

THE JRTC AND FORT POLK

GUARDIAN

Monday June 6, 2022 Vol. 49, No. 10



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QUALITY OF LIFE LINES OF EFFORT



HEALTH CARE



PCS MOVES



SPOUSE
EMPLOYMENT



HOUSING



CHILD CARE



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All editorial content of the Guardian is prepared, edited, provided and approved by the Public Affairs Office, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.

For more information on Fort Polk units and happenings visit the following Facebook pages: [@JRTOperationsGrp](https://www.facebook.com/JRTOperationsGrp), [@BayneJonesACH](https://www.facebook.com/BayneJonesACH) or [@fortpolkmwr](https://www.facebook.com/fortpolkmwr).

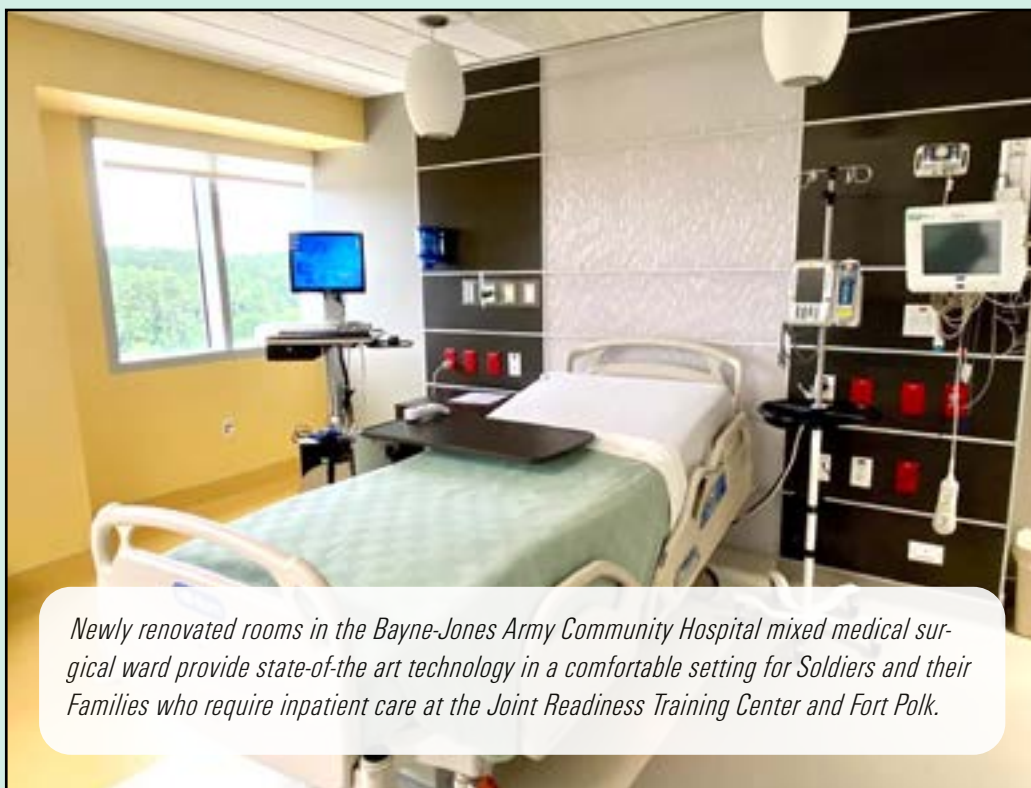
BJACH invests in infrastructure, facilities, patient satisfaction

By JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES
BJACH PAO

FORT POLK, La. — Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital formally opened the doors to the current facility in 1983. The hospital was named in honor of New Orleans native, Brigadier General Stanhope Bayne-Jones, the world acclaimed bacteriologist responsible for the control of typhus in Europe at the conclusion of World War II.

Ground was broken for the current facility in 1978, with a modern design for the time. Much has changed in the 39 years since BJACH treated the first patients at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk. To maintain the excellent quality of health care the hospital is known for, infrastructure investments, renovations and new equipment have been made and procured over the past several years.

BJACH has recently completed more than \$10 million worth of projects at the hospital and the dental clinic to improve services for Soldiers, their Families and beneficiaries. Projects include renovations to the mixed medical surgical ward; architectural and heating, ventilation and air conditioning repairs, as well as equipment upgrades for the Chesser Dental Clinic; an improved serving line for the dining facility; a new nursing station for the labor, delivery, and post-partum department; new floors in radiology along with a new MRI scanner



Newly renovated rooms in the Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital mixed medical surgical ward provide state-of-the-art technology in a comfortable setting for Soldiers and their Families who require inpatient care at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.

JEAN GRAVES/BJACH PAO

and electrical, plumbing and other repairs to the post veterinary clinic.

Maj. Markeisha Hubbard, chief nurse in charge of the mixed medical surgical department, said the entire department has been completely renovated.

"We have state-of-the-art patient rooms, nurses' station and equipment," she said. "Our patient experience has improved drastically due to welcoming colors, spacious rooms and the modern construction style."

Hubbard said the employees are excited to have a designated break room, private lockers and a conference room to hold monthly trainings and briefings.

"We are now operating in a safe environment," she said. "We no longer need to store our supplies

and equipment in patient rooms. Every piece of equipment can be easily located and secured."

Hubbard said her team appreciates the renovation in their department and the rest of the facility.

Capt. Rebecca Prince, chief of nutrition care, said the serving line and interior of the BJACH dining facility have been upgraded for efficiency, safety and service.

"The BJACH Bistro is the communal hub and largest conference space at the hospital for patients and employees," she said. "The DFAC recently underwent renovations for a new stainless steel serving line that allows staff to easily clean and maintain the most touched piece of equipment in the dining facility. Stainless steel is highly resistant against cor-

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Cover photo: *Command Sgt. Maj. David P. Hanson, incoming post command sergeant major, prepares to receive the colors from Brig. Gen. David S. Doyle, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk commanding general, signifying his assumption of responsibility at a ceremony held May 20 at Warrior Field. (Photo courtesy Christy Graham, public affairs specialist).*

Men's Health Month brings awareness to male health issues

By JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES
BJACH PAO

FORT POLK, La. — June is Men's Health Month and the Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital public affairs officer discussed the topic of men's health with providers and health care professionals at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.

Capt. Yuhang Chen is an optometrist in the BJACH eyes, ears, nose and throat department. Chen discusses his personal and professional opinions on the subject and why it's important to highlight the topic in June and throughout the year.

Question: Dr. Chen, why is it important to highlight men's health?

Answer: As a man myself, I think we like to portray ourselves as strong and fearless to society, friends, family and significant others. We tend to underemphasize our own health concerns. From my personal experience, I have not had a routine health exam for at least two years, even though that is the wrong thing to do. I always feel that I am healthy and have not noticed anything wrong with my body. I, like many men, am always focused on my



From left: Yu Chen, Capt. Yuhang Chen, Shelby Lau, Eric Zheng and Alvin Lee enjoy hiking to stay fit and healthy.

job, hobbies and relationships, therefore health concerns become a lesser priority. It is important to use this month to make me, and others like me, more aware of our health, not just for ourselves, but also for our friends and family. Men need to know that we are more susceptible than women to various health issues like

cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes and hypertension.

Question: What are some things you do personally to maintain a healthy life style?

Answer: To maintain a healthy life style,

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BJACH

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rosion, fluctuations in extreme temperatures, durable, hygienic and aesthetically pleasing to guests."

Prince said the dining facility is often used as a conference space for large gatherings at the hospital.

"Our DFAC is used regularly for awards ceremonies, monthly installation medical council meetings and special events for our organization," she said. "In addition to new paint, we've invested in technology upgrades to improve overall functionality and experience for visitors and staff."

Maj. Ashley Slack, chief nurse officer in charge for the labor, delivery and post-partum department, said the nurses' station was recently renovated.

"Our new nurses' station is open and spacious," she said. "As you approach the desk, you immediately notice the brightness of the modern grey and white color scheme and natural wood tones. Some of our nurses assisted in the design and color for the final production."

Slack said her clinical staff appreciates the functional organization that supports their department's fast-paced environment.

Col. Anita Kimbrough, commander of the U.S. Army Dental Health Activity, Fort Polk,

said the renovations at Chesser Dental Clinic were a long time coming.

"There are a lot of patients assigned to Chesser who had to travel to another clinic across post for care," she said. "The newly renovated facility is based near the 519th Military Police Battalion, 46th Engineer Battalion and the 1st Battalion, 509th Infantry Regiment "Geronimo" Soldiers who live and work in proximity to the facility. This clinic also serves Soldiers assigned to the U.S. Army Garrison, Operations Group, DENTAC, 32nd Hospital Center, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division and 705th Ordnance Company."

Kimbrough said the increased capabilities at the facility will improve access to care for Soldiers with the new state-of-the-art equipment.

