

SPRING 2017 | ISSUE 1

# THE JOURNEY

SUPPORT • RESOURCES • INFORMATION





SPRING 2017 | ISSUE 1

# THE JOURNEY BEGINS

Welcome to the first edition of The Journey, a new Navy Region Southwest Publication created for Surviving families, service members, and friends. Your shared experiences and collective path forward come together in these pages through relevant news, resources, Survivor stories, events and happenings. Wherever you are — California, Colorado, Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Hawaii or Guam — you are part of a unique community. It is our honor to serve you and all families of those who were lost while in the armed forces.

## CONTRIBUTORS:

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*It is the mission of the Navy Gold Star Program to provide Survivors with information on resources available to them. The Journey 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 endorse any company, sponsor or their products and services.*



## IN THIS ISSUE:

THE NAVY GOLD STAR PROGRAM  
Survivor Eligibility - 2

BEHIND THE SCENES WITH  
EILEEN MARCUS  
Supporting our Military Families - 3

WHO'S WHO AROUND NAVY  
REGION SOUTHWEST  
Meet the NGS Team - 3

UPCOMING EVENTS  
Gold Star Wives Day - 4

GOLD STAR AWARENESS MONTH  
PROCLAMATION - 5

RESOURCE & NEWS SPOTLIGHT  
Program Updates - 5 - 6

REMBRANCE & RECOGNITION  
Lest We Forget - 7

MEMORIAL DAY 2017  
History, Remembrance and Gratitude - 8

ABOUT GOLD STAR PARKING  
Car Placards and I.D. Cards - 9

REGION SURVIVOR ADVISORY  
WORKGROUP  
Getting Involved - 10



# THE NAVY GOLD STAR PROGRAM (NGS)

The Navy Gold Star Program (NGS) provides casualty support to Survivors — spouses, mothers, fathers, children, and siblings of Fallen Service Members. Now, and as long as the family desires, Gold Star coordinators help meet the needs of Survivors through information and referral to military and civilian support services.

If you are a Survivor and would like to connect with Your Gold Star Coordinator, please contact 619-532-2886.

If you are a command representative or outside agency and would like to know more about the Navy Gold Star Program, contact 619-532-2886.

[www.navylifesw.com/sandiego/families/navy-gold-star/](http://www.navylifesw.com/sandiego/families/navy-gold-star/)



## GOLD STAR SURVIVOR ELIGIBILITY?

Survivors eligible to participate in the NGS program include the spouses, parents and the next of kin of the Fallen.

The term “widow” includes widower; the term “parents” includes mother, father, stepmother, stepfather, mother through adoption, father through adoption, and foster parents who stood in loco parentis.

The term “next of kin” only includes children, brothers, sisters, half-brothers, and half-sisters; and the term “children” includes stepchildren and children through adoption. *For more information, call 1-888-509-8759.*



### GET IN THE KNOW

Receive updated information on local events and Survivor Connection opportunities.

Contact : 619-532-2866

# BEHIND THE SCENES WITH EILEEN MARCUS



Eileen Marcus joined the NRSW Gold Star team in August 2016. She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience as prior active duty Navy, as well as being a current, active duty spouse. Also, she has been an Ombudsman volunteer for over eight years,

serving as a liaison between the command and families. She understands the call to serve and the important role families play in our military support system.

“I believe supporting our military families is one of the most important jobs,” she says. “I am honored to be here to support our Navy’s most important families, the Gold Star Families.”

Eileen is the Gold Star coordinator responsible for providing support and assistance to Surviving families residing throughout San Diego and Riverside counties, and in Colorado and Nevada. Based at Naval Base Coronado, she is instrumental in raising awareness of Survivor-related issues, while promoting the Navy Gold Star Program span of services. This includes involvement in various Fleet Weeks (Los Angeles, San Francisco and San Diego) and the upcoming Hero Spin Memorial Day Tribute Ride.



