

THE JRTC AND FORT POLK

# GUARDIAN

Monday Sept. 26, 2022 Vol. 49, No. 18



## Inside:

- Home Based Business event .... page 1
- Take part in AFAP .... page 5
- Honoring Hispanic Heritage .... page 9
- Asking tough questions about suicide .... page 11



## QUALITY OF LIFE LINES OF EFFORT



**SPOUSE  
EMPLOYMENT**



**CHILD CARE**



**HEALTH CARE**



**HOUSING**



### JRTC and Fort Polk

**Brig. Gen. David W. Gardner**

Joint Readiness Training Center  
and Fort Polk

Commanding General

**Col. Sam Smith**

Garrison Commander

**Timothy M. Andersen**

Deputy Garrison Commander

**Deven B. King**

Director of Public Affairs

**Keith Houin**

Deputy Director

### Public Affairs Staff

**Angie Thorne**

eGuardian Editor

**Jeff England**

Broadcast

**Chuck Cannon**

Community Relations Officer

**Lt. Juncheng Lai**

Social Media

**Spc. Kelly Acevedo**

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/)

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

The Guardian can be found on the JRTC and Fort Polk web site at [home.army.mil.polk/](http://home.army.mil.polk/) and the JRTC and Fort Polk Facebook page at [@JRTCandFortPolk/](https://www.facebook.com/JRTCandFortPolk/). Guardian archives can also be found on the JRTC and Fort Polk website.

Links to the Guardian are also included in all-users emails to government email users and by request to non-military units. To be included on all-users messages email [usarmy.polk.id-readiness.list.fort-polk-pao-office@army.mil](mailto:usarmy.polk.id-readiness.list.fort-polk-pao-office@army.mil)

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.

## Army Community Service hosts Home Based Business event

By **ANGIE THORNE**  
Public Affairs Office

FORT POLK, La. — Fort Polk's Army Community Service hosted a Home Based Business "Welcome Fall" two-day market Sept. 17-18 at ACS.

The Fort Polk Home Based Business program is about giving spouses an alternative to the out-of-house employment norm.

Stacey Delgado, ACS Employment Readiness Program Manager, said HBB can help military spouses earn income from their home.

"This event is a showcase of their small businesses, which are portable and can leave with them when they head to a new duty station," Delgado said. "When we have these events, it's important for the Fort Polk community to come out and support their local HBBs."

Helen Archibald, spouse and Home Based Business owner, said having the opportunity to participate in the HBB program is great.

"I took what was essentially a hobby and turned it into a growing business," Archibald said. "I've participated in all the HBB events I can on post."

Archibald makes clay based jewelry. She designs and creates the pieces she sells under the name Van Arch Designs.

"If I know people are thinking about starting a home based business, I encourage them. It has been nothing but a positive experience for me," Archibald said.

Solo Sauvao, a spouse who also



Members of the Fort Polk community stopped by Army Community Service Sept. 17 to brows through handmade and consultant based businesses at the "Welcome Fall" Home Based Business Market.

has a Home Based Business, was browsing the tables of her fellow vendors.

"I like to support my fellow spouses, so I look around and make a purchase here and there," Sauvao said.

Sauvao was buying macarons from K Mac's French Macarons — an HBB owned by Kathryn Robles.

Robles said she has culinary arts training and had some free time on her hands since her kids are in school, so she created her cookie business.

"It's been a great opportunity for

me," Robles said. "Since I've been approved as an HBB, I've been selling out every week. It just makes me happy when people love what I create."

Another business that has grown since entering the HBB program is Markee Maker Customs, owned by Rachel Markee.

"Without this program, I wouldn't be where I am," Markee said. "I've actually started wholesaling to small boutiques."

Markee puts in long hours to make her business a success.

Please see **Business**, page 2



**Cover photo:** Kirsti Beyer and her daughter Emilie, 3, look at some of the handcrafted clay earrings found at the "Welcome Fall" two-day Home Based Business Market Sept. 17-18. (Photo ANGIE THORNE/Guardian)



# Business

Continued from page 1

"I work anywhere from 40 to 60 hours a week. It's crazy, but I love it," Markee said. "My Family relies on this income. That's why I work so hard. My business now pays for itself and I'm actually making a profit."

Markee said the success of the Fort Polk HBB program is due to Stacey Delgado's hard work.

"She pushes this program and helps by supporting us to make the program successful," Markee said. "I appreciate her so much."

For more information about the HBB program call (337) 531-1941.



Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Nielson talks to Home Based Business owners at the "Welcome Fall" two-day market Sept. 17-18 at Army Community Service.



Home Based Business vendors selling their wares Sept. 17 at Army Community Service.





# JRTC and Fort Polk 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Retiree Appreciation Day!



**15 October 2022**

**Opening Ceremony 8:00AM**

**Consolidated In & Out Processing**

**1716 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, BLDG 250**

**Fort Polk, LA. 71459**

**Open to all DOD ID card holders.**

**We will have Information Booths,  
Equipment Displays, refreshments,  
Legal, ID card services and a  
Soldier for Life Golf Tournament!**

After the opening ceremony, and cake cutting

Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital

1585 3<sup>RD</sup> Street. BLDG 285

will be offering Information Booths, Health Screenings,  
Immunizations as well as Pharmacy and Dental Services.

Come out and  
see what we  
have for you!



Sponsored by your  
Fort Polk Retired  
Soldier Council

# Soldier For Life Golf Tournament

JRTC and Fort Polk's Retired Soldier Council

Invites all DOD Id card holders on

**15 October 2022**

**4 Person Team Scramble  
Price is \$50 per head for all  
fees, lunch and prizes galore!**

JRTC and  
Fort Polk

**The Event Begins at 9:00am**

**Register Today at (337) 531-**

**4661**

**Warrior Hills Golf Course**

**1321 Corps Road**

**Fort Polk, LA. 71459**

This tournament is part of the 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Retiree Appreciation Day  
Activities and sponsored by the Retired Soldier Council.



# Hurricane Preparedness **STRENGTHEN YOUR HOME**



There's a lot you can do around your home to help protect it from hurricane winds. Before hurricane season, trim trees on your property and get approved window coverings. Ahead of storms, collect loose outdoor items, secure all doors on your property, and find a safe location for your vehicle.



Cover  
windows



Secure loose  
outdoor items



Trim trees



Move vehicle to  
a safe location



Secure  
all doors

[weather.gov/hurricane](https://weather.gov/hurricane)







ANGIE THORNE/ eGUARDIAN



## Housing Town Hall

Installation leadership, housing officials and unit and organization representatives held a Housing Town Hall Sept. 19 in the Palmetto Terrace neighborhood. Residents were able to share their housing concerns and ask questions. The town hall is a way for Fort Polk leadership and the community to maintain a positive connection through open communication.



## Barracks Town Hall

Soldiers from 5th Battalion, 25th Field Artillery Regiment took part in the first Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk Barracks Walking Town Hall. Installation leadership listened to Soldier's concerns, assisted them in resolving any outstanding work orders and helped them navigate ArMA. Soldiers can submit their maintenance requests on [armymaintenance.com](http://armymaintenance.com) or through the Digital Garrison App.



# Make your **voice** heard at Fort Polk's Army Family Action Plan conference

By **ANGIE THORNE**  
Public Affairs Office

FORT POLK, La. — Ever get frustrated when you feel like there's a better way to do something? After all, there can be room for improvement, no matter the situation. If you have a suggestion, utilizing the Army Family Action Plan is your chance to improve the process for yourself and others.

AFAP is the voice of the customer. It's a way for Soldiers, Family members, survivors, retirees and Department of the Army civilian employees to communicate with Army leadership about what works, what doesn't and what they think will resolve the issues they have observed.

Since its inception in 1983, AFAP remains the only such partnership between a branch of the United States military and its constituents.

AFAP is the primary tool to communicate the important issues that give commanders and leaders insight into the Army population's current satisfaction and expectations.

Leadership uses the information they get from AFAP to affect changes that improve quality of life and support programs. These needs remain in the forefront of Army senior leadership in an effort to foster a satisfied, informed and resilient Army community.

If you have an issue, now is the time to submit it to AFAP. Fort Polk's AFAP conference takes place Nov. 15-16 from 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at the Warrior Center.

Though a few inputs have been submitted, AFAP is asking for more. The deadline for issues to be submitted is Oct. 25.

Leslie Fontenot Cormack, Army Community Service information and referral specialist, said issues must be broad because it's not about one person's specific challenge, but something that affects a large group of people.

"The issue needs to be something benefiting the Army Family as a whole," Fontenot Cormack said. "It's not just about me or you. It's about issues that everybody can relate to."

**Criteria for issue submission includes:**

- The issue has a broad impact and is within the scope of Fort Polk or Headquarters, United States Department of the Army.
- The issue is obtainable after considering the current political and resource environment.
- The issue has measurable objectives with an identifiable end product.
- Issues should focus on improving the quality of life for everyone.

