



FORGING THE

WARRIOR SPIRIT

THE JRTC & FORT POLK GUARDIAN

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Home of Heroes @ Fort Polk, LA

Aug. 7, 2020

STRIKE!

Screaming Eagles barge to JRTC Rotation 20-09

By **CHUCK CANNON**

Command information officer

ALEXANDRIA, La. — As the Joint Readiness Training Center prepares to put the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) through the crucible of JRTC Rotation 20-09, it's with the knowledge that not only will the training provided by the world-class OPFOR (Opposing Force) Geronimos and observer, controller/trainers prepare the Screaming Eagles for future combat, it also shows Forces Command the viability of moving an infantry brigade combat team to the nation's Southern ports via the United States' river system.

Add the economic impact of nearly 10,000 Soldiers coming to Central Louisiana, along with more than 2,000 pieces of equipment arriving by barge and off-loaded at the Central Louisiana Regional Port (CLRP) before convoying to the JRTC during the next two months for Rotations 20-09 and 20-10, and it's understandable the excitement shown by the area's political leaders.

Strategically deploying forces

Brig. Gen. Patrick D. Frank, commander, JRTC and Fort Polk, said lessons learned during JRTC rotations — such as moving equipment by barge — are important for the Army.

"Barge operations here at the Port of Alexandria are significant because they assist the Army in understanding how to strategically deploy our forces," Frank said. "The division (101st Abn Div) sending a brigade combat team from Fort Campbell (Kentucky), coming along the water-



Barge decks carrying equipment belonging to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) are lined up next to the Central Louisiana Regional Port in Alexandria, La., July 29 after their trip along U.S. waterways from Fort Campbell, Ky. The 2nd BCT, 101st Abn Div will participate in Rotation 20-09 at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk, La.

CHUCK CANNON/GUARDIAN

ways of the United States, allows the Army to see how we can move large formations to our Southern ports."

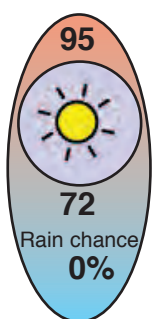
Frank said that's one of the important parts of deployability that are learned at JRTC.

"Whether we come by barge, rail, strategic air

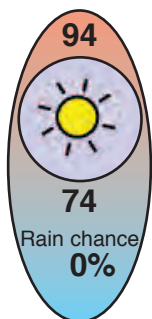
or commercial line haul, all of those are different aspects of deploying formations that we learn every rotation at JRTC," he said. "That goes right back to the Army as far as how we would deploy

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Saturday



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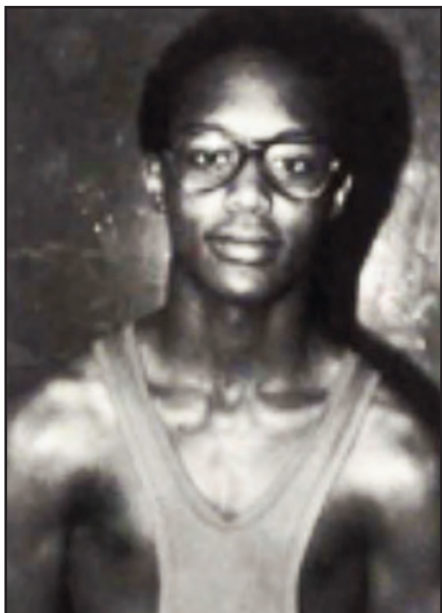
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Viewpoint

In our view

Guardian staff asked the JRTC and Fort Polk community,
"In a few words, what is your favorite childhood memory?"
Here are their responses:



Terrence Carter: "It was my junior year in high school and I went to the state wrestling meet. I wrestled at 98 lbs and was in St John Arena, at Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio. All the lights went on then spotlights highlighted the flag and they started playing the national anthem. Cameras were flashing in the audience of more than 20,000 people. I got beat, but ended up in third place that year in Ohio."



Jenna Muha: "Hiking in Glacier National Park. We actually were body sledding and fell into a deep hole and had to dig our way out, but it was so fun!"



Carol Hardy: "My favorite childhood memory consists of the measures my mom (Jean Pratt — pictured above) would take before we traveled to my grandmother's house. She would make sure everything was fresh and clean. That included washing the sheets and comforters and placing clean linens on the beds. It was great because when we came back home everything was in place and when I took my shower, I would climb into my fresh and clean linen. I do this very thing today."



Tresa Tolley (left): "My best childhood memories were spent in Tennessee with my cousin and best friend, Jennifer, at my grandma's house."



Duran Davis: "Every three years I would enjoy our entire family coming together in my hometown of Tchula, Mississippi. We would have the Davis family reunion. This was very significant to me as a kid, to learn our family history, reconnect with family and have some of my greatest historical memories."



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

R2 performance center

The R2 Performance Center hosts a brown-bag “Lunch and Learn: Building Trust in the Workplace” the first Wednesday of each month through Dec. 2. The workshop is held from noon-12:45 p.m. at the R2 Performance Center, bldg. 2380, 8148 Alabama Ave.

The event is open to Soldiers, Family members or Department of the Army civilians interested in discussing performance and resilience skills, effective communication and building trust, cohesion and positive relationships in the workplace.

Slots are first come, first served. Due to COVID-19 protective posture, only 11 seats are available. For more details or to register call 531-2427.

Vehicle release

The Directorate of Emergency Services Traffic Section will release the following vehicles to a towing company for disposal on Aug. 19, if they remain unclaimed. Vehicles are listed with the last four numbers of their VIN number.

If one of these vehicles belongs to you, please contact the Fort Polk Police Traffic Section at 531-1806/2677.

2002	Pontiac	Bonneville	3776
2003	Chevrolet	Cavalier	7798
2002	Pontiac	Firebird	4585
2002	Ford	Taurus	0589
2005	Nissan	Sentra	7413
2010	Chevrolet	Malibu	9609
1999	Jeep	Cherokee	5435
2002	Nissan	Altima	5680
2012	Toyota	Tacoma	0296
2007	Pontiac	Grand Prix	1872
2005	Mitsubishi	Galant GTS	8409
2007	Toyota	Camry	7497
2008	Ford	F250	1075
2002	Subaru	Impreza	6083

Suicide prevention

There will be Ask, Care and Escort Suicide Intervention skills training on Sept. 4, 11, 18 and 25 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in bldg 4275 on Polk Army Airfield. The course, recommended for sergeants and above, teaches participants to recognize when someone may have thoughts of suicide and how to properly address the situation. The class has a maximum size of 10 students, and they must wear a mask during instruction.

For more information, contact John Pilgrim at john.l.pilgrim.civ@mail.mil or 531-6187.



Task Force Ramrod Soldiers maintain their COVID-19 protocols as they train cadets at the United States Military Academy at West Point, N.Y.

Capt. SAMANTHA BROWN / 3RD BCT, 10TH MTN DIV

TF Ramrod trains USMA cadets

By CAPT. SAMANTHA BROWN
3RD BCT, 10TH MTN DIV

FORT POLK, La. — After weeks of training and supporting West Point’s cadet summer training, Task Force Ramrod, commanded by Lt. Col. Andrew K. Sinden, was visited by Brig. Gen. Brett T. Funck, deputy commanding general, 10th Mountain Division and the 10th Mountain Division’s Command Sgt. Maj Mario O. Terenas. They shared experiences and provided insight on the great work that TF Ramrod has done at West Point.

Funck and Terenas spent their day observing training and participating in TF Ramrod’s urban M9 pistol range and field artillery live fire. The day culminated with Funck and Terenas facilitating leadership development sessions to officers and non-commissioned officers across the Task Force.

“You are on a path in the direction of excellence,” said Terenas to a group of cadets and TF Ramrod Soldiers. Terenas explained that the path of excellence requires a full commitment in all endeavors. Soldiers and cadets have been doing just that this summer.

Staff Sgt. Stephen Harold, TF Ramrod’s M9 pistol range safety NCO, instructed Terenas on the M9 range stress-test procedures. The stress test consisted of each Soldier conducting 25 jumping jacks; five burpees — an exhausting exercise involving squats, pushups and an explosive jump; and engaging three targets. These steps were timed and tested their ability to em-

ploy the basic fundamentals of marksmanship after physical exertion.

