



FORGING THE

WARRIOR SPIRIT

THE JRTC & FORT POLK GUARDIAN

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Home of Heroes @ Fort Polk, LA

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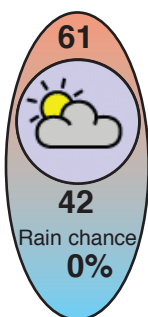


CHUCK CANNON / GUARDIAN

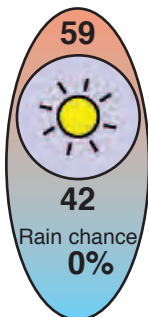
Prepping for state

DeShaun Ellison works to escape the hold of Cody Sigmon during wrestling practice March 12 at the Fort Polk Youth Gym. The wrestling team, hosted by the Directorate of Family Morale, Welfare and Recreation's Child and Youth Service's Sports Program will participate in the Louisiana State meet March 23 in Baton Rouge. For story and more photos see page 12 of today's Guardian.

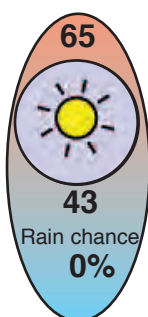
Weekend weather



Today



Thursday



Friday

Inside the Guardian

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Viewpoint

Ordnance School instructor helps shape future

By Staff Sgt. RENEE' M. WALKER
Army News Service

Editor's note: In honor of Women's History Month, the Guardian is publishing stories of female Soldiers who have excelled in their fields.

FORT BENNING, Ga. — I was excited when I learned I was selected to become the first female instructor for the U.S. Army Ordnance School's 91M, Bradley Systems Maintainer course. This assignment offered me a unique chance to be a part of a team that is shaping the Army's future.

When I arrived at Fort Benning's Bradley Training Division, the instructors welcomed me as one of their own. My fellow noncommissioned officers assisted me in preparing for the most important job in the Army — training ordnance Soldiers. The technical certification was tough and challenging but many years of ordnance experience fully prepared me to be successful.

I am thankful to have the opportunity to teach, train and mentor future Bradley Fighting Vehicle System Maintainers.

One of the highlights of my career, has been to contribute to the successful integration of females into this career field. The Ordnance Corps is leading the way and helping ensure

the Army's future strength, because the strength of our Army has always been its people. I'm proud to play a small role in this historical transition. I have a strong passion for teaching and mentoring these young Warriors, as they transition into Army Strong Soldiers.

The Advanced Individual Training for 91M Soldiers lasts 12 weeks and four days. The common core training is conducted in the first two weeks. We teach students how to read technical manuals, use maintenance support forms, the Army Oil Analysis Program, safety, basic electronics, reading schematics and other knowledge skills they need to be successful in the course. The remainder of the course teaches students how to troubleshoot, remove and install components, perform preventive maintenance checks and services and the other technical aspects of their job.

The course becomes progressively more difficult throughout the training, culminating in a Sustainment Warrior's Field Training Exercise. The exercise provides students an opportunity to demonstrate their skills and expertise in a simulated tactical environment. The training

provides Soldiers with a broad technical skills base so they can immediately contribute to maintaining unit equipment readiness once they arrive at their duty stations.

Women have been serving in other ordnance military occupational specialties, performing these same tasks and I am thankful for the opportunities

that are available to all of us now.

As an instructor, I think the most im-

portant part of my job is to empower young Soldiers to develop as professionals. The training is very rigorous and challenging, with the bar set high. Training to standard is our motto, our creed; the means to reach a professional stature is our goal.

It is so important that we get it right at the school, because we set the stage for everything that follows in the career of a 91M Soldier.

It is an honor to be the first female 91M instructor, yet I serve every day with the realization that I will not be the last. My goal is to be highly successful in shaping and developing future leaders in this field. I am excited and look forward to the many challenges that this unique opportunity will provide in helping shape the future of our Army.

Commentary

In our view

Guardian staff asked Fort Polk residents, "What is the best thing about being in the Army?"
Here are their responses:



Spc. Dajon Davis: "I like the opportunities and experiences it affords. It can set you up for a long, successful career, and you meet people from different lifestyles and cultures — that's interesting."



Sgt. 1st Class Bernardo Fuller: "I get to learn something new every day. I have has three different military occupational specialties, and have found that no matter how boring a day may be, I can still learn something."



Sgt. Ashley Morris: "Meeting new people from all different backgrounds and seeing how they work together and interact."



Cpl. Bianca Ortiz: "The friendships forged with people from all over the world, helping those in need, being able to travel and getting the kind of training and education that I may not have had in the civilian world."



Guardian

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Briefs

Change of Responsibility

A Change of Responsibility Ceremony for Command Sgt. Maj. Jerry Dodson, outgoing Fort Polk garrison command sergeant major, and his replacement, Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Ausbun, currently serving as command sergeant major of 1st Battalion, 61st Infantry Regiment, 165th Infantry Brigade, Fort Jackson, South Carolina, is held March 22 at 2 p.m. on Warrior Field. Call 531-1392 for more information.

CSH Redesignation

The 115th Combat Support Hospital holds a ceremony Wednesday at 10 a.m. on Fort Polk's Engineer Field where it will be redesignated as the 32nd Hospital Center and 115th Field Hospital. The new deployable force will provide optimal health service support to the Army operational force.

ECF suspended

The Residential Communities Initiative Energy Conservation Program is suspended until further notice. Residents should not be billed, receive rebate payouts, be charged administrative fees or receive delinquent utility charges. RCI partners will continue to monitor usage and provide residents with mock billing statements while the Army reviews current data collection and billing methodology. Contact your neighborhood office for more information.

Hiring, education event

Fort Polk hosts a hiring and education event for the military community April 25 at 10 a.m. at the Warrior Fitness Center. Information about education and career opportunities is offered to Soldiers, spouses, retirees, veterans and Department of the Army civilians.

For more information call the Soldier for Life-Transition Assistance Program at 531-1591.

ASP closure

The Ammunition Supply Point, bldg 4101, is closed Tuesday through Thursday for quarterly inventory. Call 531-0950/4793 for more information.

Tax help

The Fort Polk Tax Center, located in bldg 2502, Alabama Avenue, is open Monday through Wednesday and Fridays from 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Thursdays from 11:30 a.m.-7 p.m. (except from noon-1 p.m.), and Saturdays from 9 a.m.-noon by appointment only. Call 531-1040 for an appointment.

CG explains changes to PPP for military spouses

By Brig. Gen. PATRICK D. FRANK

Commander, JRTC and Fort Polk

FORT POLK, La. — A message from Brigadier General Patrick D. Frank, commanding general of the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk:

JRTC and Fort Polk spouses — you have provided us with outstanding feedback on challenges with spousal employment, with the Priority Placement Program (PPP) and areas that we can internally improve our own Fort Polk Employment Readiness Program.

We recognize Spousal Employment as one of our six aspects of Army Quality of Life: Education, housing, child care, health care, spousal employment and recreation. Your comments in our Community Information Forum, town hall meetings, and ICE comments have been provided to Army senior leaders.

You will recognize the recent changes in the PPP as linked to many of the constructive comments that you have provided. The Army is listening in this critical area of Army life!

The Department of Defense Career Transition Program Office has provided official notification regarding the program changes that are being implemented to streamline the PPP and the way military spouses will exercise their priority placement eligibility.

Military spouses will continue to receive priority placement based on their military spouse preference (MSP) eligibility, but will do so under simplified procedures. They will no longer be required to report to a Human Resources Office (HRO)/Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) upon relocation to the commuting area of their military sponsor's new duty station to register in the PPP or be restricted to five occupations due to system limitations imposed by the Automated Stopper and Referral System (ASARS).

They will simply exercise their priority placement status as an MSP eligible by applying for position vacancies of their choice. Ultimately, this change standardizes MSP procedures, simplifies the employment process and empowers military spouses to exercise MSP selectively.

To exercise MSP eligibility under the streamlined process, military spouses will simply complete and include the Military Spouse PPP Self-Certification Checklist, along with all other required documentation, when applying to vacancy announcements via USA Jobs for which interested and available.



Fort Polk spouse Nicole Merlino works at her job as finance director for the City of Leesville.

Keep in mind that while the transition from ASARS to the application process affords greater flexibilities for military spouses, the overarching MSP policy as codified in Title 10, United States Code 1784 has not changed. MSP entitlement is limited to the offer of only one permanent Federal position (including non-appropriated funds and Army and Air Force Exchange Service), regardless of whether preference was applied.

Spouses' transition to the application process will be effective April 1. As of this date, all Program S registrations in ASARS will be deactivated.

Spouses will continue to receive priority placement and MSP for positions for which they were referred as a Program S match via ASARS prior to this date throughout the recruitment process for such positions.

Beginning April 1, spouses are encouraged to exercise their MSP eligibility solely through the application-based process. For additional

information, spouses may visit the Office of the Military Community & Family Policy (MC&FP) public website at <http://www.militaryonesource.mil/> and the Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service (DCPAS) public website at <https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/EC/Advise>.

These websites contain Military Spouse PPP FAQs, as well as a Military Spouse PPP Fact Sheet, and a copy of the Military Spouse PPP Self-Certification Checklist.

After visiting these websites and reviewing the attached information, if spouses should still have questions, please contact Ronald Camp, Fort Polk CPAC HR representative at 531-4020 or email ronald.g.camp.civ@mail.mil.



Frank

Message

10th Mountain Soldier to be posthumously awarded MOH

By SEAN KIMMONS

Army News Service

WASHINGTON — A 10th Mountain Division squad leader credited with saving the lives of three of his Soldiers by throwing himself atop a suicide bomber in Iraq will be posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor, the White House announced March 12.

Staff Sgt. Travis W. Atkins went above and beyond the call of duty on June 1, 2007, while his unit — Delta Company, 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team — conducted route clearance southwest of Baghdad.

During the mission, Atkins, 31, of Bozeman, Montana, heard a report over the radio of suspected insurgents crossing an intersection in the Iraqi town of Abu Samak.

As the truck commander in his HMMWV, Atkins ordered the driver to pull the vehicle up to the intersection so they could interdict the suspected insurgents. Once stopped, Atkins exited the vehicle and approached one of the men to check him for weapons while another Soldier covered him.

When Atkins attempted to search him, the man resisted. Atkins then engaged in hand-to-hand combat with the insurgent, who was reaching for an explosive vest under his clothing, according to an award citation. Atkins then grabbed the suicide bomber from behind with a

bear hug and slammed him onto the ground, away from his Soldiers. As he pinned the insurgent to the ground, the bomb detonated.

Atkins was mortally wounded by the blast. With complete disregard for his own safety, he had used his own body as a shield to protect his fellow Soldiers from injury. They were only feet away.

Soon after, another insurgent was fatally shot by one of Atkins' Soldiers before he could detonate another suicide vest.

For his actions, Atkins was initially given the Army's second-highest award, the Distinguished Service Cross. Now that award has been upgraded to a Medal of Honor.

President Donald J. Trump will present the medal to Atkins' family on March 27.

Before he joined the Army, Atkins worked for concrete and painting contractors and as an engine mechanic in Montana. He enlisted into the infantry in 2000 and less than three years later he deployed to participate in the invasion of Iraq.