## WHO’S WHO AROUND NAVY REGION SOUTHWEST

Gold Star coordinators and Fleet & Family Support Gold Star POCs are located at all Navy Installations throughout the region.

NRSW has four coordinators providing full-time, long-term case management and referral services to families of the Fallen.



**NRSW - 619-532-2886**  
**NBC - 619-767-7225**  
**NBSD - 619-556-2190**  
**NBVC - 805-982-6018**

NRSW has seven Fleet & Family Support Center POCs responsible for immediate information and referral services for Survivors who frequent the FFSC on Navy Installations.



*If you are a Survivor and would like to connect to your long-term Support Coordinator, please call: 1-888-509-8759.*

# 2017 ANNUAL INITIATIVES



*Gold Star Wives Day, April 5*



*Gold Star Awareness Month, May 2017*



*Hero Spin Memorial Day Tribute Ride, May 11th*



*The Navy's 31st Bay Bridge Run-Walk Run to Remember Campaign, May 21*



*Gold Star Kids Fleet Adventure Series, July 2017*



*Bells Across America, September 2017*



*Gold Star Mothers and Families Day, September 24*



*Gold Star Holiday Memorial Tree Campaign, December 2017*

## HERO SPIN

### MEMORIAL DAY TRIBUTE RIDE

Join the 500-mile challenge today!

**THURSDAY, MAY 11, 2017 • 11:30 am-12:30 pm**

**NRSW PARTICIPATING LOCATIONS**  
**NBSD:** The Olde Gym | Fitness Station  
**NBC:** VADM Martin Fitness Center  
**NAB:** Peak Performance Center  
**NBPL FITNESS CENTERS:** Main Base | Third Fleet | Harbor Drive Annex  
**NBVC:** Point Mugu Gym | Bee-Fit Wellness Center  
**TO REGISTER, CALL:** 619-767-7225 or 619-532-2886  
[www.navygoldstar.com](http://www.navygoldstar.com)

Third Annual Hero Spin Memorial Day Tribute Ride honors the memory of our Fallen service men and women while remembering Gold Star Families left behind. Mark your calendars this year – Peddle for a Purpose, In their Memory, For their Sacrifice. For more information, contact 619-767-7225, M-F, 7:30 am - 4 pm.

THE NAVY'S 31<sup>st</sup>

## BAY BRIDGE

RUN • WALK

PRESENTED BY SDGE • UNIFIED PORT OF SAN DIEGO • LEIDOS

Join us on Sunday, May 21, 2017 • 8 am

### Run to Remember

Gold Star Families are invited to run in honor of the Fallen.

**SPECIAL PRICE\***  
\*Service fee not included

- \$35 Adult / \$15 Child (Ages 4-12) No team entry
- Children 3 and under participate FREE!

Contact your Navy Gold Star Coordinator for your promo registration code.

Eileen Marcus  
 Naval Base Coronado  
 619-767-7225

Register Today!  
[www.navylifesw.com/bridgerun](http://www.navylifesw.com/bridgerun)

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The Department of the Navy does not endorse any company, sponsor or their products or services.



## RESOURCE & NEWS

### SPOTLIGHT: LIVING LEGACY SCHOLARSHIP



The Columbia Southern Education Group offers the Living Legacy Scholarship to spouses, children, parents and siblings of Fallen Service Members. For application materials and additional information, visit:

[www.csegroup.com/scholars/living-legacy-scholarship/](http://www.csegroup.com/scholars/living-legacy-scholarship/)

## DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS DENTAL INSURANCE (UPDATE)



Reauthorization Act of 2016 (S. 3055), makes permanent the existing pilot program of VA dental insurance for veterans, survivors and dependents of veterans, by allowing eligible veterans plus family members receiving care under the Civilian Health and Medical Program of VA (CHAMPVA), to purchase dental insurance.”

