

# GUARDIAN



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# Fort Johnson joins forces with area, national teams to fight wildfires

By **CHUCK CANNON**  
Public Affairs Office

FORT JOHNSON, La. — When wildfires broke out across Southwestern Louisiana, it was only natural for firefighters from Fort Johnson’s Directorate of Emergency Services and foresters with the installations Environmental and Natural Resource Management Division to lend their skills and expertise to help battle the blazes.

DES Fire Chief David Kass said it is important Fort Johnson supports its mutual aid partners in protecting life and property.

“We share common interests in protecting military personnel, Families, friends, and coworkers due to the close ties between Fort Johnson and local communities,” Kass said. “With the recent urban interface wildfires threatening Fort Johnson and surrounding areas, we were able to assist as a response multiplier through the highly effective use of our crash rescue firefighting vehicles.”

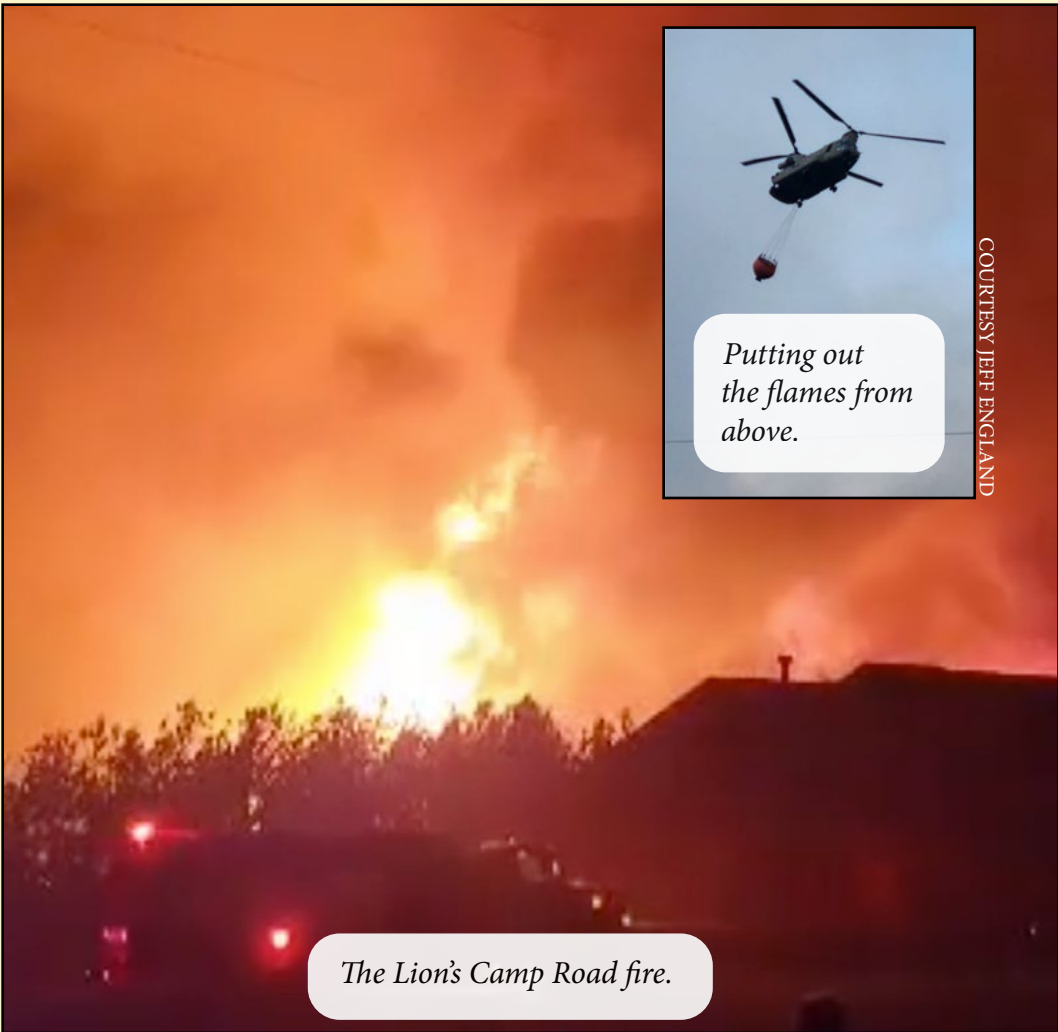
The vehicles allowed firefighters to project large volumes of water while pumping and rolling to protect multiple homes that are threatened by fire.

Severe drought conditions and scorching triple-digit temperatures persisted throughout July and August and led to the fires raging out of control and inching closer to Fort Johnson.

Although the crash rescue firefighting vehicles allowed firefighters to bring greater quantities of water to the fight, more water was needed.

The Louisiana National Guard’s 1-244th Assault Helicopter Battalion and Fort Johnson’s 1st Battalion, 5th Aviation Regiment, responded to the call by scooping water from Toledo Bend Reservoir and Alligator Lake on Fort Johnson in Bambi Buckets and dropping it where fires threatened structures.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Richard



Minton, a standardization pilot with 1/5 Avn, said when the call came there was no program in the unit’s standard operation procedure for conducting Bambi operations or how to use Bambi Buckets.

“We were able to put together a training program within a week,” Minton said. “We borrowed three buckets from the Louisiana National Guard and one from the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade. I trained instructor pilots and Sgt. Tyler Eschete trained crew chiefs.”

Minton said the crews were trained on inspection and operation of the Bambi Buckets, and different fill, dip and drop techniques depending on the type of fire and location.

“Our guys stepped up and devoted a lot of time and effort to support the operations on Fort Johnson and the surrounding area with Bambi operations,” Minton said. “They are now prepared to quickly respond in the future if the need arises.”

While Fort Johnson’s aviators brought water to the firefighting efforts, Soldiers with the 46th Engineer Battalion brought their heavy equipment.

The battalion was supporting Joint Readiness Training Center rotation 23-09 when it received a change of mission to support foresters in expanding 31 kilometers of firebreaks in the Peason Ridge training area. The 573rd Clearance Company was tasked to patrol the Kurthwood and Cold Springs training area for potential flare-ups and the 687th Engineer Construction Company were tasked with fire-break improvement.

“The firebreaks served as a crucial barrier to slow the spread of wildfires, protecting military assets, training areas and civilian properties,” Capt. Jack Scogin, 46th Eng Bn said. “This collaborative effort between 46th Engineer Battalion and

Please see **Wildfire**, page 2



**JRTC and Fort Johnson**  
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Commanding General

**Col. CJ Lopez**

Garrison Commander

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**Cover photo:** Boys from the varsity category of the Vernon Parish Invitational race around Warrior Hills Golf Course Oct. 2. (Photo by PORSHA AUZENNE)



# Wildfire

Continued from page 1

Directorate of Public Works foresters underscores our commitment to the safety and well-being of both our military personnel and the surrounding civilian community.”

