



FORGING THE

WARRIOR SPIRIT

THE JRTC & FORT POLK GUARDIAN

Vol. 47, No. 23

Home of Heroes @ Fort Polk, LA

June 5, 2020

4th SFAB Builds Combat Power in Preparation for Rotation 20-08

By **CHUCK CANNON**

Command information officer

FORT POLK, La. — Safety.

That word — safety — is always paramount in the minds of Army leaders. Whether it is squad, team, platoon or company training, rotations to the Joint Readiness Training Center, National Training Center, or a deployment down range, safety is of utmost importance.

With the current COVID-19 pandemic, safety has become even more prominent in planning for units as they seek to mitigate the effects of the coronavirus, while at the same time conducting realistic training before heading to an overseas deployment.

Rotation 20-08 at the JRTC seeks to do just that as the 4th Security Force Assistance Brigade, with elements from the 3rd Battalion, 126th Infantry Regiment, Michigan National Guard, and the Security Force Assistance Command from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, prepare for a deployment to Afghanistan later this summer.

The focus on safety began before the Soldiers boarded buses or aircraft for the trip to Alexandria, Louisiana in transit to Fort Polk. Soldiers received a COVID-19 screening at their home station, fol-

lowed by another screening by a team of JRTC and Fort Polk medical personnel at the Arrival/Departure Airfield Control Group (ADACG) at Alexandria International Airport.

Once on Fort Polk, rotational Soldiers were assigned to barracks that normally sleep 40, but to maintain social distancing requirements, will sleep just 12 for this rotation.

Sgt. 1st Class Kohlby Hollingsworth, C Company, 2nd Battalion, 4th SFAB, said the limited number of Soldiers in each barracks is a plus.

"We actually have more space here so it's kind of nice," he said. "It helps alleviate concerns about contracting COVID-19."

Hollingsworth said the precautions 4th SFAB has put in place — social distancing, gloves, masks, and eye protection — should keep Soldiers COVID-19 free during the rotation.

"I'm not really worried about it," he said. "I don't think anyone is in any serious danger of getting it. When we reach the field, I think as long as we set the practices now, when we get out there we'll be just fine."

Hollingsworth said he knows Army leaders are watching this ro-

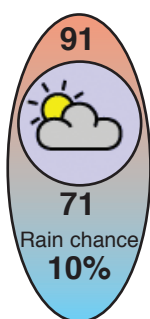
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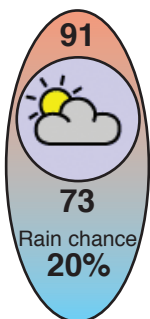
A Soldier with the 4th Security Force Assistance Brigade gives hand and arm signals to a fellow Soldier while donning a mask for COVID-19 mitigation during vehicle off-loading operations at the centralized receiving and shipping point (CRSP) on North Fort Polk in preparation for Rotation 20-08 at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.

CHUCK CANNON / GUARDIAN

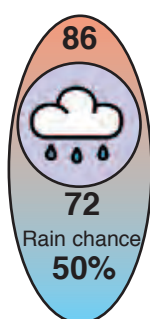
Weekend weather



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Saturday



Sunday

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Viewpoint

In our view

Guardian staff asked local residents,
"What have you done to prepare for hurricane season?"
Here are their responses:



Teresa Prichard: "I'm rolling my coronavirus-preparedness stock over to my hurricane-season stash."



John Crook: "It's hurricane season. I always make sure I have a bit of extra water on hand!"



Rodney and Victoria Fultz: "We always keep the propane tank full and stock up on canned goods and water. If you have pets, keep their food stocked as well."



Lisa Adams (Pictured with Stephanie Carroll, left): "I stocked up on the essentials."



Charlie Elliot: "You need to get a stash of food and water in the house. You'll need batteries for flashlights and fuel for your cars and gasoline containers, if you have them."



Beth Isley: "We have sand bags and hurricane supplies to last a couple weeks with no electricity. We have flashlights, extra batteries, to-go bags, a first-aid kit and a camp stove for boiling water and cooking."



Guardian

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

Briefs

Road work

Mississippi Avenue is undergoing renovations — pavement milling, new asphalt and installation of permanent pavement parking. Travel lane and shoulder closures are projected to continue through June 19. The primary traffic impact will be continued delays associated with flaggers controlling traffic within and around the work zone. The moving work zone will require intermittent temporary closures of intersections and drives along this segment of Mississippi Avenue.

The new asphalt paving is projected for June 22-July 10. The contractor will close intersecting roads at Mississippi Avenue and install "road closed to thru traffic" signs along Alabama Ave after 8 a.m. Monday through Friday. Flaggers will be placed within the work zone to control and mitigate conflicting traffic movements. Efforts will be made to minimize traffic impacts, but delays should be expected and alternate routes used if available.

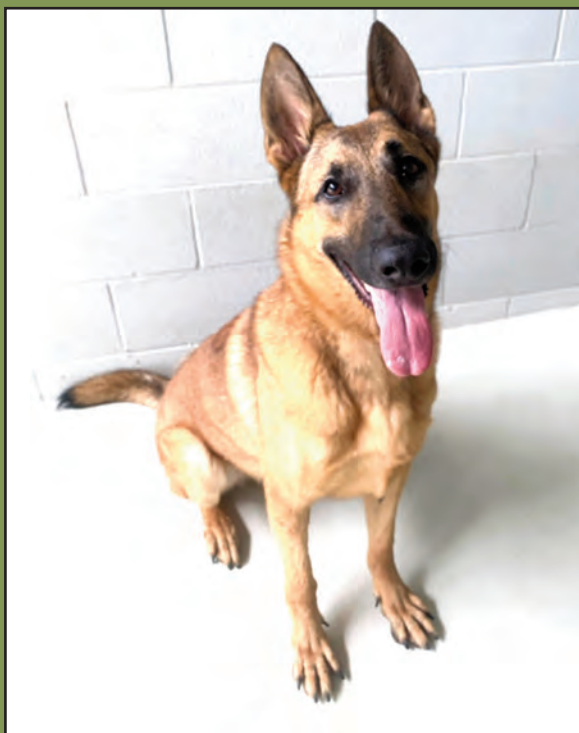
Off limits

The following establishments in the Fort Polk, Leesville, Barksdale Air Force Base and Shreveport areas have been designated as off limits by the Armed Forces Disciplinary Control Board of the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk:

- Blackhawks Motorcycle Club, 2463 VFW Road., Leesville
- The Venue, 11810 Lake Charles Highway, Leesville
- American Legion Post 510, 703 North Gladys St., Leesville
- Adolph's Grocery, 100 Vernon St., New Llano
- Banshees Motorcycle Club, 1330 and 1340 Rapides Ave., Alexandria
- BEAST Motorcycle Club, 3149 Davis Road., West Lake
- Outcast Motorcycle Club, 5151 U.S. Highway 90 East, Lake Charles
- Pipes Emporium, 1304 Centenary Blvd., Shreveport
- Kokopellis, 400 Commerce St., Shreveport
- Lotus, 2001 East Texas St., Suite 3, Bossier City.

100% ID scans

Beginning June 6, the installation will transition back to a 100% ID scan of all personnel entering the installation. It will remain a no-contact scan. Drivers will present their cards to access control point personnel, including any cards belonging to other occupants in the vehicle.



Newest "Home of Heroes" teammates

Military working dogs Gerber (left) and Xando (right) arrived to the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk on May 28. They are both patrol explosive MWDs and are excited to be joining the world-class 50th Military Working Dog Detachment in the 519th Military Police Battalion.

JRTC AND FORT POLK COMMAND GROUP

383rd Modular Movement Control Team deploys

By **CHRISTY GRAHAM**

Guardian editor

FORT POLK, La. — Opening the deployment ceremony for the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk's 383rd Modular Movement Control Team, 519th Military Police Battalion on June 1 at 10 a.m., 1st Lt. Madalyn Larch, unit movement officer, extended her gratitude to the Soldiers and said, "These heroes have successfully completed their training and are prepared to secure their place in history alongside every other Soldier who has ever fought our nation's wars."

Brig. Gen. Patrick D. Frank, commander, JRTC and Fort Polk, and Lt. Col. Shawn C. Keller, commander, 519th MP Bn, were guest speakers. Due to COVID-19 social-distancing and mask requirements, Families and fellow Soldiers were not in attendance.

The 383rd MMCT's 21 Soldiers are deploying into Africa Command's area of responsibility "to expedite, coordinate and supervise transportation support of units, cargo and personnel into and through air and water ports," said Capt. Tiara Knotts, commander, 383rd MMCT.

Discussing her team's unique qualities Knotts said, "we are a small group with 21 service members — we are designed to execute five movement control missions.

An MCT can breakdown into two- to three-person teams and still function without the entire group. Being modular allows the MCT to be flex-

ible; we can be employed at various locations and in a variety of configurations to meet mission demands."

Keller, the first guest speaker, thanked Sgt. 1st Class Marketa Pearson (383rd MMCT acting 1st Sgt.) for "ensuring our Warriors continue to stand tall in support of our great battalion and our nation."

Highlighting the team's extensive training and preparations, Keller remarked on their readiness to deploy.

"Standing before you are 21 of your Fort Polk teammates, Soldiers and warriors. They've honed their skills and perfected their craft. From being poked and prodded by the Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital teams, to the small-arms qualifications, squad and team live-fires and, just a week ago, training with the Air Force at Barksdale Air Force Base — these Soldiers are ready to deploy," he said.

