



FORGING THE WARRIOR SPIRIT

THE JRTC & FORT POLK GUARDIAN

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Home of Heroes @ Fort Polk, LA

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Memorial Day honors heroes 'who gave all'

By **CHUCK CANNON**

Command information officer

FORT POLK, La. — Each year, on the last Monday in May, the United States honors on Memorial Day.

Veteran's groups, active-duty military units, government officials and Families turn out for ceremonies and to place flags on veterans' graves in cemeteries across the country.

The Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk's Memorial Day ceremony was held May 21 at Warrior Memorial Park. This year, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ceremony took on a new look, with social distancing, the wearing of masks and a live Facebook stream of the event.

Brig. Gen. Patrick D. Frank, commander, JRTC and Fort Polk, said it was important to continue Army ceremonies and traditions during the COVID-19 response.

"Today we honor the sacrifices of thousands of heroic American Soldiers, Marines, Sailors and Airmen who dedicated their lives to defending the nation and our freedom," he said.

Frank spoke of the origins of Memorial Day following the Civil War and how 152 years later, the day is as real for today's generation as it was for the Civil War generation.

"Warrior Memorial Park has many historic monuments honoring the sacrifices of Soldiers from several conflicts," he said.

"Memorial Day has a significant meaning for our generation — from the morning of Septem-

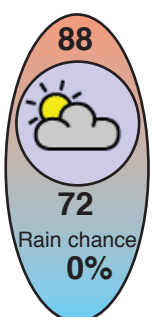
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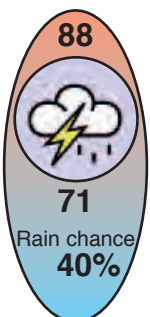
Sgt. 1st Class Adriana S. Fox, JRTC Operations Group and Audie Murphy Club member (left), and Brig. Gen. Patrick D. Frank, commander, JRTC and Fort Polk, place a wreath in front of the Global War on Terror memorial at Fort Polk's Warrior Memorial Park May 21 as part of the installation's Memorial Day Ceremony.

CHUCK CANNON / GUARDIAN

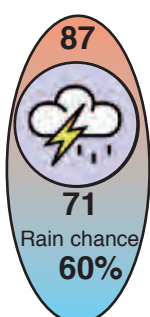
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In our view

Guardian staff asked JRTC and Fort Polk Facebook followers to “send us a photo of a veteran you are remembering and would like to honor this upcoming Memorial Day weekend”

Here are their responses:



James E. Perkins: “My dad Willie Ray Perkins served in the Army Air Corps from 1935 - 1945, World War II, Bataan Death March and spent three years and two months in a Japanese prison camp. He was a strong, sharp and smart man. He lived to be 91.”



T.C. Bradford: “My dad, Retired Chief Warrant Officer 3 Tom Bradford. He was a father, husband, Soldier, Patriot and cancer survivor. This picture was taken in Vietnam. He is my hero and role model, and I miss him dearly.”



Teresa Sandoval: “My son Pfc. Brandon Buttry was killed Nov 5, 2012. He was 19 years-old in Afghanistan, assigned to 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division from Joint Base Lewis-McChord.”



Tresa Tolley: “My friend, Pvt. Adrienne Lynette Mitchell, killed in action during Operation Desert Storm, June 25 1970 — Feb. 25 1991, 20 years old.”



Bianca Marie Ortiz: “My uncle Capt. Antonio Gonzalez served 23 years in the Army. He joined right after the Vietnam War. Even after retirement, he was always on time and liked things to standard; he was by the book.”



Nancy Joseph: “Our son Maj. Trevor Joseph, Blackhawk medical evacuation pilot, two Afghanistan deployments, Air Medal with valor in combat, Bronze Star and Commander of Cajun Dustoff. He was killed in action on Sept. 26, 2019.”



Guardian

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For more information on Fort Polk units and happenings visit the following Facebook pages: [@JRTCOperationsGrp](https://www.facebook.com/JRTCOperationsGrp), [@BayneJonesACH](https://www.facebook.com/BayneJonesACH) or [@fortpolkmwr](https://www.facebook.com/fortpolkmwr).

Briefs

ACP changes

During Rotation 20-08 (June) North Fort Polk will be locked down for the safety of the community and rotational Soldiers.

Effective May 26, access control point 7 (Alligator Lake) is closed to all but commercial traffic and rotational traffic.

ACP 6 (Chaffee Road) is now open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. As always, ACP 1, (Entrance Road), is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Outdoor safety

The Fort Polk Garrison Safety Office reminds motorists that May is Motorcycle Safety Month.

Safe riding practices and cooperation from motorists will help reduce the number of fatalities and injuries on the nation's highways.

The Fort Polk community is reminded that, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, more people are spending time outdoors, including walking or jogging along area streets. Pedestrians are advised to look both directions before crossing a street, then look once more. Motorists should avoid distractions while driving.

June 1 is the start of hurricane season in Louisiana, so now is the time to make a hurricane evacuation plan.

Off limits

The following establishments in the Fort Polk, Leesville, Barksdale Air Force Base and Shreveport areas have been designated as off limits by the Armed Forces Disciplinary Control Board of the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk:

- Blackhawks Motorcycle Club, 2463 VFW Road., Leesville
- The Venue, 11810 Lake Charles Highway, Leesville
- American Legion Post 510, 703 North Gladys St., Leesville
- Adolph's Grocery, 100 Vernon St., New Llano
- Banshees Motorcycle Club, 1330 and 1340 Rapides Ave., Alexandria
- BEAST Motorcycle Club, 3149 Davis Road., West Lake
- Outcast Motorcycle Club, 5151 U.S. Highway 90 East, Lake Charles
- Pipes Emporium, 1304 Centenary Blvd., Shreveport
- Kokopellis, 400 Commerce St., Shreveport
- Lotus, 2001 East Texas St., Suite 3, Bossier City.

For a complete list of Fort Polk policy letters visit <https://home.army.mil/polk/index.php/about/pol>.



CHUCK CANNON / GUARDIAN

Leaders from across the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk gathered in the installation's Bayou Theater May 19 for a tabletop exercise to test their ability to respond to a catastrophic weather event. Representatives from the Warrior Operations Center, Crisis Action Team and organizations throughout the installation refined battle drills to help react and provide recovery efforts should severe weather strike Fort Polk.

TTX preps leaders for severe weather event

By **CHUCK CANNON**

Command information officer

FORT POLK, La. — When spring comes to the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk, it often brings with it inclement weather in the form of thunderstorms or tornadoes.

During April and early May of this year, three tornadoes passed within 5 miles of the installation.

To mitigate such events, the JRTC and Fort Polk held a tabletop exercise testing the ability of the Warrior Operations Center, Crisis Action Team and organizations throughout the installation to react and provide recovery efforts in the event such a calamitous event were to occur within its boundaries.

Additionally, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the TTX was conducted in Fort Polk's Bayou Theater with strict social distancing and the wearing of facemasks to protect participants.

Col. Ryan K. Roseberry, Fort Polk garrison commander, highlighted the importance of "practicing" potential threats — whether man-made or weather related — that might occur on the installation.

"Last year we conducted an exercise in which we had to respond to a downed aircraft," Roseberry said. "A few weeks later it actually happened, and because of the exercise we were able to respond correctly."

Roseberry said Louisiana's year round weather make these types of exercises especially important.

"At Fort Polk, severe weather could hit at any time," he said. "That's why we need to be prepared."

Brig. Gen. Patrick D. Frank, commander, JRTC

and Fort Polk, compared preparation for severe weather to the installation's response to COVID-19.

"We've worked a lot these past few weeks to protect the community from COVID-19," he said. "We must provide the same protection to our Soldiers and Families in the event of severe weather."

Frank said exercises that practice the installation's response to events such as tornadoes or COVID-19 are critical to the confidence level residents have in leadership's abilities.

"Our residents have confidence in this team," he said. "If we have a tornado strike, we have a physical battle drill that gives us assurance in our ability to respond successfully. In the face of severe damage, how do we instill that same confidence to our installation



Frank

Family? By being well trained in our response. And today we're going to test our ability to respond to a catastrophic weather event."

The TTX called for a tornado to strike a housing area and child development center on Fort Polk at 8:15 a.m. on a Tuesday.

Mark Leslie, chief, Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security, called on representatives from each directorate and organization on the installation to explain their responses and brainstorm ways those responses could be improved.

A scribe kept notes of the conversations and proposals, with the ultimate goal of preparing a document that will govern the installation's response to a severe weather event.

MacArthur awardee proud of Asian-Pacific heritage

By GARY SHEFTICK
Army News Service

WASHINGTON — Growing up in a small fishing village on the southeast coast of China, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Meirong Magee never imagined that one day she'd be recognized as an elite leader in the U.S. Army.