Atkins left the Army in late 2003, but rejoined

two years later and was assigned to the 10th Mountain Division.

He deployed to Iraq again with the division in the summer of 2006 and became a staff sergeant in May 2007, a month before his death.

At Fort Drum, New York, the division honored Atkins by naming a fitness center after him in 2013.

During the dedication ceremony, then-Sgt. Aaron Hall, who was Atkins' battle buddy, described the staff sergeant as a "quiet professional" who always had the respect of others.

"When my 4-year-old son Travis tells me his favorite superhero is Captain America and asks me who my favorite superhero is, my reply always has been and will be Staff Sgt. Travis W. Atkins," Hall said.

According to his obituary, Atkins was also known to hunt, fish, camp and ride snowmobiles. His first love, though, was his son, Trevor Oliver, who was 11 years old at the time of his father's death. Atkins was buried June 12, 2007, in his hometown of Bozeman in south-central Montana. He is also survived by his parents, Jack and Elaine Atkins.



Atkins

New talent system to eye tech-savvy Soldiers for future network

By SEAN KIMMONS

Army News Service

SPRINGFIELD, Va. — As the Army undergoes the largest modernization of its network in decades, technically skilled Soldiers may be placed in jobs outside their career fields to help push it forward, the Army's vice chief of staff said.

"Talent management is one of the biggest things we're doing behind the scenes in the Army right now," said Gen. James C. McConville, while speaking at an Army signal conference March 12.

Currently, the Army has three separate personnel systems for the National Guard, Army Reserve and regular Army.

Part of the Army's larger talent management strategy includes providing commanders with a tool, known as the Integrated Personnel and Pay System-Army, which allows them to identify talents across the total force. The Pennsylvania National Guard is now testing IPPS-A.

By 2020, the goal is to have the system Army-wide, making it easier for leaders to manage Soldiers

based on their knowledge, skills and behavior and even give them preference on where they want to serve, regardless of their military occupational specialty.

McConville said the system could benefit Soldiers who have backgrounds in signal, cyber and intelligence.

"If you have specific talents, you may be promoted ahead of your peers, get special compensation for your skills, or go to graduate school so we can expand your talent as we go forward," he said.

Earlier this year, the Army stood up the Artificial Intelligence Task Force. Based at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, the task force engages with academia and industry partners to further develop AI technology.

While building it up, McConville said it took weeks to find the right people to join the task force since the service still uses an "industrial-age" personnel management system.

The general, though, was impressed when the Army finally found Soldiers with AI experience, even some with doctorate degrees,

hidden in other career fields.

"We have people in the Army who have all these capabilities," he said, "except that they're masked by their MOS."

McConville also credited the Army Signal Corps for being behind past modernization efforts that improved communication on the battlefield.

In his remarks, Lt. Gen. Bruce Crawford, Army chief information officer/G-6, said last year's National Defense Strategy also sent a message to the Army: The service must change the way it fights from irregular warfare to power competition with near-peer competitors.

To do so, the Army network modernization strategy aims to develop a unified network and common operating environment, increase interoperability and boost the mobility and survivability of command posts.

"Our quest is to deliver a network that is fundamentally different in many facets than the one that we have today," Crawford said.

One goal from these initiatives is to allow units to operate quicker in contested environments.

"This future network that we envision has to not only come back and be resilient enough to overcome the threat, but it also has to dramatically increase speed of decision making," he said.

Tangible actions by the Army are expected in the next four to five months to help tackle its data challenges as part of these efforts, he added.

In the future, McConville sees the Army using a wireless mesh network.

That sort of network could be more resilient and self-healing compared to standard systems that rely on a central point of connectivity.

The Army could also learn from technology found in smartphones, he said, which sometimes perform better in combat areas than military systems.

"The iPhone has the type of communication we want," McConville said. "They're very easy to use, they're agile and they're adaptable."

Bottom line, he said, if Soldiers cannot communicate in combat, then they can't win.

"And for the Army, winning matters," he said.

Fort Polk's USAG Soldiers change patches to align under AMC

By **JEAN DUBIEL**

Guardian staff writer

FORT POLK, La. — U.S. Army Garrison Soldiers assigned to Fort Polk changed their unit patches from Installation Management Command to Army Materiel Command in a ceremony held March 8 outside of the Fort Polk Headquarters at bldg 350.

IMCOM was formally acknowledged as a major subordinate command of AMC the same day at an assumption of authority ceremony at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

The transition was effective March 1.

"The Army is implementing aggressive reforms to free resources for readiness and modernization efforts and improve overall efficiency," said Brig. Gen. Omar Jones, the Army's chief of public affairs. "This transition establishes unity of command and effort on our installations, improves the readiness of our Soldiers and formations, and strengthens the well-being of our Soldiers, civilians and Families."

Headquartered at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, IMCOM was created in 2002 to integrate and deliver base support to enable readiness for a globally responsive Army. IMCOM's 50,000-strong workforce remains in place, and no positions will be physically relocated or eliminated during the transition.

AMC, a four-star command, performs installation support for depots, ammunition plants and other facilities. It provides service functions from management of installation power-projection platforms to installation contracting services.

Gen. Gus Perna is the commanding general of Army Materiel Command, based at Redstone Arsenal, Alabama.

Lt. Gen. Bradley A. Becker, IMCOM commanding general, continues to serve from Fort

Sam Houston, Texas.

The realignment consolidates base operations and support functions, and leverages existing Army expertise in logistics, sustainment and services.

The move is one of several ongoing management and headquarters reforms to ensure the Army is efficient and prioritizes resources to readiness and modernization — the service's top priorities.

Perna said Army installations play a vital role



JEAN DUBIEL / GUARDIAN

in establishing military might and sustaining troops, and praised IMCOM professionals for their work.

"The realm of responsibility you have is incredible," Perna said. "We are very grateful for what you have done."

Becker thanked AMC leaders for their recent support.

"There is real value in having a higher headquarters," Becker said. "We think alike and we share a culture of service."

IMCOM directorates will initially remain functionally aligned with their supported Army commands and Army service component commands. AMC and IMCOM leadership will conduct an assessment to ensure all IMCOM directorates are best aligned to effectively support senior commanders.

Realignment under one command, along with continued oversight by the Army secretary, will also increase advocacy within the Army for installation requirements, said Jones.

There are no impacts expected from the change at Fort Polk, according to Col. Jarrett Thomas II, Fort Polk's garrison commander.

"The patch ceremony symbolizes our transition to the AMC," said Thomas. "You won't see any change in the services we provide. We will continue to deliver outstanding customer service to our Soldiers, Families, civilians and contractors."

Command Sgt. Maj. Jerry Dodson (left), Fort Polk garrison command sergeant major, has his Army Materiel Command patch emplaced on his sleeve by Col. Jarrett Thomas II, garrison commander, during a ceremony held in front of Headquarters, bldg 350 March 8.

TRICARE restricts purchase of deluxe breast pumps after overspend

TRICARE

WASHINGTON — A revised TRICARE policy, announced March 11, limits coverage of breast pump kits to one per birth and excludes those considered to have luxury features, such as smartphone connectivity, expanded rechargeable batteries, fancy tote bags, car adapters and more.

The changes affirm coverage of breast pumps for new mothers and adoptive mothers, an initiative that began in late 2014, and allow expecting moms to access the benefit starting at the 27th week of pregnancy, or when the baby is born, if premature.

The change follows a Defense Department Office of Inspector General report released last April that found the department paid \$16.2 million more than it should have for electric breast pumps and replacement parts.

In some cases, the DHA paid as much as \$1,400 for a breast pump that could be purchased in a store for less than \$200. The overages occurred, the IG found, because the

TRICARE policy allowed users to order a pump directly from a medical supply company and bill TRICARE, or to buy a pump at a store and submit the receipt.

The investigation noted that the DHA should have required TRICARE contractors to use suppliers with fixed, negotiated rates.

Now, pumps must be purchased from a TRICARE-authorized provider and only replacement supplies considered essential for breastfeeding will be reimbursed. Patients can still purchase their own breast pump and supplies and request reimbursement, but there will be a maximum reimbursement rate, to be listed in the TRICARE Reimbursement Manual, which can be found at Health.mil.

Also, under no circumstances can patients purchase a breast pump kit that includes a pump and all supplies and submit reimbursement claims for individual components, according to the new policy.

"Unbundling of a breast pump kit for the purposes of billing items individually to maximize reimbursement is considered an abusive

billing practice," the policy states.

According to the IG, the Pentagon overpaid for breast pumps more than 90 percent of the time under the old policy, 54,006 out of 59,241 purchases. It overpaid 57 percent of the time for replacement parts.

Failure to heed the new policy could result in out-of-pocket expenses for families, according to the policy update.

The new policy allows only the breast pump and the following replacement parts without an additional prescription: Two bottles and caps or locking rings once a year after a birth; one replacement power adapter per birth and none within the first 12 months; 12 valves or membranes; one set of flanges per birth; one set of tubing; and 90 breast milk bags every 30 days after the birth.

The caps placed on breast pump purchases by TRICARE are as follows: For personal use, \$312.84 in the U.S. and \$500 overseas; for hospital grade (as required by a doctor), \$1,501.65 in the U.S. and \$3,003.30 overseas.

For more information visit Health.mil.

BJACH No. 1 again

BJACH

FORT POLK, La. — For three out of the last four months, Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital has been No. 1 in overall patient satisfaction for the entire Regional Health Command — Central, as a result of beneficiary responses from the Joint Outpatient Experience Survey (JOES).

JOES is the Military Health System's unified outpatient survey for all military treatment facilities across all services to learn about beneficiary health care experiences, with the goal of making them better.

Beneficiary input on the JOES can have a considerable impact on how BJACH delivers health care. Surveys can be responded to through email. For more information contact the Patient Experience Office at 531-3628/3880.