Keller continued by promising that the Soldiers' Families would be cared for during their deployment.

"To the Soldiers and your Families who will remain behind, it is my pledge to you that if they need something all they have to do is say something," he said.

In his closing remarks, Keller expressed his excitement and pride for the MCT.

"Captain Knotts and Sergeant First Class Pear-

Please see **Ceremony**, page 7

Army news

Soldier tells how he stopped active shooter on bridge

By **BOB KERR**

Army News Service

FORT LEAVENWORTH, Kans. — The Fort Leavenworth Soldier who took action to end an active shooter situation May 27 on the Centennial Bridge in Leavenworth spoke about the incident during a press conference May 28.

Master Sgt. David Royer, a corrections non-commissioned officer with the 705th Military Police Battalion (Detention), said he was eastbound waiting to cross the bridge into Missouri when the incident occurred. He said he was talking with his fiancé, Haley Siela, on speaker phone when the suspect exited a vehicle and began shooting a rifle at other vehicles on the bridge. Before ending their call, Royer instructed Siela to call 911.

"I assessed the situation quickly, looked around and took the only possible action I could take," Royer said. "I accelerated my truck and struck the active shooter, pinning him underneath my truck."

While waiting for law enforcement to arrive, Royer said he got out of his truck and found the suspect underneath the truck, determining there was no longer a threat. He said he began life-saving procedures at this point. Law enforcement showed up within minutes, he said.

"It was a textbook response on their part," Royer said. "They handled the situation amazingly well."

Royer said he has had ample active shooter training during his 15-year military career including Military Police Special Reaction Team Training (Military SWAT Team), Air Assault School, a Military Police Investigator Course and other situation-specific training, which also attributed to his quick reaction.

"I was shocked that it was happening, but the adrenaline took over and, with my military training, I took appropriate action to take the threat out quickly," Royer said. "I didn't imagine (an active shooter situation) would happen in traffic, but it was always in the back of my mind because of how crazy things are in the world today."

"I constantly consider what I would do while at various places with my family" he said. "If something were to happen, how would I exit if my children and fiancé are with me? How do I get them to safety before I react?"

Royer said he also attributes his quick actions to his upbringing.

"It runs in our blood to stand up and do what's right and put ourselves in front of harm's way," Royer said. "(My parents) taught me to not



PRUDENCE SIEBERT/ FORT LEAVENWORTH LAMP

Master Sgt. David Royer, 705th Military Police Battalion (Detention), supported by 15th MP Brigade Commander Col. Caroline Smith and 705th MP Battalion Command Sgt. Maj. Justin Shad, speaks to area reporters about taking action to subdue an active shooter on Centennial Bridge in Fort Leavenworth during a press conference May 28 at Sherman

let fear take control, always do what's right and protect the innocent."

Local law enforcement and Royer's commanders agree that his actions were heroic.

"He won't call himself a hero, but I will," said Leavenworth Police Chief Pat Kitchens. "He saved countless lives. His actions were extraordinary, and he should be commended for that."

"We're grateful ... on behalf of the entire Leavenworth community," he said.

Col. Caroline Smith, 15th Military Police Brigade commander, said she was proud of Royer.

"I think many people will sit back and wonder what they would do in that situation and if they have the confidence and the courage to act when necessary," Smith said. "I think Master Sgt. Royer did what was necessary to neutralize the threat. In a split second, he made the right decision."

"He acted with courage and conviction. I have no doubt that he saved many people's lives," she said. "We'll never know how many lives he

saved, but I can say I'm proud of his actions and who he is as an NCO."

Siela said she was proud, too.

"I couldn't have done what he did," she said.

Royer has a different mindset.

"There are people all around the world that would do the right thing, and I believe there is more good out there than there is bad," Royer said. "There are good people that would stop a dangerous situation and save lives."

"My life is worth something, but there are also many other lives out there, too," he said, "If I sacrifice myself for the majority, then that is my prerogative."

Two people were injured during the incident, including an active-duty soldier who was shot and the shooting suspect. Both are being treated for injuries.

Law enforcement continue to investigate the incident.

Royer joined the Army in 2005 and has been stationed at Fort Leavenworth since 2014.

DoD launches effort to collect 8,000 units of COVID-19 convalescent plasma

OSJA

WASHINGTON — Patients who have recovered from COVID-19 may hold a treatment in their veins that could help others currently suffering from the virus.

The Defense Department has begun an effort

to collect 8,000 donated units of plasma from patients who have recovered from COVID-19 to support the development of an effective treatment against the disease.

"We may want to ask you to donate blood," Army Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said in a virtual town hall May 31.

"That can help others who are severely ill, and if we can do that, then we'll be on a good path toward getting powerful therapeutics."

Donations will be accepted at 15 Armed Services Blood Program centers across the continental United States and in Hawaii, Guam and Ger-

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Rotation

Continued from page 1

tation with a discerning eye to see if it's feasible to resume large-scale training.

"I think we're here to help figure out those best practices during this time and that's one of the ways we can contribute to the force," he said. "That's what we're here to do, and to continue on with our training as well."

Before heading to the JRTC "Box" training area, 4th SFAB Soldiers were issued multiple integrated laser engagement systems — MILES — gear. Maj. Kevin Mott, 2nd Bn, 4th SFAB executive officer, said adjustments were made to the way MILES gear was distributed to Soldiers.

"For a typical rotation we would go to a warehouse with a significant number of people to draw our MILES gear at the same time," he said. "With the COVID-19 mitigation measures, we had cases of individual MILES gear dropped off at each company area so we don't have people congregating indoors or in one area. Instead we have five or six Soldiers who inventory the MILES, and then we will issue it out to individual Soldiers. It limits the size of crowds; we're not dropping off a case for a whole platoon — it's each barracks and there are 12 Soldiers per barracks."

Maj. Chad Campbell, C Co, 2nd Bn, 4th SFAB company commander, said in addition to the MILES issue adjustments, other areas were looked at to mitigate possible COVID-19 exposure, including using a solution of 95% water and 5% bleach to sanitize equipment and work spaces.

"We're looking at continuing the bleach/water solution even after things return to normal," he said. "It's said cleanliness is next to Godliness; I think it gives everyone a heads up and says let's re-look how we're doing business, and not just because of COVID-19, but because we want to maintain a healthy workplace."

As the 4th SFAB's vehicles began arriving via 18-wheeler, safety measures — both to prevent injury and COVID-19 — were followed. Maj. Jonathan Cach, B Troop, 3rd Squadron, 4th SFAB troop commander, said any time vehicles are moved, Soldiers have to use proper ground guide procedures.

"You must ensure Soldiers are aware of all the moving pieces around them," he said. "Anytime we're in the yard, all of our personal protective equipment is on — helmet, gloves and eye protection."

As for COVID-19 mitigation, Cach said he limits the number of Soldiers in the yard and makes sure they maintain social distancing.

"We use the fence (chain link fence around the motor yard) as our guidepost," he said. "If you think one Soldier per section of fence, then that keeps them 6 feet apart, and allows them to sit down and take their masks off when it's hot."

Cach said that while masks are an important tool in COVID-19 mitigation, it's also important to protect against heat casualties. He added having a good water source on hand is important, and medics are on standby in the event something should happen.

"With our rank structure, it's actually made things easier," he said. "We are 100% NCO with myself and one other officer here. It's been very smooth. The NCOs understand ground guide procedures and hand and arm signals."

Cach said Fort Polk safety office representatives have been a big help.



Unloading containers May 28 at a temporary 4th SFAB motorpool setup at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk for Rotation 20-08.



4th SFAB Soldiers prepare to safely off-load a High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle and trailer at the CRSP on May 28.

"They've been awesome," he said. "They're not here troubleshooting or yelling at us; they're here helping us, and it's been really great. It's been really smooth."

Capt. Adam Graetz, 4th SFAB safety officer, said there were a few minor issues unloading the unit's vehicles.

"We've had a few things that were loaded a little differently than what we expected, but the team handled it with no problem and worked through it," he said.

Another area that Graetz identified as needing work was heat mitigation. "We're a new unit and don't have a lot of tents to set up and get our Soldiers out of the heat," he said. "The heat down here is no joke, especially coming from Fort Carson, so we're figuring out things. Our command sergeant major was able to get ice from the dining facility, and we borrowed some tents from the post safety office. Between heat and live fire, I think those will be our two biggest safety issues."

Graetz said it will be a challenge to maintain



4th SFAB Tactical Operations Center discusses safety issues during a morning brief on May 28 while adhering to COVID-19 social-distancing guidelines.

COVID-19 mitigation efforts once the 4th SFAB moves to the Box.

"But this is a unit of senior leaders, so they've all been hand selected," he said. "That means they're in the top percent of Army leaders. It might be uncomfortable, but they'll be OK. It's an all-volunteer unit so they all want to be here. This is the first time our unit has come to a CTC. It's a little different with the COVID-19 restrictions, but it's still going to be great training."

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Rotation

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Brig. Gen. Patrick D. Frank, commander, JRTC and Fort Polk, speaks to members of 4th SFAB during a reception, staging, onward movement, and integration rehearsal brief on May 28 while adhering to COVID-19 mitigation measures. Pictured, from left to right, are Capt. J. Sheridan Massey, rotation planner JRTC Operations Group; Frank; Maj. Tia Terry, lead rotation planner for Rotation 20-08, 4th SFAB; and Maj. Edwin Bodenheimer, executive officer, 4th SFAB.