"In addition to the new equipment, we've added new paint and decor to improve the patients' overall experience," she said. "Visiting the dentist can be stressful and our patients have remarked about the calming ambience of the clinic."

The most recent improvement was the installation of an improved MRI scanner.

Master Sgt. Robert Cooke, noncommissioned officer in charge of the radiology

department said the new magnet has a larger tunnel diameter that will improve patient comfort.

"The speed and image quality have been improved, allowing for less time in the magnet and higher resolution images," he said. "This top of the line MRI allows us to better serve the patients of our community and provide the best care possible."

Kim Duncan, facilities manager for BJACH, said over the past five years the hospital has invested more than \$50 million in improvements, renovations and upgrades to the hospital and clinics.

"We aren't finished yet," she said. "We have one project that will start in June and are in the development process for upgrades to the hospital cooling tower system which is projected for award later this summer. We have a renewal plan for the DFAC and laboratory in the queue projected for the next two to three years. These projects will improve the overall experience for Soldiers, Families, beneficiaries and staff."

Duncan said the improvements made and those being planned will bring BJACH up to the 2022 standards of medical facilities across the country and improve the patient and staff experience.

Health

Continued from page 2

there are three areas that men can't ignore. One, have a strong body; I like to go to the gym five times per week and do a 5-10 mile run at least once per week. Two, reduce stress; it can weaken our immune system and put us at a disadvantage in our battle against illness. Taking the weekend to enjoy our hobbies is a great way to de-stress from a week of work. Three, steer clear of unhealthy behaviors such as smoking and drinking alcohol that will greatly increase our risk for hypertension, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases.

Question: What advice do you have for other men about the importance of their health?

Answer: As men, we have a lot of responsibilities. We are the backbone of our families, essential team players at our work place and an important part of our social circles. Having a healthy body is not just important to ourselves, but also to others in our circle.

Question: As an optometrist how can a person's eye health be an indicator of other health concerns?

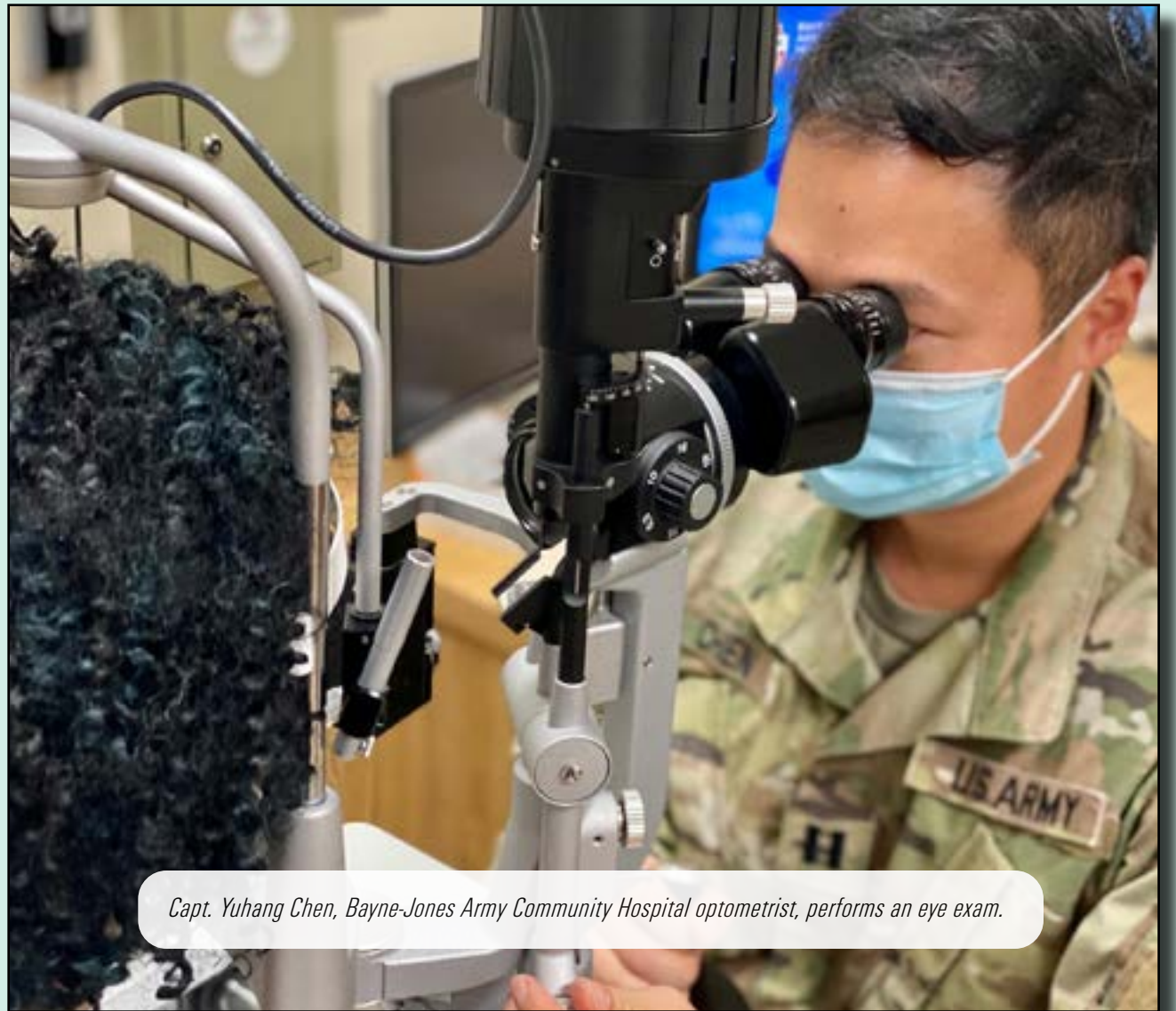
Answer: Eyes are two of the most essential organs in our body, not just because they provide us with the ability to see the world, but also because subtle changes in components of the eye can be early indicators of other systemic conditions. For example, narrowing blood vessels in eye is an early indication of hypertension. Small hemorrhage spots in the back of the eye can be early indication of diabetes, and subtle yellowing of white part of the eye can point to liver issues. The list goes on with more serious conditions like cancer, HIV, thyroid issues and other diseases.

Question: What are some issues you encounter on a regular basis with your male patients that may indicate more serious health concerns?

Answer: While hypertensive and diabetic retinopathy are common eye diseases that I see in older males, "normal tension glaucoma" is more common in younger healthy male Soldiers than female Soldiers.

Glaucoma is an eye condition that damages the optic nerve located in the back of the eye, resulting in loss of peripheral vision and can encroach on our central vision in late stages of the disease.

Even though the majority of glaucoma cases are associated with high eye pressure, there are patients who suffer glaucomatous damage even in the normal pressure range, intraocular pressure (IOP) of 10 to 21, thus the name "normal tension glaucoma." This condition is not only detrimental to vision, it is also associated with various serious systemic conditions like sleep apnea and cardiovascular diseases. When I encounter these seemingly healthy young males who are exhibiting signs of hav-



Capt. Yuhang Chen, Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital optometrist, performs an eye exam.

JEAN GRAVENS/BLANCH PAO

ing normal tension glaucoma, I will order a sleep study. Quite often these tests come back positive. This will then initiate a full work up to rule out cardiovascular conditions.

Question: Why is it important to have annual eye exams in general? For men in particular?

Answer: Annual eye exams with dilation are an essential part of health assessment and disease prevention because good vision does not equal healthy eyes. Our visual acuity (clearness of our vision) is mainly coming from a structure called macula located in the center of the retina (the back portion of our eye). However, macula only occupies about 10% of the retina, so diseases affecting the other 90% of the retina can easily go unnoticed in our daily life.

Diseases like glaucoma, retinal breaks, tears and holes, choroidal melanoma, diabetic and hypertensive retinopathy don't usually affect our macula in early stages, but can also cause serious damage to our ocular health if they are not diagnosed in time.

A dilated eye exam is the only way for us to fully assess all areas of the retina and make these early detections.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, hypertension and diabetes are more common in men than women. This dilated retinal examination is more important in

men for early detection of retinopathy.

Additionally, men are more likely to engage in physical activities like boxing, wrestling and other exercises that can result in retinal tears and holes, so annual eye exams become more important for men.

Question: As we age, our eye sight seems to go (at least mine does). Why is it important to keep our eyes healthy? For overall health? For quality of life?

Answer: Getting our eyes examined annually and keeping them healthy becomes especially important as we age because most of vision-threatening conditions like glaucoma, cataract and macular degeneration become more prevalent with aging.

Early detection serves an important role in monitoring and appropriately treating these conditions. With aging also comes reduced mobility.

Elders tend to stay home the majority of the time. Therefore, having good vision and being able to enjoy television shows, movies, reading books and newspapers play an important role in improving their quality of life.