In addition to Fort Johnson’s 46th Eng Bn and 1/5th Avn assets, the LANG’s 528th Eng Bn, and air assets from the Oklahoma National Guard joined the fight.

The entire team created more than 150 miles of firebreaks in Sabine, Vernon and Beauregard parishes, and dropped more than 800,000 gallons of water on the fires.

As the fires drew nearer to Fort Johnson, Bruce Martine, Fort Johnson DES Forestry Branch chief, put the word out to other installations that assistance was needed in battling the blazes that were popping up across Southwestern Louisiana. Foresters from Fort Liberty, North Carolina, Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and Fort Stewart, Georgia, answered the call.

The volunteers, who traveled up to 16 hours, bringing bulldozers with them, included the following: Brandon Morgan, James Chaffin and Brian Ball from Fort Liberty; Tyler Mike-ll and Evan Strickland from Fort Stewart; and Luke Sopralski, Sean Connelly and Mike Ma-son from Fort Campbell.

“We were told the guys at Fort Johnson had been running about six weeks straight, working 12-14 hour days,” Sopralski said. “We’ve had experience fighting forest fires in this type of environment, so we volunteered.”

Although the structure of the fires was what the volunteers expected, there were some challenges.

“The most difficult part for us was not knowing the reservations,” Morgan said. “Also, the heat was brutal.”

The volunteers stayed at Fort Johnson for a week. Strickland said they stayed busy the entire time.

“We fought wildfires and addressed re-burns,” Strickland said. “Once you get a fire contained, it’s not necessarily out – it can flare back up, so you’ve got to keep an eye on it.”

Among issues firefighters faced were damaged trees from hurricanes Laura and Delta, and dry pine needles from the area’s multiple pine forests and tree farms that literally added fuel to the fires.

“Pine straw reburns and downed trees from hurricanes make good burning material,” Mike-ll said. “You might think you have the fire out in a particular area, then dry pine needles from trees damaged by the fire fall to the ground and the fire picks up again.”

The volunteers worked with foresters from DPW’s Forestry Branch while at Fort Johnson. Although the work was difficult, the volunteers agreed they were happy to help.

“It was an honor to come down and work with the Fort Johnson crew,” Connelly said.



*Pvt. Zion Finley, 687th Engineer Construction Company, 46th Engineer Battalion, watches the forest on Fort Johnson for any signs of a wildfire.*

PORSHA AUZENNE/GUARDIAN



*Fort Johnson firefighters were acknowledged for their efforts in fighting the wildfires before the 9/11 Ceremony Sept. 11.*

“We will come back anytime they need us. I just hope they get some relief.

Fort Johnson forester Mark Luttrell said they could not have asked for any better group of volunteers than those who came from forts Liberty, Campbell and Stewart.

“It was evident within a short time that those three installations sent their best guys,” Luttrell said. “They brought great equipment, and we are very appreciative of the help they provided.”

While the DES firefighters are well versed in battling structure fires, wildfires pose different problems. DES firefighter Christopher Lewis said there are several ingredients of a wildfire that make it more complex and dangerous than a structure fire.

“For one thing, you are completely at the mercy of mother nature,” Lewis said. “You also must deal with constant wind speed and direction changes, dry weather conditions and topography/fire load. When you have these variables you can’t control, the fire is able to behave like a herd of stampeding cattle, charging unchecked as it pleases.”

To add to the above conditions, Lewis said firefighters must strategize how to get water where it is needed.

The areas most of the fires occurred were rural and water supply was limited — either no hydrants or a limited amount — which requires coordinating a water shuttle operation. All while the fire is changing direction, speed and intensifying.

“The incident commander can’t fight the fire head on as he can in a structure fire because it’s usually a larger fire and moving fast,” Lewis said. “He has to prioritize structures that can be reasonably saved, set up on the structure and apply large amounts of water as the fire passes through the area, keeping his firefighters safe.”

Lewis said the best one can hope for is to contain the fire and allow it to consume the natural fuel load, keeping people and structures safe.

In recognition for their efforts in protecting life and property in the unprecedented wildfires that raged through southwestern Louisiana, Brig. Gen. David W. Gardner presented Commanding General Excellence Awards to 56 firefighters, Soldiers and aviators.

In addition, certificates of appreciation were given to the eight volunteers from different installations who helped Fort Johnson fight to prevent wildfires.



# Fort Johnson pays homage to Soldiers who made ultimate sacrifice

By **ANGIE THORNE**  
Public Affairs Office

FORT JOHNSON, La. — On the morning of Oct. 3, the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Johnson commemorated the 30th anniversary of the actions of Master Sgt. Gary Gordon and Sgt. 1st Class Randall Shughart.

The ceremony was held at the military operations on urbanized terrain site, located in the Fullerton Training Area, named for the sergeants who died in Mogadishu, Somalia, during Operation Restore Hope. The Shughart-Gordon MOUT site was completed in 1996.

These brave men were killed during a fire-fight Oct. 3, 1993, while heroically trying to rescue other Soldiers who had been cut off from their unit and were under enemy fire. Both Soldiers were posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor — the United States highest award for military valor in action and a medal that stands for bravery, courage, sacrifice and integrity.

Col. Matthew J. Hardman, Joint Readiness Training Center's Operations Group commander, welcomed those in attendance on a day he said was profound for his generation.

"The sacrifices made by these two American heroes etch into us an expectation of excellence, professionalism, courage and sacrifice. Operations Group is honored to be the custodians of this hallowed ground. We have been given a sacred trust, not just to memorialize these two men, but to honor their memory through the hard training that we conduct here every single month," Hardman said.

He then introduced the guest speaker, Operations Group Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Hall.

"I feel it is incredibly fitting that a noncommissioned officer deliver the remarks that honor these two great heroes and remind us of our responsibilities to our Army, teammates and nation," Hardman said.

Hall began by praising the two warfighters as they distinguished themselves by actions above and beyond the call of duty that fateful Oct. 3. He told their story.

