

THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 2025

THE FORT JACKSON LEADER

... STORY ... ST ... RE."

JACKSON INDUCTS 8 INTO THE NCO CORPS



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Victory ... Week starts June 9 with a post run, challenges

Fort Jackson Public Affairs

Thunder will sound early Monday morning as Fort Jackson will fire howitzers during run celebrating the kickoff of its 108th birthday celebration.

The week holds many different activities to honor the post's heritage including organizational sports contents, a Victory Pistol Competition; the Strongman/Strongwoman Competition; an organizational day with a cake cutting; and the Victory Week Golf Tournament.

The entire listing of events is:

June 9: South Carolina Junior Cadet Leaders Course
6-7 a.m. — Army's 250th Birthday & Fort Jackson's 108th Birthday Post Run at Darby Field

June 10: Organizational Sports

9 a.m. to 4 p.m. — Tactical Relay (165th)

5:15-8:30 a.m. — Pickleball Tournament at Perez Gym Courts

9 a.m. to 4 p.m. — Ultimate Frisbee Tournament at Darby Field

9 a.m. to 4 p.m. — Museum Visits

5:30-9 p.m. — Fort Jackson Night at Columbia Fireflies Baseball Game, Segra Park in Columbia

June 11: 2nd Battalion, 13th Infantry Regiment Family Day at Hilton Field

9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. — Fort Jackson Organizational Day. Army and Fort Jackson Birthday Cake Cutting Ceremony at Darby Field with the 282nd Army Band, Gaming trailers, Food Vendors, Equipment Displays, and Army Golden Knights Parachute Team Exhibition.

9 a.m. to 4 p.m. — Soccer Tournament and Tug of War at Darby Field.

June 12: 2nd Battalion, 13th Infantry Regiment Graduation at Hilton Field

5:50-7:30 a.m. — Holistic Health and Fitness Circuit at Darby Field

9 a.m. to 4 p.m. — Volleyball Tournament at Darby Field

9 a.m. to 4 p.m. — Shooting Competition at the EIC

9 a.m. to 4 p.m. — Museum Visits



Leader file photo

Soldiers run past a Fort Jackson sign during the 2024 Victory Week run. The post will kick off its 108th birthday celebration with a run, June 9.

11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. — Hall Of Fame Lunch and Induction Ceremony at the 1917 Club

June 13: 4th Battalion, 39th Infantry Regiment and 2-13th changes of command

6:30-9:30 a.m. — Boat Race at Inchon Lake

10 a.m. — CG's Tournament Winner Trophy Presentation at the Fort Jackson Golf Course

10:10 a.m. to 3 p.m. — CG's Victory Week Golf Tournament at the Wildcat Course

June 14: 250th Army Birthday

9-10 a.m. — Strongman / Strongwoman competition

9-10 a.m. — ARCG Mass Reenlistment event at the 81st Readiness Division Auditorium

5-10 p.m. — 250th Army Birthday Ball at the 1917 Club, Fort Jackson

Victory Week ends with the 250th Army Birthday Ball, where Lt. Gen. Milford H. "Beags" Beagle Jr., Army Combined Arms Center commander, is set to speak.

ON THE COVER

Command Sgt. Maj. Janio Cespedes, senior enlisted leader for the 3rd Battalion, 60th Infantry Regiment, leads a group of noncommissioned officers in the Charge of the NCO
See Page 6-7.



Photo by NATHAN CLINEBELLE

THE FORT JACKSON LEADER

Fort Jackson, South Carolina 29207

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Start of hurricane season brings calls for preparation

Fort Jackson Public Affairs

Fort Jackson is advising the community to prepare now that hurricane season is here. While the Midlands is a way from the coast, it isn't invulnerable.

In 2015, the "1,000-year flood" hit the Columbia area causing dams to burst and roads to wash out. Last year Hurricane Helene tore through western South Carolina damaging homes and roads in Lexington and Aiken.

The season began June 1 and runs until November 30.

The best time to prepare for a storm is now before a storm hits, the National Weather Service stated. Waiting until the storm is about to arrive may be too late.

If this is your first hurricane season, it can be scary, but preparation is key. The first thing to do if you have a Common Access Card is ensure you're enrolled in the Alert! Notifications system at <https://alertservices.csd.disa.mil/>. Also download the My Army Post App, which does not require a CAC, to stay up to date on all Fort Jackson news and updates.

