

**THE JRTC AND FORT POLK**

# **GUARDIAN**

**Tuesday Oct. 11, 2022 Vol. 49, No. 19**



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## QUALITY OF LIFE LINES OF EFFORT



HEALTH CARE



CHILD CARE



SPOUSE



HOUSING



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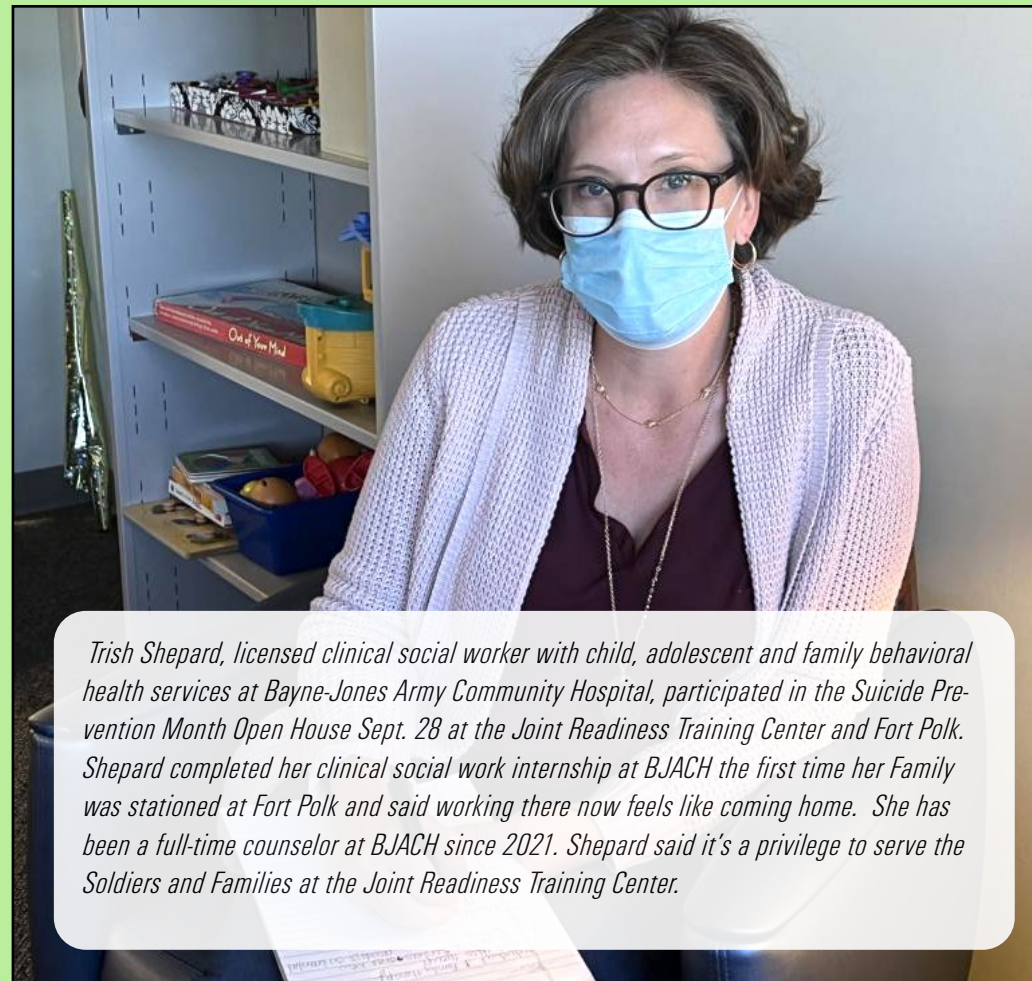
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All editorial content of the Guardian is prepared, edited, provided and approved by the Public Affairs Office, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.

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

ANGIE THORNE/ GUARDIAN



*Trish Shepard, licensed clinical social worker with child, adolescent and family behavioral health services at Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital, participated in the Suicide Prevention Month Open House Sept. 28 at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk. Shepard completed her clinical social work internship at BJACH the first time her Family was stationed at Fort Polk and said working there now feels like coming home. She has been a full-time counselor at BJACH since 2021. Shepard said it's a privilege to serve the Soldiers and Families at the Joint Readiness Training Center.*

## Suicide Awareness Open House highlights tools to help community

By **MELISSA BOX**  
BJACH Public Affairs

FORT POLK, La. — The Behavioral Health Department at Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital and the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, embedded behavioral health clinic hosted an open house Sept. 28 at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.

The event was organized by Lt. Col. Alexander Ragan, installation director for psychological health, in support of Suicide Prevention Month. The intent was to connect command teams with behavioral health staff and give them the opportunity to visit the clinics where Soldiers and Families receive care.

"Leadership plays a major role when it comes to the behavioral health needs of Soldiers and their Families," said Ragan. "It is important they have the tools to recognize warning signs early and to help their Soldiers receive the support they need to prevent negative outcomes."

There are several warning signs that could lead to mental health concerns in the future.

"It is imperative to stay connected to your Soldiers," Ragan said. "Things like financial problems or relationship concerns, if left unresolved, could cause sleep problems, moodiness, anxiousness and loss of interest in things they usually enjoy," Ragan said.

Patricia Shepard, licensed clinical social worker, specializes in working with children over the age of four and adult military dependents.

Shepard said she enjoys the work she does and offers counseling and classes to help Families struggling with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress and more. She is also starting a post-partum depression group and feels this will be beneficial for new parents.

"When a Soldier knows their Family members are taken care of, they are able to focus and serve without disruptions," Shepard said.

The Fort Polk Army Wellness Center also participated in the event.

Pamela Richard, project lead and director for the center, was on site to answer questions concerning resources offered at AWC.

"It is important to take care of the entire person, mind, body and spirit, to make sure we are functioning at our best," said Richard.

Richard said a holistic approach when dealing with physical and mental health issues brings about better outcomes.

"Problems usually stem from within and tend to project outward toward others. By focusing inward

Please see **Awareness**, page 2



**Cover photo:** The Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Mud Run took place Sept. 24. Members of the Fort Polk community enjoyed the fun and challenges of the muddy obstacle course. (Photo Angie Thorne/Guardian)





### Breast Cancer Awareness proclamation signing

A Breast Cancer Awareness Proclamation signing took place at the Leesville City Council Meeting held Sept. 26. Kevin Quinn, CEO, Byrd Regional Hospital (left), Col. Aristotle Vaseliades, BJACH commander (middle), and Rick Allen, Leesville mayor, signed the proclamation signifying unity within the community and declared October Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

# Awareness

Continued from page 1

we can help people get right with themselves," Richard said. "It is important to exercise and strengthen the body, but it is just as important to exercise and strengthen the mind."

Richard said the AWC can be a missing link for anyone (Soldiers, retirees, Family members or civilian employees) trying to better themselves.

Chaplains are another resource offering 100 percent confidential counseling.

Capt. James Walker, BJACH chaplain, offers daily affirmations to the hospital staff.

Walker shared a quote by Bessel Van Der Kolk, author of "The Body Keeps Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma."

"If you cry out for help and people come to help you, you'll likely not get traumatized. Feeling like you're, a member of the human race is terribly important," Kolk said.

Walker said being able to feel safe with other people is probably the single most important aspect of mental health.

"Meaningful and rewarding relationships depend on safe connections," Walker said.

"Think about that when you ask for help or when others ask you for help."

Ragan plans on hosting additional behavioral health events throughout the year to build community awareness. Virtual tours and videos highlighting programs and services available are some of what's in store.


"We need to pay attention to mental health awareness daily. Paying attention to how we are feeling, thinking and behaving gives us insight into our mental health status," Ragan said. "When you're mentally healthy, your feelings, actions and relationships are in a good place."

Ragan said when you are mentally aware you can relax, work and enjoy your downtime to the fullest extent.

"This doesn't mean that life is always perfect," Ragan said, "but when you are faced with uncertain obstacles in life, you are better equipped to cope with them."


For more information visit <https://bayne-jones.tricare.mil/Health-Services/Mental-Health-Substance-Abuse/Behavioral-Health>.

## GETTING THE FLU VACCINE




**WHO SHOULD GET VACCINATED AGAINST INFLUENZA?**

- SEASONAL INFLUENZA VACCINE IS RECOMMENDED FOR EVERYONE 6 MONTHS OF AGE AND OLDER WITH RARE EXCEPTION.
- PEOPLE AT HIGH RISK FOR INFLUENZA COMPLICATIONS INCLUDE:
  - INFANTS.
  - YOUNG CHILDREN.
  - PREGNANT WOMEN.
  - ADULTS AGE 65 AND OVER.
  - NURSING HOME OR LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY RESIDENTS.
  - THOSE WITH UNDERLYING HEALTH CONDITIONS.



TRICARE.mil/flu



**Got News?**  
Call the  
**Guardian**  
at 531-7203



# Take up **fight** against breast cancer in October, all year

By Spc. KELLY ACEVEDO  
Public Affairs Office

FORT POLK, La. — During October, communities and resource centers across the country come together to bring awareness to the ongoing fight against breast cancer. Though a cure against the disease has not been discovered, there are still victories to celebrate. Due to research and clinical trials, information on the disease has influenced a better understanding of what can lead toward a cure. Support offered by centers and organizations has become more common, allowing people with a diagnosis to have a more normal and comfortable lifestyle.

Breast cancer is caused by the growth of abnormal cells in breast tissue. Out of the different types of cancers, breast cancer is the second most common amongst women in United States. Although most common in women, men can be diagnosed as well.