Cav Soldiers eyes, ears of 3rd BCT, 10th Mtn Div

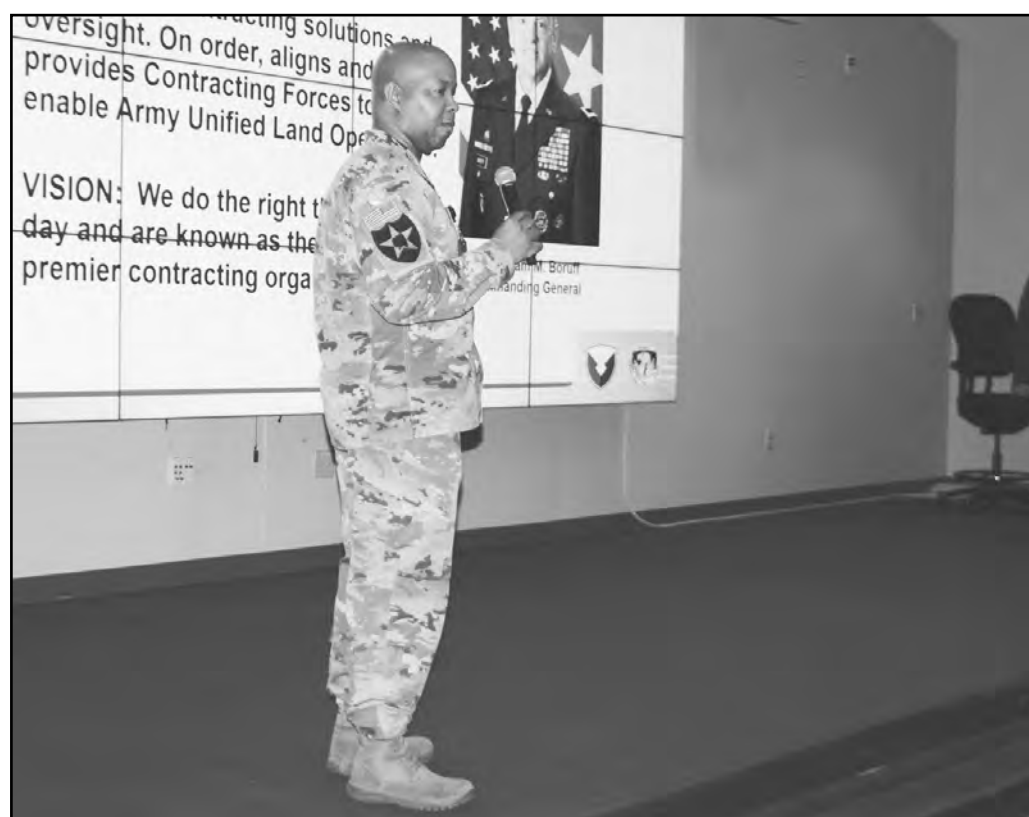
3rd SQUADRON, 89th CAVALRY REGIMENT

FORT POLK, La. — During the last week of February and the first week of March Soldiers with the 3rd Squadron, 89th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division conducted reconnaissance by being the eyes and ears of the 3rd BCT, 10th Mtn Div fight during a Combined Arms Live Fire Exercise and Exercise Mountain Peak.

The photographs on this page show the 3/89 Soldiers in action.



COURTESY 3/89TH CAVALRY REGIMENT



MICC offers seminar

Lt. Col. David Taylor from Fort Polk's Mission and Installation Contracting Command presents information about doing business with Fort Polk during a small business information seminar at the Mission Training Center after action review theater March 13. Small business owners received an information packet including a step-by-step guide to doing business with the installation; helpful phone numbers, email and web addresses; a list of the kinds of goods and services the installation does and doesn't buy through contracts; and a statement of the mission and vision of the MICC, which is to provide responsive contracting solutions and oversight for the customer, the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk tenant activities and major subordinate commands. The presentation also showed that Fort Polk's MICC has exceeded every minimum requirement for small business contracts, with fiscal year 2018 achievements including 55.7 percent for small business, 24.8 percent for small disadvantaged business, .5 percent for service-disabled veteran-owned business, 1.8 percent woman-owned business, and 3.9 percent historically underutilized business zone.

JEAN DUBIEL / GUARDIAN

Brain Injury Awareness Month promotes warfighter brain health

DEFENSE AND VETERANS BRAIN INJURY CENTER

WASHINGTON — Every year, the Defense Department recognizes March as Brain Injury Awareness month to increase awareness of traumatic brain injury.

To underscore the department-wide effort to understand, prevent, diagnose and treat TBI, Deputy Secretary of Defense Patrick Shanahan released a memo dated Oct. 1, 2018, that outlines a strategy and action plan to support warfighter brain health.

"Our pursuit of superior lethality must be matched by a commitment to understanding, preventing, diagnosing and treating TBI in all its forms," Shanahan stated in his memo.

Through the Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center, a division of the Defense Health Agency Research and Development Directorate and the TBI center of excellence for the Defense Department, the department is leveraging new technologies and cutting-edge research to develop concussion care tools and protocols that prioritize early identification and individualized treatment to maximize warfighter brain health.

2019 theme: Advancing Warfighter Brain Health

The 2019 Brain Injury Awareness Month theme supports the enduring responsibility of DoD to promote and protect the health and well-being of the nation's warfighters and their families.

"Only by amplifying our communications about, and promoting awareness of warfighter brain health and surveillance initiatives, can the department eliminate, once and for all, the stigma that remains attached to help-seeking behaviors," Shanahan said.

About traumatic brain injury

TBI is a signature injury of current conflicts and, according to DVBIC, 383,947 service members received a TBI diagnosis from 2000 until the first quarter of 2018. Additional facts include:

- DVBIC defines a TBI as the result of a blow or jolt to the head that disrupts the normal function of the brain; not all blows or jolts to the head



result in a TBI.

- Injuries can be closed or penetrating head wounds and will range in severity from mild to moderate to severe.

- The most common form of TBI in the military is mild TBI, also referred to as concussion.

- Common symptoms following a concussion include headaches, dizziness, sleep disturbances, vision changes, balance problems, fatigue, attention and memory problems, irritability and mood changes.

- Early detection of traumatic brain injury leads to early treatment; early treatment leads to better outcomes.

"Educating our service members and families to recognize the signs and symptoms indicative of TBI and making it easy for families, loved ones and friends to seek and receive the information and support they need to respond compassionately and constructively to a member who may have sustained a TBI, are essential first steps," said Shanahan.

TBI research, tools for providers

The MHS will leverage the month-long focus on TBI to highlight ongoing research and break-



throughs that help improve and maintain the quality of life for those living with a brain injury.

DVBIC will also promote the recent release of new cutting-edge provider tools, such as the updated Military Acute Concussion Evaluation, or MACE 2.

The MACE 2 is a screening tool that allows frontline providers to quickly screen for concussion.

The MACE 2 tool can be downloaded at <https://health.mil/Reference-Center/Forms/2015/04/30/MACE-2012>.

Serving through the centuries: Women in the military

By Keith Houin

Public affairs specialist

FORT POLK, La. — Since 1978 the United States has recognized the role of women in the country's history, but March was not designated as Women's History Month until 1987 when The National Women's History Project petitioned Congress to establish a Women's History Month, which they did when they passed Public Law 100-09 on March 12, 1987.

Women have played a vast role in the nation's history in the fields of engineering, medicine, civil rights, the space program and more. Their role in the military is no exception.

The recent opening of combat roles to women in the military may seem like a new idea, but women have served in combat far longer than recent events.

In 1782 Deborah Samson Gannett, from Plymouth, Massachusetts, disguised herself as a man and enlisted under her deceased brother's name, Robert Shurtleff Samson.

She served in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War for 17 months. To keep doctors from discovering her true gender she once cut a musket ball from her thigh. In 1804 she was granted a pension for her service.

In 1776, with her husband and 600 American Soldiers, Margaret Corbin also saw combat defending Fort Washington, New York.

The first documented death of a woman in combat came during the Civil War in New Orleans. Sarah Rosetta Wakeman had enlisted as Private Lyons Wakeman. Her true gender was not known at the time of her death and her headstone reads Lyons Wakeman.

Also, during the Civil War, Mary Edwards Walker would become the first woman to receive the Medal of Honor for her efforts to treat the wounded.

These are just a few of a long line of women in the military paving the way for women serving today. Women have taken part in every conflict since the very first, though maybe not officially or legally.

World War I brought about major shifts to women in the military, when the Navy and Marine Corps allowed 12,000 women to enlist of which 400 died.

Women also served in other capacities in the war effort. Women made up nearly 25 percent of aviation plant workers. Women also worked in the Red Cross and United Service Organizations.

The numbers of women serving in the military drastically increased during World War II with 350,000 serving. Despite their non-combat roles, women were in dangerous situations. In the Philippines, 67 Army nurses were captured by the Japanese in 1942 and held as prisoners of war for three years.

World War II also saw the creation of official female branches of the services. The Women's Army Auxiliary Corps was created in 1942 and changed to the Women's Army Corps in 1943. One hundred and fifty thousand women served under those corps. Also in 1942, the Navy started Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service. WAVES worked in administrative, medical and communications positions. The Coast Guard and Marines followed suit with their own version of a women's Corps or reserve.

With war ending, the more than 12 million men and women serving was reduced to 1,566,000 and resulted in fewer roles for women. However, in 1950 tensions were mounting on the Korean peninsula, and U.S. men and women would soon find themselves on foreign soil once again.

During the Korean War, about 50,000 women served in the military, many as Army nurses in forward-deployed Mobile Army Surgical Hospitals and aboard ships.

Eight died in combat.

At the same time, the Vietnam War had begun and by 1954 U.S. involvement had escalated. Once again women found themselves overseas with their mostly male counterparts.

But, by this time women were serving in a variety of roles and even command positions. U.S. Navy Cmdr. Elizabeth M. Barrett became the first and highest-ranking woman naval line officer to serve in the Vietnam War, and the first woman to assume a command billet in a combat zone.

The war in Vietnam saw the end of the front line, and women often found themselves in the same dangers as their male counterparts. Capt. Eleanor Alexander and 1st Lt. Hedwig Orłowski are just two examples.

The two had been sent to a hospital in Pleiku to help out during a push. On the return trip their C-7B Caribou aircraft crashed and they, along with 24 other military and civilian personnel, were killed. Orłowski and Alexander were posthumously awarded Bronze Stars.

Women continued to serve and break ground in various military roles.

More than 40,000 women served in the 1991 Gulf War engaging with enemy forces at an unprecedented level. The U.S.S. Acadia left San Diego for the Persian Gulf on Sept. 5, 1990 with 1,260 personnel on board, 360 were women. This marked the first time men and women shipped out together in wartime conditions on a U.S. Navy vessel. The Gulf War was also the first time women and men served in integrated units within a warzone.

During that same time period 1st Lt. Jeannie M. Leavitt became the first U.S. female fighter pilot in 1993. She was later the first woman to command a U.S. Air Force combat fighter wing, and is currently a brigadier general and commands Air Force Recruiting Service.

In 1994 Defense Secretary Les Aspin implemented a rule that prohibited women from serving in units where the primary mission was to engage in direct ground combat. However that did not stop women from achieving new heights.

On Nov. 14, 2008, Ann Dunwoody became the first woman in U.S. military history to achieve the rank of four-star General.

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan saw a change in the nature of warfare and women played a more active role.

Then-Sgt. Leigh Ann Hester became the first female Soldier to receive the Silver Star for exceptional

valor in close-quarters combat in 2005. Leading her team in a 25-minute firefight near Salman Pak, Iraq, Hester used an M203 grenade launcher and hand grenades to cut off the enemy.



U.S. ARMY ARCHIVE PHOTO

1st Lt. Hedwig Orłowski was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star after losing her life in the Vietnam War.

Pfc. Monica Lin Brown also received the Silver Star for her 2007 actions in Afghanistan. After an improvised explosive device detonated on the side of a vehicle in her convoy, Brown protected wounded Soldiers with her own body and ran through gunfire to save their lives.

Since the beginning of the U.S. history women have continued to serve and increased opportunities have opened up for them within the ranks, and in January 2013 all the barriers to serving in their field of choice were removed.

Defense Secretary Leon Panetta announced that the ban on women serving in combat roles would be lifted, leveling the playing field. Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey said, "The time has come to rescind the direct combat exclusion rule for women and to eliminate all unnecessary gender-based barriers to service."

This paved the way for female Soldiers like Capt. Kristen Griest and 1st Lt. Shaye Haver to become the first two women to graduate from the Army Ranger School on Aug. 21, 2015.