Next, develop an action and communications plan. Write down emergency phone numbers and post them on the refrigerator and save them in your cell phone. Mark a designated meeting place in case of phone outages and make sure all family members know the plan and their role. Locate the nearest emergency shelter and map out different routes you can take to get there from your home and places of work.

Check out Ready Army at <https://ready.army.mil/> for resources and ideas to develop a proper plan. Ensure that pets, special needs, young children and elderly family members, are considered when developing your plan.

The third step to proper hurricane preparation and safety is to build an emergency preparation kit. Kits should include two gallons of water per person per day for three days (That means a family of four would need a minimum of 24 gallons of water), nonperishable food items for at least three days, important papers (e.g. driver's license, birth certificates, passports, medical insurance documentation, etc.), first aid kit, cash in small denominations and a battery-operated radio with spare batteries, just to name a few items.

Individuals should also be aware if you're in a flood-prone area and know the location of the nearest medical facility as well as the closest emergency shelters.



Photo by ROBERT TIMMONS

Jason "JP" Pieri, Chief of Plans and Operations for the Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security, orients attendees to a map of Fort Jackson during a rehearsal of concept drill for the post's hurricane response, May 28.

According to the NWS, preparations may include:

Putting Together an Emergency Kit: Put together a basic emergency. Check emergency equipment, such as flashlights, generators and storm shutters.

Writing or reviewing your Family Emergency Plan: Before an emergency happens, sit down with your family or close friends and decide how you will get in contact with each other, where you will go, and what you will do in an emergency.

Keep a copy of this plan in your emergency supplies kit or another safe place where you can access it in the event of a disaster.

Reviewing Your Insurance Policies: Review your insurance policies to ensure that you have adequate coverage for your home and personal property.



Understand NWS forecast products, especially the meaning of NWS watches and warnings.

Ready.gov, a part of the Department of Homeland Security advises families to recognize the warnings and alerts and pay attending to the local news. Community members can download the FEMA app and sign up for community alerts with the Emergency Alert System and Wireless Emergency Alerts.

Some other ways to be prepared is to gather supplies for a hurricane kit and ensuring your phones are charged when storms are in the area. Community members should also purchase backup charging devices to keep electronic devices charged when/if the power goes out.

According to Ready.gov, an emergency kit should include:

- Water (one gallon per person per

day for several days, for drinking and sanitation)

- Food (at least a several-day supply of non-perishable food)

- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert

- Flashlight
- First aid kit
- Extra batteries
- Whistle (to signal for help)
- Dust mask (to help filter contaminated air)

- Plastic sheeting, scissors and duct tape (to shelter in place)

- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties (for personal sanitation)

- Wrench or pliers (to turn off utilities)

- Manual can opener (for food)

- Local maps

- Cell phone with chargers and a backup battery

(Editor's note: Portions of this article were taken from a previous article written by Emily Hileman)

Community Updates

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Community Information Exchange/ Housing Town Hall

Do you want to get the most up-to-date information about what is happening on Fort Jackson? Do you have feedback you'd like to give about on post housing? Then come to the 1917 Club June 24 for the Community Information Exchange/Housing Town Hall. There you can sit down face-to-face with post leaders, directorates and Partners in Excellence. The meeting starts promptly at 2 p.m. For more information, call (803) 751-5670. The event will not be livestreamed or recorded.

Moncrief Closing

All Moncrief services, including the pharmacy and the appointment call center, will close early on June 12 for internal training. EMS will remain open to take emergency calls.

Birthday Ball Tickets on Sale

Tickets for the 250th Army Birthday Ball are on sale now. Join Fort Jackson in celebrating the 250th Birthday of the U.S. Army at the Army Birthday Ball. The ball takes place at 5 p.m. June 14 at the 1917 Club, 5700 Liberty Division Road. Lt. Gen. Milford "Beags" Beagle, commander, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, will be the guest speaker. Scan the QR code for more information and to purchase tickets.



Safety Training

The Installation Safety Office presents various safety training classes. To reg-

ister for the Army Traffic Safety Training or Local Hazards training classes, go to the website <https://airs.safety.army.mil/default.aspx>. To register for the Unit Safety Officer training, contact your Safety Specialist.

