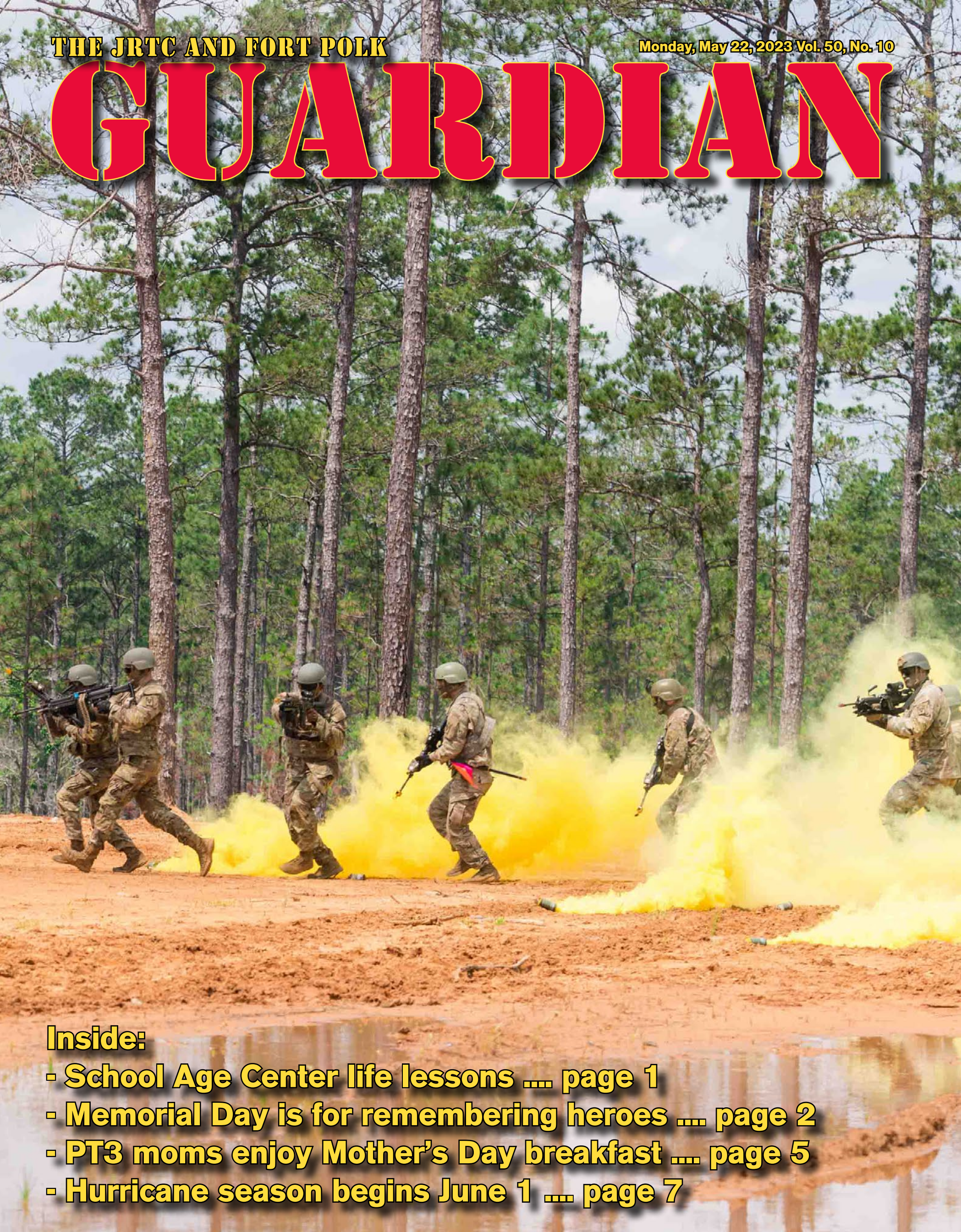


# **GUARDIAN**



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## QUALITY OF LIFE LINES OF EFFORT



CHILD CARE



HEALTH CARE



HOUSING



SPOUSE  
EMPLOYMENT



## JRTC and Fort Polk

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Deputy Director

## Public Affairs Staff

**Angie Thorne**

eGuardian Editor

**Jeff England**

Broadcast

**Chuck Cannon**

Community Relations Officer

**Karen Sampson**

Writer

**Porsha Auzenne**

Writer

**Editorial Offices**

Building 4919, Magnolia Street

Fort Polk, LA 71459-5060

Voice (337) 531-4033

Fax (337) 531-1401

Email: [usarmy.polk.id-readiness.list.fort-polk-pao-office@army.mil](mailto:usarmy.polk.id-readiness.list.fort-polk-pao-office@army.mil)

Fort Polk Homepage

[home.army.mil/polk/](http://home.army.mil/polk/)

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

For more information on Fort Polk units and happenings visit the [@JRTCandFortPolk](https://www.facebook.com/JRTCandFortPolk/) Facebook page.

# Lessons learned with SAC mascot, Life Skills lab

By **KAREN SAMPSON**

Public Affairs Office

FORT POLK, La. — Children attending classes at the School Age Center Life Skills lab are learning diverse abilities that will help them as they grow into adulthood. One of those skills includes pet care.

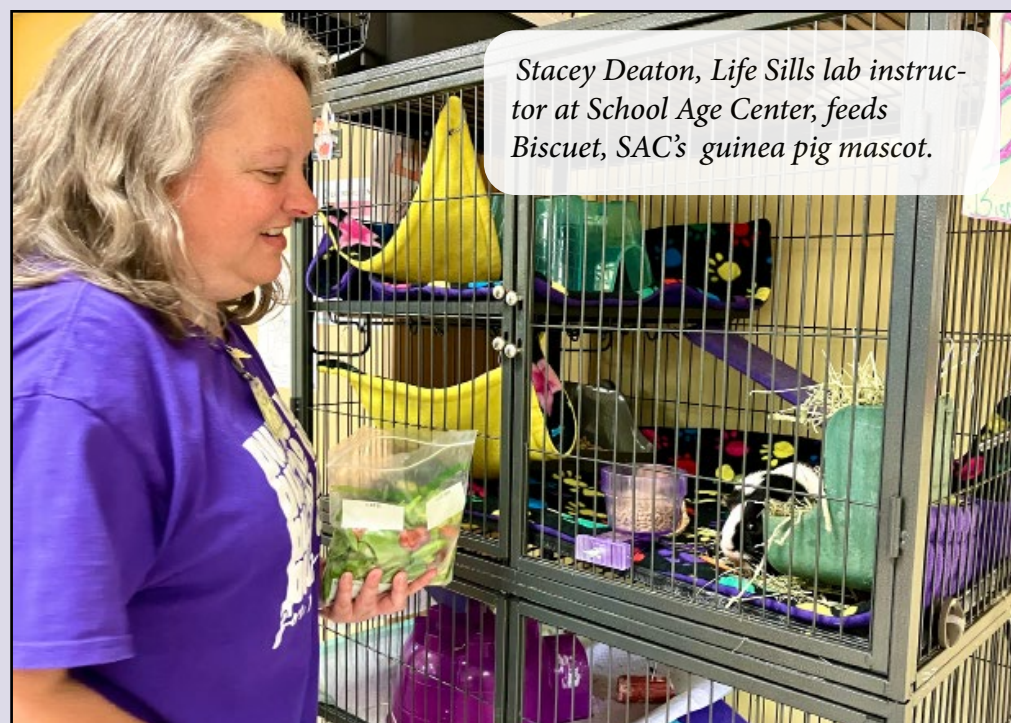
“At SAC we teach a wide variety of skill sets,” said Stacey Deason, instructor at SAC. “Special interest clubs like art, photography, computers and sports are popular.”