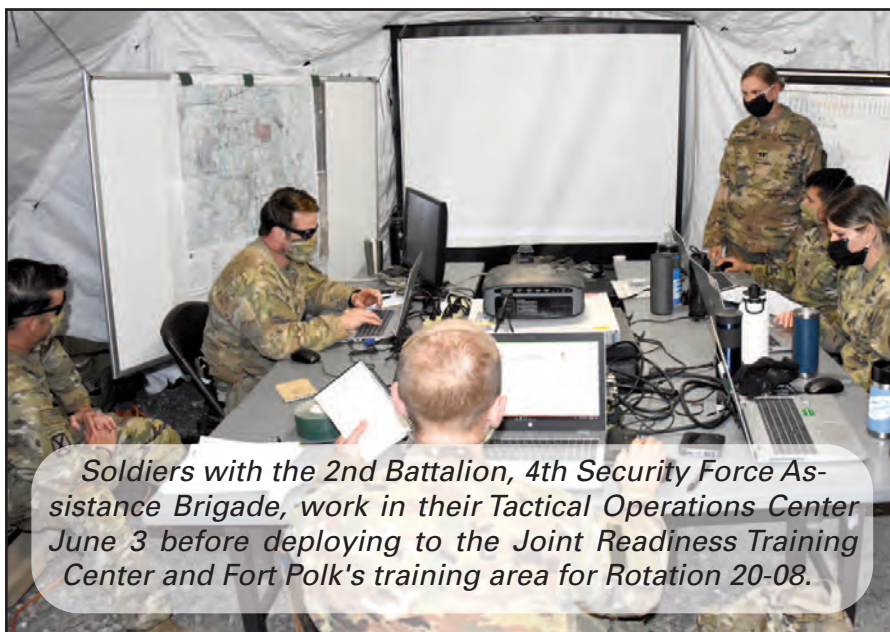


Soldiers from the 4th SFAB unload vehicles while observing COVID-19 mitigation guidelines May 27.

CHUCK CANNON / GUARDIAN



4th SFAB Soldiers lay out MILES gear prior to issuance while adhering to social-distancing and COVID-19 mitigation measures.



Soldiers with the 2nd Battalion, 4th Security Force Assistance Brigade, work in their Tactical Operations Center June 3 before deploying to the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk's training area for Rotation 20-08.

Army leadership shares message



A Message to the Army Community About Civil Unrest

3 June 2020

Dear Soldiers, Civilians, Family members and Soldiers for Life:

Over the past week, the country has suffered an explosion of frustration over the racial divisions that still plague us as Americans. And because your Army is a reflection of American society, those divisions live in the Army as well. We feel the frustration and anger. We felt it this week while traveling through the nation's capital with the DC National Guard. We feel it, even though we can never fully understand the frustration and life experiences of people of color, in or out of uniform. But we do understand the importance of taking care of people, and of treating every person with dignity and respect.

Our ability to defend this country from all enemies, foreign and domestic, is founded upon a sacred trust with the American people. Racial division erodes that trust. Though we all aspire to live by the Army values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage, the Army has sometimes fallen short. Because just as we reflect the best of America, we reflect its imperfections as well. We need to work harder to earn the trust of mothers and fathers who hesitate to hand their sons and daughters into our care. How we respond to the anger that has ignited will chart the course of that trust.

Every Soldier and Department of the Army Civilian swears an oath to support and defend the Constitution. That includes the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the government for a redress of grievances. We will continue to support and defend those rights, and we will continue to protect Americans, whether from enemies of the United States overseas, from COVID-19 at home, or from violence in our communities that threatens to drown out the voices begging us to listen. To Army leaders of all ranks, listen to your people, but don't wait for them to come to you. Go to them. Ask the uncomfortable questions. Lead with compassion and humility, and create an environment in which people feel comfortable expressing grievances. Let us be the first to set the example. We are listening. And we will continue to put people first as long as we are leading the Army. Because people are our greatest strength.

God bless all of the people of our United States Army: our Soldiers, Families, Civilians, and Soldier for Life retirees and veterans. And God bless the United States of America.

Michael A. Grinston
Sergeant Major of the Army

James C. McConville
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

Ryan D. McCarthy
Secretary of the Army

Ceremony

Continued from page 3

son, I'm excited for you and your team. I look forward to hearing about the great things you'll be doing. I'm proud of each and every one of you — stay safe, watch out for your battle buddies and God speed," he said.

The next to speak at the podium was Frank. He said that the formation reminded him of the "old guard," as he conveyed his sense of pride for the team.

"Captain Knotts, I'm exceptionally proud of your team. This movement control team is the best one in the Army," he said.

Frank said that he was sad to see them go as JRTC heavily relies on the MCT to move large numbers of Soldiers into and out of the JRTC training area or "box."

"You guys are the most trained MCT in the Army. There is nobody that matches the standards set by your team at each rotation here at JRTC," he said.

"You do your real-world mission all the time. That's how I know AFRICOM and General (Stephen J.) Townsend are getting the best," he said.

"I am exceedingly proud of this team. You guys look great today. I know AFRICOM is excited to get you on their team."



CHRISTY GRAHAM/GUARDIAN

Brig. Gen. Patrick D. Frank, commander, JRTC and Fort Polk, walks through the ranks of the 383rd Modular Movement Control Team, 519th Military Police Battalion, after speaking at their deployment ceremony June 1. The ceremony followed COVID-19 mitigation restrictions including face-coverings, social-distancing and reduced attendance.

Plasma

Continued from page 4

many.

Patients fully recovered from COVID-19 are the only ones who qualify to be a COVID-19 convalescent plasma donor, said Army Col. Audra Taylor, chief of the Armed Services Blood Program. DoD personnel, their families and non-DOD civilians with access to collection facilities on installations are welcome to donate.

"Our goal as a lifesaving program is to provide a safe and ample supply of blood products. The need is now," Taylor said. "We are calling for all who are healthy, able and eligible to donate and help us stand mission-ready and save lives."

Why convalescent plasma is collected

When a person contracts SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, their immune system creates antibodies to fight the virus. These antibodies are found in the plasma, Taylor explained.

Plasma with infection-fighting antibodies is called convalescent plasma, she said. Through the blood donation process, this plasma is collected from a donor who has recovered from COVID-19 and may be transfused into a sick patient still fighting the virus, if they qualify for this treatment. This may boost the immune system of the patient and help with the recovery process, Taylor said.

The collection process for this type of plasma is the same as standard blood collection, she noted. It is being investigated for the treatment of COVID-19 because there is no approved treatment for the disease at this time, and there is some indication that it might help some patients recover from COVID-19.

Several COVID-19 patients in the military health system have received convalescent plasma transfusions as part of their treatment, Taylor said.



TWANA ATKINSON/ARMY NEWS SERVICE

Donald Perry, a Fort Bragg civilian employee who recently recovered from COVID-19, donates his plasma at the Fort Bragg Blood Donor Center on May 7.

The treatment, which must be carried out under an approved protocol, is used for those hospitalized and severely ill with the disease.

Eligibility requirements

Donating CCP is the same as a standard platelet or plasma donation and must meet specific requirements set by the Food and Drug Administration. Donors must be at least 17-years old, weigh at least 110 pounds and be in good health. Women who have ever been pregnant may need additional testing for specific human leukocyte antigen antibodies that may be present in their blood.

In addition to these standard requirements, those who have fully recovered from COVID-19

must be symptom-free for at least 14 days. Donors must also produce documented laboratory test results proving they tested positive for the virus, Taylor explained.

"If a donor believes they meet these requirements, they must first contact the local blood-donor center before coming in. If they qualify, they can set up an appointment," Army Col. Jason Corley, Army Blood Program director, said. "At the appointment, the donor must bring the required documentation and undergo the standard donation procedure. Final determinations are made by the medical director or designee."

For more information, visit https://www.militaryblood.dod.mil/Donors/where_to_give.aspx.

Soldiers punished, separated for UCMJ violations

OSJA

FORT POLK, La. — The preamble to the Manual for Courts-Martial states, “(t)he 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. However, certain disciplinary issues continue to be prevalent across Fort Polk such as breaking quarantine/isolation orders, violating General Order No. 1, driving under the influence of alcohol, wrongful use/possession of controlled substances, fraternization, and sexual assault.

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

- A sergeant, assigned to 2nd Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, was issued a General Officer Memorandum of Reprimand for fraternizing with junior enlisted Soldiers by engaging in sexually exploitative behaviors while at a social gathering, in violation of Article 92, Uniform Code of Military Justice. The CG directed filing the reprimand in the Soldier’s Army Military Human Resource Record.

- A sergeant, assigned to 519th Military Police Battalion, was punished under Article 15 for disobeying a lawful order (breaking quarantine), in violation of Article 92, UCMJ. The service member was sentenced to a reduction to E-4, extra duty for 30 days, restriction for 30 days, suspension for 6 months and a forfeiture of \$500 pay for 1 month.

- A specialist, assigned to 2nd Bn, 4th Inf Reg, 3rd BCT, 10th Mtn Div, was punished under Article 15 for disobeying a lawful order (traveling outside of the 50-mile radius restriction), in violation of Article 92, UCMJ. The service member was sentenced to a reduction to E-3, forfeiture of \$1,151 pay for two months, suspension for 6 months, extra duty for 45 days and restriction for 45 days.