AFAP issues may be submitted year round to the local installation ACS or online via the Issue Management System. IMS is a tool for submission and review of AFAP issues. Access to IMS can be found on the Army Family Web Portal at <https://olms.armyfamilywebportal.com>.

**How to submit an issue:**

- Complete an AFAP form and drop it by Army Community Service, 1591 Bell Richard Ave., building 920.
- Submit online at <https://ims.armyfamilywebportal.com/>.

The perfect example of how you can take your ideas and make a difference through AFAP is the Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program. The BOSS mission is to enhance the morale and welfare of single Soldiers to increase retention and sustain combat readiness. BOSS sponsors a variety of activities

before, during and after deployment to maintain the morale of single Soldiers affected by increased operational tempo and deployment stress.

"It was an AFAP conference issue. It is an amazing program which continues to grow and impact single Soldiers. It's huge," Fontenot Cormack said.

With ideas like these, AFAP has been responsible for hundreds of legislative, regulatory and policy changes geared towards improv-

Please see **Voice**, page 6





## Hiring event

Fort Polk's Transition Assistance Program hosted a hiring event outside at the Education Center Sept. 22. Soldiers and members of the Fort Polk community stopped by to see what kind of jobs employers at the event were promoting.



# Voice

Continued from page 5

ing the quality of life for service member's to enhance readiness and retention.

Since 1983, more than 714 issues have been submitted, resulting in more than 129 legislative changes, 190 Department of Defense or Army policy changes and 212 improved programs or services.

### A few AFAP Results:

- Dedicated special needs space in Child and Youth Services
- Distribution of GI Bill benefits to dependents
- Extended education benefits for spouses
- Dental and vision insurance coverage for federal employees
- Military Thrift Savings Plan
- TRICARE for Life eligible retirees
- Active duty enlisted Soldier compassionate reassignment stabilization
- In-state tuition for military dependents

- Paternity leave
- Family member employment in the civil service system
- Convicted sex offender registry
- Audio/ video surveillance in childcare centers
- Standard level of security measures in barracks

Fontenot Cormack said AFAP is important because if the community members have an issue or see something that's not working, they can have a voice in changing things.

"The attitude says a lot about what the Army thinks about its people. It values them as a whole," Fontenot Cormack said.

The issues gathered until Oct. 25 will be presented at the conference where delegates will discuss and evaluate them.

Members of the conference will then determine if they can be resolved at the Fort Polk

level or need to be sent up to Installation Management Command and Headquarters, Department of the Army. Delegates for the conference include Soldiers, Family members, retirees and DA civilians.

Lucianne Buch, ACS mobilization, deployment and stability support operations program manager said the Soldiers and Family members are from all rank levels from enlisted Soldiers to officers.

"We want a mixture of all perspectives and views to get the best outcome," Buch said.

Buch said AFAP is a crucial process.

"I think more people need to get involved in the program," Buch said. "It's a way for people of all ranks and structure — civilian or military — to participate, get involved in the community and make a positive change."

For more information about AFAP call ACS at (337) 531-1941.



**BOSS**  
**Car Show**  
OCTOBER 1 (BEFORE HAYRIDE)


**CLASSIC**



**MUSCLE**



**TRUCK**



**MOTORCYCLE**



**BICYCLE**



(KIDS CATEGORY)



**BBQ Cooking Competition**  
Hosted by Firefest

**October 1**  
during Louisiana Hayride

Registration is now live, visit our website for details  
and sign your team up today!



FORT POLK MWR PRESENTS  
**LOUISIANA Hayride**  
HOME OF HEROES PARKING LOT

**OCTOBER 1**  
**11 AM - 4 PM**

- LIVE MUSIC
- PUMPKIN DECORATING
- HAYRIDES


- BOSS CAR SHOW
- CARDBOARD REGATTA
- BBQ COOKING CONTEST

AND MANY MORE!  
POLK.ARMYMWR.COM





# LEADERS, GET READY FOR...



INTEGRATED PERSONNEL AND PAY SYSTEM - ARMY

**Be sure to complete your training!**

**IPPS-A RELEASE 3**



## LEADER COURSE

**LEADERS** in charge of reviewing/approving actions, leave forms, and/or awards **MUST** take the **1-hour R3 Leaders course**.

You can complete this course on <https://hr.ippsa.csd.disa.mil/>, with your S1, with G1 every Thursday at AAR Theater 2 from 1530-1700, or at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LuHmhdKjaY> (be sure to tell your S1 you watched it!)

Reach out to the G1 IPPS-A Team at [USARMY-FT-POLK-G1-IPPSA@army.mil](mailto:USARMY-FT-POLK-G1-IPPSA@army.mil) if you have any questions!

**One Soldier ★ One Record ★ One Army**



## BOARD GAME

**Allen Memorial Library**

*Wight*

**Every third Thursday of month at 5 PM**

Pick a game from the library or bring your own!

337-531-2665  
746 Colorado Ave, BLDG 660  
[polk.armymwr.com](http://polk.armymwr.com)





OCTOBER 2021  
**ENERGY**  
ACTION MONTH

# ENERGY EFFICIENCY DRIVES GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION

Do your part to  
consume less energy.

Choose  
energy  
efficient  
lighting.



Turn off  
the lights  
when leaving  
a room.



Install a  
programmable  
thermostat.





# Benavidez set standard for selfless sacrifice

By **CHUCK CANNON**  
Public Affairs Office

FORT POLK, La. — In 1982, while serving at U.S. Army Field Station in San Antonio, Texas, I had the privilege — no, honor — of attending a noncommissioned officer professional development session in which retired Master Sgt. Roy Benavidez, a Medal of Honor recipient, spoke.

The son of a Mexican American farmer and American Indian mother, Benavidez went to live with his grandfather, aunt and uncle after both parents died of tuberculosis, and then dropped out of school as a teenager to help support his family.

Benavidez joined the Texas Army National Guard in 1952 during the Korean War, and in 1955 transferred to active duty. He eventually completed airborne and special forces training and was assigned to 5th Special Forces Group.

While in South Vietnam as an advisor to a Vietnamese infantry regiment, Benavidez stepped on a land mine during a patrol. He was evacuated to Fort Sam Houston, Texas, where his doctor concluded he would never walk again and began the process of medically discharging him.

Benavidez said when he saw flag burnings and media criticism of the U.S. military presence in Vietnam, he was motivated to walk again and return to military service.

As he told the group of NCOs attending that professional development session, “I began a nightly training ritual to learn to walk again. Even though the doctors told me to stay in bed, I’d get out each night and would crawl — using my elbows and chin — to a nearby wall and prop myself against the wall and attempt to lift myself unaided, starting by wiggling my toes, then my feet. I was able to eventually push myself up the wall to a standing position.”

After more than a year of hospitalization, Benavidez walked out of the hospital in July 1966. Despite continuing pain from his wounds, he returned to South Vietnam in January 1968.

The courage Benavidez showed in overcoming that injury would have been enough to label the El Campo, Texas, native an American hero. But it was his actions on May 2, 1968, that separated him from his fellow Soldiers.

That day a 12-man Special Forces patrol was surrounded by a North Vietnamese infantry battalion of about 1,000 men.

Benavidez, who was at base camp, heard the men’s appeal for help over the radio and volunteered to be part of a helicopter team sent in to extract the overwhelmed Soldiers. Armed only with a knife, Benavidez jumped from the helicopter carrying his medical bag and ran to help the trapped patrol.

His citation read, in part, Benavidez: “Distinguished himself by a series of daring and extremely valorous actions and because of his gallant choice to join voluntarily his comrades who were in critical straits, to expose himself constantly to withering enemy fire, and his refusal to be stopped despite numerous severe wounds, saved the lives of at least eight men.”

The severe wounds Benavidez received included: Seven major gunshot wounds, 28 shrapnel holes in his head, shoulder, buttocks, feet and legs, both arms slashed by a bayonet, right lung destroyed, and injuries

to his mouth and the back of his head from being clubbed by a rifle butt. He was also shot in the back with

an AK-47 and the bullet exited just beneath his heart.

When the battle was over and everyone evacuated, Benavidez was thought to be dead. As the doctor was about to zip up the body bag on the “deceased” Soldier, Benavidez regained consciousness and let them know he was still with them.

He was evacuated to Fort Sam Houston. Benavidez’s commander thought his Soldier deserved the Medal of Honor for his valor, but put him in for a Distinguished Service Cross because the process for awarding a Medal of Honor took a long time and the commander was sure Benavidez would die before he received the award.

Army Chief of Staff Gen. William Westmoreland presented the Distinguished Service Cross to Benavidez while he was recovering from his wounds at Brooke Army Medical Center at Fort Sam Houston.

Benavidez eventually recovered from his injuries, once again proving doctors wrong. In 1981, after more detailed accounts became available and an eyewitness corroboration from another survivor of that May 2 day, Benavidez’s Distinguished Service Cross was upgraded to a Medal of Honor.