TF Ramrod’s Command Sgt. Maj. Mason L. Joiner joined the training and fun while conducting the test. Training is always good, but it is great when you can make it fun and challenging, he said. Terenas presented a coin to Harold for displaying expert professionalism. After warming up on the M9 range, they participated in more training.

Funck observed Call for Fire operations. The 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment Forward Support Team occupied the observation point, while Bravo Battery, 5th Battalion, 25th Field Artillery Regiment fired for effect, demonstrating target acquisition and artillery registration. Staff Sgt. Matthew Daltorio observed the target and gave the command, “Fire for effect” as the artillery fires engaged and destroyed the target.

At the artillery firing point, Pfc. Lizbeth Reyes demonstrated how to operate the graphic firing table and compute firing data. She was able to use this data to conduct a firing mission, while her team on the gun line assisted Funck with loading and firing the artillery rounds. These two teams skillfully showcased the importance of teamwork and leadership to the cadets.

Teamwork is the lesson that TF Ramrod continues to teach throughout its support to West Point’s cadet summer training, as the cadets conducted the react to contact lanes. React to contact is one of the many training exercises that TF

Please see Cadets, page 9

Gulf War veteran reflects on pivotal war that changed Army, nation

By **JOE LACDAN**
Army News Servicier

WASHINGTON — Only 13 months into his Army career, Ken Foulks learned that he would be deploying to Saudi Arabia to support an operation that would bolster United States forces against a threatening Iraqi army.

Foulks, now the director of field programs and historical services at the Army Center of Military History, didn't know then that the conflict would eventually alter the course of the U.S. military for the next three decades.

Following Iraqi president Saddam Hussein's invasion and occupation of Kuwait, President George H.W. Bush ordered a large-scale buildup of forces along the Persian Gulf to help defend Saudi Arabia from a potential Iraqi attack.

American forces, under the command of Army Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf, led the largest coalition of allied nations since World War II.

In what would later be called the Gulf War, the military shifted its focus from defeating the Soviet Union in Europe to what would become a 30-year battle for stability in the Middle East region.

The retired colonel recently reflected on those five months he spent traveling in convoys through the Saudi desert before the 30th anniversary of the start of the Gulf War on Sunday.

In November 1990, Foulks recalled watching television in Germany as then-Gen. Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Defense Secretary Dick Cheney announced that Foulks' unit, the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment, would be among those traveling to the Persian Gulf for Operation Desert Shield.

Foulks deployed to Saudi Arabia in early December toward the end of Desert Shield and about a month before Bush announced it would change to Operation Desert Storm, which was designed to drive Iraqi forces out of Kuwait.

The conflict began Aug. 2, 1990, when Iraq invaded Kuwait to seize control of its oil reserves. Bush condemned Hussein's actions and asked the Iraqi president to withdraw his troops.

Fearing that Hussein may invade Saudi Arabia, Bush announced that troops would deploy to the region. At the time, Saudi Arabia boasted the world's largest supply of oil reserves. Within seven days of Bush's announcement, nearly 4,600 members of the 82nd Airborne Division arrived in the country after Desert Shield officially began Aug. 7.

However, the U.S. didn't yet have sufficient logistical support established in the region, including basic necessities like shelter, sanitation, food and water.

As a 24-year-old logistics officer, Foulks and his unit faced the daunting challenge of delivering supplies and equipment to a massive influx of Soldiers. Foulks served as a supply platoon leader and his troop continuously worked to provide fuel, rations, water and ammunition to the cavalry squadrons.

The former officer said he could always count on the non-commissioned officers he worked with to get their jobs done, even during the high-operational tempo of the war.

"Our troop was large and had a lot of different

missions, and everyone was very supportive," Foulks said of his unit. "But, it was also an extremely busy time. A lot of things are blurry as far as dates and locations because, in the desert, most things look the same."

The conflict showed the need for pre-positioned stocks and established ports to quickly transport supplies into the region, said Army historian Travis Moger. Most troops traveled to the region by plane while 85% of supplies arrived on ships, which took much longer to transport.

Foulks said his platoon fortunately did not suffer any casualties during his time in the war. His unit trained all year and had plenty of field experience by the time they landed in the coastal town of Al Jubail.

Winning the war and the public

Desert Storm marked a swift and decisive victory for U.S. forces and its allies, which included the United Kingdom, France and Egypt. Using fighter jets and bombers combined with ground attacks, U.S. and coalition forces overwhelmed the Iraqis.

Following a four-day air and ground offensive, U.S. and coalition troops finally forced the Iraqi army out of Kuwait Feb. 28, 1991. The operation lasted only 42 days and the U.S. suffered only 283 fatalities while Iraq lost about 30,000.

The victory also held symbolic value for the U.S. military.

"Vietnam hung over as this mark of shame that we had failed," said Shane Story, another Army historian at the center. "When (the U.S.) defeated Saddam Hussein and Iraq in 1991, there was a sense of this huge weight being lifted off the shoulders of the Army."

Foulks' regimental commander, squadron commander and sergeant major all served during Vietnam, along with several other Soldiers in his unit. Foulks said troops received an outpouring of support from the American public during and after the war. That contrasted with the reception of Vietnam veterans who did not get the same respect, he said.

The war also changed the public perception of the military in large part because of the positive media coverage that helped rally the nation around the war efforts, Moger said.

During Vietnam, media portrayals often depicted U.S. forces negatively.

"I felt (the conflict) left an indelible mark," Foulks said. "That's not how (war) was often portrayed during Vietnam. It was a transition point between some of the actively-serving Vietnam veterans and some of the new, end-of-the-Cold-War Soldiers."

"You had the entire Army really existing in this tremendous shift from Europe to the Middle East, and we didn't recognize the significance of that at the moment," Story said. "In 1991, we thought we just wanted a decisive victory over Saddam Hussein, and he knew never to mess with us again."

Following the American triumph, Foulks and his unit would remain in Saudi Arabia until April 1991 before returning to their headquarters at Nuremberg, Germany.

Foulks would leave active duty and join the Army Reserve eventually becoming an Army



Above: Then-1st Lt. Matthew Olander (left) and then-2nd Lt. Ken Foulks stop for a photo in Saudi Arabia during the Gulf War. Foulks, the director of field programs and historical services at the Army Center of Military History deployed to the Persian Gulf as a logistics officer assigned to the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment in December 1990.

Below: Then-2nd Lt. Ken Foulks, left, shares a laugh with fellow Soldiers while deployed to Saudi Arabia during the Gulf War.



ARMY NEWS SERVICE

historian. Foulks returned to the Middle East in 2008, deploying to Kuwait as a historian and then to Afghanistan in 2009 and 2010.

After the war, service members remained in the Persian Gulf to further prevent any potential attacks from Iraq. Following the 9/11 attacks, the U.S. invaded Iraq in 2003 and captured Hussein, who the Iraqi government placed on trial and executed. The U.S. began to pull out its troops from Iraq in 2007 following the mass deployment of Soldiers to the country in 2006, but later returned in 2014 to fight ISIS forces.

"We're over there now in small numbers," Story said. "We're still fighting a war. We are still conducting military operations in certain respects. You could say that the Gulf War of '91 was like the negotiation of a 30-year war for the U.S. in the Middle East — that is not yet over."

To help commemorate the Gulf War and Desert Shield anniversaries, Moger has been documenting the conflicts' history in an essay called "The Gulf War at 30." The essay is slated to be published next January in Army History Magazine, which is accessible through the Army Center of Military History website.

Program seeks to send officers, NCOs to law school

OSJA

FORT POLK, La. — The Office of the Judge Advocate General is now accepting applications for the Army's Funded Legal Education Program. Under this program, the Army projects sending up to 25 active-duty commissioned officers and, as of this year, non-commissioned officers to civilian law school at the government's expense. Selected officers and NCOs will attend law school beginning in fall 2021 and will remain on active duty while attending.