- A specialist, assigned to 3rd Battalion, 353rd Regiment, Joint Readiness Training Center Operations Group, was punished under Article 15 for disobeying a lawful order (breaking quarantine), in violation of Article 92, UCMJ. The service member was sentenced to a reduction to E-1, forfeiture of \$866 pay for two months, suspension for 6 months, extra duty for 30 days and restriction for 30 days.

- A specialist, assigned to 519th MP Bn, was administratively separated under Chapter 14-12c (Commission of a Serious Offense), with an Other Than Honorable characterization of service for illegal use of a weapon or dangerous instrument and aggravated criminal damage to property. Generally, an OTH characterization of service results in a reduction to the lowest enlisted grade and the loss of a majority of a service member’s VA and educational benefits.

- A private first class, assigned to 710th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd BCT, 10th Mtn Div, was administratively separated under Chapter 14-12c (Commission of a Serious Offense), with a General (Under Honorable Conditions) characterization of service for assaulting a police officer, resisting arrest, disturbing the peace and disobeying a lawful order given by a commissioned officer. Generally, this characterization of service results in the loss of a service member’s educational benefits.



JOINT READINESS TRAINING CENTER AND FORT POLK
FORCE HEALTH PROTECTION

UCMJ SUMMARY



ON 28 MAY 20, AN E-2, B CO, 2-30 IN, 3/10 BCT WAS PUNISHED UNDER

FIELD GRADE ARTICLE 15

FOR VIOLATING A LAWFUL GENERAL ORDER TO NOT TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE
50-MILE RADIUS SURROUNDING FORT POLK,
IN VIOLATION OF ARTICLE 92, UNIFORM CODE OF MILITARY JUSTICE.
THE BRIGADE COMMANDER SENTENCED THE SOLDIER TO:

- Reduction to the grade of E-1
- Forfeiture of \$866 pay for 2 mos. (suspended for 90 days)
- Extra duty for 45 days
- Restriction for 45 days (suspended for 15 days)
- Oral Reprimand

Quarantine, isolation, and GO #1 orders are for your safety and the safety of the Fort Polk community



JOINT READINESS TRAINING CENTER AND FORT POLK
FORCE HEALTH PROTECTION

UCMJ SUMMARY

ON 26 MAY AN E-4, 52d TICO, 3/353 REG WAS PUNISHED UNDER

GENERAL OFFICER ARTICLE 15

FOR VIOLATING A LAWFUL GENERAL ORDER TO REMAIN IN QUARANTINE,
IN VIOLATION OF ARTICLE 92, UNIFORM CODE OF MILITARY JUSTICE.
THE COMMANDING GENERAL SENTENCED THE SOLDIER TO:

- Reduction to the grade of E-1
- Extra duty for 30 days
- Restriction for 30 days

Quarantine, isolation, and GO# 1 orders are for your safety and the safety of the Fort Polk community



JOINT READINESS TRAINING CENTER AND FORT POLK
FORCE HEALTH PROTECTION

UCMJ SUMMARY

ON 28 MAY 20, AN E-4, B CO, 2-4 IN, 3/10 BCT WAS PUNISHED UNDER

FIELD GRADE ARTICLE 15

FOR VIOLATING A LAWFUL GENERAL ORDER TO NOT TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE
50-MILE RADIUS SURROUNDING FORT POLK,
IN VIOLATION OF ARTICLE 92, UNIFORM CODE OF MILITARY JUSTICE.
THE BRIGADE COMMANDER SENTENCED THE SOLDIER TO:

- Reduction to E-3
- Forfeiture of \$1,151 pay for 2 mos. (suspended for 6 mos.)
- Restriction for 45 days (suspended for 15 days)
- Oral Reprimand

Quarantine, isolation, and GO #1 orders are for your safety and the safety of the Fort Polk community

Make appointment to get taxes done at reopened Fort Polk Tax Center

By **ANGIE THORNE**

Guardian staff writer

FORT POLK, La. — As a result of COVID-19 stay-at-home orders, the Fort Polk Installation Tax Center — 2165 Ninth St., bldg 1455 — was shuttered not long after its grand opening.

With restrictions lifting, the center reopened June 1 and will pick up right where it left off by providing free income tax return preparation and filing for active duty personnel and their Family members, reservists on active duty for more than 90 days and military retirees through July 15, as the 2020 Internal Revenue Service extended the tax payment deadline.

The tax center is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and will see clients by appointment only.

The center is run by Soldiers — IRS certified volunteers — who conduct free tax preparation for the Fort Polk community.

Capt. Michael Moore, Fort Polk Tax Center officer in charge, said the center’s tax preparers have gone through a thorough two-week training course with the Internal Revenue Service, but there is also an attorney on staff at the tax center to help them handle the more difficult tax forms.

As part of the tax center’s COVID-19 safety parameters, tax preparers and clients are required to wear masks during their appointment. In addition, clients can no longer wait for their taxes to be prepared while on site.

Moore said clients will also have to drop off their information and come back to finish the process.

“For safety reasons, instead of waiting at the

center while preparers are working on their taxes, clients will have to come back to pick up their completed forms. On average, it takes 45 minutes to finish a client’s taxes. When they come back, they can review and sign their taxes and then we submit them,” he said.

To save time, Moore said after clients make their appointment, they should go online and print out form 13614-C, which they will need to fill out.

“They can Google the form, print it and fill it out in advance helping the process move along smoothly and quickly,” he said. “If they aren’t familiar with the Internet or don’t have access to a printer, the tax center also has copies of the form that clients can fill out when they arrive for their

Please see **Tax**, page 9

The little red book review by Leslie

By Lt. Col. (retired) MARK S. LESLIE
DPTMS director

Written by Mao Tse-Tung, "Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung" is commonly known as "the little red book," because it was originally printed in pocket size with bright red covers. It is comprised of excerpts from statements and speeches from Mao, the Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party from 1943 until his death in 1976. First published in 1964, it is one of the most widely distributed books in the world.

Many modern-day "leader readers" may not know much about Mao, but it is likely that they have heard of some his quotes contained in this book. One of the more well-known quotes is "political power grows out of the barrel of a gun."

I have to admit two things in regards to this book. First, I was surprised it is on this Chief's list. After all, it has been around for decades and, while it was lauded as "the book to read" during Vietnam by Army leaders, communism is dead — a failed experiment, right?

My second admission is that I am disappointed that it took me so long to read it. One of my true-life heroes, Colonel David Hackworth, discusses this book in his own work, "About Face," and he carried it on every tour he had in Vietnam. He demanded his subordinates read it, and know it.

To understand their enemy, they had to know their enemy, and this was a way to know what made the Communist Vietnamese dedicated and fierce fighters. I read Hack's book years ago and have been meaning to read his recommendation — the little red book. I am glad I finally did.

There are a few reasons I think the Chief has

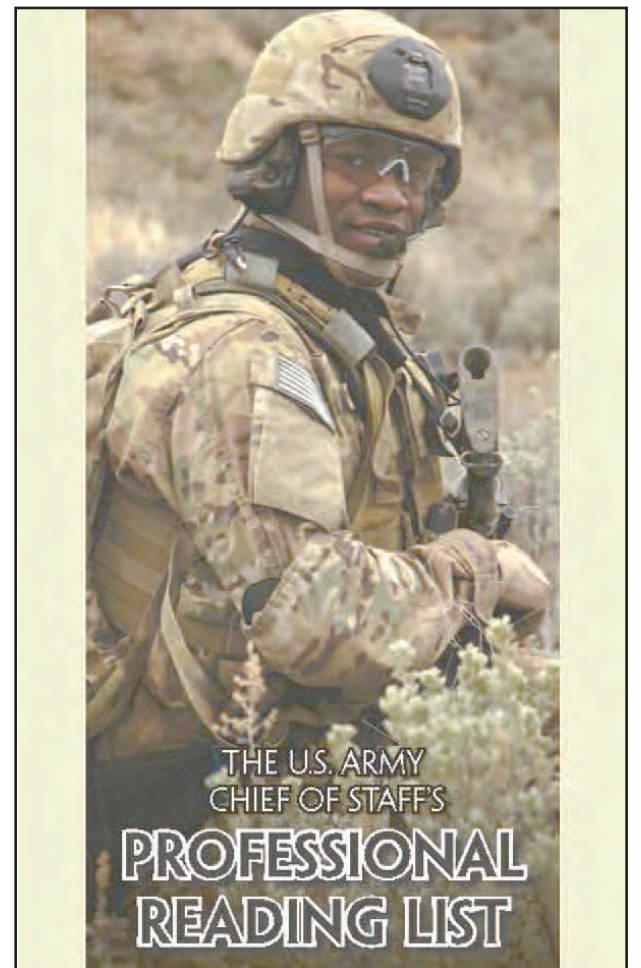
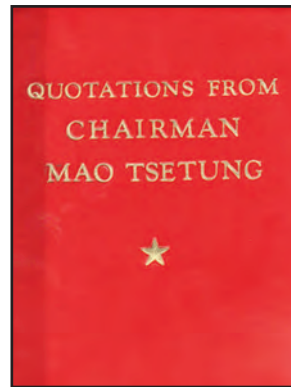
this title on his list. First, Chinese communism is not dead, and they are a world power that the U.S. spars with not only economically and in trade but sometimes on the high seas and potentially in a decisive-action environment.

