



FORGING THE

WARRIOR SPIRIT

THE JRTC & FORT POLK GUARDIAN

Vol. 47, No. 7

Home of Heroes @ Fort Polk, LA

Feb. 14, 2020

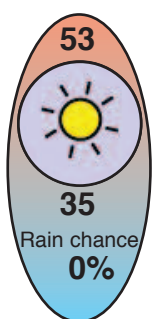


Medics test for right to wear EFMB

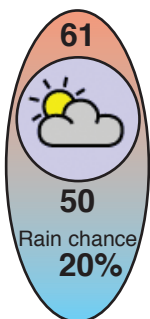
Soldier medics from 46 installations across the Army began the battle to be recognized as one of the best in their field and claim the right to wear the Expert Field Medical Badge. Long considered one of the service's toughest badges to earn, the medics

had to overcome rain, cold weather, complete an array of battle tasks and a 12-mile road march in less than three hours to earn the badge. For story and more photos see pages 6 and 7 of today's Guardian.

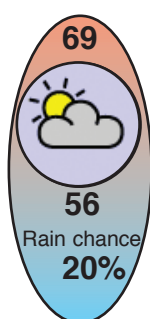
Weekend weather



Friday



Saturday



Sunday

Inside the Guardian

Trail opens 3 32nd HC deploys 9

Housing improves 5 Time to leap 11

Trio saves life 8 Scholarship winner ... 12

Viewpoint

In our view

Guardian staff asked the Fort Polk community,
"What was the best Valentine's gift you ever gave or received?"
Here are their responses:

Alexus Jones: "I got a six-foot teddy bear. I love it. We still have it sitting on our stairway landing."



Jan Torres: "The best gift I ever gave was a camera so she could take pictures of all of our good memories."



Devin Rushing: "When he was 3 years old, my godson sent me a rose at work. It was so sweet."



Lia Verdi: "A bouquet of flowers. It was unexpected. It's always great to get flowers because they are so beautiful."



Spc. Richard Bolling: "My date and I gave each other the gift of a wonderful dinner, so it was the best Valentine present I gave and received."



Esya Flores: "I was given a trip in a recreational vehicle. We got on top and looked at the stars. It was great. This year I'm giving a trip to Lake Charles to my husband. It's about the time you spend together."



Amanda Moore: "Flowers from my husband because we were both in the Army at one point and didn't always get to spend the day together. That made it special."



Cassidy Ferguson: "I place little paper valentines all over our house for my kids to find every day in February. They love it."



Guardian

Editorial Staff

Brig. Gen. Patrick D. Frank
Joint Readiness Training Center
and Fort Polk commanding general

Col. Ryan K. Roseberry
Garrison commander

Kim Reischling
Public affairs officer

Chuck Cannon
Command information officer

Angie Thorne

T.C. Bradford

Keith Houin
Staff writers

Editorial Offices

Building 4919, Magnolia Street

Fort Polk, LA 71459-5060

Voice (337) 531-4033

Fax (337) 531-1401

Email: Kimberly.K.Reischling.civ@mail.mil

Trading post ads:

tradingpostads@yahoo.com

Fort Polk Homepage
home.army.mil/polk/

Advertising

For advertising contact
(337) 404-7242

Email: sales@thefortpolkguardian.com

The **Guardian**, a civilian enterprise newspaper, is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. Army. Contents of the **Guardian** are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army or Fort Polk.

The **Guardian** is published weekly by the Public Affairs Office, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk. Printed circulation is 13,000.

Everything advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation or any other nonmerit factor of the purchaser, user or patron.

A confirmed violation of this policy of equal opportunity by an advertiser will result in the refusal to print advertising from that source.

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

The **Guardian** is printed by the **Natchitoches Times**, a private firm in no way connected with the Department of the Army, under exclusive written contract with Fort Polk. The civilian printer is responsible for commercial advertising.

The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts and supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the Department of the Army or the **Natchitoches Times** of the products or services advertised.

Briefs

Polk drill

Fort Polk will conduct a Force Protection Condition Elevation Drill March 6. Soldiers, employees, Families, residents, guests and visitors may see Soldiers with weapons responding to planned events as part of the drill.

Do not be alarmed; this is part of the drill to ensure Fort Polk is prepared for any contingency and the safety of everyone on Fort Polk. Any questions or inquiries should be directed to the Installation Antiterrorism Office at 531-6007 or the Warrior Operations Center at 531-4916.

Black History Month

A Black History Month celebration, hosted by Joint Readiness Training Center Operations Group, is held Wednesday at noon, in Bayou Theater. Everyone is invited to attend the event.

BJACH holiday hours

Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital clinics, laboratory, radiology, dining facility and pharmacy are closed Monday in honor of Presidents Day.

BJACH services will remain open today. The emergency room and inpatient services are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

FPSC grants

The Fort Polk Spouses' Club announces the launch of the 2019-2020 Community Grants application period through March 2.

The FPSC seeks to promote community interests, support worthy causes and improve the quality of life for Fort Polk and its surrounding communities. Its goal is to support as many needs as possible; however, the amount of funds disbursed depends on the success of ongoing Fort Polk Spouses' Club fundraisers and the number of applications received.

You can find the community grants application at <https://fortpolkspousesclub.wildapricot.org>. Please have completed applications post marked no later than March 2. Mail completed application packets to the address on the form or submitted by email to FPSCCommunityGrants@gmail.com.

Once the applications are reviewed and approved all disbursements will be made in May.

For more information contact the Community Grants Chair at fpsccommunity-grants@gmail.com. Subject: ATTN: Community Grants Eligibility or Application Process.



1st LT. MICHAEL GORSKI

Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 509th Infantry Regiment "Geronimos" join with Fort Polk leadership and representatives from the Directorate of Public Works and PRIDE Industries to cut a ribbon Feb. 10 officially opening Geronimo Trail, a path that leads from Soldiers' barracks to the installation's commissary and PX.

Trail improves quality of life for Soldiers

By **CHUCK CANNON**

Command information officer

FORT POLK, La. — Soldiers who reside on South Fort Polk in barracks near Bayou Theater now have a shorter, safer path to the installation's commissary and Post Exchange area.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held Feb. 10 officially opening Geronimo Trail. The path, once a slippery, muddy walkway over a rickety bridge and through encroaching brush, now features a new bridge, gravel footing and open spaces.

"This idea was a Soldier's feedback that went to the commanding general," said Lt. Col. Henry Moltz, commander, 1st Battalion, 509th Infantry Regiment. "The commanding general said this is what the Soldiers need. There is no better example of the chain of command listening to you and providing what you need."

Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 509th Infantry Regiment "Geronimos," for whom the trail was named, are the primary beneficiaries, but other Soldiers who reside on the southern side of South Fort Polk will also benefit, said Brig. Gen. Patrick D. Frank, commander, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.

"What the Geronimo Trail represents for Fort Polk is Soldier Quality of Life," Frank said. "Soldiers always take the shortest point from their barracks to a place like the commissary, PX or barber shop, so Geronimo Trail is the shortest point, but it was in disrepair. Providing a Geronimo Trail that's a respectable path from point to point allows our Soldiers a little bit better quality of life for a unit that's always in the box."

JRTC and Fort Polk Command Sgt. Maj. David

W. Bass spoke with Geronimo Soldiers after the ceremony and challenged them to continue the unit's tradition of producing talented leaders.

"If we can do something like this for you I think it's great," Bass said.

Command Sgt. Maj. Vladimir Querales, 1st Bn, 509th Inf Reg command sergeant major, said the trail is all about taking care of Soldiers and their quality of life in the Army.

"Don't ever forget where you came from," he said.

The Fort Polk Directorate of Public Works and PRIDE Industries joined forces to complete the project at Frank's request. Tim Fitzgerald, a retired Soldier and part of the team that work on improving the trail, related a story from a Soldier who approached him as work was nearing completion.

"I had a Soldier tell me he wanted to hug me and the trail was something the Soldiers had needed for a long time," Fitzgerald said. "It was humbling. When you get that kind of input from Soldiers, it makes you proud to be part of this team."

Col. Ryan K. Roseberry, Fort Polk garrison commander, recalled his time as a member of Geronimo.

"I was Geronimo here for four years and I was one of the first Geronimos paving a path through here, going from the troop area to the PX and commissary," he said. "To see now that we've got bridges, gravel trail and lighting, this is what quality of life is. They just want to walk back and forth from their barracks to the commissary without fighting snakes — they get enough of that in the box — and this is a great way to do it."

FY21 budget focuses on readiness, modernization, people

By DEVON L. SUITS

Army News Service

WASHINGTON — The Army released its fiscal year 2021 budget request Monday for \$178 billion, which includes a 3% increase in basic pay for Soldiers.

If approved, Soldiers could also see a boost in housing and subsistence allowances by 2.9 and 2.3% respectively, said Maj. Gen. Paul Chamberlain, Army budget director in the Office of Assistant Secretary of the Army for Financial Management and Comptroller.

In addition to the increased pay, the Army's budget request "enables us to reach our 2022 tactical readiness goal of two-thirds of brigade combat teams at the highest levels of readiness," Chamberlain said.

"The National Defense Strategy informs the Army's FY21 budget request and prepares the Army to support joint all-domain and large-scale combat operations," he said.

Even with an about \$2 billion decrease from this year's enacted budget, he said the Army will continue to provide the joint force with Soldiers to meet today's challenges.

The force will also continue to enhance its strategic readiness to compete in an evolving operational environment that might require distinct material and technical solutions, he added. Strategic-level preparation includes sustained funding of the Army's modernization priorities, he said, as the Army looks to reach its 2028 modernization goal.

"While we were fighting counterterrorism and counterinsurgency battles, near-peer competitors and adversaries were modernizing with new technologies and capabilities, putting them on a trajectory to overtake our competitive advantage," he said. "China and Russia are developing sophisticated weapons systems and advanced capabilities to disrupt our military deployments and operations."