The Army is seeking exceptional leaders with the confidence, humility and character needed to provide principled counsel and premier legal support to the best clients in the world.

Interested officers and NCOs should review Army Military Personnel Message 20-135 and

Chapter 10, AR 27-1 — The Judge Advocate General's Funded Legal Education Program (revisions pending) — to determine their eligibility. The program is open to Regular Army captains, first and second lieutenants, sergeants first class, staff sergeants and sergeants from the Operations Division, Operations Support Division, Force Sustainment Division, Health Services Division, Army Special Operations Force and Cyber.

Commissioned officer applicants must have between two and six years of total active federal service at the time legal training begins. NCO applicants must have between four and eight years of total active federal service at the time legal training begins. Eligibility is governed by statute 10 U.S.C. 2004 and cannot be waived.

Applicants should immediately register for the earliest offering of the Law School Admission

Test. See www.lsac.org/lSAT for full details on LSAT dates and registration deadlines.

Applicants must submit their original application through command channels, including the officer's branch manager at Human Resources Command and the Office of the Judge Advocate General. Physical applications should be addressed as follows:

ATTN: DAJA-PT (Yvonne Caron-Rm 2B517), 2200 Army Pentagon, Washington, DC 20310.

Applications may also be submitted in Portable Document Format (PDF) to Yvonne Caron at yvonne.m.caron2.civ@mail.mil.

Applications must be received between Aug. 1 and Nov. 1. Contact the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk Office of the Staff Judge Advocate at 531-2899 for information about the Funded Legal Application Program.

UMCJ violations result in Soldier reprimands, extra duty

OSJA

FORT POLK, La. — The commanding general and subordinate commanders at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk 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 private first class, assigned to 1st Battalion, 509th Infantry Regiment, Joint Readiness Training Center Operations Group, was issued a General Officer Memorandum of Reprimand for operating a vehicle while under the influence of

alcohol, underage drinking and careless operation of a motor vehicle. The CG directed filing the reprimand permanently in the Soldier's Army Military Human Resources Record.

- A specialist, assigned to 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division was issued a GOMOR for operating a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol, underage drinking and driving a vehicle with no proof of insurance. The CG directed filing the reprimand permanently in the Soldier's AMHRR.

- A sergeant, assigned to the Army Medical Department Activity, was issued a GOMOR for driving under the influence of alcohol with a blood alcohol content of 0.16%. The CG directed filing the reprimand permanently in the Soldier's AMHRR.

- A specialist, assigned to 2nd Battalion, 4th

Infantry Regiment, 3rd BCT, 10th Mtn Div, was punished under Article 15 for wrongful use of a controlled substance, in violation of Article 112a, Uniform Code of Military Justice. The Soldier was sentenced to a reduction to E-1, forfeiture of \$866 pay for two months, suspended for six months, extra duty for 45 days and restriction for 45 days.

- A specialist, assigned to 3rd Squadron, 89th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd BCT, 10th Mtn Div, was punished under Article 15 for three failures to report, in violation of Article 86, UCMJ. The Soldier was sentenced to extra duty for 7 days and restriction for 7 days.

- A private first class, assigned to 3rd Sqn, 89th Cav Reg, 3rd BCT, 10th Mtn Div, was punished under Article 15 for failure to report, in violation of Article 86, UCMJ. The Soldier was sentenced to extra duty and restriction for 7 days.

Criminal Investigation Command Cybercrime unit warns rental scams rising

CID

QUANTICO, Va. — Worldwide, housing rental scams are on the rise. The Army community is urged to be cautious when responding to advertisement regarding home or apartment rentals.

Edward Labarge, director of CID's Major Cybercrime Unit, said scammers use a variety of tactics to steal people's money.

"A typical rental scam works by a property being listed at a low price, usually below market rate, to get the attention of potential renters," said Labarge. "Then the scammers will pressure the renters to pay a deposit and the first and last month's rent to secure the rental."

CID reports that there are currently millions of fake listings for apartments, duplexes and houses listed on classified ads and reputable rental sites.

"Rental scams are prevalent in larger metro areas where there are more rentals on the market," said Labarge. "These scams easily go unnoticed, hidden behind the large volume of rentals."

Labarge said areas surrounding military installations are targeted because of their competitive rental markets and the fact that service members sometimes have unique housing situations leaving them unable to view a property in person. Fake listings often lure victims in by offering

military discounts, low rent, good neighborhoods and great amenities.

"If it's too good to be true, it usually is," Labarge said.

If you feel you are a victim of a rental scam, contact the Fort Polk CID office at 531-7190, as well as the Federal Trade Commission (www.ftc.gov).

Below is a list of known rental scams.

Hijacked ads — scammers use real rental ads and photos from legitimate postings to create their own fake ads.

Phantom rentals — scammers make fake listings using photos from properties that are not for rent, for sale or do not exist.

Watch for the warning signs listed below:

- They want you to sign or send money before you see the property.

- They want the security deposit or first month's rent before you sign the lease.

- They ask you to wire or send money through a payment app.

- They are ready to make a deal with no background information.

Here are some ways to protect yourself from becoming a victim of a rental scam:

- Do not rely solely on email to contact the owner and be wary of foreign telephone numbers.

- Do online research of the rental company, property address and the owner.

- Conduct a reverse image search of the photos to see where else the images are being used.

- Ask for additional photos.

- Compare the rent amount to other rentals in the area.

- Never pay a security deposit, first month's rent or application fee with cash, wire transfers, gift cards, prepaid cards or payment apps.

- Obtain and review a copy of any contract prior to sending any money.

- Do not make rush decisions. Scammers will often pressure suspecting victims to complete the deal quickly.

The CID's Major Cybercrime Unit warns the Army community of ongoing Coronavirus-themed phishing attacks that involve scammers impersonating organizations with the end goal of stealing information and delivering malware.

For more information, please visit <https://cyber.mil> or <https://public.cyber.mil>.

For more information about computer security, other computer-related scams and to review previous cybercrime alert notices and cybercrime prevention flyers, visit the Army CID MCU website at <https://www.cid.army.mil/mcu-advisories.html>. To report a crime to Army CID, visit www.cid.army.mil or call 531-7190.

Barge

Continued from page 1

large formation combat forces if required."

Cost effective

Another aspect of the barge operations Frank referenced was their cost effectiveness. To move a BCT from Fort Campbell, Kentucky via rail or truck would have cost about \$6 million, Frank said. By barge, the cost dropped to about \$3 million.

"At JRTC and Fort Polk we are always attempting in our operations and how we conduct rotations to ensure that we are as efficient as possible in spending taxpayers' dollars," he said.

"Coming by barge is one of those efficiency points. When we have a unit we can bring by barge, the 101st Airborne Division, that allows us to save Forces Command resources for additional training of other formations."

Frank spoke at the CLRP to a group of central Louisiana political and economic leaders Aug. 3. He said the reason for bringing them to the port was so they could see the impact it has on JRTC operations.

"We began this about two years ago with 101st and we had a lot of lessons learned from that first move," he said. "Those lessons were included in our dialogue points with the port management team, and we increased their capacity down here just by ongoing discussions with leaders here in Alexandria and across the region."

Frank said JRTC leadership told the port operations team that if certain enhancements were made at the port, the Army could move more of the brigade combat team by barge than what was being moved at the time.

"The city and the region got behind those initiatives and it's great to see them take place here," Frank said.

Port partnership

Terry Spruill, CLRP board president, said being able to utilize the port to its full potential is one of the goals of his organization.

"It's the mission of this port to find ways to provide positive economic impact to this region, and having the military come in is one way to do that," he said.

Spruill said the port board took to heart JRTC's recommendations on improvements.

"We've expanded the lower dock, we've put a road in over the levee for heavier equipment to traverse, and we created a seven-acre staging area so vehicles have a place to line up before beginning their convoys to JRTC," he said. "By partnering with the military, we were able to offset those costs."

Spruill said that for the first time in the port's existence there will be back-to-back rotations at JRTC coming to the area via barge.

"That tells me the military sees how well this is coordinated and performs for them, so they have decided they can do two almost simultaneously, which is hopefully good for them and us," he said. "We try to price our service with what we think is reasonable, and this is a win for us and the military."