Shughart and Gordon, while serving as a sniper team providing precision fires from the lead helicopter during an assault at two helicopter crash sites, were subjected to intense automatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenade fire. When they learned ground forces were not immediately available to secure the helicopter crash site, they unhesitatingly volunteered to be inserted to protect four critically wounded Soldiers. They were denied twice. Despite being well aware of the growing number of enemy forces closing in on the site, they asked a third time and were granted permission. They were inserted 100 meters south of the crash site. They each had their sniper rifle and a pistol. They fought their way through a



*Col. Matthew J. Hardman (left), Joint Readiness Training Center Operations Group commander, salutes the images of Sgt. 1st Class Randall Shughart and Master Sgt. Gary Gordon at the 30th anniversary commemoration ceremony held Oct. 3.*



*Operations Group Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Hall was the guest speaker at the 30th anniversary commemoration ceremony held Oct. 3.*



Shughart and Gordon lived and breathed each day with a sense of pride in their country and embraced the privilege of leadership.

"They set aside ego and sought to place the needs of fellow Soldiers first to accomplish the mission at all costs," Hill said. "It's our choices that matter in the end, not wishes, words or promises. Shughart and Gordon chose selfless devotion because they were ultimately more committed to the needs and wishes of their fellow teammates than that of their own."



# Birth month Soldier readiness processing is one-stop shop

By JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES  
BJACH PAO

FORT JOHNSON, La. — Readiness is a priority at the Joint Readiness Training Center but that doesn't stop with rotational units. Soldiers stationed at Fort Johnson remain ready with birth month Soldier readiness processing, otherwise known as SRP. This focal point of medical and personal readiness is a win for units and commanders.

Lt. Col. Patrick Murphy, special projects officer, JRTC and Fort Johnson operations, said SRP is a major subordinate command requirement to ensure all assigned personnel maintain readiness for deployment.

"At JRTC and Fort Johnson we execute this process during service members' birth month to provide predictability and limit spikes in SRP requirements," he said. "The installation is surging resources every month to help commanders ensure their Soldiers and units are mission ready and prepared for deployment. Taking advantage of this opportunity mitigates the risk of not having a fully ready organization if called to deploy on short notice."

Birth month SRP dates are published in an operational order through December 2024. Unit leaders are responsible for allowing their Soldiers the time needed to complete the SRP.

Staci Stipe, supervisory mobilization officer, said birth month SRP allows Soldiers to cycle through and complete all readiness requirements keeping them "green" until their next birthday.

They will complete, amongst others, medical appointments.

"If they don't participate in their birth month SRP, Soldiers may require multiple visits to different providers and at a variety of locations throughout the year," she said. "This may only result in updating one specific requirement on each of those visits, potentially leaving them 'red' for multiple months as each requirement comes due, keeping them away from their unit far longer and more often than participating in a once per year birth month SRP."

Having a monthly SRP also gives installation support agencies predictability for resourcing and staffing.

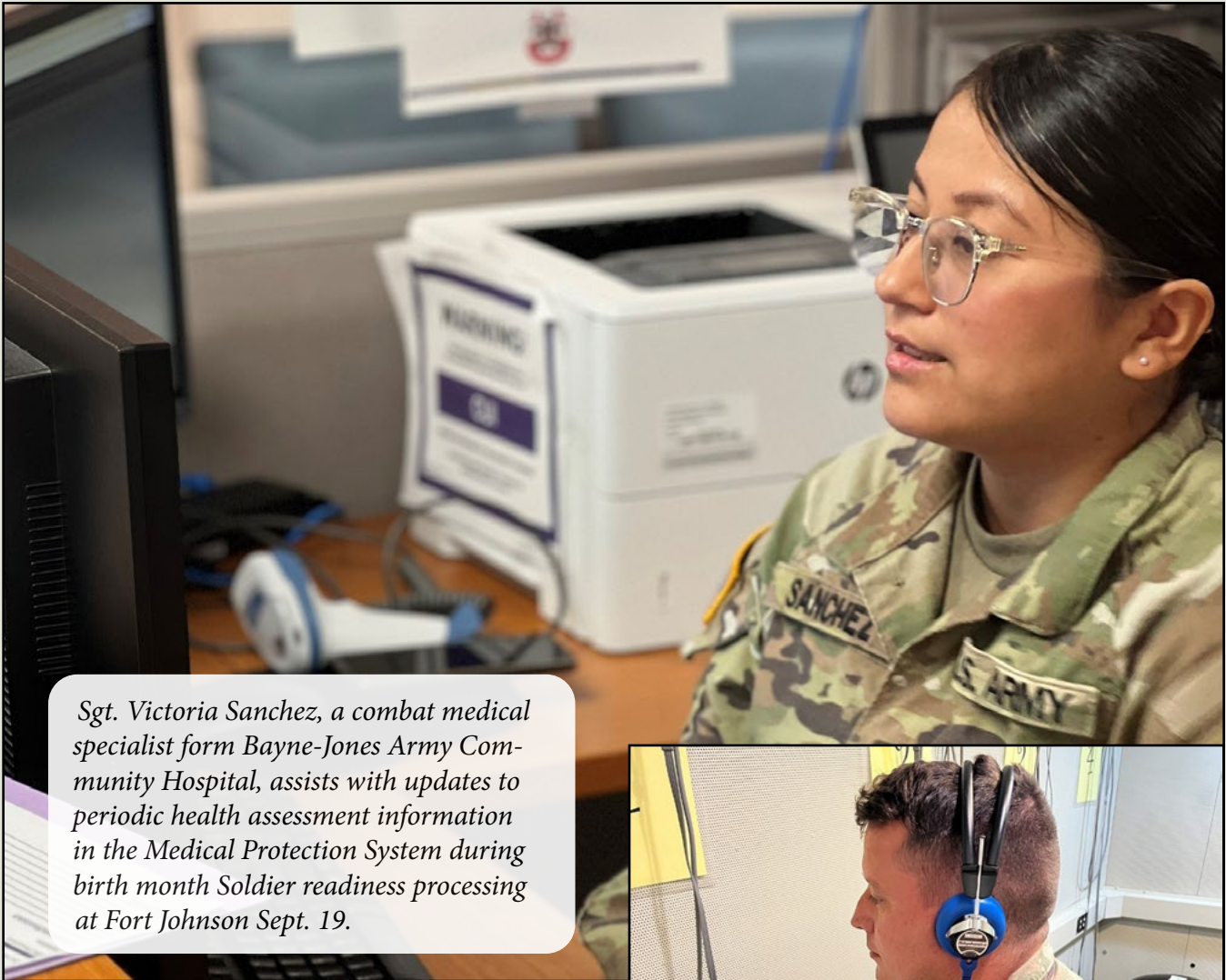
"During SRP, Soldiers can knock out immunization requirements, hearing assessments, lab tests, dental and vision exams, personal health assessments and a visit with a medical provider," Stipe said. "They can also update their DD Form 93, Record of Emergency Data, make changes to their Service Members' Group Life Insurance, create wills, powers of attorney and more."