School-age children, ages 5 to 12 years old, can learn self-discipline and confidence when caring for a pet, Deason said. She explained children develop nurturing skills when they learn animals depend on them for care.

“Stacey focuses her classes on 4-H club curriculum,” said Michelle Thorman, director at SAC. “She also teaches gardening and sewing.”

These classes foster social skills, and community partnerships with several 4-H clubs throughout Vernon Parish. Biscuet, the guinea pig at SAC, plays an important role in the students lives and as SAC mascot. Biscuet is also an impeccable “assistant instructor” to Deason as she teaches the children about pet care in the Life Skills lab.

“When caring for Biscuet, they (children) learn and practice responsible pet care and will compete during the annual fall pet show,” Deason said. “They get to



Stacey Deaton, Life Sills lab instructor at School Age Center, feeds Biscuet, SAC's guinea pig mascot.



Biscuet, the School Age Center's resident guinea pig, snacks on a carrot.

earn ribbons.”

Along with the consistency of care, a child learns public speaking is essential during the competition when describing the care a guinea

pig requires.

For more information about the Life Skills lab, Biscuet and activities and classes offered at SAC call (337) 531-2149.



**Cover photo:** Soldiers perform an exercise May 13 at the annual Fort Polk Box Tour. Members of the Fort Polk community and the surrounding area signed up for the tour, which gave them a better idea of how the Joint Readiness Training Center prepares U.S. and international military to successfully accomplish their mission. (Photo courtesy Visual Information)



# Memorial Day set aside for remembering heroes

By **CHUCK CANNON**  
Public Affairs Office

*"We are the dead; short days ago we lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow, loved and were loved, and now we lie in Flanders Fields."*

*John McCrae, In Flanders Fields*

FORT POLK, La. — Those haunting words were written by the Canadian poet, Soldier and physician John McCrae in 1915. He penned the lines as a memorial to those who died in a World War I battle near an area known as the Ypres Salient in Belgium.

The words serve as an example of the true meaning of Memorial Day — to remember those who gave their all in defense of our nation.

Too often, Memorial Day is used to honor all Veterans. Veterans Day, celebrated on Nov. 11 each year, is set aside to honor military veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces.

The date was chosen to coincide with the armistice signed signaling the end of World War I on Nov. 11, 1918, and was originally called Armistice Day.

But Memorial Day is reserved for those who never came home from war, who left their all on the battlefields of Yorktown, Chancellorsville, Berlin, the Chosin Reservoir, Saigon, Iraq and Afghanistan.

My first memory of the significance of Memorial Day occurred in November 1968.

My classmates and I were sitting in our eighth grade math class at Woodlawn Junior High School in West Monroe, Louisiana, when there was a knock on the door. Through the door's window I could see a local pastor.

Our teacher stepped outside, spoke with the pastor for a moment, then reentered the room and said, "Terry, you need to come outside for a moment."

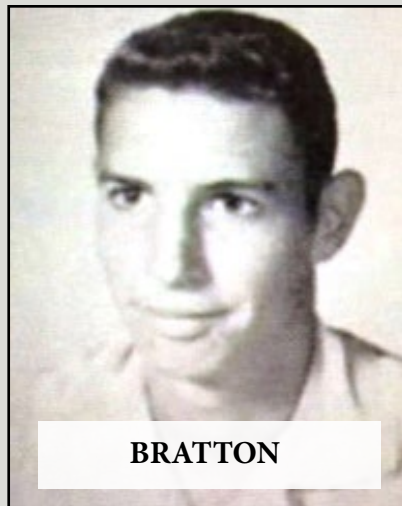
Terry Bratton got up, left the classroom, and didn't return that day. Our teacher, with tears in his eyes, solemnly told us Terry's older brother, Cpl. John Leslie Bratton, had been killed in action while serving in Vietnam.

Until that day, the Vietnam War had only been a daily report on the CBS Evening News with Walter Cronkite. It almost seemed unreal as it had not touched those of us who lived in the rural area of Southwest Ouachita Parish. But now, it was as if our entire class, and our church, was in the middle of the conflict.

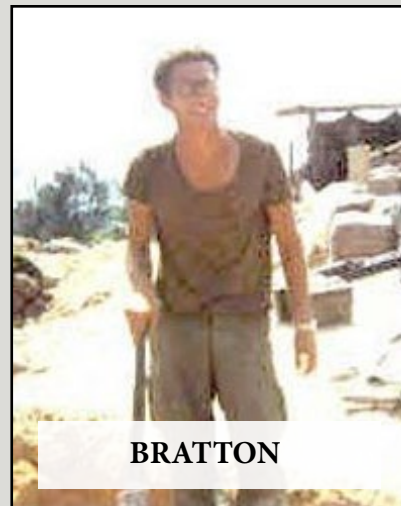
Leslie, as he was known to us all, was a happy, fun-loving young man with his whole life in front of him.

Leslie was an ordained minister and could have received an exemption when his draft number came up, but said that wouldn't be fair to those who had to serve. He enlisted, attended infantry school and headed to Vietnam on June 15, 1968, a member of Delta Company,

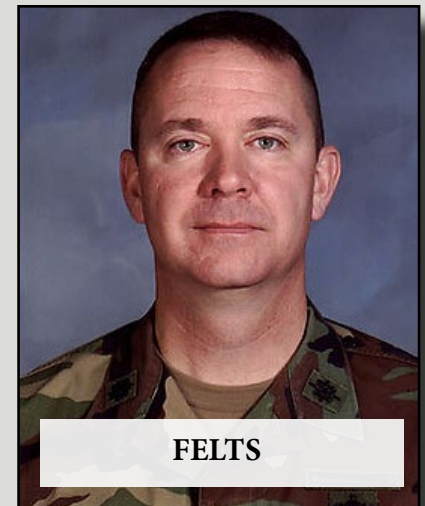
## Fort Polk's Memorial Day Ceremony takes place May 25 at 10 a.m. at Warrior Memorial Park



BRATTON



BRATTON



FELTS

### COMMENTARY

1st Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Division.

On the morning of Nov. 11, 1968, Pfc. John Leslie Bratton, nicknamed "Preacher" by his fellow Soldiers, was walking point for his unit in Pleiku Province, South Vietnam, when it came under hostile fire. Bratton, along with Sgt. James Humphrey and Spc. Gary Rust were killed in the ensuing firefight. Bratton was 23.

Leslie's was not the only casualty suffered by our small, tight-knit community.

Shortly after his death, Bratton's best friend, Charles Beard, committed suicide, unable to handle the loss of a person he considered closer than a brother. It took Terry and his Family a long time to accept that Leslie was gone, another resident of Flanders Field.

For me, the war became real. It now had a face. If Leslie could be killed, anyone over there could be killed — and I knew others who were there, some of whom were Family members.

Through the years, every Memorial Day, I thought of Leslie, of a life gone too early, of friends and family wishing they could have seen him come home.

I wish I could say Leslie was the only specif-

ic service member I personally knew who never came home, but there is another.