■ Basic Riders Course: June 24-26 (0 seats open)*; July 29-31 (5 seats open)

■ Advanced Riders Course: Tuesday (0 seats open); July 8 (6 seats open)

■ Intermediate Drivers Course: June 12 (8 seats open); July 22 (20 seats open)

■ Local Hazards Course: Every Monday at 10 a.m. (except holidays)

■ Remedial Drivers Course: July 8 (12 seats open)

■ Unit Safety Officer Course: July 8-9 (22 seats open); Aug. 5-6 (25 seats open)

* Safety officials encourage those wishing to attend in case of no shows.

Tuition Assistance Announcement

It is the Soldier's responsibility to ensure their IPPS-A records are current and accurate before requesting Tuition Assistance. If not, your ArmyIgnitED account will be placed on hold and the Soldier is not allowed to proceed to obtain TA. The Education Center is not authorized to perform any actions such as submitting a manual TA on behalf of the Soldiers when there is an IPPS-A hold on the account.

Victory Fresh

Victory Fresh offers healthy alternatives to fast food. Victory Fresh offers Grab and Go entrees, a Build Your Own Power Bowl station, Hot BBQ bar, and brick oven piz-

zas during lunch hours of 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Additionally, Grab and Go items are available during extended hours and breakfast is available from 7-9:30 a.m. Victory Fresh helps patrons manage fueling their bodies in a healthy way, within the time constraints of an on-the-go lifestyle.

Summer Reading Program

Join the Thomas Lee Hall "Post" Library for this year's Summer Reading Program: "Level Up at Your Library." Sign-up for SRP to read, log minutes, and receive prizes. Programs will be held all week long. Coloring sheet contests will last throughout June and July. Registration began June 1.

First Friday Golf

Maj. Gen. Daryl O. Hood, Fort Jackson commander, invites you to join him for First Friday Golf the first Friday of every month. This is a Captain's Choice event and will begin at 11:30 a.m. at the Fort Jackson Golf Club. You may enter your own team or sign up as a single and be paired with a group. Entry fee is \$45 for FJGC members and \$55 for non-members. The entry fee includes applicable greens fee, user Fee, cart, prizes, and a boxed lunch. Register by calling the pro shop, at (803) 562-4437.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

TODAY

Wine & Yoga

5:30-7:30 p.m., Incheon Lake Park. Sip on a drink while practicing Yoga helps lessen anxiety, create a more relaxed body and of course ... fun. It is well known that wine relaxes the body and mind. To register or for more information, call (803) 751-3700.

Fort Jackson Movie Schedule

3319 Jackson Blvd.
Phone: 751-7488

SATURDAY, JUNE 7

■ From the World of John Wick: Ballerina (R)

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11

■ From the World of John Wick: Ballerina (R)

- Ticket sales open 30 minutes before each movie.
- Movie times and schedule are subject to change without notice.

TOMORROW

MAHC Change of Responsibility

11 a.m., Moncrief Army Health Clinic Multipurpose Room. Col. Christopher C. Pase, Moncrief Army Health Clinic commander, invites you to attend the Moncrief Army Health Clinic change of responsibility from Command Sgt. Maj. Kimberly N. Nieves to Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Wall. The ceremony will be live streamed on the Moncrief Army Health Clinic Facebook page.

SATURDAY

National Whitewater Center Trip

7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., Marion Street Station. Join Fort Jackson Outdoor Recreation for a day of adventure at the U.S. Whi-

See **EVENTS:** Page 10

THE FORT JACKSON LEADER

SEND ALL
SUBMISSIONS TO

usarmy.jackson.93-sig-bde.mbx.atzj-pao@army.mil

Deadline for events to be included in the Community Updates is one week before publication. Include the time, date and place the event will occur, as well as other necessary information.

If you submit an article on an event that already has taken place, please send it as soon as possible. Tuesday is the last day we will be able to accept an article for publication the following

Thursday. Include the date and place of the event, as well as a description of what took place. Please include quotations, if possible.

With any photo you submit, include IDs — rank, unit, and first and last names. All submissions will be edited and published using Associated Press Style.

Questions? Call (803) 751-3615.



U.S. Army photo

Gen. George Washington inspecting the captured colors after the Battle of Trenton painted by Edward Percy Moran circa 1914.

The Battle of Trenton: A turning point in the American Revolution

By **HENRY HOWE**

Director, Fort Jackson Museum Community

(Editor's note: This article is part of a recurring column honoring the Army during the service's 250th birthday)

The Battle of Trenton, fought on Dec. 26, 1776, was a significant victory for the Continental Army.

This battle occurred during a period of extreme despair and uncertainty, as the Continental Army faced multiple defeats and low morale.