Maj. Aeri Aumiller, command surgeon liaison officer, said readiness is a priority at JRTC and Fort Johnson and the birth month program will enable Soldiers to maintain their readiness status more easily.

"As far as I know we are the only installation



*Soldiers wait to update their records during birth month Soldier readiness processing at Fort Johnson.*



*Sgt. Victoria Sanchez, a combat medical specialist from Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital, assists with updates to periodic health assessment information in the Medical Protection System during birth month Soldier readiness processing at Fort Johnson Sept. 19.*

doing birth month SRP," she said. "This allows Soldiers to complete the SRP in an efficient manner by doing everything in one building at one time. It also ensures Soldiers are always ready to deploy. This is a win not only for the service members themselves, but for units overall and the entire installation."



*Staff Sgt. Raymond Flick, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, has his annual hearing test during the birth month Soldier readiness processing Sept. 19.*





## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

OCTOBER

## Fort Johnson takes stand against domestic violence

By PORSHA AUZENNE

Public Affairs Office

FORT JOHNSON, La. — As the residents of Fort Johnson illuminate their porches with purple lights in honor of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, which is recognized annually in October, installation leadership took a vow of their own Oct. 2. Fort Johnson leadership and personnel from Army Community Service's Family Advocacy Program gathered with the community to hold a proclamation signing ceremony at Catfish Cove. The signing commemorated Fort Johnson's efforts in joining this year's DVAM campaign — United Against Domestic Abuse — and vowing to take a stand against domestic violence.

"To unite together against domestic violence, we must collectively desensitize this topic in an effort to draw attention to and unmask it," said Maj. Jeremiah Snyder, Fort Johnson's Family life chaplain. "Domestic violence often lingers in the shadows until it escalates and makes the commander's critical incident report. Many will then say, 'They (the victim) didn't display anything that I would recognize in a situation regarding domestic violence ... they hid it so well.' The response to domestic violence is this — there are resources both on-post and off-post at Fort Johnson for all three categories when bringing awareness to it: the victims, the perpetrators and the bystanders."

Brig. Gen. David W. Gardner, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Johnson commanding general, took to the podium next to express the importance in uniting with the community to stop domestic violence. "Together, we must heighten awareness of the signs, make sure people are informed of the resources provided and commit as leaders on a daily basis to ensure the safety of our people," said Gardner. "We want our community to know they can stay anonymous, seek resources and file restricted reports. Please, if you know someone, let's make sure everyone knows about the Domestic Violence Hotline and our Family Advocacy Program. We know our advocates can't do it alone, so we need brave people emotionally willing to help those who are in most need of assistance."

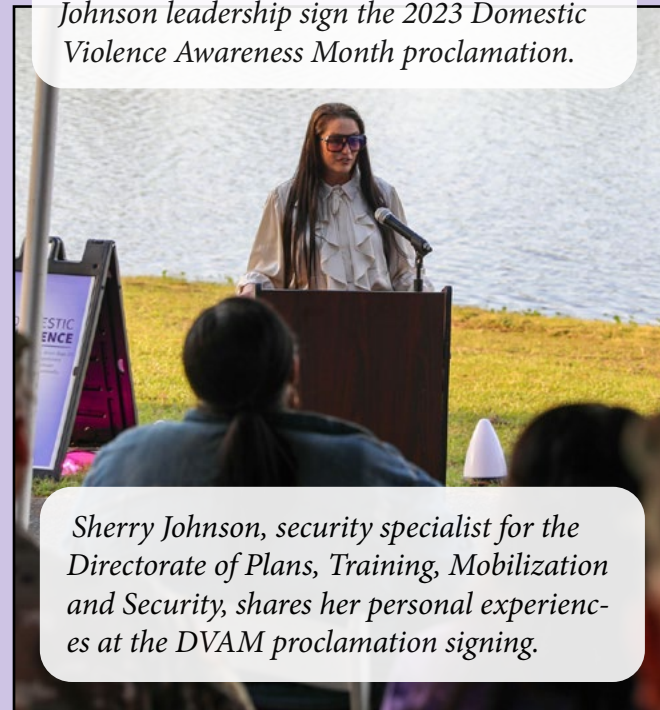
Gardner, along with post Command Sgt. Maj. David P. Hanson, Col. CJ Lopez, Fort Johnson garrison commander and garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Nielson, gathered in front of attendees to each sign the proclamation.

Sherry Johnson, security specialist for the Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security, took to the podium to share a story of her own once the signing concluded.

"Domestic violence can happen to anyone. However, I come here today not as a victim, but as a survivor. I hope my story shared this evening can help somebody," said Johnson. "It can be exhausting for people in these situa-



Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Johnson leadership sign the 2023 Domestic Violence Awareness Month proclamation.



Sherry Johnson, security specialist for the Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security, shares her personal experiences at the DVAM proclamation signing.

tions constantly talking about their experiences. Sometimes they just need a shoulder or a hug. I encourage those in attendance to point others in the right direction if they see or hear something. You can survive and you can take your power back, just like I did."

The 2023 DVAM campaign seeks to encourage the military community to speak up against domestic violence, as well as to share prevention information and support those who are experiencing violence. "This year's campaign theme seeks to educate the community on how to prevent it and sends a poignant message to victims of violence that they are not alone," said Joanna Garcia, one of Fort Johnson's ACS FAP domestic violence victim advocates. Several community events and activities are planned throughout the month to commemorate the month and heighten community awareness. "We encourage the entire Fort Johnson community to come out, meet the FAP staff and join us," said Garcia.

Help is available 24/7, 365 days of the year and can be accessed by calling the local Domestic Abuse Hotline at 337-531-6897. Additional resources can also be found at <https://www.armymwr.com/programs-and-services/personal-assistance/family-advocacy/vap>.



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*Fight Less*

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starting Oct. 31-Nov. 21**

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- Danger signs and how to prevent escalation
- The three keys to successful relationships
- Speaker-listener techniques and so much more

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register, contact:

*ACS Family Advocacy Program  
Building 920, 1591 Bell Richard Ave.  
337-531-0636/7391*







JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES/BLANCH PAO

### Breast Cancer Awareness Month proclamation signing

(From l to r) Christine Childers, Alma Arthur, Col. Alisa Wilma, Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital commander, Angela DeGray, Kevin Quinn, BYRD Regional Hospital CEO, HaTina Allen and Rick Allen, Leesville mayor, sign a Breast Cancer Awareness Month proclamation Sept. 25 at Leesville City Hall.