Editor's note: This is part one of a five part series that will be posted at bayne-jones.tricare.mil and the Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital Facebook page every Wednesday in June for Men's Health Awareness month.

Prevention best option for sexually transmitted infections

By **TONY PRITCHARD, BSN, MSN, EDD**
Army public health nurse

FORT POLK, La. — Most people can list one or two sexually transmitted infections off the top of their heads; unfortunately, there are many more.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that there are nearly 26 million new STIs in the United States each year. They further report that nearly half of those infections occur in the 16-24 year old age group. Many people who have STIs do not have any symptoms; this contributes to the spread of these diseases. Luckily, treatment is available to cure most common STIs. Chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis are all curable, and early identification and treatment help prevent the serious complications that can occur with long-term infections.

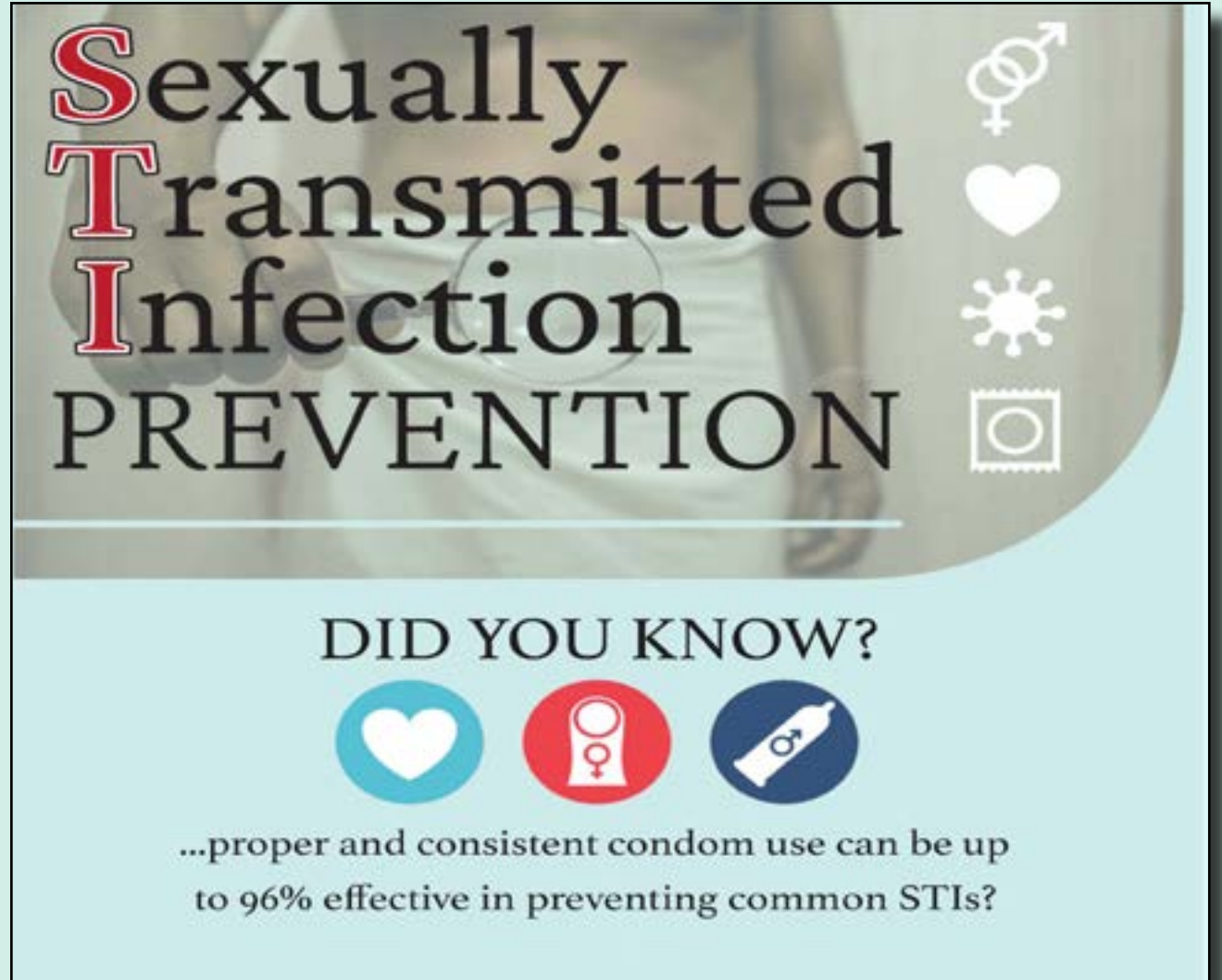
Viral diseases pose a different challenge, since antibiotics don't work against viral infections. There are vaccines available to help prevent some viral diseases like Hepatitis A and B, and a vaccine to help prevent Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) related cancers. Cervical cancers account for 48% of HPV related cancers. CDC data from 2014-2018 showed there are 36,500 new cases of HPV diagnosed annually in the US, which is about 100 new cases daily.

HPV can cause cervical cancer, throat cancer, and other cancers of the genitalia in both males and females. According to the CDC, HPV is so common that nearly all sexually active men and women get it at some point in their lives. Because there is no way to identify who will develop HPV related cancer the CDC recommends that all children be vaccinated.

The CDC recommends the Gardasil vaccine for all boys and girls ages 11-12. The reason for administering the vaccine is that studies have shown that pre-teens immune systems respond most effectively and build the best immunity to the virus. The vaccine is so effective that when given to 11-12 year olds only two doses are needed. For best results the vaccine should be given before the individual becomes sexually active. If you have not already had the Gardasil vaccine series, it's not too late; the CDC recommends the vaccine for both males and females up to age 26. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration expanded their recommendation to age 45 for both men and women.

The good news is that you can prevent the spread of all STIs by remembering the ABCs:

- Abstain — just say no. It is the right thing to do.
- Be in a mutually monogamous relationship — you and your partner should have an exclusive intimate relationship.
- Correctly use condoms every time you engage in sexual activity.
- Don't use drugs and avoid excessive alco-



Sexually Transmitted Infection PREVENTION

DID YOU KNOW?

...proper and consistent condom use can be up to 96% effective in preventing common STIs?



Sexually Transmitted Infection PREVENTION

STI Rates

STI rates are on the rise across the country. Don't be part of the problem! Use protection and pick your partners wisely!

hol consumption. Those lead to bad judgment and poor decisions.

The Department of Public Health at Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital provides confidential screening and treatment of STIs for active duty personnel, their dependents

and retirees. The clinic is located at 8091 Georgia Avenue, behind the Fontaine Troop Medical Clinic, in bldg 3515. Clinic hours are Monday through Friday from 8 to 9:30 a.m.; you can reach the clinic at (337) 531-6131. Remember, "If you're in doubt ... get Checked Out!"



Bayne-Jones Army

Community Hospital

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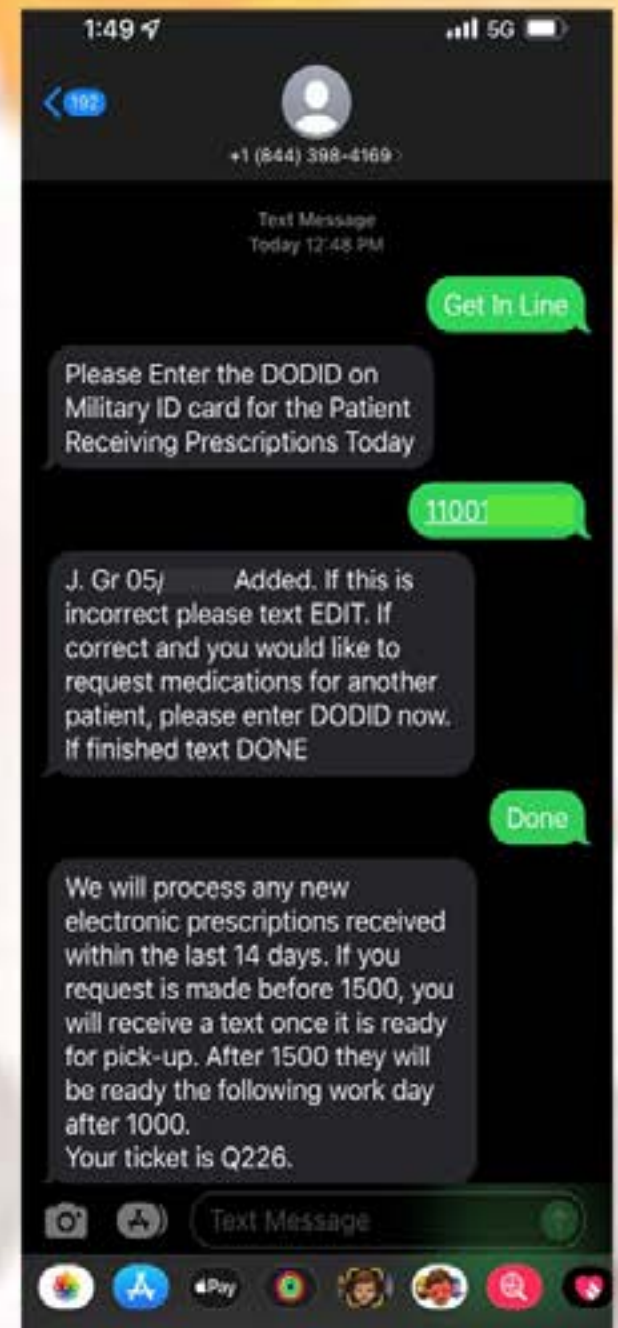
Requests made before 3 p.m. will be available the same day.

