

# SOS

## SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES NEWSLETTER

P1  
August/September

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Please visit our new website  
<http://www.benningmwr.com/sos>

### JENNIFER PIERCE, M.S.

SOS Support Coordinator  
Work Phone (706) 545-2989 / 7517  
After Hours Phone (706) 442-1644  
email: [jennifer.r.pierce@us.army.mil](mailto:jennifer.r.pierce@us.army.mil)

### MONICA WADDELL

SOS Financial Counselor  
Work Phone (706) 545-8990 / 7517  
Mobile Phone (706) 315-4260  
email: [monica.waddell@us.army.mil](mailto:monica.waddell@us.army.mil)

### DARLENE SANDLIN

SOS Benefits Coordinator  
Work Phone (706) 545-4347  
email: [darlene.sandlin@us.army.mil](mailto:darlene.sandlin@us.army.mil)



Share your stories so we can

### Remember

Your Fallen Soldier

### Survivor Resources

Since it's start at Fort Benning, Survivor Outreach Services has made it a primary goal to reach out to garrison and community agencies to educate them on our program, as well as the ongoing needs and issues of Survivors of Fallen Heroes. The list of benefits and services is growing as we continue our outreach. Survivors need to know that we are here for you, no matter the need. If we cannot assist you, we will find out who can. Below are just some of the benefits and services you are entitled to as a Survivor of a Fallen Hero at no cost to you. (Most garrison services are only available to dependent ID card holders).

- Supportive Counseling
- Financial Counseling and Training
- Survivor Support Groups
- Bereavement Respite Child Care
- Discounted Childcare rates
- Free SKIES Unlimited instructional courses for children
- Access to licensed vocational/educational counselors
- Providing your feedback regarding Survivor issues to the Department of Army through SOS and the Army Family Action Plan

- VA and DA Benefits Assistance, including money for education
- Access to licensed mental health counselors and Chaplains
- Priority Appointments (Next available appointment) to most garrison services, including the Staff Judge Advocate Office, Tricare Benefit Advisors, and much more
- Access to Army Community Service Programming (Employment Readiness, AER, Army Volunteer Corp, etc.)
- Army Substance Abuse Program
- Training and support for new mothers, fathers, or grandparents (for children ages 0-3)
- Coordination with national peer support organizations such as Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors and Gold Star Wives
- Gifting agencies which give hand drawings of your Soldier, memorial quilts, and personalized decorative angels
- Coordination of services in the community such as shelter, clothing, food vouchers, legal assistance, home improvement, etc.
- If you live outside the Fort Benning area, we can still assist you! Reach SOS at 706-545-7517

## *New Survivor ID Card gets you discounts on post!*

The Fort Benning Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation recognizes the sacrifices of Survivors of Fallen Soldiers and wants to offer numerous freebies and discounts. With the new ID card, Survivors are entitled to \$5.00 off an oil change at Auto Skills Center, \$1.00 bowling with free shoe rental, 1/2 price green fees & 1 free bucket of range balls at the Fort Benning Golf Course, 10% off total purchase at Java Café locations, 10% off rental equipment at Outdoor Recreation, 1 free pack of paper bingo cards at Pinks & Daubers Bingo, 10% off Sunday and daily lunch specials at the Benning Conference Center. Please call Survivor Outreach Services on more information about how to get this ID card.

## *Capitol Hill*

*From Army Times—9 July 2009*

“President Barack Obama signed a bill Monday that extends a temporary survivors benefit through 2017 and also provides annual increases in the payment...Under the law, the payment will be \$150 in 2014, \$200 in 2015, \$275 in 2016 and \$310 in 2007.”

[http://www.armytimes.com/news/2009/06/military\\_survivorsbenefits\\_062209w/](http://www.armytimes.com/news/2009/06/military_survivorsbenefits_062209w/)

*From AUSA—27 July 2009*

“The Senate passed their version of the fiscal 2010 defense authorization bill last week by a vote of 87-7...The Senate’s passage of an amendment which would repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities paid under the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) by veteran’s dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC) was also welcomed news...Now that both the House and Senate have passed their bills, members of a conference committee will be appointed to resolve the difference between the two versions of the defense bill.”