After presenting Benavidez with the Medal of Honor, President Ronald Reagan turned to the reporters gathered for the ceremony and said, “If the story of his heroism were a movie script, you would not believe it.” Reagan then read the citation accompa-



nying the award.

After Benavidez related his story to the group of NCOs I was with, there was not a dry eye in the house. Needless to say he received a standing ovation and spent as much time visiting with us after his speech as he did during the speech.

Benavidez died Nov. 29, 1998, at the age of 63, from complications related to his wounds.

Not often does one find himself in the presences of a true hero. On this day, I did. It was a humbling experience to realize this man was willing to give his all to save his fellow Soldiers. I think all of those who attended that NCOPD class learned what selfless sacrifice really meant.

I know I did.

## COMMENTARY



# WE CARE WHAT YOU THINK

Take the  
**JOINT  
OUTPATIENT  
EXPERIENCE  
SURVEY**



For more information,  
visit **[www.health.mil](http://www.health.mil)**.



Take a few minutes to fill out the **Joint Outpatient Experience Survey (JOES)** when you get it by mail or email. **JOES** is a survey that asks questions about your military health care experience. It's secure and we won't share your personal information. Your **JOES** responses tell us what we're doing right and what we can do better.



# Soldiers prepared to ask tough questions regarding suicide

By JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES

BJACH Public Affairs Officer

FORT POLK, La. — Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital, along with units from across the installation, sent 18 Soldiers to the Applied Suicide Intervention and safeTALK facilitator course Sept. 13-16 at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.

According to [livingworks.net](http://livingworks.net), these Soldiers are now skilled, supportive trainers who will guide others through the safeTALK workshops.

The workshops are designed to help others learn how to recognize when someone is thinking about suicide and connect them to an intervention provider such as an ASIST trainee. The goal is to build a safety network around intervention providers and increase their reach and impact to prevent suicide.

Christa Zayas, suicide prevention program manager for JRTC and Fort Polk, said suicide prevention should be discussed year round, not just in September.

"I encourage everyone to take the time to reach out to a friend, coworker or Family member to see how they are really doing," Zayas said. "You'd be amazed how randomly reaching out and checking in on someone can make a difference in their life. You may be intervening and not even know it."

SafeTALK is about suicide alertness for everyone and stands for Tell, Ask, Listen, Keep safe.

"It's creating a safe community at Fort Polk. The training brings awareness to the topic and teaches Soldiers and civilians how to identify someone who may be struggling with suicide," Zayas said. "Once they are aware, they can get them to the help they need. The more awareness there is the better chance we have to save a life before it is taken by suicide."

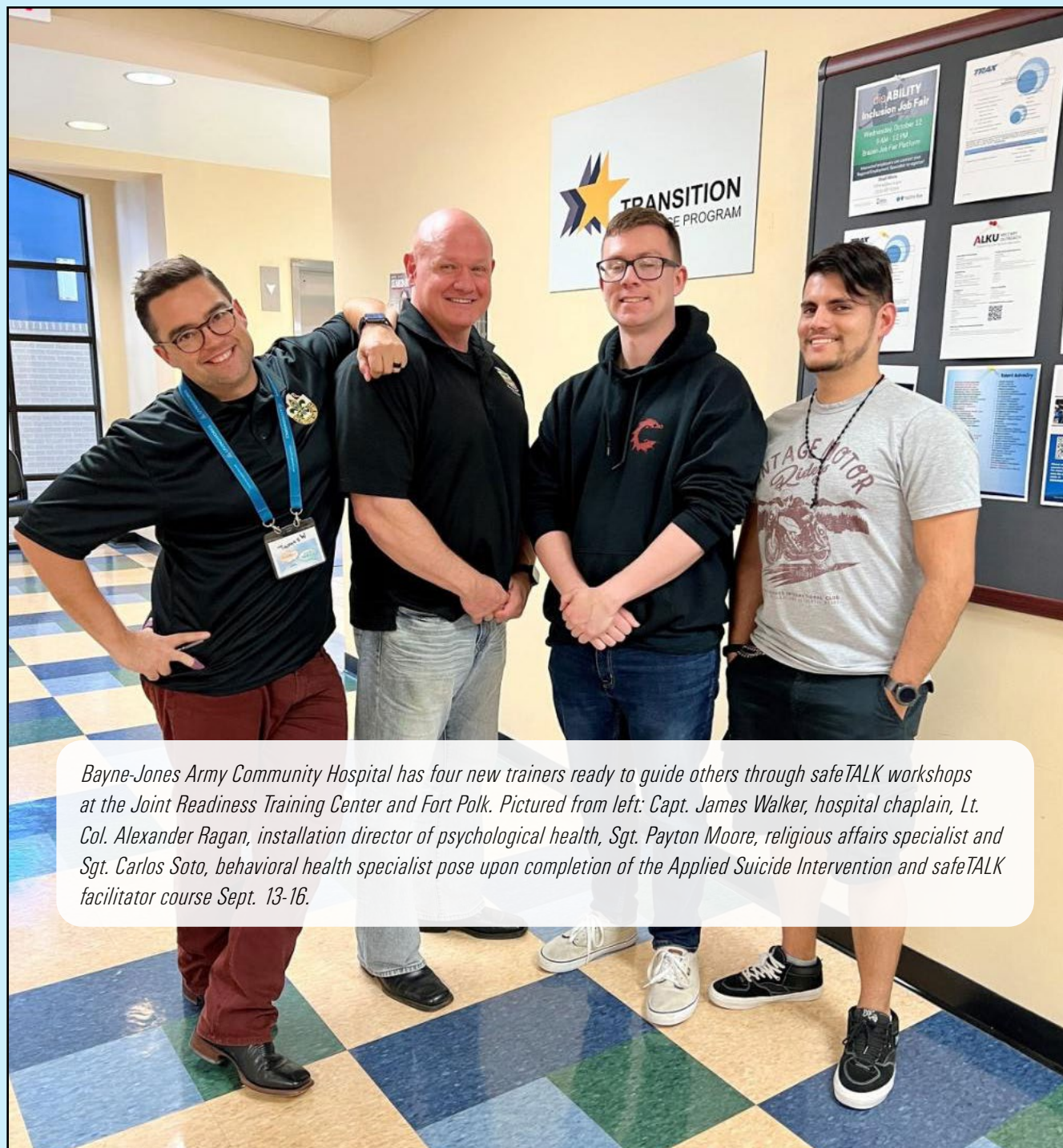
Students trained in the facilitator course will be equipped to teach the four-hour, face-to-face safeTALK workshop offered weekly during in-processing and upon request.

"I hope through this initiative we can destigmatize suicide and make it easier to talk about," Zayas said. "There are a lot of myths that surround suicide and the only way we will be able to change them is by having open, honest and direct conversations about the topic. SafeTALK training brings another level of awareness about suicide and opens the door for those tough conversations to be had."

After last week's training, BJACH has nine certified safeTALK facilitators who can support the installation and the organization.

Capt. James Walker, hospital chaplain, attended the training and learned to identify and effectively communicate with someone having suicidal thoughts.

"Unintentionally, we may miss, dismiss, or avoid what our peers are trying to communi-



Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital has four new trainers ready to guide others through safeTALK workshops at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk. Pictured from left: Capt. James Walker, hospital chaplain, Lt. Col. Alexander Ragan, installation director of psychological health, Sgt. Payton Moore, religious affairs specialist and Sgt. Carlos Soto, behavioral health specialist pose upon completion of the Applied Suicide Intervention and safeTALK facilitator course Sept. 13-16.

cate," Walker said, "Through this training, we become more perceptive to what those who are considering suicide are trying to communicate with us."

It's crucial for BJACH to have safeTALK trainers.

"We need helpers who are comfortable talking about suicide," Walker said. "This program is for people to build confidence in having open and direct conversations about suicide and connecting them with a caregiver."

Walker said one in every 20 people are considering suicide.

"I believe the main goal of this training is to let those who are suffering know that someone cares for them," Walker said. "We all need to be reminded that anyone could have thoughts of suicide and everyone can learn how to help."

Lt. Col. Alexander Ragan, installation director of psychological health, said training was beneficial to him.

"It helps sustain or improve the confidence to be curious when concerned about someone and ways to ask important clarifying questions such as:

Are you suicidal? And to be present and

available if they say yes," Ragan said. "It also helps us realize how approachable or unapproachable we are based on our biases, as well as our verbal and nonverbal communication to someone that is suicidal."

Ragan said talking about suicide is important.

"September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month," Ragan said. "It is always important to take a tactical pause and review the past to see what we've done to address suicide. Then we should look at the present and be self-aware about how we are doing and reset as we look to the future and determine what strategies we can improve on."

Ragan said having safeTALK trainers at BJACH is essential to the hospital's mission.

"At BJACH, we are here to help our community be purposefully present and situationally aware of the behavioral tells that cause us to be concerned and have the tools necessary to address it in the moment," Ragan said.