Requests made after 3 p.m. will be available the following day.

STEP 5:

Pick up your prescriptions at Windows 1 and 2 of the BJACH Pharmacy, 8 a.m. - 5:30 p.m., Monday - Friday.

****Please note only one DODID number can be associated with each phone number.****





JEAN GRAVNESS/BJACH PAO

BJACH, Red Cross engage youth

The American Red Cross Summer Youth Program kicked off at the Joint Readiness Training Center's Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital May 23. The six-week program allows high school students ages 13-17 to experience working in a medical setting. This year, six volunteers served in a variety of roles in the hospital's labor and delivery and staff education departments, the mixed medical surgical ward and the women's clinic. Pictured from left to right are the children of active duty Soldiers, retirees and Department of the Army civilian employees from across the installation: Kourtly Reed, Makayla Goody, Leanna Buchanan, Jasmine Tatum, Ciamoni Gerbier and Arielle Martinez

Assumption of Responsibility held, Fort Polk welcomes Hanson

By **CHRISTY GRAHAM**
Public Affairs Specialist

FORT POLK, La. — An Assumption of Responsibility ceremony for the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk's incoming post command sergeant major, Command Sgt. Maj. David P. Hanson, took place May 20 at Warrior Field.

Brig. Gen. David S. Doyle, JRTC and Fort Polk commanding general, welcomed the distinguished guests, Soldiers and Family members in attendance at the ceremony.

"It is truly a great team Polk day, as we welcome back Command Sergeant Major Hanson, his wife Christina and their children Elizabeth, David and Colt to JRTC and Fort Polk."

Doyle thanked Command Sgt. Maj. Nema Mobarakzadeh for his time as the acting post command sergeant major.

"You've gone above and beyond in the last several months, and we're all thankful for your commitment to Fort Polk and our Soldiers," he said.

Doyle said that JRTC and Fort Polk is gaining a familiar friend and leader in Hanson.

"We are thrilled that you brought your beautiful Family back to Louisiana," Doyle said.

Doyle said that Hanson previously served as an observer-coach-trainer for Task Force 2 and as the command sergeant major of the Live-Fire Division in Operations Group.



The colors are presented at Command Sgt. Maj. David P. Hanson's Assumption of Responsibility ceremony on Warrior Field, May 20.

CHRISTY GRAHAM/ GUARDIAN

"I know this man. We've walked more than 40 iterations of battalion and brigade live-fire exercises at Peason Ridge, we've had conversations in the muddy Papa-9 pickup truck ..., we drank coffee on chilly mornings and sweat through our body armor on blazing hot afternoons," he said.

Doyle said he knows Hanson is the right

leader for Fort Polk, as he is dedicated to the service of others, maintains high standards and is an expert coach, mentor and trainer for Soldiers.

"His experience and vast knowledge of our mission, along with his familiarity and abso-

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Are you prepared for **hurricane** season 2022?

DPTMS

Editor's note: This is a two-part series focusing on hurricane preparedness. Look for the second story in the June 20 edition of the e-Guardian.

FORT POLK, La. — Hurricane season began June 1 and lasts through Nov. 30. As Fort Polk continues to take precautions to keep Soldiers, civilians and Family members safe, it is also important for the community to know how to prepare for severe weather incidents, natural disasters and other unforeseen emergencies.

The 2022 hurricane season is predicted to be another active one. Many of the indicators that help predict the number of storms that will impact the United States are pointing to a busier than normal season.

Hurricanes are dangerous and can cause major damage due to storm surge, wind damage and flooding. They can happen along any U.S. coast or territory in the Atlantic or Pacific oceans. Storm surge is, historically, the leading cause of hurricane-related deaths in the United States.

Hurricanes can happen in any community and affect the people in those communities in dangerous ways. The most important step they can take is to be prepared. Being able to take care of themselves and those in their care



can free local responders to take care of emergency situations, as well as help the community recover quickly.

Consider the following steps in planning and preparing for a severe weather event:

Know your hurricane risk: Hurricanes bring many hazards to the U.S. coastlines and inland areas, including storm surge along the

coast, inland flooding (due to heavy rainfall), tornadoes, strong wind, rip currents and large waves. Significant impacts can occur without it being a major hurricane.

Make an emergency plan: Make sure everyone in your household knows and under-

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Responsibility

Continued from page 7

lute mastery of the surrounding Central Louisiana community, will help us master the role we have to be the crucible training event for Soldiers," Doyle said.

Hanson will also do everything necessary to ensure the installation is well-run and maintained for Families, said Doyle.

"(Command Sergeant Major) Hanson is the leader we want our Soldiers to watch and follow. He's been coaching, teaching, mentoring and putting people first throughout his entire career," he said.

"Command Sergeant Major Hanson, welcome back to Fort Polk and know we are glad to have you home."

Hanson first thanked those in attendance for the warm welcome he received.

"Brigadier General Doyle, thank you for the kind words and your trust in me in serving as the JRTC and Fort Polk Command Sergeant Major," said Hanson.

Hanson said that he would not take his duties lightly.

"I'm truly honored and humbled for this op-

portunity to serve Fort Polk Soldiers, Families, Department of the Army civilians, our great retirees and the Central Louisiana surrounding communities," he said.

Hanson said he and his Family have several fond memories of JRTC and Fort Polk, ranging from Friday Night Lights to days spent at the lake.

He said that they were excited to be a part of the many activities the area has to offer Families.

"JRTC and Fort Polk provides unique opportunities to serve with so many incredible Warriors. Not only in all the formations you see here today, but also in the rotational units that come here to receive the crucible training experience, as the Army's premier CTC," he said.

Hanson also offered a message to Soldiers, reminding them to focus on the fundamentals, be a master and always uphold standards.

"I look forward to getting out there with you Soldiers and seeing the impacts you make every day for our Army," he said.



Command Sgt. Maj. David P. Hanson, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk command sergeant major, speaks at his Assumption of Responsibility ceremony held May 20 at Warrior Field.

CHRISTY GRAHAM/GUARDIAN

Hurricane

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stands your hurricane plan.

Be informed: Many emergencies and disasters occur without any warning. Since you can't predict where you will be for disasters, it is important to have plans and supplies for the places you and your household go to regularly.

Planning ahead ensures that you and your family will know what to do and have the supplies you need to be safe wherever you are.

Customize your personal and household plans based on what household members would do if an emergency occurred while they are at home or another location.

Make a plan by location: (locations to consider and plan for)

- Home
- Workplace
- Vehicles (regular methods of transportation)
- School and daycare
- Places of worship
- Sports arenas, playing fields and entertainment locations such as theaters
- Shopping areas (malls and retail centers)

To develop a plan for different locations, it is important to get information about the organization or building managers' plans. If plans are not available, consider the following:

- How to get local alert or warnings while you are there
- Building alarm or alert systems
- Building evacuation (including alternate exits), and shelter in place plans
- Supplies you would need for temporary sheltering
- Consider how the type of building or the environment around the building may impact alerts and warnings, shelter and evacuation and the need for supplies

Gather supplies: Have enough supplies for your household. Include medication, disinfectant supplies, cloth face coverings and pet supplies in your go bag or vehicle.

After an emergency, you may need to survive on your own for several days. Being prepared means having your own food, water and other supplies to last for at least 72 hours. A disaster supplies kit is a collection of basic items your household may need in the event of an emergency.

Basic disaster supplies: The following are recommendations for your emergency kit. Assemble items for your kit and store in an airtight plastic bags, plastic bins or a duffel bag. Once you take a look at the basic items, consider what unique needs your family might have, such as supplies for pets or seniors.

- Water (one gallon per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation)
- Food (at least a three-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 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

Stay informed: Listen for emergency information and alerts; if told to evacuate by local officials, do so immediately.

Dealing with the weather

- Determine how best to protect yourself from high winds and flooding.
- Take refuge in a designated storm shelter, or an interior room for high winds.
- If trapped in a building by flooding, go to the highest level of the building.
- Do not climb into a closed attic, you may become trapped by rising flood water
- Do not walk, swim, or drive through flood waters. Turn around, don't drown!

