

Focus On FamilyCenter

VRC FamilyCenter Update March 2006

FamilyCenter Grows

Deployments continue for our military, and the future holds more of the same. For military families, this means a continuation of the challenging and difficult family separations that such operations require. As FamilyCenter evolves and grows, we are tailoring our services to meet these emerging needs. Since the War on Terror is unique in terms of the types and lengths of deployments, we are seeing new problems for our families. Department of Defense, the National Guard Bureau and all the Reserve components are working hard to solve these problems, but they cannot do it alone. FamilyCenter seeks to fill the voids that our government cannot fill due to legal restrictions or resource limitations.

The key to helping families and veterans lies all around us - it is **community**. We have ample resources in our communities to help, but many are unaware that the need exists. The resources, the talent, the opportunities are extensive, but they must be tapped to be effective. The fact that our families are dispersed makes the need seem minimal, yet this is far from the case. Mobilizing community is difficult when the perceived need is small. So, a major challenge for all VRC volunteers and staff is to educate the public about the predicament of families and returning veterans. We remain hopeful that through community events, outreach and efforts we can bring the focus of our communities to bear on those military families that need help.

This summer we hope to partner with the City of Harrisburg to create events of value for the military families in the Central PA area. We also plan to address the needs of families on major holidays. Our first step in this direction is our Easter Celebration, planned for April 8th. November is Military Family month. We hope to sponsor a major event to raise awareness in Central PA about our military families while raising much needed funds. These are all noble undertakings, but our ultimate success will lie with the individual volunteers of VRC, taking the message forward, one person at a time. I know we can count on each of you to step forward willingly to this task.