Capt. Thomas Felts was a company commander in the 519th Military Intelligence Battalion at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, when I was stationed with the same unit in the mid-1980s. Felts was a great commander and an all-around good person.

Fast forward to November 2006 during my tenure as editor of the Ruston Daily Leader in North Louisiana. When the war on terrorism began, I began to run the photograph of a service member killed in action on the left lower corner of our front page.

As I read the casualties of Nov. 14, 2006, I caught my breath — Col. Thomas Felts was listed as KIA by an improvised explosive device. Another who joined the list of those in Flanders Field.

As a veteran, married to a veteran and the father of two sons who are veterans, I by no means advocate slighting those who served — they deserve their day. But on Memorial Day, let us remember who that day is for — those who never returned, and left their friends and families with, longing for one who will never return.



# Fort Polk conducts multi directorate active shooter exercise

exercise  
exercise  
exercise

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY SOLDIERS



DIRECTORATE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

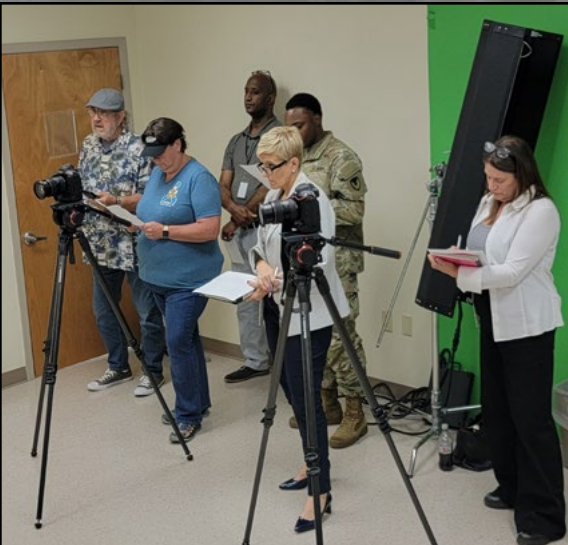


WARRIOR OPERATIONS CENTER



These are just a few of the Fort Polk directorates that worked together during an active shooter exercise held May 17 in the vicinity of Woodfill Hall.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE



BAYNE-JONES ARMY COMMUNITY HOSPITAL





# Command recognizes, honors Asian American and Pacific Islander Soldiers

FORT POLK, La. — Each May, the U.S. Army joins the nation in observing and reflecting on the tremendous contributions of Asian American and Pacific Islanders to our country and our history.

Gen. Eric Shinseki, former Army Chief of Staff and current Chairman of the Army Historical Foundation, once said, “Asian Americans in uniform have written boldly across the pages of our military history and advanced our social well-being at the same time.”

“Advancing Leaders Through Opportunity” is the theme for the 2023 Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month.

This year’s theme provides an opportunity to reflect on the contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to the history of the nation, to recognize and honor their service and to foster inclusive environments where people of all backgrounds can reach their full potential and be all they can be.

Although citizenship and voting were not available for most Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders until the passage of the Immigration and Naturalization Acts of 1952 and 1965, this population has played a major role in shaping America’s Army by serving in every major conflict since the Civil War.

Today’s Army stands on the tradition of sacrifice of the Asian American and Pacific Islander Soldiers, including the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, WWII’s all Japanese American unit and one of the most decorated units in Army history; and the Filipino Veterans of

## MESSAGE

WWII, who were collectively awarded the Congressional Gold Medal in 2015 in recognition of the outstanding wartime achievements and honorable contributions to the United States. Since 1911, the Medal of Honor has been awarded to 33 Asian American and Pacific Islander Soldiers.

Today, Asian American and Pacific Islanders encompass more than 50 ethnic groups, with more than 24,360 Soldiers identifying as Asian American and more than 5,630 identifying as Pacific Islander; 6.5% of the active Army is Asian American or Pacific Islander.

The Department of the Army civilian work-

force is comprised of approximately 4% Asians and 1% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

We are extremely proud to serve alongside the incredible Asian American and Pacific Islanders who are serving, working and living right here at Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.

We know from history and experience their contributions and achievements make JRTC and Fort Polk and our Army stronger.

Forging the Warrior Spirit! People First!

David W. Gardner  
Brigadier General,  
U.S. Army Commanding



## Mini Mall Express **grand opening** adds to Fort Polk quality of life

By **ANGIE THORNE**  
Public Affairs Office

FORT POLK, La. — The grand opening of the Fort Polk Mini Mall Express took place May 18. The ribbon cutting ceremony celebrated another milestone in a long list of quality of life initiatives at Fort Polk.

The refurbishment of the Mini Mall encompassed everything from expansion to upgrades.

Tammar Tracey, Fort Polk Army & Air Force Exchange Service general manager, took part in the ribbon cutting and explained a few of the changes.

“If you were familiar with the previous layout, you would remember that the old store was very compact and there was no room to move,” Tracey said. “With this upgrade, we were able to expand the store and add two new food concepts — Chopz, and Paavo’s Piz-

za. These are healthier options for our Soldiers, which is something our customers were asking for and is also a focus for command.”

The image upgrade is part of improving quality of life for Soldiers at Fort Polk.

“Everything from the modern looks of the facility to it’s cleanliness and more has improved the shopping experience for Soldiers as a whole,” Tracey said.

The store will also be getting two new self-checkout stands in July.

“That will also add to their (Soldiers’) quality of life,” Tracey said.

Beyond the Express, small improvements were made to the additional stores (Firestone and Smoothie King) occupying the Mini Mall space. One of those improvements was the complete overhaul of the exterior across the front of the buildings.

“The entire facing was redone



The ribbon cutting held at Fort Polk’s Mini Mall Express May 18.

and looks great,” Tracey said. “We also got two new price monument signs.”

Spc. Ryan Orlowski, 2nd Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, thinks the upgrades at the Mini Mall Express are a big improvement.

“There are a lot more items to choose from and more space to move around,” Orlowski said.

More variety means Orlowski doesn’t have make another trip somewhere else to find what he needs or wants.

“That make things a lot more convenient for me,” Orlowski said. “The new restaurants are nice too and the food is really good.”

For more information call (337) 531-8530.



# PT3 moms enjoy support, Mother's Day breakfast

By ANGIE THORNE  
Public Affairs Office

FORT POLK, La. — Fort Polk's Installation Pregnancy Postpartum Physical Training Program hosted a Mother's Day breakfast at the Warrior Center May 12.

According to Defense Centers for Public Health, the intent of the program is to implement mandatory standardized Army-wide P3T aligned with exercise recommendations from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the 2018 revised Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. Policies released in recent years strengthen the ability for P3T to meet approved Army standards.

PT3 allows Soldiers to:

- Maintain fitness during pregnancy
- Reduce physical discomforts during pregnancy
- Boost morale and reduce stress
- Easily transition to unit physical readiness training
- Enhance ability to pass the Army Physical Fitness Test and meet body composition standards

Sgt. 1st Class Natalie Dorris, Installation PT3 program manager, said P3T Soldiers and their Families matter to the leadership of the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.