Reading and studying this book gives insight into the fundamental beliefs that have been ingrained into Chinese culture for decades. The principles and thoughts contained in this tiny book are powerful tools for influencing behavior. The awareness gained by reading this book will better help in knowing an enemy and developing an approach in engagements, whatever form they may take.

Another reason is that this book is effectively a handbook for insurgents, revolutionaries, dissidents or terrorist to cull techniques to develop a theme that would elicit support from a civilian population. It worked for Mao, and it is working now for some of our opponents across the globe who study and use the template in his book to mobilize support from a depressed population. Reading this book may help

us identify when some of these techniques are being used and assist in countering them.

Lastly, by simply reading this book one would think that Mao was an inspiring democratic leader with an appreciation for what the people wanted. We know that this is far from the truth, as his regime murdered millions of Chinese citi-



Commentary

Tax

Continued from page 8

appointment."

With a shortened tax season and fewer personnel, Moore said he still thinks his team will be able to process just as many tax forms as last year by July 15.

"We serve a lot of active duty Soldiers and retirees, many of whom waited for us to reopen to get their taxes done. We had a waiting list before we closed, and we called those folks first to get us started. There are still plenty of open time slots for people to call and make appointments," he said. "I think it was a huge relief, especially for our retiree population, when we reopened. We closed so abruptly, and they didn't know what to do because many of them may not be computer savvy like other filers who could do their taxes online."

Pvt. Brandon Grigg, 2nd Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, said he's also happy the tax center reopened.

"I feel like it's a good opportunity for new Soldiers, such as myself, who don't know a lot about doing their taxes. This way, I get to ask questions, learn more about the tax process and it's free," he said.

For more information or to make an appointment, call 531-1040.



Spc. Paige Barnnett, 317th Brigade Engineer Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, a tax specialist at the Fort Polk Installation Tax Center, helps Pvt. Brandon Grigg, 2nd Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, get his taxes done June 1.

Celebrating best

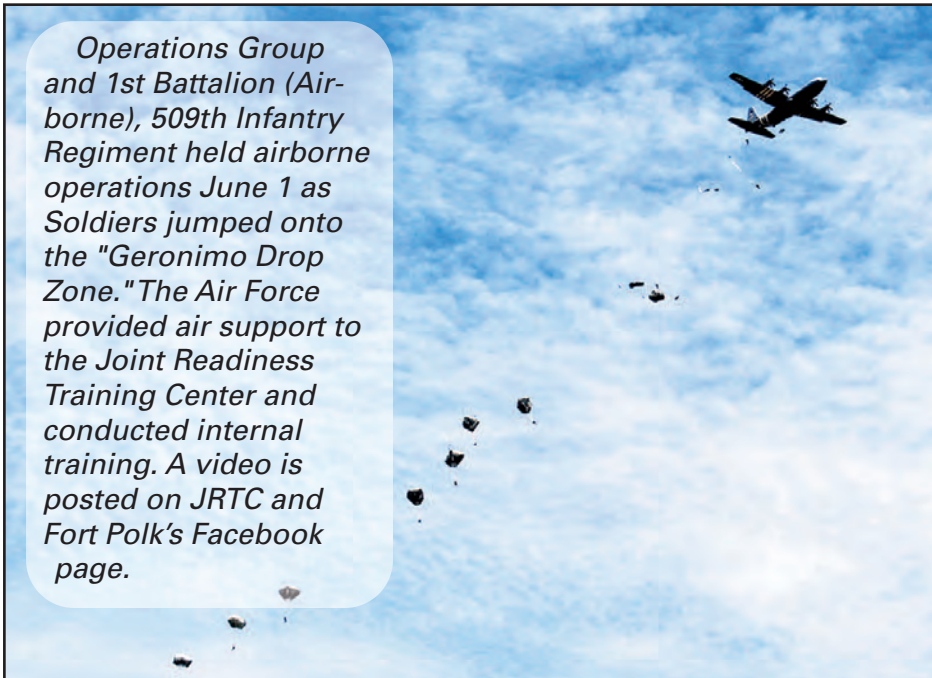


Left: Spc. Logan Shephard, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 5th Aviation Regiment, (left), is the 2020 Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk Soldier of the Year and Spc. Nicole Dupreez, Dental Activity, is the JRTC and Fort Polk Soldier of the Year runner up. **Right:** Staff Sgt. Erica Whaley, Dental Activity (left) is the 2020 JRTC and Fort Polk Noncommissioned Officer of the Year and

Staff Sgt. Tyler Eissler, 519th Military Police Battalion, is the JRTC and Fort Polk NCO of the Year runner up. The winners were announced at a ceremony held at the Fort Polk Warrior Center June 3. If the winners are not able to complete their upcoming duties, the runner ups will step in for them. Look for the story in the June 12 edition of the Fort Polk Guardian.

509th Infantry Regiment (Airborne) Soldiers land on Geronimo Drop Zone

Operations Group and 1st Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment held airborne operations June 1 as Soldiers jumped onto the "Geronimo Drop Zone." The Air Force provided air support to the Joint Readiness Training Center and conducted internal training. A video is posted on JRTC and Fort Polk's Facebook page.



Military Families step outside to enjoy Fort Polk community



CHUCK CANNON/ GUARDIAN

Yoel Scott, 6, lands a bass at Catfish Cove. Yoel is the son of Joshua Scott, a civilian employed at the Directorate of Family Morale, Welfare and Recreation's Child and Youth Services on Fort Polk.



Katie Hawthorne gets a little exercise on the Warrior Hills Golf Course trail with her son, Noah (asleep in the stroller) and dog, Cooper. Katie is the spouse of Chap. (Capt.) Sam Hawthorne, 519th Military Police Battalion.



Master Sgt. Joshua Bone, Fire Support, Joint Readiness Training Center Operations Group (right), enjoys a round of golf with his spouse, Stephanie, and their daughters Emily, 13 (far left) and Olivia, 10. It was the first time Stephanie, Emily and Olivia had played golf.



From left: Courtney, Justin Jr. (6), Holly (3) and Sgt. Justin Hays Sr., 1st Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment, enjoy a brief respite from their morning walk beside the turtle pond on Warrior Hills Golf Course June 2. The pond, one of many quality of life areas on Fort Polk, has become a favorite place for walkers to catch their breath before tackling the hilly path.

DoD helps discover facts about ticks, diseases they carry with MilTICK program

GUARDIAN STAFF

Editor's note: In the May 29 edition of the Guardian we featured an article about snakes. In this week's edition we cover another critter — ticks — that are prevalent in the area. Please take precautions.

FORT POLK, La. — As you step outside this summer, realize that COVID-19 isn't the only danger you may encounter. Something as simple as walking across a yard or taking an enjoyable hike through the woods could have detrimental consequences due to something tiny — like a tick.

Instead of holding out a thumb, these blood-sucking hitchhikers hold the first pair of their legs outstretched while resting on the tips of grasses and shrubs, waiting to climb onto a host. Whether you want to give them a lift or not, when a host — human or animal — brushes the spot where a tick is waiting, it quickly climbs aboard.

Ticks find their hosts by detecting breath and body odors, or by sensing body heat, moisture and vibrations. Some ticks find optimal places to attach and begin to feed quickly and others will wander around, looking for places where the skin is thinner, like the ear.

As they feed, ticks may transmit pathogens that can cause any one of the following diseases:

- Anaplasmosis — these bacteria are spread primarily from the blacklegged tick and the western blacklegged tick. Signs and symptoms typically begin within one to two weeks after the bite of an infected tick. Early signs of the illness include fever, chills, severe headache, muscle aches, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and loss of appetite.

- Babesiosis — is caused by microscopic parasites that infect red blood cells and are spread by certain ticks. Many people who are infected with babesiosis do not have symptoms. Some people develop nonspecific flu-like symptoms, such as fever, chills, sweats, headache, body aches, loss of appetite, nausea, or fatigue. Because the parasites infect and destroy red blood cells, babesiosis can cause a special type of anemia called hemolytic anemia. This can lead to jaundice (yellowing of the skin) and dark urine. For those who do have symptoms, effective treatment is available.

- Ehrlichiosis — is a bacterial disease spread to people primarily through the bite of infected ticks including the lone star tick. People with ehrlichiosis will often have fever, chills, headache, muscle aches and sometimes upset stomach.