Among the governmental leaders who attended the briefing at the port was Alexandria Mayor Jeff Hall. He said the port is another way the Central Louisiana area has postured itself to support the military.

"We've had leadership in the past that did the right thing, with investments like this at the



Maj. Jason Day, support operations officer for the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) (right) explains barge operations to leaders of the Central Louisiana community and the Joint Readiness Training Center at the Central Louisiana Regional Port in Alexandria Aug. 3.

CHUCK CANNON / GUARDIAN



Soldiers with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) off-load equipment from barges at the CLRP Aug. 3 for the unit's Rotation 20-09 at the Joint Readiness Training Center.

port," he said. "This was a great investment and location, and as we know, river, interstate, air and rail transportation is intermodal reality that not everyone is going to have. To have it within a short distance to the JRTC Box, is phenomenal, and we've got to support it."

Hall said as a leader in the Alexandria community, he wholeheartedly supports the efforts, and whatever the city can do to expand and bring more of this type activity to central Louisiana.

"I'm glad to be a part of it and whatever we can do as a group we're going to contribute and make it even better," he said. "We want to continue to improve the port, grow it, and take advantage of any opportunity that comes about."

Hall said it's important that central Louisiana takes a leadership role in providing assistance to the JRTC and Fort Polk.

"That's what we're trying to do in central Louisiana," he said. "We want to work together with England Air Park and JRTC to make this happen very smoothly. This allows us to become more of an operational component of what the JRTC is doing in training our Soldiers."

Deborah Randolph, president, Central

Louisiana Regional Chamber of Commerce, called the partnership between the JRTC and the port to utilize the Red River to bring equipment in for rotations "great."

"We're pleased the port can be of service to the Army, and we appreciate the Army's business," she said. "It has a great economic impact for our region. Fort Polk is the largest employer in the state of Louisiana, and we appreciate having it here."

Randolph said the residents of central Louisiana love and support Soldiers and their Families and appreciate their service.

"We're committed to the installation, and we recognize it has a tremendous economic impact, not only for just our region, but for all of the state of Louisiana," she said.

Power Projection Platform

Maj. Jason Day, support operations officer for the 2nd BCT, 101st Abn Div, said his unit received plenty of support throughout the entire trip from Fort Campbell to Alexandria.

"We have a new and improved lock at Fort Campbell," he said. "The work was just complet-

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Barge

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ed and we're the first unit to actually use it."

Day said barge operations — called brown body shipping in the transportation world — from Fort Campbell to Alexandria, is a tremendous power projection platform.

"Using rail, which you would typically see for us, cost about \$5-6 million," he said. "We do this (barge) and we're saving about \$3 million."

Day said the barge company was flexible and responsive to everything his unit needed during the trip.

"We had planned for four days to upload the equipment, but we got after it and with the barge company's help finished in two days," he said. "When we were going through the locks on the trip down you usually have to wait your turn, but because we were moving military equipment, I guess they were giving us priority through the locks so that sped it up a bit. We were expecting around 12 days for the trip, but because of them letting us move to the front of the line at the docks, we completed the trip in about 7 days."

Day said with savings of almost \$3 million per trip, he believes barges will be how the 101st will move in the future.

"In a large-scale event, rail traffic is most likely going to be taken up by the heavy brigade combat teams with their tanks and all the heavy stuff," he said. "For us, using the barge just makes more sense as a power projection platform."

Back-to-back rotations

For the next JRTC rotation — 20-10 — the 2nd BCT's sister unit, the 1st BCT, will follow.

"They will use the same decks (platforms pushed by the barges bearing the vehicles) we came in on," Day said. "Once these are off-loaded, they'll go back to Fort Campbell, load up the 1st BCT, bring them down, off-load them here, load us back up and take us home. They'll then come back and take the 1st BCT home when they're through with Rotation 20-10."

Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Simmons, transportation NCOIC for the JRTC Sustainment Operations Center, said as the 1,047 pieces of equipment are off-loaded, they are moved to the staging area and prepped for convoy to Fort Polk.

"We're limiting the convoys to 25 vehicles at a time, at 15-minute intervals," he said.

Simmons said 2nd BCT, 101st Abn Div Torch arrived Aug. 2.

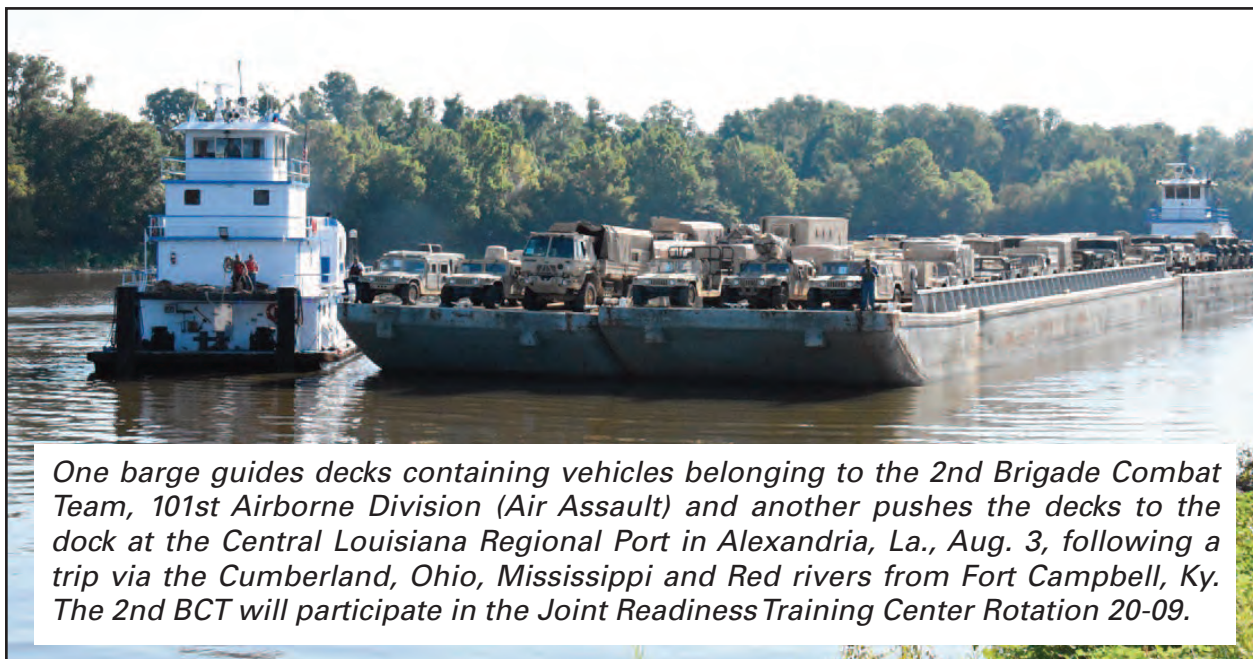
"We did a recon with leadership, identified points of friction, mitigated them, then today (Aug. 3) began downloading the barges at 8 a.m. The first convoy moved out at 8:30 a.m., with the final convoy today scheduled to leave at 5 p.m. We will follow the same schedule tomorrow (Aug. 4) and expect to be finished by late afternoon."

Simmons said there were 350 Soldiers in the Torch to off-load and convoy the equipment. He said the Soldiers came from Fort Campbell by bus, as will the rest of the unit during the next week.

Managing safety concerns

Mike Rude, safety manager for 101st Abn Div, said there were a different set of concerns when dealing with barge operations.

"The issues we have to watch out for are the water, weak swimmers and current," he said. "Barge operations are unique in that one of the



One barge guides decks containing vehicles belonging to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and another pushes the decks to the dock at the Central Louisiana Regional Port in Alexandria, La., Aug. 3, following a trip via the Cumberland, Ohio, Mississippi and Red rivers from Fort Campbell, Ky. The 2nd BCT will participate in the Joint Readiness Training Center Rotation 20-09.



Vehicles belonging to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, from Fort Campbell, Ky., prepare to off-load from a barge at the Central Louisiana Regional Port in Alexandria, La., Aug. 3.