Magee was recently selected for the Army's prestigious Gen. Douglas MacArthur leadership award. The human resources technician at 25th Infantry Division is one of four warrant officers and 24 captains to receive the Army-level award this year for exemplifying the ideals of duty, honor and country.

"The path that led me to be where and who I am was not an easy one," she said. "I cannot thank all the leaders — who believed in me and guided me — enough." She added the award is a reflection of their leadership.

Fisherman's daughter

Magee is from Dong Tou, a village in China's Fujian Province where "everybody knows each other," she said.

Her father was a fisherman, and her mother a housewife. Her hometown is southeast of Fuzhou, the province capital with a population of about 7 million.

Fuzhou has been a thriving seaport since the days of the Ming Dynasty between the 1300s and the 1600s, when fleets sailed down the Min River to the Indian Ocean, the Philippines and on to Africa. In the 1800s, westerners knew the city as Foochow, and it was one of five cities in China open to western trade and missionaries.

Magee's family lived in Lianjiang County, directly across from the island of Taiwan. Beginning in the late 1980s, her county began an emigration to western nations like the United Kingdom and the U.S.

As a young girl, Mei had dreams of joining the People's Liberation Army in China.

After beginning school, though, she was impressed with her instructors and decided to become a teacher.

She attended Lianjiang Shangde High School, which she said is one of the best schools in the area for college preparation.

"It was competitive," she added.

She was accepted at Quanzhou Normal University, about 125 miles south in the historical city of Quanzhou. She studied for more than



Chief Warrant Officer 2 Meirong Magee and her husband, pictured with Staff Sgt. Michael Magee, with Hawaiian leis. Meirong was one of four warrant officers selected for this year's Army-level Gen. Douglas MacArthur leadership award. Recipients were to come to Washington, D.C. this month for the award, but due to COVID-19, the ceremony has been tentatively rescheduled for October.

three years to become a physics teacher.

Faced with a dilemma

Months before graduation, she received word that her family was accepted to immigrate into the U.S. She had to choose between finishing college or going with her family; she chose to accompany her family.

She immigrated to the United States in March 2007, and her family eventually settled in Braintree, Massachusetts. She soon received a job offer from her father's friend, who owned a Chinese restaurant in Savannah, Georgia.

"People from my hometown either own a Chinese restaurant, or they work at one," she said.

Mei had learned some English in high school and college, but she wasn't fluent. She felt lucky

to have the chance to work as a waitress.

After four months, she aspired to do more than wait on customers.

"I started wondering what the purpose of my life was, and I realized that I didn't want to do what I was doing for the next 10 years," she said.

New adventure

One day while serving a Chinese-American customer, she learned he was a Soldier and they began talking about the profession.

"I said, 'you know what, let me give it a try.' I dreamed of being a Soldier. I went ahead and took a test," she said.

In October 2007, she enlisted in the Army.

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Army general to co-lead Operation Warp Speed for COVID-19 vaccine

By DAVID VERGUN
Army News Service

WASHINGTON — President Donald J. Trump announced May 15 that Army Gen. Gustave F. Perna, the commander of Army Materiel Command, will co-lead an effort, dubbed Operation Warp Speed, to find a COVID-19 vaccine by January 2021.

Defense Secretary Dr. Mark T. Esper said the Defense Department is excited and committed to partnering with the Department of Health and

Human Services and the private sector to accomplish the mission.

"Winning matters, and we will deliver a vaccine, at scale, treating the American people and partners abroad by the end of this year," he said.

The goal is to produce about 300 million vaccines by January, said Jonathan Rath Hoffman, assistant to the secretary of defense for public affairs, at a Pentagon press briefing on May 15.

Hoffman mentioned that it's a goal involving a whole-of-government approach, not just the Department of Defense.

Regarding the DoD and Pentagon, Hoffman said neither has been shut down and daily operations continue with mitigation steps, including social distancing, facemasks, quarantine when necessary and telework if the situation allows.

As for increasing personnel at the Pentagon, Hoffman said it would be conditions-based and informed by medical experts. The Pentagon is consulting with the governments of the District of Columbia, Virginia and Maryland. Policy and decisions are being reviewed and their release is anticipated in a matter of weeks.

Sulpizio identifies JRTC, Fort Polk as 'leadership factory'

By **CHUCK CANNON**

Command information officer

FORT POLK, La. — Since the early 1940s, Fort Polk (originally Camp Polk) has been a proving ground for Soldiers headed overseas to battle. Whether it was World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam, or Afghanistan and Iraq, the installation in the piney woods and abundant swamps of Central Louisiana has long been the Army's premier training site to prepare Soldiers for battle.

Unfortunately, because most of those who entered Fort Polk's gates were just passing through on the way to war, the post earned an unfair reputation as a place to avoid.

However, that "reputation" has been reversed due to recent leadership and Big Army's assistance in changing Fort Polk from a station of opportunity to a station of choice.

If you were to speak with Maj. Donald Sulpizio, outgoing Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk G-3, he would be quick to point out Fort Polk is one of the best assignments a Soldier could seek — both for its opportunity to receive training from the best the Army has to offer, to a quality of life that has become second to none.

Sulpizio was not new to Fort Polk when he was assigned as an Operations Group observer/controller/trainer in June 2017. He attended air assault school here in 2000 as a private. Later, as a lieutenant, company commander and battalion S-3, his unit participated in JRTC rotations.

"I understood the combat training center side, but I didn't understand the Fort Polk side of it at all," Sulpizio said. "I didn't understand quality of life; only what people told you. But I did understand the Box (training area)."

Sulpizio said he and his son Dominic were the Team Sulpizio advance party.

"We were moving from Fort Riley, Kansas, and I had just gotten home from Afghanistan a few weeks before that," he said. "As I drove onto the installation, there was a pit in my stomach. I wondered what I was asking of my Family. I had already asked so much based on my love of serving. It looked like status quo; like a time capsule of my time as a private, lieutenant and a captain. Like nothing had changed."

Sulpizio said he came to JRTC and Fort Polk prepared to lead Soldiers and make a contribution to his branch — aviation — and the Army.

"The OC/T job was beyond rewarding," he said. "While in Ops Group I also served as a rotational planner and served as the S-3/XO aviation trainer with Task Force Aviation."

Then came a job that Sulpizio said he was humbled to accept: JRTC and Fort Polk G-3. The Pennsylvania native said during his three-year tenure at Fort Polk, he watched an aggressive plan unfold to invest in the combat training center, modernize it and maintain pace to prepare units and leaders for war in decisive action and large-scale combat operations.

While the focus was justifiably on the JRTC's training platform, Sulpizio said just as importantly, he got to be a part of a collaborative team effort: An investment in Soldiers, their Families, the civilian workforce and contractors.

"The Army terms it 'quality of life,'" he said. "You read that if you invest in your people, your business will get better. What was beautiful was that during the past three years we really invest-



Above: Team Sulpizio, consisting of, from left, Dominic, 12, Maj. Donald Sulpizio, Noah, 6, Olivia, 14, Amanda Sulpizio, and Noah, 6, celebrate completing a Color Run on Fort Polk.

Right: Maj. Donald Sulpizio drives through the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk "Box" during a rotation.

ed in our people."

Growing up in farm country, Sulpizio said he has always enjoyed being part of a team.

"I've got a farming work ethic: You were surrounded by people who would do anything for you and you didn't leave until the job was done," he said. "That's very much JRTC and Fort Polk, on and off post."

In addition to being motivated by teamwork, Sulpizio said his Family inspires him.

"If they're not happy, it's hard to put on that uniform and go to work with enthusiasm," he said. "We raised our kids here for three years — critical years. Their time here will help make them into the adults they'll become one day, based on their interactions with good people and the quality of life."

Some of the opportunities Team Sulpizio par-

Please see **Sulpizio**, page 6



Ceremony

Continued from page 1

ber 11th to the on-going combat deployments we witness here at Fort Polk."

Frank said the Global War on Terror memorial, with its inscription of the names of 96 fallen Fort Polk Soldiers, is a reflection of the JRTC and Fort Polk's Warrior Ethos.

"What Soldiers throughout Fort Polk see in the names are acts of uncommon battlefield courage in Iraq and Afghanistan, fellow platoon members sharing a light-hearted joke before a Baghdad patrol, the valor of combat medics running into enemy fire to save the life of a wounded teammate in Nangahar, the compassion of American Soldiers assisting a poor Iraqi family, and the determination to never leave a fallen comrade," he said. "After this ceremony, take time to view the names on this monument; you will see these same sacrifices as you look at the names of our fallen Fort Polk Soldiers."

Frank also thanked Gold Star Families, local community leaders, veterans and installation leadership for viewing the Facebook live event.

"May we never forget how special it is to live in a nation that has brave citizen volunteers step forward to become members of the world's greatest military force," he said.

The history of Memorial Day actually began three years after the end of the Civil War, when the head of the Grand Army of the Republic, an organization of Union veterans, established Decoration Day as a time for the nation to decorate with flowers the graves of those who were killed during the war.

