



Survivor's Link



COMMUNICATING INFORMATION AND RESOURCES



Starting New Holiday Traditions

By Lisa Bauch, Navy Gold Star Program Analyst

A tradition has been defined as a “transmission of customs or beliefs passed on from generation to generation” and can be represented in many different ways. December holidays are steeped in tradition, no matter what religion you do or do not identify with. Lighting candles, singing songs, eating good food, opening presents and family togetherness are all traditions that most holidays of this season embrace. We are drawn to what the end of the year represents and are fascinated with the idea of new beginnings.

However, for many, the holidays are also a reminder of people they have lost. The empty chair, the missing voice, and the decoration so loved by someone no longer there are reminders of this loss. Many who are grieving a lost loved one approach the holidays with trepidation and resistance, while others have the attitude of it being something to push through for the benefit of everyone else. Some simply decide not to celebrate in order to avoid the pain.



While everyone's grief is different and there is no right or wrong way to face it, maybe December and the new year can represent an opportunity to start new traditions while finding a way to honor and remember your missing loved one. New traditions can be simply something you do to remember or can be grander gestures for the whole extended family to adopt. As you think about traditions, remember

that they are intended to be repeated from year to year, so make sure you choose something you and your family can continue. Some suggestions are listed below, but by no means are your only options.

Food: In order to remember your loved one, ensure their favorite food or desert is served each year. Consider naming it in their honor and sharing the recipe with family and friends.

Music: Create a playlist of music that remind you of your loved one or start a family sing along.

Candles: Light a candle to remember or even adopt a small ceremony explaining its purpose before family gatherings and share fond memories.

Give to charity: The holidays are also a time of giving; consider donating in the memory of your loved one to their favorite cause.

Remembrance ornaments: At my house, we get a new ornament annually that represents each member of the family. You can decorate an ornament or purchase a new one that reminds you of your loved one. Navy Gold Star Programs across the country host many remembrance trees. Consider contacting your coordinator to see where your closest tree is and how you can participate and honor your loved one.

No matter how you approach the holiday season, remember that traditions should mean something to you and your family. I wish you the best, and if you need someone, the Navy Gold Star Program is here for you. Visit www.navygoldstar.com/locations to find your closest coordinator or reach out to us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/navygoldstar.

Memorial Trees Return to California

By Sabrina Griffin, CNRSW Gold Star Coordinator

The Holiday Memorial Tree Campaign features memorial trees adorned with ornaments bearing the names of our fallen service members, lovingly handwritten and designed by their friends and families. This campaign also allows active-duty service members a creative way to remember and reflect on their fallen brothers and sisters in arms. All memorial trees will remain on display from Dec. 1 through Jan. 1, 2019.

Locations:

- USS Midway
- MCRD Museum
- Naval Base San Diego
- Naval Base Point Loma
- Naval Base Coronado
- Naval Base Point Mugu (Flight Line Café and FFSC)
- Naval Base Port Hueneme (FFSC, Navy Exchange and 19th Hole)
- Pacific View Mall, Ventura
- Oxnard College Veteran's Center, Oxnard
- Camarillo Library, Camarillo
- Ojai Valley Women's Center, Ojai

- Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum, Simi Valley
- Naval Postgraduate School Monterey

To learn more about this campaign or how to have your loved one represented in the Southwest Region, contact us at 619-532-2886.



For more information on the Navy Gold Star Program in your area, please call 888-509-8759, or visit www.facebook.com/navygoldstar or www.navygoldstar.com.

Chaplain's Corner: Peace on Earth and Goodwill Toward All

By CNIC Force Chaplain's Office

As this year rapidly comes to an end, most of us are prone to reflect on the good that we have done and on the missed opportunities over the past 12 months. Invariably, the thoughts of “peace on earth and goodwill toward all” provide a theme for this time of the year.

This theme comes from scripture: “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased” (Luke 2:14, New Living Translation).

Oddly, the wording “peace on earth and goodwill toward all” misses the point of the verse in expressing praise to God and extolling peace on earth to “those with whom God is pleased.”