Personnel and end strength

The military personnel account makes up the majority of the Army's budget, Chamberlain said. This year's \$62.5 billion request for personnel is an increase of \$2.8 billion over FY20's enacted budget.

"Our people are our greatest strength and our most important weapons system," he said. "Our people will deliver on our readiness, modernization and reform efforts. The Army stands ready to deploy, fight and win our nation's battles."

Increased funding for personnel includes a boost in recruiting and retention incentives, "allowing the Army to attract the talent it needs for today's sophisticated force," he said.

"In FY19, the Army exceeded its adjusted end-strength goals," he said. "The Army, therefore, adjusted the FY20 active-component end strength to 485,000 Soldiers. In FY21, the Army will up its active end-strength to 485,900."

The Army's total end strength, which includes the National Guard and Reserve, will be 1,012,200 Soldiers.

A funding increase also helps fund Reserve Soldiers serving on active duty, he said. These Soldiers provide essential support during operational missions, Chamberlain said.

"The requested Army end strength will fill units, reconstitute lost capabilities, and provide new capabilities that are designed to face emerging threats to support the joint all-domain fight."



C. TODD LOPEZ / ARMY NEWS SERVICE

Maj. Gen. Paul Chamberlain, the Army budget director in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Financial Management and Comptroller, discusses the Army's fiscal year 2021 budget request at the Pentagon, Feb. 11. The Army's FY21 request looks to sustain its current level of tactical readiness, enhance strategic readiness and further the Army's modernization priorities.

Operational maintenance

The Army's operation and maintenance, or OMA, funding request increased by \$1.9 billion over the 2020 enacted levels, Chamberlain said. The proposed increase in OMA targets operational training opportunities, ensuring that BCTs are ready to face a near-peer competitor during large-scale combat operations.

Training opportunities will include 24 brigade rotations to combat training centers: 10 to the Joint Readiness Training Center, eight to the National Training Center, and six to the Joint Multi-

national Training Center, he added.

"Four of these rotations are Army National Guard BCT rotations, emphasizing total Army readiness and interoperability," Chamberlain said.

Proposed OMA funds also include the extension of one-station unit training from 18 to 22 weeks for armored cavalry and combat engineers, he said.

"The result will provide better trained and more lethal forces that can quickly integrate with their new units, he added.

Army briefs

User feedback helps

WASHINGTON — Improvements to the Assignment Interactive Module known as AIM 2.0 will ensure an even better user experience before the next assignment cycle, leaders said Thursday.

"It is an incredibly exciting time to be in the Army," said Lt. Gen. Thomas Seamands, deputy chief of staff, G-1. "The leadership we have is aligned to make the Army as best as it can be."

The Army People Strategy, which includes the Army's talent alignment efforts, provides an opportunity to resource and embed programs to "attract, acquire, develop, employ and retain" Soldiers, families and civilians, said Seamands during a media roundtable at the Pentagon.

Soldier protection

ADELPHI, Md. — When faced with battlefield threats, American Soldiers depend more than ever on body armor to protect them. To adapt to the evolving dangers of getting shot, the Army created a flagship program dedicated to protection technologies.

At the U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command's Army Research Laboratory, leaders designated 10 research programs as essential. Soldier protection made the list.

"The United States fields the best body armor in the world, but near-peer adversaries have threats designed to defeat body armor," said Dr. Christopher Hoppel, Physics of Soldier Protection to Defeat Evolving Threats program manager.

Fort Polk Family overcomes challenges, renews faith in Army quality of life

GUARDIAN STAFF

FORT POLK, La. — Whether military or civilian, challenges exist that must be overcome. It's how those inevitable difficulties are resolved that can bring about positive resolutions and happy endings.

Staff Sgt. Blake Nauert, a military police officer with the 91st Military Police Detachment, 519th Military Police Battalion, his spouse Charlsie and their daughter Harper, 1, discovered that for themselves.

The couple moved to Fort Polk in October 2018 from Fort Campbell, Kentucky-Tennessee, when Charlsie was still pregnant. They moved into an on post home to begin their journey at Fort Polk. Everything seemed fine at first, but after Harper was born the following Jan. 24, they began to have a major problem.

"When she (Harper) was at the hospital, everything was fine. She was healthy and there were no issues. After we came home, we noticed that she'd wake with a crusty build up around her eyes. We thought at first it was just allergies," said Nauert.

Charlsie said it got so bad that Harper would wake up with her eyes swollen shut with so much crust that they would have to use warm water to get it off. The couple still thought it might just be an adjustment to the house.

"We took her to Byrd (Byrd Regional Hospital, Leesville, La.). The doctor looked at it and said it might just be allergies, but I told him I didn't think that was the case. A month later she was still having the same problems in addition to trouble breathing, so we took her back to the hospital," Nauert said.

Charlsie put Harper in the Child and Youth Service's Family Child Care to get her out of the family home.

"I noticed that when she was at FCC she was fine, but when we brought her home the same symptoms would start again," she said.

At this point, Harper had been hospitalized three times between the ages of 2 to 6 months.

Nauert said his little girl was happy and healthy in every way except for this issue and he and his spouse knew they had to figure out what was going on.

They began to notice the puddles of water on the window frames and talked to Charlsie's family, who builds homes, and realized they were dealing with more than just allergies.

"That water builds up, drips down the wall, gets into the carpet and dries. Then it gets wet and dries and you get the picture. It creates mold," he said.

They finally had a possible answer to what was causing Harper's difficulties. The next challenge was having something done about it.

"We talked to Corvias and they said it's a normal issue that happens in Louisiana," he said.

The Nauerts went back and forth with Corvias for months about the mold in the carpet, under the kitchen tiles and in the vents. The housing company would send out a maintenance man that the Nauerts said was very kind and he would try to help correct the problems, but in Harper's case drastic measures were necessary and that caused a difficulties for all involved.

"At this point, we even had doctor-backed documentation stating that it was the mold causing Harper's issues," said Charlsie.

She said they couldn't seem to get anyone to understand the gravity of the situation. They



Staff Sgt. Blake Nauert, a military police officer with the 91st Military Police Detachment, 519th Military Police Battalion, (left) sits with his daughter Harper, 1, and his spouse Charlsie.

couldn't stay in the house while repairs were taking place. In fact, they wanted a new house altogether, but were hitting roadblocks everywhere.

That's when the Nauerts decided to go to the Fort Polk Palmetto Town Hall — an event held to encourage Families to meet with command to discuss their housing issues — on May 13, 2019. They said they wanted to tell someone about the problems they were having and try to get some help.

Nauert attended the town hall and talked to Brig. Gen. Patrick D. Frank, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk commanding general, about the issues his family was having. Nauert said Frank assured him that the situation would be looked into.

What Nauert didn't know was that Charlsie cut short an appointment to attend the town hall herself and also talked to Frank. Her emotional plea for help added to an already respectfully worded request, seemed to make a huge impression.

"What spouse goes up to the general and goes on a rant? But I was scared and exhausted. I had to do something," said Charlsie.

The result was an immediate move for the Nauerts into the Corvias complimentary suite.

"I didn't want to be the person who saw the mold and blamed it for all of my problems. I get it. It happens, but when you've paid to have your house deep cleaned and removed your own pets to see if they were the problem and eliminated all the other possible causes and that's the only common denominator, but you still aren't getting the help you need, there's only one thing left to do. I went to that town hall and laid it all on the line to see what would happen," she said. "I was terrified I would have to pack my family up and move."

Charlsie said the commanding general didn't judge her for crying or make her feel like her points weren't valid.

"I didn't really expect anything to happen. I'm sure he had a lot of other issues to deal with, but he took us seriously and I walked out of that meeting with a key to that complimentary suite," she said. "He (Frank) made sure everything was

done. The Army talks about Family and I think he is the perfect example of backing that up with the actions they took," she said.

Charlsie said Frank told her he would watch the situation closely and make sure everything got done.

"That night after the town hall I got a phone call from Brigadier General Frank. He asked how we were doing. I told him Harper was doing great. There were no issues in the complimentary suite home. Then he emailed me to let me know we would be getting a new house and we could choose the one we wanted," said Nauert.

The Nauerts found a home they liked and are now healthfully and happily situated.

In the big picture, Nauert said he didn't think a sergeant's house would be a priority when it comes to the list of things a general normally has on his plate.

"I can never repay him for what he did for my family," he said.

But the struggle had taken a toll on the family. Nauert was up for reenlistment and was leaning toward getting out of the Army, but Charlsie said no.

Charlsie said it just made sense to stay in the Army.

"My husband reenlisted, got a promotion, is going to school and I've got my own home-based business with FCC. Things are wonderful now, but I never would have encouraged him to stay in if it weren't for Brigadier General Frank," she said.

The commanding general even did the reenlistment upon Nauert's request.

"I was so honored that he took the time out of his day to do that for us. It was absolutely amazing," he said.

Charlsie said in addition to her daughter's health issues, she had to pause the process of starting her own home-based business with FCC because she couldn't bring other children into a home with mold.

"With as many health checks as the house goes through to qualify for FCC, there is no way she

Please see Quality, page 9

Candidates battle weather, terrain, medical tasks to earn EFMB

By **CHUCK CANNON**

Command information officer

FORT POLK, La. — Soldiers from more than 46 Army installations conclude testing for the coveted Expert Field Medical Badge today with a 12-mile road march and graduation ceremony, slated for 10 a.m. on Fort Polk's Honor Field.

To highlight the badge's importance and the skill and perseverance needed to pass the grueling class, the badges will be flown in by helicopter just prior to the ceremony.