Those with disabilities: If you or anyone in your household is an individual with a disability, identify if you may need additional help during an emergency.

- Create a support network. Keep a contact list in a watertight container in your emergency kit.
- Be ready to explain to first responders that you need to evacuate and choose to go

to a shelter with your Family, service animal, caregiver, personal assistant and your assistive technology devices and supplies.

- Plan ahead for accessible transportation that you may need for evacuation or getting to a medical clinic.

- Inform your support network where you keep your emergency supplies.

- Contact your city or county government's emergency management agency or office. Many local offices keep lists of people with disabilities so they can be helped quickly in a sudden emergency.

- If you are dependent on dialysis or other life-sustaining treatment, know the location and availability of more than one facility.

- If you use medical equipment in your home that requires electricity, talk to your doctor or health care provider about how you can prepare for its use during a power outage.

- Wear medical alert tags or bracelets.
- If you have a communication disability, make sure your emergency information says the best way to communicate with you.

- If you use an augmented communications device or other assistive technologies, plan how you will evacuate with the devices or how you will replace equipment if lost or destroyed.

Keep model numbers and note where the equipment came from (Medicaid, Medicare, private insurance)

- Plan how you will communicate with others if your equipment is not working, including laminated cards with phrases, pictures or pictograms.

- Keep Braille/text communication cards, if used, for two-way communication.

- Plan for children with disabilities and people who may have difficulty in unfamiliar or chaotic environments.

E3B pinning ceremony

On May 27, 192 Soldiers earned their Expert Infantry Badge, Expert Soldier Badge, or Expert Field Medical Badge, at a pinning ceremony held at Honor Field. The 2nd Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment and 1st Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment – Geronimo – earned the Expert Infantry Battalion Streamer and the Expert Soldier Battalion Streamer, respectively, for producing the highest number of Soldiers to earn badges and prove they were experts.



CHRISTY GRAHAM/GUARDIAN



3/10 redeployment

3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division Soldiers set boots on the ground in the early morning of June 2. The last main body flight of Patriot Soldiers redeploying to Fort Polk were welcomed home safe and sound by fellow Soldiers and Family members.



3RD BDE, 10TH MTN DIV PAO

Thomas recalls nostalgic days spent at Fort Polk

By **CHUCK CANNON**
Fort Polk PAO

FORT POLK, La. — An old adage, adopted from the title of a 1940 Thomas Wolfe novel states, “You can never go home again.”

The statement supposes that nostalgia causes most people to view the past in an overly positive light, when in reality that is often not the case.

Bill Thomas might not have been able to go “home again,” but he was able to return to the place he trained to be an Army infantry Soldier from May until August of 1963.

Thomas, whose son Matthew Thomas is a contractor on Fort Polk, received a tour from his son and Lt. Col. Patrick Murphy, commander, 519th Military Police Battalion, on May 10. Murphy and Matthew Thomas are friends from a previous assignment.

Thomas attended Basic Training in Kentucky before heading to Fort Polk for Infantry Advanced Individual Training. On his first trip back to Fort Polk in 59 years, Thomas said the installation was hardly recognizable.

“When we took the tour, I think there were only about four buildings still standing from when I was here before,” he said. “Those were the old World War II two-story wooden barracks.”

The differences in the physical makeup of the installation were not the only items Thomas said he noticed.

“Everything is so dramatically different, I don’t know that you could compare things,” he said. “Especially the Soldiers; we had a lot of draftees then and that I see as a major change.”

Thomas said when he served in the mid-60s most Soldiers were in the Army for their three-year tour and then left. Now, he said it seems most Soldiers are planning to make the Army a career.

“When I joined, I really didn’t know what I wanted to do, so I used the Army as a place holder until I decided,” he said.

Another positive change Thomas said he noted was the amenities provided to Soldiers and their Families.

“That is vital, because most of the Soldiers have Families with children,” he said. “Back then most of us didn’t. We were a completely different breed of cat. These are changing times.”

Thomas said that in his opinion, not all changes have been for good.

“The Army was larger back then, and the downside today is that too much is asked of too few,” he said.

Thomas is a Gold Star orphan: His father was killed in a training accident during World War II while flying a Martin B-26 Marauder in Kansas, leaving a 19-year-old wife and a



The Thomas family visits with Fort Polk command after a tour of Fort Polk.

CHUCK CANNON/GUARDIAN

four-month-old son. In addition to his father, Thomas said he had several relatives — all citizen Soldiers — who served during World War II, and previous U.S. conflicts.

“I had uncles who served in World War II — two jumped into France with the 82nd Airborne on D-Day, one landed in a glider on D-Day, and another went through the Battle of the Bulge,” he said. “Our family goes clear back to the Revolution, and all citizen Soldiers. They came up when they were needed, and went home when they were done.”

When Thomas finished his AIT training, he headed to Fort Hood, Texas, and later served in Germany and Korea, before heading to Fort Riley, Kansas, where he ended his service. Although there were Soldiers in Vietnam when Thomas entered the Army, he said they were all “advisors.”

“The famous Fort Polk Tigerland was not being used at that time,” he said. “I read about it after I got out of the service. Vietnam was kept quiet from the American public.”

When he thinks on the three years he served in the Army, Thomas said he has come to appreciate it more every year that passes.

“To look back, there’s a lot of pride,” he said. “I had two great grandfathers who fought in the American Revolution. I had relatives that fought in the Civil War, Spanish American War and World War I.

“I’m very proud of my Family. I am not important, but it is important that people like me served. I did my three years, to the best of my ability, and did everything they asked, and then went home when I was through. You need professional Soldiers, but when push comes to shove, you need citizen Soldiers also and being a Soldier is a great way to serve this country.”

FORT POLK MWR
NEW FITNESS HOURS

WARRIOR FITNESS
MONDAY - FRIDAY 6 AM – 7 PM
SAT/SUN/HOLIDAY 10 AM – 4 PM

HOME OF HEROES FITNESS
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3 PM – 7 PM
SATURDAY 9 AM – 1 PM
SUNDAYS & HOLIDAYS CLOSED

WHELOCK FITNESS
MONDAY - FRIDAY 6 AM – 9 PM
SAT/SUN/HOLIDAY 9 AM – 7 PM

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polk.armymwr.com

Got News?
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Guardian
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Fort Polk riders participate in **Motorcycle Safety** Awareness Month Safety Ride

By **ANGIE THORNE**
Public affairs specialist

FORT POLK, La. — The lure of the open road has enticed motorcycle enthusiasts, with a soul for adventure, since an engine was added to two wheels. But along with the thrill of the ride comes a responsibility to travel the roads safely.

That's why Fort Polk hosted a Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month Safety Ride May 26 that began at the installation's old commissary parking lot. The ride — which meandered down to Oakdale and Oberlin and then headed back by way of Sugartown and concluded at Fort Polk's Alligator Lake — was for active duty, reserve, Family members, retirees, veterans, Department of the Army civilians and Fort Polk contractors.

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Brendon Murphy, 1st Battalion, 5th Aviation Regiment Battalion aviation materiel officer and the installation's Motorcycle Program mentor, said the ride not only promotes an atmosphere of esprit de corps and community, but also helps instill the principles of motorcycle safety.

Since 2017, the Army has lost an average of 25 Soldiers each year to motorcycle mishaps.

Col. Sam Smith, Fort Polk garrison commander, attended the event and kicked things off by talking to riders about the importance of safety.

"I want you to have a great day and enjoy your ride, so it's important to pay attention to your speed and other safety skills to avoid mishaps," he said.

Murphy said excessive speed — exceeding the posted limit or going too fast for the conditions, was cited in fatal motorcycle accidents 52% of the time. For Soldiers, that number is 20% higher than the national average.

One way to encourage safety in the ranks is through the installation's Motorcycle Mentor program.

Sgt. 1st Class Demarcus Allen, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, is a post motorcycle mentor, as well as 3rd BCT, 10th Mtn Div motorcycle mentor. He and his fellow mentors make sure young Soldiers new to motorcycle riding learn about safety while riding.

Allen said the mentor program is all about putting people first.

"We are giving new riders the skills and resources necessary to be successful motorcycle riders, as well as Army Soldiers," he said. "We teach, coach and mentor what to do on a motorcycle, as well as what not to do."

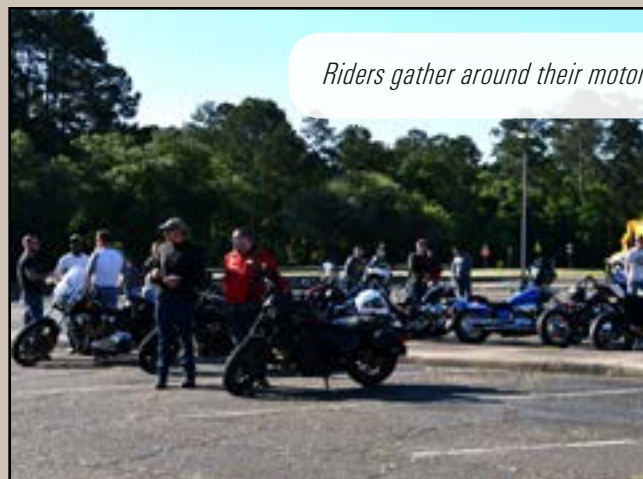
Allen said mentors teach new riders things like proper safety wear, obeying traffic laws and more.

