



Fostering connections within our community
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Silverbrook Military Connections was established in conjunction with the Silverbrook Parent Teacher Organization to:

- Welcome new military families to our school
- Provide resources to help new military families learn more about our school and ease their transition into the community
- Foster connections among military families and between military and non-military families in our community
- Share information on programs and events that might benefit our military and veteran families
- Promote education and awareness about military service and military families and veterans in our community

Did you know...

There are almost 200 children at our school with one or both parents currently serving in the United States military. Additionally, we have many veteran families in our Silverbrook community.



Some military families are able to remain in the same geographic area for several years, however the average child in a military family will move six to nine times during a school career.



Mark your Calendars!

In honor of Veterans' Day we invite our military and veteran families to an ice cream social

Date: Thursday, November 9, 2017
Time: 6:00 to 8:00 pm
Location: Silverbrook Cafeteria

- Meet other military-connected families
- Activities for children -- a great opportunity for kids to connect with other Silverbrook kids with military families, and similar backgrounds and interests
- Information on local programs and activities for military-connected families

How our non-military families can get involved:

- Encourage your children to help new students feel welcome.
- Welcome parents in military families into your circle; it can be difficult for military families to develop relationships in neighborhoods where other families have known each other for years. Be friendly and consider inviting new neighbors to neighborhood gatherings.
- Volunteer to assist with our military connections activities: We will have a military event in November for Veterans' Day and in April for the month of the military child. We are always looking for volunteers for our "welcome committee" to serve as points of contact to assist newly arriving military families. We will also be gathering care packages to send to deployed family members.

If you are interested in helping out please email us:

silverbrookmilitaryconnections@gmail.com

Childcare -- Information You Should Know



Finding affordable and reliable childcare that meets a family's need can be one of the most stressful challenges of military life. Whether you are looking for full time child care, before and/or after school care, or respite care there may be financial assistance available through your service's child care fee assistance program. Please visit the Child Care Aware Military Family page for more information on the various programs, to check eligibility, find approved providers, and to apply:

<http://usa.childcareaware.org/fee-assistancerespite/military-families/>

In search of a sitter? Silverbrook Military Connections is partnering with South County High School Military Connections to connect the parents of elementary age children with local high school students with babysitting experience and certifications. If you would like more information, please e-mail us at silverbrookmilitaryconnections@gmail.com



We need your photographs!

Each year Silverbrook Elementary features a



Veterans' Day slideshow of photos submitted by our military and veteran families on monitors throughout the school.

If you would like us to include a service member or veteran from your family (extended family too!), please submit your photos along with a description and the student's name and grade to:

silverbrookmilitaryconnections@gmail.com

How can we help you?

Are you new to the community? Is a member of your family deployed or away at school or training? Are you struggling to find the right resource for a particular need?

Every family is unique, and military families are no exception. We are here to help. If you have needs that aren't being met, we may be able to assist. Please send us an e-mail at:

silverbrookmilitaryconnections@gmail.com

Military Connection Spotlight:

Mr. Lee Larsen

You may know Mr. Larsen as one of the music teachers here at Silverbrook, but did you know that he grew up in a military family? Mr. Larsen's father was in the Army and served in the Vietnam War.



Mr. and Mrs. Larsen on their wedding day

Mr. Larsen's family moved three times before he started kindergarten. The Larsen family was able to settle down locally after Lee began school, then when Lee was in third grade his father departed for a yearlong tour in Korea.

Mr. Larsen credits his military connection as a shaping factor in both his world perspective and his work ethic.



Lee (Center, approximately 3.5 years) with his parents and sister at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

Please note that inclusion of outside organizations and events in this newsletter is purely for informational purposes and does not imply endorsement by Silverbrook Elementary School, the Silverbrook Parent Teacher Organization, or the Fairfax County Public Schools.

Little Heroes, Big Hearts, Big Rewards

One of our biggest roles as we raise little people is protecting them and keeping them safe as they grow. This isn't limited to their physical well being. We want to protect them from emotional harm and turmoil as well. For this reason, it can be a big step for an adult to encourage their elementary-age kid to proactively make friends with a military kid. Many kids have never experienced a loss, and opening their life and their heart to a friendship with a military kid can almost guarantee they will have to part ways after a few golden years of friendship. Even some adults weigh the pros and cons of making friends who won't be around "forever." Will it be worth the effort to try to keep the friendship alive? For kids, will the disappointment of their military friend eventually moving away be too much for them at such a young age?