An important part of the week-long testing is the week of study and training held prior to the event under the watchful eyes and guidance of cadre "Black Hats" who will judge and grade the class members on their efforts. One of the cadre, Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Clifford, 32nd Hospital Center, said the event — both train-up and test — were tough and stressful.

"It's designed that way to make it as realistic as possible," said Clifford, an MOS 68S preventive medicine, who earned his badge a few years ago. "The attrition rate is normally 7 to 15%."

Clifford said the biggest stumbling block most of the candidates face is land navigation.

"Land navigation is a perishable skill," Clifford said. "It's not used often by those testing so they really have to work at it."

Another area that causes class members to stumble are tasks they routinely perform, but not "by the book."

"A lot of time they'll (candidates) develop bad habits and that trips them up," he said. "And many skills they are tested on aren't used every day. You need to study and you can't ask enough questions."

Clifford said a key to graduating is a good study partner.

"You need to find a partner who is focused on getting the badge," he said.

As for what earning the EFMB can do for a Soldier's career, Clifford said his EFMB helped him get picked up for sergeant first class on his first look with 10 years in service.

"It's definitely helps with promotions, especially for senior NCOs and officers," he said. "For young Soldiers, it shows how bright and talented they are. None of this information is secret — you know what the task, conditions and standards are. You just have to want it."

Clifford said the road march is tough.

"You need to start training a couple of months out. You have to be motivated and have an attitude that you're going to make it no matter what."

Pfc. Domanique Bisher is a 68W medic with 5th Battalion, 25th Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division. She said the course has been tough.

"It's been cold and muddy, but worth it," she said. "I'm confident I can do this."

The diminutive Soldier said the physical part of the testing has been difficult.

"The learning part and the lanes aren't hard, but the ruck and the PT is tough," she said. "I really want the badge because I'm a female and I'm small, so that would show others that I'm capable. And you get more respect from the others in your unit. It will feel really good to have it."

A pair of officers, 2nd Lt. Luke Stone and 1st Lt. Gage Newby, both members of 3rd BCT, 10th



Soldiers testing for the Expert Field Medical Badge tackle lanes that test their ability to perform common Soldier tasks, such as disassembling and assembling firearms, and treat combat casualties and remove those injured in the field of battle, often through muddy terrain and miserable weather conditions.

Please see **EFMB**, page 7

Continued from page 6

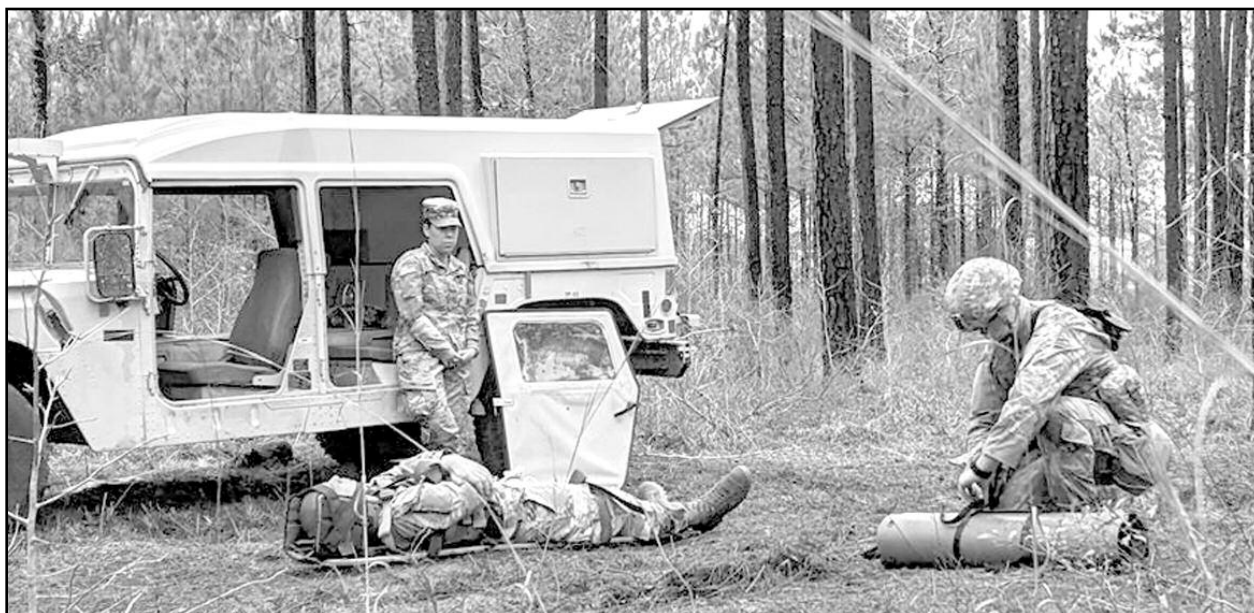
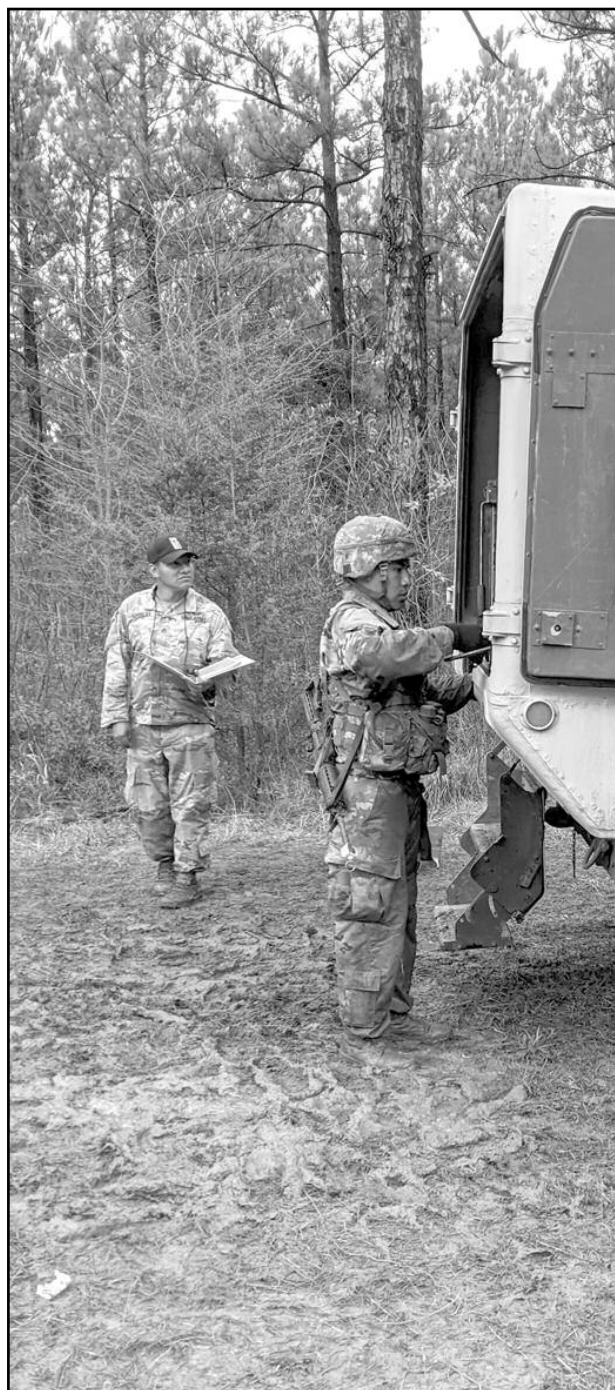
Mtn Div, joined forces as study partners and motivators in their hopes of earning the badge. Stone said that since the pair were not trained as medics, the badge would show others they take their jobs seriously.

"It sets an example," Stone said. "We're not trained as medics, but we're expected to lead medics. To earn the badge means you've developed that competency on your own to lead those medics. How can you expect to lead if you're not proficient in the skills?"

Newby said that since they've received little training in the course's medical tasks, that's been the most difficult.

"The physical part we can handle," he said. "But the medical lane is tough. But it's worthwhile to come out here and give it your best shot. Commanders understand this is an extremely challenging course."

Soldiers testing for Expert Field Medical Badge face problems that ranged from moving casualties on stretchers, to making a body board to protect injured Soldiers, to night land navigation and to operating an ambulance.



Trio prove to be reluctant heroes

Soldiers use TCCC skills to save life of man hit by train

By **CHUCK CANNON**

Command information officer

FORT POLK, La. — When three Fort Polk Soldiers headed to Baton Rouge to catch an up and coming country music band Midland at the Texas Club Feb. 8, little did they think their military training would help save a man's life.

Pfc. Justin Pfeiffer, a 91B wheeled mechanic from Sonora California, Pfc. Mark Rivington, a 12N horizontal construction engineer from Panama, Oklahoma, both with the 46th Engineer Battalion, and Pfc. Jacob Roedenbeck, a 68A biomedical equipment specialist from Kansas, Oklahoma with the 32nd Hospital Center, stopped at a gas station in Baton Rouge at about 7 p.m. to fill up before taking in the concert so they could head back to Fort Polk immediately after.

"After we got gas, we headed toward the Texas Club and a train crossed the road in front of us," Pfeiffer said. "The crossing had no cross arms, but did have flashing lights."

Pfeiffer said he noticed what he thought were two men fighting near the railroad tracks.

"But when one of them flopped over, I saw he was missing an arm and a leg," Pfeiffer said.

That's when the trio sprang into action, dismounting from their automobile and rushing to the man's aid. Rivington happened to bring his IFAK (individual first aid kit) on the trip, removed a tourniquet and placed it on the injured man's leg.

"I only had one tourniquet, so we borrowed a belt to put around the man's arm," Rivington said. "There was no stick to use (to tighten the tourniquet) so I tied a bunch of knots into it until it was tight enough."

As the tourniquets were being applied, Roedenbeck dialed 9-1-1 alerting emergency medical personnel and police of the incident.