According to the Living Beyond Breast Cancer website — <https://www.lbbc.org/> — approximately one in eight women and one in 833 men in the U.S. will develop invasive breast cancer. As of 2020, there were 2.26 million global cases of breast cancer, making it the most commonly diagnosed cancer in the world. Of those diagnosed, 685,000 have died.

There are two main types of breast cancer, invasive and noninvasive. Invasive cancer has grown through the lining of a milk duct or lobule and into the surrounding breast tissue. Noninvasive cancer has not spread past milk ducts or lobules. With these two types of cancers comes the need for more testing to identify the characteristics and appropriate treatment needed.

There are extensive routes to take when it comes to treatment. Different organizations or health centers may offer more than one type of treatment to accommodate patients. Different treatments may include surgery, breast reconstruction, chemotherapy, immunotherapy, targeted therapy, wellness and nutrition, follow-up care, hormonal therapy and clinical trials.

Social platforms have made information on the disease easily accessible to everyone. The National Breast Cancer Foundation can be found on Instagram @NBCF <https://www.instagram.com/NBCF>.

The spread of awareness advocates the importance of getting properly tested annually. Many platforms teach self-exams to conduct at home. This is to mitigate signs and prevent metastatic cancer. The sooner someone can get the appropriate help/treatment, the better. Signs to look for amid a self-exam are: lumps, nipple discharge, dimpling on the breasts, swelling, nipple retraction, or inversion, redness or signs of infection or fever, changes to skin texture, lymph node changes and breast



## Symptoms can include:

- A lump or thickening in or near the breast or in the underarm area
- A change in the size or shape of the breast
- Dimpling or puckering in the skin of the breast
- A nipple turned inward into the breast
- Discharge (fluid) from the nipple
- Scaly, red, or swollen skin on the breast, nipple, or areola

or nipple pain.

A positive diagnosis can be scary, but it is important to remember that no one is alone in this fight. Whether living with a diagnosis or affected by the diagnosis of a loved one, there are resources available. Living Beyond Breast Cancer provides a “Breast Cancer Helpline” for anyone to speak to a trained volunteer who has been diagnosed. “The Breast Cancer Helpline provides compassionate conversations with someone who understands. In addition to listening to you and discussing your feelings and concerns, our volunteers can direct you to resources such as support groups, wigs and

financial help,” the website states. For more information, visit <https://www.lbbc.org/community/breast-cancer-helpline>.

Although Breast Cancer awareness month is every October, it is important to stay educated and educate others on preventative medicine, support groups and hotlines, testing and treatment. The fight against breast cancer is not a monthly obligation, but one that is year round. For more information on how you can get involved or general information, visit About Breast Cancer — National Breast Cancer Foundation at <https://www.nationalbreastcancer.org/about-breast-cancer/>.



# *Semi-Annual Joint Readiness Training Center & Fort Polk Quality of Life Conference #2*

## *JRTC & Fort Polk Quality of Life Initiatives*



HOUSING



HEALTH CARE



CHILD CARE



SPOUSE  
EMPLOYMENT



PCS MOVES

### *Commanding General's Quality of Life Priorities:*

*Education Housing Child Care Health Care Army Spouse Employment MWR-Recreation*

*Care for Our People*

*Build Readiness*

*Succeed in our JRTC & Fort Polk Campaigns*

*Commanding General's Priorities*

*October 27<sup>th</sup> from 1330-1630  
at the Warrior Center  
1321 Corps Road*

### **Schedule of Events**

- ❖ Welcome — 1:30-1:40 p.m.
- ❖ QoL Progress Overview / Recap Last Conference — 1:40-2:00 p.m.
- ❖ MWR Events — 2:00-2:30 p.m.
- ❖ AAFES — 2:30-3:00 p.m.
- ❖ BREAK — 3:00-3:15 p.m.
- ❖ Fort Polk Infrastructure — 3:15-3:45 p.m.
- ❖ Housing / IHG / Barracks — 3:45-4:15 p.m.
- ❖ Feedback / Closing Remarks / Survey — 4:15-4:30 p.m.

*This is an event for Soldiers, Civilians, Retirees and Family Members to participate in, and provide feedback or suggestions on the state of Quality of Life on JRTC & Fort Polk.*

*Seating is limited. RSVP to [Kayla.L.Moore16.civ@army.mil](mailto:Kayla.L.Moore16.civ@army.mil) NLT Oct. 14<sup>th</sup>*











ANGIE THORNE/ eGUARDIAN

### Barracks tour

*Installation leadership listened to Soldiers' concerns, assisted them in resolving any outstanding work orders and helped them navigate ArMA during the monthly barracks tour Sept. 27.*

*Soldiers can submit their maintenance requests on [armymaintenance.com](http://armymaintenance.com) or through the Digital Garrison App.*



# Have Ideas?

Fort Polk's garrison commander recognizes you have great ideas to share and is looking for innovation from Soldiers, Families and civilians to increase efficiency and enhance garrison processes and quality of life.

[ICE link: https://ice.disa.mil/index.cfm?fa=card&sp=144893&s=257](https://ice.disa.mil/index.cfm?fa=card&sp=144893&s=257)

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





Fort Polk ASAP  
PRESENTS

OCTOBER 23-31ST

# RED RIBBON WEEK

Celebrate Life,  
Live Drug Free

## What's Happening

- ✓ 17 OCT Local Radio Spots
- ✓ 21 OCT @ 1330 Proclamation Signing;  
DHR Classroom Bldg. 4275
- ✓ 24-28 OCT Wear RR lapel pins  
Middle School Teen Center Activity  
RRW Color Sheets home with  
kids from CDC
- ✓ 28 OCT Wear red and post selfie with  
#RedRibbonFPLA

For more information call 337-531-2031

Made with PosterMyWall.com

# 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

CYS YOUTH SPORTS PRESENTS

# FLAG FOOTBALL -AND- CHEERLEADING

**PEREZ FIELD**

**AGES 5-18**

**\$50**

**REGISTRATION  
SEPT 15 - OCT 14**

**PARENT MEETING/SKILLS  
ASSESSMENT  
OCT 5 OR 7 @ 6 PM (PEREZ FIELD)**

**SEASON  
NOV 5 - DEC 10**

MUST BE REGISTERED WITH CYS AND HAVE A CURRENT SPORTS  
PHYSICAL TO ENROLL

VOLUNTEER COACHES NEEDED FOR  
BOTH FOOTBALL AND CHEERLEADING

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL  
**337-531-6004**

# ZOMBIE ARCHERY TAG

**OCT. 23**

**11A.M. - 12 P.M.**

**BOS**  
Better Opportunities  
for Single Soldiers

# FOOTBALL

**WATCH**

**LIVE GAMES EVERY  
THURSDAY, SATURDAY & SUNDAY**

**At The Anvil Bar**

ANVIL Bar





COURTESY VISUAL INFORMATION

### Domestic Violence proclamation signing

*Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk leadership sign a Domestic Violence Awareness Month proclamation in front of building 350 Oct. 5.*

## Domestic Violence Awareness Month shines light on abuse, prevention

By AIDA RIVERA  
Army Community Service

FORT POLK, La. — October is nationally recognized as Domestic Violence Awareness Month and Fort Polk's Army Community Service Family Advocacy Program is joining communities nationwide in commemorating the month with a series of events and activities.

"DVAM is a time when advocates and community members come together to create awareness of domestic abuse, and of the many resources that are available to help prevent it and to assist individuals already affected by it," said Kristina England, Family Advocacy Program manager.

This year's theme is "United Against Domestic Abuse: We're Stronger When We Stand Together."

"The theme reinforces the fact that it takes all of us working together to break the cycle of domestic abuse and intimate partner violence. Everyone deserves to live a life free from harm and the threat of harm. We can make that happen when we work together," England said.

Awareness and education are key elements in preventing domestic abuse/intimate partner violence.

"The more aware of an issue or problem a community is and of how it impacts them, the more likely they are to seek out the information needed to take action to help address it,"

said Aida Rivera, Family advocacy Program specialist. "Domestic violence/intimate partner violence affects us all. That's why it's important that we stand together against it."

The following events and activities are scheduled to take place throughout October to heighten awareness of domestic abuse/intimate partner violence and motivate the community to get involved in prevention efforts.

"We invite the entire Fort Polk community, a vital part of our prevention team, to participate," England said. "As this year's theme states: We're stronger when we stand together."

• **United Against Domestic Abuse "Did You Know?" Sidewalk Displays, Oct. 3-31** — The displays will be at building 350 and ACS, building 920, 1591 Bell Richard Ave.

• **Tree of Hope and Child and Youth Services Children's Garden of Hope, Oct. 3-31** — The tree is located at ACS, building 920, 1591 Bell Richard Ave., from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

• **DVAM Information and Take the Pledge Table, Oct. 3-31** — ACS, building 920, 1591 Bell Richard Ave., from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

• **DVAM Information and Take the Pledge Table, Oct. 14** — Main Post Exchange from 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

• **\*7 Principles for Making a Marriage Work, Oct. 14** — Special session to highlight healthy couple conflict resolution skills, ACS, building 920, 1591 Bell Richard Ave., from 1-2 p.m.



• **Paws for Cause Virtual Howl-O-Ween Pet Photo Contest, Oct. 17-28** — Photo submission on the Fort Polk ACS Facebook page. Winners will be announced on Halloween.

• **\*Purple "How Not to Fall in Love with a Jerk" Brown Bag Sessions, Oct. 20 and 25** — ACS, building 920, 1591 Bell Richard Ave., 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

• **National Wear Purple Day, Oct. 20** — 8 a.m. to close of business

\* Space in these classes is limited to 15 individuals per session, and is on a first come, first serve basis. Call (337) 531-7391 or 531-0636 to register.

For more information on domestic abuse/intimate partner violence, on planned events and on ways that you can become involved in prevention efforts, contact the FAP at (337) 531-1938.