To schedule safeTALK training for your organization contact the Fort Polk Suicide Prevention Program Manager at (337) 531-6787 or email [christa.m.zayas.civ@army.mil](mailto:christa.m.zayas.civ@army.mil).



# Department of Public Health provides tips on safe sex

By JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES  
BJACH Public Affairs Officer

FORT POLK, La. — Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital’s Department of Public Health observes Sexual Health Month in September by sharing information, resources and preventive measures to keep Soldiers and their partners free of sexually transmitted infections.

April Draper-Davis, nurse practitioner and chief of occupational health, said reduced access to primary care and preventive services during the COVID-19 lockdown have resulted in increased cases of HIV and syphilis.

“Louisiana is ranked 4th in the nation for HIV case rates,” Draper-Davis said. “Men under 30 years old who have sex with other men are at the highest risk.”

The Department of Defense estimates roughly 2,000 service members are HIV positive, 350 being newly diagnosed each year. In the U.S. Army, the Defense Health Agency reports 496,166 Soldiers were tested for HIV and 108 were identified as HIV positive from January 2020 through June 2021. Following state and national trends, males and African Americans were diagnosed with HIV at higher rates than the rest of the population.

Draper-Davis said HIV and syphilis can be prevented with safe sex practices.

“Getting tested on a regular basis, especially prior to becoming sexually active with any new partners and encouraging the partner to get tested too, will stop transmission in those who have no symptoms,” Draper-Davis said. “If you are considered at high risk for HIV infection, there is HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis — a daily medication or injection you take every two months to reduce your risk of contracting HIV.”

The Fort Polk Department of Public Health has walk-in clinic hours in building 3515 from 8-9:30 a.m. or by appointment at (337) 531-6131.


STIs are not spread through air, water, food, or activities such as shaking hands and hugging or touching surfaces or objects such as telephones, door knobs and toilet seats.

STIs are spread through the exchange of infected body fluids from:

- Any intimate or sexual contact including oral, vaginal and anal sex or sex toys
- Direct blood contact through sharing of needles, syringes, razors or unclean tattoo or body piercing equipment
- Mother to baby during pregnancy or delivery, and HIV through breast milk


Risky situations that increase the chance of contracting an STI include:

- Inconsistent condom use (oral, vaginal, anal)
- Multiple sexual partners
- One-night stands, “hookups”
- Soliciting sex



**Sexually Transmitted Infection PREVENTION**

**STI RATES**



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

PRODUCED BY THE DEFENSE HEALTH AGENCY

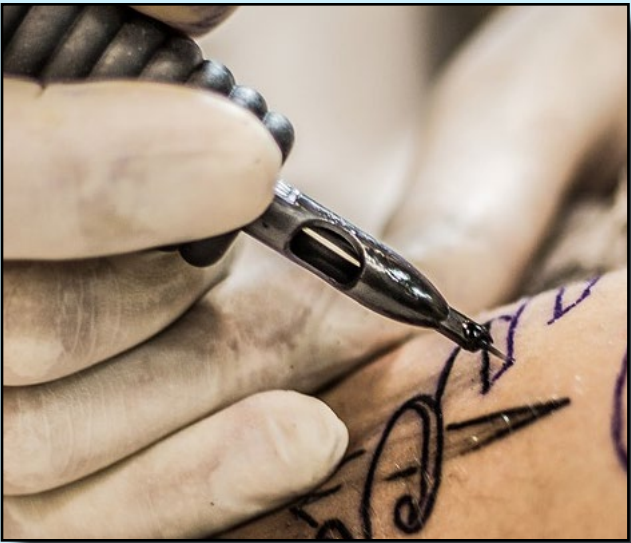
- Sharing razors, needles
- Tattooing and piercing from risky sources
- Being under the influence of illegal substances or alcohol

What can you do?

- Get tested as often as your health provider suggests for your situation and get treatment if needed
- Get the HPV and hepatitis B vaccines as indicated by your provider
- Abstain or wait to have intimate contact with a partner
- Be in a mutually monogamous relationship with an uninfected partner
- Reduce your number of partners and high risk situations

Use a condom correctly every time and don't use or agree to “condom excuses”:

- “I’m clean and my partner looks clean.”
- “My partner didn’t want to use a condom.”
- “We don’t need condoms since I’m/you’re on the pill.”
- “They don’t fit right.”
- “They always break.”
- “They’re too much trouble and make things messy and might come off.”
- “You can’t feel anything with it on.”



•“I just got a negative STI or HIV test.”  
Toni Pritchard, public health nurse at BJACH said Soldiers with questions about where to find free condoms, STI testing or treatment are encouraged visit the Fort Polk Public Health Department, 8099 Georgia Ave., building 3515, or contact their medical provider.

“There is absolutely no shame in being responsible about sex,” Pritchard said.

For more information on sexually transmitted infections visit <https://www.cdc.gov/std/default.htm>.



# Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital fights to bring talent to Fort Polk

By JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES

BJACH Public Affairs Officer

FORT POLK, La. — The Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk is known throughout the Department of Defense as the premier combat training center for the Army. Nestled in the pine forests of central Louisiana, the installation has the land capacity to support world-class brigade combat scenarios to prepare the modern warfighter for potential near peer conflicts abroad.

Many Soldiers have preconceived ideas about the installation based on their time in the “box” and the austere training environment associated with rotational combat scenarios conducted at Fort Polk.

According to Keri Brandt, Winning the Fight for Talent project officer, Fort Polk is redefining the way they approach recruitment to ensure the installation gains and retains highly-qualified Soldiers.

“At JRTC and Fort Polk, we approach talent management with precision,” Brandt said. “Conducting talent management with intentionality allows us to build readiness and train the force to fight and win with an unparalleled level of authority. We then send cultivated, honed leaders to go do great things at other installations, making the Army better as a whole.”

Brandt said Soldiers should consider Fort Polk as their next duty station.

“We provide a place where Soldiers can thrive personally and professionally. Our senior mission commander and leaders from Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital are actively seeking talent and are planning a trip to Joint Base San Antonio next month,” Brandt said, “The experience you receive at JRTC and Fort Polk makes you more marketable in the Army. There are a variety of positions available within our medical community, as well as career-enhancing opportunities that may be unavailable at larger military treatment facilities.”

At BJACH, enlisted Soldiers and officers are eager to choose Fort Polk for a variety of reasons.

Capt. Kelvin Cook, chief of operations for BJACH, said he chose Fort Polk because he was looking for professional growth as a medical corps officer.

“I was fortunate enough to have served time with the U.S. Army Forces Command and U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, but have never worked in the U.S. Army Medical Command environment or a hospital setting,” Cook said. “After finishing my command and staff time with TRADOC at Joint Base San Antonio, I came across this position as the chief of operations at BJACH. I immediately scheduled for an interview and decided this is where I wanted to be. I am a



*The Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk, was selected as the station of choice by four newly arrived Soldiers at Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital. Pictured from left: Lt. Col. Alexander Ragan, installation director of psychological health, Capt. Kelvin Cook, chief of operations, Capt. Maria Ong, clinical staff nurse for the mixed medical surgical ward*

firm believer it is all about what you make of your environment. I feel most opinions about this area stem from participants of former training rotations. I have been thoroughly impressed with the installation thus far and the opportunities that are available here.”

Cook said the quality of life initiatives at Fort Polk were unexpected.

“You can tell that funding has really been pushed to increase the quality of life that the post has to offer,” Cook said. “I never would have expected to find so many amenities here such as a high quality turf field for sports, a plethora of swimming pools, batting cages, fishing ponds and more. That was honestly a huge surprise to me.”

Lt. Col. Alexander Ragan, installation director for psychological health and the chief of behavioral health at BJACH, said others should consider JRTC and Fort Polk because of the great community, high quality health care, supportive resources and the opportunity to make a difference.

“I chose Fort Polk because I love southern culture and small towns. I was interested in working with an installation that had rotational training like JRTC,” Ragan said. “Work-

ing at a smaller military treatment facility, like BJACH, gives me opportunities to lead at multiple levels as an officer. Working closely with stakeholders in the surrounding community and across the installation is also a key to success.”

While stationed at BJACH, Ragan plans to apply what the Army has taught him to provide ready reliable behavioral healthcare across the installation for those seeking help, reinforcing prevention efforts and providing specialty and emergency care when necessary.

Staff Sgt. Carlos Constantino, noncommissioned officer in charge of the BJACH pharmacy, said he chose Fort Polk because it was a great move for his family.

“As long as I have my family with me, I am happy at any duty station. This was a great choice for my wife,” Constantino said. “After following me around the world for the past 13 years, I wanted to make a move that would help her career. She has been working remotely for a company in Baton Rouge. Now that she is only a few hours away, she can attend seminars and training events with her organization in person.”