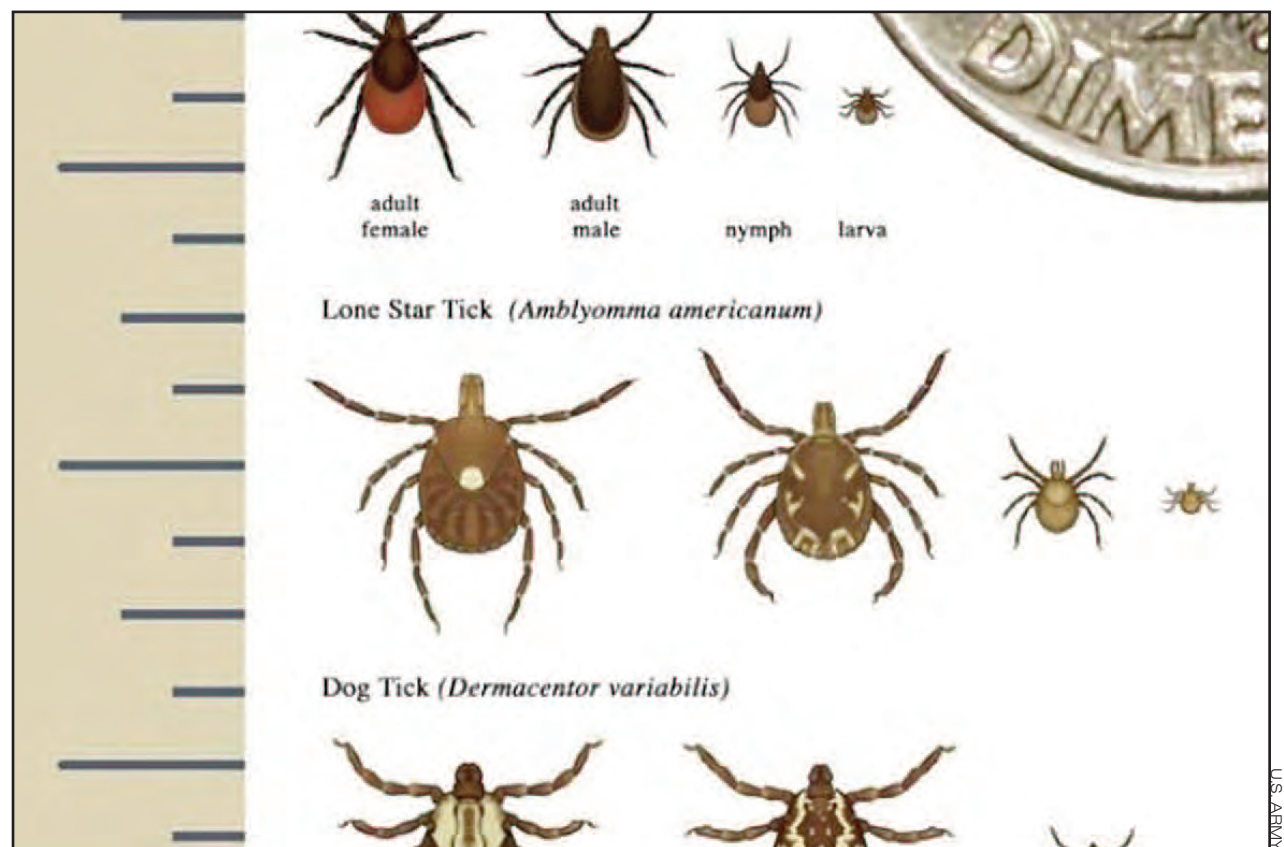
- Lyme disease — is a bacterial disease transmitted to humans through the bite of infected blacklegged ticks. Typical symptoms include fever, headache, fatigue and a characteristic skin rash called erythema migrans. If left untreated, infection can spread to joints, the heart and the nervous system. Lyme disease is diagnosed based on symptoms, physical findings and the possibility of exposure to infected ticks. Most cases of Lyme disease can be treated successfully with antibiotics.

- Rocky Mountain spotted fever — is a bacterial disease spread through the bite of an infected tick. Most people who get RMSF will have a fever, headache and rash. RMSF can be deadly if not treated early with the right antibiotic. Early



GRAHAM SNODGRASS/U.S. ARMY PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER

This is a highly magnified ventral shot of a female Ixodes scapularis tick, otherwise known as the deer tick, a primary vector for Lyme Disease. The U.S. Army Public Health Center offers free identification and analysis of ticks that have been removed from human patients for Department of Defense beneficiaries through its MilTICK testing program.



U.S. ARMY

This is a photo illustration of a blacklegged tick, a lone star tick, and a dog tick — in relation to Lyme Disease.

signs can include fever, headache, rash, nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, muscle pain and lack of appetite. However, the disease can rapidly progress into a life-threatening illness.

You should see your health-care provider if you become ill after having been bitten by a tick, having been in the woods or in areas with high brush where ticks commonly live. When you

come inside, you should check your clothes. Ticks may be carried into the house on clothing. Any ticks that are found should be removed. Tumble dry clothes in a dryer on high heat for 10 minutes to kill ticks on dry clothing after you come indoors.

Please see **Ticks**, page 13

Ticks

Continued from page 12

Take a shower as soon as possible and perform a tick check all over your body.

In addition, when you remove a tick, save it and have it tested with help from the Department of Defense.

For more than 20 years the Army Public Health Center Tick-Borne Disease Laboratory, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, has been offering military clinics and health-care providers test kits for identification and analysis of ticks that have been removed from human patients.

This service was known as the DoD Human Tick Test Kit Program. The program is expanding so that individual DoD beneficiaries who have been bitten by ticks can submit their ticks directly to the Military Tick Identification/Infection Confirmation Kit, or MilTICK, program, without needing to visit a clinic or order a test kit.

Why should you be interested? It is a free tick testing and identification service available to DoD personnel and their dependents. Individuals eligible to submit include active duty service members; National Guard personnel; Reservists in all services; civilian personnel working for the DoD or any of the services (including Army Corps of engineers); contractors supporting DoD or any of the services; retired service members; and dependents, including spouses, parents or children of any of these categories.

Ticks can be submitted following the instructions on the MilTICK form and results will be reported back to the sender within two weeks.

The results are used to track ticks and tick borne pathogens by location and can be used by patients seeking medical guidance and/or treatments for possible exposure to tick-borne disease. See the submission process and list of eligible users on the following link: https://phc.amedd.army.mil/PHC%20Resource%20Library/MilTICKforms_2020.pdf.

The purpose of submitting a tick is to help keep you safe by providing tick species identification; engorgement level, a relative indicator of the duration of attachment; and analysis for the pathogens that cause the human illnesses such as Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever and related spotted fevers, ehrlichiosis, anaplasmosis, babesiosis, and more. Infection potential increases relative to the duration of attachment.

If you aren't sure how to properly detach a tick, the Centers for Disease Control and Pre-



vention offer a step-by-step process on how to remove a tick.

Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible.

Pull upward with steady, even pressure. Don't twist or jerk the tick; this can cause the mouthparts to break off and remain in the skin.

If this happens, remove the mouthparts with tweezers. If you are unable to remove the mouth easily with clean tweezers, leave it alone and let the skin heal.

After removing the tick, thoroughly clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol or soap and water.

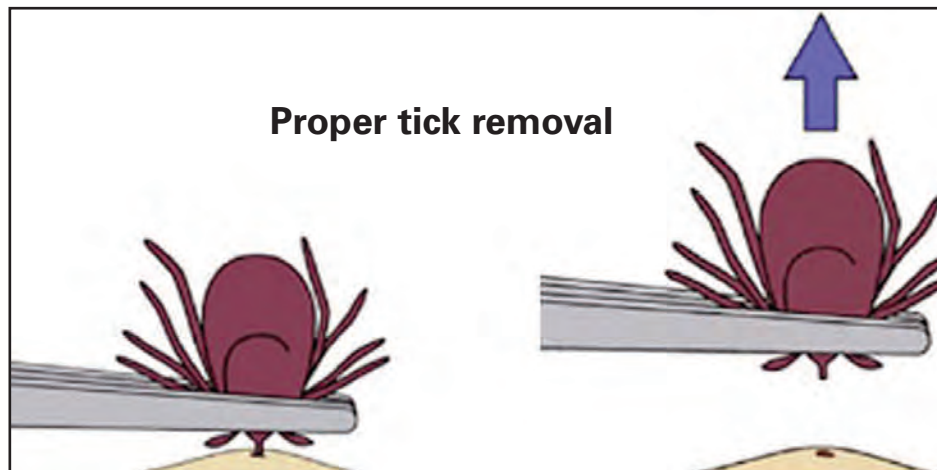
Never crush a tick with your fingers. Dispose of a live tick by putting it in alcohol, placing it in a sealed bag or container, wrapping it tightly in tape or flushing it down the toilet.

However, for the purposes of MilTICK, disregard the last instruction on disposal.

Editor's note: The following information on tick-borne diseases was found at www.cdc.gov and www.army.mil/article235944.



This is what late stage rash looks like in a patient with Rocky Mountain spotted fever.





Heed safety message regarding home during National Safety Month

GUARDIAN STAFF

FORT POLK, La. — Each June the Army observes National Safety Month in conjunction with public and private organizations across the United States. This year efforts are expanding to promote a campaign focused on four key areas: Emergency preparedness, driving, ergonomics and safety culture. During these uncertain times, safety and risk management helps inspire confidence in everyday tasks, according to <https://safety.army.mil>.

Shane Denning, Fort Polk's Garrison Safety Office director, said safety is often discussed, which is great, but it can become "white noise" to Soldiers and Family members.

"Having a safety month, especially as summer is kicking off, gives us an opportunity to spotlight safety and really provides relevant information," he said.

The safety office's first topic of focus is safety in the home.

The top hazards in and around the home include poisoning, falling, choking and suffocating, drowning and fires and burns.

In 2016, 31% of deaths from all causes of injury occurred in the person's home. The percentage varied by the cause of injury. More than half of the deaths attributable to poisoning (52%) occurred in the home. About 44% of deaths from firearms and suffocation occurred in the home, according to the National Center for Health Statistics.