The first large observance was held May 30, 1868 at Arlington National Cemetery, across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C.

Various Washington officials, including Gen. and Mrs. Ulysses S. Grant, presided over the ceremonies. After speeches, children from the Sol-

diers' and Sailors' Orphan Home and members of the GAR made their way through the cemetery, strewing flowers on both Union and Confederate graves, reciting prayers and singing hymns.

Although several cities claimed to be the first to hold a Memorial Day ceremony, the "official birthplace" was designated by President Lyndon Johnson and Congress as Waterloo, New York, in 1966. There, a ceremony on May 5, 1866, honored local veterans who had fought in the Civil War. Businesses closed and residents flew flags at half-staff.

It was not until after World War I that the day was expanded to honor those who have died in all American wars. In 1971, Memorial Day was declared a national holiday by an act of Congress, though it is still often called Decoration Day. It was then also placed on the last Monday in May.

The crowd attending the first Memorial Day ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery was about 5,000 people. Then, as now, small American flags were placed on each grave — a tradition followed at many national cemeteries today. In recent years, the custom has grown in many families to decorate the graves of all departed loved ones.

To ensure the sacrifices of America's fallen heroes are never forgotten, in December 2000, the U.S. Congress passed and the president signed into law "The National Moment of Remembrance Act," creating the White House Commission on the National Moment of Remembrance. The commission's charter is to "encourage the people of the United States to give something back to their country, which provides them so much freedom and opportunity" by encouraging and coordinating commemorations in the United

Brig. Gen. Patrick D. Frank, commander, JRTC and Fort Polk, watches as Spc. Joshua D. Cardwell (left) and Sgt. Elvis V. Palarchie, both with Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital, raise the Gold Star Family Flag at Warrior Memorial Park during a Memorial Day ceremony May 21 at Fort Polk.



States of Memorial Day and the National Moment of Remembrance.

The National Moment of Remembrance encourages all Americans to pause wherever they are at 3 p.m. local time on Memorial Day (Monday, May 25) for a minute of silence to remember and honor those who have died in service to the nation. As Moment of Remembrance founder Carmella LaSpada states: "It's a way we can help put the memorial back in Memorial Day."

Sulpizio

Continued from page 3

ticipated in included: Fishing, the Directorate of Family Morale, Welfare and Recreation Color Run, the Geronimo 10K, movie nights — "we went to every one and ate MWR out of their popcorn and hot dogs" — and FreedomFest.

"Those opportunities allowed my children to see how great the Army culture is and how tight the community is," he said. "We're excited about the next adventure, but we're not excited to leave."

Sulpizio said if a friend were to ask if he would recommend the JRTC and Fort Polk as an assignment, the answer would be, "Absolutely yes."

"For professional growth — if you want to lead troops one day this is a leadership factory," he said. "And then I would let them talk to my wife and children who don't want to leave Fort Polk, because they have cherished memories here."

"We all want to be here. It's a cultural change of pride in the installation. It feels like a tactical Army unit, and it starts from the top with the CG. You're proud to be stationed at the JRTC and Fort Polk. When you come through the gate, you're proud of the professionalism and the appearance of the installation."

When the conversation turned to JRTC and

Fort Polk Commanding General Brig. Gen. Patrick D. Frank's leadership team, Sulpizio said the team members were "unwavering, and relentless in their commitment to our Soldiers, Army Families, civilians and contractors to ensure they are relevant, and that we are the premier combat training center" because our BCTs that come here deserve nothing less.

"I've never been part of a chain of command that was so service-oriented toward their people."

Sulpizio said much is asked of those who serve at JRTC and Fort Polk.

"The operational tempo is higher than anywhere else I've ever been," he said. "I've been deployed four times and I've never seen an operational tempo like this. I think we all recognize the sacrifice that takes. In return, and it starts at the top with General Frank and the command sergeant major, the garrison team and the senior leaders across the installation, there is a collective effort to be service-oriented and invest in people."

Sulpizio said Frank is an "inspirational leader" and the most engaged leader he's served with.

"He is engaged with everyone from senior leaders to young Soldiers in a PT formation," he said. "He listens to everyone and acts on what

they say. He's genuine because he lives it. It's real. He's invested in every line of effort on Fort Polk. And that culture spreads."

Part of that investment includes Families, Sulpizio said.

"We have an aggressive campaign of activities for Family resiliency," he said. "That's what we ask of our Families. My kids believe in our mission. They believe if I — and my battle buddies who wear this uniform — don't go to work, the Army is not going to be ready to fight and win. They're all in. That asks for a lot of resiliency."

"They had heard they were in the middle of nowhere. But from where we were at in 2017 to where we are now, I've really got to give a lot of credit to the headquarters staff. There is a steady investment both in and out of rotation to build Family resiliency so they can endure those late nights when we are out in the Box training or working on other issues for the mission."

Asked what he will miss most when he heads to his new assignment at the Pentagon, Sulpizio said, "The people. I'm going to miss the team. I hope to serve with them again. It's up to the Army whether or not I come back to Fort Polk one day, but if it's up to me and my Family, I know that it's an opportunity we would seek in the future. But I'll let the Army decide that."

Awardee

Continued from page 4

"It wasn't easy," because of the language barrier, she said.

She understood about a third of what they were telling her at the Military Entrance Processing Station and was unsure of everything she was committing to.

"I'm not a big fan of working outside," she said, so they put her in a job working inside — a human resources position, which required a high level of the English language.

"I met great people," she said, who helped and mentored her.

"The people around me supported and believed in me," she said. "They got me to where I am today."

At her first duty station, Fort Carson, Colorado, she was assigned to the 4th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Infantry Division. Her non-commissioned officer in charge was Sgt. 1st Class Jason Coulter, and Magee said he was the first leader "who truly believed in (her.)"

He taught her the importance of understanding each Soldier's motivation, she said.

"Know how to find your Soldiers' motivation," she said. "It's not until you understand them that you can put a team together."

She deployed to Jalalabad, Afghanistan, in May 2009. One of her duties was to make the mail run for her unit from Forward Operating Base Finley Shields to FOB Fenty.

After returning to Fort Carson in May 2010, the specialist grew closer to Spc. Michael Magee, a power generator mechanic. The two married the following year.

New rank

Magee said she has worked to understand the roles and responsibilities of all Soldiers.

"I'm more of a technical person," she said. "I really enjoy making the process better."

That's what attracted her to the warrant officer's role. As technical experts, she perceived their mission "was to make life easier."

She saw that NCOs were focused on taking care of Soldiers, while warrant officers were also focused on the system. "Is the system effective enough; is the (right) policy in place?" she asked as examples of things warrant officers may consider.

"Warrant officers take a broader view," she added.

She was a staff sergeant when she was appointed as an adjutant general warrant officer in 2016.

Warrant officers have a unique and wonderful community, adding that she's proud to be part of the cohort.

Remembering her heritage

Magee said she is also proud of her heritage. She does her best to join her family in celebrating the Chinese New Year, which falls in late January or early February, depending upon the lunar calendar.

"The Lunar New Year is about getting together and enjoying the food," she said. "I'm a huge foodie."

She also keeps in contact with her sister still working in the Fujian province. They keep in contact through online chatting apps.

"I visited her a few times in the past but not in recent years," said Magee.

Her favorite author goes by the pen name San-



Chief Warrant Officer 2 Meirong Magee (far left) with members of the 500th Military Intelligence Brigade staff at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. With their hands, they are flashing the shaka, a Hawaiian greeting, sometimes interpreted as "hang loose."

mao. After living in the Sahara Desert and traveling around Africa, Sanmao wrote one of her most acclaimed books, "The Stories of Sahara."

"I didn't think I'd like deserts, but I want to experience one because of Sanmao."

One of her biggest supporters is her mother, who came to visit her two years ago in Hawaii, along with her father and younger brother.

Aloha place

"Hawaii is such a spiritual, aloha place," she said. "I really enjoy it."

"The most relaxing thing is riding my Jeep around the island. There's nothing better than that," she said.

"The breeze is perfect. The weather is perfect. People are always friendly. I really enjoy Hawaii."

She and her husband, now a staff sergeant, have visited most of the other islands in Hawaii — Kauai, the big island of Hawaii, and Maui.

"Oahu is beautiful and has many of the best sights and beaches, but it is too crowded," she said. Maui is my favorite."

She likes to travel, hike and enjoys checking out different cultures and meeting new people.

New command

Magee is getting to know new people at the 25th Infantry Division, having just transferred there a few weeks ago from the 500th Military Intelligence Brigade.

The brigade commander there nominated her for the MacArthur award.

When she moves to a new location, she tries to spend time in one-on-one conversations to understand the Soldiers. Some have clear goals; others, she must "help find their motivation," she said.

"I wouldn't say that I can read people well, but I do my best to get to know them," she added.