It was the first year the Army opened the course to women. Secretary of the Army John M. McHugh said in a statement, "This course has proven that every Soldier, regardless of gender, can achieve his or her full potential."

With the barriers down, the role of women in the military will continue to expand, encouraging more opportunities for female Soldiers to march toward the future while accomplishing extraordinary things.



U.S. ARMY ARCHIVE PHOTO

Members of the Women's Army Auxillary Corps share coffee and snacks during WWII.

Briefs

School lunches

The following school lunch menu is for Vernon Parish schools for Monday through March 22. Meals are served with salad bar and choice of milk:

- **Monday:** Hamburger on whole wheat bun, French fries, ranch style beans, lettuce/tomato/pickle cup, orange wedges.
- **Tuesday:** Chicken and sausage gumbo, steamed rice, potato salad, green beans, peach crunch, ice cream, crackers.
- **Wednesday:** Barbecue beef on whole wheat bun, potato rounds, green Lima beans, fruit.
- **Thursday:** Pinto beans and sausages, fluffy whole grain rice, mustard greens, orange wedges, whole wheat cornbread.
- **March 22:** Cheese nachos, corn on the cob, ranch style beans, apple wedges.

Vietnam vets event

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service honors Vietnam veterans for their service and sacrifice on March 29, National Vietnam War Veterans Day with a pinning ceremony at the Fort Polk Main Exchange at 10 a.m.

Veterans who served on active duty in the U.S. armed forces at any time from Nov. 1, 1955 to May 15, 1975, regardless of location, can receive a Vietnam Veteran Lapel Pin.

Veterans who typically do not have access to the post should stop at the Visitor Center on Entrance Road to receive a pass. For more information contact the Fort Polk Exchange at (337) 537-1001.

Preschool registration

Registration for the Vernon Parish Preschool Programs (Head Start and LA4) for the 2019-20 school year begins Tuesday. Visit the school of your choice to register between 8 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Applications can also be completed online via the Vernon Parish Early Childhood website at www.vernonpreschool.com beginning Tuesday.

Call Lisa Franklin, LA4 coordinator, at (337) 537-5145 or the Head Start office at (337) 239-6899 for more information.

Color run

Fort Polk's Directorate of Family Morale, Welfare and Recreation hosts the Dye Hard Warrior 5K Color Run April 6 from 9 a.m.-noon beginning at Showboat Theatre, South 10th Street.

To register or for more information visit the DFMWR Facebook page at www.facebook.com/fortpolkmwr/.



Attendees sign in to participate in the Family Life Symposium held at Fort Polk's Glory Chapel March 7.

Symposium highlights dangers of digital world

By **ANGIE THORNE**

Guardian staff writer

FORT POLK, La. — A Family Life Symposium, hosted by Fort Polk's Main Post Chapel, delved into navigating and coping in a world inundated with technology and social media. The symposium was held March 7 at Glory Chapel for leaders and others interested in learning skills to better deal with the fallout of too much screen time.

Chap. (Maj.) Jerrod Glenn, Fort Polk Main Post Chapel Family Life Chaplain, organized and led the symposium addressing the challenges of social, digital and online addiction.

Glenn thanked those in attendance for their courage in tackling such an important subject.

"Everyone has a phone. If you go to a restaurant, you see more people engaged in their phones than each other. There's this social media revolution going on that's taking the place of interaction. That's affecting relationships in negative ways at a staggering level," said Glenn.

Glenn said while the symposium addressed a broad subject, the focus was narrowed to key areas within technology based devices.

"Chaplain's tend to face a large amount of couple related counseling and crisis management on a community level, all related to cell phones," he said. "In a sense, the phone and the digital world are gateways to more harmful issues such as accessibility to pornography and sexual addictions. This is a personal and intimate issue for people, but we can't just put our heads in the sand and ignore it. Getting this group of counselors, chaplains, leaders and concerned citizens together is a start," he said.

Event topics included sex and the brain, predators and family impact, digital/emotional affairs and unmet emotional needs. Guest speakers included John Fort, Be Broken Ministries director of training — a Christian ministry that helps men, women, marriages and families overcome

pornography and sexual strongholds, and Cindi Geeslin, a licensed clinical social worker at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

Geeslin said that sexual media addiction is almost unavoidable in today's world because people have been desensitized.

"It seems like every television sitcom and commercial makes some type of sexual reference or innuendo. You can't divorce sex and its influence from digital media and the brain because it's everywhere," she said. "That leads people to believe life isn't complete without it (sex), which is simply not true."

Sex adds cement to relationships with a layer of intimacy and commitment, said Geeslin, but pornographers prey on people's loneliness and cheapen it (sex) by making it a commodity to be purchased — making it a solo and shameful activity that objectifies women, she said.

"This (pornography) is out there and you need to know about it and make informed decisions about what you believe, not what culture tells you to believe. Then you need to figure out how to have constructive conversations about it," she said.

Julia Stevenson, a Family life chapel intern currently working on her master's degree in counseling, was part of the chapel team working at the symposium.

Having grown up with social media, Stevenson said what she learned at the symposium was a revelation.

"Technology and social media are an ingrained part of my life. It's all around me and I didn't even realize the problems it could create. Listening to the speakers has opened my eyes to the negative aspects of digital media," she said.

Stevenson said that doesn't mean everything about technology is bad.

"When my husband was deployed, it was a

Please see **Symposium**, page 16

PSH demonstrates deadly dangers of teenage drunk driving

By **ANGIE THORNE**

Guardian staff writer

PICKERING, La. — Prom season is just around the corner. There will be girls in beautiful dresses, handsome boys dressed in tuxedos, music and dancing. It's like a dream come true for those experiencing their first "adult" formal.

Unfortunately, the evening can quickly turn into a nightmare when alcohol, underage drinking and getting behind the wheel of a vehicle are added to the mix — ending in the possibility of mangled cars, life-changing circumstances and even fatalities.

Pickering High School showed its student body the deadly consequences of drinking and driving by hosting a full scale demonstration of what takes place moments after an accident occurs March 13, in the parking lot in front of the high school.

As students gathered outside to watch the drama unfold, they were greeted with a grisly picture. A car crushed and mangled held the bodies of four students — bloodied, cut, bruised and frozen in a horrific moment in time. The car was surrounded by beer bottles. One victim had been thrown through the windshield and was lying in a pool of her own "blood" across the hood of the car. Even for those that helped create the scenario, it was a sobering scene.

The school worked in conjunction with the Vernon Parish Sheriff's Office, Sandy Hill Fire and Rescue, Med Express Ambulance Service and Labby Funeral Home to build a believable sequence of events with four PHS students acting out roles as accident victims.

The students were dressed in the tattered remnants of prom formal wear and covered in life-like injuries to make the event as realistic as possible.

Jerome Henson, PHS principal, explained the purpose of the demonstration before it began.

There are a number of people who have spent much time and effort to recreate the aftermath of an accident on prom night, said Henson.

"They want you to see what it would be like if you were involved in this type of situation," he said.

Henson said the faculty and staff care about students.

"We help raise you. If you are in an accident and die, it hurts us too," he said. "I know we talk about the importance of testing and grade point averages, but this is also a vital part of your education. We need you to understand that if you are drinking and driving and have a wreck, not only does it affect you, but also the people you could possibly hit. If you are drinking, texting or otherwise distracted, then you are liable for their lives."

The students participating in the "accident" were PHS 10th graders.

Shaela Lawrence, 15, played an injured victim in the simulated car wreck. Lawrence said she wouldn't want to put anyone through that after seeing her friends and family react to the demonstration, even though they knew it wasn't real.

"You could see how it touched everyone watching," she said.

During the scene, Lawrence said she felt helpless, much like someone in a real accident might feel in her situation.

"This isn't a game. You can't rewind and make something like this go away," she said.



Sandy Hill Fire and Rescue arrives at the scene and begins to assess injuries. They are checking on the victim that flew through the car windshield, played by Pickering High School student Jaquelin Lopez, 16. The demonstration about what can happen when drinking and driving mix took place at PSH March 13.



Shaela Lawrence, 15, (left), Braden Lebata, 16, (right) and Ashton Fritts, 15, in the back seat, are some of the Pickering High School students acting out the drama of a drinking and driving accident on prom night held at PHS March 13.

Jaquelin Lopez, 16, played the part of a passenger that goes through the windshield and dies as a result of her injuries. She said it hurts to think of people and families that have actually gone through something like this.

"It makes you realize that it's not just the people in the car that can be hurt," she said. "I don't think I'll ever make the mistake of getting into a car when people have been drinking."

As the passenger that "dies," Lopez knew she would have to be placed in a body bag and put in a hearse. She said it was an interesting experi-

ence that drove home the seriousness of the issue.

"It definitely made me stop and think of all the people that I would be leaving behind if this was real and how they would mourn and suffer," she said.

In the scenario, Braden Lebata, 16, was a drunk driver. He said he was the one in the wrong because he was drinking and driving and "killed" one of his friends.

Please see **Drunk**, page 11

CDC provides latest information about teens, drunk driving

CDC

ATLANTA, Ga. — Teen drinking and driving is a continuing battle at schools and in homes across the nation.

How big is the problem?

In 2016, 2,433 teens in the United States ages 16 to 19 were killed and 292,742 were treated in emergency departments for injuries suffered in motor vehicle crashes. That means that six teens ages 16 to 19 died every day due to motor vehicle crashes and hundreds more were injured.

In 2016, young people ages 15 to 19 represented 6.5 percent of the U.S. population. However, they accounted for an estimated \$13.6 billion (8.4 percent) of the total costs of motor vehicle injuries.

Who is most at risk?

The risk of motor vehicle crashes is higher among 16 to 19 year olds than among any other age group. In fact, per mile driven, teen drivers ages 16 to 19 are nearly three times more likely than drivers ages 20 and older to be in a fatal crash.

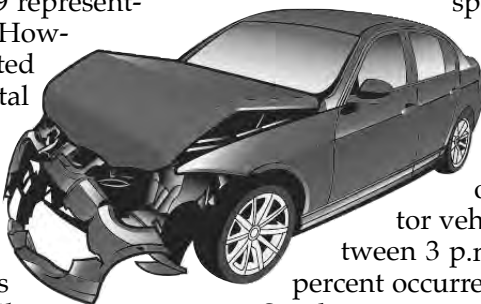
Among teen drivers, those at especially high risk for motor vehicle crashes are:

- Males: In 2016, the motor vehicle death rate for male drivers ages 16 to 19 was two times that of their female counterparts.
- Teens driving with teen passengers: The presence of teen passengers increases the crash risk of unsupervised teen drivers. This risk increases with the number of teen passengers.

- Newly licensed teens: Crash risk is particularly high during the first months of licensure. The fatal crash rate per mile driven is nearly twice as high for 16 to 17 year olds compared with 18 to 19 year olds.

What factors put teen drivers at risk?

- Teens are more likely than older drivers to underestimate dangerous situations or not recognize hazardous situations. Teens are also more likely than adults to make critical decision errors that lead to serious crashes.
- Teens are more likely than older drivers to speed and allow shorter headways (the distance from the front of one vehicle to the front of the next).
- In 2016, 49 percent of teen deaths from motor vehicle crashes occurred between 3 p.m. and midnight, and 53 percent occurred on Friday, Saturday or Sunday.
- Compared with other age groups, teens have among the lowest rates of seat belt use. In 2017, only 59 percent of high school students reported they always wear seat belts when riding as passengers.
- At all levels of blood alcohol concentration (BAC), the risk of involvement in a motor vehicle crash is greater for teens than for older drivers.
- Among male drivers between 15 and 20 years of age who were involved in fatal crashes in 2016, 32 percent were speeding at the time of



the crash and 21 percent had been drinking.