"The commanding general's (Brig. Gen. David W. Gardner) number one priority is people first. This is his program and we are doing everything we can to support it and all the Soldiers impacted by parenthood, pregnancy and postpartum," Dorris said. "But P3T still needs support from local leadership to remain a sound platform for Soldiers to rely on. With all the changes to Army directives and policies, commanders can use the tools and knowledge of the P3T program to assist them in taking care of their Soldiers and improving the quality of life of their Families so Soldiers can better focus on the mission." Dorris believes the breakfast was the perfect opportunity to say "thank you" to the mothers who drop their kids off at daycare, do physical training when they are already tired and exhausted and then continue their day with their tasks as Soldiers.

"Events like this Mother's Day breakfast establish a sense of community, camaraderie and fellowship for these mothers," Dorris said. "I hope this is just the first of many new PT3 events that focus on support with the help of outside resources."

Support of the event came from a variety of sources including instructor trainers, exercise leaders, Army Community Service New Parent Support, Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital education department, Fort Polk's Mom2Mom program, Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers, Religious Support Office, Warrior Center staff and more.

"The organization worked together with



*Soldier moms enjoy a Mother's Day breakfast at the Warrior Center May 12. The event was hosted by Fort Polk's Pregnancy Postpartum Physical Training Program.*

PT3 to make this happen because we want these women to know they aren't alone in this journey," Dorris said.

Chaplain (Col.) Michael Jeffries delivered the invocation for the breakfast and was quick to praise the multitasking skills of these Soldier moms.

"These mothers amaze me. As a Soldier, I feel I can sometimes barely take care of myself and everything I have to do. I can't imagine being a mother and doing all they have to do to take care of their children on top of being a Soldier," Jeffries said.

E. Anne Bollinger, New Parent Support director, and some of her staff were in attendance to answer questions and hand out gift bags filled with useful and fun goodies for moms and babies.

"I am honored to support the Soldiers and Family members at Fort Polk because I recognize the immense sacrifices they make each day serving our military and protecting our country," Bollinger said.

Bollinger is in awe of the soldiers who serve while pregnant and during the postpartum period with their newborns.

"The P3T Soldiers hold a special place in my heart. Each day, they show up to their duty station, not only ready for their assigned duty, but doing so during a very difficult time," Bollinger said. "Being pregnant or after delivering your newborn is hard and exhausting for any mom. Add being in the military and it's even harder.

These service members have extra duties that are 24/7 at work and at home."

Once P3T Soldiers return to work, they assimilate back into their unit while attending to their newborn and potentially trying to breast-feed throughout the workday.

"Our P3T Soldiers need additional community and leadership support to help them as they transition back to assigned duties," Bollinger said. "We want them to know the New Parent Support Program is one of those resources. We are here for our military Soldiers and Family members who are expecting a baby or have a child under the age of 36 months. Our team of registered nurses and social workers are available to help our parents with any additional parenting education, resources and support they may need."

Pfc. Priya Simpson, BOSS secretary, volunteered at the event and was happy to take part in such a joyous occasion.

"These moms are wonderful and BOSS wants to support them for all they do," Simpson said.

As a Soldier, Simpson could see herself in the Soldiers attending the event.

"If I ever get pregnant, I hope I would have the same support through my pregnancy," Simpson said.

For more information visit <https://phc.amedd.army.mil/topics/healthyliving/al/Pages/PregnancyPostPartum.aspx> or call the Fort Polk PT3 office at (337) 531-1897.



# MOLD MITIGATION

**TIP  
#1**



**Maintain air conditioners  
at a reasonable  
temperature to avoid  
moisture issues.**

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Contact CYS at 337-531-1955 for more information!



# Get ready: Hurricane season begins June 1

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

FORT POLK, La. — Do you know what to do during and after a hurricane? If not, now is the time to find out because hurricane season lasts from June 1-Nov. 30.

Here are some tips and information to keep in mind:

### Terminology

**Tropical storm watches and warnings:** Take these alerts seriously. Although tropical storms have lower wind speed than hurricanes, they often bring life threatening flooding and dangerous winds. Take precautions.

**Hurricane watch:** Hurricane conditions are possible in the specified area of the watch, usually within 36 hours.

**Hurricane warning:** Hurricane conditions are expected in the specified area of the warning, usually within 24 hours.

### In advance of the storm

#### Start preparing ...

- Determine safe evacuation routes inland.
- Learn location of official shelters.
- Make emergency plans for pets.
- Check emergency equipment such as flashlights, generators (be sure to ground your generators and be aware of carbon monoxide hazards), battery powered weather radio and cell phones.

- Buy non-perishable foods and store plenty of drinking water.

- Buy plywood or other material to protect your home.

- Clear loose and clogged rain gutter and downspouts.

- Trim trees and shrubbery.
- Decide where to move your boat in an emergency.

- Review your insurance policy.

#### If sheltering in place ...

- Turn the refrigerator to maximum cold and keep it closed.

- Turn off utilities if told to do so by authorities.

- Turn off propane tanks.
- Unplug small appliances.
- Fill the bathtub and large containers with water in case tap water is unavailable. Use water in bathtubs for cleaning and flushing only. Don't drink it.

#### If winds become strong ...

- Stay away from windows and doors, even if they are covered. Take refuge in a small interior room closet or hallway.

- Close all interior doors. Secure and brace external doors.

- If you are in a two story house, go to an interior first floor room.

- If you are in a multi-story building and away from water, go to the first or second floor and stay in the halls or other interior rooms



away from windows.

#### Be alert for ...

- Tornadoes. They are often spawned by hurricanes.

- The eye of the storm (it's the eerily calm center of the storm). It may seem like the hurricane is over, but after the eye passes, the winds will change direction and quickly return to hurricane force.

#### After the storm ...

- Keep listening to the radio and television for important information updates.

- Wait for an area to be declared safe before entering.

- Watch for closed roads. If you come upon a barricade or flooded road, turn around.

- Avoid weakened bridges and washed out roads.

- Stay on firm ground. Moving in water that is 6 inches deep can sweep you off your feet. Standing water may be electrically charged from power lines.

For more information visit <https://www.noaa.gov/hurricane-prep>.



# Fort Polk community members take box tour

Those attending Fort Polk's annual box tour were able to watch Soldiers in action, experience battle conditions such as explosions, watch Soldiers parachute from airplanes and check out static displays and a variety of equipment Soldiers use in the box.





# Books & Brews

Books and Brews is a new book club facilitated by staff from the Allen Memorial Library in collaboration with the Warrior Center. Bring your own Books and Socialize with fellow bookworms and relax with a brew or two! Participants will discuss what they are reading lately, favorite books and authors, and hear recommendations for good reads!

Located at The Warrior Center  
Tuesday, May 30th at 1700  
Adults 18+ can enter!

For more information and registration  
Call the Library at  
337-531-2665



## MAY IS MOTORCYCLE AWARENESS MONTH

### CHECK YOUR HELMET

Replace your helmet every 3 – 5 years – wear and tear, as well as exposure to UV rays, can break down important components of your helmet

Get with your unit's Motorcycle Mentor to enroll for the mandatory Basic Rider Course or call 531-RIDE for more information





# BJACH holds weeklong celebration of nurses

By JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES  
BJACH PAO

FORT POLK, La. — Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital celebrated National Nurses Week May 6-12 at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.

1st Lt. Justin Sinlao, registered nurse on the mixed medical surgical ward and the officer in charge of Nurses Week planning committee for BJACH, kicked off the festivities May 5 with Natalie O'Quinn on Good Day CENLA, CBS News, Alexandria, Louisiana.