The following information and tips can help keep you safe:

*** Poisoning** — every day, more than 300 children in the United States, ages 0 to 19, are treated in an emergency room, according to www.cdc.gov. Two children die as a result of being poisoned. It's not just chemicals in your home marked with clear warning labels that can be dangerous. Everyday items like household cleaners and medicines can be poisonous as well. Medication dosing mistakes and unsupervised ingestions are common ways that children are poisoned. Active, curious children often investigate — and sometimes try to eat or drink — anything they can get into.

The following tips can help poison-proof your home:

- Keep medicines and toxic products, such as cleaning solutions and detergent pods, in their original packaging where children can't see or get them.
- Put the nationwide poison control center

National Safety Month 2020

ARE YOU READY?

Emergencies can strike at any time. And as COVID-19 has shown, they can take many different forms.

Be prepared for the unexpected, no matter the season.

For more information visit <https://safety.army.mil>

U.S. ARMY
U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS CENTER

phone number, (800) 222-1222, on or near every telephone in your home and program it into your cell phone. Call the poison control center if you think a child has been poisoned but is awake and alert; they can be reached 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can also visit their website at www.poison.org. Call 911 if you have a poison emergency and your child has collapsed, experienced a seizure or is not breathing.

- Follow label directions carefully and read all warnings when giving medicines to children.
- Safely dispose of unused, unnecessary or expired prescriptions and over-the-counter drugs, vitamins and supplements. To dispose of medicines, mix them with coffee grounds or kitty litter and throw them away. You can also turn them into a local take-back program or during National Drug Take-Back events.

*** Falls** — they can be a threat to anyone, but it can be especially dangerous for older adults by reducing their ability to remain independent. One out of five falls causes a serious injury, such as broken bones or head injuries. Each year 3 mil-

lion older people are treated in emergency departments for fall injuries and 800,00 are hospitalized with a head injury or head fracture. In 2015, the total medical costs for falls totaled more than \$50 billion.

However, falls aren't something that just happen when you age. Here are a few proven ways to reduce falls.

- Make your home safer. Get rid of things you could trip over.
- Add grab bars inside and outside your tub or shower and next to the toilet.
- Put railings on both sides of stairs and make sure your home has ample lighting by adding more or brighter light bulbs.
- * Choking** — you can help prevent your child from choking. Have your child:
 - Sit up while eating (no laying down); sit in a high chair or other safe place.
 - Avoid eating in the car or a stroller.
 - Cook and prepare food in ways that are ap-

Please see Home, page 15





Home

Continued from page 14

appropriate for each stage of your child's development.

- Pay close attention to what your child is eating and what they put in their mouth.
- Some foods served uncooked, whole or in certain shapes can be choking hazards, and cutting up food into smaller pieces and mashing foods can help prevent choking.
- If the item is small enough, they can also choke on things like magnets, hard candy, coins, toy parts and more.

* **Suffocation** — sudden infant death syndrome and unintentional strangulation from things like curtain cords are dangers that can lead to suffocation. Some safe sleep practices to prevent SIDS include:

- Placing the baby on his or her back at all sleep times.
- Using a firm sleep surface, such as a safety-approved mattress and crib.
- Keeping soft objects and loose bedding out of the baby's sleep area.
- Sharing a room with the baby but not the same bed.

When it comes to cords, if you are unable to switch to cordless window coverings, follow these safety tips:

- Move all cribs, beds, furniture and toys away from windows and window cords, preferably to another wall.
- Make sure that tasseled pull cords are as short as possible; keep all window cords out of reach for children.
- Eliminate any dangling cords.
- Check that the cord stops are properly installed and adjusted to limit the movement of inner lift cords.
- Continuous-loop cords on draperies and vertical blinds should be permanently anchored to the floor or wall.

* **Drowning** — When enjoying time at the pool or beach, injuries aren't the first thing people think about; yet, drowning is a leading cause of injury and death for young children ages 1 to 14. Three children die every day as a result of drowning. Key prevention tips include learning life-saving skills such as basic swimming and cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Other safety tips include:

- If you have a pool, then fence it off. Install a four-sided isolation fence, with self-closing and self-latching gates, around backyard swimming pools. This can help keep children away from the

area when they aren't supposed to be swimming. Pool fences should completely separate the house and play area from the pool.

- You should always make sure your kids are wearing life jackets when they are in or around bodies of water like lakes or the ocean, and the pool, if they are just learning to swim.
- Always closely supervise kids when they are in or near water (including bathtubs in the home). Don't let activities like reading, talking on the phone or socializing distract you from keeping an eye on your kids.

* **Burns** — Every day more than 300 children ages 0 to 19 are treated in emergency rooms for burn-related injuries and two children die as a result of being burned. Younger children are more likely to sustain injuries from scald burns that are caused by hot liquids or steam, while older children are more likely to sustain injuries from flame burns that are caused by direct contact with fire. There are ways you can protect children and other family members from fires and burns.

- Install and maintain smoke alarms in your home — on every floor and near all rooms family members sleep in. Test your smoke alarms once a month to make sure they are working properly. Use long-life batteries when possible.

• Have an escape plan. Create and practice a family fire escape plan and involve kids in the planning. Make sure everyone knows at least two ways out of every room and identify a central meeting place outside.

- Cook with care. Use safe cooking practices, such as never leaving food unattended on the stove. Also, supervise or restrict children's use of stoves, ovens and microwaves.

• Check your water heater temperatures. Set your water heater's thermostat to 120 degrees Fahrenheit or lower. Infants and small children may not be able to get away from water that may be too hot and maintaining a constant thermostat setting can help control the water temperature throughout your home, preventing it from getting too high. Test the water at the tap if possible.

Denning said Soldiers know how to follow safety procedures but tend to relax that focus when it comes to their own homes.

"We have so many rules and laws in the workplace (for good reason) that, when we retreat to our homes, we often let our guard down. Often nothing happens, but it's that one time that I want to highlight. We can get complacent in the



routines of our homes and often walk right by significant hazards. That's why taking extra precautions is important," he said.

The additional time spent at home during stay-at-home orders in response to COVID-19 can exacerbate the complacency and importance of home safety.

"Safety is supposed to be a habit and not a burden. It shouldn't ruin the relaxing time spent at home. I like to use the analogy of seatbelts: Some of us grew up in an era when seatbelts weren't required, and we had to develop the habit over time. Today, after years of practicing a good habit, I have to try hard to stop myself from putting on a seatbelt if I'm only backing the car from the carport into the driveway," he said.

Denning hopes that focusing awareness and altering perceptions about safety in the home becomes an ingrained habit that people don't have to think twice about.

Editor's note: The Fort Polk Guardian, working with the Fort Polk Garrison Safety Office, is producing a series of articles in June — National Safety Month — to help the Fort Polk community stay safe. The safety tips and information about National Safety Month were gathered from <https://safety.army.mil>, www.cdc.gov and www.cpsc.gov.



Dogs leave paw prints on hearts for a lifetime

By **JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES**

Public affairs specialist

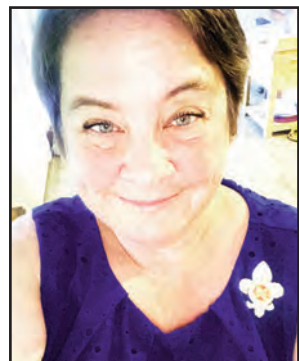
Fort Polk, La. — If you've been stationed at Fort Polk or lived in the surrounding community for the last two years, you are probably well aware that our commanding general is a note writer. His signature red-sharpie notes on newspaper articles, slide presentations, operational orders and photos can be seen on display across the installation and in the homes and offices of citizens in the surrounding community. Seeing his distinctive script, your name and "ATW BG Frank" can elicit a host of emotions. It's nice to be recognized and to know that what you are doing matters. Recently, the public affairs office got several notes from the CG — all very complimentary — but one particularly caught my eye and made me laugh.

As you know, our Command Information Officer, Chuck Cannon, has been illustrating his chaotic life with four cats. He wrote a calamitous-cat commentary about trying to complete his honey-do list while his four cats were determined to sabotage his efforts at every turn. Thankfully, Chuck survived the misadventure mostly unscathed, with blood drawn only twice.

As a result, he received a note from the commander about his story that said, "Chuck, we might have to get you a dog! ATW BG Frank."

That note made me laugh. I knew the commander had a dog, and I've been tempted to offer to dog sit if he ever needed a dog sitter. I've become the go-to guy amongst my friends to dog sit when they go out of town.

In fact, one of my dogs was shipped back to me from friends who were stationed in Korea last year.



Graves

Over the course of our marriage, my husband Drew and I have adopted, befriended and raised six dogs. As the late George Carlin said, "life is a series of dogs." His stand up bit is hysterical, but having dogs, while amusing at times, is anything but funny.

It's a deeply moving experience where two creatures, one human and one canis familiaris, bond in a manner that only other dog lovers can understand. Dogs choose to commune with humans; they trust us; live and work alongside us, and the relationships we build with them are remarkable.

We adopted our first dog (our first baby) in 1998 while we were stationed at Fort Leonard Wood. The baby, a faun-colored Chihuahua named Radar, was my husband's best friend. Radar had a great life. He traveled to Germany,



Daisy (top) and Rowdy (bottom).

Commentary

Kansas, back to Missouri and to Colorado. While my husband was doing a Rotation at the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, Radar passed away due to complications with an enlarged heart. That was the most difficult news I ever had to deliver.

