

# DMAVA HIGHLIGHTS

JUNE 16, 2016

**IT'S HURRICANE  
SEASON, ARE  
YOU READY?**



# HURRICANE SEASON IS HERE: ARE YOU READY?



**Damage to Casino Pier in Seaside Heights, N.J., caused by Superstorm Sandy Oct. 30, 2012. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen/Released)**

Hurricane Season runs from June 1 to 30 November 30; with the peak season from mid-August to late October.

Weather forecasters are predicting a below average season for 2016. Technological advances enable meteorologists to predict severe weather earlier than ever, forecasting hurricane tracks five days ahead of a storm with increasing accuracy.

What can you do to get ready? Hurricanes not only affect coastal communities. High winds, heavy rainfall, tornadoes, and flooding can be felt hundreds of miles inland, potentially causing loss of life and catastrophic damage to property. It only takes one to change your life and your community. Knowing your risk, getting prepared and staying informed are just a few steps people can take to get ready for hurricane season:

**Know your Risk.** Visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) and search for your state to learn more about the risks in your state.

Check out NOAA's historical hurricane tracks tool at <https://coast.noaa.gov/hurricanes/> for the severity and frequency of past hurricanes in your area.

**Get Prepared.** Take action now to be prepared for hurricane season. As the storm approaches, it is often too late to get ready. Make sure you have family evacuation and communications plans, update your emergency supply kit, and evaluate your flood insurance needs.

**Know your zone.** Evacuations are more common than people realize. Make yourself

familiar with your community's evacuation zones, so you'll know exactly where to go. Remember: if a hurricane threatens your community and local officials say it's time to evacuate, don't hesitate - go early.

Complete a family communication plan. Plan how you will assemble your family and loved ones, and anticipate where you will go for different situations. Get together with your family and agree on the ways to contact one another in an emergency, identify meeting locations, and make a Family Emergency Communication Plan. Visit [www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/108887](http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/108887) for more information.

Download the FEMA app at [www.fema.gov/mobile-app](http://www.fema.gov/mobile-app). The FEMA app includes disaster resources, weather alerts from the National Weather Service, safety tips, and a new feature that will enable users to receive push notifications to their devices to prepare their homes and families for disasters. The app also provides a customizable checklist of emergency supplies and maps of open shelters and disaster recovery centers.

Check your insurance coverage. Many states have increased deductibles for hurricanes and not all hurricane-related losses are covered under traditional policies. Most homeowner's insurance policies do not cover damage or losses from flooding. Review your policy, ensure you're adequately covered and understand exclusions, and contact your agent for any changes. If you're not insured against flood, talk to your agent or visit [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov).

[floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov). Renter's insurance policies are also available and should be considered as a way of protecting your belongings.

**Stay Informed.** Know where to go for trusted sources of information during a hurricane event. Monitor local news for hurricane watches and warnings in your area and follow directions from local officials. Make sure you have a battery-operated or hand-crank radio available should the power go out.

Sign up for alerts from your local emergency management office. Register your phone and email to receive local emergency notifications, including evacuation orders, these also include wireless emergency alerts.

WEAs are emergency text messages sent by government alerting authorities through your mobile carrier. You do not need to opt-in to receive these messages, they are automatic for any WEA-enabled cell phone. To ensure your device is WEA-capable, check with your service provider.

Remember that preparation can be the key to your survival.

## Cover: Are you ready?

*View of the coastal flooding at Mantoloking, N.J. caused by Superstorm Sandy taken during a search and rescue mission by 1-150 Assault Helicopter Battalion, New Jersey Army National Guard, Oct. 30, 2012. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen/Released)*

# Three buses in two years

By Kryn P. Westhoven, New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Public Affairs



(Courtesy photo)

Bergen County does not have the largest veterans' population among New Jersey's 21 counties, but that fact did not stop Bob Salvani from raising \$210,000 dollars in less than two years to purchase three new buses for the New Jersey Veterans Memorial Home at Paramus.

The project started with what was a seemingly unimportant event in the fall of 2013; a bus wasn't available to bring the Home's residents to a scheduled outing at the American Legion Post 170 in Rochelle Park where Salvani has been the commander for the past 24 years.