Sinlao discussed the importance of Nurses week with O'Quinn.

"When I first became a nurse, I didn't understand the importance of Nurses Week," Sinlao said. "The longer I have been a nurse, the more I realize that it is a rewarding, yet challenging profession."

Nurses Week is an opportunity to show gratitude and appreciation for nurses.

"Nursing is a challenge. Sometimes the work we do goes unseen," Sinlao said. "Burn-out is prevalent in the medical profession, so appreciation goes a long way."

This year's Nurses Week theme is "Nurses Make a Difference: Anytime, Anywhere — Always."

"For me personally, being able to educate patients about procedures, diseases and how their bodies work to improve their health and their lives is the most rewarding part of being a nurse," Sinlao said. "On and off duty, we provide medical expertise. This is a week to recognize and celebrate the hard work of our fellow nurses, not just at BJACH but across the state and around the country."

Sinlao and his committee set up a week of activities for nurses each day at BJACH including breakfast, special jackets and gifts, an ice cream social, popcorn, yoga and a closing ceremony with a blessing of the hands and cake.

Capt. James Walker, BJACH chaplain, said the blessing of the hands ceremony is a Nurses Week tradition.

"Human touch is an essential component of healthcare," Walker said. "Blessing their hands with oils is a way to recognize its significance while also acknowledging the spiritual elements of physical care."

The team held several fundraisers and received a generous grant from the Fort Polk Thrift Store to make it all possible.

Sinlao, Col. Dwight Berry, chief nurse, Toni Pritchard, public health nurse and Spc. Sydney Pierce, licensed practical nurse from BJACH, visited with nursing students May 10 at Southwest Louisiana Technical Community College, Lamar Salter Campus, Leesville.

Dr. Geralyn Janice, instructional site coordinator for SOWELA's Leesville campus, said it was important to have the nurses from BJACH talk to the nursing students.



*Pictured from left: Spc. Sydney Pierce, licensed practical nurse, Col. Dwight Berry, chief nurse, and 1st Lt. Justin Sinlao, registered nurse from Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital discuss the Southest Louisiana Technical Community College practical nursing program with Kristine Stout, dean of the SOWELA School of Nursing and Allied Health May 10 during a Nurses Week 2023 engagement at the Lamar Salter Campus in Leesville.*



*Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital celebrated National Nurses Week May 6-12 at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk. Capt. Maria Ong, clinical nurse in charge of the mixed medical surgical ward, participated in the free yoga class offered at BJACH for Nurses Week 2023.*

"Once our students earn their LPN credentials, it's important for them to learn from nurses in the field about different job opportunities," Janice said. "It's also important for them to know that there are opportunities to work at BJACH and to serve the Soldiers and their Families who are such a huge part of our community."

Janice was very appreciative to have the Soldiers and civilian nurses take the opportunity during Nurses Week to talk to her students.

"This will give our students the full spectrum of opportunities available to them, so they won't limit themselves," Janice said. "Nursing is not just about the academic knowledge we provide to them. It's about the heart of nursing where empathy is just as important as the skills they are obtaining. We have an accredited program and a group of instructors who love what they do and ensure our students are holistically well rounded both academically and emotionally."

The next nursing cohort begins in August. Anyone interested in pursuing one of one of SOWELA's academic programs is encouraged to visit the website at [onestop@sowela.edu](mailto:onestop@sowela.edu) and begin the application process.

Pritchard, a Lamar Salter alumni and former faculty member, encouraged students to continue learning and seek out opportunities they will enjoy.

"Don't take a job you know you aren't going to like," Pritchard said. "Leave yourself open to opportunities. Healthcare is expanding and so are the possibilities you'll find your fit eventually."

Pritchard also encouraged the students to continue their educational journey upon graduation and shared with them her journey as a certified nursing assistant, a practical nurse, a registered nurse, earning a Bachelor of Science in nursing, a master's degree and finally, a doctorate.

The Defense Health Agency is celebrating nurses at military treatment facilities around the world for their unwavering commitment to patients and the value they provide to the unified health care team in accomplishing the medical readiness mission.

If you are interested in learning more about the SOWELA practical nursing program please visit: <https://www.sowela.edu/programs/school-nursing-allied-health/practical-nursing/>.



# PCS YARD SALE

## JUNE 3

### OLD COMMISSARY PARKING LOT

**Vendor Set Up: 8 AM | Yard Sale Open: 9 AM**

The Directorate of Family, Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (DFMWR) will host their second annual PCS Yard Sale. This event will encourage families to buy, sell, and trade items before the peak of PCS season for our Soldiers, Families and Civilians by providing them with a family friendly event. The PCS Yard Sale will be a joint event with the First Saturday Home Based Business Market

**Event is open to Military, Retired, DOD ID card holders and their families**

**\$10 per space (20x20)** – for Yard Sale Spaces  
**\$3 table rentals** – for Yard Sale Participants  
HBB will be hosting First Saturday Market in conjunction with yard sale

To set up a space, or for more information, please email [megan.n.angell.naf@army.mil](mailto:megan.n.angell.naf@army.mil)





# National Dental Care Month drills importance of oral hygiene

By **PORSHA AUZENNE**

Public Affairs Office

FORT POLK, La. — Dental care has always been seen as a crucial part everyday life. From a young age, kids are taught the importance of brushing their teeth twice daily, flossing, staying away from sugary snacks and drinks and other dental care processes by teachers, parents and dentists.

It doesn't get any easier to care for your teeth as an adult. No matter how old you are, good dental care is essential thanks to the many unhealthy foods and drinks consumed that are loaded with ingredients that can lead to damaging consequences for teeth.

The damage includes gum disease, plaque, tooth loss and cavities. No one wants to deal with daily pain, fear of smiling or problems eating. To remind people of the seriousness of caring for their pearly whites, the month of May has been designated as National Dental Care Month.

The month was founded to encourage healthy dental hygiene and improve awareness concerning preventative dental care.

The aim is to prevent gum disease and tooth decay before they happen, therefore saving the U.S. population from both costly dental visits and pain.