## *SOS and Fort Benning Events*

### **SOS Support Group**

“A Night Out,” August 18th. Support groups meet every third Tuesday from 6:00 PM-7:30 PM. Groups alternate from meeting on post to “A Night out” at a local Ft. Benning/Columbus restaurant. Free childcare is provided on site. The upcoming “Night Out” will be held at Cheddar’s Restaurant. Please call us for more information and to make reservations at 706-545-7517. Children are welcome to “A night out.”



**Let your voice be heard!** Wednesday August 26th SOS is hosting it’s quarterly Survivor Interview Forum. Survivors get a chance to voice their concerns and make suggestions regarding pre-deployment planning, casualty assistance, and long term support. Feedback is given to the Department of the Army! Free childcare will be provided on site! Please call us to make reservations at 706-545-7517. The forum will be held in BLDG 2652, SFAC

**SOS Credit Repair Training** Tuesday September 1st Do you want to know what really affects your credit score and how they come up with those wonderful buying numbers? Great! Please join us at the SFAC, 6980 Dixie Rd. Please call to RSVP and reserve free childcare!

### **Fort Benning Events**

**Army Concert featuring Hinder—** 8 Aug  
**National Suicide Prevention Events—** 9 and 10 Aug. Training and guest speakers, such as the original Dream Girl, Jennifer Holiday, will be speaking out about suicide prevention. Call 706-545-5441. SOS Staff will be on hand to assist suicide Survivors.

**Women’s Equality Day—** August 26th  
A luncheon to celebrate women’s rights at the Benning Conference Center from 11:30 AM-1:30 PM. Call 706-545-6665 for more information

**Super Bingo and Free Buffet—** August 7th  
At Pins and Daubers Bingo Hall from 5:00-10:30 PM. Please call 706-544-1964 for more details. Check the Fort Benning FMWR site and SOS page for the latest events! Visit <http://www.benningmwr.com>



## *The Money Game*

How many people want to be Financially Independent? Everyone right? But how many actually achieve that goal of Financial Independence? Only about 10% of the American population. Pretty bad huh? I like to think of it like this, a basketball player, say the great Michael Jordan, won so many championships but

he practiced from childhood until he became one of the greatest Basketball stars of all time. I would say the same for Tiger Woods, Michael Jackson, Michael Phelps and quite a few others, even the great Warren Buffet. Here is my point, in order for you to be good at the "Money Game," you must know the rules of the game. You can't win knowing only a fraction of how it really works. Money is bigger than an hourly pay check, monthly salary or yearly income. We've seen some of the biggest entertainers and politicians fall because they failed to play by the rules. So here are a couple of important rules I think you must know about and implement to help you start winning this game.

1. **Use your checkbook register.** Most people think the internet is the checkbook register, WRONG! It takes time for them to update the internet and many times you can find where they have overcharged you for things. Yes the great banks make mistakes too. This is like trusting a ghost to monitor your finances. Who's watching out for you?
2. **Pay yourself first.** Many people live from payday to payday or shall I say pre-payday to pre-payday. Bills are paid before you are. Many people have to pay the banks before they pay themselves or their creditors. This is called NSF fees. Banks are being paid \$40 to \$850 and more in personal fees monthly for many individuals. Banks stay in business because they understand how to play the game. Most Americans file bankruptcy or go thru, repossessions, foreclosures, pay garnishments or become homeless trying to play this powerful game.
3. **Is it a Need or a Want?** This is a question that is invisible to us. We have the money, and we just buy it, without even thinking about what we're doing. Say the cell phone bill is \$200, but the electricity is turned off. Or perhaps you can't do without that cable, but your family needs shelter. Oops lets hope you don't lose your job, right. Now what?

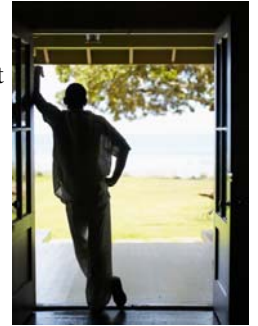
It is time to educate ourselves on how to play the "Money Game." I think that goes for every individual in this country. Look at what has happened to our Economy lately. Even the politician can't figure this one out. Are you being affected by it? If not you, what about your children? Don't get bored thinking you know everything about this game, see the rules change daily.