Respecting each other is the most important thing, she said.

"The Army is a melting pot. I get to meet a lot of people from different cultures," she said.

She doesn't believe that peoples' values in China and America are that different. "I think human beings — regardless of race, color or country — are the same deep down," she said. They share the same core value of caring about each other.

It's important to care for your Soldiers, she said, "because it's about how you can serve them."

When not caring for Soldiers, Magee is volunteering for non-profit organizations on Hawaii. She has been spending her weekends assisting the North Shore Community Land Trust to "protect, steward and enhance the natural landscapes and cultural heritage," she said.

Once she retires from the Army, she said she'd like to dedicate her energy to serving a non-profit group.

"Leadership is about caring, being agile and serving others," she said. "The philosophy taught by a significant mentor, Command Sgt. Maj. Christian Carr, remains the same," she said.

"The Army has made me a better leader and taught me to understand the true meaning of serving others," she said.

(Editor's note: The chief of staff of the Army normally presents the MacArthur Leadership awards in May or early June at the Pentagon. This year, due to COVID-19, the ceremony has been tentatively moved to October.)

Mortuary affairs specialist bring closure to Families of Fallen Soldiers

By Staff Sgt. ASHLEY M. MORRIS
3rd BCT, 10th Mtn Div

FORT POLK, La. — “When you’re in advanced individual training, they train you to always be on guard when recovering remains, because you’ll be in combat zones,” explained Sgt. 1st Class Lorena Whitaker, a mortuary affairs specialist assigned to 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division. “When you’re in the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Agency, even though we’re all working hard, it is a relaxed environment — it’s different. We’re there to bring people home and help families get closure.”

Whitaker enlisted from Trujillo Alto, Puerto Rico in 2006, at the time, she was working on a biology degree, intending to obtain a master’s in forensics. She said her goal was to find a job that allowed her to work with the deceased.

“Even as a little girl, I was always interested in death,” said Whitaker. “I grew up on a farm, and was accustomed to seeing dead animals. I would occasionally see dead people, but I was more intrigued than horrified.”

The Army didn’t have forensics jobs, but her recruiter introduced her to mortuary affairs. This allowed Whitaker to help recover lost service members.

In 2008, shortly after arriving at her first duty station, Whitaker deployed to Iraq.

Whitaker worked at the mortuary collection point at Logistics Support Area Anaconda, Balad Air Base — Iraq. Mortuary collection points are usually located on or near air bases so the remains of fallen Soldiers are repatriated within 24 to 72 hours after their deaths.

Her first deployment was not what she expected.

“I had expected to go in with teams and recover Soldier’s but that wasn’t the case,” said Whitaker. “We were mostly in one location, and the remains came to us.”

During combat operations, the units are responsible for ensuring remains are received at the Modular Command Post System.

Whitaker said that working at collection points was both interesting and heartbreaking. During the peak of the Iraq war, her team would receive remains

from U.S. Soldiers, coalition forces and Iraqis.

“A lot of remains came through, but I wanted to be the one making sure they were taken care of,” Whitaker said. “Taking care of these Soldiers highlighted how awful war could be.”

A few years after returning from Iraq, Whitaker deployed to the Middle East again. This time she spent a year in Afghanistan as her brigade’s mortuary affairs liaison.

Whitaker’s responsibilities included assisting in remains collection, presumptive identification — using the Soldier’s record — and returning equipment and sensitive information to units.

“This deployment was different because I went outside of the collection points and saw what happened,” said Whitaker. “It helped me better understand my job. I learned Soldiers’ habits, such as where they hid stuff on themselves, and the best ways to establish positive identification.”

These skills proved useful for Whitaker during her assignment to the DPAA at Joint-Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii in 2013.

During her time with DPAA, Whitaker was able to go on three recovery missions to Laos, Germany and Japan.

The recovery teams searched for remains from previous U.S. conflicts.

In Laos, they searched for remains of service members who died in a plane crash during Vietnam. The search in Germany was due to a plane crash during World War II. In France, they searched for remains caused by a tank being destroyed during WWII.

When searching for service members lost to war, every clue found is important. Lost equipment or torn pieces of uniforms can be important during a search.

Whitaker said personnel on the recovery teams are trained to identify military items such as aircraft, parachutes and weapons, enabling teams to distinguish them from civilian items.

“You go to a place, and you feel that energy,” Whitaker said while explaining the atmosphere. “You want to soak it in. You are standing in a historical area, and it hits you that someone lost their lives there decades ago, fighting for our country.”



Sgt. 1st Class Lorena Whitaker, a mortuary affairs specialist assigned to 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, at Fort Polk, Louisiana, holds a picture of herself sifting through excavated dirt during a human-remains recovery mission in Le Mesnil-Tove, France. Whitaker participated in three recovery missions during her time at Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii.

During her three recovery missions, two service members were recovered in Germany and one in France. To date, one person has been identified, but Whitaker said she is hopeful the other two service members will be reunited with their families.

When reflecting on her time at DPAA, Whitaker said helping families gain closure was a bonus of the job.

“These families have lost loved ones,” said Whitaker. “The care and worry is passed down

through generations. They’re holding on to that person’s history, and the family’s legacy becomes tied to wanting closure for their lost service member. It’s important to give them closure.”

Whitaker is serving as the brigade Sexual Assault and Response Coordinator at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.

She hopes to receive an assignment at Dover AFB, Delaware, after completing her upcoming tour in Korea.

Wheelock Fitness Center employees unveil anvil

By **ANGIE THORNE**

Guardian staff writer

FORT POLK, La. — Wheelock Fitness Center is the most recent facility to have the distinction of an anvil sculpture gracing its entranceway at an unveiling ceremony held May 18.

Brig. Gen. Patrick D. Frank, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk commanding general, spoke to Wheelock Fitness Center employees before unveiling the seventh anvil of 10 to be placed in locations around Fort Polk and thanked them for their hard work.

"You play a critical role at Fort Polk. We wanted to acknowledge that by putting an anvil in front of Wheelock Fitness Center. You not only keep our Soldiers fit and ready for combat, but also help maintain our Family members' physical and mental resiliency, and that speaks to the spirit of everything you guys do," said Frank.

Frank said branding the "Forging Warrior the Spirit" motto is about seeing the anvils and being reminded of the importance of our mission to the Army and nation.

Cody Greathouse, Wheelock Fitness Center manager, said as the largest fitness center on Fort Polk, his team is honored to have an anvil placed in front of their facility.

"The anvil represents our important role in forging the Warrior Spirit," he said. "I think it will give our patrons a sense of pride. Soldiers are a huge part of the focus of what we do, but we also serve veterans, retirees and civilians. No matter which category they fall into, I think seeing the anvil at the entrance will be exciting because patrons will realize they are part of something larger than themselves."



ANGIE THORNE/GUARDIAN

Wheelock Fitness Center employees (from left) Sean McCroary, supervisory sports specialist, Rebecca Hovsepian, lead recreational assistant, Leslie Dixon, recreation specialist and Ezra Wadman, lead recreation assistant, watch as Cody Greathouse, Wheelock Fitness Center manager, unveils the latest anvil sculpture with Brig. Gen. Patrick D. Frank, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk commanding general, overseeing the reveal.

Ezra Wadman, lead recreation assistant, said he thinks the anvil symbolizes everything the Army stands for, including its focus on physical fitness.

"I think the anvil encourages Soldiers to go above and beyond as they pass it to enter the gym," he said.

With the stay-at-home order lifted, Wheelock Fitness Center opened its doors for business May 19. Hours of operation are Monday through Sunday from 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Currently, Fort Polk fitness centers are open to uniformed military personnel only. For more information email randy.p.behr.naf@mail.mil or call 353-3424.

New emergency leave available to Army civilians affected by COVID-19

By **JOSEPH LACDAN**

Army News Service

WASHINGTON — Army employees affected by COVID-19 will have the option of taking up to two weeks of emergency-paid sick leave in addition to other paid-leave entitlements.

The Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act, part of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, allows civilians across the Defense Department to take the emergency leave from April 1 through Dec. 31, provided that they meet certain conditions.

The new emergency sick leave will be separate from the normal sick leave civilians accrue and can be taken without using accrued sick leave.

"This is a new leave category provided to employees needing to use this option to care for family members or themselves, which is critically important as we all navigate our way through COVID-19," said Todd Fore, deputy assistant secretary of the Army for civilian personnel.

The leave is available to civilians required to remain in quarantine by federal, local or state quarantine order; employees advised by health-care professionals to self-quarantine; and employees experiencing COVID-19 symptoms with a medical diagnosis. Employees in these categories will qualify to receive full-pay emergency leave at their normal pay rate. They must provide documentation from the government agency issuing the quarantine order or the name of the health-care provider advising the self-quarantine.

Fore said employees who wish to take the

emergency leave should carefully read the requirements.