"We kept the pressure on his injuries to try and stem the flow of blood until EMS (emergency medical services personnel) arrived," Pfeiffer. "Once they got there, we turned it over to them."

Pfeiffer said they learned that the injured man had tried to jump on the train and the other man attempted to stop him, resulting in the first man being injured.

"It was pretty horrific," Pfeiffer said. "His leg was still in his pants leg and his arm was a little ways down the track."

The injured man was taken to a hospital in Baton Rouge and admitted in serious condition. As of Feb. 10 his condition had been upgraded to stable.

In addition to Roedenbeck's medical training, both Pfeiffer and Rivington had recently completed the Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) course in their units. They each said because of their training, they were confident and competent when they were called upon.

"The adrenaline was running pretty high," Pfeiffer said. "It wasn't until we were at the concert that we began calming down. I kept thinking, 'What the heck just happened?'"

Afterward, the Soldiers headed to the Waffle House for a meal and opportunity to discuss the events from earlier in the evening before making the three-hour trip back to Fort Polk.

Lt. Col. Ian Davis, commander, 46th Engineer



CHUCK CANNON / GUARDIAN

From left: Pfc. Justin Pfeiffer, 46th Engineer Battalion, Pfc. Mark Rivington, 46th Eng Bn, and Pfc. Jacob Roedenbeck, 32nd Hospital Center, were instrumental in saving the life of a Baton Rouge, La., man who was struck by a train Feb. 8. The three Soldiers were on their way to a concert when they noticed the man laying beside a railroad track near a crossing missing an arm and leg. They administered first aid and provided life-saving measures until emergency medical personnel arrived.

Battalion, said he was proud of the way his Soldiers responded to the incident.

"The adrenaline was running pretty high. It wasn't until we were at the concert that we began calming down."

Pfc. JUSTIN PFEIFFER
46th Engineer Battalion

"They used their training to help someone in the community," Davis said. "It validates the training our Soldiers are receiving. We've been going through the battalion getting everyone

trained as TCCC."

Col. Lee Burnett, commander, 32nd Hospital Center, said that after discussions with Davis, the three Soldiers would receive Army Commendation Medals for their actions. He also spoke to the selfless character of Roedenbeck.

"We found out what happened, not from Roedenbeck, but from another Soldier at the motor pool formation Monday (Feb. 10) morning," Burnett said.

"It speaks to his humility, his sense of service and his concern for his fellow man. He considers he was just doing his job."

Burnett added, "It just goes to show, that if something hits the fan and you've done good Army training, that training kicks in, it becomes muscle memory and you execute. We're really proud of them."

Deployment ceremony held for 32nd HC Soldiers headed to Kosovo

GUARDIAN STAFF

FORT POLK, La. — The Fort Family bid farewell to 21 Soldiers of the 32nd Hospital Center as they prepare to head to Kosovo in support of American and allied forces serving in that European nation.

The Soldiers are expected to be deployed from nine months to a year, providing medical support.

See next week's Guardian for more photos and a story on the 32nd HC's deployment.

Clockwise, from right: A 21-Soldier detachment from 32nd Hospital Center participates in a ceremony Feb. 13 before their deployment to Kosovo; Brig. Gen. Patrick D. Frank shakes hands with Sgt. Aexodus Ayala and other members of the 32nd Hospital Center following the ceremony; Col. Lee Burnett, commander, 32nd Hospital Center, speaks during the deployment ceremony held in Fort Polk's Warrior Gym.



CHUCK CANNON / GUARDIAN

Quality

Continued from page 5

would have passed," said Nauert.

Charlsie has a marketing degree, but with a little one it's easier to work from home to help with the family's finances.

Nauert said with two kids it's a necessity for Charlsie to work.

"I knew I could do this work. I love kids and I can do it from home. I love it. My daycare kids are like our own. They and their parents have become friends and extended family," she said.

Moving into their new home and being able to open her own home-based FCC business has improved the Nauert's quality of life.

"Harper hasn't been sick since we moved to

this house and that means I'm also providing a healthy environment for the kids I provide child care for. Obviously, it gives us relief financially, but it also gives me the opportunity to work from home, which I've always wanted to do," she said. "It's been a great opportunity for our Family and the fact that this business can transfer with us when we move is wonderful."

Nauert said the way that he (Frank) helped his Family was life changing.

"He took action within 48 hours after hearing our story. That's the type of leader I want to be in the military," he said. "Every Soldier's issues need to be resolved."

Nauert said that's what a true mentor does. He said knowing a general officer is concerned about the wellbeing of a noncommissioned officer's Family shows that no matter how high you are in leadership, you always have people that need help.

He said it's made a difference in how he treats his own Soldiers.

"If I know they need help, I'm going to stop what I'm doing and take care of them," he said.

The Nauerts said their whole experience from beginning to end has not only restored their faith in the Army, but also in its focus on prioritizing quality of life issues for Soldiers and Families.

Community

Briefs

School lunch menu

The following school lunch menu is for Vernon Parish schools for Tuesday through Feb. 21. Meals are served with salad bar and choice of milk:

Tuesday: Hamburger on whole wheat bun, French fries, ranch style beans, lettuce/tomato/pickle cup, orange wedges.

Wednesday: Egg rolls, fried rice, frozen mixed vegetables, cheese stick, chilled peaches, sherbet.

Thursday: Barbecue beef on whole wheat bun, potato rounds, green Lima beans, fruit.

Feb. 21: Bean burrito with chili and cheese, corn on the cob, ranch style beans, banana.

Dance time

Fort Polk's 41st Transportation Company Soldier and Family Readiness Group hosts a Father/Daughter Dance Feb. 28 from 5-8 p.m. at Warrior Gym. Cost is \$15 per couple (\$5 for each additional child). Refreshments will be served. Space is limited so reserve a spot by Feb. 21.

Tickets can be purchased at 41st Trans Co. For more information email 41stsfrg@gmail.com or call (318) 422-1510.

Roaring 20s

The Fort Polk Spouses' Club hosts the "Roaring 20s" Feb. 28 at the Warrior Center. Doors open at 6:45 p.m., and cost is \$20 online or \$25 at the door. Dress is 20s attire or New Orleans casual.

Fun, games and entertainment will fill the evening, as well as light and heavy hors d'oeuvres.

For more information call (910) 382-1747 or email fpsscphilanthropy@gmail.com.

Exchange offers

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service at Fort Polk provides Soldiers and the military community with the tools needed to stay ready and resilient in the new year. Military shoppers can find the latest athletic apparel and shoes, fitness trackers and workout equipment — everything they need to live a BE FIT lifestyle — at the Fort Polk Exchange and at ShopMyExchange.com.

As part of its efforts to help Soldiers and their Family members BE FIT, Fort Polk Exchange restaurants offers better-for-you meals and snacks that support readiness and resiliency.

Online nutritional guides for Fort Polk Exchange restaurants are available at www.shopmyexchange.com/be-fit/nutrition.

Make plans to attend MWR events

DFMWR

FORT POLK, La. — If the winter doldrums have taken hold, don't worry. Just take note of some of Fort Polk's Family Morale, Welfare and Recreation programs and upcoming events. You won't want to miss your chance to experience the adventure to be had over the next few months.

Wine & Tapas

Looking for a special way to celebrate this Valentine's Day? The Warrior Center has the perfect event for you and your special someone as it hosts a Wine & Tapas event with wine tasting, dancing and a delicious menu of appetizers, entrees and desserts to choose from. The event takes place today from 6-9 p.m. Prior reservations are required and the cost for this event is \$25 per person, which includes a glass of wine with your meal. You must be 21 or older to attend.

Call (337) 531-4440 or (337) 531-7668 for more information and to find out how to purchase your tickets.

Laser tag

The Warrior Hills Golf Course brings you laser tag on the driving range. Test your tactical skills with your friends and family Feb. 21 from 5:30-8 p.m. Sessions are \$5 per eight minute session or \$12 for three sessions and all ages are welcome. Refreshments are available on the deck while you wait. For more information call (337) 531-4661.

Yoga uncorked

Need some time to unwind? Wheelock Fitness Center invites you to Yoga Uncorked, held Feb 22 at 7 p.m. at the Showboat Theatre. You can find your center and loosen up with friends while participating in this relaxing yoga class. The cost is \$15, which includes 2 drinks, snacks and the class if you register before Feb. 21. Space is limited so call (337) 531-6795 to reserve your spot today.

Strongest Youth Competition

Does your child love to compete and show their strength? If so, sign them up for the Child and Youth Services Strongest Youth Competition held March 21 at 10 a.m. at Perez Field. Each age division competes for one youth to prove themselves the strongest of the group through a series of challenges.

Challenges include events such as a tire flip, flexed arm hang, log toss and more. Prizes are awarded to the champion of each age division and the runner up of the division, not per event. This event is free and open to the public. Registration begins the day of the event at 9 a.m. at Perez Field.

For more information, call (337) 531-6004.

Movie Night

The return of Movie Night is quickly approaching. Join the Fort Polk community at Headquarters Field March 28 for another great outdoor movie featuring "Frozen 2."

There will be free popcorn, candy, hot dogs, nachos, drinks and the signature MWR light up bracelets.

Concessions open at 6:30 p.m. and the movie begins at 7:30 p.m. Be there early to grab your goodies and get a great seat.



Save the date for FreedomFest 2020!

The Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk's FreedomFest will be held July 18. Country music superstar Toby Keith will headline the event, which will include fireworks, static displays, salute to the nation, food vendors and children's activities.

Warrior Store

Don't forget to check out the Warrior Store. You'll find everything from Fort Polk hoodies, shirts and glassware to beautiful home decor. The boutique atmosphere offers something for everyone and new items are added monthly. The Warrior Store is open seven days a week, Thursday through Tuesday from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. and Wednesdays from 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Warrior Lanes/ Anvil Bar

As many of you know, the Warrior Lanes Bowling Center is still closed for repairs. However, the Anvil Bar is back in business.