- In 2016, 15 percent of drivers ages 16 to 20 involved in fatal motor vehicle crashes had a BAC of .08 percent or higher.

In a 2017 national Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 16.5 percent of high school students reported that, within the previous month, they had ridden with a driver who had been drinking alcohol. Among students who drove, 5.5 percent reported having driven after drinking alcohol within the same one-month period.

How can deaths and injuries resulting from crashes involving teen drivers be prevented?

There are proven methods to help teens become safer drivers. Make sure your young driver is aware of the leading causes of teen crashes:

1. Driver inexperience
2. Driving with teen passengers
3. Night driving
4. Not using seat belts
5. Distracted driving
6. Drowsy driving
7. Reckless driving
8. Impaired driving

Seat belts

Of the teens (aged 16 to 19) who died in passenger vehicle crashes in 2016, at least 48 percent were not wearing a seat belt at the time of the crash. Research shows that seat belts reduce serious crash-related injuries and deaths by about half.

Louisiana seat belt laws cover drivers, as well as passengers age 13 and older in all seats.

For more information visit www.cdc.gov.

Drunk

Continued from page 10

"Even though I knew it wasn't real, when the police officers handcuffed me, I felt immediate regret. You don't think it can happen to you, but it can. You are just one bad choice away from something like this happening," he said.

The students knew where they were supposed to be positioned in the car but didn't get much time to practice.

"They told us what to expect about two minutes before everything began because they said they wanted our real reactions to the situation. So a lot of what we did and said wasn't rehearsed," he said.

Lebata said he would never get behind the wheel if he had been drinking and added he tries to stress that to his friends as well.

"Being the drunk driver in this demonstration just makes me believe that even more. You should never put anyone's life in danger," he said.

Ashton Fritts, 15, played the part of the second injured passenger in the back seat.

He said knowing that this can happen to you or your friends made an impact on him that he won't forget. "There aren't any second chances when it comes to drinking and driving," he said.

Denisha Brinkley, Shaela's mom, was emotional as the demonstration progressed and said it was difficult to watch.

"Though it was scary to watch, I think it puts into perspective what every parent fears. A demonstration like this makes you realize how fast life can change," said Brinkley. "As a par-

ent, our biggest goals are to raise our kids to be good people who make smart decisions — like not getting into the car when people have been drinking — even if that makes you unpopular because it could save your life. You just want them to do the right thing. Hopefully, this demonstration will help these kids make the right choices."

Tyler Martin, Med Express Ambulance Service director of operations, said his company has been part of demonstrations like this before during prom season and if it saves just one life, it makes all the coordination and hard work worth it.

He said he can't stress enough to students how severe drinking and driving accidents can be.

"It's not just the injuries and fatalities, but the driver of that vehicle will face jail time for vehicular homicide," he said.

Martin told students they often don't understand the impact this type of situation can have.

"These are your friends; you've grown up with these people and accidents like this usually mean you will be going to one or more funerals during prom season or graduation," he said.

"Sadly, as much as we try to keep it from happening, every year we have to work at least one accident similar to what we have acted out here today based on bad decisions about drinking and driving," he said. "Ultimately, the best decision is to not drink at all. Don't get behind the wheel if you have been drinking and encourage your friends not to drink and drive."



The visual of a teen that didn't "survive" the demonstration held at Pickering High School March 13 is a solemn reminder of the consequences of drinking and driving.



CHUCK CANNON / GUARDIAN

The Fort Polk youth wrestling team: Front row, kneeling, left to right: Evan Bailey, Landon Dougherty and Jacob Sigmon; second row, left to right: Jaxson Horne, Jordan Ellison, De-Shaun Ellison, Gabriel Holman and Darius Hickman; third row, left to right: Coach Chris Horne, Anthony Hernandez, Phillip Brown, Nathaniel Pommer and Cody Sigmon.

Youth wrestlers claim titles at Ark-La-Tex meet

By **CHUCK CANNON**

Guardian editor

FORT POLK, La. — Members of the Fort Polk youth wrestling team made a strong showing at the Ark-La-Tex Classic at Hirsch Memorial Coliseum in Shreveport March 9, bringing home trophies and medals as they prepare for the upcoming Louisiana State Meet in Baton Rouge March 23.

Jordan Ellison, Jaxson Horne and Cody Sigmon each were crowned champion in their weight classes, while several other team members also earned medals for placing second or third place.

The Fort Polk wrestling team is part of the Directorate of Family Morale, Welfare and Recreation's Child and Youth Service's Sports Program. Chris Horne, who wrestled in college at Ohio State University before making the Army a career, is the team's coach.

Horne said the 16 to 18 members of the Fort Polk team have made exceptional strides since the program began in February.

"I'm very proud of our kids because we haven't had a full season like the other teams," Horne said. "The other teams started wrestling when school began and some of them have had 30 or 40 meets during the past four or five months, and now we are in the tournament season. Our guys have only been at it a short time and we're doing well, and we're winning matches. We're having fun and working hard."

Horne said that since the Fort Polk team members haven't been wrestling long, they're still working out what weight they might want to compete at.

"Some of them talk about wanting to get bigger, but I remind them that if they get bigger, they'll have to wrestle against bigger guys, so you've got to decide what you want to do," Horne said.

"You have to balance the power and speed aspects. But, if your technique is good and you're always giving 100 percent, you'll be OK."

Horne said Nate Pommer is one of the

Please see **Wrestling**, page 13

Sports briefs

Soccer event

Fort Polk Intramural Sports hosts a seven-on-seven soccer tournament March 25-27 from 6-9 p.m. nightly at the Soldiers Athletic complex.

The tourney is open to active-duty Soldiers, Family members, retirees and Department of the Army civilians age 18 and up.

Register at [Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com). Call 531-2056 for more information.

Golf scramble

Wednesday night golf scrambles at Warrior Hills Golf are ongoing and run through Sept. 5. Sign up by 4:45 p.m. for 5 p.m. shotgun start. Cost is \$20 for members, \$25 for non-members. Price includes cart, golf and prizes. For more info call 531-4661.

Strongest youth

A strongest youth competition is held March 23 at Perez Field. Register on site at 9 a.m. Contest begins at 10 a.m. Free and open to the public.

Age categories: 8-9; 10-11; 12-14; and 15 and up. Events include log toss, tire flip, sled pull and more. Call 531-6004 for more info.

Gymnastic classes

The Directorate of Family Morale, Welfare and Recreation Child and Youth Services hosts the following gymnastic classes at bldg 2070, Youth Gym:

- Parent and child gymnastics, ages 12 months to 3 years, Mondays at 10 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 11 a.m., and Fridays at 5:30 p.m., \$25 a month.

- Preschool gymnastics, ages 3-5 years, Monday, Tuesday and Friday 4:30 p.m., and Wednesday 11 a.m., \$35 a month.

- School age gymnastics, ages 6-9 years, Mondays at 5:30 p.m. and Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m., \$45 a month.

- School age gymnastics, ages 10 and up, Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m., \$55 a month. Children must be registered with CYS. Call 531-6004 for more information.

Jiu jitsu classes

The Fort Polk Directorate of Family Morale, Welfare and Recreation and Child and Youth Services offers Brazilian jiu jitsu classes for ages 6 and up for \$48 a month. Classes are held in bldg 744 Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5:30-6:30 p.m. and 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Participants must be registered with CYS. Call 531-6004 for more information.

Wrestling

Continued from page 12

wrestler who is still trying to decide at weight he wants to wrestle.

"He wrestles at 170 because he probably walks around at about 165," Horne said. "He should probably be wrestling at 155. But he's doing well and he practices hard, so whatever is most comfortable for him is best."

Pommer, who is 14, said he enjoys wrestling because it lets him compare himself to other kids his age and size.

"I don't want to feel inadequate," he said. "I don't have any brothers or sisters my age so I can't compare myself at home. That's why I like going to wrestling meets and either beating or losing to other kids my size."

After competing in a few meets, Pommer said he's confident how he stacks up against others his size.

"I think I'm equal; I'm definitely not better than most of them, but I'm equal," he said. "If I'm good enough I'd like to wrestle in college."

Horne said the meet in Shreveport was an opportunity for the team to see what it was like competing against top level teams in a large area.

"It was nice for the kids to be able to experience something in a place like that (Hirsch Coliseum)," he said. It resembled a state high school tournament setting so a lot of our younger guys won't be able to experience something like that until they are older."

Horne said his team wasn't intimidated competing against so many teams in such a large venue.

"They went out, had fun and size of the place didn't affect them at all," he said.

Horne said that anyone interested in joining the team can give him a call at (937) 844-8461.

"We have kids from 7 to 17 years old," he said. "We practice twice a week on Tuesday and Thursdays at 6 p.m. in the Youth Gym."

With the state tournament looming on the horizon, Horne said the focus is getting his team ready.

"The tournament in Shreveport was big with excellent teams from three different states," he said. "After seeing how our kids did, I'm confident that eight to 12 of our guys can place at state. They work hard, don't give up and are aggressive."



CHUCK CANNON / GUARDIAN



Clockwise, from left: Fort Polk youth wrestlers Jaxson Horne (left) and Darius Hickman grapple during practice March 12; Coach Chris Horne (on his back) shows Nate Pommer a takedown move during practice March 12; Coach Horne (top) teaches an escape move to Phillip Brown; and DeShaun Ellison (top) gets the best of his younger brother, Jordan, during practice in preparation for the Louisiana State Wrestling Tournament in Baton Rouge March 23.

Heart healthy diet important to overall health

By First Lt. JENNIFER WEST

Health.mil

FORT GORDON, Ga. —With the typical American diet and lifestyle, many people put themselves at risk for developing heart diseases. Diets that are low in vegetables and fruits, and high in processed grains, added sugars, saturated fats and sodium are risk factors for developing heart diseases such as unhealthy levels of fat in the blood (hyperlipidemia), high blood pressure (hypertension) and fatty deposits in the blood vessels that supply blood to the heart (coronary artery disease).

The Centers for Disease and Control reports that coronary artery disease is the most common of all heart diseases. Coronary artery disease can reduce or stop blood flow to the heart, causing a heart attack, or if developed over a long period of time, leading to heart failure.

The good news is that you can take action to reduce your risk of developing CAD and other heart diseases. Lifestyle changes, including increased physical activity and changing your eating habits, can go a long way in reducing your risk.

The CDC recommends a minimum of 150 min-

utes of moderate-intensity physical activity per week. Choosing an activity that gets your heart pumping is the goal. Walking, active yoga and general yard work are examples of moderate-intensity activity. Alternatively, 75 minutes per week of vigorous-intensity activity supports substantial health benefits, too. Running, jumping rope, hiking uphill or with a heavy backpack are some examples of vigorous-intensity activity.