Let's take a closer look at this verse. The immediate question is: “So who are these people who please God?” The Bible emphatically speaks of peacemakers as being blessed (Matthew 5:9). So, what makes peacemakers blessed?

Let's take an even closer look at this verse. What is a peacemaker? A peacemaker is an arbiter, one who brings quiet, tranquility or harmony by reconciling adversaries or adverse life situations. What does peacemaker work look like? The work of peacemakers involves empowering the vulnerable among us - the weak, the poor, the young,

the aged and all who may stand in need of a champion. Peacemakers are keenly sensitive to autonomy. Autonomy, in this context, is having the vulnerable experience respect for their boundaries and assurance that they have a voice that is heard by the strong.

So, what does this reflection have to do with the holidays? For those who seek to live out the theme of the holiday season - “Peace on earth and goodwill toward all” - there are three elegantly simple things we can do to live out the message found in the Gospel of Luke: (1) Show “Glory to God in the highest” by giving your time, money and/or talent to help those in need - the vulnerable; (2) Do peacemaker work by seeking first to understand the life situations of others, particularly the vulnerable, and then to do your part in bringing relief for those in emotional turmoil; and (3) Put a smile on God's face! Be “that one” who is the anonymous do-gooder. Avoid attribution for your good works. God knows your intent and your actions. After all, much about life is truly a mystery.

During this holiday season and beyond, let us do the work of peacemakers by diligently seeking to live out the scripture: “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased.”

Self-Awareness, Your Personal Journey

By Sabrina Griffin, CNRSW Gold Star Coordinator

“What lies behind us and what lies before us bare tiny matters compared to what lies within us.” -- Ralph Waldo Emerson

This powerful quote by one of the most influential scholars of all time, Ralph Waldo Emerson, challenges the way we view ourselves and how we interact within the world around us. As we all travel along in this journey called life, we must be intentional in discovering our personal inner state of well-being.

Self-awareness (noun) – defined as conscious knowledge of one’s own character, feelings, motives and desires.

Psychologists Shelley Duval and Robert Wicklund developed the theory of self-awareness in 1972, deeming self-awareness as a major mechanism of self-control by capitalizing on one’s ability to understand and master emotional intelligence, understanding ourselves better,

being at a place of peace with who we are, and proactively managing our thoughts, emotions and behaviors. This utopia is arguably one of the most fundamental issues in psychology and a rather complicated subject. How does one actually accomplish such a task? As human beings, we may never fully understand ourselves – if there is such a destination. But perhaps it is the journey of exploring, understanding and becoming ourselves that makes life worth living. Try the below simple exercises to begin your personal self-reflection/discovery journey.

1. Look at yourself objectively.
2. Keep a journal.
3. Practice being a good listener.
4. Write down goals, plans and priorities.
5. Practice self-reflection daily.
6. Practice mindfulness habits.
7. Ask for feedback.

9 Tips for Savvy Holiday Spending

By Military OneSource

Holidays mean spending, but you’ve got the discipline to keep it reined in this season. Celebrating with your family doesn’t have to lead to debt, and here’s how to make it a great holiday and maintain financial control.

Control your cash

Check out these ways to tame the holiday frenzy:

- Make (and stick to) a budget. Money can fly out of your wallet fast for gifts, special meals, decorations and travel. Plan ahead of time how much you’re going to spend on each category, and then stay in that range.
- Take inventory. Don’t rush out to buy wrapping paper before checking to see if there’s a forgotten stash of a dozen rolls shoved into the back of a closet. The same is true for presents you may have hidden too well last year.
- Shop secondhand for decorations. Thrift stores and garage sales usually have loads of holiday decorations as people upgrade, downsize or realize their decorations somehow multiplied when they weren’t looking.
- Consider budget-friendly alternative gifts. Homemade gifts are a great option if you’re crafty or a whiz in the kitchen, or even if you aren’t either of those, but can follow online directions. Coupons for your “services,” like babysitting, can also make good presents.
- Make your own holiday cards. You can save money (and trees) by using e-cards to send greetings to your loved ones instead of traditional cards. Many websites offer free or inexpensive e-cards, some with options to add videos or slideshows.