The bar offers a variety of Louisiana themed specialty drinks for you to enjoy while you watch your favorite sports on one of the many big screen TVs.

The Anvil often hosts UFC Fights and other championship sporting events with no cover charge. The Anvil Bar is open Monday through Thursday from 4:30-10 p.m., Friday 4:30 p.m.- 1 a.m., Saturday from 11-1 a.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m.-10 p.m.

Follow the Anvil Bar on Facebook to keep up with the latest events happening at the bar.

For more information follow MWR on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, or visit www.polk.armymwr.com.

Jump into interesting history, facts of leap year

GUARDIAN STAFF

FORT POLK, La. — Whether you use a desk, wall or phone calendar, most folks couldn't get through their busy schedules without the aid of this miraculous marvel that the modern world takes for granted as correct. But it's not, so much. After all, it is a human construct created by men of science through trial and error. It took "time" to get the calendar as close to accurate as it is today.

If there were no calendars how would people schedule doctor's appointments, make note of important dates like birthdays and anniversaries, celebrate holidays, know the day of the week, month and year for daily use, historical purposes and more?

The calendar's history goes like this:

Calendars are the result of ancient astronomers using a mixture of math and astronomy to track time. They watched the sun and stars as the Earth rotated and calculated the length of days in a year. They discovered that a normal solar year came close to 365 days, but noticed that the time it took for the earth to orbit the sun took longer than that — more like 365.25 days. If that extra time wasn't accounted for over years, months, decades or centuries, the calendar would be off kilter.

That's why leap year was devised — you know, that extra day added to the end of February that happens every four years? If you aren't familiar with the concept, and since Feb. 29, 2020 is a leap year, you might want to read on and learn more about this imperfect, yet immensely important man-made concept of time.

The Egyptians were the first to realize a leap year was needed to correct the calendar, but it didn't happen until Julius Caesar came to power in Rome in 46 B.C. He knew that the calendar used at the time wasn't accurate and had become an issue. Caesar worked with the great minds of



his time including Hipparchus, a Greek astronomer, and Sosigenes of Alexandria to figure out and fix the calendar. They came up with the concept of a leap year every four years to keep things on track, but it still wasn't perfect. There is still unaccounted time — about 11 minutes.

That discrepancy meant that the calendar went off course over time — one day every 128 years. This caused the official calendar to be off from the solar calendar quite a bit — 10 days by the year 1582.

To help get the calendar back on track, Pope Gregory XIII devised the "Gregorian Calendar" — the one based on Caesar's 12-month 365-day per year calendar — with a nifty bit of math. He kept the concept of leap year except for years

evenly divisible by 100 and not by 400. For example, the year 1900 was not a leap year because it was divisible by 100, but not 400. The updated calendar is what is used today worldwide. Though it comes close, this calendar still isn't exact — experts note that the remaining discrepancies will probably need to be addressed in around 10,000 years.

So, as the calendar turns from Feb. 28 to Feb. 29 — leap day — don't forget to have some gratitude for all those who put in the effort and calculation to make your life easier and the calendar what it is today.

Editor's note: The information for this story was gathered from www.history.com, www.info-please.com and allthatsinteresting.com.

Curious about leap year? Discover fun facts, trivia galore

GUARDIAN STAFF

FORT POLK, La. — Leap year is an interesting day. Since it doesn't happen every year, a wide variety of unusual events and lore have been attributed to the day according to information found at www.chiff.com and www.rd.com.

- If you are born on a leap day you are known as a "leapling."

- According to astrologers, if you were born on Feb. 29, you fall under the sign of Pisces due to the unique day on which you arrived into the world.

Like other leap day babies, you are more apt to go your own way and exhibit an independent streak and optimistic spirit.

- While leap year babies have to wait every four years to "officially" observe their birthdays, they typically choose either Feb. 28 or March 1 to celebrate in years

that aren't leap years.

- Leap day has also resulted in social customs turned upside down when Feb. 29 became a "no man's land" without legal jurisdiction.

- As the story goes, the tradition of women romantically pursuing men in leap years began in fifth century Ireland, when St. Bridget complained to St. Patrick about the women having to wait for men to propose. Patrick relented and set Feb. 29 aside as the day allowing women the right to ask for a man's hand in marriage.

- The tradition continued in Scotland, when Queen Margaret declared in 1288 that on Feb. 29 a

woman had the right to pop the question to any man she fancied. Menfolk who refused were faced with a fine in the form of a kiss, a silk dress or a pair of gloves that were given to the rejected lady.

- A similar modern American tradition, Sadie

Hawkins Day, honors "the homeliest gal in the hills" created by Al Capp in the cartoon strip Li'l Abner.

In the famous story line, Sadie and every other woman in town were allowed on that day to pursue and catch the most eligible bachelors in Dogpatch. Although the comic strip placed Sadie Hawkins Day in November, today it has become almost synonymous with Feb. 29.

- Leap years give people an extra day to do their taxes. But they don't affect Lent. While taxes are always due on April 15, Lent is more flexible and always begins 40 days before Easter.

- The first warrants for arrest for the 1692 Salem witchcraft trials went out on Feb. 29.

- Feb. 30th? This even rarer date occurred in Sweden and Finland in 1712, when they added an extra leap day to February to help catch up their outdated Julian calendar with the new Gregorian calendar.

- The superstition that leap days are particularly lucky or unlucky has been debated through history and across cultures, and there's no clear winner.

It's bad luck if you're a prisoner on a one-year sentence that spans a leap day. But it's bad news if you work on a fixed annual salary — no extra pay for that extra day.



Fort Polk teen inks football scholarship with Lamar University

By **CHUCK CANNON**

Command information officer

FORT POLK, La. — Efosa Evboumwan, a senior who starred on the gridiron at Leesville High School, recently signed a scholarship to continue his football career at Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas.

Evboumwan is the son of Maj. Ray Evboumwan, a hospital administrator at Fort Polk's Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital, and Maj. Jocelyn Evboumwan, a nurse educator at BJACH.

The 18-year-old Efosa, who stands 6-1 and weighs 215 pounds, is projected by the Cardinal coaching staff to play outside linebacker. With a 300-pound bench press to his credit and a 4.3 40-yard dash time, it's easy to see why Evboumwan was sought after colleges.

"When I got here from (Fort Meade) Maryland, I had worked hard and the Leesville coach convinced me to come out and play," he said.

"I signed up and when they timed me in the 40-yard dash, I ran a 4.3. They said, 'I think we have a kid here that can play.'"

That wasn't always the case. In fact, Efosa and other Family members said he had to be nudged a little into playing sports.

"They had to push me into athletics," he said. "I was more of a reserved person and stayed in my room and didn't get out much. I didn't get much physical activity."

Older brother Etiosa went a step further.

"He was nerdy; literally a dork," he said. "But he was cool. He was adventurous mentally. He would go into his room and come out a couple of hours later with a sword made out of paper towels. He was a little chubby, but once he got involved in sports, started slimming



CHUCK CANNON / GUARDIAN

Efosa Evboumwan (center) stands with from left: his brother, Etiosa; mother, Maj. Jocelyn Evboumwan, Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital; sister Osayame, a sophomore at Leesville High School; and dad, Maj. Ray Evboumwan, BJACH. Efosa recently signed a football scholarship with Lamar University in Beaumont following a standout high school career at LHS.

down and getting athletic, we got closer. He's been a fantastic little brother."

Efosa said he was — and still is — focused on academics.

"I was always a curious kid," he said. "I enjoyed science experiments."

"One time I got a little carried away with an experiment using rubbing alcohol and fire and nearly burned the house down."

And that, Jocelyn said, led to the encouragement to play sports.

"He was always a different child," she said. "His personality al-

ways stood out. He was into books and science. But I decided it was time for him to get outside a little."

Efosa said he enjoyed track — both field and running events — and soccer the most at first. But then he discovered football and found his athletic calling. He said he looks forward to playing college football and chose Lamar because it's close to Family.

"Lamar has a new coaching staff, and it's close enough (Beaumont) that my Family can come see me play," he said. "They play in the Southland Conference so even away games are too far away. Plus, their academics are strong."

Ray said he's proud of Efosa's accomplishments.

"I was glad he didn't put all his eggs in one basket, that he liked both sports and academics," he said.

"With us, it's always academics first. It's something you can fall back on. He's very hard working. What he sets his mind on, he accomplishes."

Jocelyn said she, too, is proud of her son.

"He has a lot of ability not only in sports, but in other areas," she said. "I am always amazed at what he can do. He has a lot of talent that keeps coming out."

And she said that although it will be tough when he moves to Beau-

mont, he's only a couple of hours away.

"I was glad he didn't put all his eggs in one basket ... With us, it's always academics first. It's something you can always fall back on. He's very hard working. What he sets his mind on, he accomplishes."

Maj. RAY EVBOUMWAN
BJACH

"He can always come home and we can go see him," she said. "It's going to be hard, but he's not too far away and that will be my comfort."

Efosa said he, too, will miss his Family.

"My family has always supported me, and has always seen more in me than I ever did, whether it be sports or academics," he said. "They've always felt that because of the way I was dedicated, I could do anything I wanted."

Fort Polk Exchange offers wide range of activities

EXCHANGE

FORT POLK, La. — The Fort Polk Exchange offers the following activities and events for Soldiers and their Families:

- Kids’ Mardi Gras Mask Event: 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Feb. 22. Join the celebration of Mardi Gras 2020 at the Fort Polk Main Exchange. Kids can make their own mask, take fun photos and enjoy Mardi Gras activities.