Changing your eating habits doesn't have to be drastic to be effective. When registered dietitians and other health professionals talk about a "heart-healthy" diet, it generally means to increase the amount of fiber in one's diet and reduce saturated fats and salt. Each of these tasks can have a direct impact on your heart health.

For example, fiber can help reduce cholesterol levels. The type of fiber your body needs to do this is called soluble fiber. Think of this non-calorie nutrient as a magnet for cholesterol. Foods high in this type of fiber include whole grains (like oats), beans, whole fruits and nuts. The Institute of Medicine recommends that men eat 30-35 grams of fiber per day and women should eat 20-25 grams of fiber per day. Unfortunately, most Americans fall short of this

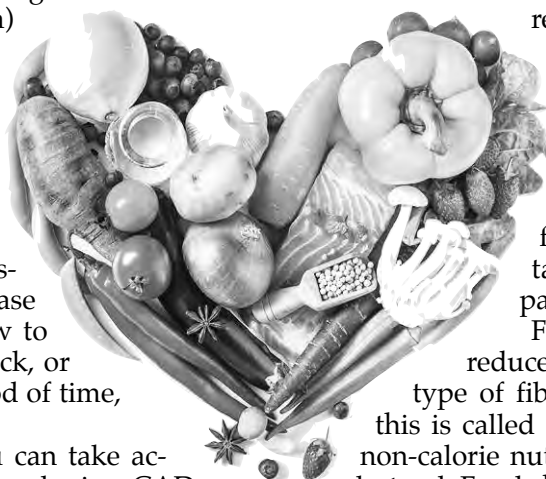
goal, eating on average about 15 grams of fiber daily.

Reducing saturated fats in one's diet can also help the heart. Saturated fats are typically found in tropical oils (coconut) and animal products (dairy and meats). Heart-healthy fats are unsaturated fats found in foods such as olive oil, nuts, seeds and fish. To remember which ones are healthier just think of this: Saturated fats are solid at room temperature (and in your heart) and unsaturated fats are liquid at room temperature. Keep in mind though that all fats are high in calories and a little goes a long way.

Choose low-fat or non-fat dairy and lean cuts of meats to reduce saturated fats from those sources. And don't swap your heart healthy olive oil for coconut oil. Coconut oil is higher in saturated fat than butter. Keep the coconut oil to a minimum, or just use it on your skin and hair for a heart-healthy alternative.

When it comes to salt and heart health, less is definitely more. Most Americans eat around 4,000 mg of salt (or sodium) daily. Health experts recommend reducing this to 1,500-2,500 mg daily for health benefits, such as lower blood pressure. Foods that are typically high in salt are those that are prepackaged and highly processed.

Easy-to-find, low-sodium foods include breads, canned beans and low sodium soy sauce. If you are cooking at home you can use a variety of spices and herbs to create flavorful dishes without added salt.



Picky eaters? End dinner battles with tips from AND

ACADEMY OF NUTRITION AND DIETETICS

PHILADELPHIA — In honor of National Nutrition Month in March, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics offers tips to help families cope with finicky young diners.

The key to calm, positive meals is an appropriate division of responsibilities between adults and children, according to child feeding expert Ellyn Satter, registered dietitian.

She said adults decide what foods and beverages are served as well as where to serve the meal, and they have the power to make meals pleasant. Children decide whether to eat and how much to eat. As they get older, they can learn age-appropriate table manners and behaviors.

If you have picky eaters in your family, you already know the signs that they dislike a meal: A blank stare or turned-up nose, the plate pushed away. Instead of getting upset with their pickiness and falling into familiar meal battles, try a new tactic. Ask: "How can I make that better for you?"

This question seems simple, but it can work like magic to open lines of communication between you and your children, and can give kids a feeling of control to make the meal more enjoyable.

It also may take the pressure off you, since you won't have to guess what they want — which changes frequently, anyway.

Phrasing is key. Instead of a negative question — such as, "Why don't you like it?" — a positive question allows for constructive problem-solving and innovative solutions that you create as a team.

The first time you ask "How can I make that

better for you?" your child may not know how to answer.

That's OK. Here are some common complaints and suggested solutions (note that nuts and seeds are choking hazards for children under 4):

"The food is too hot." Put the plate in the fridge for a few minutes or add ice to hot soup.

"The food is too cold." A quick zap in the microwave or a few minutes under the broiler will help.

"The food is plain." Use "sprinkles" to add pizzazz to plates: Flax seeds, sesame seeds, slivered almonds, fresh mint, shredded coconut, nutritional yeast, cinnamon or shredded Parmesan or cheddar cheese.

"The food is boring." Add a dip such hummus, guacamole, mild salsa or a yogurt-based sauce. A dollop of dip adds flavor and fun.

"The food is too crunchy." Lightly steam vegetables or add a sauce or spread to crackers or toast.

"The food is too creamy." Add texture to soup or yogurt with nuts, seeds, panko breadcrumbs, croutons, granola, diced vegetables or fruit.

"The plate has (fill in the blank) on it, and I don't like it." Something as simple as a speck of green herbs or a bit of diced red pepper can be enough to ruin an entire dish for a child. Give your child permission to put the offending food to the side of the plate.

Be warned: The solution that works today may not work tomorrow. The answer to "How can I make that better for you?" will often change but it will always lead to some answer. Whether it's a sprinkle of cheese or removing the "green stuff," a simple question can save you from troublesome meals and ensure everyone enjoys what they are eating.

Six more ways to have meals without squeals

1. Make regularly scheduled meals a family priority. Young children need the reassurance of structured meals and snacks. Eating on the run can be sufficient for adults, but it doesn't work well for children. Whether you are eating at home or at a restaurant, take the time to sit down and eat with your child.

2. Avoid pressuring or forcing children to eat. Most adults have good intentions when they try to make children eat "healthy" foods or try new items. The problem with pressure is it doesn't work. Kids like foods less if they are forced to eat them.

3. Model the habits you want children to develop. Young children do not automatically know how to eat like adults. They learn how to behave at the table by watching their most important role model, you, for developing life-long, healthy eating habits.

4. Enjoy the foods you want your children to enjoy. Children learn to eat new foods by watching other people eat and enjoy them. If you want a child to eat green vegetables, you eat green vegetables. Serve them regularly in a variety of appealing ways. Talk about how good they taste and how they make you strong and smart.

5. Create a relaxed atmosphere for meals. The best family meals have minimal distractions. This means turning off the TV and handheld devices. Music can provide a pleasant background for meals if it is played at low volume and doesn't drown out conversation.

6. Have realistic expectations for meal behavior. It takes time for children to master new skills, which includes table manners. Adults need to spell out clear expectations for behaviors and reinforce them.



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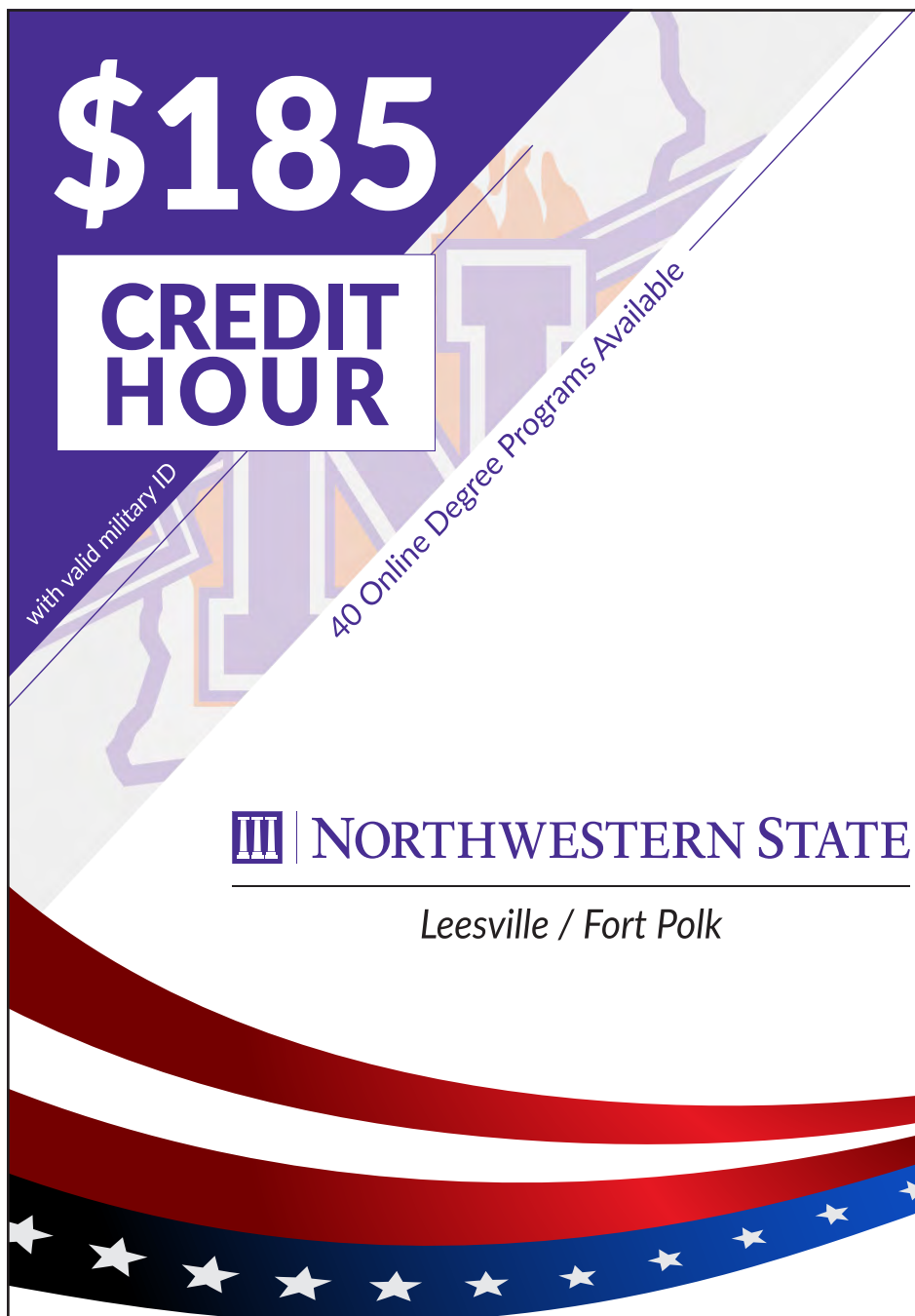


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Symposium

Continued from page 9

blessing to be able to talk to him. I'm so thankful for that, but I understand better now that it can also be a curse. It can become a hindrance to relationships by taking away time spent together and intimacy," she said. "The symposium focused on those challenges and the skills needed to correct the issues."

Allison Aebi, Family Life Center volunteer and licensed professional counselor, said the symposium was a response to the growing awareness that social media is taking over the world.

"People don't always realize the impact it (technology) has on our lives and the way we communicate. It's not just about social media, but access to all digital media," she said.

Aebi said she hoped the symposium would bring an increased awareness of the negative impact digital media has to culture in general. "At the end of the day, I also want the people participating in the symposium to walk away with the ability and skills to better discuss the subject while educating others about the perils of social media and technology," she said.

Alexandra Rost, 1st Battalion, 5th Aviation Regiment master resiliency trainer, said she attended the symposium to gather relevant information to bring back to her leaders, Soldiers and Family members.