## Breast Cancer Awareness Run/Walk

# OCT 17<sup>TH</sup> AT 6:30 AM

OPEN TO ALL SERVICE MEMBERS, FAMILIES, AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY



**North Turn-Around at 4<sup>th</sup> Street: 1.5 mi Walk and 4 mi Run**

**South Turn-Around at Viper Gym: 4 mi Run**

**START/FINISH LINE:**  
25 Meter Pool Parking Lot  
7090 Alabama Ave #1454,  
Fort Johnson South, LA 71459




**ROUTES**

- All runners and walkers move north to 4<sup>th</sup> Street along Alabama Ave
- All runners and walkers return south along Georgia Ave
- All runners and walkers cross Finish Line at Pennsylvania

- All runners continue south along Alabama to Viper Gym
- All runners return north along Alabama to Finish Line

**Order your 3/10 MTN Pink Shirt Here**





Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital

# BREAST CANCER AWARENESS

## Luncheon

11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Wednesday, October 18, 2023

at the Warrior Center

ALL SURVIVORS ARE WELCOME

Special Guests


Dr. Furan Akhtar, Hematology Oncology


Dr. Troy Richards, Radiology Oncology

Dr. Phyllis Mason, Chief Medical Officer

Natchitoches Regional Medical Center

For more information and to help us get invitations to survivors in our community please contact HaTina Allen at [hatina.r.allen.civ@health.mil](mailto:hatina.r.allen.civ@health.mil)



*Sponsored by the*  




# Students competing in Veron Parish Invitational race to finish line

Fort Johnson hosted the Vernon Parish Invitational cross country meet Sept. 27 at Warrior Hills Golf Course. Students from Rosepine, Pickering, Anacoco, Leesville and more participated in girls and boys junior varsity and varsity competitions. JRTC and Fort Johnson commanding general Brig. Gen. David W. Gardner and Fort Johnson garrison commander Col. CJ Lopez took part in sounding the air horns to commence the races.



PORSHA AUZENNE/GUARDIAN



# One of North America’s rarest snakes gets boost from military conservation efforts

By JODI PETERSON  
Colorado State University

FORT COLLINS, Co. — Snakes have gotten a bad rap. In literature and tradition, they’re usually villains. Think of the sly serpent in the Garden of Eden; sinister Kaa, the python in Kipling’s “The Jungle Book”; wicked Nagini, pet of dark wizard Voldemort in the Harry Potter series.

While many people react to snakes with fear and revulsion, others are working to change that perception, including staffers at Fort Johnson, an Army installation in Louisiana (formerly known as Fort Polk, its full name is now the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Johnson). The installation is home to one of North America’s rarest snake species, the Louisiana pinesnake, protected under the Endangered Species Act as threatened. Installation staff spend a lot of time educating Soldiers and the public about snakes in general and the imperiled pine snake in particular. They also study the pinesnake and work to improve its habitat and increase its numbers.

One of those staffers, Amy Brennan, is a conservation outreach specialist with Colorado State University’s Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands, which helps the Department of Defense manage natural and cultural resources on its lands.

CEMML has a total of five staff members who help with threatened and endangered species conservation at Fort Johnson. Brennan has been there for about seven years, continuing the installation’s long-standing outreach efforts. She’s assisted by two scaly ambassadors, captive-bred pinesnakes Mario and Luigi. “We talk to at least 3,000 people each year at Soldier briefings, as well as at local schools and camps,” said Brennan. “People see a lady holding a snake, and that helps them get over their fear and benefits their perception of all snakes.”

Brennan also trains the military officers responsible for ensuring Fort Johnson’s compliance with environmental laws. “We ask them to not harass or injure any pine snakes they might see on the installation — just get a picture if possible, note the coordinates, and give us a call.” Those calls go to Brennan or to Chris Melder, supervisory wildlife biologist with CEMML at Fort Johnson since 1999. Melder then usually heads out to take a look, especially when a photo shows a possible Louisiana pinesnake. If he finds one, he tries to capture it to gather data and samples. The installation has been monitoring the species for 30 years, and in all that time its biologists have encountered less than 50 individual snakes.

A 4- to 5-foot-long constrictor marked with brownish-black splotches, the pinesnake is not dangerous to people, only to rodents — especially the Baird’s pocket gopher, which makes up three-quarters of its diet. Most of its



*A Louisiana pinesnake on Fort Johnson.*

COURTESY CHRIS MELDER



*Colorado State University’s Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands staff members Chris Melder (right), Andrhea Massey (center) and Matt Christiansen help kids learn snakes don’t have to be scary.*

COURTESY FORT JOHNSON

time is spent underground, hunting in gopher burrows. While it lays the largest eggs of any North American snake, up to 5 inches long, each clutch has only a few eggs, so its populations increase slowly. It inhabits longleaf pine forests, but today, due to extensive logging, only about 3% remains of the 90 million acres across the South once covered by longleaf pine.

Other threats to the species include snake fungal disease and housing development. The pinesnake occurs in just a handful of counties in Texas and Louisiana; both states protected the species for years before its federal listing in 2018.



*Soldiers at Fort Johnson interact with a captive-bred Louisiana pinesnake.*

COURTESY CHRIS MELDER



# October is National Protect Your Hearing Month

## What Happens to Your Hearing as You Age?

### Will it Happen to Me?

The short answer is more than likely yes – at least to some extent. Most of us gradually lose some of our hearing as we get older. In the U.S., about a third of people ages 65 to 74 have hearing loss. Almost half of people over age 75 have some trouble hearing. But there are things you can do to help preserve as much of your hearing as possible, as long as possible.

- ☐ Get your hearing pro on when exposed to loud noises, i.e., lawn mover, chainsaw, bingo parlors, family reunions, etc.
- ☐ Don't rock full blast with your ear buds at the gym. Sounds good now, not so much later



**It's a noisy world, protect your hearing**

Contact the Garrison Safety Office at 531-SAFE if you have any questions



## Have Ideas?

Fort Johnson's garrison commander recognizes you have great ideas to share and is looking for innovative ideas from Soldiers, Families and Civilians to increase efficiency and enhance garrison processes.

Submit your innovative ideas through the Interactive Customers Evaluation system under Plans, Analysis and Integration Office Garrison Innovation Program by using the QR Code or clicking the link below.



[ice.disa.mil](http://ice.disa.mil)



# JRTC AND FORT JOHNSON 47TH ANNUAL RETIREE APPRECIATION DAY!

## 21 OCTOBER 2023

*Opening Ceremony 9:00AM*

### **Located:**

Consolidated In & Out Processing 1716 3rd Street,  
BLDG 250 | Fort Johnson, LA. 71459

### **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 3RD Street. BLDG 285 will be offering Information Booths, Health Screenings, Immunizations as well as Pharmacy and Dental Screening Services.