"It is complicated," he said. "I highly encourage anyone or supervisors of anyone who's using the leave to familiarize themselves with the significant level of detail regarding the hours."

Employees who provide care for individuals who have been subject to a federal or local stay-at-home order or have been advised by a doctor to remain home can qualify, but they will be paid two-thirds of their normal pay rate. This includes parents who care for a child under the age of 18 whose school may be closed or had their place of care closed due to quarantine restrictions.

"It could be that you don't have a leave bank and don't want to go into advanced leave status," Fore said. "This leave enables compensation while caring for yourself or a family member."

He said the civilian pay system has not been adjusted for individuals caring for others; employees who take sick leave for caregiving may receive their normal full pay for now. Those employees would subsequently be asked to repay one-third of the sum.

Fore said that the Defense Finance and Accounting Service will take back the owed sum in future pay periods in increments. He added that DFAS has been working on updating the leave system so employees will be paid the correct amount.

Fore reminds employees in care-provider categories choosing to take the emergency-leave option to work closely with supervisors to develop a balanced schedule and closely monitor their pay stubs.



COURTESY ARMY NEWS SERVICE

Part-time employees will also be eligible for additional sick leave, but the maximum amount of leave will be based on the average number of hours that employee works over a two-week period. Department of Defense employees who fall under certain exemptions may not be eligible for the emergency paid leave. For instance, agencies can exclude essential health-care providers from taking the leave.

Employees must have scheduled work hours in order to take the emergency leave, meaning that civilians in furlough status, employees who have been suspended or employees who are in leave-without-pay statuses will not be eligible. Emergency-paid leave cannot be used on holidays or in conjunction with other leave.

"An employee cannot receive two types of paid leave for the same hours," the summary of statutory and regulatory requirement in connection with the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act states.

Soldiers punished, separated for UCMJ violations

OSJA

FORT POLK, La. — At the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk, the commanding general and subordinate commanders take good order and discipline seriously. However, certain disciplinary issues continue to be prevalent across Fort Polk, such as breaking quarantine or isolation orders; violating General Order No. 1; driving under the influence of alcohol; wrongful use or possession of controlled substances; fraternization; and sexual assault.

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

- A sergeant, assigned to 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, was issued a General Officer Memorandum of Reprimand for driving under the influence of alcohol with a blood alcohol content of 0.081%. The CG directed filing the reprimand in the Soldier's Army Military Human Resource Record.

- A sergeant, assigned to 519th Military Police Battalion, was issued a General Officer Memorandum of Reprimand for violating quarantine orders, in violation of Article 90, Uniform Code

of Military Justice. The CG directed the reprimand be withdrawn and destroyed.

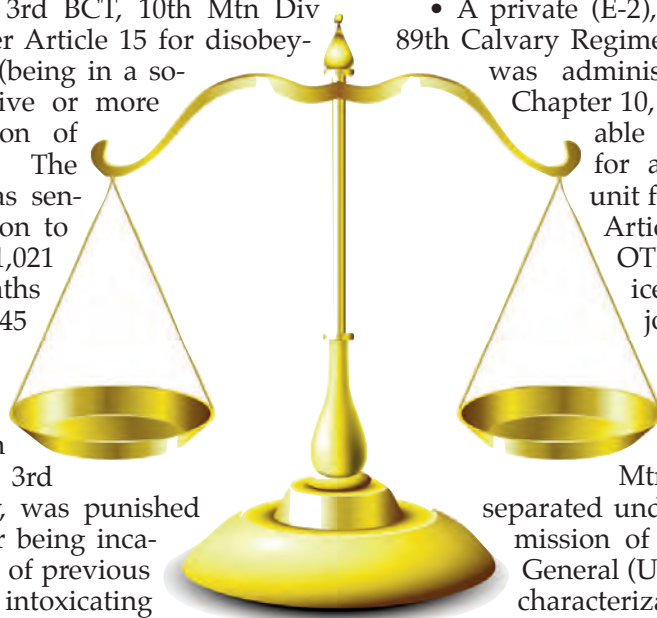
- A specialist, assigned to 2nd Battalion, 30th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd BCT, 10th Mtn Div was punished under Article 15 for disobeying a lawful order (being in a social gathering of five or more people), in violation of Article 92, UCMJ. The service member was sentenced to a reduction to E-3, forfeiture of \$1,021 pay for two months and extra duty for 45 days.

- A private first class, assigned to 2nd Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, 3rd BCT, 10th Mtn Div, was punished under Article 15 for being incapacitated as a result of previous overindulgence in intoxicating liquor and for disobeying a lawful order from a noncommissioned officer, in violation of Articles 112 and 91, UCMJ. The service

member was sentenced to a reduction to E-2, forfeiture of \$476 pay, extra duty for 14 days and restriction for 14 days.

- A private (E-2), assigned to 3rd Squadron, 89th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd BCT, 10th Mtn Div, was administratively separated under Chapter 10, with an Other Than Honorable characterization of service for absenting himself from his unit for 14 months, in violation of Article 86, UCMJ. Generally, an OTH characterization of service results in the loss of a majority of a servicemember's VA benefits.

- A private, assigned to 710th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd BCT, 10th Mtn Div, was administratively separated under Chapter 14-12c(2) (Commission of a Serious Offense), with a General (Under Honorable Conditions) characterization of service for wrongful use of a controlled substance. Generally, this characterization of service results in the loss of a service member's educational benefits.



New family support rules released detailing Soldier obligations

OSJA

FORT POLK, La. — A new Army Directive, Enhanced Interim Financial Support, now requires Soldiers to make an additional support payment equaling the Basic Allowance for Housing-Differential.

Soldiers residing within the United States are required to make an immediate one-time payment of BAH—DIFF to his/her non-active-duty spouse. This obligation is temporary and designed to cover food and necessary expenses that initially arise upon separation.

If the spouse resides outside the United States, without access to a U.S. court, this additional payment will continue until the spouse returns to the U.S. or until the divorce is finalized.

Unlike the AR 608-99 requirement — described below — this support requirement is upheld even if the spouse lives in government-provided housing, such as Corvias.

This obligation cannot be met by paying non-government housing expenses.

A Soldier can be relieved from this requirement under certain, limited circumstances by a battalion-level commander.

Army Regulation 608-99 establishes a Soldier's obligation to his dependents. Soldiers are obligated to make payments established by court orders. If there is no court order, written agreements may be established between spouses regarding the amount of support necessary.

This agreement can be a written document signed by both spouses, but it must accurately and unambiguously reflect the true intent of both parties.

Once the agreement becomes legally enforceable, Soldiers are required to pay the stated amount of support, unless a court directs otherwise.

Absent a lawful court order or binding written agreement, AR 608-99 requires that Soldiers pay support to dependents in the amounts detailed in the non-locality BAH rates, BAH reserve component/ transit with dependents schedule.



The payment amount is based on rank; it is not based on whether the Soldier receives BAH or the number of dependents he/she may have.

If dependents live in government housing, Soldiers will not be mandated to make additional support payments.

If non-government housing is provided for dependents, such as making rental or mortgage payments, then Soldiers are entitled to a credit towards the financial obligation outlined by AR 608-99.

Credit is not received for paying cell phone charges, monthly cable bills, car loan payments, insurance, credit card invoices or other recurring debts.

If family support payments are court ordered, then Soldiers make payments as mandated in the

judgment. If there is a written agreement, then Soldiers will begin payments on the date indicated in the document.

Otherwise, monthly support payments will begin on the date spouses cease residing together, no later than the first day of the following month.

In addition to the above requirements, the Enhanced Interim Financial Support directive now requires Soldiers to make an additional support payment in an amount equal to the BAH—DIFF.

If you have questions about whether you qualify for a waiver, or other questions regarding family-support matters, contact the Soldier and Family Services legal division at Fort Polk at 531-2580, or visit the office at 7090 Alabama Ave., next to the Showboat Theater.

Briefs

Patriot Pet contest

Pets are great companions during the long weeks at home due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This May, pets can fetch 10 lucky military shoppers a combined \$3,000 in Army & Air Force Exchange Service gift cards — without having to set paw outside the house.

Through May 31, authorized shoppers at Fort Polk, and Exchanges worldwide, can send in a patriotic-themed picture of their four-legged friends for a chance to win the Patriot Pet, Just Say "Treat," Photo Contest.

Two grand-prize winners will each receive a \$500 gift card, while eight second-place winners will each receive a \$250 gift card.

Authorized Exchange shoppers, aged 18 or older, can find complete contest rules and enter to win at www.shopmyexchange.com/Sweepstakes.

Winners will be selected on or about June 15.

Religious support

Beginning May 24, congregants are welcome to attend services at the Main Post Chapel under social distancing and 25% occupancy guidelines.

Live-stream services will continue as well. Child-care and education services will not be provided at this time.

For more information on religious activities on Fort Polk visit [@FortPolkChapel-Page](https://twitter.com/FortPolkChapel).