Believe it or not, anecdotes of non-military parents discouraging their kids from befriending military kids are more common than most would imagine. What most military parents will tell you is the kids who do befriend their little ones can be heroes in their eyes. Military kids are known for being resilient, still, many struggle to make new friends, especially when they move in the middle of a school year or move into a community where many of the kids have been in the same school system for their entire educational career.

Here are some reasons you should encourage your kiddo to extend an olive branch and see if, just maybe, that new military kid might actually be a forever friend:

- Military kids are average kids who have had some unique experiences.
- If the friend moves away there are many ways to keep in touch. Between cell phones, e-mail, social media, old-school postal pen-pals, and even potential vacations or road trips, a goodbye doesn't have to be the end of a friendship.
- Military kids often have different experiences that they can share with your child, potentially expanding their horizons and interests.
- It is never too early to teach empathy. What would you want for your child if she or he had to move to a new school and community?
- Military kids understand how it feels to be accepted as well as left out. They are often willing to be accepting of other kids with unique experiences and backgrounds.
- Although a friend moving away can be a sad time for a child, it is also an opportunity to help children build positive life skills.
- Military kids tend to be more resilient than their non-military peers. Through the "loss" of a military friend, you can help your child identify the emotions they are feeling and help them find positive and productive outlets to address their feelings and emotions.



Thankful for
those who
serve!!



Thankful for
those who
support!!

Upcoming Events:

Air and Scare

Oct. 21, 12:00pm - 5:30pm

Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Air and Space Museum,
14390 Air and Space Museum Parkway, Chantilly, VA 20151
703-572-4118

<https://airandspace.si.edu/events/air-scare-10>



Amazing Farm Fun @ Ticonderoga

Sept. 29-Nov. 4, Remember to ask for the military discount prior to checkout!

26469 Ticonderoga Road, Chantilly, VA 20152
703-327-4424

<http://www.ticonderoga.com/2017/09/01/fall-pumpkins-festival/>



Fall Festival

Sept. 17-Oct. 31, Nov. 4-8

10 a.m.-6 p.m., Sept.-Oct.; 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Cox Farms, 15621 Braddock Rd Centreville, VA
703-830-4121

www.coxfarms.com/fallfestival.aspx



Fall Festival & Pumpkin Playground

Oct. 1-Nov. 5

9 a.m.-8 p.m., Sun.-Thurs.; 9 a.m.-9 p.m., Fri. & Sat.
Burke Nursery & Garden Centre, 9401 Burke Rd, Burke, VA
703-323-1188

www.pumpkinplayground.com



Boo at the Zoo

Oct. 20-22

5:30-8:30 p.m.
Smithsonian National Zoological Park, 3001 Connecticut Ave NW, Washington, D.C.
202-633-4888

<https://nationalzoo.si.edu/ActivitiesAndEvents/Celebrations/Boo/boo.cfm>



Living in the National Capital Region provides many opportunities to participate in activities centered around the historic landmarks and buildings in this area:

National Wreaths Across America Day
Saturday December 16, 2017
#JoinTheMission

 **WREATHS across AMERICA**
MARCIA ANN

KENNETH SHANNON
ARMY
9/22/36-3/15/64

Wreaths Across America -- Each year volunteers come together to adorn the headstones of our nation's heroes with donated wreaths. This year's event is December 16, 2017.

Please visit this website for more details:

<http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/volunteer-at-arlington/>

Honor Flights -- [The Honor Flight Network](http://www.honorflightnetwork.org/) flies veterans from 127 cities, free of charge, to visit their memorials in Washington DC. Volunteers help make the trip even more memorable for these veterans and is a great experience for children and adults alike. The easiest way to volunteer here is to greet our veterans as their flight arrives at the airport or their bus arrives at the WWII Memorial.

<https://honorflightdca.com/volunteering/>