Please see **Talent**, page 14



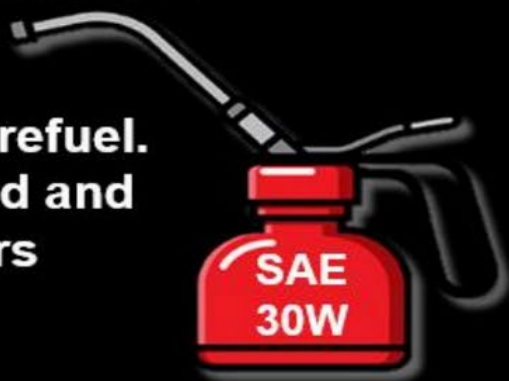
# GENERATOR SAFETY

**Hurricane Season is upon us and lots of folks are thinking about purchasing a generator. Find the total amps you need by dividing watts by volts. Choose one that produces more amps than you need, some appliances draw up to 3 times as much power when starting up. Ensure your generator is maintained**

**Never run the generator in an enclosed space – carbon monoxide kills**

**Never refuel a generator while it is in use. Fumes from the fuel you're adding could spark and burst into flames**

**Check oil every time you refuel. Have SAE 30W oil on hand and change oil every 100 hours**



**Check your 3-pronged, #10 gauge, extension cord's rating. Ensure you can use it outdoors, it isn't damaged and isn't hot to the touch**

## Talent

Continued from page 13

Constantino said he's enjoying BJACH.

"I've met more of the staff in just a few weeks here than I did the entire three and a half years I was assigned to a larger MTF," Constantino said. "This is my first time being the NCOIC of the department without someone else expected to fill the seat in a few months. I'm grateful for the opportunity to grow as a leader."

Constantino said BJACH is great place for Soldiers to blossom personally and professionally.

"The best Soldiers know that the greatest opportunities come by taking on the tasks and roles that no one else wants and knocking them out of the park," Constantino said. "Fort Polk is a proving ground. It is an opportunity to show your strength, skill and dedication to the mission."

Capt. Maria Ong, clinical staff nurse in the mixed medical surgical ward, said living close to family in Shreveport motivated her to choose an assignment at BJACH.

"I appreciate working at a smaller MTF because you get to know everyone, including people outside your immediate workplace," Ong said. "While I'm here, I plan to improve my Soldier skills and further my education. The command at BJACH is supportive of our success."

Jennifer Garrison, chief of military human resources for BJACH, said enlisted personnel and officers can select Fort Polk as their duty station of choice.

"When officers are within their movement cycle, they are able to view all available requisitions in the Assignment Interactive Module 2.0 Marketplace. Selecting JRTC and Fort Polk as their one-for-one preference gives the officer the greatest chance of being chosen for assignment," Garrison said. "Enlisted Soldiers also have the opportunity to select an assignment here, however, the process is slightly different. They can preference JRTC and Fort Polk as their duty assignment through the Assignment Satisfaction Key — Enlisted Mar-

ketplace and compete for available openings. Once a Soldier completes their preferences in ASK-EM, an algorithm will match them with their preference along with the needs of the Army."

Garrison said first term Soldiers in their reenlistment window can also discuss assignment availability at Fort Polk with their retention NCO. Cook said BJACH is the place to be for medical officers and NCOs.

"I would recommend this assignment if you are looking for the next step in your professional growth," Garrison said. "This facility has professionals that are passionate about their work, both in the patient care and administrative side of our service. If someone asked me why they should come here, I would tell them to challenge themselves with the experience and give it an honest chance."

To learn more about the JRTC and Fort Polk winning the fight for talent initiatives visit: <https://home.army.mil/polk/index.php/my-Fort-Polk/newcomers/winning-fight>



# Army Substance Abuse Program gets real about marijuana

By AMELIA CONNOR  
ASAP specialist

FORT POLK, La. — There's a lot of talk about marijuana these days. Questions abound. Is recreational use legal in Louisiana? If so, how old do you have to be to make a purchase? Is there a limit to how much a person can buy? Is medical marijuana legal? Which doctors can prescribe it? Where do you find dispensaries?

The Fort Polk Army Substance Abuse Program has been asked all these questions and more.

The response when asked by anyone working for the Department of Defense? It doesn't matter. Marijuana is a controlled substance and federally illegal.

The 2018 Farm Bill removed hemp, cannabidiol and other cannabis products containing less than 0.3 percent tetrahydrocannabinol from the definition of marijuana in the Controlled Substances Act.

This is how local convenience stores, vape shops and online retailers are able to sell the products legally. So, what exactly does that mean for those who work, live and play Fort Polk?

The issue is even though products containing less than 0.3 percent THC are sold legally, there is little to no regulation of them. In other words, there is no guarantee that the product contains the legal amount.

For this reason, the DOD has prohibited use of any cannabis derived products, including marijuana, CBD and hemp. Regardless of legality, the products are off limits to service members and Department of the Army civilians and prohibited on the installation.

What about medical marijuana? Medical marijuana is still marijuana and the substance is illegal under federal law.

Executive Order 12564 created the Federal Drug-Free Workplace Program in which all federal employees agree to refrain from using illegal drugs on or off duty as a condition of employment.


This means service members and civilians are not authorized to use marijuana. Medical marijuana would result in a positive THC drug test, which is grounds for removal.

With all the ads, billboards, commercials and talk about the issue, ASAP wants to make sure Fort Polk Soldiers, civilians and Families have the information needed to make the best decisions.

For more information related to substance use, reach out to your Fort Polk ASAP office, 7438 California Ave., building 4275, at (337) 531-2031.

Also, check out the Facebook page at Army Substance Abuse Program – JRTC & Fort Polk.

## What Marijuana Legalization Means for You

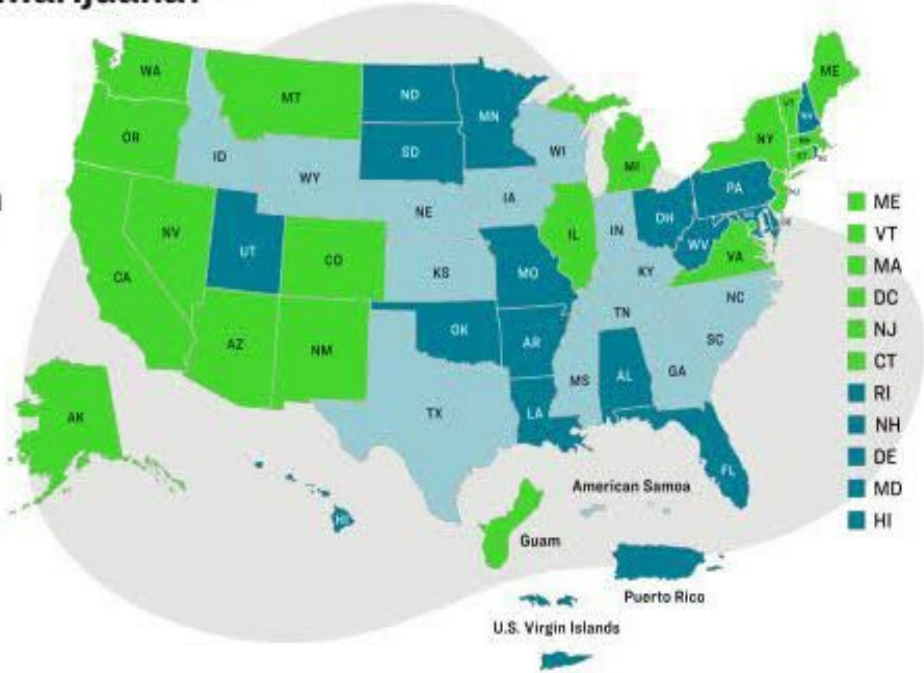


Active duty Service members, reservists or Guardsmen, are prohibited from having or using marijuana in any form - even if it's legal in your area.

### What States and U.S. Territories Have Legalized Marijuana?\*

**KEY:**

- All forms of marijuana are illegal
- Medical marijuana is legal
- Recreational & medical marijuana are legal



**BE AWARE!**  
Know what products are sold in your area that might contain marijuana so that you don't accidentally ingest them.

**PROTECT YOUR CAREER**  
No matter where you are stationed, TDY/TAD or visit, possessing, distributing or using marijuana (recreational, medical or otherwise) is prohibited by federal law and military regulation. Violations may result in discharge from service and punishment under applicable codes (federal criminal code, UCMJ and/or State Codes of Military Justice).

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
If you are a civilian dependent of a Service member, it is prohibited to possess marijuana anywhere on the installation, including on-base housing.

**Remember that no matter where you are stationed, marijuana is prohibited for Service members.**


Visit [toomuchtolose.org/marijuana-cbd-hemp-facts/](http://toomuchtolose.org/marijuana-cbd-hemp-facts/) for more information.