- Plan holiday meals early. Knowing what you’re going to cook well in advance lets you shop the sales for the non-perishable items you’ll need. It also helps spread the higher food costs over a couple of paychecks instead of just one.
- Use your smartphone while shopping. Many retailers can send coupons right to your phone when you walk into their stores, which is handy (if not a little creepy). You can also use your phone to compare prices to make sure you’re getting the best deal.
- Consider traveling on the holiday itself. You could score a much cheaper airline ticket by flying on the holiday instead of in the days before. Plus, arriving on the big day conveniently gets you out of a lot of meal-prep duty.
- Search hotel rates and airfares online. Take advantage of websites that compare airfares and hotels so you get the best deal. Many will also alert you to price drops. Another bonus: Those online reviews can help you avoid a vacation you remember for all the wrong reasons. Be sure to check out special travel options for service members on lodging and flights.

There are a lot of ways to save money at the holidays. Check out other budget-friendly tips from Military OneSource, or take advantage of free financial counseling available in person, by phone or by video chat. Contact your Navy Gold Star coordinator for additional financial planning resources or any other questions you might have.

Shanny's Run

By Laura Fugere, Gold Star Mother of IT3 Shantell Fugere

My daughter Shanny was always active, athletic and loved to run. Shanny joined the track team in sixth grade and first started doing the throwing events and long jump. Her coach talked her into running, and from there she just kept on running. In middle school, she went from playing volleyball and basketball to running cross-country. She also ran track in high school. During the spring season, she competed in the 3000 as well as a couple of the shorter running events. Also in high school, she ran the Portland to coast portion of the Hood to Coast Relay twice. It is one of the longest and largest relays in the world with over 18,000 total participants. It started in Portland, Oregon, and ended at the beaches of Seaside, Oregon. When she wasn't running, working two jobs, studying at school, getting coffee, or hanging with friends, she could be found in her room doing crunches and push-ups. She had two loves: running and coffee (Dutch Brothers was the preferred choice). It was hard to keep up with her.

She was an energetic and strong-willed child, earning the nickname BBC – Bossy Babe of Carlton. As she approached the end of high school, she surprised us by enlisting in the Navy. We were not a family that, at that time, had strong roots in the military. But we did know that she felt she was not ready for college and wanted to expand her experiences. We were very proud of her when she left for boot camp.

She further surprised us by taking on the rate of IT (information systems technician). Shanny had never shown an interest in computers or technology and was very much a “girly girl” who loved her coffee, makeup, shoes and clothes. She could spend up to an hour in a fitting room just trying on every color of one blouse. However, she did enjoy the Navy, wearing the uniform, and her

responsibilities. She was stationed in San Diego, so she was not too far away from Carlton. Early on, she got a bit homesick. She loved her father dearly, but was also a bit of a “mama’s girl.”

In early July 2015, she took leave and came home to visit family and friends. Just a few hours after being home, she was driving with one of her best friends when they were hit and killed by an unlicensed driver who also was DUI.

As we tried to make sense of things without our Shanny in our lives, we found the local community was also struggling.

They wanted to remember Shanny. Shanny's Run started out as the Carlton Fun Run (she had participated in it while in high school). The run was originally put together by the Carlton Fire Department, but after Shanny died, some members of the Carlton Community Foundation came to us and said they wanted to start a foundation in Shanny's name and changed the name of the Fun Run – thus the creation of Shanny's Run, which is always held on the fourth Saturday in June as part of Carlton Fun Days. When those community members told us about the run, they also asked us where we thought the money should go, and after a brief deliberation, we decided that if Shanny had a say, she would want the money to go to what she loved. Now the proceeds of Shanny's Run benefit both the cross-country and track and field organizations in the Yamhill-Carlton School District.

Shanny is deeply missed every day by her parents and siblings. Knowing that the community she loved, and was such a part of, ensures her spirit and love of running is brought to focus every June helps us remember and honor our beautiful girl.