For more information: [www.va.gov/healthBenefits/vadip/](http://www.va.gov/healthBenefits/vadip/)

## GOLD STAR PROCLAMATION – STATES OUTREACH

By Stephanie Hunter, CNIC Navy  
Gold Star Program Analyst

Last year, the Navy Gold Star Program declared May as Gold Star Awareness Month to help raise public knowledge and to educate military and civilian communities on what it means to be a Gold Star Family. The initiative also honors Gold Star Families by hosting events that pay tribute to the Fallen and provide surviving family members with opportunities to connect with one another.

## MARINE GUNNERY SERGEANT FRY SCHOLARSHIP

On December 16, 2016, HR 6416 became Public Law 114-315, which clarifies the eligibility for the Marine Gunnery Sergeant John Fry Scholarship assistance to include all surviving spouses of a member of the Armed Forces who died during the period beginning September 11, 2001 thru December 31, 2005. (These survivors were not included in the Public Law 113-146: The Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014.)

For more information, visit [www.benefits.va.gov](http://www.benefits.va.gov)

## Upcoming Gold Star Activities

- April 29 : May Flowers Paint Class (See pg. 6)

- Kids Fleet Adventure  
June 22, 2017, 8 am - 4:00 pm

This event is for the Children of our Fallen Heroes Ages 8-16

Register by June 1, 2017.

For more information or to register:  
619-767-7225 or 619-556-2190



## GOLD STAR WIVES DAY

The first Gold Star Wives Day was celebrated on December 18, 2010, the result of a Senate resolution with support from Gold Star Wives of America, Inc., a nonprofit organization providing services and support to the spouses and families of Fallen Service Members. Then and now, Gold Star Wives Day is a way for America and its military to recognize the sacrifices that families have made and continue to make, as well raise awareness of the ongoing impact felt by the loss of our Fallen Service Members. This year's Gold Star Wives Day was April 5. We'll provide a full report in the next issue.

Additionally, installations throughout Navy Region Southwest are partnering with Navy MWR/Community Recreation, among others, to honor Gold Star Spouses in a variety of ways. This includes the **May Flowers Paint Class** (see below). For more information and to register, contact 619-553-9138.



## Navy Gold Star Program "Rocks" the Troops



Thank you to Spike TV as "Rock the Troops" honored one of our NRSW Gold Star families, during a two-hour special, before a crowd of 48,000 troops

at the historic Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam in Hawaii. Chief Petty Officer Kraig M. Vickers served as an explosive ordinance disposal technician in Expeditionary Warfare and was killed in action in August 2011, supporting Operation Enduring Freedom in Wardak Province, Afghanistan. His legacy, life and family were highlighted during the nationally televised special.



# MARCH 2, 2007: LEST WE FORGET



Fleet Marine Force Navy Corpsman, Petty Officer 3rd Class Lucas Wesley Albert Emch. Luke was a Corpsman with a three-man Marine EOD team. During his six months in Iraq, Luke participated in more than 240 missions. His

teams cleared 78 IEDs and captured over 2,500 pieces of ordnance totaling more than 10,000 pounds net explosives. Also, in that time, he treated 80 casualties both outside and inside the wires. Luke was killed instantly by an IED blast on their last operational mission call. But because he always positioned himself at the door, his location absorbed the blast and saved the lives of two others inside. "We Remember Luke Emch"...



# L.A. DODGERS RECOGNIZE OUR FALLEN HEROES AND GOLD STAR FAMILIES



On January 27, 2017 Gold Star Families joined players from the L.A. Dodgers aboard the USS Iowa for a private lunch in San Pedro. The event, the #DodgersLoveLA Community Tour, recognized our Fallen Heroes and Gold Star Families left behind. A huge thank you to the L.A. Dodgers for taking time to remember, reflect and meet the resilient families.

# NAVY LEAGUE SPONSORSHIP



NAVY LEAGUE is a proud sponsor of Navy Region Southwest Gold Star Program, enhancing programming and events designed to build morale and to establish a

sense of community and support for Survivors of Fallen service men and women.