Led by Gen. George Washington,



the attack on Trenton revitalized American forces and demonstrated their ability to confront experienced European troops.

By the end of 1776, the American Revolution was in a precarious

state. Washington's forces had suffered several setbacks in New York, and many Soldiers were nearing the end of their enlistments.

Desertion rates were high, and public support for the revolutionary cause was

dwindling.

The British, along with their Hessian allies, were confident and had captured much of New Jersey, believing that the rebellion was nearing its conclusion.

The Hessians, elite German soldiers under British command, were stationed in Trenton to secure the area against further American resistance.

Recognizing the need for a decisive victory, Washington devised a bold plan to launch a surprise attack against the 1,500 Hessians garrisoned at Trenton.

See **TRENTON**, Page 9

DOD plans to reduce PCS budget

By **C. TODD LOPEZ**
DOD News

In a memorandum published May 28, the Defense Department directed the military departments to look at how their services could reduce their discretionary permanent change of station move budgets as a way to increase geographic stability to families, increase department efficiency and reduce costs for the department.

Earlier this month, a survey of military spouses cited PCS moves as one of the biggest reasons for dissatisfaction with military life.

"We understand how disruptive PCS moves can be," said Tim Dill, who is performing the duties of the deputy undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness. "There are many aspects to that challenge and that disruption. One of the biggest ones is military spouses' employment — when they often have the need to find a new job at their gaining location and sometimes, they end up underemployed at that location."

Following a PCS move, Dill said, families also need to find new homes, new schools for their children and rebuild a life.

"They're displaced from the community of support that they've developed over the years in their previous duty station," he said. "All of those concerns can be effectively addressed by examining when the department does not need to move a service member and their family to accomplish the mission."

The department gave the military departments about four months to conduct a review of

See **PCS**, Page 9

Jackson inducts 8 into NCO Corps

Story, photos by ROBERT TIMMONS
Fort Jackson Public Affairs

The tradition of passing on a Soldier into the ranks of the noncommissioned officer can be traced to the army of Frederick the Great and brought to America by Baron Frederick Wilhelm von Steuben in 1778.

Steuben arrived while the Continental Army was in its winter quarters. He would so effectively drill them and teach them that the army was transformed when it broke camp.

He instilled in the Soldiers the need for tactical leadership at a lower level so they could fill in for officers if needed. They became the first corporals and sergeants.

Those early NCOs would go on to become the backbone of the service by providing order and discipline.

One of those NCOs was Cpl. Freddie Stowers, whom the single Soldier complex is named after.

Stowers would give his life fighting off a German attack during World War I.

On May 29, eight Soldiers were inducted into the Noncommissioned Officer Corps in a ceremony held at the 1917 Club on post.

During the ceremony first sergeants from different units lit red, white, blue and gold candles to honor parts of the NCO Corps.

The gold candle symbolizes the color of the chevrons on the uniform.

Red represents the past and the blood shed in the wars for the country.

Blue means the future and loyalty to the nation.

White represents the present and purity.

The NCOs were charged to take care of their Soldiers and to accomplish the mission.

“Never forget where you came from, or that you must lead by example and always take care of your Soldiers,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Janio Cespedes,

3rd Battalion, 60th Infantry Regiment’s senior enlisted leader.

“The NCOs within your unit also stand behind you as you learn how to grow,” he added. “Stay within the circle of noncommissioned officers and solicit their wealth of knowledge, accept their guidance, because they have been where you are about to go.”

Retired Command Sgt. Maj. Reggie Fox, former senior enlisted leader for 1st Battalion, 61st Infantry Regiment, spoke to the Soldiers about what it means to be an NCO.

“Let’s talk bout that title, sergeant,” Fox said. “What does it mean? Sure, may of you can rattle off the textbook definition from the board, but to me, a sergeant is a leader of Soldiers, a builder of warriors and a winner of wars.

“As a father of a specialist serving in the airborne infantry, I’ll tell you this – When I look at a sergeant, I see someone I’m trusting my son’s life with. I don’t take that lightly,” he said. “As an infantryman, I’ll always picture a sergeant as a fire team leader.”

He spoke about his fire team during a deployment to Baghdad, Iraq and how important sergeants are to the Army.

He shared the information to highlight “how young we were and how serious the responsibility of leadership is. I didn’t take it lightly. I made sure they were physically fit. I personally checked every piece of gear. I preached weapons maintenance. I enforced the standards ... but I also knew my Soldiers.”