Soldiers with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) move to decks pushed by barges to begin off-loading equipment at the CLRP for the unit's Rotation 20-09 at the Joint Readiness Training Center Aug. 3.

barges today was not even with the dock and therefore you've got to have specific leverage to get the vehicles up which causes problems. So not only is safety concerned with humans but also resources and materials to make sure they

don't damage equipment or hurt themselves."

Rude said he is always surprised at Soldiers' ability to tackle obstacles as they pop up.

Please see **Barge**, page 8

Barge

Continued from page 7

“What amazes me is that the Soldiers are able to adapt and overcome,” he said. “You’re always going to have problems and there are always going to be situations arising. It’s fun to watch and see who is the more experienced Soldier and how they adjust and overcome the situation, and see the younger Soldiers watch and learn.”

Corps of Engineers lends a hand

Vincent Schu, project manager for the barge company, said he’s been pleased with the current operation.

“This is our fourth time with the military and everyone has been great,” he said. “We went 90 miles on the Cumberland River and picked up the Ohio River at Paducah, Kentucky. Went about 43 miles on the Ohio to Cairo, Illinois where we entered the lower Mississippi River at mile 952. We then went 652 miles from Cairo to the Red River, crossed through the locks, then came 90 miles up the Red River to Alexandria.”

Schu said the Army Corps of Engineers provided assistance to help the barges through a river closure at Victoria Bend on the Mississippi River.

“They also gave us priority at all the locks,” he said. “But the big thing was communication going into it from the very beginning. The only snag we had was Victoria Bend, but we knew that was happening, we consulted with the Corps of Engineers before arriving, and they got us priority to get through. We went around probably 30 boats. If we had to wait in line with everyone one else it would have taken quite a bit longer.”

For the trip from Fort Campbell to the Red River, Schu said each barge pushed 15 decks of equipment. Once they hit the Red River, he said each barge could only push six decks due to the size of the locks.”

“All in all, it was a great trip and we always look forward to working with the military,” he said.

As the briefing wound down, Frank was asked about the prospects of the 101st Abn Div coming to the JRTC and Fort Polk for rotations 20-09 and 20-10, and how they might fare against the 1st Battalion, 509th Infantry Regiment (Airborne) Geronimos.

“The 101st is an outstanding unit and I’m sure they’ll do a good job,” he said. “It is always great to see the Screaming Eagle patch entering the box. It’s got all of JRTC excited for the next two rotations.”



CHUCK CANNON / GUARDIAN

Brig. Gen. Patrick D. Frank (foreground, facing left), commander, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk, visits with Soldiers assigned to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Aug. 3, as they prepare to off-load equipment at the Central Louisiana Regional Port in Alexandria, La., before convoying to Fort Polk and participating in JRTC Rotation 20-09.



Above: Vincent Schu, project manager for Yazoo River Towing, the barge company tasked with moving the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) via U.S. waterways from Fort Campbell, Ky., to the Central Louisiana Regional Port in Alexandria, La., directs a barge to the CLRP dock Aug. 3.

Left: Maj. Jason Day, support operations officer for the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) (right) explains barge operations to Alexandria, La., Mayor Jeff Hall at the Central Louisiana Regional Port in Alexandria Aug. 3. The 2nd BCT, 101st Abn Div moved 1,047 pieces of equipment from Fort Campbell, Ky., to Alexandria via barge along the Cumberland, Ohio, Mississippi and Red rivers.

National Purple Heart Recognition Day honors heroes' sacrifices

By Retired (Lt. Col.) MARK LESLIE
DPTMS director

FORT POLK, La. — Today is National Purple Heart Recognition Day. The Purple Heart is the oldest American military medal, and it is a different medal than most — it's the medal no one wants to earn.

The Purple Heart is not awarded for bravery or heroism; it is awarded for sacrifice. It is recognized by most military veterans as the national symbol of sacrifice. Sadly, many Americans do not know the significance or meaning of the medal.

The Purple Heart medal is awarded to those who have been wounded or killed in combat. Purple Heart Day is an observance that commemorates the creation of the Purple Heart Medal in 1782 by Gen. George Washington. Originally known as the Badge of Military Merit, it was initially awarded to three Revolutionary War Soldiers in 1783.

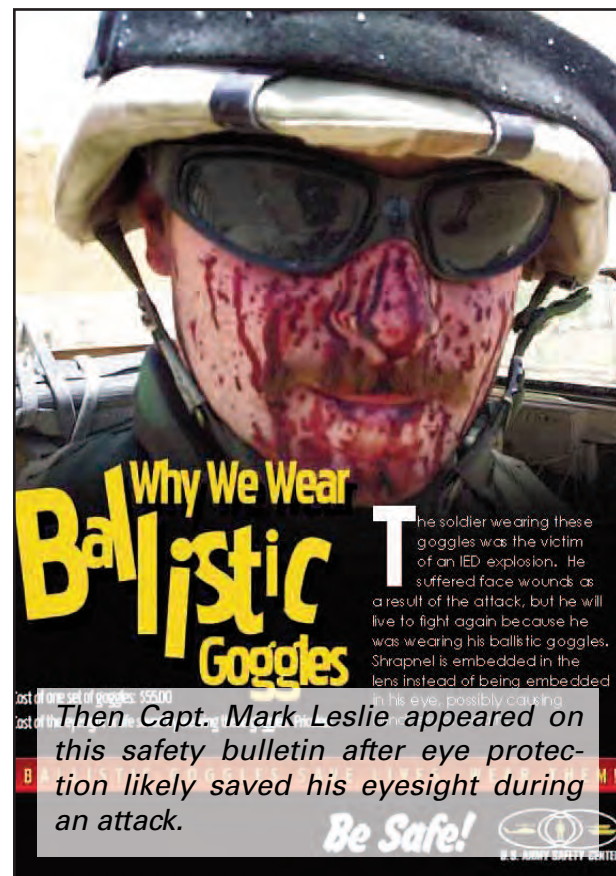
The Revolutionary War ended and the Purple Heart faded into obscurity until being later revived in 1932 on the bicentennial anniversary of Washington's birth. Purple Heart Medals were

retroactively awarded to those wounded or killed while serving in the armed forces during World War I due to enemy action on or after April 5, 1917. It is estimated that about 1.9 million Purple Hearts have been awarded since that time. It is also the most intricate and expensive medal in the inventory.

This day is marked to recognize those that have made a sacrifice that all Soldiers must be prepared to make but never want to. On this day, I reflect on the heroic actions of Cpl. Travis Brown, who saved my life and suffered more severe wounds than mine; many other Soldiers to whom I have presented this award; and the Families of those no longer with us.

I ask all Americans to honor the Purple Heart recipient on this day and to actually consider the meaning of this small piece of cloth and metal. What it represents is sacrifice. The Purple Heart is a small token presented to a service member who sacrificed blood (or life) for their fellow Soldiers and the rest of the country. There is no greater love or sacrifice than this willingness to risk personal well-being, and it is one of the unique aspects of the military that the uninitiated will never truly know.

Commentary



SAFETY CORNER

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BPSD – 05 AUG
Back to School Safety
VPSPD – 17 AUG

- Stop completely in all directions for the school bus when the lights are flashing
- Reduce speed significantly
- Be ready to stop at all times
- Do not block crosswalks
- Do not double park

Most importantly, expect the unexpected, children may dart out into traffic

e-Guardian email list

If you're interested in receiving the weekly e-Guardian to your inbox, then please send your personal email address to kimberly.k.reischling.civ@mail.mil, and you'll be placed on the distribution list for non-government email users.

Cadets

Continued from page 3

Ramrod has instructed and led the cadets through this summer.

Looking at the squads move in a wedge formation through the foliage of the trees, Funck and Terenas noted their apparent level of discipline and motivation. Along with three other Soldiers, 1st Lt. Conner McCabe supervised the lane, allowing the cadets to use their leadership skills to guide their squads through the lane.

At the end of the training day, TF Ramrod leaders conducted a squad competition on the tasks that the cadets learned. Funck and Terenas observed the cadets' competitive spirit on the medical trauma lanes to see who would earn the title of "Best Squad." Two squads eagerly waited at the start line as Sgt. Kiera Watson, the medical lane non-commissioned officer in charge, commanded the cadets to begin.