*Article continued on page 4*

## *The Emotional & Physical Effects of Grief Part II*

From "I Wasn't Ready to Say Goodbye: Surviving, Coping and Healing after the Sudden Death of a Loved One." By Brook Noel and Pamela D. Blair, PhD

In the last SOS Newsletter, we discussed only some of the emotional and physical reactions to grief such as exhaustion, distraction, denial, and anger. In addition to these experiences, there are many other reactions that you may find uncomfortable. However, if you know what to expect of your body and mind, you will realize you are not alone and definitely not going "crazy." These reactions to grief are common in anybody who loses a loved one. Here are some other reactions that Noel and Blair point out:



### *Ambush Grief and Emotions*

The authors explain that even though you may be in the middle of a laugh or engaging in a pleasant activity, painful emotions may overcome you unexpectedly. You cannot control your grief reactions as they may be triggered by reminders such as a faded song in the background, a smell, or a place that reminds you of your loved one. Noel and Blair state that these reactions are heightened in the first 3 to 6 months, but will decrease throughout the first year following the loss of your loved one. However, though rare, this ambush of grief will last indefinitely. The authors suggest to honor and experience the feelings completely as they will end. Also lean on your support networks to alleviate your sad feelings.

### *Physical Symptoms*

Please see a medical professional if you experiences any of the following physical symptoms to determine if they are grief induced or a result of illness. If the following are grief induced, they should fade in time. DO NOT think you are going "crazy," if you experience these symptoms, as they are due to your depleted emotional state and grief. Look out for: chest discomfort, sleep difficulties, poor appetite or overeating, shakiness or trembling, numbness, disorientation, migraines or headaches, dizziness, dry mouth, crying, exhaustion or weakness, shortness of breath, and heart palpitations. Remember, your emotional state directly affects your physical health!

### *Dreams*

Pamela and Blair state that it is normal not to have dreams about your lost loved one. They suggest asking your friends and family about their dreams. The authors state, "These dreams can carry messages for you..."

*Article continued on page 4*

*Continued from p3, The Money Game*

Our 1<sup>st</sup> Financial Training on “Credit Repair” will be conducted September 1<sup>st</sup> we truly encourage you to join in and help change the face of this “Money Game” called Financial

Monica Waddell  
Survivor Outreach Services Financial Counselor  
706-545-8990

## Helpful Links

Survivor Outreach Services Fort Benning Website -  
<http://www.benningmwr.com/acs-sos.php>

Operation Homefront -  
<http://www.operationhomefront.net>

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors-  
<http://www.taps.org>

Veteran’s Affairs Benefits for Survivors -  
<http://www.vba.va.gov/Survivors/VAbenefits.htm>

**Army Community Services (ACS) Center  
Survivor Outreach Services  
ATTN: IMSE-BEN-MWA, BLDG 2624  
7200 Kanopsky Avenue  
Fort Benning, GA 31905**

- **Don’t forget** to give your feedback to the Army regarding your experiences as a Survivor at our Quarterly Interview Forum on August 26th at Ft. Benning!
- Credit Repair Training– September 1st
- SOS “A Night Out” at Cheddars–Aug 18th
- Call 706-545-7517 for details

*Continued from p3, The Emotional & Physical Effects of Grief II*

The authors mention that dreams involving your passed loved one can be a means of healing, thus it is important to keep track of what you dreamt so you can cherish the images of your loved one . If you remember the dream, Blair and Noel suggest to, “...spend 10 minutes each morning jotting down thoughts and impressions in your dream journal. If you only remember pieces of your dream, jot those down. Often just a few notes will spur other recollections.”

Noel and Blair state that bad dreams and nightmares may be the result of your subconscious working out your problems. The dream material may involve a conflict between you and your loved one. The authors suggest to analyze your dreams or discuss them with family and friends; change your dream by thinking about a different ending several times before you fall asleep; and to be aware that prescription drug usage and withdrawal can be the cause of vivid dreams and nightmares.

*Stay tuned for more excerpts from I wasn’t Ready to Say Goodbye, Surviving, Coping and Healing after the Sudden Death of a Loved One By Brook Noel and Pamela D. Blair, PhD.*

If you are interested in sharing what you have felt and experienced throughout your grief process, please submit your story or share with others at our monthly support group.