# HISTORY, REMEMBRANCE AND GRATITUDE

MEMORIAL DAY IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO HONOR FALLEN MEN  
AND WOMEN OF THE ARMED FORCES. BY ZEA MOULLETT

On Monday, May 29, many of us will enjoy a day of barbequing with friends, among other activities, and generally, cheer the unofficial start of summer. Amid all the relaxation and revelry, it might be easy to overlook the real reason why this day, Memorial Day, matters – but we never should. It is an important day for our Armed Forces and for our nation.

Originally known as “Decoration Day,” the holiday was created to remember Civil War veterans. General John A. Logan proclaimed: “The 30th of May 1868, is designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers, or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village and hamlet churchyard in the land.”

The first Decoration Day was recognized with a service at Arlington National Cemetery, and included decoration of 20,000 graves by 5,000 participants. As the United States became involved in World War I, the holiday became an occasion to remember and honor the sacrifices of fallen Service members who died in all

American wars. In 1968, Congress passed the Uniform Holiday Act, declaring Memorial Day as a federal holiday, and in 1971, the last Monday in May became recognized as Memorial Day.

The modern Memorial Day echoes that first Decoration Day. Specifically, the President or Vice President lays a wreath at the Tomb of The Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery. Also, around the country, a variety of local services, parades, and ceremonies mark the occasion. Here in San Diego, many locals, including Boys and Girl Scouts, place flags next to each grave in Rosecrans National Cemetery. No matter how you spend the Memorial Day weekend, take a few minutes to reflect and acknowledge the sacrifices of the men and women who gave their lives for our beloved country.

# ABOUT GOLD STAR PARKING



*Designated parking at Navy installations for Gold Star Family Members is a small gesture to honor and recognize the sacrifices of those who have lost loved ones in military service.*



At minimum, one designated parking space is available for Gold Star Family Members with access to Navy installations. Spaces are located at Fleet & Family Support Centers (FFSCs), commissaries and base exchanges.

To ensure that the Gold Star parking spaces are used as intended, Gold Star Survivor I.D. cards and car placards are issued. These are designed for placement on the dashboard or hung from the rear view mirror of cars parked in a Gold Star space.

The Gold Star Survivor identification card serves simply as a way to show involvement in the Navy Gold Star program. It does not grant base access nor offer any additional benefits. For more information on Gold Star parking, I.D. cards and parking tags, contact your local Navy Gold Star Coordinator (see page 3).



## SOUTHWEST REGION SURVIVOR ADVISORY WORKGROUP



Volunteer today to become a member of the NRSW Survivor Advisory Workgroup!

This Survivor-only opportunity allows you assist, advise and shape the future of the program by sharing:

- Unique challenges you face as a Survivor
- How you use Navy Gold Star services
- Recognition events you would like to see implemented.

Contact NRSW Region Gold Star Coordinator at 619-532-2886 to find out how to join.

## Give Back Today

Civilian and active duty volunteers are invited to participate in our GIVE BACK TODAY promotion. The Navy Region Southwest Gold Star Program welcomes you to get involved with upcoming events and outreach opportunities to further ensure that the lives of our Fallen Sailors are Never Forgotten. For more information, contact: 619-532-2886



The USS Midway in downtown San Diego remembers our fallen heroes,

and honors Gold Star Families with FREE admission Monday-Sunday. Contact your Gold Star Coordinator to receive your Survivor ID card and enjoy an afternoon aboard the USS Midway.

## NRSW NGSP SNAPSHOT: 2,144 NAVY SURVIVORS REACHED



Throughout FY16 - One regional Gold Star coordinator and three installation Gold Star coordinators provided over 4,328 contacts to Gold Star Family Members via email, phone, postal service or in person.



**Stay Connected!**  
[www.navygoldstar.com](http://www.navygoldstar.com)



NAVY GOLD STAR PROGRAM : 619-532-2886  
[www.navylifesw.com/sandiego/families/navy-gold-star](http://www.navylifesw.com/sandiego/families/navy-gold-star)