\*Not including CBD products  
\*\*Information current as of: July 2021

**TOO MUCH TO LOSE**

GET THE TRUTH ON RISKY DRUG USE

[www.toomuchtolose.org](http://www.toomuchtolose.org)

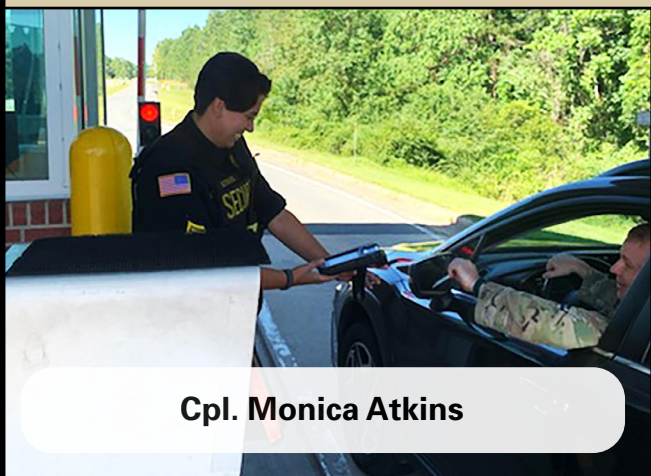


U.S. Department of Defense





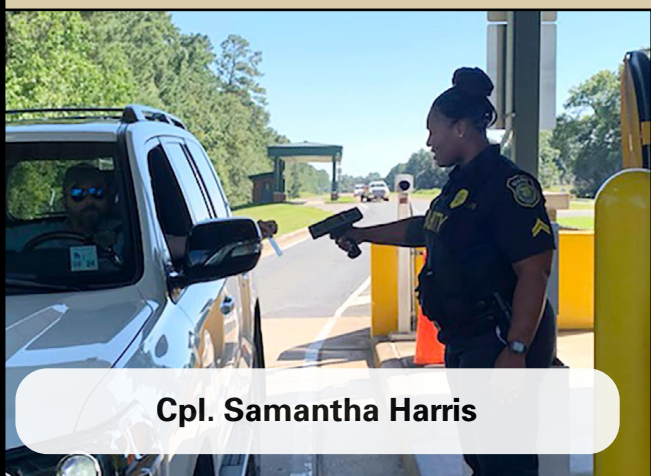
Capt. Aaron Nietfeld



Cpl. Monica Atkins



Cpl. Dorris Carter



Cpl. Samantha Harris



Cpl. Kevin Cole

COURTESY FORT POLK DES

# Supporting security guards doesn't end with appreciation week

## DIRECTORATE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

FORT POLK, La. — National Security Officer Appreciation week took place Sept. 19-25.

Amanda Pete, Directorate of Emergency Services physical security division chief, said it was an opportunity for the Fort Polk community to recognize the hard work security guards do through extreme heat, cold and other weather conditions to keep the Fort Polk community safe.

To help celebrate, Pete asked a few security guards their take on what they do.

Capt. Aaron Nietfeld, DES access control program security guard supervisor, said, it's serving the Fort Polk community.

"I fell in love with Fort Polk when I was stationed here. I moved away due to a permanent change of station in 2013, but I knew that this was my home. There is no better way to honor Fort Polk than by providing security to the home that I love," Nietfeld said.

Cpl. Monica Atkins, DES ACP security guard, said though she tries to greet everyone coming through the gate with a happy attitude, she also knows she is the first line of defense when it comes to keeping people safe and protecting the Fort Polk community.

"Basically, I'm part of a show of force to help keep the community safe while still providing assistance with a smile," Atkins said.

Cpl. Dorris Carter, DES ACP security guard, said she loves interacting with the different people in the community as they enter Fort Polk's gates.

"Bringing light to their day is important to me. It makes my day better if I can make just one person smile with a kind word," Carter said.

Carter also mentioned a few things people entering at the ACPs could do to make things move smoothly and quickly.

"When drivers and their passengers approach the ACP, it helps if they have their ID card ready to be scanned, as well as — depending on the time of day and weather conditions — dimming the vehicle headlights and turning off their wipers," Carter said.

Cpl. Samantha Harris, DES ACP security guard, said as a guard she makes sure only authorized personnel have access Fort Polk. Those who don't, she

sends back to the Visitor Control Center.

"That action and random vehicle inspections protect the installation and the people living here. I am first the first line of defense for this community," Harris said.

Giving an encouraging word to someone who may be having a bad day is something Harris enjoys about her job.

"If they seem to be feeling down, I try to lift their spirits with a kind word. It gives me the best feeling when it works," Harris said.

Harris asked the Fort Polk community to be patient with ACP security guards as they do their checks to keep the installation safe.

Cpl. Kevin Cole, DES ACP security guard, said the best part of being a gate guard is interacting with the members of the community who encourage them in return.

"A kind word goes a long way and I have experienced that many times from Soldiers, Family members, visitors and retirees. It keeps me going on those hard, hot days," Cole said.

Though National Security Officer Appreciation week is over, Pete said remembering ACP security guards keep Fort Polk safe all year long is important. She said DES has a few suggestions drivers entering ACPs can continue to do to show their appreciation.

1. Share their support for security professionals in the Interactive Customer Evaluation system or post a positive message on Facebook or Twitter.

2. Thank them for their hard work, especially during tough weather conditions.

3. Have your ID card out and a smile on your face as they greet you on entering the installation. That goes a long way in lifting their spirits as they labor in the summer heat.

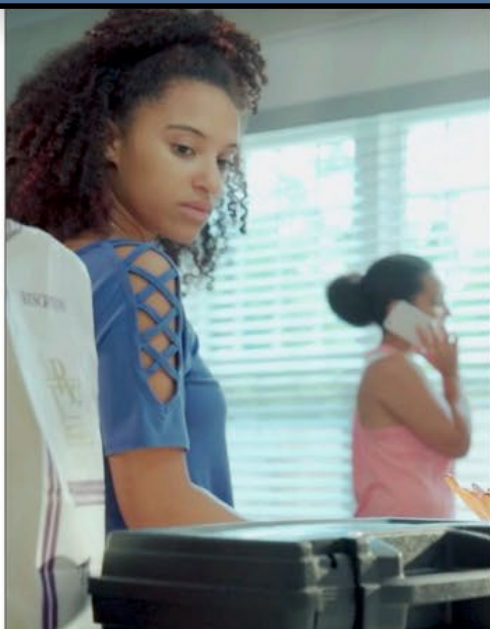
4. When the traffic is backed up at the ACPs, let the guards know that you appreciate their hard work in getting you on as fast as possible.

5. Help others understand the hard work and dedication it takes to be a Department of the Army Security Guards at Fort Polk.

For more information about Fort Polk's security guards visit the JRTC and Fort Polk website's [Physical Security Division](#) page.







# LETHAL MEANS SAFETY TOOLKIT



## FACT SHEET

Lethal Means are methods used in a suicide attempt. 580 service members died by suicide in 2020, 64.3% of Active-duty, 75.3% of Reserve, and 79.8% of National Guard by firearm (DoD, ASR). Research has shown that a suicide attempt can occur within 5-10 minutes from idea to action. Lethal means safety is the practice of safely storing means that could be used in a suicide attempt. Increasing time and distance between an individual in crisis and a lethal mean allows for intervention and reconsideration. These simple actions can save lives!



Statistics reveal making lethal means less accessible has reduced death by suicide by 91%."



Studies state approx. 90% of attempters who survive a nonfatal attempt, will not try again."

### EASY SAFETY STORAGE PRACTICES:

#### Ways to safely store firearms:

- Use a gunlock
- Disassembling the gun and place in a lockbox/safe
- Separately storing gun and ammunition

#### To prevent overdose, store/dispose medication:

- Take individually packaged pills
- Throw out expired medication
- Portion medication for the week and lock in a cabinet

#### Deter asphyxiation by reducing access to ligatures (ie: ropes, cords, and belts):

- Use specialized bed sheets resistant to tearing
- Purchase cordless appliances/electronics

#### Substitute/hide everyday sharp objects:

- Use knife covers and safes/locks
- Keep tools locked in sheds

#### Avoid chemicals/poisons:

- Purchase green/organic cleaning products or repellents that do not include toxic ingredients or pesticides
- Add carbon monoxide detectors to the house

### RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR SOLDIERS, THEIR FAMILIES, AND CIVILIANS.

Counseling on Access to Lethal Means or [CALM](#) is a training course that counsels individuals who work with people at risk and their Families providing information on how to reduce access.

Ask, Care, Escort or [ACE](#) is a training model offered by the Army that educates Soldiers and Family members on methods of prevention.

The [Suicide Prevention Resource Center](#) is a federally supported resource center funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration or SAMHSA.

The [Army Suicide Prevention Program](#) or SP2 is a campaign that provides resources, builds awareness, and supports Soldiers and Families with suicide prevention tools.

DOD Lethal Means Safety Tools and Information: <https://www.dspo.mil/Tools/Download-Library/lethalmeanssafety/>

Properly storing lethal means and staying informed by taking advantage of suicide prevention resources available to Soldiers and their Families will significantly save lives. Adding time and space between an individual and lethal means makes a world of difference. Make every second count.