"I think the symposium is helping people realize these issues in digital media are a problem that needs to be addressed. It's important to learn and hone the skills necessary to combat the difficulties brought about by technology, social media and a lack of communication in every day life," she said.

Tonia Gutting, a member of Protestant Women of the Chapel — a ministry where women can seek God and connect with each other through Bible study, prayer, fellowship, friendship and spiritual growth that adds to the richness of military communities, said she attended the symposium as a concerned member of the community.

"I wanted to know more about how this topic affects people and how to help," she said.

Gutting said she learned it's critical to know what needs society has and how to fulfill them.

"This includes identifying people at risk and addressing their needs. People can become addicted to media to fill the emptiness they have inside," she said.

Raymond Folsom, a retired Fort Polk deputy chaplain, said he attended the event to support Glenn and the symposium agenda because he still enjoys helping Soldiers. The symposium's ultimate focus is helping people learn how to cope and stay healthy, he said.

Talking about a technology or media-related addiction can be awkward or even shameful for people,

said Folsom.

"Their entire life revolves around a digital world and it's hard for them to talk about. It becomes a secret lifestyle that is an unhealthy way to release stress," he said.

"This kind of addiction is a new threat that is untapped because the resources are easy to access and there is no real end to it."

Folsom said pornography is the perfect example.

"It can be the substitute for an unmet need, such as loneliness. People have to find a healthier way to cope with an unmet need," he said.



ANGIE THORNE / GUARDIAN

Chap. (Maj.) Jerrod Glenn, Family Life Chaplin, welcomes attendees to the Family Life Symposium March 7 at Glory Chapel and gives an introduction about the focus of the symposium.

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Everything you never knew you wanted to know about St. Patrick

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"Yeah, it's St. Patty's Day. Everyone's Irish tonight." — Murphy MacManus, "Boondock Saints," 1999.

FORT POLK, La. — Every March 17, millions of people around the world wear green clothes, drink tinted beer and search for four-leaf clovers and leprechauns. Some areas launch lavish parades while others host Irish-themed parties and pub crawls.

Before you delve into your emerald-clad revelry this weekend, catch up on some of the facts behind this Patron Saint of Ireland:

- It could have been St. Maewyn's Day — the person who was to become St. Patrick is believed to have been born in Britain to wealthy parents near the end of the fourth century. His given name was Maewyn, which he changed to Patrick when he became a priest. Although his father was a Christian deacon, it has been suggested that he probably took on the role because of tax incentives, and there is no evidence that

Patrick came from a particularly religious family. Far from being a saint, Patrick considered himself a pagan until he was 16, when he was abducted and enslaved by Irish marauders and taken to Ireland to live as a slave.

- During his captivity, he became closer to God. According to his writing, a voice — which he believed to be God's — spoke to him in a dream, telling him it was time to leave Ireland. After traveling more than 200 miles by foot, he was eventually given passage on a boat travelling across the Irish Sea. His first destination was Britain.

- He eventually settled in France and studied in a monastery under St. Germain, bishop of Auxerre, for about 12 years. During his training he became aware that his calling was to convert the pagans to Christianity. Patrick reported that he experienced an angel in a dream, who told him to return to Ireland as a missionary.

- Patrick was called to Rome in 432,

where Pope Celestine made him a bishop before he left on his holy mission.

- Patrick and 24 of his followers arrived in Ireland in the winter of 432. He and his followers were invited to visit the King of Laoghaire. While he was there he plucked a shamrock from the ground and tried to explain to the druids (pagans) and king that the shamrock had three leaves just as God had three personas — Father, Son and Holy Ghost. This was called the Trinity. Before the Christian era, it was a sacred plant of the druids of Ireland because its leaves formed a triad.

- King Laoghaire was impressed and chose to accept Christianity. He also gave Patrick the freedom to spread Christianity throughout Ireland.

- Patrick was quite successful at winning converts, and this fact upset the Celtic druids. Patrick was arrested several times, but always managed to escape. While not the first to bring Christianity to Ireland, it is Patrick who is said to have encountered the druids at Tara and abolished their pagan rites.

- He travelled throughout Ireland, establishing monasteries across the country. He also set up schools and churches, which would aid him in his conversion of the Irish country to Christianity.

Familiar with the Irish language and culture, Patrick chose to incorporate traditional ritual into his lessons of Christianity instead of attempting to eradicate native Irish beliefs. For instance, he used bonfires to celebrate Easter since the Irish were used to honoring their gods with fire.

He also is said to have superimposed a sun, a powerful Irish symbol, onto the Christian cross to create what is now called a Celtic cross, so that veneration of the symbol would seem more natural to the Irish.

- His mission in Ireland lasted 30 years. After that, Patrick retired to County Down, and is thought to have died sometime between 463 and 493 — on March 17.

- Today, many Catholic places of worship around the world are named after St. Patrick, in-

cluding cathedrals in New York City, Dublin and Toowoomba in Queensland, Australia.

- Patrick is said to have given a sermon that drove all the snakes from Ireland. Of course, no snakes were ever native to Ireland, and some people think this is a metaphor for the conversion of the pagans. One story tells of his standing upon a hill, using a wooden staff to drive the serpents into the sea, banishing them forever from the shores of Ireland.

Another legend says that one old serpent resisted, but the would-be saint overcame it by cunning. He is said to have made a box and invited the reptile to enter. The snake insisted the box was too small and

the discussion became very heated. Finally the snake entered the box to prove he was right, whereupon Patrick slammed the lid and cast the box into the sea.

- For most of Christianity's first thousand years, canonizations (papal declaration of someone as a saint) were only done on the diocesan or regional level. However, local churches were allowed to affirm that people considered holy could be liturgically celebrated as saints after their deaths. As a result, Patrick has never been formally canonized by a pope; nevertheless, various Christian churches declare that he is a saint in Heaven.

- Saint Patrick's Day has come to be associated with everything Irish: Anything green and gold, shamrocks and luck. Most importantly, to those who celebrate its intended meaning, St. Patrick's Day is a traditional day for spiritual renewal and offering prayers for missionaries worldwide. In modern-day Ireland, St. Patrick's Day has traditionally been a religious occasion. In fact, up until the 1970s, Irish laws mandated that pubs be closed on March 17. In 1995, however, the Irish government changed this law.

*An Irish toast:
May your blessings
outnumber the
shamrocks that
grow,
And may trouble
avoid you wherever
you go.*

Beware of various scams, cons, cheats

USA.GOV

FORT POLK, La. — Scam. Just the word tends to send a shiver down the spine of anyone who has been a victim of one of the countless scams making the rounds today.

With the annual tax season now in full bloom, USA.gov cautions against the following IRS and tax fraud scams and how to protect yourself:

IRS imposter scams

IRS imposter scams occur when someone contacts you pretending to work for the IRS. The imposter may contact you by phone, email, postal mail or text message. There are two common types of scams:

- Tax collection — you receive a phone call or letter, claiming that you owe taxes. They will demand that you pay the amount immediately often with a prepaid debit card or wire transfer. They may even threaten to arrest you if you don't pay.

- Verification — You receive an email or text message that requires you to verify your personal information. The message often includes a hyperlink phrase "click here" or a button to a fraudulent form or website.

It's important to report IRS imposter scams. Contact the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) if you believe that an IRS imposter has contacted you. Report IRS imposter scams online or by calling TIGTA at (800) 366-4484. Forward email messages that claim to be from the IRS to phishing@irs.gov.

There are things to watch for to prevent being a victim of an IRS imposter scam.

- Beware if someone calls claiming to be from the IRS. The IRS will always contact you by mail before calling you about unpaid taxes.

- Ask a caller to provide their name and badge number and call-back number. Then call TIGTA at (800) 366-4484 to determine if the caller is an IRS employee with a legitimate need to contact you. If the person legitimately is from the IRS, call them back. Otherwise report it to the IRS.

- Verify the number of the letter, form or notice on the IRS website.

- Be suspicious of threats. The IRS won't threaten to have police arrest you for not paying a bill.

- Don't give in to demands to pay money immediately. Be especially suspicious of demands to wire money or pay with a prepaid debit card.

- Don't trust the name or phone number on a caller ID display that shows "IRS." Scammers often change the name that shows on caller ID.

- Don't click on any links in email or text messages to verify your information.

Tax ID theft

Tax-related identity theft occurs when someone uses your Social Security number to get a tax refund or job. You may not be aware of the problem until you E-file your tax return and find out that another return has already been filed using your Social Security number. If the IRS suspects tax ID theft, they will send a 5071C letter to the address on the federal tax return. The IRS will never start contact with you by sending an email, text or social media message that asks for personal or financial information.

Report tax ID theft

If you suspect you have become a victim of tax ID theft — or the IRS sends you a letter or notice indicating a problem — take these steps:

- File a report with the Federal Trade Commis-

sion at IdentityTheft.gov. You can also call the FTC Identity Theft Hotline at (877) 438-4338 or TTY (866) 653-4261.

- Contact one of the three major credit bureaus to place a fraud alert on your credit records: Equifax: (888) 766-0008; Experian: (888) 397-3742; TransUnion: (800) 680-7289.

- Contact your financial institutions and close any accounts opened without your permission or that show unusual activity.

- Respond immediately to any IRS notice; call the number provided. If instructed, go to the IRS Identity Verification Service.

- Complete IRS Form 14039, Identity Theft Affidavit; print, then mail or fax according to instructions.

- Continue to pay your taxes and file your tax return, even if you must do so by paper.

- Check with your state tax agency to see what steps to take at the state level.

How to protect yourself

Follow these steps to prevent tax identity theft:

- File your income taxes early in the season, before a thief can file taxes in your name. Keep an eye out for any IRS letter or notice that states:

- More than one tax return was filed using your Social Security number.

- You owe additional tax, you have had a tax refund offset, or you have had collection actions taken against you for a year you did not file a tax return.

- IRS records indicate you received wages from an employer unknown to you.

While IRS and tax fraud scams are more prevalent during tax season, there are other scams that can cause just as much trouble. Check out these scam which are also listed on USA.gov:

Telephone scams

Telephone scammers try to steal your money or personal information. Scams may come through phone calls from real people, robocalls or text messages. The callers often make false promises, such as opportunities to buy products, invest your money or receive free product trials. They may also offer you money through free grants and lotteries. Some scammers may call with threats of jail or lawsuits if you don't pay them.

Reporting scams to federal agencies helps them collect evidence for lawsuits against people committing these scams. However, federal agencies don't investigate individual cases of telephone scams.

Report telephone scams to the Federal Trade Commission, either online or by phone at (877) 382-4357. This is the primary government agency that collects scam complaints. Also report the scam to your state consumer protection office. Some consumer protection offices help residents resolve consumer problems.

Banking scams

Banking scams involve attempts to access your bank account. Some popular banking scams include:

- Overpayment scams — A scam artist sends you a counterfeit check. They tell you to deposit it in your bank account, and wire part of the money back to them. Since the check was fake, you'll have to pay your bank the amount of the check, plus you'll lose any money you wired.

- Unsolicited check fraud — A scammer sends you a check for no reason. If you cash it, you may be authorizing the purchase of items or signing up for a loan you didn't ask for.