# Take note of fun, informative Fire Prevention Week events

## FORT POLK FIRE DEPARTMENT

FORT POLK, La. — Since 1922, the National Fire Protection Association has sponsored the public observance of Fire Prevention Week.

In 1925, President Calvin Coolidge proclaimed FPW a national observance, making it the longest-running public health observance in our country. During Fire Prevention Week, children, adults, and teachers learn how to stay safe in case of a fire. Firefighters provide lifesaving public education in an effort to drastically decrease casualties caused by fires.

FPW is observed each year during the week of Oct. 9 in commemoration of the Great Chicago Fire, which began on Oct. 8, 1871, and caused devastating damage. This horrific event killed more than 250 people, left 100,000 homeless, destroyed more than 17,400 structures and burned more than 2,000 acres of land.

This year we are celebrating the 100th anniversary of FPW. This year's FPW campaign, "Fire won't wait. Plan your escape", works to educate everyone about simple but important actions they can take to keep themselves and those around them safe from home fires.

Today's homes burn faster than ever. You may have as little as two minutes, or less, to escape a home fire from the time the smoke alarm sounds.

Your ability to get out of a home during a fire depends on early warning from smoke alarms and advance planning.

It is important for everyone to plan and practice a home fire escape.

Everyone needs to be prepared in advance, so that they know what to do when the smoke alarm sounds. Given that every home is different, every home fire escape plan will also be different.

Have a plan for everyone in the home. Children, older adults, and people with disabilities may need assistance to wake up and get out. Make sure that someone will help them!

Fort Polk FPW Events:

•**Oct. 11 at 9 a.m.** — Fire safety presentations by the fire prevention staff and Sparky the Fire Dog at North Polk Elementary School.



The fire safety coloring contest will be initiated and handouts will be given to students and faculty.

•**Oct. 12 at 9 a.m.** — Fire safety presentations by the fire prevention staff and Sparky the Fire Dog at Parkway Elementary School. The fire safety poster contest will be initiated and handouts will be given to students and faculty.

•**Oct. 13 at 9 a.m.** — Fire department personnel will conduct fire drills and fire prevention week parades at the Child Development Centers (701, 702, 3349 and 14500).

Handouts will be given to children and faculty. After the parades, starting at 11 a.m., a fire drill will take place at Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital, building 285.

•**Oct. 14 at 8:30 a.m.** — Fire drill, fire extinguisher class and fire inspection at the Commissary, building 601.

Fire prevention personnel will conduct a fire drill to assure the Commissary employees are aware of their fire reporting procedures, evacuation routes and muster points, as well as their number one concern — the customer's safety.

•**From 9:30-11:30 a.m.** — Fire prevention personnel will stay on site to provide fire extinguisher and fire escape training to Commissary personnel and customers throughout the day.

•**Oct. 17 at 8:30 a.m.** — Recognition of coloring and poster contest winners at North Polk Elementary School and Parkway Elementary School.



COURTESY FORT POLK FIRE DEPARTMENT



# Know rules, regulations, role of exercising right to vote

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

FORT POLK, La. — With the 2022 midterm primary election taking place in Louisiana Nov. 8, followed by the general election Dec. 10, it's time to refresh the Fort Polk community on the dos and don'ts of election season.

The most important thing to remember is to exercise your right to vote. The Department of Defense encourages all DOD personnel, including active-duty Soldiers, reserve Soldiers, civilian employees and retirees to carry out this pivotal duty of citizenship.

However, the DOD has a longstanding tradition and policy to avoid the perception of sponsorship, approval or endorsement of any political candidate, campaign or cause.

In particular, DOD installations and facilities may not be used for political campaign or election activities. This includes both from work and at home if you live on the installation.

DOD civilian employees fall under the Hatch Act. Passed in 1939, this law restricts the partisan political activity of civilian executive branch employees of the federal government, District of Columbia government and some state and local employees who work in connection with federally funded programs.

The act allows most federal employees to engage in most types of political activities while in their personal capacities, and the majority of civilians working at Fort Polk fall under the less restricted category of rules dealing with voting and political behaviors.

### **DOD civilian employees aren't allowed to:**

- While at work or on a federal installation, activity directed toward the success or failure of a political party, candidate for political office or partisan political group. An example could be criticism or praise directed toward the political party, candidate for partisan political office or partisan political activity. Partisan means committees, clubs and other organizations affiliated with a political party or candidate.

- Knowingly personally soliciting, accepting or receiving political contribution from anyone.

- Using their official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the result of an election.

- Participating in political activity in the federal workplace while on duty or in any room or building occupied in the discharge of official duties by an individual employed by DOD (including teleworking).

- Engaging in political activity while wearing a uniform or official insignia identifying the office or position of the DOD employee.

### **DOD civilian employees are allowed to:**

- While off duty and outside a federal building (in their personal capacity), DOD civilians may volunteer with a political campaign or organization by: attending and being active

at political rallies and meetings; distributing campaign literature; writing speeches; hosting a meet and greet; circulating nominating petitions; working to get out the vote on election day.

- Contribute (consistent with Federal Election Commission rules) to the campaign of a candidate for partisan political office, party or organization provided they do not do so while on duty or in a federal building.

- Place a campaign sign in their yard.

- Be a delegate to a political convention.

Soldiers and retirees (not Department of the Army civilian employees) don't fall under the Hatch Act, but the political activities of members of the armed forces are governed by the DOD Directive 1344.10 — Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces.

### **Active-duty Soldiers and retirees aren't allowed to:**

- Active duty and reserve members on active duty may not engage in partisan political activities and must avoid the inference that their political activities imply or appear to imply DOD sponsorship, approval or endorsement.

- Soldiers can't actively campaign for a partisan candidate, engage in partisan fundraising

activities, serve as an officer of a partisan club or speak before a partisan gathering.

- All members of the armed forces, including active duty members, reserve components not on active duty and retired members are prohibited from wearing military uniforms at political campaigns or election events.

- Soldiers can't solicit monetary contributions for a political campaign or group.

### **Active-duty Soldiers and reserve Soldiers on active duty are allowed to:**

- Express their personal opinions on political candidates and issues and make personal contributions to a political campaign.

This is just a small sample of the rules and regulations pertaining to election regulations.

For more information on the Hatch Act or DOD Directive 1344.10, contact the Administrative Law Division, Office of the Staff Judge Advocate at (337) 531-2754/2155.

Voting assistance information is available through the Federal Voting Assistance Program at 800-438-8683, DSN 425-1584, email [vote@fvap.gov](mailto:vote@fvap.gov) or visit <http://www.FVAP.gov>.

For more information about the Hatch Act and DOD Directive 1344.10 visit <https://www.fvap.gov/info/laws/political-activities>.





# Celebrating those who keep Fort Polk's skies safe

By Spc. KELLY ACEVEDO  
Public Affairs Office

FORT POLK, La. — International Day of the Air Traffic Controller is Oct. 20. The day highlights a career field people may not know much about and recognizes the people working behind the scenes day and night to ensure safety in the air. There's a lot involved in getting an aircraft off the ground, in the air and back on the ground again.

It's not just an aircraft marshaller (the person that is visually signaling between ground personnel and pilots) who ensures safety and guidance on the runway. They work in parallel with air traffic controllers and pilots to help aircraft safely land and take off. There is a process that is followed and continues even after an aircraft is in the air.

ATCs work on the ground supervising traffic within a radius. Operating in air traffic control centers and control towers, they monitor the position, speed and altitude of aircraft in their assigned airspace visually and by radar.

They gain the skills and knowledge to be proficient at controlling the skies through their in-depth training. However, ATCs must also be able to adapt in a fast-paced, and often fast-changing environment.

Although the profession can be strenuous due to the many hours worked by the men and women behind the scenes, many controllers love what they do on a day-to-day basis.

Shane Denning, airfield manager at the Fort Polk Airfield, wants to spread awareness this year about what it's like to work as an ATC and the role they play at Fort Polk.

"We need the Fort Polk community to know about our people and recognize the hard work they do," said Denning.

Danny Engel, the radar facility chief at the Fort Polk Airfield, said it's important to work on their professional legacy.

"Having a legacy others know about and can



Spc. KELLY ACEVEDO/6GUARDIAN

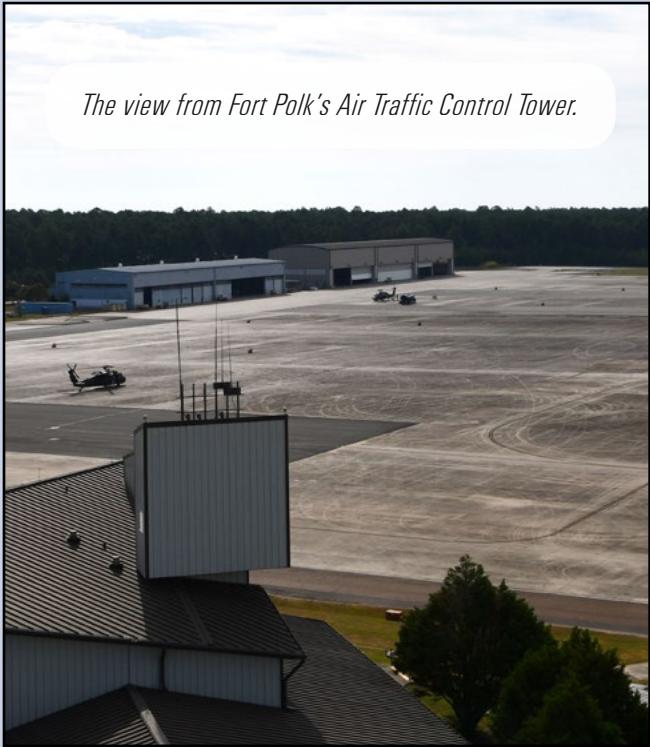
look up to is critical if you want to be someone who can be a mentor others, especially in this line of work," said Engel.

