. Please contact your local Coast Guard Mutual Assistance (CGMA) representative or find the one nearest to you at www.cgmahq.org or 1-800-881-2462

Have a safe and happy holiday season!

Winter safety

From Ready Coast Guard, make sure you are prepared for winter weather! Take precautions with pipes, pets, and plants. Make sure vehicles are ready for winter road conditions. Use caution when using space heaters and generators. Obey road warnings and use caution on icy roads.

A children's Christmas joke:

What do you call a person who is afraid of Santa Claus?

Claustrophobic!