## THIS IS OUR ARMY.



**ARMY  
RESILIENCE  
DIRECTORATE**



**SP2**  
SUICIDE PREVENTION  
PROGRAM

Military Crisis Line: Dial 988 and press 1  
In Europe, dial 00-800-1273-8255  
In Korea, dial 0808-555-118  
[www.armyresilience.army.mil](http://www.armyresilience.army.mil)



## Volunteer classes

Army Community Service, 1591 Bell Richard Ave., building 920, hosts Volunteer Management Information System classes.

Classes are scheduled for the first Friday of each month from 10-11 a.m. The focus will be on teaching how to create necessary accounts, find volunteer positions and track your hours. For more information call (337) 531-1941.

## CYS has moved

Fort Polk's Child and Youth Services has moved from its old location at 6880 Radio Road, building 400, to 7960 Mississippi Ave., building 924. Their hours are from 8-5 p.m. For more information call (337) 531-1955.

## Fort Polk pet care

The Veterinary Treatment Facility is open Monday through Wednesday from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. and Friday from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. All pets on post are to be registered and microchipped.

Register in person or by email. Your pets should also be up to date on all mandatory and recommended vaccines. For more information

call (337) 531-1322.

## Fort Polk Kiosk

Meal card holders should visit the Fort Polk Kiosk, building 2382.

They are operating under a new vendor and providing a wide variety of quality meal choices for Soldiers. Hours of operation are 7:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

## Anger management

Fort Polk Army Community Service, 1591 Bell Richard Ave., building 920, hosts an Anger, Stress and Crisis Management class.

The class helps people learn to identify triggers and potential stressors, along with positive methods of coping. The next class is 11 a.m.-noon Oct. 24. If you are interested, call (337) 531-0636/1938.


## Career classes

Fort Polk Army Community Service, 1591 Bell Richard Ave., building 920, hosts the Stars Are Lined Up For Military Spouses For Federal Careers classes.

Class dates are Oct. 4, Nov. 1 and Dec. 6. The


ARMY WELLNESS CENTER

CLASSES




**FUELING FOR HEALTH: THE BASICS OF NUTRITION**

This class is designed to increase the participants' ability to choose well-balanced nutrition for the purposes of preventing disease and improving health. Discussions include fundamental components of nutrition as well as developing improved understanding of national dietary guidelines.




**HEALTHY MEALS IN MINUTES**

This class focuses on meal planning: including tools and strategies to help with preparing healthier meals and addresses challenges faced. Whether you are in the barracks, housing, or a hotel, the goal is to help participants put healthier meals on the table quickly and economically.




**UPPING YOUR METABOLISM**

With the intent of improving individual metabolism, class participants will learn the importance of consistent exercise, healthy nutrition, good sleep, and how each can affect an individual's ability to reach personal goals. This class is typically taken following a client's participation in metabolic analysis but can be adjusted to be taught to groups who haven't had the testing.




**STAYING FIT HOME AND AWAY**

By applying physical activity recommendations, strategies and technology, this class enhances participant confidence and ability to get and stay physically fit when gym access is unavailable or not desired.




**HEALTHY SLEEP HABITS**

This class discusses the importance of sleep and how inadequate sleep can impact overall health and performance. General healthy sleep recommendations and methods and resources for achieving quality sleep will be explored.



**STRESS MANAGEMENT**

Class participants will learn to recognize stress and the negative impact it may have on overall health and wellness. This class focuses on defining stress, assessing personal stress levels, and utilizing effective stress reduction techniques.



**337.531.3055**  
1365 3RD ST., BLDG. 283  
FORT POLK, LOUISIANA 71459

class is 10-11:30 a.m. If you are interested, call (337) 531-6922 to register.

# #FortPolkThingsToDo

**Oct. 1-9:** Red River Revel Arts Festival, Shreveport. The Red River Revel is an annual festival of food, culture, art and music. Check out more than 80 artists specializing in oils, acrylics, sculpture, jewelry, woodwork, glass, metal and more.

There is an entire area for children's activities. This year's festival will be held at Festival Plaza, 101 Crockett St.

<https://redriverrevel.com/>

**Oct. 4-8:** Beauregard Parish Fair, DeRidder. It's time for candy apples, funnel cakes and carnival rides at one of the oldest agricultural fairs in the state.

The fair is held at the Beauregard Parish Fair Grounds, 506 West Dr., and includes a parade, heart racing rides, exhibits, food, live music and entertainment. Admission is \$5 per person.

<https://beauregardparishfair.com/>

**Oct. 5-9:** West Louisiana Forestry Festival, Leesville. Kick off fall at the West La. Forestry Festival, held annually during the first full week of October at the Vernon Parish Fair Grounds.

The festival features rides and shows, food from local service organizations, exhibits and vendors.

<https://www.leesvillela.gov/227/West-Louisiana-Forestry-Festival-Fair>

**Oct. 6-8:** Zwolle Tamale Fiesta, Zwolle. The fiesta offers a tamale making demonstration, tamale eating and judging contests, treasure

hunt, live bands and dancing, arts and crafts and a parade.

The event also features pageants, arm wrestling contests for all ages, a trail ride, Spanish costume contests, carnival rides and food booths, Fiesta Mud Bog Race for trucks and a lot of tamales for sale.

<https://zwolletamalefiesta.com/>

**Oct. 7-9:** Old Schoolhouse Antique Fair, Washington. The Semi-Annual Antique Fair & Yard Sale takes place twice a year at the Old Schoolhouse Antique Mall, a stop for experienced antique shoppers in Louisiana. The show features more than 200 vendors on six acres of land just outside the antique mall.

There will be bargains, barbecue and vintage items galore. The sale takes place from 9 a.m.-5 p.m., each day. The antique mall was built in 1934 and was formerly Washington High School.

Today, every inch of this 40,000 sq. ft., two-story building features antiques, furniture, vintage clothing and primitives. Even the old gym is used to showcase antique items and house the Old Schoolhouse Café, a 50's style diner serving burgers, sandwiches, plate-lunches and more.

<https://oldschoolhouseantiquemall.com/>

**Oct. 13-16:** Cal-Cam Fair, Lake Charles. The Cal-Cam Fair will be celebrating it's 100th Anniversary in October.

The four-day event boasts a host of festival fun including a talent show, bullfight, games,

rides, live music and more.

<https://www.facebook.com/calcamfair/>

**Oct. 22:** Alexandria Zoo — Zoo Boo, Alexandria. Zoo Boo is moving to daytime. Cenla's "wildest" family-friendly Halloween extravaganza is back and bigger than ever.

See all your favorite zoo animals while you explore the trick or treat trail, enjoy kid-friendly activities and games, spooktacular displays, entertainment, photo ops and more. Be sure to dress in your costume and be prepared to have a great time.

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

**Anytime:** Creole Nature Trail, Sulphur. Nicknamed "Louisiana's Outback," the 180-mile Creole Nature Trail All-American Road is a driving trail like no other.

Beginning in Lake Charles and neighboring Sulphur, drivers are taken south through the swamplands where alligators blend in seamlessly with the scenery, and wading shorebirds rest between migratory flights.

The region sits at the confluence of two flyways — the routes birds take between North and South America seasonally — which means that visitors can see a phenomenal display of feathered friends along the trail. Download the Creole Nature Trail smartphone app by searching "Creole" in the App Store or on Google Play.

<https://byways.louisianatravel.com/byway/creole-nature-trail-all-american-road>



# Defense Commissary Agency helps military Families think outside the **box**

By **KATHY MILLEY**  
DeCA Public Affairs Specialist

FORT LEE, Va. — Thinking outside the box, as defined by Merriam-Webster, is to explore creative and unusual ideas, not limited by rules or tradition.

The Defense Commissary Agency’s “Thinking Outside the Box” recipes do just that.

Typically, when choosing recipes to prepare at home, they may be quick and economical but not healthy, or healthy and economical but not quick. DeCA’s “Thinking Outside the Box” recipes deliver on all three attributes.

Deborah Harris, DeCA’s dietitian and health and wellness program manager, holds a master’s degree in public health degree and is a registered dietitian and certified diabetes care and education specialist.

Harris said preparing nutritious food at home does not have to be difficult or expensive.

“These recipes, found on [www.commissaries.com](http://www.commissaries.com), offer meal solutions that are quick, healthy and designed to save you money,” Harris said.

Every two weeks, a new “Thinking Outside the Box” recipe is featured in the commissary sales flyer highlighting specially priced

ingredients. The recipes feature a key nutrient and align with American dietary guidelines.

To make it even easier for customers shopping online, all ingredients for the “Thinking Outside the Box” recipe can be added to their online shopping basket with one click.