Road to Resiliency

By Paul Murphy, Gold Star Brother of Capt. Stephen F. Murphy

My brother, Capt. Stephen Murphy, passed away five years ago. Steve grew up in Catonsville, Maryland, the youngest of seven children. He graduated in 1987 from Catonsville High School and attended the U.S. Naval Academy. He majored in political science, was part of the leadership of the Naval Academy Foreign Affairs Conference, sailed on the sailing team, and was selected as a Trident Scholar. He graduated with distinction in 1991. Steve was an amazing husband and father. Family was by far his greatest joy. He was thrilled to be able to bring his daughter Madeleine on many travel adventures overseas and at home and to spend family time together whenever possible. He possessed a



rare blend of humility, leadership, humor, work ethic, intelligence, and an unwavering faith in God. He applied these same strengths that brought him success in the Navy.

My road to resilience began when I received a Gold Star pin. When I place the Gold Star on my lapel each day, I know that I bring Steve's core values with me. Wearing the Gold Star keeps Steve in the forefront of my thoughts. The past five years have enabled me to develop a learnable set of behaviors that contribute to resilience. Scientists

who study stress and resilience say it's important to think of resilience as an emotional muscle that can be strengthened at any time. While it's useful to build up resilience before a big or small crisis hits, there still are active steps you can take during and after a crisis to speed your emotional recovery.

Here are some of the ways I have found to build resilience. Optimism is part genetic, part learned. Optimism doesn't mean ignoring the reality of a dire situation. After a loss, many people may feel defeated and think, "I'll never recover from this." An optimist would acknowledge the challenge in a more hopeful way, saying, "This is going to be difficult, but it's a chance to rethink my life goals and find meaning and purpose." While it sounds trivial, thinking positive thoughts and surrounding yourself with positive people really does help. Dr. Steven Southwick, a psychiatry professor at Yale Medical School, notes that optimism, like pessimism, can be infectious. His advice: "Hang out with optimistic people."

Studies have shown that we can benefit from reframing the personal narrative that shapes our view of the world and ourselves. A Harvard study found that people who viewed stress as a way to fuel personal growth managed their stress better than those taught to ignore stress. Seek out activities that elevate your spiritual life and nurture your inner strength.

People are more resilient when they have strong support networks of friends and family to help them cope with a crisis. But you can get an even bigger resilience boost by giving support. The Gold Star family recently introduced me to the Travis Manion Foundation. The foundation invited us to a tree planting event where they dedicated a tree in honor of Steve in the childhood community of his father. I plan to continue my support

of the Travis Manion Foundation and seek opportunities to help others in honor of Steve. Any way you can reach out and help other people is a way of moving outside of yourself, and this is an important way to enhance your own strength.



A few weeks before Steve passed away, he gave us a gift of

"Affirmations from Life and the Fight." Steve's affirmations are visible in our home and I am reminded of them each time I wear the Gold Star. During Steve's memorial service at the Naval Academy, Chaplain Cary Cash shared Steve's affirmations. A few months later, Chaplain Cash conveyed to me that the day after Steve's memorial service, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert called him and requested a copy of the affirmations to distribute to his staff and the fleet. "Affirmations from Life and the Fight" provided me comfort and resilience to weather the passing of my mother-in-law Betsy, my oldest brother Charlie and my mother Angela.

In closing, I would like to share Steve's affirmations - which have strengthened my resilience in facing challenges and adversity - with the hope they will be of help to you.

Affirmations from Life and the Fight

Cultivate an authentic spiritual life
Treasure and invest in relationships
Seek meaning and purpose above all else
Slow down to appreciate the beauty all around us
Courage and humility in the face of adversity ultimately yields personal growth