"I also encourage them to ride on a track. The skills they practice and learn there can transfer



Col. Sam Smith, Fort Polk garrison commander, says a few words to those taking part in the Fort Polk Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month Garrison Ride March 26.

ANGIE THORNE/GUARDIAN



Riders gather around their motorcycles to talk before the event begins.



Before riders hop onto their motorcycles, Chief Warrant Officer 4 Brendon Murphy, 1st Battalion, 5th Aviation Regiment Battalion Aviation Materiel Officer and officer in charge for the ride, gives the participants a safety brief.

from the track to the street. It's a safe venue to become competent in their abilities and make them safer riders," he said.

Allen said events like this allow riders to mingle with mentors who are going to ride correctly and teach by doing.

"These leaders care and want young Soldiers to be safe," he said.

Rico Williams, Fort Polk Command Safety Office safety director, said there was a mixed bag of inexperienced and experienced riders taking part in the safety ride.

"Inexperienced riders, with four or five months on a motorcycle under their belt, look up to riders with 15 to 20 years of experience," he said.

Williams said that's why mentors are so important when teaching young riders about safety.

"In addition, we give a safety brief before they ever leave the installation."

Another way Williams said to maintain safe conditions on the ride is to keep the groups of motorcycle riders smaller.

"They will leave in groups of six to 10 riders," he said.

Williams said a ride like this is important because it shows those young riders what right looks like.

"When they ride with their peers and men-

Please see **Motorcycle**, page 13

Motorcycle

Continued from page 12

tors, they are less likely to take their cues from popular culture like YouTube videos and television shows," he said.

Sgt. Thomas Perrette, 573rd Clearance Company, 46th Engineer Battalion, said he thinks the mentor program meets its intent.

"Mentors get the point across to new riders by focusing on telling them not to do dumb things and stay safe," he said.

Perrette said he was impressed that the ride had a large number of participants.

"That shows that Soldiers and the Army are on the same page when it comes to safety issues," he said.

1st Lt. Matthew Campbell, 573rd Clearance Company, 46th Engineer Battalion, said he hasn't been able to get out and ride enough lately because work is keeping him busy.

"So this is a great opportunity for me. I've been looking forward to it," he said.

Campbell said riding gives him a feeling of freedom and he loves dealing with the mechanics of the machine.

"When I ride, I become one with my motorcycle," he said.

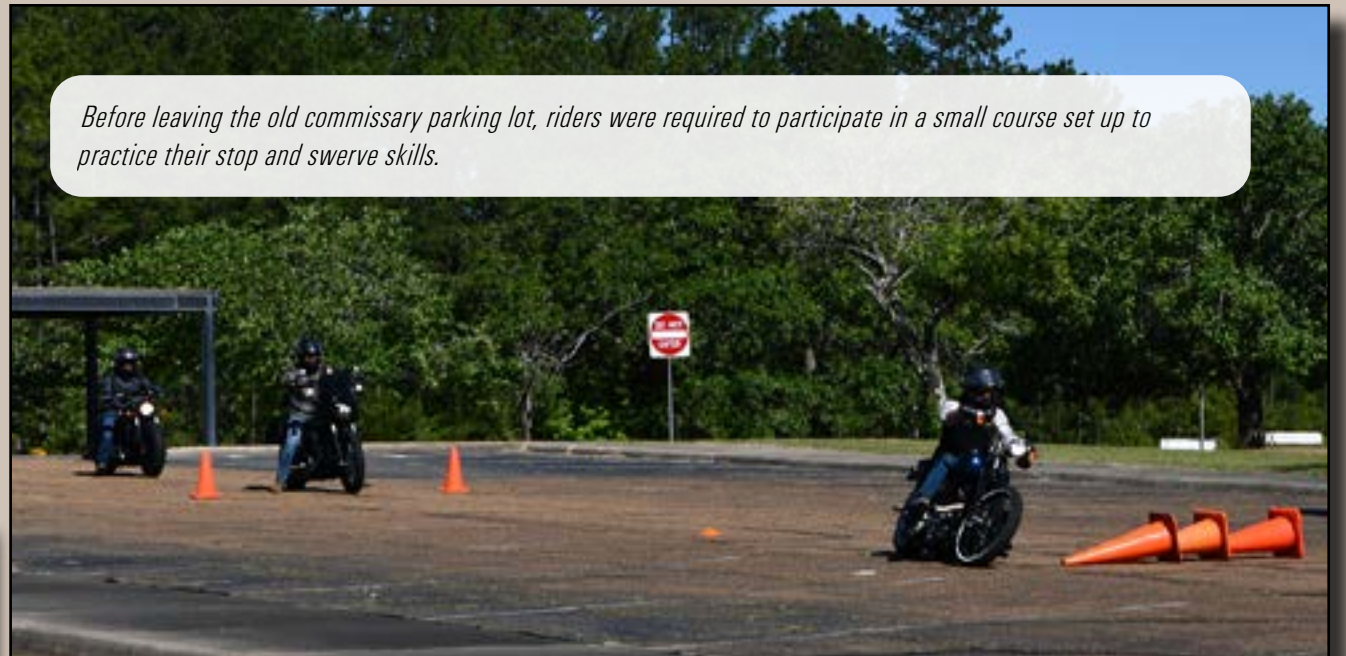
Staff Sgt. Jermal Dubose, 46th Engineer Battalion, said there is something relaxing about taking part in an event with a group of people who love doing the same thing as much as you do.

"It's therapy for me. It gives me a chance to unwind when my stress gets to be too much," he said.



Riders get on their bikes to line up for practice skills.

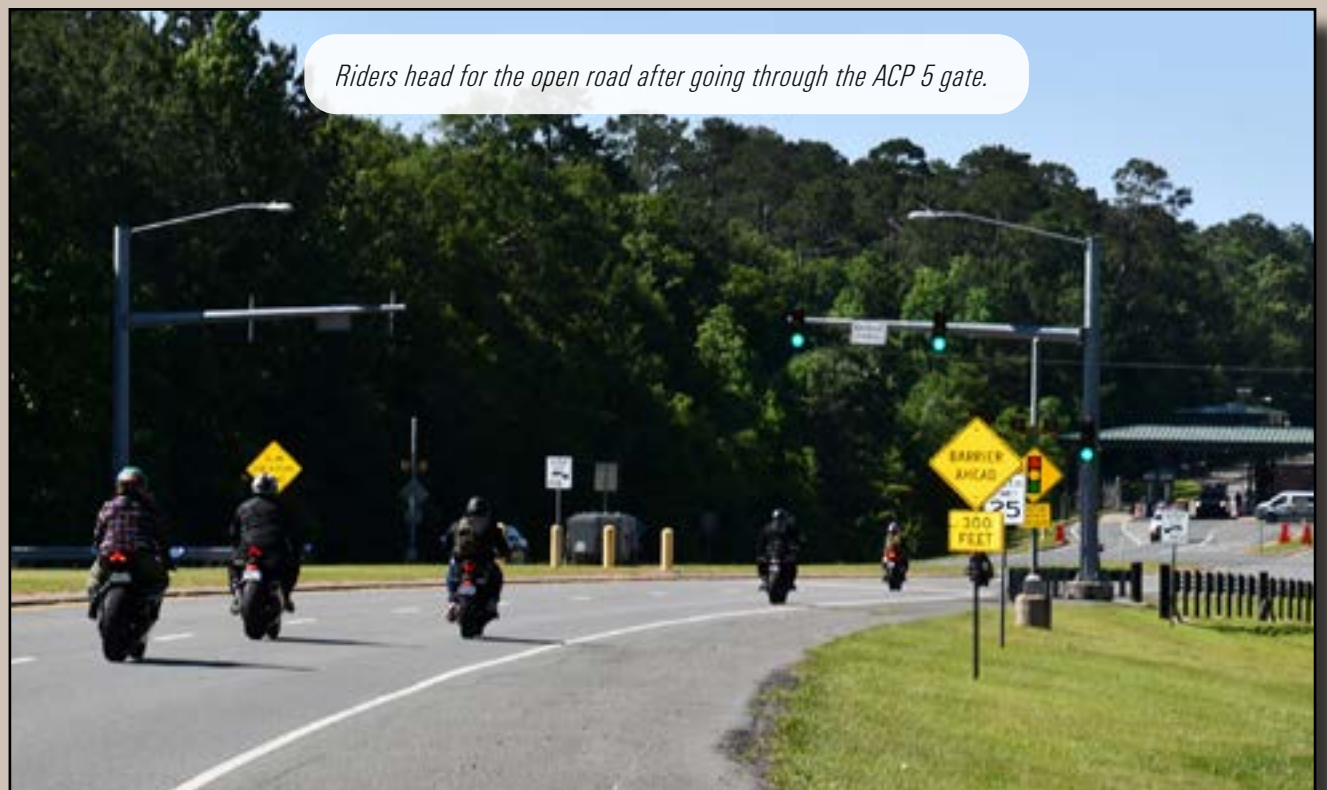
ANGIE THORNE/GUARDIAN



Before leaving the old commissary parking lot, riders were required to participate in a small course set up to practice their stop and swerve skills.