He added that being a sergeant in about “knowing your Soldiers as people.”

“You’re the sergeants of the U.S. Army,” he said. “You’re the standard bearers. Your officers and Soldiers are counting on you to lead with purpose and professionalism.”

Those Soldiers would ceremonially pass through an arch and crossed sabers to cross the threshold into the NCO Corps.



A noncommissioned officer lights a blue candle symbolizing the future and a loyalty to the country.



Clockwise from left:

Cpl. Mya Brown, with Medical Activity - Fort Jackson leads a group of noncommissioned officers in reciting the NCO Creed.

The official party listens as the narrator speaks about the history and importance of the sergeant in the Army’s.

First Sgt. Justin Montoya, senior enlisted leader for Company C, 3rd Battalion, 13th Infantry Regiment, lights a red candle that symbolizes the past and blood shed for the country.

Command Sgt. Maj. William P. Clancy III, senior enlisted leader for the 193rd Infantry Brigade, retired Command Sgt. Maj. Reggie Fox, and Command Sgt. Maj. Janio Cespedes, from 3rd Battalion, 60th Infantry Regiment, watch as senior NCOs light candles during the NCO Induction Ceremony, held May 30 at the 1917 Club.

A sergeant passes the threshold into the NCO Corps.

Fire Department launches QR code-based system

Fort Jackson Fire Department

In a move toward modernizing community services, the Fort Jackson Fire Department Fire Prevention division has launched an innovative QR code-based request system that allows residents to easily submit fire drill requests and community event request directly from their smartphones.

Convenient Access at Your Fingertips

The new automated system eliminates the need for residents to visit offices during business hours or navigate complex paperwork. By simply scanning designated QR codes, community members can now:

- Submit fire drill requests for businesses, schools, and residential complexes
- Request fire department support with community events for public gatherings, events, and local celebrations
- Track application status in real-time
- Receive automated updates on processing and approval

How It Works

The process is designed with ease in mind:

- Scan the QR code posted at community centers, fire stations, or available on the garrison SharePoint page.
- Complete the digital form with relevant details about your request
- Submit instantly with automatic confirmation
- Receive updates via email or text as your request is processed

Benefits for the Community

This digital platform ensures faster response times for fire drill scheduling while maintaining our commitment to community safety. Residents no longer need to worry about calling during business hours or potentially tying up emergency lines. For event organizers, this system provides transparency and efficiency. You can submit your application at midnight or during your lunch break, whenever it's convenient for you.

Enhanced Safety and Organization

The automated system also improves record-keeping and ensures all safety protocols are properly documented.

Fire drill requests are automatically scheduled based on availability, while community event applications are routed to appropriate departments for coordinated review. One of the most impactful improvements will be the reduction in workload for



Leader file photo

The Fort Jackson Fire Department has updated the way it interacts with the public.



Event Request



Fire Drills

Fort Jackson dispatch services. Previously, residents would call dispatch lines to submit routine requests, often during peak hours when emergency lines needed to remain clear.

This platform ensures faster response times for fire drill scheduling while maintaining our commitment to community safety.

It also allows our dispatch team to focus on what they do best, coordinating emergency responses and keeping our community safe.

Getting Started

To get started scan the QR codes or visit the links below:

Event Request: <https://forms.osi.apps.mil/r/Vhr3uB0G7E>

Fire Drills: <https://forms.osi.apps.mil/r/XFR1VL7Csg>

For residents without smartphone access, request can be made in person at any fire station. Residents can also schedule request in housing at the DES auxiliary office located at 5953 Parker Lane.

Looking Forward

This initiative represents the first phase of broader digital transformation efforts aimed at making fire department services more accessible and efficient for all residents.

For more information, call (803) 414-4936 or email usarmy.jackson.id-training.mbx.fort-jackson-fire-prevention@army.mil

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- Newcomer information
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- Resource Alerts
- Events
- Maintenance Requests
- MHS Genesis Login

Download the My Army Post App today

Victory Week is next week. Check out the event schedule on Page 2.



PCS

Continued from Page 5

how they might go about reducing their PCS budgets, and how they also would modify career pathways for service members for whom some PCS moves are part of career development.

"The memo directs the military departments to spend 120 days reviewing their PCS budgets and to consider how they would pursue future reductions to those budgets and develop holistic and comprehensive implementation plans for those proposed changes," Dill said.