Air traffic controllers dedicate a lot of time ensuring safety and creating a team environment at the airfield.

"It's the people that make it easier. You have each other to rely on. There is a lot that goes on so it's important to be part of a team with people who motivate and help one another," Engel said.

Denning said it's important to appreciate and commend air traffic controllers Oct. 20 because they put a lot of time, energy and heart into what they do to maintain the safety of others.

If anyone with experience is interested in working in this career field or would like more information, contact John Fuselier at (337) 531-1151.





# Fort Polk **partners** with Leesville High School to host Wampus Cat Invitational

*The Leesville High School Wampus Cat Invitational took place at Fort Polk's Warrior Hills Golf Course Sept. 28. The installation hosted 23 schools from surrounding parishes at this mutually beneficial community event.*



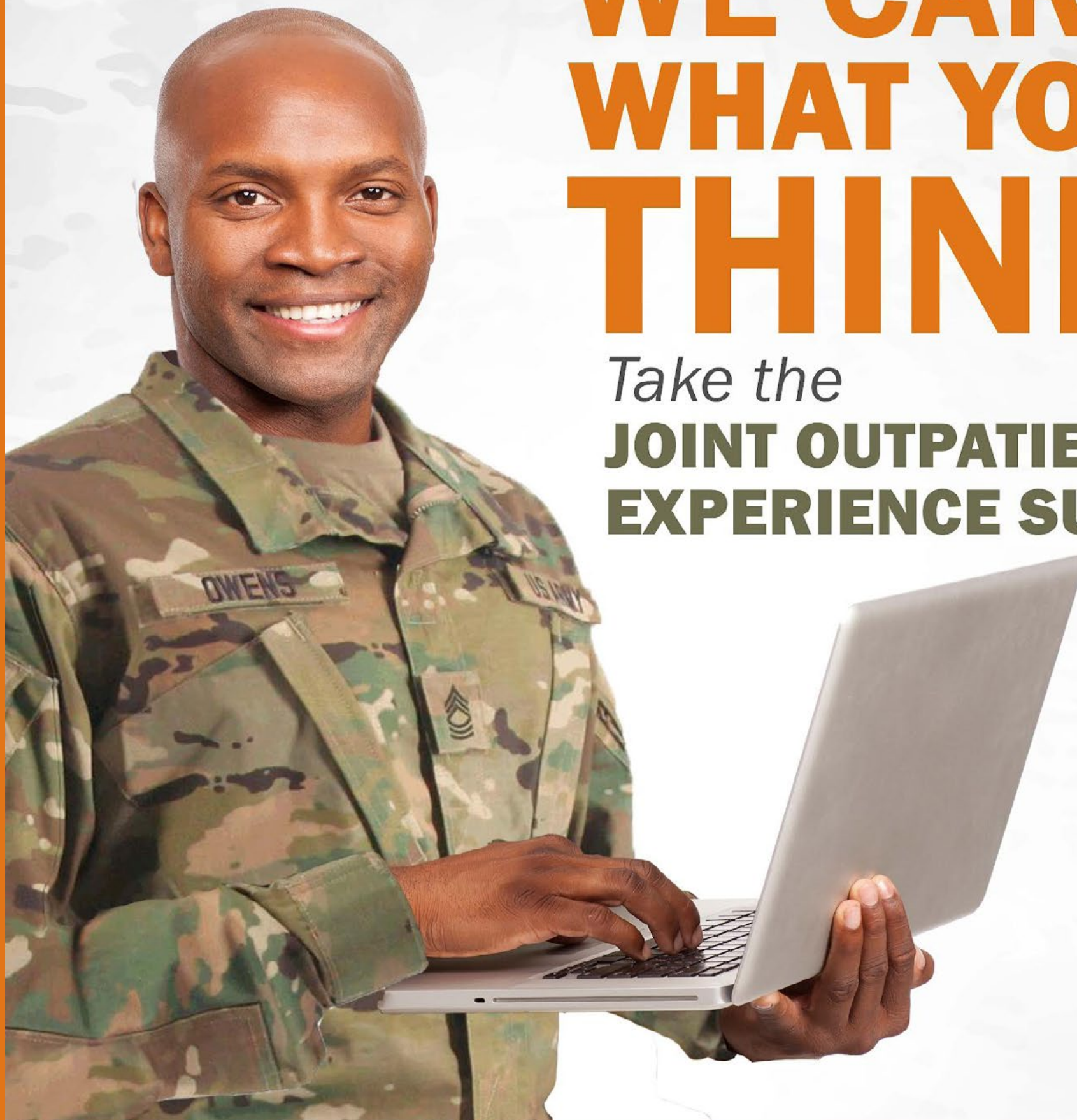
COURTESY VISUAL INFORMATION





# WE CARE WHAT YOU THINK

Take the  
**JOINT OUTPATIENT  
EXPERIENCE SURVEY**



## **JOES**

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.



[armymedicine.mil](http://armymedicine.mil)





# Look into origins of hauntingly happy Halloween past

By Spc. KELLY ACEVEDO  
Public Affairs Specialist

FORT POLK, La. — The Spookiest season of all meshes perfectly with the start of fall and, together, manufactures magnificent masked and menacing Halloween festivities.

Each year people dress up to trick or treat, carve pumpkins, or visit haunted attractions. Yet there isn't much discussion as to the origins of the tradition.

Halloween, formally known as "All Hallows' Eve," "All Souls Day" and "All Saints Day" by the Catholic Church, in fact began as "Samhain," a Celtic festival dating back to the eighth century.

Samhain celebrated the end of the year for the Celts. Celtic pagans celebrated in recognition of the end of the harvest season and the start of winter. They believed winter approaching meant death. They assumed the start of the new year caused the living and the dead to cross paths as they were entering a new era. The celebration took place between Oct. 31 and Nov. 1.

As part of the festival activities, Celtic priests, known as Druids, built bonfires for people to gather, burn crops and sacrifice animals to Celtic deities.

People wore costumes made up of animal skin to look like demons to ward off spirits. After the gathering, people relit fires in order to keep spirits away. They believed the line between the living and the dead was obsolete during this time.

Lighting jack-O'-lanterns began to scare off spirits. Carved pumpkins were placed on windowsills or outside of doors to prevent spirits from entering homes. People even put food out for spirits.

As a result of the Roman Empire conquering Celtic territory, their beliefs incorporated with the Celts and created new festivals and traditions. The "Festival of Pomona" was a harvest festival that celebrated Pomona, goddess of agriculture. Her symbol the apple, which influenced the tradition of apple picking. The romans celebrated "Ferālia" in February to honor their dead ancestors. The two traditions inspired the types of traditions that occur today.

Fast forward to the 19th century when people emigrating to America introduced new customs and beliefs. People coming to the states helped make the celebration of Halloween more common. Those fleeing from the Irish potato famine played a big part in introducing Halloween. The first events leading to Halloween included parties to celebrate harvest events. That brought along storytelling, mischievous pranks, and parties.

Through the years, the way Halloween is celebrated has evolved. During the 1920's vandalism was a big part of Halloween merrymak-



**SPOOKY  
SCAVENGER  
HUNT**

Free popcorn & candy!

**22  
OCT  
5:30-10 PM**

**Klubs & Karts**  
UNLIMITED MINI-GOLF  
Must be in costume to participate!

\$10 per person

**HALLOWEEN COSTUME  
FASHION SHOW**

**OCTOBER 22, 2022  
1100 TO 1300**

**FORT POLK MAIN EXCHANGE**

SIGN UP AT JEWELRY COUNTER  
BY OCTOBER 17, 2022

BOSS

**Pumpkin Carving**

**OCTOBER 19**

**Home of Heroes Recreation Center | 6 PM**

This event is free and open to all single soldiers. Sign up required.

**337-531-1948**

ing. Through the efforts of community leaders, vandalism incidents dropped and Halloween became a way for families and communities to come together.

Although Halloween was a great way for

people to come together, there was a drop in celebrations during World War II, and 2020 when COVID-19 was prevalent. Thankfully, Halloween celebrations have begun to recover and this year will be a day everyone can enjoy.



# DOD invests to reduce prices, strengthen economic security of military Families

## DEFENSE COMMISSARY AGENCY

FORT LEE, Va. — Service members and their Families will soon see a 3 to 5 percent decrease in pricing on most grocery items in their commissaries as part of a Department of Defense initiative to bolster the economic security and stability of the military community.

DOD's "Taking Care of Service Members and Families" initiative lays out comprehensive actions to support military members struggling with the financial impacts of inflation, supply chain disruptions and the pandemic.

"The department's added investment in our budget allows us to reduce commissary prices at the register on most items, particularly food staples struggling military Families need most such as bread, eggs, milk and more," said Bill Moore, director and CEO of the Defense Commissary Agency. "With this boost we can achieve at least 25 percent in overall savings for eligible patrons who shop their commissaries."

Commissary customers are expected to see price changes at most locations by mid-October. Pricing on some products and categories will vary.

Before the additional funding, DeCA was able to provide service members and their Families with discounted groceries that cost on average 22 percent less than civilian grocery stores for fiscal year 2022.

"Going forward with the department's initiatives, we want to sustain the increased savings through fiscal year 2023 and exceed the 25 percent benchmark to the extent our resources allow," Moore said.