“Thinking Outside the Box” recipes are accessible under the Healthy Living tab. The library features quick and easy, dietitian-approved recipes for appetizers, entrees, salads, side dishes and desserts. While choosing your recipes for the week, visit the Healthy Habits and Resources tabs to learn about meal nutrition, stretching your food dollar, using leftovers and setting nutrition goals.

To get started on “Thinking Outside the Box” meal planning, DeCA has prepared a booklet, available for download from their website, which includes tips from a dietitian, a list of substitutions to make recipes more nutritious and some favorite “Thinking Outside the Box” recipes.

“The best way to improve the nutrition quality of your diet is to cook more meals at home, limiting the number of times you eat out allows you to control the nutrition quality of your ingredients and serving size.” Harris said. “Incorporating ‘Thinking Outside the Box’ recipes along with the other dietitian-ap-



proved recipes in a weekly menu plan can have positive effects on your waistline and wallet.”

Don’t forget to try Commissary CLICK-2GO. Building your basket with dietitian-approved recipe ingredients is just a click away.

For more information about “Thinking Outside the Box, visit [www.commissaries.com](http://www.commissaries.com).

# Defense Commissary Agency works to strengthen **economic** security

By **KEVIN L. ROBINSON**  
DeCA Public Affairs Specialist

FORT LEE, Va. — The commissary benefit is a valuable asset for the Department of Defense as it looks to help support service members and their Families who are challenged by the financial impacts of COVID-19, a disrupted supply chain and inflation, said Bill Moore, director and CEO of the Defense Commissary Agency.

Moore said despite all these ongoing global challenges, the commissary is in a perfect position to be a food security resource in DOD’s plan to strengthen economic security for the military community.

“We are a food security resource for our customers, and as such, we are doing everything we can, and more, to get the products they need — at the lowest price possible,” Moore said. “We offer our patrons healthy food cheaper, and that assists them with learning how to eat on a budget.”

DOD’s plan for economic security was front and center in November 2021 when the department unveiled its “Military Leader’s Economic Security Toolkit” on Military OneSource.

The webpage is a central landing spot to help leaders connect service members and their Families with resources they need to help boost their economic readiness.



Fort Polk Commissary

The commissary benefit portion of the economic toolkit is spotlighted on the DeCA website, specifically on its “We’re Stronger Together” page that links military members to the following patron savings and nutritious options:

- Timely sales promotions, as well as specific items highlighted on the biweekly sales flyer
- Everyday Savings program items that feature low prices on popular, core items

Please see **Economic**, page 15



# Economic

Continued from page 19

- Commissary store brands offering private label pricing on quality products
- Rewards cards offering digital coupons
- Healthy and economic recipes and meal plans

DeCA is expanding its efforts to improve access to the commissary benefit. This spring the agency began to offer bulk military unit pick-up or delivery of groceries from commissaries directly to barracks locations to assist troops who cannot make it to dining facilities.

Commissaries are also adjusting hours of operation and using technology to expand access in more convenient ways than ever before — like online shopping and curbside pickup with online payment (available now at all stores).

DeCA is in the middle of an at-home grocery delivery pilot at eight continental U.S. locations, with agency-wide expansion planned soon thereafter.

“If we can’t get the patron to the store, then we’ve got to get the benefit to the patron — that’s what CLICK2GO delivery is really about at our eight pilot locations,” Moore said.

DeCA also wants military members who qualify for special assistance to know their commissary allows them to use those programs in the store. This includes the following benefits:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Basic food items are SNAP eligible. These items do not include alcohol, tobacco, foods that can be eaten in the store, vitamins or medicines, pet foods and nonfood items such as tissue, soap, cosmetics or other household goods.

- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
- Women, Infants, and Children

Each state provides a product list of the items that commissaries can sell as WIC. For active duty troops and Family members stationed abroad, who are WIC recipients Overseas, the DOD-funded program provides a WIC food list and food checks called drafts redeemable in overseas commissaries and NEXMARTs.

Commissaries have also ramped up support of local food banks as the rate of food bank usage has increased. Over an eight-year period, DeCA has donated more than 25 million pounds of edible but unsellable food to local food banks.

Currently, 174 stateside commissaries support 198 food banks designated by DOD to receive donated items certified by food inspectors as being edible but unsellable.

“We are aware the pandemic has put a tremendous strain on food banks that are already pressed to help those who need assistance,” Moore said. “I’m proud that we are connecting with food banks to help where we can.”



ANGIE THORNE/©GUARDIAN



DeCA’s support to food banks is also linked to the annual USDA-sponsored Feds Feed Families campaign that runs June through September this year.

Through Feds Feed Families, commissaries serve as collection points for food and personal hygiene items, with DeCA collecting about 12.2 million pounds over the past 12 years. In 2021 alone, DeCA patrons and employees led DOD contributions by collecting nearly 2.4 million pounds — 66% of the department’s total.

“We want young service members to know that if they are not shopping their commis-

sary, then they are missing out on tremendous savings and spending more on food than they should,” Moore said.

“We have a single purpose to deliver the commissary benefit, improving our military Family quality of life, and we are doing all we can, within our resource constraints, to successfully achieve that objective,” Moore added. “And we are confident that we are significantly saving money for our patrons as they deal with these higher costs of living.”

For more information visit <https://www.commissaries.com>.





# Fort Polk Soldiers found guilty for UCMJ violations

## OSJA

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

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

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

- A staff sergeant assigned to 46th Engineer Battalion received a permanently filed GO-MOR for sexual harassment.
- A specialist assigned to 1st Battalion, 509th Infantry Regiment was separated from the Army with a general discharge for refusing to be vaccinated against COVID-19. A general discharge may result in a loss of benefits and could lead to difficulty obtaining civilian employment.
- A private first class assigned to 2nd Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment received a Field Grade Article 15 for wrongful use of tetrahydrocannabinol. They received a punishment of reduction to E-1, forfeiture of \$916 pay per month for 2 months, suspended for 180 days, 45 days of extra duty, and 45 days of restriction.
- A first lieutenant assigned to 317th Brigade Engineer Battalion was eliminated for misconduct and moral or professional dereliction and derogatory information. They received a characterization of general (under honorable conditions).
- A sergeant assigned to 2nd Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment received a Company Grade Article 15 for failing to report three times. They

received a punishment of seven days extra duty and restriction. Article 15s given to non-commissioned officers are also filed in their AMHRR.

•A private assigned to 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment was separated from the Army with a general discharge for wrongful use of marijuana.

### Child & Youth Services Hourly Care

**CDC 701**  
Ages 6 weeks to 5 years  
8am - 3pm  
For availability call  
337-531-7041

**School Age Center**  
Grades 1st - 6th  
Afternoon  
For availability call  
Call 337-531-2149

More information can be found at  
<https://polk.armymwr.com/programs/school-age-services>

## COMMANDING GENERAL'S GOLF OPEN

**WARRIOR HILLS GOLF COURSE**  
TOURNAMENT STARTS AT 1 PM  
SOCIAL STARTS AFTERWARDS

1ST PLACE TEAM TAKES HOME  
A "GREEN JACKET"

REGISTER AT WARRIOR STORE  
OR CALL 531-337-4661

**OCTOBER 7**

**ENTRY \$50**

\$55 AFTER OCTOBER 5  
INCLUDES: GREEN FEE, HALF CART, AWARDS & DINNER

PROUDLY SPONSORED BY

**BENOIT** **SWB** **Corvias** **K&R** **NSU**

# Check VIN numbers

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

1988	Chevrolet	3500	4195
2011	Dodge	Avenger	1373
2014	Nissan	Altima	6092
2016	Kia	Reo	5808
2008	Ford	Explorer	3754
2001	Volvo	S 40	1073
2007	Acura	RDX Turbo	1092
1995	Chevrolet	Caprice	3876
2008	Chevrolet	1500	0226
2008	Ford	Edge	1971
2017	Nissan	Versa	1496
2008	Saturn	Aura XE	3244
2004	Chevrolet	Trail Blazer	8828
2003	Toyota	Tacoma	7528
2010	Nissan	Altima	6499
2005	Ford	Explorer	4483
2012	Chevrolet	Malibu	1689
2016	Chevrolet	Malibu	5420
2002	Dodge	1500	7497
2006	Ford	F150	6507
2015	Ford	Escape	8502
2004	Infinity	Q35	8469
2012	Kia	Optima	1405
2011	Nissan	Sentra	4417
2009	Honda	Civic	3562
UNK	Baja Warrior	Mini bike	UNK
1997	Dodge	1500	3720
2012	Dodge	Avenger	0247
2016	Jeep	Cherokee	7670
2006	Ford	Focus	5525
2020	Kia	Sorento	5641
2018	Toyota	Corolla	9110
2000	Dodge	Durango	1293
2012	Chevrolet	Malibu	7822
2004	Chevrolet	1500	1742
2008	Mitsubishi	Galant	1159
2013	Dodge	Dart	1997
2015	Kia	Cadenza	1160
2003	Honda	Accord	6673