BJACH mask policy

Patients and visitors to Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital will wear cloth face wraps.

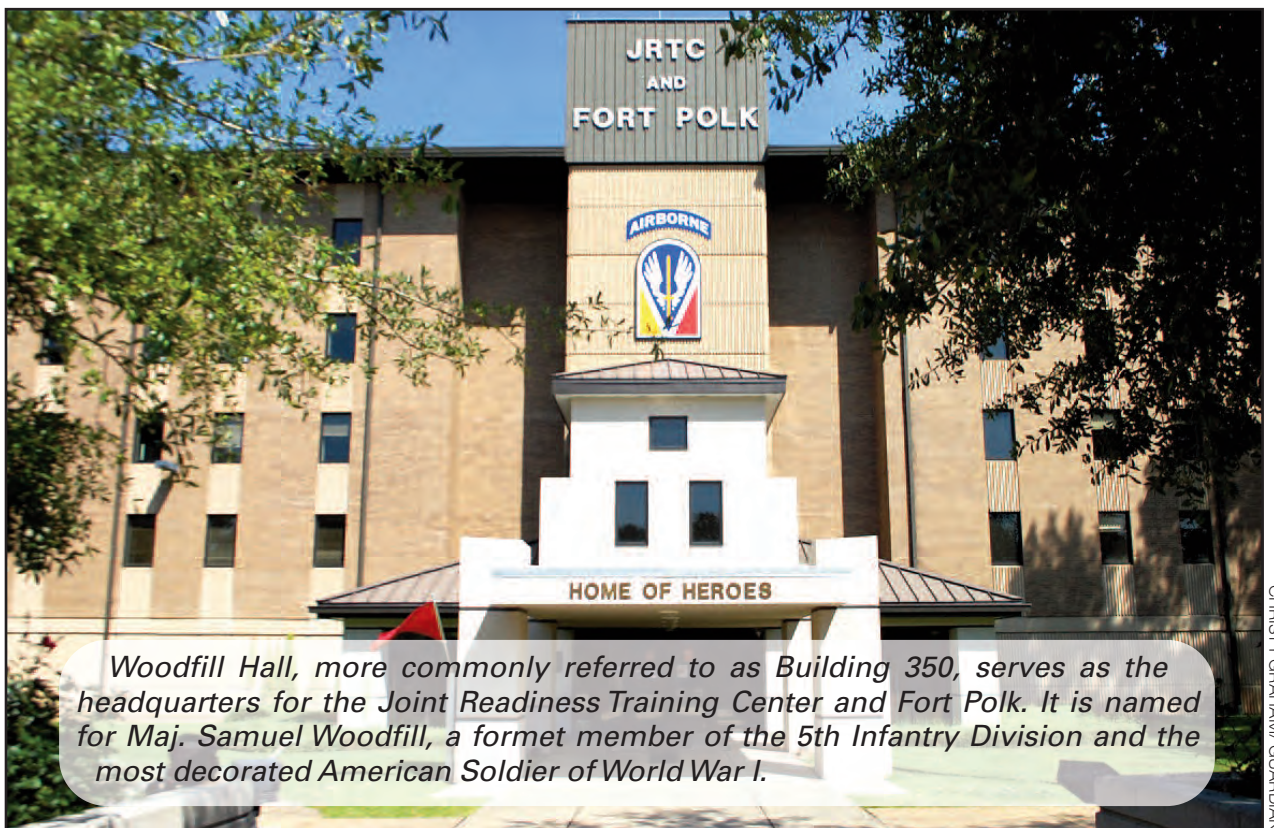
Patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should wear surgical facemasks. Infant carriers can be covered with a light blanket. Children under age 2 are not required to wear facemasks.

Tide sweepstakes

Until June 4, The Army & Air Force Exchange Service and Procter and Gamble are giving away four Super Bowl LV tickets in the Greatest of All Tides Sweepstakes. Enter at www.shopmyexchange.com/sweepstakes.

AAFES mask policy

Due to increased facility use, face coverings are now mandatory throughout Army and Air Force Exchange Service locations, including the Main Post Exchange Food Court, to protect the community from COVID-19 transmission.



CHRISTY GRAHAM/ GUARDIAN

Woodfill Hall honors American Soldier, hero

By **CHUCK CANNON**

Command information officer

FORT POLK, La. — Each day, hundreds of Soldiers and civilians enter and exit the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk's headquarters building, familiarly known as "Building 350."

But many of those same people would be hard-pressed to tell you the proper name of the structure, whose name it shares, and the background behind its namesake.

The building's name is Woodfill Hall, named for Medal of Honor recipient Maj. Samuel Woodfill.

During World War I, Woodfill earned the Medal of Honor for a display of rifle marksmanship that was at least as equally impressive as the exploits of fellow World War I hero Sgt. Alvin York. Interestingly, the two events happened within days of each other.

Woodfill joined the Army in 1901 at age 18 and served in various assignments to include the Philippines, Alaska and Texas.

In 1917, he was promoted to first lieutenant, having served in the enlisted ranks to that point. In the fall of 1918, he was sent to France with thousands of others in the American Expeditionary Force. He served in the 60th Infantry Division, and arrived in France as the six-week-long Meuse-Argonne battle was taking place.

On the morning of Oct. 12, Woodfill's unit was in the Meuse-Argonne battle just outside the French town of Cunel. Woodfill took two men out on a patrol to find German machinegun positions. The day was foggy, and the unit faced blistering artillery and machinegun fire.

As Woodfill and his men approached the village of Cunel, he studied the terrain for the most likely places to locate machineguns. The first to stand out was a church tower an estimated 300 yards away. After watching it for a few minutes, Woodfill saw muzzle flashes confirming the presence of a machinegun. He aimed at the muzzle flash, then moved his point of aim back to where the gunner's head would be and fired, killing the gunner. He waited until the next man on the gun crew took his place, then killed him too. There were five men in the gun crew, he had five shots in his rifle, and he got them all.

Woodfill wasn't done. The next likely spot was a stable. After watching it, a machinegun was found there too. He fired one round and the gun went quiet.

The third likely spot took a little maneuvering on Woodfill's part. He began crawling and eventually took cover in a shell hole. As was the case with many shell holes in WWI, this one still had the remains of mustard gas collected in it. He got out, but not before suffering from its effects. Woodfill managed to get within 40 yards of the enemy, taking cover in a ditch.

Once again, five rounds to the head killed five crewmen. But there were more than five crewmen there. A sixth ran from the site, and Woodfill grabbed up the 1911 pistol he had laid on the ground in front of him and shot him with one round.

When Woodfill moved up to inspect the site, he found another crewman and shot him with the 1911 as well.

Woodfill began looking for a fourth machine-

Please see **Woodfill**, page 12



Woodfill

Woodfill

Continued from page 11

gun nest, shooting a German sniper out of a tree in the process. Once again, Woodfill located the gun and killed its five crewmembers, reloaded, and shot three ammunition bearers.

The sharpshooter continued his search and located another machinegun, and took out its five crewmembers, falling back into a trench for cover. In the trench, two German Soldiers attacked and Woodfill dispatched them with a pickaxe.

This was the end of the war for Woodfill, since he was evacuated and treated for the effects of mustard gas until after the war was over.

On Feb 19, 1919, General John J. "Black-jack" Pershing personally presented Woodfill with the Medal of Honor and promoted him to captain. Pershing praised Woodfill, because before he went over to France, Pershing said he wanted American forces to shoot and fight rather than occupy trenches for months on end. Woodfill gave him just what he wanted.

The French awarded him the Croix de Guerre with palm, and made him a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor.

The Italians awarded him the Merito di Guerra.

Montenegro gave him the Cross of Prince Danilo, First Class.

Woodfill died Aug. 10, 1951.

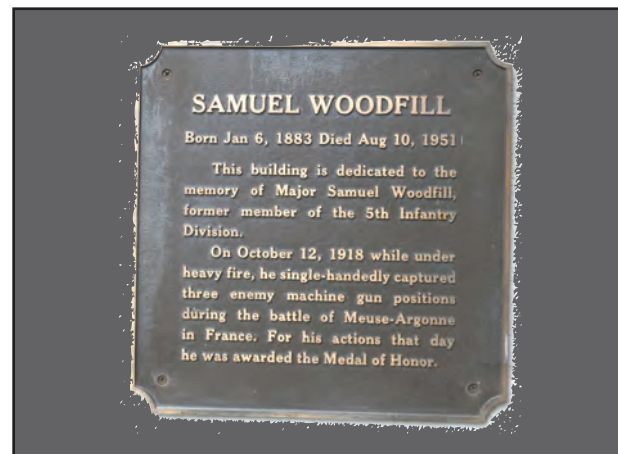
So, the next time you walk into Building 350, or more correctly, Woodfill Hall, think about the Medal of Honor and the man for who the structure is named, and enter with pride at being, like Woodfill, Army Strong.