Each squad rushed to their mannikin to render first aid, while members of their company cheered along the sidelines. As Watson called out

a body part, the squads applied a tourniquet, conducted a full medical assessment and buddy carried their "casualty" to the finish line. Racing down the lane with their mannikin as a team, Bravo squad won the competition.

The winners of each best squad competition and TF Ramrod Soldiers have embodied the message that Brig. Gen. Funck and Command Sgt. Maj. Terreras shared during their visit, which is to always remain on the path of excellence and give 100% of their effort. They stated that the three rules along the path of excellence is to never be average, engage and destroy any target and never leave a battle buddy behind. TF Soldiers will carry this message as they continue to support West Point's cadet summer training program, accomplishing their mission.

A TF Ramrod Soldier trains a West Point cadet on proper shooting techniques with the M9 pistol.



Capt. SAMANTHA BROWN / 3RD BCT, 10TH MTN DIV

Rapid mobilization of DoD manufacturing to solve COVID-19 supply shortages

USAMMDA

WASHINGTON — Over the last several months, people have been living in a world that may have once been considered as science fiction, because of the COVID-19 pandemic. People now live 6-feet apart, wearing masks and washing hands far more than they ever imagined would be necessary. There have been shortages at home, in the workplace and, most importantly, in medical fields with personal protective equipment and diagnostic testing.

The Department of Defense recognized the need to move quickly in addressing the critical need for medical supplies, such as PPE and sample collection kits for COVID-19 testing.

Leading research and development efforts to prevent, detect and treat COVID-19, the Army Medical Research and Development Command stood up a streamlined process to assist all DoD additive manufacturers interested in organically producing PPE and other Food and Drug Administration-regulated devices.

This team, dubbed the “USAMRDC Additive Manufacturing Working Group,” is led by the Army Medical Materiel Development Activity, a subordinate command of USAMRDC. USAMMDA is the Army’s medical materiel developer, responsible for developing, acquiring and fielding new medical capabilities.

“To alleviate pressure on the already strained commercial market, the mobilization of an organic DoD response seemed to be a win-win situation for both the government and industry,” said Leigh Anne Alexander, deputy project manager for USAMMDA’s Warfighter Expeditionary Medicine and Treatment Project Management Office. “Additive manufacturing, specifically three-dimensional printing, quickly became an attractive solution for

meeting shortfalls in both PPE and test kit components, such as swabs, as a current capability existing within the DoD’s laboratories and manufacturing facilities.”

However, PPE and collection kits are medical devices that are regulated by the FDA. Devices, as with drugs, require FDA review prior to distribution to ensure they meet performance and quality standards.

“In addition, the DoD has its own policies in place to ensure all service members receive medical products that are safe and effective,” said Ana-Claire Meyer, senior clinical advisor to the Office of the Principal Assistant for Acquisition, USAMRDC.

Combining USAMRDC’s in-house regulatory, legal, clinical and medical acquisition expertise and experience, the working group assists DoD organic manufacturing facilities and research laboratories to develop high-quality products and navigate complex FDA regulations.

In addition, the working group can act as an interface with the FDA through coordination with the sponsor’s representative at the USAMRDC, who has the authority (delegated by the Surgeon General of the Army) to request review and approval of medical products from the FDA.

“The working group’s primary goal is to ensure that anything manufactured by the DoD has been appropriately authorized by the FDA for safe use,” said Alexander.

While coordination with the USAMRDC sponsor’s representative is mandated for Army organizations, this working group supports all services and has interfaced with the Air Force, Navy, Marines and Coast Guard, who are manufacturing 3D-printed nasopharyngeal swabs and N95 respirators in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recent successes include obtaining FDA enforcement discretion for the 59th Medical Wing and Portsmouth Navy Shipyard to addi-



JIM CLEVELAND / U.S. NAVY

The Army Medical Research and Development Command’s Additive Manufacturing Working Group, led by the Army Medical Materiel Development Activity, a subordinate command of USAMRDC, was created to streamline the process assisting all DoD additive manufacturers interested in organically producing personal protective equipment and other Food and Drug Administration-regulated devices. Shown here, a staff member at the Portsmouth Navy Shipyard checks on the production of nasopharyngeal swabs.

tively manufacture and distribute nasopharyngeal swabs for DoD-wide use during COVID-19.

Portsmouth Navy Shipyard has the ability to produce about 280,000 swabs per month, and the 59th MDW can produce about 10,000 swabs per month. The swab design was from University of South Florida Health and Northwell Health.

Combining the manufacturing capabilities of the DoD organic industrial base with the USAMRDC’s medical acquisition, regulatory and legal expertise will enable the DoD to solve key COVID-19-related supply shortages.

Also, the DoD can apply these lessons learned from COVID-19 to ensure medical preparedness and response in future emergencies or

conflicts in which global supply chains are disrupted.

Editor’s Note: USAMMDA is a subordinate command of the U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command, under the Army Futures Command. As the premier developer of world-class military medical capabilities, USAMMDA is responsible for developing and delivering critical products designed to protect and preserve the lives of Warfighters across the globe. USAMRDC is leading research to prevent, detect and treat COVID-19. USAMMDA is applying existing field-leading research capabilities, a global research network and established partnerships to support the whole-of-government response to COVID-19.

Weaponized words: Leaders’ language ignites team success, failure

By BENTON F. ILES

Operations Group physical security manager

Leaders often succeed or fail based on the words they choose. Our words should be considered and used as weapons; tools that arm us with power. The words we choose often determine the successes and failures of our endeavors, as words truly do have meaning.

It has often been said that “professionals speak a professional language.” If your language is informal or inaccurate, then your leadership may be described in the same manner. Conversely, if your leadership is characterized by its strength, then your words and communication skills are likely considered strong as well.

I submit that, as leaders, we should actually

consider words as our first weapons. Speaking too quickly, saying the wrong thing, reacting too fast in a situation or reporting an incident without first choosing the proper words, can lead to chaos and confusion. Many of us can think of incidents where the first report was wrong. Often, those reporting the situation failed to properly think through the information before sending a report.

They chose the wrong words and negative effects were likely felt. Words have the potential to shape situations for the better — good communication is a powerful thing.

Think about one of the greats, President John F. Kennedy, inaugurated on Jan. 20, 1960. He is known for his famous line, “And so, my fellow

Americans, ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country.” He chose his words correctly and now his quote has outlived his physical life and inspired countless people. What a great tribute to him and the power of his words.

Our words are potent and can have an enormous impact. An accurate and timely word from a supervisor will positively affect many in the organization —

words can build up or tear down, they can motivate or discourage and they can be accurate or cause panic. Choose your words wisely and become the leader you were meant to be. Your choice in words can be the difference in your team’s success or failure on any given mission.

Commentary

From new signs to cleared paths, upgrades to Marion Bonner are complete

By **ANGIE THORNE**

Guardian staff writer

FORT POLK, La. — Curb your COVID-19 enhanced stress by enjoying the beauty found in nature along Fort Polk's Marion Bonner Trail — a 10-mile, two-way path that curves and bends through woods filled with pine trees and hardwoods. The trail is open to walkers, runners and nature explorers. Much of the path is in the shade — a boon on hot, summer days.

There are two entrances to Marion Bonner Trail. The first is located next to Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital where the track begins.

The other is a dirt-packed parking area located along Chaffee Road as you head to North Fort Polk. This entrance marks the entry to the twin ponds of Marion Bonner Recreation Area.

The recreation entrance is also the start of a nature trail system that has been improved over the past few months for the enjoyment of the community and in support of quality of life efforts taking place on Fort Polk, said Jon West, Directorate of Public Works, Environmental and Natural Resource Management Division, Conservation Branch chief.

West and his team have tackled several improvements to the Marion Bonner trail including clearing fallen logs and vines from nature pathways, new signs along the nature trail, additional plant and tree markings, maps at kiosks and repair of interlocking bricks in a low area.