We got our second dog, Rocket, a beautiful boxer with a fancy bloodline, through breeders associated with the German Kennel Club. When we went to see the puppies, they alluded that he was defective and not suitable for showing. That's when we knew he was the dog for us. We didn't want a show dog.

Shortly after we got this boxer puppy, my husband went to Fort Leonard Wood for the Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course, now called the Advanced Leadership Course. I was in Germany doing "stairwell" living with a Chihuahua and a brand new puppy, transitioning from active duty and beginning my career as a Department of the Army Civilian. Rocket was a hard-head and a lot of work.

During BNOC, my husband tore his anterior cruciate ligament and then 9/11 happened. His return to Germany was delayed, he underwent surgery in December and then deployed to Kosovo (against his doctor's orders) in February 2002. I was stuck with this wild dog.

I failed to mention, Drew was the one who wanted a boxer. He said his granddad had one, and he always wanted one. His grandfather also had a Chihuahua.

Somehow, Rocket became my dog. He once ran off into the German wilderness (picture the Brothers Grimm) during a long walk. I searched that eerie forest for what seemed like hours; after I found him, I knew I couldn't live without him. He was the dog for me.

All of his annoying habits (peeing when he got



Lucy

JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES/GUARDIAN

excited, drooling all over the floor, trying to lick your plate when you walked by, getting his head stuck in the cat box, being caught standing on the kitchen table or being extremely rambunctious) no longer mattered. I loved that dog.

Rocket and I were thick as thieves. Where I went, he went with me. We'd often walk to the marketplatz then take the bus home. In Germany, dogs are allowed nearly everywhere.

When our son Baker was born, Rocket could be found under his crib as he slept, becoming a second set of eyes for me. He was vigilant and on guard for the tiny human.

Rocket and Radar traveled with us back from Germany to Fort Riley. They kept my son and me company while Drew spent three years on the drill sergeant trail, during one deployment to Iraq and two to Afghanistan.

After drill-sergeant duty, we spent four years at Fort Carson. While at Carson, we acquired a third dog, an English bulldog and Labrador retriever mix. We saw her at the pet store and thought she was a Boxer like Rocket. The sales associate told us she was a Bulldador, the latest in designer hybrids.

We left for dinner and a few beers at Phantom Canyon Brewery, and my friend convinced me that sometimes dogs needed to be rescued from the pet store. She said when they get too big the dogs are sent back to the puppy mill.

I may have been slightly intoxicated, but I decided I needed to go back to the mall and save her. Twelve hundred dollars later, I purchased Rowdy — the most expensive mutt in history.

Having three dogs was too much. Rowdy was a wild woman; she chewed up Drew's government blackberry, our grandfather clock and the legs of our kitchen table. But, she was also ex-

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Paws

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tremely sweet and loving. We could not imagine rehoming her. After Radar died, I thought to myself “no more dogs. We are back to a two dog family,” but my husband’s fellow Soldiers had other plans.

As I mentioned, Radar passed away while Drew was in the box with the 110th Military Police Company in 2011. I couldn’t reach him and had to send a text to his executive officer, 1st Lt. Christopher Housel, who relayed the message. (Housel is now a major, and I feed him and his buddies every time they do a rotation at Fort Polk).

My husband typically has two emotions that are seen by his Soldiers, leaders and peers — humor and anger. After he heard about Radar, however, they saw a broken-hearted man. Drew told me he felt like he lost his best friend. The next day, the spouse of another NCO in the company showed up with a little black and white Chihuahua. She told me her husband sent her over with the pick of the litter for Graves. That little dog’s name is Daisy, and she worships the ground my husband walks on. It’s humorous to see this tough-gruff man with his purse dog, but they’re a nice pair.

That leads me to our journey to Fort Polk, Louisiana and why we are here. After that Joint Readiness Training Center rotation, Drew departed for Afghanistan. It was supposed to be a nine-month deployment, but his platoon did such a great job they stayed on for the full year.

During the deployment, his branch manager said he needed to leave Fort Carson. Drew would be promoted to Master Sgt. soon, and there was no spot for him in his current battalion. He was told to update his wish list on his Army Knowledge Online profile; we chose Hawaii, Alaska and Joint Base Lewis-McChord. His branch manager called back and said, “You’ve got three choices: Germany, Japan and Fort Polk.”

We loved Germany; Japan would be a once in a lifetime opportunity, but we had three dogs (and a cat), a new truck, a camper and Rocket was twelve years old. We were afraid he wouldn’t make the flight. We ultimately decided to come to Fort Polk because of our dog.

When we left Colorado, it was 8 degrees. When we arrived to Fort Polk, it was 70 degrees and humid; it might as well have been 100 degrees. We lived in our camper (with three dogs, a cat and our kid) for a couple of months before we found a place to live.

Two weeks after receiving our household goods and settling in, Rocket had a massive seizure. The vet said he had blood cancer, and the only humane thing to do was to put him out of his misery. We let him eat Fat Boy and Skinny hamburgers and ride around in the truck before the vet gave him medicine that put him into an eternal sleep. All three of his humans were there as he left us for the rainbow bridge. Even now, it’s heartbreaking to write.

We were back to two dogs. We only need two dogs. After we lost Rocket, I didn’t think I’d ever love another dog, and that was fine. Rowdy and Daisy were all we needed.

On a weekend outing to Lake Charles and routine stop at PetSmart, we found Chance. They were having an adoption event and we all separately interacted with this weird looking Shar-Pei/Sheppard mix. On the drive back home, my son said, “Did you see that brown and black



Stitch (left) and Simba (right).

JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES/ GUARDIAN

Shar-Pei? He reminded me of Rocket.” Drew and I had both seen him and, while he definitely wasn’t a boxer, he had dark soulful eyes and leaned against his cage to be rubbed — just like Rocket would do to our legs when he wanted attention. We talked about him the entire trip home and, by the time we returned, we voted to take a chance on Chance. The next day, I called in sick and went back to Lake Charles to pick him up. We call him a Louisiana dingo because he always smells like swamp water.

Here we are with our four dogs Daisy, Rowdy, Chance and Lucy. They each have managed to carve a spot in our hearts. Rowdy loves to ride in the car and visit Lowes with me. She always gets a lot of attention and is exhausted whenever we get home. We call her “mama Row” because she treats the other dogs (and cats) like they are her puppies.

Daisy can always be found under a blanket on my husband’s lap or in our bed. Every morning as I get up to go running, she starts yapping and barking at me. I think she is telling me, “be quiet, daddy’s asleep.” She and Rowdy are both getting older, and the gray hair is showing up in their black fur.

Chance will sit in our yard for hours sniffing the air and monitoring his property. Every night he sleeps with our son, unless there is a thunderstorm. In that case he needs to be with my husband and me.

Lucy, our newest edition, must have all the attention at all times. She is a blond bombshell, and she uses her nose to force you to pet her if she feels she isn’t getting the affection she deserves.

At the office, we’ve been teasing Chuck about all the communing he’s been doing with his cats. If you look at his Facebook page, you’ll find pictures of his cats or his granddaughter. I thought I’d write a commentary about life with dogs. But the stroll down memory lane had the waterworks flowing like the time I watched “Marley and Me,” or after I read “A Dog’s Journey.” Don’t let me fool you; I cry at the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals commercials every time.



Chance

JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES/ GUARDIAN

Ironically, the day I began writing this story, as I was out for my morning run, I heard a cat crying and this tiny guy came running out of the woods towards me. I tried to run away, and it just ran with me. I bent down to pet him, and he kept following me. I picked him up and tried to put him back where he came from, but he wouldn’t have it. I was summarily adopted by a cat who we decided to keep and name Stitch, because I’m sure he will be a lot of trouble.

I guess the difference between having dogs and having cats is that we adopt dogs, but cats adopt us. Dogs live to please us and cats demand we please them. Simba, the cat my brother gave me last summer (he was evidently too “bitey and too scratchy”) still hasn’t accepted Stitch, but I think he’s coming along.

I basically live in a zoo. Thankfully, I have a dog door and a big fenced-in backyard. I have a soft spot for animals; dogs are my favorite, cats are a close second and even our bearded dragon Jeffery is endearing.

If you are privileged enough to have an animal in your life treat them well. Keep their shots up-to-date; periodically sneak them extra treats; take them on long walks; scratch their bellies and behind their ears; let them sit on the furniture and love them the way they love you; and, as Bob Barker used to say, “help control the pet population — have your pets spayed or neutered.”



Going out of business sale

Cash only sale, available now through July 4, subject to availability. Contact Michelle Myers at 537-4089 ext. 211 or by email at myersmi@aafes.com.

Items can be picked up from the Fort Polk Exchange Food Court, 7742 Colorado Ave. (bldg 850) Monday-Friday 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Please visit facebook.com/pollexchange for a list of available sale items.



FORT POLK THRIFT SHOP REOPENS

The Fort Polk Thrift Shop has officially reopened today at their new location in bldg 830 — the old commissary — from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The store will also be open Saturday, June 6, from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Sales will be cash only, and masks are mandatory while in the store. Regular operating hours (listed below) will resume next week.
Tuesday-Thursday 9:30 a.m. to 4:40 p.m.
Wednesday 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

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TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY

CLOSED

THURSDAY & FRIDAY

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0900 - 1700



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