The first group of riders — they left in groups of about 6-10 riders each — leaves the parking lot to make their way off Fort Polk.



Riders head for the open road after going through the ACP 5 gate.

Ribbon-cuttings have been taking place across Fort Polk, beyond



**TOLEDO BEND
WELCOME CENTER**

MASTER SGT. NICHOLAS CAGE/ GUARDIAN



WARRIOR LANES BOWLING CENTER

CHRISTY GRAHAM/ GUARDIAN



SOUTH FORT CAR WASH

SHELBY WARYAS/ COMMAND PAO



FORT POLK'S 50-METER POOL

CHRISTY GRAHAM/ GUARDIAN



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**MIDDLE SCHOOL AND TEEN CENTER
OUTDOOR BASKETBALL COURT**

SHELBY WARYAS/ COMMAND PAO

FreedomFest fast approaches, features live music, food, fun

By **CHRISTY GRAHAM**
Public Affairs Specialist

FORT POLK, La. — The Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk FreedomFest is fast approaching (June 11) and will feature fireworks, food vendors, a salute to the nation, static displays and musical guests Kylie Morgan and Jason DeRulo on the JRTC and Fort Polk Headquarters Field.

DeRulo, considered a multi-platform powerhouse, ranks among the top pop and urban artists with 11 Recording Industry Association of America platinum certified singles.

Morgan is an Oklahoma native who gained national attention from music producers and television executives after releasing her music independently.

If you're interested in attending this event, which is open to the community, please take note of the following considerations:

For non-Department of Defense identification card holders, a visitor's pass will be required. Pre-vetting is available by visiting visit.gvt.us/?b=usa&i=fort_polk&e=6Z7MF-PZ9 and inputting your information. You will receive a text with your visitor-pass approval

and directions to pick up your pass from the Visitor's Control Center. Military police will be on-site to assist with parking, vetting and loading the shuttle buses (which are air conditioned).

Please have a government or state issued ID card, for anyone over the age of 16, when you arrive at Honor Field for parking. Parking is \$10 per car, and only cash will be accepted. All persons entering a federal installation are subject to search.

Any non-DOD ID card holders who approach an access control point gate for entry will be directed to the Honor Field parking area.

DOD-ID cardholders can access Fort Polk from any gate. They will be directed to the nearest shuttle-bus parking lot at the following locations:

Allen Memorial Library/ Education Center
Fort Polk Commissary/ The Exchange
The Berry Mission Training Center
Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital
(no shuttle bus from this location)

Shuttle buses:

Shuttle buses will begin transporting attendees at 4 p.m. from all locations. All event-

site entrance gates open at 4:30 p.m.

What to bring:

Blankets
Lawn chairs
Cash (automatic teller machines will be on-site)
Sunscreen
Strollers
Small, insulated coolers for infant formula or water
Diaper bags

What NOT to bring:

Pets
Tents
Canopies
Coolers
Outside food or beverages
Alcohol
Glass bottles
Weapons
Video cameras
Backpacks or large bags
Professional cameras with telephoto lenses
Personal fireworks

For more information, call (337) 531-1959 or visit Fort Polk MWR on www.facebook.com/fortpolkmwr.

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Out of Many, One

**HONORING THE PAST,
SECURING THE FUTURE!**

JRTC and FORT POLK presents Army Heritage Month and Army Birthday



June 14

10:00-11:30 a.m.

LOCATION: Bayou Theater

For more information, please contact
Installation Equal Opportunity Office
337-531-1911

June is Army Heritage Month — a time to celebrate the diverse history and culture of the Soldiers who make up our formations today.



CHUCK CANNON/GUARDIAN

Signing an Intergovernmental Support Agreement

James Tuck (left), president of the Vernon Parish Police Jury, looks on as Col. Sam Smith (center), commander, U.S. Army Garrison Fort Polk, signs an Intergovernmental Support Agreement with representatives from Waste Connection. The contract signing took place May 24 in Woodfill Hall, bldg 350, on Fort Polk.



CHUCK CANNON/GUARDIAN

DES breakfast

Members of the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk Directorate of Emergency Service parishes met May 23 for a breakfast honoring their service during law enforcement appreciation and representatives from local law enforcement agencies throughout Vernon and Beauregard week May 23.

D-Day serves as reminder to thank Veterans

By **CHUCK CANNON**
Fort Polk PAO

FORT POLK, La. — On June 6, 1944, more than 160,000 Allied troops landed along a 50-mile stretch of France's Normandy coastline in the largest amphibious assault in history, now known as D-Day.

German Nazi troops were in heavily fortified bunkers overlooking the beaches, ready to inflict countless casualties.

Today, 78 years later, historians still marvel at the ability of the invasion force to eventually overrun the enemy and start the end to World War II.

Against seemingly insurmountable odds, the Allied forces pushed the Nazis back from the shoreline and established a beachhead, allowing more troops to join the fight and send the Germans retreating.

As an 8-year-old, I remember watching a documentary on CBS called "D-Day plus 20 years."

I believe watching that program led me to an interest in the military that resulted in an Army career and my current job as member of a newspaper team in the Public Affairs Office that serves the Soldiers and Family members of Fort Polk.

I was moved to tears as I saw combat foot-

age of Soldier after Soldier assaulting fortifications under a barrage of enemy fire, their bodies riddled by bullets, falling onto rolls of razor wire, never to know their home again.

These were American men who volunteered to fight an enemy on foreign soil to halt the spread of the ideology of a madman, intent on world domination.

I was amazed at the ability of the Army's 75th Rangers, who in the face of German hand grenades and machine-gun fire, gained a foothold on a thin strip of beach before scaling 100-foot cliffs to knock out guns raining fire on Allied ships.

I remember being stunned by the footage of waves, lapping the beach and the bodies of Soldiers as they lay partially covered in the surf, unseeing eyes open to the sky.

Those visions remain indelibly imprinted in my mind. That these men would volunteer to fight an enemy so far away from their homes made an impression on this third-grader from West Monroe, Louisiana. They were true heroes.

Fast forward to today, and I realize things

aren't much different. We still have young Soldiers — volunteers — who travel halfway around the world to fight an enemy that seeks world domination. Instead of hand grenades, it's rocket-propelled grenades and improvised explosive devices, but those weapons kill and maim the same as those wielded by Nazi Germany.

There aren't many World War II veterans left who took part in the Normandy invasion and fought their way across France and Germany to ensure the freedom we have today. Most have gone on to where old Soldiers go to rest.

But there are still a few among us, and I encourage everyone to seek them out and thank them for their service and sacrifice.

On this D-Day, I would also remind you there are heroes on Fort Polk today who are

returning to their Families after deploying to the Middle East to fight terrorism. Please seek them out and thank them — their service and sacrifice is just as great as those of the "Greatest Generation." Perhaps 78 years from now it will be the men and women fighting today who earn that title.



CANNON

COMMENTARY

Memorial Day observance

JRTC and Fort Polk hosted a Memorial Day Ceremony May 26 at Warrior Memorial Park. Gold Star Families were in attendance and an installation wreath was placed at the Global War on Terrorism Monument, followed by a 21-gun salute and the playing of Taps.



CHRISTY GRAHAM/GUARDIAN

FRC changes location

Army Community Service programs/services and ACS team members are now located in the main ACS facility across the street from the Family Readiness Center in bldg. 920.

Telephone lines have been transferred and ACS operating hours remain the same — 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

PCS app redesign

The Army is excited to invite you to explore the new and improved redesign of the Army Permanent Change of Station Move App now known as the “My PCS App.”

This user-friendly app improves the PCS experience for Soldiers, civilians and their Families, while enhancing their quality of life.

The “My PCS App” is for the Soldier — by the Soldier. Download the app today from your Google Play Store or Apple Store.