"In addition to the savings, we provide healthy food options, clean and safe stores, convenience and premier customer service for our service members and their Families," Moore said. "Commissaries are there when our military Families need them most, even in disasters or pandemics or periods of inflation. We're an insurance policy to ensure food security for our military Families. With all that value and now additional savings, our patrons would be smart to shop their commissaries."

"Taking Care of Service Members and Families" aligns with DOD's overall campaign for economic security, first announced 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.

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 in the biweekly sales flyer

- Private label brands and Your Everyday Savings! (YES!) programs that offer better prices on popular core items

- Healthy options with dietitian-approved recipes, meal plans and quick, ready-to-eat, economical meal options via the deli and 174 dietitian-approved fueling stations

DeCA is also expanding efforts to ensure all eligible patrons know about their benefit, particularly targeting the millions of disabled veterans who became eligible for the benefit in January 2020, said Marine Sgt. Maj. Michael Saucedo, senior enlisted advisor to the DeCA director.

"We are working closely with veterans' groups to reach our DAVs and with the active duty military to increase awareness of the benefit to troops earlier in their careers," Saucedo said. "And as we spread the word on this much-needed benefit to all our eligible customers, we are striving to anticipate our patrons' needs, offer premier customer service and do what it takes to be their grocery provider of choice."

Commissaries are also pushing out more initiatives to include the following to help boost the benefit for eligible patrons:

- Expanding hours of operation and using technology to improve access in more convenient ways than ever before. To date, 56 stores have converted from six to seven-day operations, seven stores have converted from five to six-day operations and 43 stores have adjusted

hours to better fit the shopping preferences of their communities.

- Working with installations on piloting bulk deliveries to barracks or other specified locations with future plans to expand

- Expanding online shopping and curbside pickup with online payment now available at all stores

- Piloting home grocery delivery at eight continental U.S. locations, with agency-wide expansion planned soon thereafter

"The commissary system's commitment to saving military communities money has not wavered for more than 30 years," Moore said. "We remain steadfast in our efforts to improve the quality of life of our eligible patrons by saving them at least a quarter on every dollar they spend on groceries compared to 'outside the gate' grocery stores. That's \$50 back in your pocket on a \$200 grocery bill."

"We are a food security resource for our customers, and as such, we are doing everything we can to get our precious military Families the products they need at the lowest price possible," Moore added.

Visit <https://www.commissaries.com/> to learn more about the Defense Commissary Agency. Patrons can check out the latest news, find a store near them, see what's on sale, create a shopping list, learn of food and product recalls, scan employment opportunities, read frequently asked questions, submit a customer comment form online through DeCA's "Your Action Line" and more.





COURTESY VISUAL INFORMATION

## Energy proclamation signing

Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk leadership sign the Energy Action Month proclamation Oct. 5 at building 350.



# Energy Action Month highlights securing future through 'energy resilience'

## DPTMS

FORT POLK, La. — The Army observes Energy Action Month each October to raise awareness of the critical role energy resilience plays in mission readiness and to drive behavior change. This year's Army theme is "Energy Resilience: Sustain the Mission — Secure the Future."

Energy resilience or uninterrupted access to energy and water is critical to Army's readiness posture. Controlling our demand helps assure energy and water supply will be available for readiness and reduces utility costs.

The Army's Installation Strategy is the foundational document that drives modernized, secure and sustainable installations in support of the ready force. The Army Energy and Water Strategic Plan sets the vision for energy and water infrastructure supporting critical missions in the strategic support area to be resilient, efficient, and affordable (the three goals). The Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk Energy and Water Plan sets objectives to enhance installation resilience by pursuing projects and actions to meet the three goals. Objectives such as on-post energy genera-

tion, storage and distribution will reduce the installation's dependency on the external power grid in the event of severe weather and other threats. The installation's facility investment plans pursue improving infrastructure and facilities on post by applying efficient technologies to meet energy and water demands at least cost.

Did you know the Army is the biggest consumer of energy and water within the Department of Defense, spending over a billion dollars each year? From fiscal year 20 to 21, JRTC and Fort Polk's energy cost (i.e., electricity and natural gas) increased by 22%; and FY22 cost is even higher than FY21 due to current high fuel costs which results in challenges to fund Army programs.

Everyone plays an important role in improving installation resilience by conserving energy and water consumption at every opportunity, every day. Command Policy 18 "Energy Conservation and Efficiency" sets that guidance. Efforts such as turning off lights and setting back thermostats when lighting and air conditioning is not needed, closing exterior doors and unplugging unauthorized equipment contribute significantly to reducing the Army's utility costs.

## ENERGY ACTION MONTH

U.S. ARMY

### Resilience

Ensure energy for critical missions under all conditions

### Efficiency

Optimize energy use to meet requirements effectively and sustainably

### Affordability

Manage energy costs to enable the Army to refocus investment

# #PowerToWin





# *Annual Mud Run encourages messy motivation*

By **ANGIE THORNE**  
Public Affairs Office

FORT POLK, La. — Squishy, slimy, wet, brown mud covered members of the Fort Polk community taking part in the Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Mud Run Sept. 24. The goopy stuff clung to participants from head to toe, not to mention some places better not discussed.

The annual event isn't for the squeamish or those whose closest contact to the dirty stuff is a spa day mud treatment. However, for those hardy enough to confront the muddy muck there were 16 obstacles to contend with on the looping trail that meandered in and around woods surrounding Alligator Lake.

Soldiers from units across Fort Polk ran the course in the week leading up to the community run and some ran it twice.

Kyle Edwards, DFMWR, worked the grounds preparation for the run.

"If it needs to be picked up, moved or hauled, they call me," Edwards said.

Edwards said he enjoys getting the annual Mud Run ready for action because of all the smiles and laughter associated with the event.

"I love watching the participants work their way through the challenges. It makes the hard work I do worth it," Edwards said.

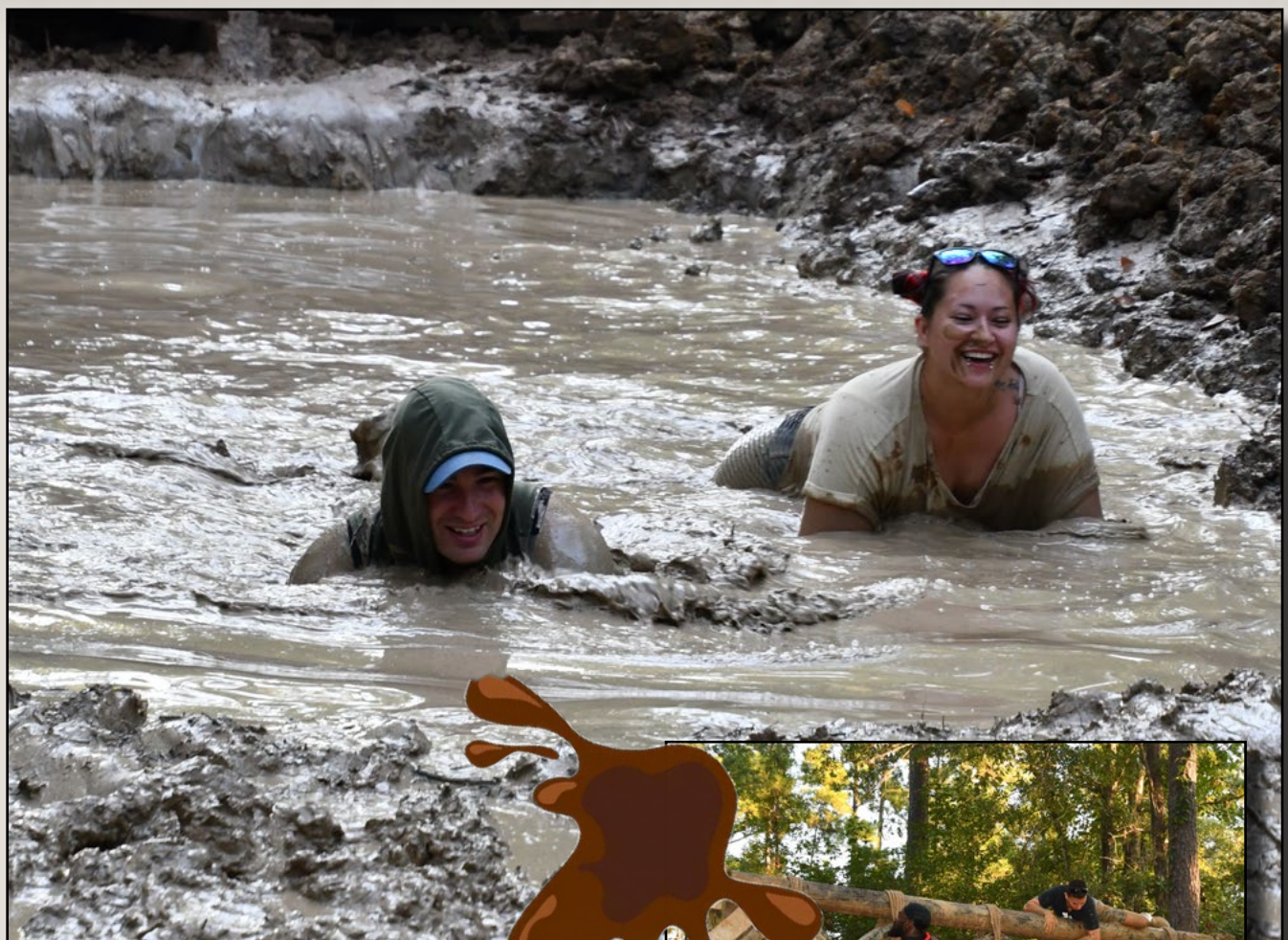
Porsha Auzenne, DFMWR, participated in the Mud Run. She said it was a great opportunity to stay fit.