## COME OUT AND SEE WHAT WE HAVE FOR YOU!

Sponsored by your  
Fort Johnson Retired Soldier Council





# SOLDIER FOR LIFE GOLF TOURNAMENT

JRTC and Fort Johnson's Retired Soldier Council  
Invites all DOD ID Card Holders on

**21 OCTOBER 2023**

**BEGINS AT:**  
**10:00 AM**

**REGISTER TODAY:**  
**(337) 531-4661**  
**Warrior Hills Golf Course**



1321 Corps Road  
Fort Johnson, LA. 71459

***4 Person  
Team Scramble  
and prizes galore!***

This tournament is part of the 47th Annual Retiree Appreciation Day Activities and sponsored by the Retired Soldier Council.



## ARMY FAMILY WEB PORTAL

FORT JOHNSON, La. — Thanks to continuing advancements in technology, the Army is offering a new way for Soldiers and Families to communicate.

A Soldier and Family Readiness Group acts as an extension of the unit command in providing official and accurate command information to Soldiers and their Families.

The Army has taken that concept and created a virtual SFRG, or vSFRG. It's a tool commanders can use to securely communicate with their SFRG membership regardless of a unit's mission or deployment status — anytime (24/7) and from anywhere in the world.

A unit can customize their vSFRG site and control the content on their page. It's another way commanders can connect with their Soldiers and Families, provide access to on- and off-post resources and offer a network of support.

The vSFRG system is a component of the Army Family Web Portal collection of systems, which support the mission of Army Community Service.

The vSFRG system is made up of many separate virtual groups that are created for separate battalions or units. These individual groups are known as vSFRGs and their contents can be accessed only by members of that specific SFRG.

The first step to building a vSFRG is creating an account. AFWP accounts utilize a single sign-on feature that permits users to log into different AFWP systems with the same email address and password combination. This helps reduce the overall quantity of usernames and passwords to maintain between each AFWP web application, without any compromise of security.

Other AFWP web applications can be accessed using the menu button (indicated by three horizontal dashes) in the top left of any AFWP system page. Additional authorization requirements may be required to access these applications.

**Tip:** If you have ever created an AFWP Account for a different AFWP system, you can log in to the vSFRG system using the same credentials as those systems.

### Create an AFWP Account

1. Select register in the upper right corner of the vSFRG home page.

2. Enter the required information into the following data fields:

- Email, password and confirm password

Note: AFWP account passwords are case-sensitive and require a minimum of 15 characters that include the following:

- Two uppercase letters, Two lowercase letters, Two numbers, and Two special characters (!#\$%^@)

3. Select register.

4. An automated email will be sent to the email that was entered in step two with a link and a token number.

5. Select the link in the email to verify the account.

6. On the page that appears, enter the email address and the token number provided in the automated email.

7. Select Verify Email.

AFWP Accounts are managed from a single location called the AFWP Account Management page. All user types can access this page via the upper-right corner of any AFWP system or directly to the URL (<https://account.army-familywebportal.com/>). Users will access this page to update their associated email address, password, or connect a common access card to their profile to use to log in to AFWP systems.

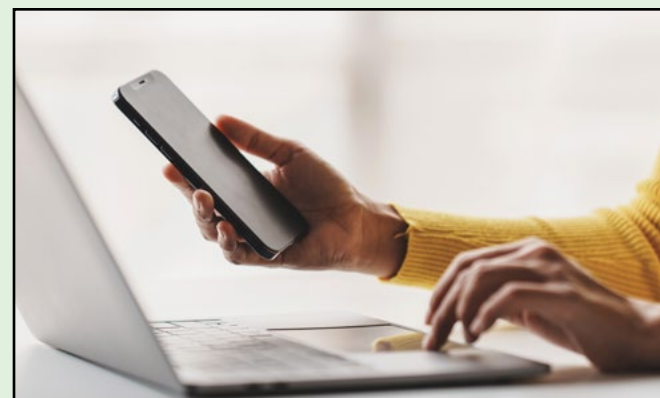
Once the account has been created vSFRGs can post high priority updates, announcements, events and more.

Each SFRG will have access to the same set of content management features, which allows authorized users to create posts, add media content and even create pages within their specific unit's vSFRG.

Content that is created using the vSFRG system content management tools will be posted to the Unit Wall for that unit.

Any user who is authorized to access and view the contents of a specific unit's vSFRG will be able to see the following categories of information within that group:

- About — Basic information about the SFRG



and its affiliated unit including the level, component and location, as well as information about its SFRG administrator and commander.

- Unit Wall — Location where content created by users through the content management tools is stored, including multimedia posts, featured resources and more.

Regular users will only be able to access and view these contents and cannot create them.

- Announcements — Pertinent or timely announcement information specific to the currently selected SFRG. These will also appear in the announcements section of the vSFRG system dashboard.

- Events — Information about upcoming events related to the current SFRG, including the date and location of the listed events when available, will appear in the events section of the vSFRG system Dashboard.

For more information, training or to create an account, visit <https://www.armyfamily-webportal.com/content/virtual-soldier-family-readiness-group-vsfrg>







# FALL HERITAGE REUNION

# 2023

**Saturday, October 28th, 2023**

## Main Post Chapel

Fort Johnson, Louisiana

**Command Welcome Ceremony • 9:30am**

**Lunch • 11:00am**

**Self-Guided Tours • 12:00pm-7:00pm**

**Heritage Family Booths • Music**

**Yard Games • Map Room • Silent Auction**

**Fort Johnson and Peason Ridge  
Will be Accessible Starting at 11:00am for Self-Guided Tours!**



# CYBER SECURITY

## AWARENESS MONTH



### **DO NOT...**

- Leave classified systems, classified information or controlled unclassified information unattended
- Leave common access cards unattended nor with someone who is not the owner
- Share CAC and Secret Internet Protocol Router Network token pins
- Leave General Services Administration containers open and unsecured
- Leave your computer unlocked and unattended
- Place CUI and classified material in recycling bins or trash cans

### **DO...**

- Review and understand your SIPR standard operation procedure
- Properly mark and label equipment and media
- Perform end of day checks: Complete standard forms 701 & 702, arm the Integrated Commercial Intrusion Detection System and ensure classified area is secure
- Complete annual Cyber Awareness and Derivative Classification training
- Exercise the clean desk policy: When not in use, store media in appropriate security container
- Shred all unneeded CUI and classified information
- Store communications security central index keys in appropriate security container



JOINT READINESS  
TRAINING CENTER

**FORT  
JOHNSON**





# *Community Gift-Wrapping Fundraiser 2023*

**The Fort Johnson Exchange Community Gift-Wrapping Fundraiser is Nov. 10-Dec. 24 in the Fort Johnson Main Exchange mall. Participation is open to all registered volunteer organizations and Soldier Family Readiness Groups directly affiliated with Fort Johnson.**

The Exchange will provide the venue and supplies to wrap items for donation during allotted time slots. Slots will be determined by random drawings during the mandatory meeting stated below. Organizations may also choose to hold a by-donation-only bake sale during their Gift-Wrapping Fundraiser slots.