- Community Health Fair: 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Feb. 29. The Main Exchange partners with Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital for a health fair. Visit more than 20 health booths, exercise equipment demonstrations, free samples, all-day discounts at the Main Exchange and fun activities for the kids.

The Exchange has scheduled the following movies for Bayou Theater:

- Today — “1917,” rated R, 6 p.m.
- Saturday — “Spies in Disguise,” rated PG, 3 p.m., and “Little Women,” rated PG, 6 p.m.
- Sunday — “Spies in Disguise,” rated PG, 3 p.m., and “Gretel & Hansel,” rated PG-13, 6 p.m.
- Thursday — “1917,” rated R, 6 p.m.
- Feb. 21 — “Gretel & Hansel,” rated PG-13, 6 p.m.
- Feb. 22 — “Little Women,” rated PG, 3 p.m., and “Like a Boss,” rated R, 6 p.m.
- Feb 23 — “Spies in Disguise,” rated PG, 3 p.m., and “The Rhythm Section,” rated R, 6 p.m.

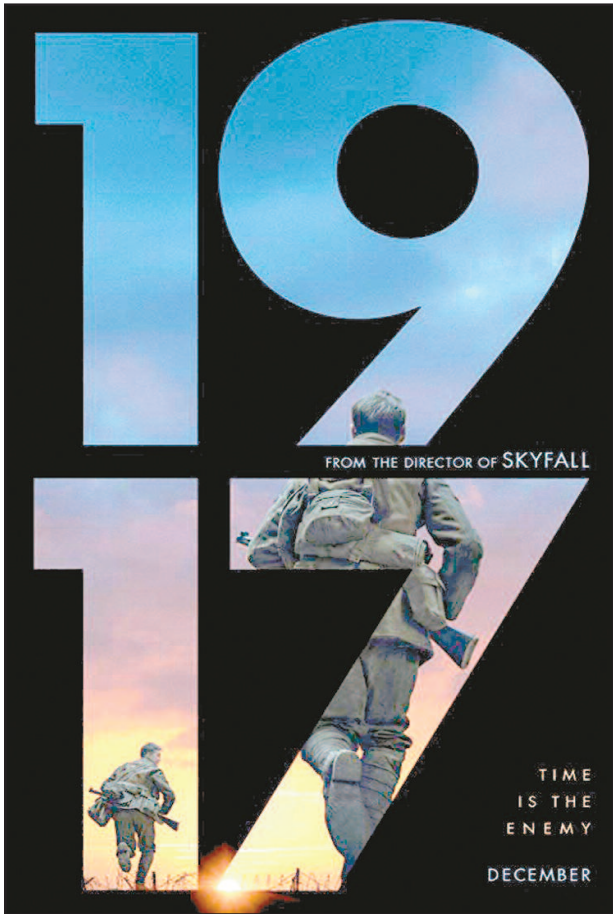
The Exchange has also announced the following hours for Exchange facilities for the Presi-

dent’s Day holiday, Monday:

- Main store — 10 a.m.-7 p.m.
- Military clothing — 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
- Food Court — 9 a.m.-6 p.m.
- Starbucks — 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Subway — 9 a.m.-7 p.m.
- Boston Market — 10:30 a.m.-3 p.m.
- Charley’s — 10:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Qdoba — 10:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Panda Express — 10 a.m.-7 p.m.
- Optical shop — 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Concessionaires — 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- GNC — 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Patriot Outfitters (bldg 850) — 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Alterations — 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
- Gamestop — 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Stylique — 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Barber shop (main) — 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Enterprise Car Rental — 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Mini Mall Express — closed
- Barber shop (bldg 3310) — closed
- Smoothie King — closed
- Hospital express — closed
- Barber shop (bldg 285) — closed
- Burger King — 11 a.m.-3 p.m.
- Express 3 (bldg 7000) — 8 a.m.-7 p.m.
- Class VI — 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Hickory Smokehouse (bldgs 1975 and 7828) closed

Additionally, the Mini Mall is closed Saturday; Smoothie King is closed Saturday and Sunday; the barber shop in bldg 285 is closed today; and

Burger King is open from 6 a.m.-6 p.m. Friday, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday and 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Sunday.



Army doubles amount for spouse licensure reimbursement

By **JOE LACDAN**
Army News Service

FORT MEADE, Md. — Last summer, Army spouse Kamyar Haghayeghi left his job as an internal medicine physician in Maryland to follow his wife to San Antonio, Texas. Haghayeghi needed to relicense to practice medicine at the University of Texas-San Antonio. The licensing costs for an exam and administrative fees totaled more than \$1,200.

To add to the couple's stress, Haghayeghi's wife, Capt. Jennifer Loftsgaarden, learned she was pregnant with their first child shortly before the relocation from Bethesda to Brooke Army Medical Center. After beginning the permanent-change-of-station process in July, she heard about the Army's Spouse Licensure Reimbursement Program and quickly filed the necessary paperwork to receive \$500 in reimbursements.

"I know a lot of dual professional couples in civilian-military marriages that do have to incur some pretty surprising costs for their relicensure during a move," said Loftsgaarden, a physical medicine rehabilitation physician at Brooke Army

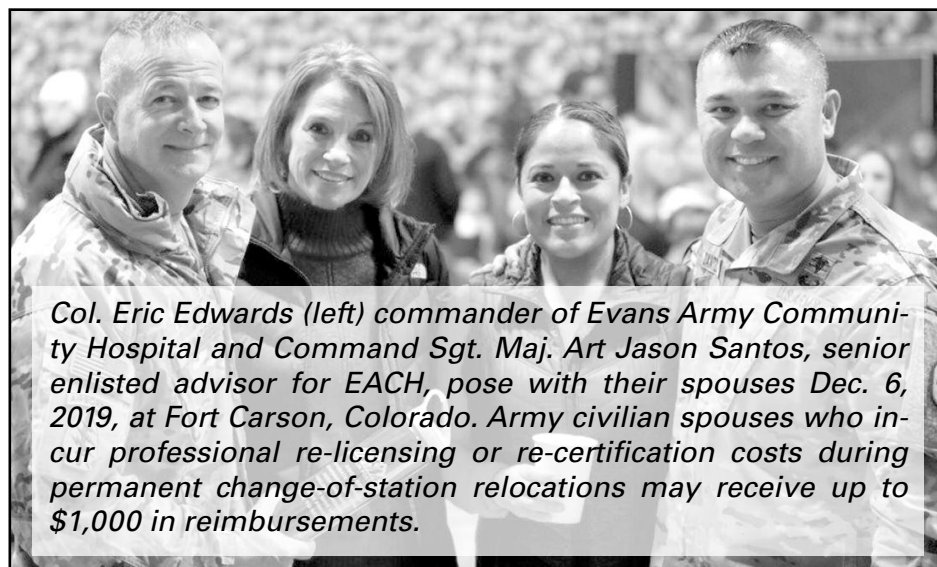
Medical Center. "And I think that it's a really awesome benefit to help those families and it really shows that the Army really does care about their people."

Under the National Defense Authorization Act 2020, civilian spouses can now receive up to \$1,000 in reimbursements for relicensing costs during permanent change-of-station relocations. Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy signed the new Army directive Jan. 16, which increases the reimbursable amount from the \$500 Loftsgaarden and Haghayeghi received.

The 2018 NDAA required each military branch to reimburse spouses up to \$500 for licensure and certification costs. Congress increased that number to \$1,000 in the 2020 authorization.

Before the program's inception, Army spouses previously had to shoulder licensure costs themselves.

"Army life can be kind of tough. You get moved every couple of years and if you have a working spouse and that spouse requires a license to do his or her job, then every time you move, you frequently have to relicense," said Christine Traugott, assistant deputy for child



Col. Eric Edwards (left) commander of Evans Army Community Hospital and Command Sgt. Maj. Art Jason Santos, senior enlisted advisor for EACH, pose with their spouses Dec. 6, 2019, at Fort Carson, Colorado. Army civilian spouses who incur professional re-licensing or re-certification costs during permanent change-of-station relocations may receive up to \$1,000 in reimbursements.

Sgt. INEZ HAMMON / ARMY NEWS SERVICE

and youth school services and education for the assistant secretary of the Army for manpower and reserve affairs. "You have to get licensed in the state in which you're practicing ... Those costs can add up over time, and they're a barrier to spouses being able to find quick employment."

Civilian military spouses like Haghayeghi require a professional recertification or relicensure when moving to another state, as each state has different requirements and certifications. The added costs can be an additional burden to military families on frequent PCS moves. Those expenses could add up over the course of a career.

The Army has also widened the eligibility options. Spouses who held a professional license at a previous duty station but chose not to renew their license at succeeding duty station are also eligible now for reimbursement.

"We are giving commanders and members greater flexibility to support these required additional expenses they incur," said Larry Lock, military compensation chief for the Army.

Angie Rodriguez-Torres, branch

chief for pay and allowances, said that couples who have filed for the program average about \$142 in reimbursable expenses with fewer than a dozen who have incurred expenses greater than \$500.

Lock said the program is currently in a two-year pilot and will later determine the appropriate reimbursable amount.

Soldiers that PCS outside of the continental United States with spouses relocating to a designated state are also eligible for the program. In addition, the Army Emergency Relief program, or AER, may also be able to assist with funding for some licensing expenses, officials said. The changes coincide with the Army's focus on prioritizing its people, especially its spouses and military families. Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville implemented that focus which has been echoed by Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston.

"It's critically important for (spouses) to be able to get to work as quickly as possible after a PCS move," Grinston said. "The increase in available funds for reimbursement in this year's NDAA will go a long way to help."

Know rules before claiming children on tax returns

By 1st Lt. MICHAEL MOORE JR.
Installation tax office

FORT POLK, La. — The Fort Polk Installation Tax Center is open for business. Hours of operation are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Wednesday and Friday, 11:30a.m. to 7 p.m. on Thursday and 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday at bldg 1455, 2165 Ninth St. Call 531-1040 to schedule an appointment. Walk-ins are welcomed, but appointments will take priority.