The team that completed this effort are: Sarah Pearce, wildlife biologist; Amy Brennan, conservation outreach coordinator; Abigail Arfman, biologist; Kyle McKee, biologist; Ewan Isherwood, botanist; Jody Patterson, biologist; Jason Jinks, biologist and Shaun Williams, geographic information system specialist.

West said the improvements began in May and are now complete.

One of the first renovations people will see as they enter the North Fort entrance parking area are new maps located at kiosks next to the beginning of the nature trail on each side of the dirt road.

West said previous maps were weathered and needed to be replaced.

"The geospatial information system is a wonderful tool that helped us make great, new maps. The intent is to put added information, showing people walking Marion Bonner where the signs and native plants are located along the nature trail," he said.

The experience of completing these improvements has been rewarding, said West, because the projects enhance the trails for Soldiers, Family members and the Fort Polk community by providing outdoor recreational and environmental educational opportunities, such as learning about plants and trees native to Louisiana.

West said the new signs were his favorite part of the improvements.

"Some were in bad shape. We refurbished 31 signs and added new pictures and information to each one," he said. "We put signs in front of plants and trees that flower or change colors in spring and fall because we felt that would generate the most interest."

West said improvements have made the nature trail more aesthetically pleasing.

"I hope the work will draw more people to Marion Bonner to explore and enjoy nature," he said.



The new maps — placed in kiosks on each side of the road leading into the Marion Bonner parking area as you head to North Fort — stand at the dual entrances to the Marion Bonner nature trail. The maps denote the new signs restored along the path.



The flowering dogwood sign is one of 31 new signs posted along the Marion Bonner nature trail next to native Louisiana trees and plants. The signs are part of the recent improvements made to the nature trail.

Jackie Woods, an Army spouse (retired), said she walks the Marion Bonner trail and likes the new signs.

"I brought my daughter out here to walk with me one day. We walked the nature trail to look at all the new signs and we loved them," she said.

"I've also seen spouses out here reading the signs with their children and teaching them



Stones lining a low area along the nature trail path were straightened to improve safety and keep feet from getting muddy as people walk the trail in wetter weather.

about local trees and plants."

Woods said Marion Bonner is important to her.

"It's my favorite place to walk. It's beautiful out here. This place is great and the improvements only make it better for everyone to enjoy," she said. "I appreciate the work that has been done."

If you love what you do, you'll never work again

By **JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES**

Public affairs specialist

FORT POLK, La. — As a sixth grade student we were asked to write an essay about what we wanted to be when we grew up. As a rebellious pre-teen I vividly recall writing about my aspirations to become an undertaker.

I had broken my leg skiing (actually coming up the tow rope) that year and was in a bit of a dark place. I recall doing my best to make the essay as disturbing as possible to get a rise out of my teacher, Mrs. Greenberger, who we not so affectionately referred to as Mrs. Green Booger.

Fast forward 36 years and I find myself working at the Fort Polk Public Affairs Office as the community relations specialist for the installation. While I never had any intention of becoming an undertaker, I doubt my 12-year-old self-envisioned she'd be living in rural Louisiana, working for the Department of the Army as a public affairs professional. Shoot, she probably didn't even know what public affairs was and was probably still holding out hope for meeting, falling in love and marrying a mysterious prince from an obscure European country.

Where am I going with this? The installation chief of staff complimented me on my efforts in coordinating a community engagement at the Central Louisiana Regional Port in Alexandria recently. The commanding general wanted me to invite stakeholders and community leaders from Rapides Parish to visit the port to view the barge operations associated with the current rotation and I helped make that happen.

I told the chief, "Sir, community relations is so much fun, it doesn't really seem like work."

I was being slightly sarcastic when I said that, you know, like when Soldiers working at the gate say, "Living the dream" in response to an

inquiry about their day. Sure, some days are more fun than others, but for the most part, I think I may very well have the best job on post and I often wonder how I got here doing what I'm doing.

I've been working since I was 12 years old. My first job was delivering the Milwaukee Journal, every afternoon, 6 days a week and on Sunday mornings. Even while I wrote an elaborate plan to become an undertaker, I was essentially running my own business, selling sub-

scriptions, collecting payments and delivering the newspapers to what I grew to be the biggest route in the city of Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. My step dad, Pat, will argue that it was his paper route, because he took care of it for me when I was at my dad's every other weekend, and he always drove me around on Sunday mornings, but for the most part, without fail, I stuffed those papers, loaded up my wagon and provided exceptional customer service to nearly 200 subscribers for more than two years. I learned so much from that paper route. I'm sad that kids these days don't have the opportunity to operate one.

Throughout high school I had several jobs, but working at Baskin Robbins and delivering pizzas for a local mom and pop joint called JR's are the ones I remember and enjoyed the most. My dearest friend on the planet, Mary Stollenwerk and I became best friends forever during our years scooping ice cream, making sundaes, blizzards, ice cream cakes, pies and more.

JR's was a crazy place. I worked with a dude named Dan who ONLY made pizza, so it was up to me to do literally everything else. I waited tables, made sandwiches, did all the dishes, and delivered food in my 1978 Pontiac Grand Le Mans. At one point the transmission in that car was so bad that I couldn't go in reverse and would have to make sure I could pull through or park on the street to prevent getting stuck in someone's driveway.

After high school I went to the University of Wisconsin-Madison. During my five years as a student, earning my four-year degree, I worked for the rural sociology department as a research assistant. I envy students today with internet access. I had to walk all over campus finding books and articles for the professor I worked for at one of the university's plethora of libraries.

I also augmented my student loans to support my substantial party habit by

working at Subway, a bridal shop, another local pizza joint, a grocery store and a private dorm washing dishes in the cafeteria. The dishwashing gig was by far the worst job I ever had. I didn't last more than a couple weeks there before I had my roommate call them pretending to be me and quit.

A college education is important, but with a bachelor of arts in sociology with a double major in history, your options for high paid employment are limited. My first job after



Spc. Jean C. Graves (left) and spouse Spc. Cleophus D. Graves, February 1998. Graves' spouse went on to serve 22 years and retire from the Army as a first sergeant. He loved being a military police officer and continues to serve as a civilian in a similar capacity at the Fort Polk Directorate of Emergency Services. Graves left the army after five years to pursue other opportunities.

college was selling ads for a regional bridal magazine, followed by a stint in a multi-level marketing scheme, third shift at a gas station and K-mart custom portrait studio. A "Be all you can be in the Army" advertisement convinced me I was lacking discipline in my life and I decided to enlist.

Many people enlist for patriotism, love of country or adventure. I joined for the student loan repayment and spent five years as an E4 military personnel specialist. I entered the Army and left the Army as an E4. I was great at my job, but I wasn't really into the being a Soldier part. Sure, I loved my uniform, the camaraderie and had some amazing experiences, but I was a terrible marksman and literally got scared in my hasty fighting position during field training exercises. I decided I'd serve the Army better as a civilian and found myself on transition leave when terrorists attacked the Pentagon and World Trade center on Sep. 11, 2001.

I started working as a Department of the Army civilian in October of 2001 and have pretty much been working for the Army ever since. I've been a transportation assistant, secretary, administrative assistant, human resources specialist and the garrison administrative officer at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri.

From February 2009 until we moved to Fort Polk in January 2012, I had the closest job to being an undertaker I'd ever want. During the

three years we were stationed at Fort Carson, Colorado, I worked at the casualty assistance center training notification and assistance officers in Colorado, Utah, Wyoming and North and South Dakota. That was a difficult job. Most of my friends while we were stationed at Fort Carson were widows who came to my classes to share their notification stories. Working in casualty with an active duty spouse was challenging, especially because my husband was in Afghanistan for the majority of my time working there.

We arrived at Fort Polk in January 2012. While we were living in our camper waiting for a permanent place, I interviewed and was selected for the job I currently have, but due to a hiring freeze, the job offer was rescinded and I found myself looking for non-Department of the Army jobs. I landed a position as a contract education counselor at the Education Center followed by the on-site director for McNeese State University.