It was not the first time that lack of transportation had canceled opportunities for veterans to go on excursions; Salvani sprang into action to solve the problem.

"We know what a challenge it is to provide our fellow veterans with a quality of life...allowing them to get out of the home," said Salvani.

As the Bergen County American Legion commander since 2010, he brought the idea up to the county committee of buying a bus for the state run veterans' Home.

The money poured in and the first bus was purchased and presented to the Home.

"Donations continued to come in, raising enough for a second bus; we thought we might as well finish the project replacing all three of the Home's buses," noted Salvani, adding the fund raising started as a

gofundme.com posting and just took off.

Nearly two-thirds of the funds came from American Legion mem-

bers and posts in Bergen County. Other veteran service organizations, community groups and individuals donated the rest.

County sponsored meetings of the stakeholders representing the more than 32,000 veterans, helped Salvani with the networking effort.

"There is a lot of goodwill out there; we just got to connect everyone," said Ariel "A.J." Luna, Director, Bergen County Veteran Services.

Nearly a dozen times a month Paramus home veterans are invited out to dinner, bingo or a shopping trip. The three buses can handle up to 16-passengers and the seats fold up to accommodate wheelchairs with a built in lift.

Besides the American Legion roles of county and post commander, Salvani served as the statewide membership chairman in 2015-2016. He knows a little about membership as Post 170 is number two in New Jersey with 936 members. Currently 175 members are residents of the Paramus Veterans home, which the post pays their dues each year.

"The state always knew that Big Bergen took care of the Paramus home," said Salvani.



Bob Salvani. Photo by Kryn P. Westhoven.

# Story connects lives

By Joseph Bilby, National Guard Militia Museum of New Jersey

History is about stories. Carol Fowler, Assistant Curator and Veterans Oral History Director of the National Guard Militia Museum of New Jersey in Sea Girt, knows that well. And sometimes the Internet can provide a surprising missing link.

"So many stories in the past have gone untold," Fowler said. "The Internet has the ability to span years and miles."

World War II veteran John Knox of Montclair, N.J., came to Fowler's attention through a 2004 Memorial Day article in the Star Ledger newspaper. She thought his story should be preserved, so she arranged an interview with him as part of the Library of Congress Veterans Oral History Program.

Knox was a company first sergeant in the 559th Quartermaster Battalion, a racially segregated unit that initially trained in the Mojave Desert. The 559th mobilized to Europe after D-Day and built stockades for the German POWs they would later guard. Assigned to General George Patton's Third Army, the 559th then served in the Battle of the Bulge, where, as Knox noted, "everyone - clerk, cook and truck driver - became a rifleman."

In 2007, California resident Jon Merksamer was searching for information on his late father's World War II unit, and the search led him to the museum's website. There, summaries of oral history interviews are posted, and thus led Merksamer to the story of John Knox.

In email to Fowler, Merksamer recalled that his father, who was a white officer in the otherwise all-black unit, "spoke little about the war but...spoke very highly of his NCO and how efficiently he ran things." That NCO was John Knox. Fowler sent Merksamer a copy of Knox's interview along with his contact information.

Merksamer soon discovered that Knox had numerous memories of his father. In 2013, Merksamer became involved with the PBS documentary film "Sands of War," about Mojave Desert training during World War II. During the course of the production the film crew visited Knox in New Jersey and filmed his story.

Merksamer later wrote to Fowler that: "I really owe it all to you and that article online...so once again, thank you!"

Merksamer concluded his message with: "As time passes and each generation becomes a bit more removed from World War II, I fear the memory of these men and women will fade...you are certainly doing noble work in making sure that doesn't happen."