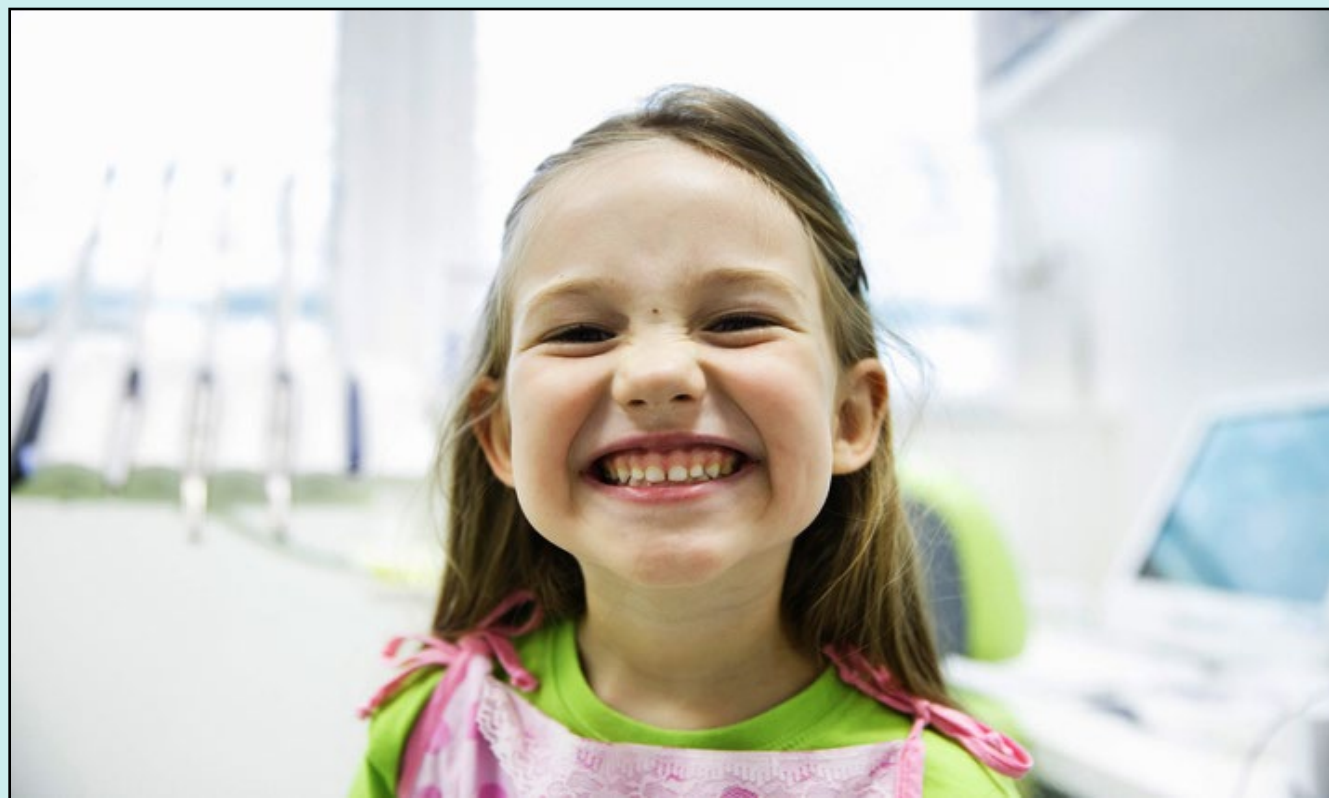
In observation of National Dental Care Month, dentists recommend people do the following to prevent tooth decay and gum disease: review your oral hygiene habits, schedule check-ins with your dentist to ensure dental health is properly maintained and make the recommended adjustments to your daily routine or keep up with the healthy ones you already perform.

The five basic steps of tooth and gum care include brushing, flossing, rinsing, maintaining a healthy diet and seeing your dentist at least once a year.

Brushing your teeth and gums at least twice a day removes plaque, a yellow bacterial substance that clings to teeth. When the bacterium in plaque encounters food, it produces acids which, in turn, lead to cavities. Floss your teeth at least once a day (ideally after each meal) to get rid of food and plaque lodged between the teeth.

Since a toothbrush can't reach that far, flossing removes plaque before it can harden into tartar. Once tartar is formed within the crevices of your teeth, only a hygienist or dentist can remove it.

The third part of your daily oral health care should be to use mouthwash. However, dentists warn against using just any kind of mouthwash. Rinsing with an antiseptic mouthwash helps kill plaque-causing bacteria, bad breath and early gum disease. A mouthwash that contains fluoride helps aid in the prevention of tooth decay. Certain mouthwashes have both



antiseptic ingredients and fluoride in them. Remember to rinse your mouth for 30 to 60 seconds.

The fourth step, eating the right foods, cautions people against consuming foods known to contain sugar and starches. Since foods that include these ingredients produce the most acids, the more they can damage your teeth. Foods and beverages like cookies, cakes, pies, candy, sodas, fruit juices, chips and French fries are primary culprits.

Water should always be your main beverage of choice because it has little to no acidity. Tomatoes, peppers, and citrus fruits are highly recommended by dentists due to their rich concentration of vitamin C, which promotes

healthy gums.

Lastly, remember to see your dentist for annual checkups. Even if you've never had a cavity and your teeth shine like diamonds, the nerves inside your teeth become smaller and less sensitive as you age. You can still have early-stage gum disease even if you're completely cavity free.

This May, there are many things you can learn from National Dental Care Awareness Month including the fact that failure to properly take care of your oral health can be painful and expensive.

For further information regarding dental care visit [www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/basics/adult-oral-health/tips.html](http://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/basics/adult-oral-health/tips.html).



## CYS facility walkthrough

Col. Sam Smith, Fort Polk garrison commander, visited Child and Youth Services and Family Child Care facilities May 10 for a CYS Walkthrough. Jean Wadman, CYS Director, and Valerie Hammond, FCC Director, joined the garrison commander in touring CDC Bldg. 3349 and holding discussions related to the facility.



PORSHA AUZENNE/GUARDIAN



## CYS facility walkthrough

Col. Sam Smith, Fort Polk garrison commander, visited Child and Youth Services and Family Child Care facilities School Age Center May 15 for a walkthrough. Jean Wadman, CYS Director, and Michelle Thorman, director at SAC joined the garrison commander in touring and holding discussions with staff related to the facility.



KAREN SAMPSON/GUARDIAN





# Good Conduct Incentive Program



1st Battalion, 509th  
Infantry Regiment

A Co B Co  
C Co D Trp



519th Military  
Police Battalion

HHD 204 258 41  
383 91 50



1st Battalion, 5th  
Aviation Regiment

HHC HHC USAG  
A Co B Co C Co



46th Engineer  
Battalion

HHC FSC  
687



MEDDAC

MEDDAC Co



DENTAC

DENTAC Co



32nd Hospital Center

115th Field Hospital



2nd Battalion, 2nd  
Infantry Regiment

A Co C Co  
J Co



2nd Battalion, 4th  
Infantry Regiment

B Co G Co



2nd Battalion, 30th  
Infantry Regiment

HFSC A Co B Co  
C Co D Co



3rd Squadron, 89th  
Cavalry Regiment

A Trp B Trp  
C Trp D Trp



5th Battalion, 25th  
Field Artillery

A Bat B Bat F Co

These 48 out of 65  
companies have  
earned a  
three-day pass for  
good behavior over  
30 consecutive days.



317th Engineer  
Battalion

HHC A Co B Co C Co  
D Co E Co



3rd Battalion,  
353rd Regiment

HHC



710th Brigade  
Support Battalion

B Co C Co





JUNE 9  
GEAUX BLUE

THE CITY OF  
LAKE CHARLES PRESENTS

# DOWNTOWN at SUNDOWN

@THE 1000 BLOCK OF RYAN STREET DOWNTOWN

KID-FRIENDLY ★ VENDOR BOOTHS ★ FOOD, BEER, WINE\*



**MAY 19**  
6-9 PM  
**GREGG  
WRIGHT**



**MAY 26**  
6-9 PM  
**MASON TRAIL AND  
ZYDECO RHYTHM**



**JUNE 2**  
6-9 PM  
**NICKI AND THE  
PEOPLE'S VICTORY**



**JUNE 9**  
6-9 PM  
**CHARLIE  
WAYNE BAND**  
OPENING ACT: GINO V.





PORSHA AUZENNE/ eGUARDIAN



ANGIE THORNE/ eGUARDIAN



ANGIE THORNE/ eGUARDIAN



ANGIE THORNE/ eGUARDIAN



ANGIE THORNE/ eGUARDIAN



ANGIE THORNE/ eGUARDIAN



PORSHA AUZENNE/ eGUARDIAN

# Maple housing town hall

A Housing Town Hall was held May 15 in the Maple Terrace neighborhood. Installation leadership, housing officials and unit and organization representatives were able to talk to residents as they shared their housing concerns and asked questions. The town hall is a way for Fort Polk leadership and the community to maintain a positive connection through open communication.