The memorandum asks military departments to propose a plan for reducing their discretionary PCS budgets by as much as 50% by fiscal year 2030, based on their fiscal year 2026 budget, Dill said. This means service members could be asked to move far less often.

"There (are) certain functions where in order to continue on your career track, you must go obtain certain accreditation or additional training ... something that corresponds with your increase in rank," Dill said, offering

scenarios that might qualify as a mandatory PCS like a career change that would require a move to a different duty station.

In other cases, he said, there are critical missions that must be fully manned, and moving a service member to fill a role there would also be mandatory.

But other moves might not need to happen, Dill said.

"We estimate that about 80% of (military department) PCS moves are in a discretionary category, and 20% are mandatory," he said. "What we're directing the (military) departments to do is purely to examine potential reductions in things that would be defined as discretionary. So, if they see as mandatory for mission need, we're not even asking them to come back with a plan to reduce it. We want them to continue that course of action and do the mandatory moves."

A big part of the direction from the secretary, Dill said, is that while reducing PCS moves and associated costs, the military departments must maintain mission readiness.

"(We) have issued direction to the departments to come back with plans for how they think they could best achieve those reductions while ensuring that they continue to prioritize the mission and the development of

service members," Dill said.

Considerations there, Dill said, include how moves, if they happen, can be done more efficiently and also how to provide service members with career-broadening and leadership opportunities that do not require PCS.

Right now, the department has directed the military departments to develop plans for their services to reduce their PCS budgets by half. But Dill said there will be ongoing discussions about what kind of cuts are appropriate for each military department.

"On top of being efficient from a fiscal perspective, the other goal of this policy, as a people-driven policy, is to ensure that this works well for service members and their families," he said. "So that is one of our primary goals in the policy, to ensure it works well."

Dill also said the DOD understands there needs to be discussions on how proposed cuts could negatively impact service members, their families and mission readiness. And when those concerns are expressed, the department will listen and adjust.

"We haven't directed that any specific course of action must be implemented," Dill said. "We look forward to having that conversation and figuring out how we can do this best."

Trenton

Continued from Page 5

The strategy involved crossing the icy Delaware River on Christmas night and marching nine miles to launch an assault at dawn on Dec. 26.

Despite challenging weather conditions, including snow, sleet, and freezing temperatures, Washington led roughly 2,400 troops across the river.

The attack caught the Hessians by surprise, as they were unprepared for an assault during the harsh winter, especially after celebrating Christmas.

In a swift and decisive engagement lasting less than an hour, the Continental Army overwhelmed Hessian defenses, resulting in the capture of nearly 900 Hessian soldiers and a substantial stockpile of weapons and supplies.

Notably, only two American Soldiers lost their lives in combat, although additional casualties occurred due to exposure during the march.

Washington's victory at Trenton was not merely a tactical success; it was also a crucial psychological boost for the American cause. It inspired many Soldiers to reenlist at a time when enthusiasm for the revolution was waning.

This victory bolstered support from both domestic and international audiences, proving that the Continental Army could compete with and defeat professional European forces. Washington would later build on this momentum with another surprise attack at Princeton just days afterward, further tilting the balance in favor of the American forces.

The Battle of Trenton exemplified how determination, leadership, and strategic planning could overcome significant challenges. It solidified Washington's reputation as an effective commander who could inspire and lead under pressure. Most importantly, the battle rekindled faith in the American Revolution, sustaining the hope for independence during one of its most challenging periods.



SALUTING THIS CYCLE'S HONOREES

3rd Battalion, 60th Infantry Regiment

DRILL SERGEANT OF THE CYCLE
Staff Sgt.
Joseph Touns

ALPHA COMPANY SOLDIER LEADER OF THE CYCLE
Spc. Maxwell Schuman

SOLDIER OF THE CYCLE
Pvt. Jasiah Santos

BRAVO COMPANY SOLDIER LEADER OF THE CYCLE
Pvt. Takayla Thomas

SOLDIER OF THE CYCLE
Pfc. Jayden Pearson

CHARLIE COMPANY SOLDIER LEADER OF THE CYCLE
Spc. Keyon Harrison

SOLDIER OF THE CYCLE
Pvt. Bianca Fierro

DELTA COMPANY SOLDIER LEADER OF THE CYCLE
Spc. Seth Schulz

SOLDIER OF THE CYCLE
Pfc. Stephany Miksch

ECHO COMPANY SOLDIER LEADER OF THE CYCLE
Spc. Sungjae Min

SOLDIER OF THE CYCLE
Spc. Patrick Holt

Events

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tewater Center. The trip includes white-water rafting, zip lines, rock climbing, mountain biking and more. The cost is \$60 per person and includes transportation. Must be 8 years or older. Patrons must register at Marion Street Station. For more information, call (803) 751-3484.