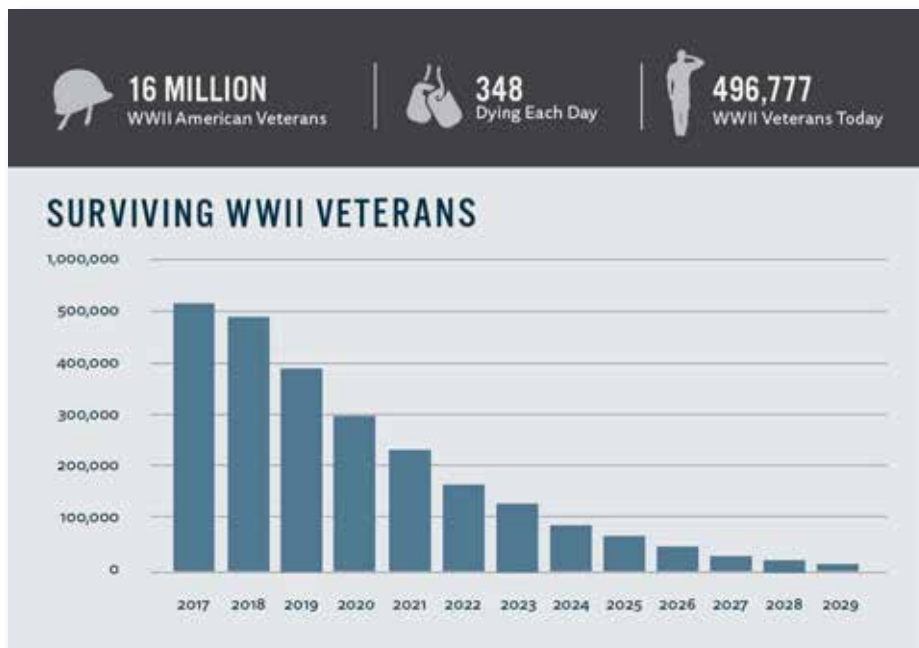
World War II Generation Slowly Disappearing

By Ray Cunnikin, CNRMA Gold Star Coordinator

Every day, memories of World War II – its sights and sounds, its terrors and triumphs – disappear. Yielding to the inalterable process of aging, the men and women who fought and won the great conflict are now in their late 80s and 90s. They are dying quickly; according to U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs statistics, 496,777 of the 16 million Americans who served in World War II are alive in 2018.*

World War II was the most widespread war in history. More than 100 million people served in military units, and many were part of the occupation forces assigned to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. In honoring the sacrifices of these brave Americans who shaped the foundation of our country and contributed a lasting tribute for generations to come, there is no better time than the present to thank them for their sacrifices and service to our nation and to show the world what they meant to the principles of freedom.

*Source U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs



THE NATIONAL WWII MUSEUM

LIVING WWII VETERANS BY STATE 2018

Alabama	5,868	Maine	3,169	Pennsylvania	26,346
Alaska	286	Maryland	8,090	Rhode Island	2,064
Arizona	13,186	Massachusetts	12,958	South Carolina	7,006
Arkansas	4,658	Michigan	15,898	South Dakota	1,397
California	51,567	Minnesota	10,133	Tennessee	8,653
Colorado	7,598	Mississippi	3,497	Texas	28,811
Connecticut	7,532	Missouri	10,697	Utah	3,881
Delaware	1,493	Montana	1,814	Vermont	1,312
D.C.	830	Nebraska	3,343	Virginia	11,555
Florida	49,400	Nevada	3,689	Washington	12,663
Georgia	9,323	New Hampshire	2,776	West Virginia	3,026
Hawaii	2,772	New Jersey	14,620	Wisconsin	10,658
Idaho	3,407	New Mexico	3,523	Wyoming	602
Illinois	17,550	New York	26,190	Puerto Rico	1,410
Indiana	8,891	North Carolina	11,988	Is. Areas & Foreign	2,234
Iowa	6,365	North Dakota	1,023		
Kansas	4,723	Ohio	19,618		
Kentucky	5,829	Oklahoma	6,210	Grand Total	496,777
Louisiana	5,350	Oregon	9,293	Deaths Per Day	348

Beating the Holiday Blues

By Susanna Del Llano, NAS Corpus Christi Gold Star Coordinator

"I think a lot of people would say that the holidays are the worst time of the year," said Dr. Ken Duckworth, medical director of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, in an interview with WebMD. "Many feel miserable, and that's not only for people with clinical depression."