# Salute to troops brings joy to Fort Polk, local community

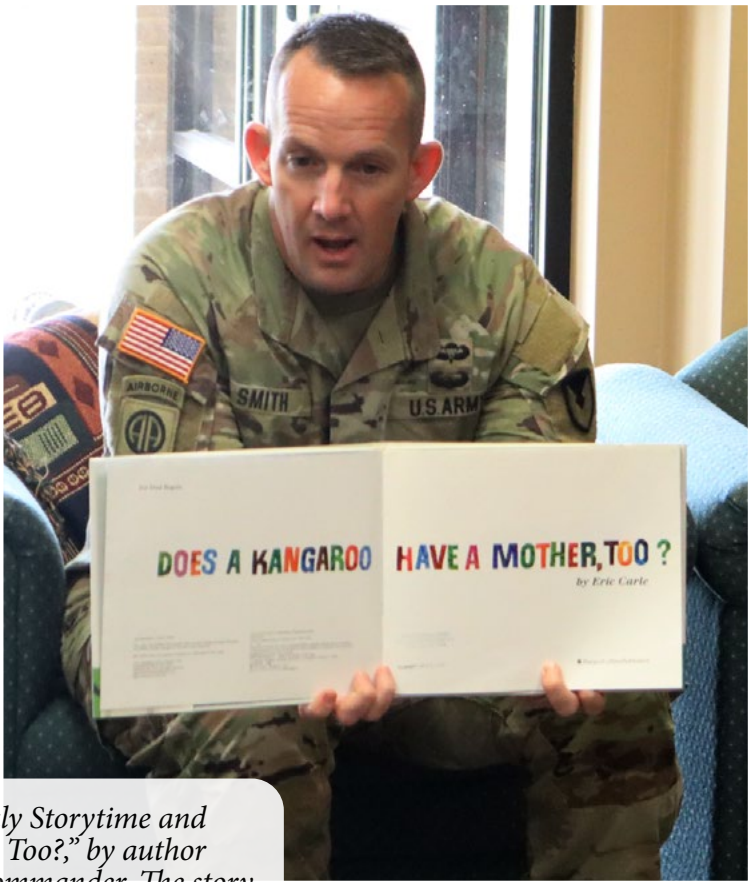


The Fort Polk community enjoyed a day filled with music and fun at Salute to the Troops May 20.





Garrison commander reads to children in honor of Mother's Day



On Tuesday, May 10, the Allen Memorial Library held their weekly Storytime and Craft session. This week's book, "Does a Kangaroo Have a Mother, Too?," by author Eric Carle, was narrated by Col. Sam Smith, Fort Polk garrison commander. The story taught about the importance of mothers in honor of Mother's Day. Children, along with their parents, also created a paper craft to gift their mothers.







TERRY NEWMAN/ISIS



### Touring Fort Polk

A group of 30 home school children, along with their parents, made the trip to Fort Polk from Ragley, Louisiana, to tour Fort Polk. The group toured the rigger shed and museum May 10. They also enjoyed lunch at the Patriot Inn dining facility and were able to interact with Soldiers.

## Check VIN numbers

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

2018	Chevrolet	Camaro	2576
2014	Kia	Optima	0324
2014	Dodge	Dart	5863
2011	Infiniti	2D	3365
2000	Chevrolet	Impala	8125
2000	Honda	Civic	8929
2011	Cadillac	DTS	6891
1995	Jeep	Cherokee	9563
1999	Honda	Accord	5783
2012	Hyundai	Elantra	8154
2016	Mazda	3	5679
2001	Kawasaki	M/C	0233
2008	Chevrolet	Impala	9420
2010	Chevrolet	Cobalt	6002
1997	Dodge	1500	9101
2002	VW	GTI	2558
1981	Yamaha	XJ650	8637

REELTIME  
THEATERS

Disney

X  
EXCHANGE

Proudly Presents



Date:  
MAY 26TH  
MAY 27TH  
MAY 28TH

Time:  
1800  
1500 & 1800  
1500 & 1800

Screening Location:  
BAYOU THEATRE BLDG 930  
7830 MISSISSIPPI AVE, FORT POLK

General seating available 30 minutes prior to show time.



## Home based business

The Home Based Business Market is open to all HBB vendors, typically the first Saturday of the month. The next market is June 3 at the Warrior Center. Shop all kinds of vendors selling everything from soaps and baked goods to tumblers, clothing and more. For more information call (337) 531-7668.

## Women's league

Nine, Wine and Dine is a new ladies golf league that takes place each Tuesday from 5-7 p.m. Women are invited to participate. It's a great opportunity to make new friends, enjoy a night of golf (nine holes) and then opting to have dinner and wine at the Forge Bar and Grill.

The cost is \$22 for members and \$27 for non-members. The event takes place at the Warrior Hills Golf Course. The next Nine, Wine and Dine is May 23. For more information call 531-4661.

## Murph challenge

Stop by the Home of Heroes Fitness Center May 27 from 8 a.m.-noon to take part in the Murph Challenge, which consists of a one mile

run, 100 pull ups, 200 push ups, 300 squats and another one mile run. A weighted vest is optional. Medals will be awarded to all challenge finishers. Think you have what it takes? Sign up at the Home of Heroes Fitness Center prior to the event. For more information call (337) 531-4337.

## Board game fun

Select from Allen Memorial Library's extensive collection of board games or bring your own and get your game on.

Board game night takes place every third Thursday of the month. Board games are available anytime during open hours at the library. The next game night is June 15. For more information call (337) 531-2665.

## Bass tournament

The Toledo Bend Army Recreation Park's monthly Bass Tournament. The park is located at 1310 Army Recreation Road, Florien. The tournament takes place the first Saturday of each month. The next tournament takes place June 3 and is open to the public. Check in is at first light. Weigh in is at 3 p.m.

The entry fee is \$40 per boat and \$5 per person for big bass. For more information call (318) 565-4235/4484.

## Lock in

The Home of Heroes Recreation Center hosts a Lock In May 28. Soldiers can enjoy extended hours from 10 p.m.-2 a.m. There will be fun activities and games to participate in. This event is open to all Soldiers. For more information call (337) 531-5870.

## SOS Memorial Day

Memorial Day events to honor the sacrifices made for this country will be held May 25 from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. After the Memorial Day Ceremony at Warrior Memorial Park, a luncheon for survivors will be held. For more information or to RSVP for the luncheon, call (337) 531-1965.

## Soldier game night

Soldiers can take part in a Dungeons and Dragons game night May 31 at the Home of Heroes Recreation Center from 6-7 p.m. The event is open to all Soldiers. For more information call (337) 531-5870.

# #FortPolkThingsToDo

## May 26: Mudbug Madness, Shreveport

Mudbug Madness was started on what began in 1984 as a two-day street festival in downtown Shreveport and is now one of Louisiana's largest and most popular Cajun festivals, featuring renowned Cajun, zydeco, blues and jazz artists, mouth-watering Cajun cuisine, raucous contests and fun for all ages.