The Center for U.S. War Veterans Oral Histories is located at the National Guard Militia Museum in Sea Girt, N.J. For more information, or to schedule an interview, please contact Carol Fowler at (732) 974-5966. Veterans of all ages and from all conflicts are encouraged to have their

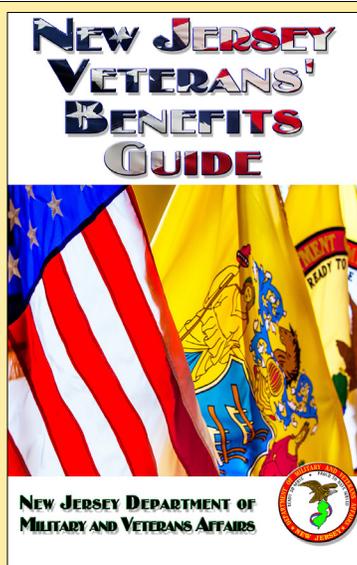
stories recorded at the museum and archived at the Library of Congress Veterans Oral History Program.

Knox's story can be viewed at:  
[www.nj.gov/military/museum/summaries/wwii/knox](http://www.nj.gov/military/museum/summaries/wwii/knox)



John Knox. Courtesy photo.

The newest interactive issue of the New Jersey Veterans' Benefits Guide is now online at:  
<http://www.nj.gov/military/veterans/njguide/2016-NJ-Veterans-Benefits-Guide.pdf>



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<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Z88N2PD>

# GUARDLIFE

JUNE 2016



Guardlife is interactive and online. Click on the photo and check it out!

## Veterans Outreach Campaign

**VETERANS OF FOREIGN  
WARS STATE CONVENTION**  
June 15-17, 8 a.m. – 3 p.m.,  
daily

Wildwood Convention Center  
4501 Boardwalk  
Wildwood, N.J. 08260

**SUSSEX COUNTY "BIKE  
NIGHT FOR VETERANS"**

June 23, 5 – 8 p.m.  
Chatterbox Restaurant  
1 State Route 15  
Augusta, NJ 07822

**63RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
SIGNING OF THE KOREAN WAR  
ARMISTICE**

July 27, 11 a.m.  
New Jersey Korean War  
Memorial  
Brighton Park Amphitheatre and  
the Boardwalk  
Atlantic City, NJ 08401

**"VETTE TO VET NIGHT"**  
Sept. 9, 5 – 8 p.m.  
Chatterbox Restaurant,  
1 State Route 15

Augusta, NJ 07822)

**VETERANS OUTREACH  
CAMPAIGN & MEDAL  
CEREMONY**

Sept. 20-21, 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.  
Daily

DMAVA medal ceremony Sept.  
20 at 11 a.m. at Center Court  
Bridgewater Commons Mall  
400 Commons Way  
Bridgewater, NJ, 08807

Highlights submissions deadline 4 p.m. Wednesday: [mark.olsen@dmava.nj.gov](mailto:mark.olsen@dmava.nj.gov)

## Scholarship for wounded guardsmen

The National Guard Education Foundation is offering scholarship grants to current or former National Guard members wounded in an operational or training mission in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation New Dawn.



NATIONAL  
GUARD  
EDUCATIONAL  
FOUNDATION

For more information, please visit: <http://www.ngef.org/the-van-hipp-heroes-scholarship-fund/>

**NJ★VET2VET** 1-866-838-7654  
(1-866-VETS-NJ4)

## Confidential Peer Support For New Jersey Veterans

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<http://ubhc.rutgers.edu/vet2vet/>

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## Military Appreciation Day

**Place:** Casino Pier, Seaside Heights  
800 Ocean Terrace

**Date:** Saturday, 25 June 2016 (Raindate – Sunday 26 June)

**Time:** 1000 – 1430 Hours for bracelet pick-up  
Waterpark opens at 1000 Hrs

**Rain Date:** Please check “NJ State Family Programs” on Facebook for info. Please **DO NOT** call Casino Pier. Changes will be made by the State Family Programs Office and will be posted on their facebook page.

Soldiers/Airmen and Family members of the NJ National Guard are cordially invited to attend “Military Appreciation Day” at the New Jersey Shore.

You will be required to show a Uniformed Services Military ID to obtain waterpark bracelets for you and your dependants only. Friends and extended family members will not receive bracelets.

\*\* check in through the side entrance of the Breakwater Beach Waterpark on 800 Ocean Terrace off Grant Ave. between 1000 Hrs – 1430 Hours.

\*\* Waterpark opens at 1000 hours.

Thank you.....for serving our Country!



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Raymond Zawacki – Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs

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