The "holiday blues" can stem from a variety of sources such as current events, personal grief, loneliness, illnesses of all kinds, economic concerns, separation from family members, and relationship issues including separation, divorce and/or a death.

These feelings can easily be exacerbated by stressors, many of which are experienced in this season alone. Many of us wish - or feel obligated to - host holiday parties, while being cajoled into attending those of family members, friends and acquaintances. Decorations are beautiful, but someone has to put them up. Not to be forgotten are visits with family members who are only seen once or twice a year and fighting the crowds to find that perfect gift, all of which is compressed into a four to six-week block of time. To make the holidays a little easier, there are some strategies you can follow to minimize the negative aspects of the season.

Don't worry about how things should be. "There's a lot of cultural pressure during the holidays," said Duckworth. "We tend to compare ourselves with these idealized notions of perfect families and perfect holidays." But remember, those other families doubtlessly have their own stressors and ruminations to contend with.

Be realistic. You can't please everyone the rest of the year, so why try to during the holidays? Saying no to gatherings or a present on someone's wish list that you simply cannot find can be one of the most challenging parts of the season. But your own mental and physical well-being needs to come first.

Don't try to be a superhero (or heroine). We all have complex family dynamics. Acknowledge them, but also acknowledge that despite the season's near-universal message of unity and peace, it's not a realistic outlook. If you must spend time with these people, try to limit your exposure.

Volunteer. Volunteering and simply knowing that you're making a small dent in the lives of people who are not as fortunate can be a great source of comfort. This is a great strategy if you feel lonely or isolated. Consider seeking out community, religious or other social events.

Keep your own well-being in mind. Yes, the holidays are technically the season of giving. But that doesn't mean you should take yourself completely out of the equation; instead, add yourself to it. Give yourself some time away from the hype, even if it's just for half an hour a day. Also, exercise can help reduce the effects of anxiety and depression you may be feeling at this time. Even a small amount of exercise, such as parking further from the store, can do much to improve your state of mind.

Give it some thought. Do you really have to do everything on your list? "Ask yourself, 'Why am I doing things that make me miserable?'" Duckworth said. "Think about the reasons." He suggests that you draw up a list of reasons why you engage in these holiday traditions, and then list the reasons why you shouldn't. Just making a simple pro and con list will remind you that you do have a choice.

Make sure that the "holiday blues" haven't become a scapegoat. You could be experiencing recurrent depression with seasonal pattern (previously known as seasonal affective disorder) or another biological or psychological cause. If these are persistent feelings, make an appointment to see your doctor.

Make sure to take time this holiday season to be kind to yourself and enjoy the time of remembrance and giving. Find peace.



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Disclaimer: It is the mission of the Navy Gold Star Program to provide Survivors with information on resources available to them. Survivor's Link is one of several tools used to accomplish that mission and from time to time will include information (including phone numbers and websites) for various non-governmental resources. The Department of the Navy does not warrant or endorse these entities, products or services.

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NB SAN DIEGO INSTALLATION COORDINATOR	619-556-2190	NB SAN DIEGO FFSC 3005 CORBINA ALLEY STE 1 BLDG 259 SAN DIEGO CA 92136-5190
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NAS JACKSONVILLE INSTALLATION COORDINATOR	904-542-5706	FFSC / 554 CHILD ST NAS JACKSONVILLE FL 32212
NSA MID-SOUTH INSTALLATION COORDINATOR	901-874-5017	FFSC / 5722 INTEGRITY DR BLDG 456 MILLINGTON TN 38054-5045
NCBC GULFPORT INSTALLATION COORDINATOR	228-871-4569	FFSC / 5301 SNEAD ST GULFPORT MS 39501-5001
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SUBASE NEW LONDON INSTALLATION COORDINATOR	860-694-1257	FFSC / BLDG 83 BOX 93 GROTON CT 06349-5093
NAS OCEANA INSTALLATION COORDINATOR	757-492-8282	FFSC / 1896 LASER RD STE 120 VIRGINIA BEACH VA 23460-2281

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