"I got to challenge myself physically while getting down and dirty," Auzenne said. "It was a new experience for me."

Auzenne said she enjoyed the event.

"It was great fun and worth the pain. I might be hurting today, but I made it to the finish line and that's something to be proud of," Auzenne said.

Veronica Alvarez, 204th Military Police Company, 519th Military Police Battalion, said she and some of her buddies participated in the



Mud Run because it was challenge.

"It was a motivational experience. It feels good to accomplish something like this," Alvarez said.

A couple of her favorite obstacles included the mud slide and the under and over.

"But all the challenges were fun," Alvarez said.

Alvarez said events like this are important to Fort Polk.

"I don't get out much, so having something like Mud Run to participate in is great and a lot of fun, not to mention you can get your friends and fellow Soldiers together and do it as a team. That's good for morale," Alvarez said.

Check out more DFMWR events at <https://polk.armymwr.com/>.



ANGIE THORNE/©GUARDIAN

Please see **Mud**, page 18



# Mud

Continued from page 17



ANGIE THORNE/ eGUARDIAN



# Mud

Continued from page 18

By Pfc. JAVIER HERNANDEZ  
46th Engineer Battalion

FORT POLK, La. — More than 100 Soldiers from the 46th Engineer Battalion competed for bragging rights Sept. 22 during the unit portion of Fort Polk's annual Mud Run at Alligator Lake.

It was a day full of competitive spirit as companies battled with each other as they tackled a series of more than 10 back-to-back obstacles. Staggering waves of my fellow screaming Soldiers began tackling the chain of challenging events. With unmatched levels of motivation, we were cheered on by our brothers and sisters to our left and right as we began annihilating the course.

The Mud Run consists of tubes to be crawled through, huge mud pits to be waded, tire walls to climb, low crawls under string used to simulate barbed wire, a downhill "slip 'n slide" with an insane amount of seemingly never ending bubbles and other challenges.

When I first hit the course, I was half expecting it to be easy, but as soon I got past the first obstacle I realized sinking into waist-deep clay-based mud wasn't going to allow me to keep the same nonchalant

mentality. After being hit with that reality check, I pushed onward, moving closer and closer to the finish, alongside huge grins and laughter induced by the trails of forfeited shoes that connected one obstacle to the next.

After conquering several more obstacles, my group and another were gaining momentum. That's when we reached a massive "slip 'n slide" covered in a thick layer of bubbles at least 7 feet tall at its highest point. Watching people come out at the bottom looking

like toddlers who just took a bubble bath was hilarious. When it was finally my turn to throw myself into those bubbles, I didn't hesitate. I jumped in, held my breath and closed my eyes.

It seemed like an eternity, but suddenly I shot out at the bottom of the hill into a world lacking in bubbles. My eyes burned, but at least I felt a little bit cleaner.

## COMMENTARY

Seeing my battle buddies continue to push through without any intention of stopping fed my resolve to finish every obstacle placed in our way.

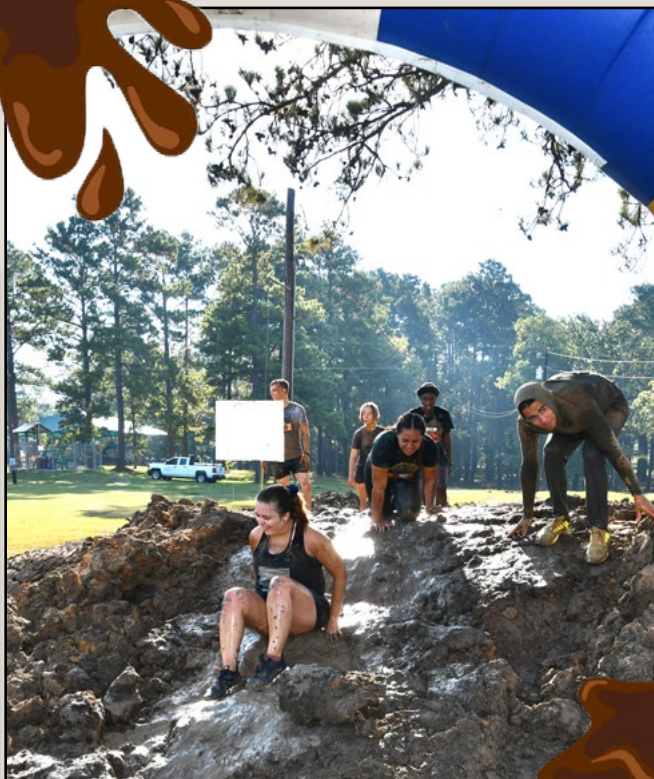
I could see the hunger for victory in my their eyes. After several more obstacles we finally reached the end, which was a 50-meter mud pit. No one participating could avoid getting soaked.

Once we crossed the finish line, participants were able to rinse off what felt like miles of mud in showers provided for the event.

After that, Command Sgt. Maj. Fernandez announced the winner of the participants from the 46th, which was the 573rd Clearance Company.

They let out a thunderous roar, cutting through the deafening silence kindly provided by the Soldiers in companies that didn't win.

All in all, it was a great day full of camaraderie, respect and ridiculous smiles. Any time the Castle stands strong is a great day for the Army.



ANGIE THORNE/GUARDIAN

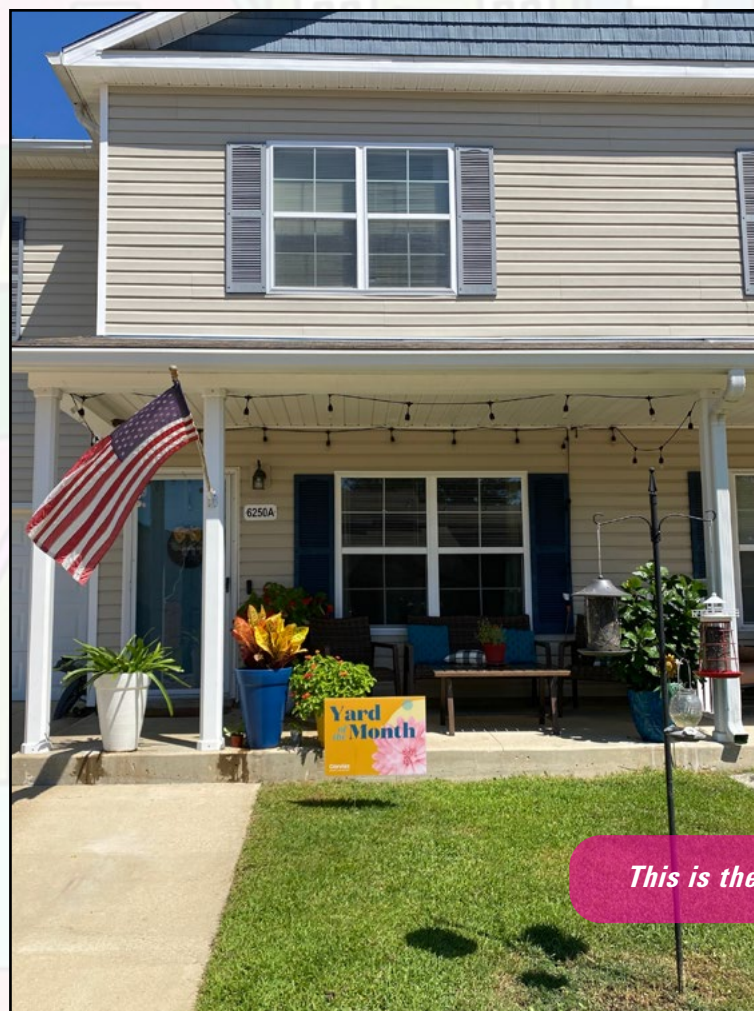


# Corvias Yard of the Month

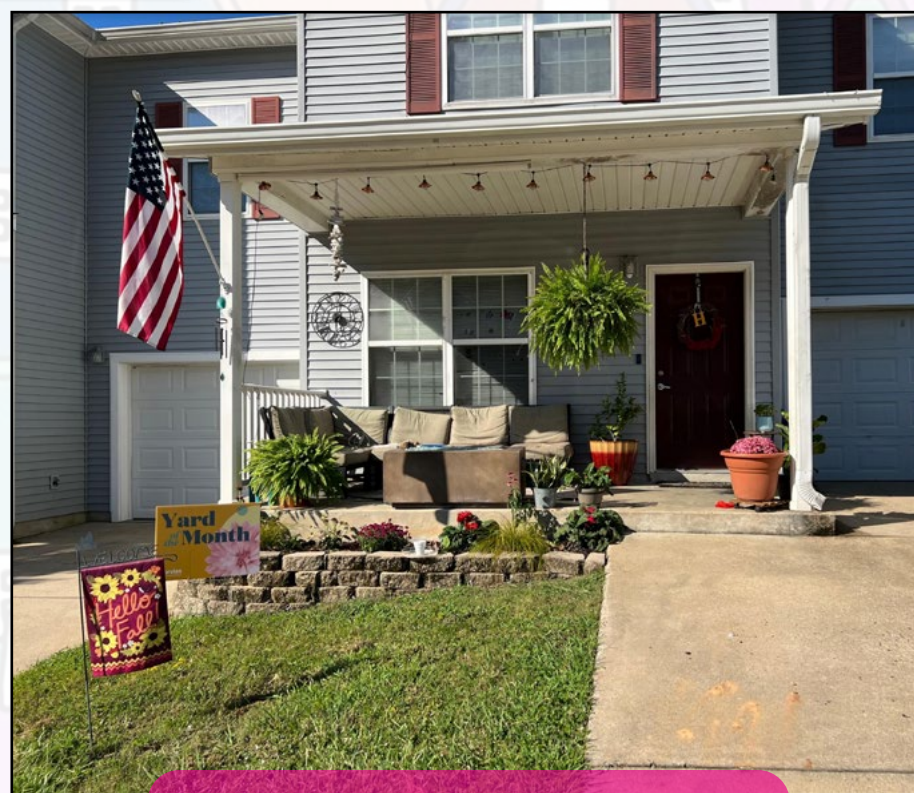


*This is the home of Sgt. Robert Bower and his spouse, Kaylin — Maple Terrace.*

**THE CORVIAS YARD OF THE MONTH PROGRAM IS THE PERFECT WAY TO SHOW PRIDE IN YOUR HOME. YOU COULD DO A LITTLE CLEAN UP HERE AND THERE, MAYBE ADD DECORATIONS AND A FLOWER OR TWO TO SPRUCE THINGS UP. YOU NEVER KNOW, YOU MIGHT BE THE NEXT NEIGHBOR WITH A YARD OF THE MONTH SIGN IN YOUR YARD AND BRAGGING RIGHTS. OCTOBER IS A HALLOWEEN THEMED YARD OF THE MONTH. WINNERS WILL BE ANNOUNCED OCT. 20, SO START DECORATING NOW.**