- The Google link:

play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.tradocmobile.MyPCS

- The Apple link

apps.apple.com/us/app/my-army-pcs/id1623381230

- You can contact them at:

usarmy.pentagon.hqda-dcs-g-4.mbx.g43-hhg-app@army.mil

- Follow them on milSuite:

HQDA G4 News Page www.milsuite.mil/

[book/community/spaces/sustainnet/news-items/hqda-g4-news](https://www.army.mil/book/community/spaces/sustainnet/news-items/hqda-g4-news)

- Follow them on Facebook:

U.S. Army Logistics, HQDA G-4

- Check them out on YouTube:

www.youtube.com/channel/UChO_NMw0s-stGakLTYyTJUXw

Garrison innovation program

Do you have a good idea? Don't let it go to waste.

The Plans, Analysis and Integration Office wants the Fort Polk community to know that the garrison team is not only listening, but also taking action on many of the great ideas that have already been submitted through the Garrison Innovation Program.

Yours could be next. The program works by asking individuals to share their concepts to increase efficiency and enhance garrison processes for the Fort Polk community.

Submit your ideas through the Fort Polk Interactive Customer Evaluation system. The PAIO Garrison Innovation Program link: ice.disa.mil or use the QR code.



#FortPolkThingsToDo

June 11: Fort Polk FreedomFest featuring Jason DeRulo with opener Kylie Morgan. Gates open at 4:30 p.m. The event is free and open to the public. Four shuttle buses: From the MTC and the intersection of Mississippi; former commissary and PX; Commissary, Education Center. polk.armymwr.com/happenings/freedomfest-2022

June 11: First Holly Beach Crab Festival, Cameron. Face painting, crab bingo, free boiled crab, a cornhole tournament, bouncy super slide, crab dish cook-off, crab races, local vendors, food trucks and more! www.louisianatravel.com/events/culinary-events/1st-annual-holly-beach-crab-festival

June 17-18: Red, White, and Blue Air Show: Saluting America's Heroes will be an airshow you will not want to miss! Featuring Hall of Fame Aerobatic Acts along with several other acts. It will be fun for the whole family! www.louisianatravel.com/events/events/red-white-and-blue-airshow

June 17-19: Let the Good Times Roll Festival, Crockett Street, Shreveport. Celebrating

the culture, music, art, fashion and unity of the African American community in the area. Bringing you a weekend full of local, regional and national music artists entertaining more than 25,000 patrons every year. www.louisianatravel.com/events/events/let-good-times-roll-festival

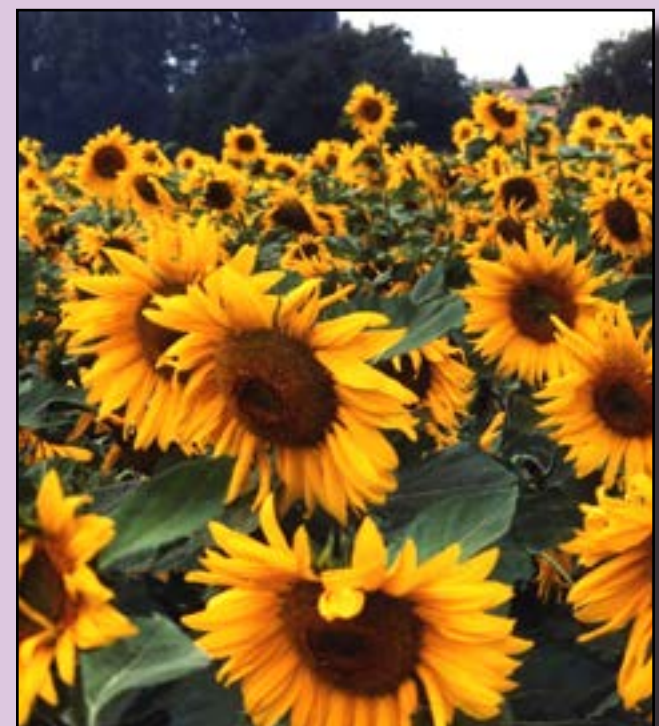
June 18: Sunflower Trail Festival, Gilliam, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Live music, delicious food, arts and crafts vendors and the Sunflower photography contest. www.louisianatravel.com/events/culinary-events/sunflower-trail-festival

June 18: 31st Annual Cross Lake Floatilla, Shreveport. Enjoy fireworks starting at 11 a.m. There will a poker run, a decorated boat parade and contest, music, food, floating, and a whole lot of fun!

www.louisianatravel.com/events/events/31st-annual-cross-lake-floatilla

June 23-25: Beauregard Watermelon Festival, DeRidder.

Watermelon seed spitting and eating contests, watermelon games, music, carnival rides and more! Check out the canning contest, corn-



hole tournament and crafters displays at the festival along with the antique tractor show! www.louisianatravel.com/events/agritourism-events/beauregard-watermelon-festival



Fort Polk Soldiers found guilty for UCMJ violations

OSJA

FORT POLK, La. — The preamble to the Manual for Courts-Martial states, “The purpose of military law is to promote justice, to assist in maintaining good order and discipline in the armed forces, to promote efficiency and effectiveness in the military establishment, and thereby strengthen the national security of the United States.” At the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk, the commanding general and subordinate commanders take good order and discipline seriously.

Across Fort Polk, the following disciplinary issues continue to be prevalent: Driving under the influence of alcohol, wrongful use/possession of controlled substances, fraternization, sexual assault and underage drinking.

Below are the most recent examples of adverse legal actions for units within the Fort Polk jurisdiction.

- A sergeant assigned to 46th Engineer Battalion was given a field grade Article 15 for making a false official statement. They received a punishment of reduction to the grade of E-4 and extra duty for 45 days.

- A specialist assigned to 519th Military Police Battalion was given a field grade Article 15 for using tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). They received a punishment of reduction to the grade of E-3, extra duty for 45 days and restriction for 45 days.

- A specialist assigned to 1st Battalion, 509th Infantry Regiment was given a field grade Article 15 for using tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). They received a punishment of reduction to the grade of E-3, extra duty for 45 days and restriction for 45 days.

- A first lieutenant assigned to 2nd Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment received a permanently filed General Officer Memorandum of Reprimand for dereliction of duty by ordering an unlicensed Soldier to operate a tactical vehicle.

mand for dereliction of duty by ordering an unlicensed Soldier to operate a tactical vehicle.

- A sergeant first class assigned to 1st Battalion, 5th Aviation Regiment received a permanently filed GOMOR for misusing their government travel charge card.

- A sergeant first class assigned to Operations Group received a permanently filed GOMOR for being drunk on duty.

- Three Soldiers from across the installation were discharged from the Army with general discharges for refusing to be vaccinated against COVID-19. A general discharge could result in a loss of benefits and may cause difficulty in obtaining civilian employment.

- Three Soldiers from across the installation received permanently filed GOMORs for driving while under the influence of alcohol.

- A sergeant assigned to 710th Brigade Support Battalion was discharged from the Army with an under other than honorable conditions discharge for domestic violence. An under other than honorable conditions discharge could result in a loss of all benefits and may cause significant difficulty in obtaining civilian employment.

Check VIN numbers

The Directorate of Emergency Services Traffic Division will release the following vehicles to Family Morale, Welfare and Recreation for disposal, if they remain unclaimed. Vehicles are listed with the last four of their VIN number. If one of these vehicles belongs to you, please contact the Fort Polk Police Traffic Division at (337) 531-1806, 6675 or 2677.

2002	Honda	CRV	7722
1988	Chevrolet	3500	4195
2011	Dodge	Avenger	1373
2014	Nissan	Altima	6092
2005	Nissan	Altima	9465
2006	Dodge	Charger	5068
1998	Honda	CRV	6564
1995	BMW	530i	4287
2011	Dodge	Durango	6226
2002	Mitsubishi	Eclipse	4078
2016	Kia	Reo	5808
2005	Dodge	Magnum	9914
2001	Honda	Civic	5428
2008	Ford	Explorer	3754
2006	Ford	Escape	0697
2013	Dodge	Avenger	9243
2001	Volvo	S 40	1073
2001	Mercury	G. Marquis	1956
2007	Acura	RDX Turbo	1092
2017	Nissan	Sentra	5638
1995	Chevrolet	Caprice	3876
1999	GMC	1500	0147
2006	Hyundai	Sonata	3189
2008	Chevrolet	1500	0226
2008	Ford	Edge	1971
2017	Nissan	Versa	1496
2008	Saturn	Aura XE	3244
2004	Chevrolet	Trail Blazer	8828
2003	Toyota	Tacoma	7528
2006	Nissan	350Z	6628
2010	Nissan	Altima	6499
2005	Ford	Explorer	4483
2012	Chevrolet	Malibu	1689
2016	Chevrolet	Malibu	5420
2002	Dodge	1500	7497
2006	Ford	F150	6507
2015	Ford	Escape	8502
2004	Infinity	Q35	8469
2012	Kia	Optima	1405
2011	Nissan	Sentra	4417
2009	Honda	Civic	3562
UNK	Baja Warrior	Mini bike	UNK
1997	Dodge	1500	3720

Fort Polk Garrison Chapel

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