Located outside Woodfill hall, the Freedom Oak was dedicated by the Fort Polk Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers Program in 2019 "to the Soldiers deployed to (Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom) who were killed in action or seriously wounded."



This M5 anti-tank Howitzer sits outside of Woodfill Hall, "as a ceremonial salute gun on Army posts," being withdrawn from service after World War II.



A plaque listing the exploits of Maj. Samuel Woodfill, 5th Infantry Division, is located near the entrance to Woodfill Hall.

Helping Korean War veterans receive Ambassador for Peace Medal

By **CHRISTY GRAHAM**

Guardian editor

FORT POLK, La. — Retired Master Sgt. Jesse Campos, member of the Military Order of the Purple Heart and service officer for the Korean War Veterans Association, is coordinating an effort to help Korean War veterans receive their Ambassador for Peace Medal.

The medal is defined as an "expression of appreciation from the Korean government to United States service men and women who served in the Korean War," according to kwva.us.

Veterans eligible for the medal served during the Korean War between June 25, 1950 and July 27, 1953 or participated in the United Nations peacekeeping operations, lasting until 1955.

Campos has helped six veterans apply for their medals; he also reached out to Korean War veterans' family members, as the medal can be awarded posthumously.

Given four more applications, the Korean consulate in Houston will send a representative to present the medals at a 70th Korean War anniversary celebration. Organized by Campos, the event is held June 25 at the First United Methodist Church in Leesville.

To apply, veterans or their family members must provide a copy of the service member's DD-214 or discharge papers from active duty, along with a completed application.

Applications can be downloaded from the kwva.us website or located on the JRTC and Fort Polk Facebook page.

To receive the medals by a consulate representative at the ceremony, applicants must submit their packets by May 30. Materials should be given to Reverend Sean Cho at the First United Methodist Church at 202 North Fifth St., Leesville. Campos said veterans or family members who don't make that deadline "will still receive their awards by mail."

"I need all the help I can get," Campos said regarding his search for Korean War veterans. If you or a loved one served in the Korean War, please complete and submit an application by the deadline.

Campos encourages the Fort Polk and Leesville community to support and celebrate Korean War veterans at the event next month.

The Korean War's start was marked as the North Korean People's Army crossed the 38th Parallel and invaded South Korea on June 25, 1950.

This line was an agreement between the U.S. and Soviet Union after World War II to temporarily divide Korea at the 38th Parallel to oversee the removal of Japanese forces according to history.state.gov.

Leading the United Nations-authorized force, the U.S. successfully pushed the North Korean army back above the divide. By 1953, the two



Picture is the Ambassador for Peace Medal, awarded to Korean War veterans who served between June 25, 1950 and July 27, 1953 or during the UN peacekeeping operations until 1955.

sides reached "an uneasy truce, thus crystallizing the division between North and South that exists today."

The JRTC and Fort Polk Qualified Recycling Program takes the following recyclable materials:



Brass casings



Scrap metal



aluminum



Lead acid batteries



Cardboard



White paper



Mixed paper



Used cooking and motor oil



#1 plastic



Used ink toner

Fort Polk Recycling Center opens, encourages participation

By **ANGIE THORNE**

Guardian staff writer

FORT POLK, La. — Like everything else, Fort Polk's Qualified Recycling Program's Recycling Center, bldg 3620/3622, located at the corner of Georgia and Maine avenues, had to close down during the COVID-19 stay-at-home order. Now that the order has lifted, Terrill Turner, Directorate of Public Works Environmental and Natural Resources Management Division, environmental protection specialist installation recycling program manager, said he wants to get the word to the Fort Polk community that the QRP Recycle Center is open for business.

Turner said he encourages folks to bring their recycling to the center. The QRP's hours are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

"It will be business as usual with the exception of implementing new safety procedures, such as social distancing and wearing masks, in addition to wearing our normal safety equipment. People are welcome to come inside QRP to recycle. They can drive through the bay and we will take the recyclable materials from their vehicle," said Turner. "That option is important when they recycle something that doesn't belong in one of the bins outside."

Kristoffer Rector, QRP operations manager, said the Fort Polk community could continue to use their 24-hour, drop-off bins in front of QRP's gates.

"I don't want people to be scared with everything that's going on. They can come down to the recycle center; and if it's supposed to go in the bins, they can throw their stuff in and never see us," he said.

The bins are for aluminum cans, cardboard and number one plastics.

QRP recycles a wide spectrum of items — cooking oil, used motor oil, paper, cardboard, number one plastics and aluminum.

Turner emphasized that the Recycling Center only takes number one plastics.

"People tend to bring their other, higher-numbered plastics; we try to take out what we don't recycle, but we aren't designed to sort through the different types of plastic," he said.

Recyclables processed by the Recycling Center are sold to vendors throughout the U.S. After accounting for operational costs and new equipment purchases, a garrison board of directors, called the QRP committee, decides how to allocate remaining profits.

"The money made at QRP makes us self-sufficient. Additional profits allow us to support FreedomFest; Riches for



The Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk Recycling Center, at the corner of Georgia and Maine avenues, is open and ready to help the Fort Polk community recycle.



Chris Bergeron (left) and Eddie Meridith, QRP technicians, carry shredded paper into the recycling center.



Eddie Meridith (left) and Chris Bergeron, QRP technicians put several bags of shredded paper onto the conveyor belt to be baled.

Recycling — a program that gives back to the units that recycle; pollution prevention; energy projects; environmental support, such as the annual Earth Day; restocking Catfish Cove; and prize donations for the kids at the Catfish Derby," said Turner. "Projects are submitted to the board. They review the projects and distribute QRP money for those projects. One of the latest projects helped finance upgraded LED lighting at an airfield hangar."

Submitted projects must fall under one of four categories: Pollution prevention, energy, safety and Directorate of Family Morale, Welfare and Recreation.

Turner said that's why the communi-

ty should keep recycling; they are not only helping the environment but the installation as a whole.

"That money is used to complete proj-

Please see **Recycle**, page 14

BJACH Health Promotion recommends physical activities

By GENEVA MERIDITH
BJACH

FORT POLK, La. — May is National Physical Fitness and Sports Month; in this unforeseen time when people are trying to adhere to the safety paramaters of COVID-19, it has never been more important to be physically active.

Physical fitness doesn't have to be a daunting task; it can be whatever you imagine it to be. Just keep your body moving, working the different muscle groups.

Challenge yourself by setting goals, starting an activity journal and finding a partner to hold you accountable and encourage you.

If you're a sedentary individual, start off slow with walking, dancing or playing outdoor games with your children or grandchildren. Whether you're in your yard or a park, there's nothing like open space inspire movement.

While they may not always show it, your children will get a kick out of seeing you act like a kid again.

Try to plan different outside activities each week, such as turning your backyard into an obstacle course and rotate the challenges.

Here are a few more ideas:

- Make and run an obstacle course.
- Take on the high seas with a game of pirate ship at <https://www.helpsteaching.com/tests/833877/pirate-ship-game>.
- Design, build and play your own mini-golf course.
- Seek treasure or discover nature with a scavenger hunt.
- Play a game of soccer, volleyball, flag football or another team sport.
- Run relay races.
- Strategize as a team in a game of capture-the-flag.
- Get messy — play in the mud, have a frozen T-shirt race, engage in a shaving-cream battle or even slip on a waterslide covered in chocolate syrup.

For more activity suggestions, visit <https://health.gov/MoveYourWay/Activity-Planner/activities/>.

Keeping the fun going on rainy days.

Rainy weather can be challenging for families with rambunctious children. Kids need to move, but a string of poor weather can dampen their spirits. Don't let the weather impede your fitness goals. Instead, roll with the rain and keep the family moving.



- Play a round of indoor hide-and-seek.
- Challenge the family to a game of fitness bingo.
- Build a blanket fort and play in it.
- Play charades or other movement games at <https://www.helpsteaching.com/tests/833835/charades-cards-animals> or <https://www.helpsteaching.com/tests/834067/animal-movement-activity-cards>.

Please see BJACH, page 15



Recycle

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ects and finance events that benefit the Fort Polk community. We want them to know we appreciate everything the community does," he said.

A return client to the Fort Polk Recycling Center, Dennis Kay, said he thinks the center is a convenient and beneficial facility.

"It's the responsible place to bring items so they don't end up as litter or in the trash. These guys do a good job," said Kay.

Another program QRP promotes is the Re-STORE — the program keeps perfectly good office supplies, like file cabinets and desks, out of landfills and saves the government money by using the items for other units, instead of buying new items. Units can bring excess office supplies to QRP for storage, and others can sign out what they need, free of charge.

Rector said the recycling at the Fort Polk Recycling Center helps sustain a better future.

"Protecting the environment is essential. We are saving trees by recycling cardboard and making new products out of it. We are talking about millions of pounds of cardboard being saved from landfills

each year," he said. "The culture is changing for the better."