*This is the home of Staff Sgt. Mitchell Ramirez and Family — Dogwood Terrace.*



*This is the home of Sgt. 1st Class Stephen Harold and Family — Palmetto Terrace.*





## THIS WEEK 19-23 SEPTEMBER 2022



### SPATIAL DISORIENTATION

Spatial disorientation is a significant concern in aviation. What's even more worrisome is that it often goes unrecognized and can result in catastrophic consequences. As a flight surgeon, I was involved in the evaluation of a crew that experienced spatial disorientation which, for the most part, went unrecognized until it was almost too late.



### TRACTOR SAFETY

Growing up in the South, I operated tractors on a regular basis. I always thought the seat belt and rollover protective structure were so stupid. After hearing the details of an unfortunate tractor mishap, I quickly changed my tune.



### DESIGNATED DRIVERS

As he sped the car down the road, the driver lost control and swerved several times. The road conditions and his delayed reaction time from the alcohol compounded the danger, making it impossible to correct.

## PRODUCTS & TOOLS



Learn the safety culture and climate within your organization.



A family of information technology systems that underpins the Army Safety and Occupational Health Management System.



Great resource for finding a local riding association and learning to be a safer rider.



An interactive, easy-to-use, automated system designed to assist users with the application of risk management.



Make your Soldiers aware of the off-duty hazards they'll face with the Off-Duty Safety Awareness Presentation.



A collection of resources to aid commanders and leaders in the management of range operations and safe weapons handling.

## DID YOU KNOW?

**RISK MANAGEMENT** is always looking for contributors to provide ground, aviation, driving and off-duty safety articles. Don't worry if you've never written an article for publication. Just write about what you know and our editorial staff will take care of the rest. Your story might just save another Soldier's life. Click the **SUBMIT AN ARTICLE** tab below to share your story.

## WHAT'S NEW

### DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

People survive disasters by putting forth the effort to plan before the disaster strikes. As demonstrated in other national disasters, until resources can be mobilized and assembled in your area, you are on your own to care for your family and neighbors. Will you be prepared when it strikes? *Click here to learn more.*



## POST THIS



CLICK TO DOWNLOAD

## WATCH THIS



CLICK TO VIEW

**SUBMIT AN ARTICLE**

**SUBSCRIBE TO SAFETY PRODUCTS**

**CONTACT US**





# Briefs

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



# #FortPolkThingsToDo

**Oct. 13-16:** Cal-Cam Fair, Lake Charles. The Cal-Cam Fair will be celebrating its 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 search-

ing "Creole" in the App Store or on Google Play.

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





# Soldiers embrace their culture during Hispanic Heritage Month

By Spc. KELLY ACEVEDO

Public Affairs Specialist

FORT POLK, La. — I believe celebrating my heritage brings me closer to who I am as an individual. Every September is a reminder of where I come from. Back home in California, my community celebrates through food, parties and parades. Throughout my tour here in Fort Polk, I have been lucky enough to meet people with similar backgrounds and values.

I had the opportunity to interview Soldiers who partake in the month-long event. They explained what Hispanic Heritage Month means to them and with that I noticed similarities from their cultures that echoed each other's journeys. Many of us here search for comfort in our home away from home.

Though the best way to find that is to surround yourself with people who hold the same principles and relatable experiences. All Soldiers interviewed come from disadvantaged backgrounds, but their humbled beginnings shaped them into who they are.

Pfc. Frida Ortega, a horizontal construction engineer with the 46th Engineer Battalion, shared what it was like to grow up in a traditional Mexican household as the oldest sister. She was raised in an environment where her freedom was limited and moving out was difficult if not due to marriage or college. Ortega defied all norms within her culture and joined the Army.

"My parents were skeptical about me joining. They didn't know much about the military. I was also only 17 years old when I joined," Ortega said.

The opportunities the military offered not only extended to her, but her family as well. "My parents wanted to pay for my college tuition, but I said no. We couldn't afford that," Ortega said. She now has the freedom to attend college for free while or after serving.

As the oldest female, she grew to be a second mother to her siblings while her parents worked long shifts. She did her best to shield her siblings from the hardships she faced growing up. Her goal is to guide her siblings and assist them financially however she can.

Another soldier who spoke on the importance of giving back is Staff Sgt. Mark Garcia, an infantryman with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, United States Army Garrison. "I did not have much growing up, but now that I do I want to provide however I can for others. There is nothing more rewarding than seeing someone light up when they get a sense of relief because of something you did," Garcia said.

He detailed what his childhood was like in Texas.

"I was 5 years old when my parents worked at an onion farm for 50 cents a sack. It wasn't



COURTESY Staff Sgt. MARK GARCIA

much, but I saw how committed they were to give me the most comfortable life. I never had the fanciest toys or clothes but that was an important experience in my life that made me me. My background brought me to the success I have today," Garcia said.

He reminded people to take a step back to reflect on their background.

"See how the values you grew up with fit into the life you have now. It's important to highlight past events in my life and culture. I see how much has progressed," Garcia said.

He teaches his daughter Spanish and the important values he was raised with. He wants her to understand her background and grow up aware of who she is.

1st Lt. Andres Lopez, executive officer, HHC, with the 46th Engineer Battalion, expressed the importance of sacrifice. Born in Colombia, he emigrated to the United States with his parents at a young age.

"Most families I know of the same background didn't have things given to them. Everyone made a sacrifice. I've seen a lot of kids go to college or do something big in order to give back. I don't know anyone of the same background who hasn't given back in some way shape or form," Lopez said.

He joined the Army to help with college and to help his parents.

"I was a kid sleeping in my dad's car while he worked night shifts. My dad worked two jobs and put my mom through college. She was learning English at the same time. That didn't stop us from sending Christmas presents back home to Colombia. We were struggling but they were struggling more," Lopez said.

Moving to a new country can be hard, but people can embrace their new home when the



COURTESY 1st Lt. ANDRES LOPEZ

people around them allow them to feel comfortable as you are.

"Growing up, you yearn for a sense of belonging. The people I grew up with helped me become who I am and encouraged me to feel comfortable with myself and be myself. I spoke Spanish in my platoon. We'd all be getting things done while having similarities in our background and even the Soldiers who didn't speak Spanish were intrigued and wanted to learn. That brought us together as a team and made us all comfortable being our individual selves," Lopez said.

Pfc. Javier Hernandez, a combat engineer with the 46th Engineer Battalion, finds Hispanic Heritage Month a good opportunity to express himself.

Please see **Culture**, page 24



**YOUR  
OPINION  
MATTERS**

**GOT ISSUES?  
LET YOUR  
VOICE BE  
HEARD**

**ARMY FAMILY  
ACTION PLAN**

If it's a program or service,  
an AFAP issue can **IMPROVE IT**.  
If it's a policy or regulation,  
an AFAP issue can **CHANGE IT**.  
If it's a law,  
an AFAP issue can **AMEND IT**.  
If there's a low-cost, creative  
solution,  
You should **PURSUE IT**.

**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>

**TURN AROUND DON'T DROWN**

Six inches of moving water can knock you down

One foot of moving water can sweep your vehicle away

# Culture

Continued from page 23

"This month is a time where I can walk around with a Mexican flag and get recognition. It's the one month we get," Hernandez said.

Born on Mexican Independence Day, Hernandez celebrated with the "Cry of Dolores" or "El Grito," a shout of "long live Mexico, long live the independence" and Mexican food. He spoke on where his values stem from.

"It's important to work hard to obtain the position that you deserve. That correlates with what we put out. My parents instilled in me a great work ethic. One that encourages me to throw my blood, sweat and tears into everything I do here," Hernandez said.

Along with hard work, comes the hunger for success.

"We were broke. I've worked since I was 13 years old. I have experience with diesel trucks which benefits me since I work in a route clearance company," Hernandez said.

These Soldiers all share the desire to strive towards success regardless of backgrounds. They all apply the values learned from their past onto their lives today and tie them into the Army Values:

**Loyalty** — Never forget your roots. Celebrate and embrace your culture. "I want to

instill all the values I grew up with into my kids. Show them that hard work and commitment is important because that leads to success," Garcia said.