Please note: Participating organizations **DO NOT** need to complete an individual legal review in order to participate. A standing legal review is in place for this annual event. **THEREFORE, ADHERENCE TO ALL FUNDRAISER REGULATIONS IS MANDATORY.** The gift-wrapping portion of this fundraiser is required during participation, though the bake sale is not. Organizations are not authorized to conduct a bake sale without participating in the Gift-Wrapping Fundraiser, nor may organizations offer any goods other than baked goods for donation in conjunction with their Gift-Wrapping Fundraiser.

**A MANDATORY MEETING** for all participating organizations will be held Oct. 25 from 9 a.m.–noon at Fort Johnson Army Community Service, Building 920 at 1591 Bell Richard Ave. During this time, fundraiser time slots will be determined by a random drawing, and rules and regulations for this fundraiser will be addressed.

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**TO REGISTER YOUR ORGANIZATION FOR THIS FUNDRAISER PLEASE CONTACT:**

Sandra Stephens at the Fort Johnson Exchange Administrative Office

**337-537-1792 ext.112 / [stephenssl@aafes.com](mailto:stephenssl@aafes.com)**

**IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER**

**DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION:**

Oct. 20


**MANDATORY INFO/TIME SLOT DRAWING MEETING:**

Oct. 25 from 9 a.m.–noon at ACS, Building 920

1591 Bell Richard Ave

**DATES OF FUNDRAISER:**

Nov. 10–Dec. 24





# EXTENDED GYM HOURS

Starting **Oct. 1, 2023**, Wheelock Fitness Center and Home of Heroes Fitness Center will be updating their hours to the following:

## Wheelock Fitness Center

### Current hours:

Monday - Friday: 6 a.m.-9 p.m.  
Weekends & Holidays: 9 a.m.-7 p.m.

### New hours effective Oct. 1:

Monday - Friday: 5 a.m.-9 p.m.  
Weekends & Holidays: No change

## Home of Heroes Fitness Center

### Current hours:

Monday - Friday: 6 a.m.-9 a.m., 3 p.m.-7 p.m.  
Saturday: 9 a.m.-1 p.m.  
Sundays & Holidays: Closed

### New hours effective Oct. 1:

Monday - Friday: 6 a.m.-8 p.m.  
Saturdays, Sundays & Holidays: No change







## Credit union grand opening

Fort Johnson representatives, members of the Fort Johnson and Leesville communities and credit union members gather at the new location of Barksdale Federal Credit Union, 7640 Colorado Avenue, building 751, for its grand opening Sept. 29.



# SUNDAY Brunch

Warrior Center  
930AM - 3PM  
October 15




(337) 531-7668  
Corps Rd, BLDG 352

## Spooky Swim Lessons

Calling all the little Monsters to come to the 50m Pool for some spooky swim fun on October 28th from 1100-1200!

Ages 3-12  
\$5 per child

25 slots available, first come first served!  
Spots will not be reserved until payment is made

For more information or questions email [taylorj.newman.naf@army.mil](mailto:taylorj.newman.naf@army.mil) or call (337) 531-1988








# Louisiana Hayride








Enjoying Beauregard Parish Fair parade


Brig. Gen. David W. Gardner (left), Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Johnson commanding general, and post Command Sgt. Maj. David P. Hanson, wave at the crowd as they ride on a float in the Beauregard Parish Fair Oct. 3. They rode on with veterans, many of them trained at Tigerland.

# LEMON LOT



15\$ per Month

Across from Catfish Cove





Family Advocacy Program & Exceptional Family Member Program

## CHALK about Family

Halloween Family Fun Night!



October 13, 2023  
5:30-7:30PM



1591 Bell Richard Ave  
Bldg. 920,  
Fort Johnson, LA

**COSTUMES ENCOURAGED**  
Join us for a chalk family contest, crafts, EFMP chill zone and snacks!



Check VIN numbers

The Directorate of Emergency Services Traffic Division will release the following vehicles to MWR 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 Johnson Police Traffic Division at 337-531-1806, 6675 or 2675.

1994	Ford	F250	3432
1997	Dodge	1500	3720
2003	Nissan	Maxima	6157
2014	Chevrolet	Cruze	0491
2002	Pontiac	Grand Prix	1285
1995	Dodge	1500	8287
2016	Jeep	Patriot	9883
2005	Buick	LaSaber	7593
2005	Lincoln	LS	5385
2001	GMC	Yukon	6444
2010	Hyundai	Genesis	5409
2005	Long	Boat trailer	5409
Unknown	Unknown	Utility trailer	N/A
2007	Mitsubishi	Galant	9674



# FORT JOHNSON VIRTUAL FALL HYBRID HIRING AND EDUCATION EVENT



Free event for transitioning service members, spouses, veterans, retirees and the local community.

## FROM NOW UNTIL OCT. 21

### Positions include:

- Energy •Finance •Health and Science
- Architecture •Hospitality and Tourism
- Information Tech •Manufacturing •Science, Tech
- Engineering and Math •Telecommunication
- Transportation, Distribution and Logistics

### Please contact

Fort Johnson Transition Assistance Program  
to register or for more information.

☎ 337-531-1591

✉ [usarmy.johnson.id-readiness.mesg.tap@army.mil](mailto:usarmy.johnson.id-readiness.mesg.tap@army.mil)



**Don't miss out. Register now!**



FORT  
JOHNSON



TRANSITION  
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



## Red Ribbon Week focuses on drug prevention

By **AMELIA CONNOR**  
Army Substance Abuse Program

FORT JOHNSON — The Red Ribbon Campaign was started in response to drug traffickers in Mexico City murdering Drug Enforcement Administration agent Kiki Camarena in 1985.

This started the tradition of wearing/displaying red ribbons as a symbol of intolerance towards drug use. Red Ribbon Week is recognized each year from Oct. 23-31 and is the oldest and largest drug prevention program in the nation.

Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Johnson will recognize Red Ribbon Week Oct. 23-27. Throughout the week, parents are encouraged to have age-appropriate conversations with their children about the risks and consequences of substance use. Leaders are encouraged to engage their teams about the negative impacts on the overall readiness

of an individual and therefore the readiness of the whole team/unit. Each member of the Fort Johnson community is encouraged to do their part to ensure the community can encompass this year's Red Ribbon theme of "Be Kind to Your Mind, Live Drug Free."