Eid Al-Adha

8-10 a.m., Lightning Chapel. Observation of Islam’s second major holiday is held at Lightning Chapel.

JUNE 14 Strongman/Strongwoman Competition

10 a.m., Vanguard Gym. What a great way to celebrate the Army’s 250th birthday. There will be five fun, exciting and challenging events to test your strength. There will be prizes for males and fe-

males in all weight classes. Sign up and weigh-in at Perez Gym, Vanguard Gym or at the Sports Complex by June 12. For more information, call (803)751-5839.

JULY 4 Save the Date

4 p.m., Hilton Field. Mark your calendars. Fort Jackson’s 4th of July Celebration will be held July 4 at Hilton Field. There will be food trucks, games for children, and the best fireworks in the Midlands.

JULY 6-12 Club Beyond

Club Beyond, an approved ministry partner here at Fort Jackson is taking high schoolers and middle schoolers to overnight camps this summer to Carolina Point Young Life Camp in North Carolina. The trip is for military teens who have just completed 9th-12th grades. If you are interested in participating, register at [cb114.younglife.events/2025-carolina-point-week-7-cb114hs](#). For more information, call the Club Beyond Fort

Jackson Community Director at (256) 794-2623.

JULY 12 Private Weapons Day

10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Aachen Range. Shooters can shoot at targets between 25-200m. Paper targets, spotting scopes, tables and chairs are provided. Patrons can shoot rifle or pistol at a day rate or on an hourly rate. Pre-register at Marion Street Station. For more information, call (803) 751-3484. For information about registering your weapon, call (803) 751-6019.

JULY 21 Offshore Fishing Trip

5 a.m. to 5 p.m., Marion Street Station. Travel to Hilton Head, SC with your Outdoor Recreation team and fish three-five miles offshore on a fishing boat for a five-hour trip. Outdoor recreation will provide the transportation and coolers for you to transport your catch back home. Cost covers transportation, license, bait, tackle and trip. Pre-regist-

ration is required at Marion St. Station. (803) 751-3484.

JULY 27-31 Club Beyond

Club Beyond, an approved ministry partner here at Fort Jackson is taking high schoolers and middle schoolers to overnight camps this summer to Rockbridge Young Life Camp in VA. The is for ,ilitary teens who have just completed 6th- 8th grades. If you are interested in participating. register at [cb114.younglife.events/2025-rockbridge-wk-11-cb114ms](#). For more information, call the Club Beyond Fort Jackson Community Director at (256) 794-2623.

AUG. 9-10 Dog Days of Summer

10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Palmetto Falls Water Park. Bring Fido to Palmetto Falls to wallow in the water. Dogs vaccinations must be current. Season pass holders are allowed one dog per pass. Non-pass holders \$10 per dog. For more information, call (803) 751-4796.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

FAITH GROUP

CATHOLIC MASS
CATHOLIC MASS
GOSPEL SERVICE
GENERAL PROTESTANT
REVIVE SERVICE
JEWISH SHABBOS SERVICE

DAY

SUNDAY
TUE-FRI
SUNDAY
SUNDAY
SUNDAY
FRIDAY

TIME

9:30-10:30 A.M.
NOON
10:30 A.M.
11 A.M. TO NOON
5 P.M.
6-7 P.M.

PLACE

MAIN POST CHAPEL
MAIN POST CHAPEL
KINGS MOUNTAIN CHAPEL
MAIN POST CHAPEL
MAIN POST CHAPEL
CENTURY DIVISION CHAPEL

INITIAL ENTRY TRAINING

CATHOLIC MASS
PROTESTANT CONSOLIDATED SERVICE
CHURCH OF CHRIST
HISPANIC PROTESTANT SERVICE

DAY

SUNDAY
SUNDAY
SUNDAY
SUNDAY

TIME

8-9 A.M.
9:30-10:30 A.M.
9-10 A.M.
11 A.M. to NOON

PLACE

SOLOMON CENTER
SOLOMON CENTER
CENTURY DIVISION CHAPEL
SOLOMON CENTER (1st and 3rd Sundays)
SOLOMON CENTER (2nd and 4th Sundays)
LIGHTNING CHAPEL
LIGHTNING CHAPEL
120TH AG BN (for trainees in 120th only)

GOSPEL SERVICE

SUNDAY

11 A.M. to NOON

ANGLICAN
ISLAMIC SERVICE
JEWISH SERVICE

SUNDAY
SUNDAY
SUNDAY

9:30-10 A.M.
8-9 A.M.
10:15-11:30 A.M.