- Automatic withdrawals — A company sets up an automatic debit from your bank account, as part of a free trial or to collect lottery winnings.

- Phishing — You receive an email message that asks you to verify your bank account or debit card number.

The proper organization to report a banking scam to depends on which type you were a victim of. Report fake checks you receive by mail to the US Postal Inspection Service. Report counterfeit checks to the Federal Trade Commission, either online or by phone at (877) 382-4357. Contact your bank to report and stop unauthorized automatic withdrawals from your account. Forward phishing emails to the Federal Trade Commission at spam@uce.gov.

Charity scams

Some scammers set up fake organizations, to take advantage of the public's generosity. They especially take advantage of tragedies and disasters.

Your state consumer protection office can accept and investigate consumer complaints. File a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission. The FTC does not resolve individual matters. But it does track charity fraud claims and sues companies on the behalf of consumers. Contact the National Center for Disaster Fraud, if the suspected fraud is because of a natural disaster.

Pyramid schemes

Pyramid schemes are scams that require a constant flow of new participants to keep them going. They are marketed as multi-level marketing programs or other types of legitimate businesses. They use new recruits' required payments to provide "profits" to those participating longer.

Pyramid schemes collapse when they run short of new recruits needed to pay earlier investors. These scams always fail — it's mathematically guaranteed.

Report pyramid schemes to your state consumer protection office or attorney general.

For the dos and don'ts of how to protect yourself from these scams visit USA.gov.

CyPhaCon set to delight variety of Southwest Louisiana fandoms

CYPHACON

LAKE CHARLES, La. — If you love any geeky type genre, you won't want to miss CyPhaCon, a sci-fi/fantasy and gaming culture convention set to be in Lake Charles April 12-14 at the Lake Charles Civic Center.

The event made its first appearance in 2011 offering enthusiasts a mix of anime, science fiction, fantasy and gaming genres. The convention continues to attract enthusiasm in Southwest Louisiana and beyond.

CyPhaCon 2019 is sure to appeal to most every fan in the region. As with past events, the convention hosts some impressive television video and voice celebrities.

To name just a few, there is legendary actor Bruce Boxleitner, who played Capt. John Sheridan in the hit Series "Babylon 5;" Alan Bradley, from the classic Disney film "TRON;" Rekha Sharma, who played Tory Foster in "Battlestar Galactica;" Caitlin Glass, as Winry Rockbell in "Fullmetal Alchemist;" Andrew Robinson, as Elim Garak in "Star Trek: Deep Space Nine" and

prolific anime voice-actor Todd Haberkorn, who voices Natsu Dragneel in "Fairy Tail."

If you are an avid reader, several popular authors will also appear. The guest writers include S.M. Schmitz, T.S. Barnett, Michelle Kay, Michael Hilton, Sherry Melancon, Lyn Gibson and Ernest Russell.

CyPhaCon activities take place throughout the Lake Charles Civic Center, including the first-floor Exhibition Hall, the second-floor Contraband Room and Mezzanine, the third floor Buccaneer and Jean Lafitte Rooms and the Rosa Hart Theater.

For families, the convention offers CyPhaKids, a child-friendly (ages 5-11) convention corner geared to please geeky-yet-doting parents and their youngsters. CyPhaKids is a popular and growing aspect of the CyPhaCon experience, with games, artwork and other child-friendly activities.

Hours are April 12 from 4 p.m.-midnight; April 13 from 9 a.m.-midnight and April 14 from 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

CyPhaCon ticket prices for an at-

the-door weekend pass for all three days are as follows: Tickets for children ages 7-13 are \$15 per person, children ages 14 and older and adults are \$45 per person.

A single-day ticket for children 7-13 is \$15 per person. Children ages 14 and older and adults are \$20 April 12, \$35 April 13 and \$20 April 14. Children 6 and under attend free.

Take advantage of military discounts of \$5 off any day or weekend pass.

Tickets can be purchased on the CyPhaCon website via the Civic Center box office through Ticketmaster.

For more information visit www.cyphacon.org or the Facebook page at www.facebook.com/cyphacon.



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Lagniappe

BOSS

Check out Fort Polk's Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers. The organization offers single Soldiers the opportunity to volunteer, as well as participate in fun events. Don't miss your chance to take part. BOSS meetings are held the second and fourth Wednesday of each month from 10-11 a.m. at the Home of Heroes Recreation Center. The next meeting is March 27.

Festivals

• Shreveport festival

Crawfest is an admission free, family friendly event held March 22-23 at Shreveport's historic Betty Virginia Park from 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Enjoy a long list of live entertainment thanks to a wide range of performances by local and regional talent.

A family fun zone features a kids carnival atmosphere, with bouncies, putt-putt, rock climbing and more. If you aren't in the mood for crawfish, a wide range of other food opportunities is also available. For more information visit Facebook at Crawfest at Betty Virginia Park.

• Film festival

If you love movies, you might enjoy the Cane River Film Festival March 22-23 in historic downtown Natchitoches. The event highlights the work of student/independent filmmakers and Natchitoches' contribution to the film industry. The festival's mission is to showcase, nurture and support emerging creative filmmakers. For more information visit www.caneriverfilmfestival.com.

• Nursery Festival

Get a jump start on your spring planting at the 34th annual Louisiana Nursery Festival today through Sunday in Forest Hill. Hours are today and Saturday from 8 a.m.-6 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Vendors host booths offering a wide variety of handmade crafts and other wares. In addition, it's hard to decide which beautiful plants to take home. All types of shrubs and trees are available in a variety of sizes. Rose bushes, especially the disease resistant Knock-Out Rose, are offered in a host of colors.

For more information call (318) 452-2362.

Miscellaneous

• Symphony feast

The Lake Charles Symphony hosts its annual Wild Beast Feast April 6 from 5-8 p.m. at VFW post 2130, 5676 Lake St., Lake Charles. The event features culinary creations of game including pork, poultry and seafood from local cooking teams, with a dash of Cajun flair. Prizes will be awarded to the top three chef teams, as well as a people's choice award.

Live entertainment is provided. General admission is \$50 per person or \$25 per student. For more information or to purchase tickets go to www.lcsymphony.com.

• Concert series

The City of Leesville, in conjunction with KJAE radio, hosts the 2019 Leesville Concert Series each Friday on the Polk stage in downtown Leesville at the corner of Texas and Fourth Streets at 6 p.m.

The event includes live music, food trucks and encourages dancing. The lineup is as follows: April 5 — Casey Peveto Band, April 12 — The jazz sounds of Robert Richard, April 19 — Dani Lacour,

April 26 — Michael Kuk and May 3 — Rootsicana.

Clubs/groups

• Language club

Immerse yourself in learning a foreign language such as Russian, Spanish, Brazilian, Portuguese or Tagalog by attending the Language Immersion Table.

The club meets the first Wednesday of each month from noon to 1 p.m. The next meeting is April 3. For more information call Miguel Moyeno at (636) 577-4274.

• Bass Masters

If you like to fish and want to be part of a group with common interests, the Fort Polk Community Bass Masters is the right club for you. The club meets monthly on the Tuesday before each tournament. Meetings are held at 7 p.m. at the New Llano American Legion, Post 387, 500 Vernon St., New Llano.

The next meeting takes place March 26. The March tournament takes place on Sam Rayburn Lake March 30. The entry fee is \$40.

For more information call (337) 535-7591 or visit www.fortpolk-communitybassmasters.com.

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VACATION PACKAGE FOR SOUTH PADRE ISLAND from 19 May to 26 May 2019. You will stay at the Royal Beach Tennis Resort. Asking \$500, Call 337-396-1832 for more Information.

PRO-FORM TREADMILL for sale. Asking \$100. Call 337-396-1832 for more information.

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ONE BEDROOM HOUSE with two baths and Townhouses (\$700 per month), References required. Call 318-793-8901

FOR LEASE IN DERIDDER'S GREEN ACRE SUBDIVISION. Move-In Ready! Beautiful 4 BR, 2 Bath, 2 car garage, extra large living and dining areas, kitchen, den and patio with fenced backyard. Call 318-717-5057.

REAL ESTATE

NOTICE: All real estate advertised in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968,

which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination. The Guardian will not knowingly accept any advertisement for real estate, which is in violation of the law. All dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis.

STATEWIDES

PREGNANT? CONSIDERING ADOPTION? CALL us first. Living expenses, housing, medical, and continued support afterwards. Choose adoptive family of your choice. Call 24/7. 1-855-780-8359 (LA-SCAN)

APPLYING FOR SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY OR APPEALING A DENIED CLAIM? Call Bill Gordon & Assoc., Social Security

Disability Attorneys, 1-844-883-2045 FREE Consultations. Local Attorneys Nationwide [Mail: 2420 N St NW, Washington DC. Office: Broward Co. (TX/NM Bar)] (LA-SCAN)

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HAVE 10K IN DEBT? National Debt Relief is rated A-Plus with the BBB. You could be debt free in 24-48 months. Call 1-844-290-9978 now for a free debt evaluation. (LA-SCAN)

SAVE YOUR HOME! ARE you behind paying your MORTGAGE? Denied a Loan Modification? Threatened with FORECLOSURE? Call the Homeowner's Relief Line now for Help! 1-866-470-1641 (LA-SCAN)

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Guardian Tradin' Post Ad

* Advertising is FREE for soldiers, family members and DA civilians.

* Businesses will not receive free advertising. All business ads must be prepaid. We accept Visa and Mastercard.

(This includes child care, quarters-cleaning, or the sale and/or breeding of multiple pedigreed/registered animals)

* Only single soldiers living in barracks may list numbers with 531 prefixes.

Turn in ads to the Public Affairs Office, Bldg. 4919, Magnolia Dr. Or fax to 318-352-3667 or email to tradingpostads@yahoo.com

Deadline for FREE ads is NOON Tuesday.

Category: ☐ Household Appliances ☐ Furniture ☐ Sporting goods ☐ TV/Radio/Stereo ☐ Motor Vehicles ☐ Computers ☐ Pets ☐ Garage Sales ☐ Real Estate ☐ Misc.

Advertisement: In 25 words or less (one word per block) give description, price, telephone number and other pertinent information. For garage sales, list time, date and location.

I am a: ☐ Soldier ☐ Retiree ☐ DA Civilian ☐ Military family member

In signing this form, I certify that the items I am advertising will 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.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Phone: _____

Fort Polk Guardian

www.thefortpolkguardian.com

Tradin' Post Ads

Published for the community of Fort Polk, La.

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JOINT READINESS TRAINING CENTER



Waste Connections is proud to be serving Fort Polk Home Of Heroes

We would like to provide some information each month to help us give Ft. Polk the best service possible

1. All dumpsters on Fort Polk are required to have top lids and side doors closed at all times, we ask that when you are done placing items in the container you ensure lids and doors are closed.
2. Please do not place any items in front of dumpsters as this prevents the driver from being able to service the dumpster.
3. There should be no field trash placed in any dumpster not marked "Mixed Field Waste", if a unit has field training to conduct they can call 535-1155 and schedule containers to be placed at their training location.
4. Please do not park vehicles around dumpsters, this will prevent the dumpster from being serviced.

If there are any questions and or concerns about dumpsters, bulk items or containers for field training please contact us at 535-1155 for Assistance.



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