The three-day festival is held annually on Memorial Day weekend.

Mudbug Madness is nationally recognized as one of the Southeast Tourism Society's Top 20 Events and the American Bus Association's Top 100 Events in the nation.

<https://mudbugmadness.com/>

## June 3: Louisiana Peach Festival, Ruston

Discover the homegrown flavors, art, music and culture of Ruston at the 72nd Annual Louisiana Peach Festival.

This year's festival features more than 10 hours of live music, a juried arts market, food vendors, kids' activities and more peachy fun in the heart of downtown Ruston.

<https://www.lapeachfest.com/>

## June 9-11: St. Landry BBQ Festival, Opelousas.

The second annual festival will take place on June 9-11, 2023, at the Yambilee Grounds and Ag Arena.

Some of the hottest local bands will be performing throughout the festival. There will also be a variety of arts and crafts vendors, a carnival with rides and activities and an array

of food and drink vendors serving up delicious barbeque and other amazing dishes. A cook-off will take place on June 11 and applications can be filled out on the website.

<https://www.stlandrybbqfestival.com/>

## June 9-11: Holly Beach Crab Festival, Cameron.

The takes place at Holly Beach, which is located along the Creole Nature Trail All-American Road. The festival takes place at 2412 Heron St. The event features kids' games, crab bingo, crab racing, a crab dish cookoff, an afternoon and evening of bands, food vendors, snow cone vendors, a meet and greet June 9 and a Pancake Brunch June 11. It's a relaxing experience for families to soak up some sun at one of the most popular gulf beaches in Southwest Louisiana.

<https://www.visitlakecharles.org/event/holly-beach-crab-festival/44045/>

## June 22-24: Beauregard Watermelon Festival, DeRidder.

Get ready for three days of watermelon fun! Watermelon eating and seed spitting contests, watermelon games and music, carnival rides and more. You will also want to check out the canning contest, cornhole tournament and crafters displays at the festival along with the antique tractor show. The festival is held at the Beauregard Parish Fair Grounds, 506 West Dr. Come out and join in some good summer time fun!

<https://beauregardwatermelonfestival.com/>

## June 30-July 4: Erath 4th of July Celebration, Erath.

Celebrate the nation's independence with an old-fashioned street fair for five days with carnival rides and games, food, live music every night, parade, water fights and a large firework display on July 4th. The event is free.

<https://www.erath4.com/>

## July 1: Lebuau Zydeco Festival, St. Landry.

Enjoy zydeco music all day long. From the place that produced zydeco hits like, "Don't Mess with my Toot Toot" comes an annual celebration of the genre and its roots in the Creole community. It features the most popular zydeco bands in South Louisiana. Bring a dancing partner, a lawn chair and your appetite.

<https://www.cajuntravel.com/events/lebeau-zydeco-festival/>

## June 24: Bug Day, Kent House Plantation.

Kent Plantation House, listed in the National Register of Historic Places, is an authentic Creole plantation house built circa 1796 prior to the Louisiana Purchase.

The plantation house is one of the oldest standing structures in the state of Louisiana. People can tour the plantation, but they also have special events.

The annual Bug Day is always popular and this year will have the addition of reptiles.

The event begins at 9 a.m. and ends at 1 p.m. For more information call (318) 478-5998.

<https://kenthouse.org/events>



# Arts, Crafts Center provides place to be *creative*

By PORSHA AUZENNE  
Public Affairs Office

FORT POLK, La. — I started my artistic journey at the wee age of 4 years old. To my parents’ dismay, that’s when I began to draw on the walls of our home with Crayons in a wide range of rainbow colors. Since then, my skills and creativity have grown, and I have successfully created graphic design work for companies such as Mattel Inc. and actor Phil Lamar (voice of Samurai Jack).

There are times, however, when I find my creativity dwindling and I need a major reboot.

I’m aware others in creative fields suffer through these occasional dry spells as well. Add in a lack of motivation, and it’s not an enjoyable time.

You may have ideas flowing in your head, but no drive to get those ideas out. That’s when you need a little help and inspiration to get your creative juices flowing again. One way to do this is to see art created by other people in many mediums. You can do this by going to a museum, but another great way to find inspirations is at an Arts & Crafts Center.

So, when I first came to Fort Polk and was given a tour of all the recreational facilities, you can imagine the excitement I had once I reached the Arts & Crafts Center.

Fort Polk is a place full of hidden treasures, with the Arts & Crafts Center being, perhaps, one of the best gems on post. Whether patrons are looking to have an engraving done on a cup, or simply want to unleash their creativity with paint and a canvas, the Arts & Crafts Center has something for everyone from the experienced Picasso to someone just starting their artistic journey.

Upon entering the Arts & Crafts Center, patrons are greeted with multiple rooms offering a variety of services. These include ceramics, painting, embroidery, framework and engraving. The embroidery and engraving departments offer custom services as well, so patrons can complete their own shirts, plaques or other items of their choosing.

From there, the center’s staff happily assists their customers in all their artistic needs. The Arts & Crafts Center also offers a monthly “Paint Night” session in which patrons are given step-by-step instructions. From blank canvas to finished product, they are guided through creating their own replica of the item on display. These can range from painted cookie trays, welcome signs, a painting of fireflies glowing under a night sky, Mardi Gras décor and so much more.

We held a farewell for one of my coworkers and decided to host a “Paint Night” in her honor. In front of the participants was a detailed painting of a beautiful sunflower against a bright, azure sky. It had been years since I last did any form of

## COMMENTARY



*Fort Polk’s Arts and Crafts Center, 1685 Bell Richard Ave., building 922, provides off-duty leisure time activities for Soldiers, Family members, retirees and guests.*



*The Arts and Crafts Center’s main workshop offers services including embroidery, engraving, framing, ceramics and painting. The sunflower painting (right) is something I created at the Arts and Crafts Center last year.*

traditional painting, as by the age of 12 I had already integrated into digital art, so I was a little nervous.

Thankfully, Michelle Newcomb, the Arts & Crafts program manager, was there to guide us through the entire session. I remember her reminding us to be careful not to put down too much blue and then proceed to paint over it with yellow. Obviously, blue and yellow makes green and you don’t want a green sunflower, so she told us to be sure to do

a light coating of blue.

In the end, it was an incredible and therapeutic experience. My favorite part was seeing everyone’s paintings done in their own style and interpretation — it reminded me that everyone is unique in their own way.

If you love art as much as I do, visit the Fort Polk Arts and Crafts Center the next time you need a place to let your creativity flourish and your imagination run wild.

For more information call the Arts & Crafts Center at (337) 531-4348.



# Warrior Hills Golf Course

*Driving Range*

## SKIP THE LINE, USE THE APP!



**Step 1: Download  
the App!**



**Step 2: Link It!**



**Step 3: Get your  
Golf Balls!**

**Have Questions?**

**Ask the Warrior Hills Pro Shop Staff for assistance today!**



### SLIP N SLIDE KICKBALL

**A Kickball Tourney that is done  
with slip n slides and pools!**

**Location: Sports Complex**  
**Teams of 9-12 players.**  
**Team registration is \$45**  
**How: Bracket play**  
**18 years or older event!**

**Register your team online!**  
**Pay at Wheelock**

**First game starts at 10am!**  
**Sign Up Deadline is June 7!**

**June 10th 1000-1400**