Chris Bergeron, QRP technician, said the Fort Polk Recycling Center sees tons of recyclable materials come through its doors.

"I think our work impacts Fort Polk in a positive way because we are accepting items commonly found on the side of roads, in ditches or landfills — what would otherwise be classified as trash," he said.

People move to Fort Polk from all over the Army.

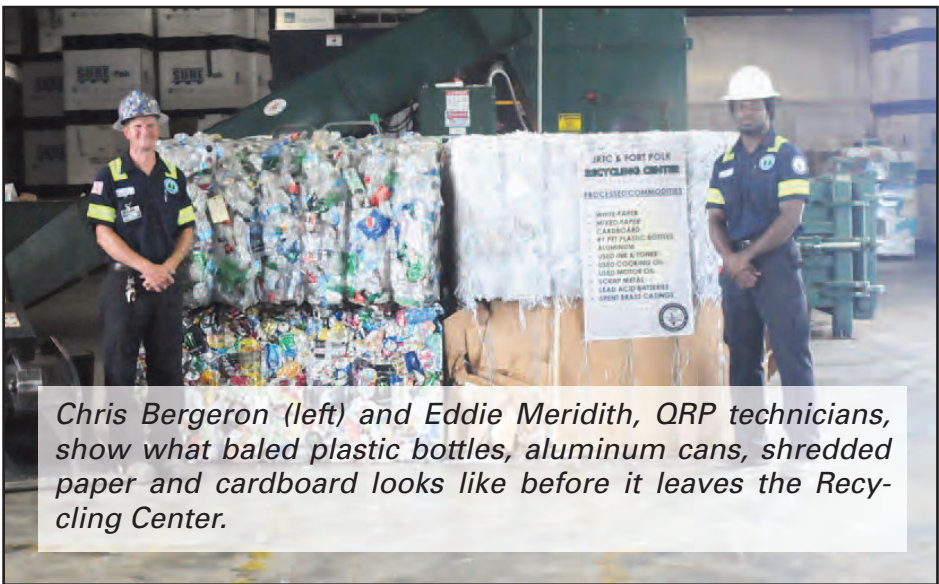
Eddie Meridith, QRP technician, said one of the first things he sees people look for in their new home is a place to recycle.

"What we do is important to the Fort Polk community and the environment," he said.

Follow The Fort Polk Recycling Program on Facebook for tips on recycling and reducing waste and additional information on Fort Polk recycling events.

"People can find articles, post events and education and craft projects on the page," said Turner.

For more information call 531-7556.



Chris Bergeron (left) and Eddie Meridith, QRP technicians, show what baled plastic bottles, aluminum cans, shredded paper and cardboard looks like before it leaves the Recycling Center.



Pictured are aluminum, plastic bottles and cardboard recycling bins that sit in front of Fort Polk recycling.



Contact unit voting assistance to prepare for 2020 Presidential Primary

JRTC and FORT POLK ASSISTANCE OFFICE

FORT POLK, La. — Are you ready to vote in the upcoming November 2020 election?

Whether you are a Louisiana resident, recently moved to Fort Polk, just returned from deployment or are about to deploy overseas, you want your vote and your family's vote to count.

For more information about voting or how to receive an absentee ballot, contact your Unit Voting Assistance Officer. If you cannot reach your UVAO, please contact the Fort Polk Installation Voting Assistance Officer 1st Lt. Joella Ross by phone at 353-5649 or by email at joella.j.ross.mil@mail.mil.

You can also contact the IVAO by chat, video or voice conference using the new CVR environment with Microsoft Teams at joella.r.ross.mil@cvt.mil.

The chart at right shows the updated election dates per state and territory as of May 1. The dates are subject to change.

A dash instead of a date represents that there are no specific dates; in this case, you need to mail your ballot at least three days before the election on Nov. 3.



2020 Presidential Primary Election by State and Territory			
State	Presidential Primary	State Primary	Runoff Primary (if necessary)
Alabama	March 3	March 3	July 14
Alaska	—	August 18	—
American Samoa	—	—	—
Arizona	March 17	August 4	—
Arkansas	March 3	March 3	March 31
California	March 3	—	—
Colorado	March 3	June 30	—
Connecticut	August 11	August 11	—
Delaware	June 2	September 15	—
District of Columbia	June 2	June 2	—
Florida	March 17	August 18	—
Georgia	June 9	June 9	August 11
Guam	—	August 29	—
Hawaii	—	August 8	—
Idaho	March 10	May 19	—
Illinois	March 17	March 17	—
Indiana	June 2	June 2	—
Iowa	—	June 2	—
Kansas	—	August 4	—
Kentucky	June 23	June 23	—
Louisiana	June 20	November 3	—
Maine	March 3	July 14	—
Maryland	June 2	June 2	—
Massachusetts	March 3	September 1***	—
Michigan	March 10	August 4	—
Minnesota	March 3	August 11	—
Mississippi	March 10	March 10	June 23
Missouri	March 10	August 4	—
Montana	June 2	June 2	—
Nebraska	—	May 12	—
Nevada	—	June 9	—
New Hampshire	February 11***	September 8	—
New Jersey	July 7	July 7	—
New Mexico	June 2	June 2	—
New York	June 23	June 23	—
North Carolina	March 3	March 3	June 23
North Dakota	—	June 9	—
Ohio	—	March 17	—
Oklahoma	March 3	June 30	August 25
Oregon	May 19	May 19	—
Pennsylvania	June 2	June 2	—
Puerto Rico	April 26*/June 7**	June 7	—
Rhode Island	June 2	September 8	—
South Carolina	February 29*	June 9	June 23
South Dakota	June 2	June 2	—
Tennessee	March 3	August 6	—
Texas	March 3	March 3	July 14
Utah	March 3	June 30	—
Vermont	March 3	August 11	—
Virgin Islands	—	August 1	—
Virginia	March 3	June 23	—
Washington	March 10	August 4	—
West Virginia	June 9	June 9	—
Wisconsin	April 7	August 11	—
Wyoming	—	August 18	—

BJACH

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- Pretend to belt out tunes in a family lip-sync battle.
- Put on a family talent show.
- Read and act out a movement story or video.
- Kick up your heels and play a dance video game.
- Get outside and go puddle jumping.

Get more adventurous for your teens

Teens are more reluctant than younger children to spend time as a family. Engage them with these high-adventure activities and embrace your wild side along the way!

As the temperatures rise, make sure your family is well hydrated by drinking plenty of water. Protecting your skin with the proper sunscreen and your eyes with the appropriate eyewear and take breaks from the heat by resting in a cool, shady area.

If you are challenged by physical limitations, you can always modify your activities according to your health-care provider's recommendations. These actions are lifestyle adjustments for a healthier you. Say goodbye to the recliner days and remote controllers; instead, put a spring in your step, and say hello to physical fitness.

For more information on healthy lifestyle changes, contact Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital — Health Promotion at 531-6880 for enrollment in the following classes: Weight management, diabetes multidisciplinary and tobacco cessation.

Other available resources are nutrition care at 531-3125 and the Army Wellness Center at 531-3055.

Editor's note: For more on post-wide scavenger hunt, see flyer on page 16.



JRTC AND FORT POLK FAMILY AND MWR PHASE ONE OPERATING HOURS

**ALL FITNESS CENTERS OPEN TO
UNIFORMED MILITARY PERSONNEL ONLY**

WHEELLOCK FITNESS CENTER MONDAY - SUNDAY 0900 - 1900	CANTRELL FITNESS CENTER MONDAY - SUNDAY 0900 - 1900
WARRIOR FITNESS CENTER MONDAY - FRIDAY 0900 - 1900 SATURDAY, SUNDAY & HOLIDAYS 0900 - 1800	HOME OF HEROES FITNESS CENTER MONDAY - FRIDAY 0900 - 1900 SATURDAY 0900 - 1300 SUNDAY & HOLIDAYS CLOSED

ARTS & CRAFTS CENTER OPEN BY APPOINTMENT ONLY Wednesday - Friday 1000 - 1800 Saturday 0900 - 1900 PLEASE CALL (337) 531-1980 FOR APPOINTMENT	AUTO CRAFT CENTER OPEN BY APPOINTMENT ONLY Monday, Thursday & Friday 1500 - 2200 Saturday, Sunday & Holidays 0900 - 1700 PLEASE CALL (337) 531 - 6149 FOR APPOINTMENT	RECREATIONAL SHOOTING RANGE THURSDAY - FRIDAY 1100 - 1800 SATURDAY, SUNDAY & HOLIDAYS 1000 - 1800
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**THE FORGE BAR AND GRILL IS OPEN FOR TAKE-OUT
ORDERS ONLY
MONDAY- SATURDAY 1100-1400**

**FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK; FORT POLK FAMILY AND MWR
OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE: WWW.POLK.ARMYMWR.COM**



16/ Guardian
May 22, 2020