One of the most common problems during tax seasons is double filing. It is important that Soldiers know if they can still be claimed as dependents. If they can be claimed as dependents they need to talk to their parents, and if they file individually they need to make sure they check the “can be claimed” box on their tax forms.

Likewise, many parents grow accustomed to claiming their children and claim them after the children are no longer eligible to be claimed.

This can cause a storm of rejected returns, letters from the IRS and trips to your tax preparer to file amended returns. To avoid this hassle make sure you are an informed taxpayer and know what qualifies and disqualifies a child from being claimed as a dependent.

To claim an exemption for your child, you must be able to answer “yes” to the following questions:

- Are they related to you? The child can be your son, daughter, stepchild, eligible foster child, brother, sister, half-brother, half-sister, step-brother, stepsister, adopted child or an offspring of any of them.
- Do they meet the age requirement? Your

child must be under age 19 or, if a full-time student, under age 24. There is no age limit if your child is permanently and totally disabled.

- Do they live with you? Your child must live with you for more than half the year, but several exceptions apply.
- Do you financially support them? Your child may have a job, but that job cannot provide more than half of her support.
- Are you the only person claiming them? This requirement commonly applies to children of divorced parents. Here you must use the “tie breaker rules,” which are found in IRS Publication 596.

Know your rights, and if you have any questions please stop by and see someone at the Fort Polk Installation Tax Center or the Legal Assistance Office.

Soldiers receive reprimands, punishment 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.”

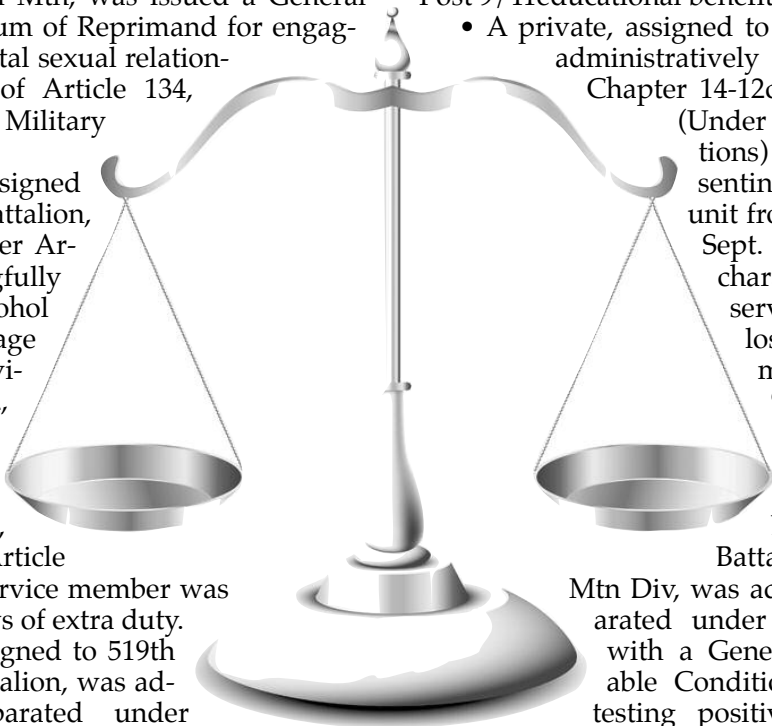
At the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk, the Commanding General and subordinate commanders take good order and discipline seriously. Across Fort Polk, the following disciplinary issues continue to be prevalent: Sexual assault, driving under the influence, wrongful use or possession of controlled substances, fraternization, inappropriate relationships and domestic violence. Below are recent examples of adverse legal actions for units within the Fort Polk jurisdiction.

- A first sergeant, assigned to 2nd Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, was issued a General Officer Memorandum of Reprimand for driving under the influence of alcohol after being involved in a single vehicle accident. The Soldier refused to take a lawfully requested blood or breath test to check for impairment.

- A first sergeant, assigned to 2nd Bn, 30th Inf Reg, 3rd BCT, 10th Mtn, was issued a General Officer Memorandum of Reprimand for engaging in an extramarital sexual relationship in violation of Article 134, Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ).
- A private, assigned to 46th Engineer Battalion, was punished under Article 15 for wrongfully consuming alcohol while under the age of 21 years old, in violation of Article 92, UCMJ; and for reporting to 6:30 a.m. morning formation intoxicated, in violation of Article 112, UCMJ. The service member was sentenced to 45 days of extra duty.
- A private, assigned to 519th Military Police Battalion, was administratively separated under Chapter 14-12c(2) with a General (Under Honorable Conditions) discharge, for testing positive for tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) on a urinalysis. Generally, this characterization of

service results in the loss of a service member’s Post 9/11 educational benefits.

- A private, assigned to 519th MP Bn, was administratively separated under Chapter 14-12c(1) with a General (Under Honorable Conditions) discharge, for absents himself from his unit from Sept. 10 until 16 Sept. 16. Generally, this characterization of service results in the loss of a service member’s Post 9/11 educational benefits.
- A private, assigned to 710th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd BCT, 10th Mtn Div, was administratively separated under Chapter 14-12c(2) with a General (Under Honorable Conditions) discharge, for testing positive for tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) on a urinalysis. Generally, this characterization of service results in the loss of a service member’s Post 9/11 educational benefits.



Coronavirus: What providers, patients should know

MILITARY HEALTH SYSTEM

WASHINGTON — With news of the contagious and potentially deadly illness known as novel coronavirus grabbing headlines worldwide, military health officials say that an informed, commonsense approach minimizes the chances of getting sick.

Many forms of coronavirus exist among both humans and animals, but this new strain's lethality has triggered considerable alarm. Believed to have originated at an animal market in Wuhan City, China, novel coronavirus has sickened hundreds and killed at least four. It has since spread to other parts of Asia. The first case of novel coronavirus in the U.S. was reported Jan. 22 in Washington State.

Anyone contracting a respiratory illness shouldn't assume it's novel coronavirus; it is far more likely to be a more common malady.

"For example, right now in the U.S., influenza, with 35 million cases last season, is far more commonplace than novel coronavirus," said U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps Dr. (Lt. Cmdr.) David Shih, a preventive medicine physician and epidemiologist with the Clinical Support Division, Defense Health Agency. He added that those experiencing symptoms of respiratory illness — like coughing, sneezing, shortness of breath and fever — should avoid contact with others and making them sick, Shih said.

"Don't think you're being super dedicated by showing up to work when ill," Shih said. "Likewise, if you're a duty supervisor, please don't compel your workers to show up when they're sick. In the short run, you might get a bit of a productivity boost. In the long run, that person could transmit a respiratory illness to co-workers, and pretty soon you lose way more productivi-

ty because your entire office is sick." Shih understands that service members stationed in areas of strategic importance and elevated states of readiness are not necessarily in the position to call in sick. In such instances, sick personnel still can take steps to practice effective cough hygiene and use whatever hygienic services they can find to avert hindering readiness by making their battle buddies sick. Frequent hand washing, for instance, is a cornerstone of respiratory disease prevention.

"You may not have plumbing for washing hands, but hand sanitizer can become your best friend and keep you healthy," Shih said.

Regarding novel coronavirus, Shih recommends following Centers for Disease Control and Prevention travel notices

- Avoid all non-essential travel to Wuhan, China, the outbreak's epicenter.
- Patients who traveled to China in the past 14 days with fever, cough or difficulty breathing, should seek medical care right away (calling the doctor's office or emergency room in advance to report travel and symptoms).
- Avoid contact with others and traveling while sick.

CDC also has guidance for health care professionals who should evaluate patients with fever and respiratory illness by taking a careful travel history to identify patients under investigation who include those with fever, lower respiratory illness symptoms and travel history to Wuhan, China, within 14 days prior to symptom onset. PUIs should wear a surgical mask as soon as they are identified and be evaluated in a private room with the door closed, ideally an airborne infection isolation room if available.