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF
LATTER DAY SAINTS
HEATHEN/PAGAN

SUNDAY
SUNDAY

10:30 A.M. to NOON
11 A.M. to NOON

CENTURY DIVISION CHAPEL
LIGHTNING CHAPEL

USACE team helps survivor recover priceless keepsake

**Story, photo by
STEPHEN BAACK**
Corps of Engineers

In the aftermath of the January wildfires in Southern California, many residents returned to their properties to find little left but ash and debris. Among them was Derek Russell Jr., who had buried his father a month before the Eaton fire consumed his home.

Russell's father was a retired police officer and Army veteran.

As Russell searched through the rubble of his home, he focused on one deeply personal mission: recovering his father's police badge. It was one of only two keepsakes he hoped to find, the other being the folded American flag presented to him at his father's funeral. The flag had already been found. The badge, he feared, was lost for good.

All that changed during a chance encounter with Army Col. Sonny Avichal, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Emergency Recovery Office – Eaton. Avichal's team had just received approval to begin clearing debris at multifamily residences, including Russell's.

"Derek was explaining to me that his dad was a cop, and then he asked, 'Are you guys going to be cleaning that place up?'" Avichal said. "I said, 'Yeah, actually, we're going to start next week.'"

Russell told Avichal about his father's missing badge and asked if the team would keep an eye out for it during the debris-clearing process.

The following day, Avichal contacted Will McGowan, a team lead with the corps' debris-removal contractor and explained the situation. McGowan relayed the request to his crew, and one of the workers offered a confident response: "Don't worry about it. By the end of today, we're going to



A charred but intact police badge belonging to Derek Russell Jr.'s late father rests in Russell's hand, May 5, 2025, at the Southern California Wildfire Recovery Field Office in Pasadena, Calif.

find your badge."

They did so within the first hour.

"For that chance meeting and their schedule being just right, it was a lot of things that aligned," Avichal said.

Russell was stunned when the call came in.

"My first initial reaction was shock," he said. "I literally had no words because, up to that point, I thought it was a lost cause. I didn't think that it was going to be recovered."

Russell was driving on the freeway at the time and struggled to keep his emotions in check.

"I couldn't break down and cry," he said. "Probably that's what

I felt like I wanted to do."

To Russell, the recovery of his father's badge felt almost spiritual, as though his dad was watching over him.

"It was a needle in a haystack," he said. "To find this, amid all that debris ... It was my dad looking down. He helped them find it, for sure."

The badge, though charred, was still intact. But Russell didn't care about its condition; what mattered was what it stood for.

"It literally tells a story of survival," he said. "Despite the condition of the badge, it survived the fire — like me. I survived the fire."

Russell said the badge is now a symbol of endurance and survival

for him and his community.

"Up until the fire, my home was a safe place," he said. "Everything in that home was safe until the fire came and took the safe place away. That badge means everything to me. It means survival. I'm a survivor, and that badge is a survivor. My community (is filled with) survivors."

Avichal credited the debris-removal crew with going above and beyond.

"All I did was just make the connection between Will and Derek," he said. "They get a lot of requests, and a lot of it is outside scope, but they definitely took the time to make sure that they talked to their crew and made all these

different connections to show that, at the end of the day, it's the care that we give the public. It's about the survivor."

Russell is not sure what comes next, but he's keeping his head up.

"I'm so grateful for meeting Sonny when I met him because he fit the pieces into the puzzle and connected me with these people and got the job done," Russell said.

He also praised USACE for the larger mission they're carrying out in Altadena, California.

"They're doing an amazing job up there with the cleanup. Without the cleanup, there's no rebuilding," Russell said, adding, "We are very thankful for the Army Corps of Engineers."

VICTORY... STARTS HERE



A trainee with 3rd Battalion, 34th Infantry Regiment, aims his weapon as he conducts security during an exercise

Photo courtesy of 3RD BATTALION, 34TH INFANTRY REGIMENT