I eventually got my foot back in the door with the Army in a term position as the transition service specialist at the Soldier for Life-Transition Assistance Center. That was an awesome job, but when my husband decided he wanted to retire from active duty and stay here I knew I needed to find a permanent position.

In July 2017, I came full circle

Please see **Work**, page 13

Commentary

National Breastfeeding Week highlights infant, mother benefits

By GENEVA H. MEREDITH

Health promotion technician

The first week of August is National Breastfeeding Week. Breastfeeding is the best source of nutrition for most infants; it can also reduce the risk for certain health conditions for infants and mothers.

Most mothers want to breastfeed, but they stop early due to a lack of ongoing support. Federal law requires employers to provide reasonable break times for an employee to express breast milk for her nursing child for one year after the child's birth each time such employee has need to express the milk.

Employers are also required to provide a place, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public, which may be used by an employee to express breast milk.

Why breastfeeding matters:

- Low rates of breastfeeding add more than \$3 billion a year to medical costs for mothers and children in the United States.

- Breastfeeding is an investment in health for the mother and infant.

- Infants who are breastfed have a reduced risk of asthma, obesity, type 1 diabetes, severe lower respiratory disease, ear infections, sudden infant death syndrome, gastrointestinal infec-

tions and necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC) for preterm infant (the death of tissue in the intestine, which occurs most often in premature or sick babies).

- Breastfeeding can help lower a mother's risk of high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, ovarian cancer and breast cancer.

While human milk provides the most complete form of nutrition for infants, including premature and sick newborns, there are rare exceptions when human milk or breastfeeding is not recommended.

Physicians should make case-by-case assessments to determine whether a woman's environmental exposure, her own medical condition or the medical condition of the infant warrants her to interrupt, stop or never start breastfeeding.

Centers for Disease Control breastfeeding guidelines:

- Mothers should NOT breastfeed or feed expressed breast milk to their infants if:

- The infant is diagnosed with classic galactosemia (external icon, a rare genetic metabolic disorder)

- The mother is infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or human T-cell lymphotropic virus type I or type II.

- The mother is using an illicit street drug,

such as PCP (phencyclidine) or cocaine. (Exception: Narcotic-dependent mothers who are enrolled in a supervised methadone program and have a negative screening for HIV infection and other illicit drugs can breastfeed.)

- The mother has suspected or confirmed Ebola virus disease

Mothers should not breastfeed (temporarily) and should not feed expressed breast milk to their infants if:

- The mother is infected with untreated brucellosis.

- The mother is taking certain medications.

- The mother is undergoing diagnostic imaging with radiopharmaceuticals.

- The mother has an active herpes simplex virus (HSV) infection with lesions present on the breast. (Note: Mothers can breastfeed directly from the unaffected breast if lesions on the affected breast are covered completely to avoid transmission).

For more information on breastfeeding visit [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

If you need assistance with breastfeeding your newborn contact the Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital Obstetrics and Gynecology Clinic at 531-3644, the New Parent Support Group at 531-9573/4170 or the local Women, Infants and Children Office at (337) 238-6410.



TRICARE enrollment fees set to increase for many in 2021

TRICARE

WASHINGTON — The Defense Department announced on Aug. 5 that thousands of Tricare beneficiaries will be required to pay new enrollment fees in 2021.

Tricare Select Group A retirees will be required to pay new fees starting Jan. 1, 2021. An individual's monthly enrollment fee will be \$12.50 or \$150 annually.

Monthly family fees will be \$25 or \$300 annually. There are 407,431 beneficiaries of Tricare Select, according to 2019 data from the Defense Department.

The new fees were mandated by the 2017 Na-

tional Defense Authorization Act's reorganization of Tricare, the health care program for service members, retirees, and their families.

Any service member who joined the military before Jan. 1, 2018 is in Select Group A. Select Group B are those who enlisted or commissioned after Jan. 1, 2018, and have already been paying enrollment fees. The Defense Health Agency said there are no changes to Group B.

Beneficiaries will need to contact their Tricare regional contractors and set up their enrollment payments.

The Tricare regions are: Humana Military in the eastern United States, HealthNet Federal Services in the west, and International SOS Gov-

ernment Services overseas. Louisiana residents are in the eastern region.

"To maintain health coverage unless waived by law, Tricare Select Group A retired beneficiaries must take action and pay their Tricare Select enrollment fees," according to a statement from the Defense Health Agency, which oversees health care for the military.

However, enrollment fees are waived for Chapter 61 retirees, their family and survivors of deceased service members. Chapter 61 refers to veterans who were medically retired from military service with a rated disability of 30% or greater, according to the Army's Human Resources Command.

Work

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back to the Public Affairs Office and was selected and able to accept the position with the community relations team. When I started there were three of us, now it's just me. My job, has given me the opportunity to meet so many wonderful people in the surrounding community, parishes and even at the state level. When people ask what I do, I say I, "hob knob for a living." I talk to people and help bring our Soldiers and commanders together with community leaders and organizations whenever possible. I facilitate and foster relationships with civic, corporate, academic and government audiences to increase public awareness about the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk and to inspire patriotism and garner support for our Soldiers and their Families in the region.

Some days I coordinate color guards for parades, on others I coordinate speaking engagements for installation and garrison leaders. My professional journey was long and winding. As

an Army spouse for more than 20 years, I had to take advantage of opportunities whenever possible to augment and enhance my skill set. I volunteered and pursued higher levels of education. I went back to school and earned a master's degree in public administration. I used spousal education and tuition opportunities through Military One Source and earned a graduate certificate in adult training and development, and I volunteered as an Army Family Team Building master trainer and developed my platform skills.

Sure, some days, when I'm sitting in a meeting, doing a slide or operational order I think, "This sucks!" But most days, when I'm visiting with chamber of commerce presidents, tourism bureau employees or local elected officials, helping a color guard as they prepare to lead a parade, or at the governor's mansion with the commanding general, I know I have the best job. On the rare occasion I hear anyone say something negative about the installation, the local commu-

nity or the state, I am able to equivocally dispel their negative assumptions based on my personal knowledge of the goals of our installation leaders and the people who live in our local community.

Childish fantasies have made way for adult realities. Maybe I wasn't swept away by royalty, but my prince charming was a Soldier in the U.S. Army. I never really wanted to be an undertaker, but that essay proved that I probably had no clue what I wanted to be when I grew up.

Partying my way through college highlighted the fact that I may not have been a very serious person and hob-knobbing was an unknown occupational pursuit at the time. My 12-year-old self would be pretty impressed that her grown-up self is doing something so impactful for her community and the Army and having a blast doing it.

The former papergirl is now writing commentaries and articles for the newspaper. Maybe I really am "Living the dream!"

Fort Polk Families receive school supplies as new school year begins

GUARDIAN STAFF

FORT POLK, La. — Operation Homefront's Back-To-School Brigade took place July 30 at Parkway Elementary School. The event provided school supplies to Fort Polk's military Families.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event followed Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines. Volunteers and participating Families practiced social distancing with a pre-registration drive-through distribution event.

Grade appropriate school supplies and backpacks were handed out to military dependent children who will be in kindergarten through 12th grade for the 2020-2021 school year.



Hannah Dorau, a volunteer from Navy Federal Credit Union, waits next to bags of school supplies to be handed out as vehicles line up to take part in the event July 30.



ANGIE THORNE / GUARDIAN

Spc. Allen Scranton, 46th Engineer Battalion and Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers volunteer, helps Erin Lotfi, Operation Homefront volunteer and Fort Polk spouse, check Families against the preregistration list before sending them on to get their school supplies and backpacks.



Pfc. Rafael Sanchez, 2nd Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division and BOSS volunteer (left), Staff Sgt. Brad Robert, JRTC Operations Group and BOSS volunteer, (center) and Hannah Dorau, a volunteer from Navy Federal Credit Union, load school supplies into the back of a Fort Polk Family's vehicle at the Operation Homefront's Back-To-School Brigade event July 30 at Parkway Elementary School.



Pfc. James Pernell, 41st Transportation Company, 519th Military Police Battalion, and BOSS volunteer, loads backpacks at the Operation Homefront Back-to-School Brigade event July 30 at Parkway Elementary School.