**Duty** — They commit to work hard through all obstacles to fulfill their obligations.

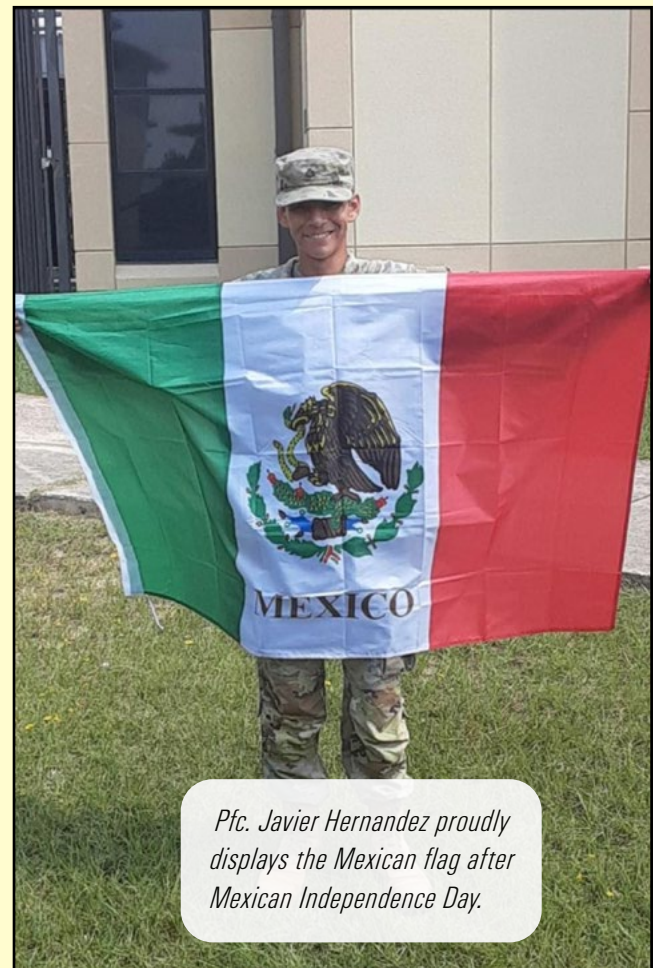
"If your team isn't succeeding, then you're not succeeding. Back home if I didn't do certain things then certain things wouldn't happen," Frida said.

**Selfless Service** — Put the welfare of their families and people before their own without recognition or personal gain. "Seeing my parents struggle and push through motivated me. With a lot of Hispanic/Latino households, you see the ability to push through adversity in order to reach a goal," Lopez said.

**Honor** — It's not only the month of September that these Soldiers walk proud of where they came from.

"When I put on that uniform, I see a Mexican American soldier," Hernandez said.

This month is a time to celebrate Hispanic/Latino Heritage. Whether your culture aligns with the year-round celebration or not, don't be afraid to learn about our heritage. Hispanic Heritage Month includes the celebration of life that brings people together. Take this month as an opportunity to celebrate with us



*Pfc. Javier Hernandez proudly displays the Mexican flag after Mexican Independence Day.*

whether that's through a dance, "El Grito" or food. After all, "Your culture starts at the dinner table," as Lopez said.



# Celebrating history of National Hispanic Heritage Month

By KEVIN STUART

BJACH Ombudsman

FORT POLK, La. — Each year the Department of Defense joins the nation in celebrating and honoring the culture of Hispanic Americans. National Hispanic Heritage Month recognizes the contributions and influence of Hispanic Americans to the history, culture and achievements of the United States.

The observation began in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week under President Lyndon Johnson and was expanded by President Ronald Reagan in 1988 to cover a 31-day period from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15. The observance was enacted into law on Aug. 17, 1988, on the approval of Public Law 100-402.

Sept. 15 is significant because it is the anniversary of independence for Latin American countries such as Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

Additionally, Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence days on Sept. 16 and 18 respectively. Moreover, Columbus Day and El día de la Raza (Day of the Races), fall within the 31-day period.

Hispanic origin can be viewed as the heritage, nationality group, lineage, or country of birth of the person or the person's parents or ancestors before their arrival in the United States.

People who identify their origin as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish may be any race.

Hispanics come from more than 20 different nations: Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Puerto Rico, Peru, Spain, Uruguay and Venezuela, to name a few.

We celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month to recognize the achievements and contributions of numerous Hispanic American champions who have inspired others to achieve success such as:

1. Joseph Marion Hernández, who was the first Hispanic to serve in Congress and the first hispanic delegate from Florida in 1923.

2. David G. Farragut, who is one of the best known Civil War heroes. He served with the Union Navy and later became the first admiral in the U.S. Navy, when Congress created the rank and awarded it to him on Aug. 5, 1864, after his victory in the Battle of Mobile Bay.

3. Rita Moreno, who in 1961 became the first Hispanic actress to win an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress in the play "West Side Story."

She is amongst the few movie stars who have won all four of the most coveted awards (Emmy, Grammy, Oscar and Tony also known as the EGOT) in the entertainment business.



*Adm. David G. Farragut aboard USS Hartford.*

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Moreno was honored with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in 1995.

4. Sonia Sotomayor became the first Hispanic Supreme Court Justice of the United States in 2009, when she nominated by President Barack Obama.

Her long career includes time spent as an assistant district attorney for New York County and being a judge to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit before nomination for the Supreme Court Justice. Justice Sotomayor has been very outspoken about how her unique experience as a Latina has contributed to her work as a judge.

5. Roberto Clemente was a professional athlete and humanitarian who was born in Puerto Rico in 1934.

He was considered by many as one of the greatest sports athletes in American professional baseball history.

He was the first Hispanic American to win a World Series as a starting player in 1960. He was a pioneer of the game and paved the way for other Hispanic Americans in Major League Baseball. He was inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1973, making him the first Latin American and Caribbean Honoree.

6. Ellen Ochoa, a veteran astronaut and research engineer was born in Los Angeles, California, and recognized as the first Hispanic American woman to go to space in 1993. She

was selected by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration for her impressive research work and became an astronaut in 1991.

Two years later, she made history on board the Space Shuttle Discovery on a mission to study the Earth's ozone layer and subsequently completed three additional missions.

In 2013, Ochoa became the 11th Director of the Johnson Space Center. She is the first Hispanic American and second woman in the position.

7. Richard E. Cavazos made history by becoming the first Hispanic American to earn the rank of brigadier general in the United States Army. Cavazos would make history again by being appointed the Army's first Hispanic American four-star general and serving as the Commanding General of the Army's Forces Command from 1982-84.

From growing up on a cattle ranch, sustaining a career-ending football injury in college and facing enemy forces in both the Korean and Vietnam wars, General Cavazos was able to learn from his life experiences and use them to become one of the Army's finest Soldiers.

These are just a few of the countless contributions made by Hispanic heritage, traditions, contributions, accomplishments and influence have made to our nation better, not for a month, but for all time.

As Americans, we should respect, honor and acknowledge their contributions.





## Fort Polk Soldiers punished for disciplinary issues

### 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 sergeant first class assigned to 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division received a permanently filed General Officer Memorandum of Reprimand for sexual harassment, and violating the Army’s equal opportunity policy.

- A private first class assigned to 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, received a permanently filed GOMOR for sexual harassment and abusive sexual contact.

- A private first class assigned to 2nd Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment received a field grade Article 15 for wrongful use of cocaine. They received a punishment of reduction to the grade of E-1, forfeiture of \$916 pay per month for two months, 45 days of extra duty and 45 days of restriction.

- A sergeant assigned to 3rd Squadron, 89th Cavalry Regiment received a Field Grade Article 15 for wrongful use of cocaine. They received a punishment of reduction to the grade of E-4, forfeiture of \$1452 pay for one month, suspended for 120 days, 45 days of extra duty and 45 days of restriction, suspended 120 days.

- A specialist assigned to 46th Engineer Bat-

talion received a field grade Article 15 for failing to report three times. They received a punishment of reduction to the grade of E-3.

- Two privates first class assigned to 519th Military Police Battalion received a company grade Article 15 for violating Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk Policy Letter #3 by consuming alcohol in the barracks while under the age of 21. They received a punishment of reduction to the grade of E-2, suspend for six months and 14 days of extra duty.

- A specialist assigned to 46th Engineer Battalion received a field grade Article 15 for wrongfully using cocaine. They received a punishment of reduction to the grade of E-1, forfeiture of \$916 pay per month for two months, 45 days of extra duty and 45 days of extra duty.

- A specialist assigned to 2nd Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment pleaded guilty at a general court-martial to specification of conspiracy to distribute a controlled substance, in violation of Article 81, Uniform Code of Military Justice; one specification of violating a Lawful General Order, in violation of Article 92, UCMJ; six specifications of wrongful distribution of a controlled substance, in violation of Article 112a, UCMJ; two specifications of wrongful possession with Intent to distribute, in violation of Article 112a, UCMJ; and one specification of wrongful use of a controlled substance, in violation of Article 112a, UCMJ. The military judge sentenced the accused to reduction to E-1, 30 months confinement and a bad conduct discharge.

- A specialist assigned to 2nd Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment pleaded guilty at a general court-martial to one specification of conspiracy to distribute controlled substances, in violation of Article 81; two specifications of possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine, in violation of Article 112a; one specification of possession with intent to distribute Marijuana, in violation of Article 112a. The military judge sentenced the Accused to reduction to E-1, confinement for 16 months, and a bad conduct discharge.

## 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.

2010	Nissan	Altima	6499
2016	Chevrolet	Malibu	5420
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
2018	Toyota	Corolla	9110
2012	Chevrolet	Malibu	7822
2008	Mitsubishi	Galant	1159
2013	Dodge	Dart	1997
2003	Honda	Accord	6673
2003	Jeep	Liberty	3545
2001	Ford	F150	0450
2004	Ford	Mustang	4127
2004	Harley	MC	D569
2008	BMW	328i	9559
1999	Toyota	Corolla	6433
2013	Audi	A6	7319
2011	Hyundai	Elantra	4018
2007	BMW	650i	2192