Fort Johnson's Army Substance Abuse Pro-

gram asks those who can wear red ribbons throughout the week in support of the campaign and wear red and post selfies with #RedRibbonFJLA on Oct. 27. For more details see the Army Substance Abuse Program — JRTC & Fort Johnson Facebook page or call 337-531-2031.





*Fort Johnson Army Substance  
Abuse Program  
presents*

**OCT. 21-31**

# **RED RIBBON WEEK**

*Be kind to your mind,  
live drug free.*



*What's happening:*

**Oct. 16**

*Local radio spots*

**Oct. 23**

*10:15 a.m. proclamation signing  
at Directorate of Human Resources  
(7435 California Ave., Building 4275)*

**Oct. 23-27**

*Wear red ribbon lapel pins*

**Oct. 27**

*Wear red and post selfies with  
#RedRibbonFJLA*

*For more information call 337-531-2031*





# NATIONAL FIRE PREVENTION WEEK



Fort Johnson Department of Emergency Services firefighters kick off Fire Prevention Week with parades at North Elementary and Parkway Elementary schools.





## Soldier scary movie nights

The Home of Heroes Recreation Center will host a scary movie night every Tuesday throughout the month of October. Starting at 6 p.m., Soldiers can stop by for refreshments and a showing of their favorite Halloween-themed movies!

For more information call 337-531-5870.

## Ladies day

Every third Sunday of the month, ladies get half off range fees at the Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Recreational Shooting Range.

For more information please call (337) 531-7552.

## Big buck competition

Ready, aim, fire! The Fort Johnson Shooting Range is hosting a big buck shooting competition Oct. 1-Jan. 31. Categories will include age ranges 5-10 years, 11-14 years, 15-17 years and 18+. One winner will be selected from each category. Hunters will measure their buck at one of three locations and submit their photos through the link below.

For more information please call 337-353-0528.

<https://johnson.armymwr.com/happenings/big-buck-competition>

## 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 nonmembers. The event takes place at the Warrior Hills Golf Course. The next Nine, Wine and Dine is Oct. 10.

For more information call 337-531-4661.

## Wednesday night scramble

The Warrior Hills Golf Course hosts a nine hole scramble each Wednesday. The cost is \$20 for members and \$25 for nonmembers. The next scramble is Oct. 11 from 5-6 p.m.

For more information call 337-531-4661.

<https://johnson.armymwr.com/happenings/wednesday-night-scramble>

## Halloween trivia

How well do you know Halloween? Come out for a freaky fun time as the Anvil Bar hosts

their very own Halloween trivia night Oct. 14 at 7 p.m. This event is 18+.

## Spooky swim lessons

Calling all the little monsters ages 3 to 12 years old! Come to the 50m Pool for some spooky swimming fun Oct. 28 from 11 a.m.-noon. Slots are available and will be a first come, first served basis. Cost is \$5 per child.

For more information please call 337-531-1988.

## Haunted house and carnival

Child and Youth Services is hosting a haunted two-day event that'll have you screaming! All are invited to this haunted house and carnival double feature Oct. 31 at the Youth Gym (Building 2070). Events start at 6 p.m. and cost \$5 per person.

An additional haunted house tour will also take place Oct. 28 from 6-9 p.m.

## Trick 'r treat trail, movie night

MWR invites the Fort Johnson community out for trick 'r treating at Headquarters Field. Starting at 5 p.m. parents and youth alike can wear their best costumes and enjoy candy followed by popcorn and a Halloween-themed movie for the whole family.

Come ... if you dare!

# FORT JOHNSON THINGS TO DO

## Oct. 13-15: Louisiana Gumbo Festival Thibodaux, La.

Think you know gumbo? Want to sample truly authentic Cajun gumbo? Then head on over to the "Gumbo Capitol of Louisiana" for the Louisiana Gumbo Festival! Volunteers cook nearly 500 gallons of fresh from scratch chicken, seafood and sausage gumbo during the festival weekend. The festival features Cajun food, music, auction, demonstrations and much more. This event was previously named one of the Top 20 Events in the Southeast by the Southeast Tourism Society and proceeds support the local Chackbay Volunteer Fire Department.

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

## Oct. 13-15: St. Augustine Creole Festival Natchitoches, La.

Come down to St. Augustine in Cane River Country to Enjoy delicious creole cuisine, music, games and fun for the whole family! Located five minutes away from the Historic Melrose.

<https://www.natchitochesla.gov/event/san-augustine-creole-festival/>

## Oct. 13-31: Gothic Jail After Dark Haunted Attraction

DeRidder, La.

October features a haunted house like none other this Halloween season. Experience the haunting and historic Gothic Jail, where para-

normal activity runs rampant and the walls hold secrets of a brutal murder, suicides and a double hanging. Located at 205 West 1st St.

## Oct. 14: Melrose Fall Festival

Melrose, La.

Melrose Fall Festival will host over 50 vendors who will be selling handcrafted items. You'll find original artwork, candles, jams, jewelry, seasonal home décor, and more – it's the perfect way to kick start your holiday shopping! There will also be food vendors, an arts and crafts table for kids, photo backdrop, and home tours. (Tours not included in price of admission).

<http://www.melroseplantation.org/festivals>

## Oct. 14: Chuck Fest

Lake Charles, La.

Chuck Fest will be held in Downtown Lake Charles and will feature a full lineup of everything Louisiana. From bands to beers and more, Chuck Fest will be a celebration of Louisiana culture.

<https://chuckfest.org/>

## Oct. 20-22: Rougarou Fest

Houma, La.

The Rougarou Fest is a free family-friendly festival with a spooky flair that celebrates the rich folklore that exists along the bayous of Southeast Louisiana. It showcases live music, cultural activities, children's activities, Ca-

jun food, the Krewe Ga Rou parade and much more. All proceeds go to the South Louisiana Wetlands Discovery Center, a nonprofit organization that is revolutionizing how we think, teach and learn about Louisiana's disappearing coast.

<https://rougaroufest.org/>

## Oct. 21: Ragley Heritage & Timber Festival

Ragley, La.

Experience the lore and traditions as you visit of the Ragley Heritage and Timber Festival with presentations from local pioneers of the area. Learn the history of the formation of the town and its founding families. The festival includes arts and crafts, food booths and live music featuring local bluegrass bands. The festival takes place at 6715 Hwy 12.

For more information call 337-725-3324.

## Oct. 26-Nov. 12: The State Fair of Louisiana Shreveport, La.

The State Fair of Louisiana will be held at the State Fairgrounds in Shreveport. Gates open at 10 a.m. and admission is \$12 and up. The State Fair features unique fair foods, live music, Louisiana's largest display of carnival rides, free shows and attractions.

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