Workers caring for PUIs should wear gloves, gowns, masks, eye and

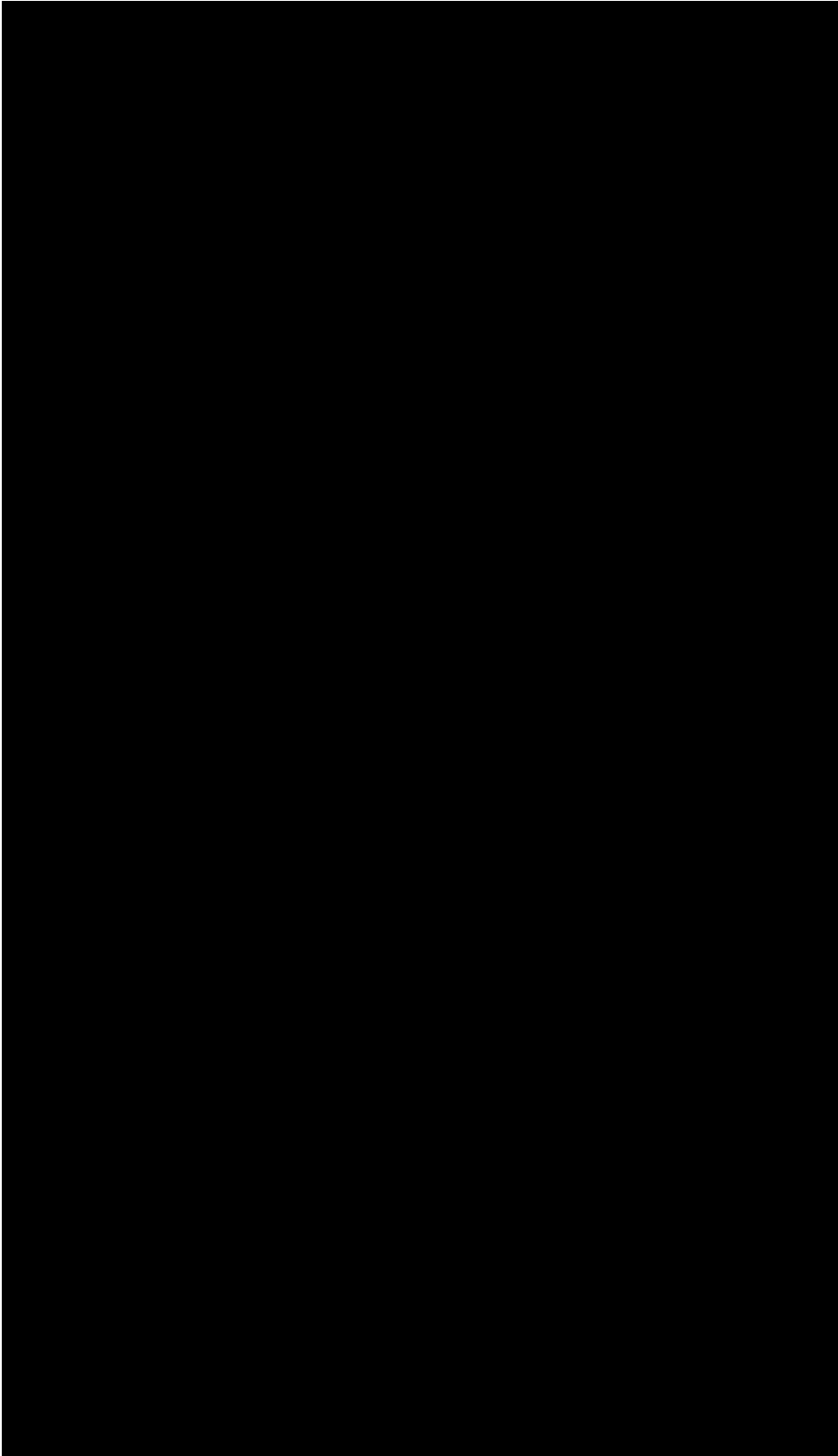
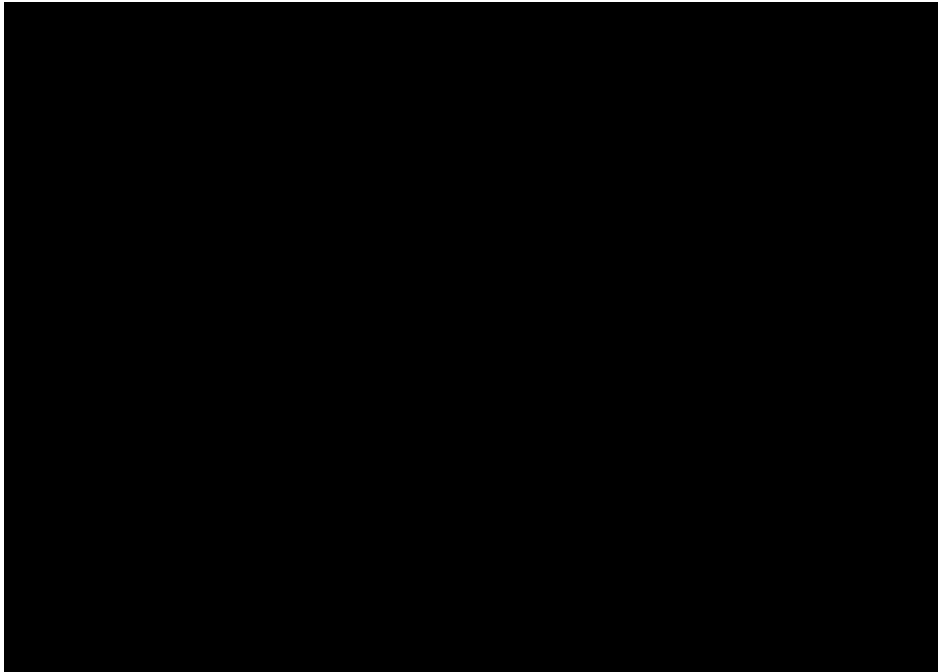
respiratory protection. Care providers who believe they may be treating a novel coronavirus patient should immediately notify infection control and public health authorities (the installation preventive medicine or public health department at military treatment facilities).

Because novel coronavirus is new, there is as yet no immunization or specific treatment. Care providers are instead treating the symptoms — acetaminophen to reduce fever, lozenges and other treatments to soothe sore throats and, for severe cases, ventilators to help patients breathe.

"Lacking specific treatment," Shih said, "we must be extra vigilant about basic prevention measures: Frequent hand washing, effec-



tive cough and sneeze hygiene, avoiding sick individuals and self-isolating when sick."



Lagniappe

Festivals

• Food festival

Check out the Louisiana Food and Music Festival Feb. 29 at the Origin Bank River Market, 316 South Grand St., Monroe.

The festival highlights the rich culture and talent in the area. The music, food, musicians, artisans and chefs who keep the area vibrant join as a community and celebrate the Louisiana culture.

A variety of foods from around the world will be available. Enjoy a diverse range of activities and entertainment throughout the day, including shopping.

Admission is free. For more information visit www.monroe-westmonroe.org.

Miscellaneous

• Museum exhibit

The Alexandria Museum of Art hosts "Pelican State Goes to War" — a look at Louisiana's contribution to World War II on loan from the New Orleans World War II Museum through Feb. 22. Admission is free. For more information visit <https://themuseum.org/>.

• Garden forum

The fourth annual Beauregard Parish Master Gardener Spring Garden Forum takes place Feb. 21 from 8 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at the War Memorial Civic Center, 250 West Seventh St., DeRidder. Admission is free.

Peruse plants and garden items for sale, sign up for door prizes and attend seminars throughout the day with topics ranging from home composting, vegetable gardening, planning your landscap-

ing and more. For more information call (337) 463-7006.

• Azalea trail

A springtime attraction since the 1930s, the Lafayette Historic Azalea Trail is a winding drive through historic districts, downtown, the university and oil center and neighborhood garden districts with grand boulevards for about 25 miles of the city's urban core. The official bloom season begins Feb. 23 and extends thru March, but the official date of the Azalea Trail event takes place March 7 from 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

This cultural floral attraction is a breathtaking display of floral color and beauty that has attracted thousands of visitors over the years.

Trolley rides are available March 7 and 14 (Stops and details on the website).

Trolley rides are held from 9 a.m.-noon and last an hour. They begin at the Alexandre Mouton House gardens, 1122 Lafayette St., at 9 a.m.

The azalea reception is held March 7 at the Vermilionville Living History Museum and Folk Life Park, 300 Fisher Road.

For more information visit www.azaleatrail.org.

• Mardi Gras parades

You don't have to go far to attend a Mardi Gras parade.

Fort Polk Soldiers and Family members are sure to find one that's just right for them.

Leesville

• **Feb. 22** — Leesville Mardi Gras Parade takes place on Third Street at 2 p.m.

For more information call (337)

238-0349.

Shreveport

• **Feb. 22** — Krewe of Gemini Parade takes place at 3:30 p.m.

• **Feb. 23** — Krewe of Highland Parade takes place in Shreveport-Bossier City at 2 p.m.

For more information visit www.shreveport-bossier.org/.

Alexandria

• **Feb. 21** — Classic Cars and College Cheerleaders parade takes place Feb. 21 and begins at 6:30 p.m.

• **Feb. 22** — Alexandria Mardi Gras Associates Children's Parade takes place in Alexandria at 10 a.m.

• **Feb. 23** — AMGA Krewe's Parade takes place in Alexandria at 2 p.m.

For more information visit <https://alexandriapinevillela.com/>.

Lake Charles

• **Feb. 25** — Krewe of Krewe parade takes place at 5 p.m.

For more information visit www.visitlakecharles.org/swla-mardigras/events/parades/.

Lafayette

• **Feb. 24** — Queen Evangeline's parade takes place in Lafayette at 6 p.m.

• **Feb. 25** — King Gabriel's parade takes place at 10 a.m. and the Lafayette Mardi Gras parade takes place at 1 p.m.

For more information visit www.lafayettetravel.com/evants/festivals/mardi-gras/.

Eunice

• **Feb. 23** — Children's Mardi Gras parade takes place at 3 p.m.

• **Feb. 25** — Mardi Gras parade takes place at 3 p.m.

Mamou

• **Saturday** — Chicken chase/parade at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church at 1 p.m.

• **Feb. 25** — Mamou Mardi Gras, downtown Mamou.

New Orleans

• **Feb. 22** — Krewe of Iris parade takes place in uptown New Orleans at 11 a.m. and the Krewe of Endymion parade takes place in mid-city New Orleans at 4:15 p.m.

• **Feb. 23** — Krewe of Bacchus parade takes place in uptown New Orleans at 5:15 p.m.

• **Feb. 24** — Krewe of Orpheus parade takes place in uptown New Orleans at 6 p.m.

• **Feb. 25** — Krewe of Rex parade takes place in uptown New Orleans at 10 a.m.

For more information visit www.mardigrasneworleans.com/parades/.

Clubs/groups

• Lose weight

Join Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS) every Thursday at the Vernon Parish Library meeting room. Weigh in is 5-5:50 p.m. For more information call (337) 208-0896.

• Bass Masters

The Fort Polk Community Bass Masters meets monthly on the Tuesday before each tournament. Meetings are held at 6 p.m. at the New Llano American Legion, Post 387, 500 Vernon St. The next meeting takes place Feb. 25. The February tournament takes place at Toledo Bend Lake Feb. 29. The entry fee is \$40. For more information visit www.fortpolkcommunity-bassmasters.com.