



FORGING THE

WARRIOR SPIRIT

The JRTC and Fort Polk Guardian

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Home of Heroes @ Fort Polk, LA

Dec. 11, 2020

41st Trans Co tests robotic vehicle viability

By CHUCK CANNON
Command information officer

FORT POLK, La. — Maj. Gen. John A. George, commanding general, Combat Capabilities Development Command, visited the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk Dec. 8 to see first-hand testing on the Army's proposed Expedient Leader Follower program.

Joining George was Brig. Gen. David S. Doyle, commanding general, JRTC and Fort Polk, and leaders from across the installation as well as subject matter experts from Detroit Arsenal, Michigan, where the program was developed.

Jeff Langhout, director, Ground Vehicle Systems Center at Detroit Arsenal, explained how the Expedient Leader Follower program works.

"Basically, the program is about trying to find a way to move a lot of stuff with as few humans as possible, so we can use those Soldiers for other missions," Langhout said. "When you offload a ship, and get the equipment to a point of need, how do you get it there? Trucks — a lot of Soldiers driving several of trucks."

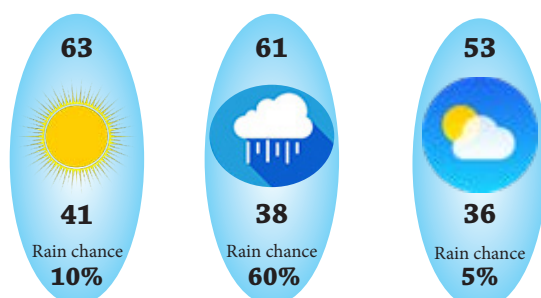
Langhout said that takes a lot of man-



Maj. Gen. John A. George, commander, Combat Capabilities Development Command, gets tips on how to maneuver a Leader Follower vehicle by remote control from Staff Sgt. Jilisa D. Mallet, 41st Transportation Company, 519th Military Police Battalion, during a visit to the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk Dec. 8.

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Weekend weather



Inside the Guardian

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Viewpoint

In our view

Guardian staff asked the JRTC and Fort Polk community, "What was the best vacation you ever took and why?"
Here are their responses:



Pfc. Sebastian Ventura: "I went to Canada. It was wonderful because I got to explore a part of North America I had never seen before. I also loved going to Ireland."

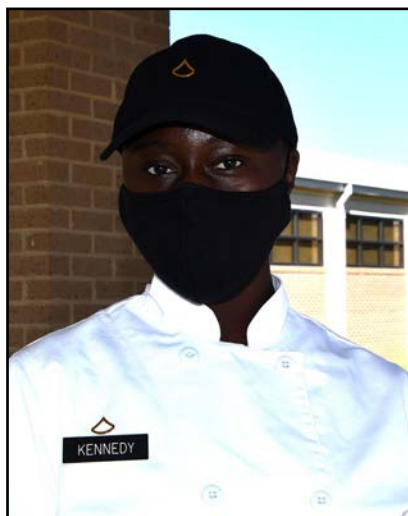


Spc. Dylan Allman: "When I was 17 my family went to New York to see what it was all about. It was beautiful and so different from what I grew up with."



Staff Sgt. Robert Lubonovich: "I would say Switzerland. It has beautiful sights like mountains and lakes, as well as a good mix of old and new culture."

Pfc. Stiffany Kennedy: "When I went to Africa. That's my heritage and roots. I got to connect on a deeper level about who I am and where I'm from."



Pfc. Treshun Alexander: "That would be a road trip to Utah. I visited a national park and enjoyed seeing the beauty of wildlife and nature all around me."



Sabine Majors: "I went to Japan in 2019. It was awesome. We visited friends, ate wonderful food, visited Itsukushima Island and other wonderful things."



Melissa Brownlee: "When I was stationed in Korea I got to travel, learn their language and enjoy the culture."



Kenita Pruitt: "I would have to say when we lived in Washington state. We went to the mountains in Oregon to visit Family. I'm not a winter person, but we skied and had fun. It was wonderful."



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For more information on Fort Polk units and happenings visit the following Facebook pages: **@JRTCOperationsGrp**, **@BayneJonesACH** or **@fortpolkmwr**.

Briefs

Walking town hall

Brig. Gen. David S. Doyle, commander of the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk, hosts a walking town hall Dec. 16 from 3-5 p.m.

The town hall begins at 16216 Richmond St. and will end at the Maple Terrace Community Center where the CG will host an open discussion where community residents can raise concerns and ask questions.

COVID-19 social distancing measures will be in place.

AAFES pet photo contest

Military shoppers at Fort Polk can show off their furry friends' "howl-iday" costumes for a chance to win \$3,000 in Exchange gift cards during the Army and Air Force Exchange Service's Holiday Pet Photo contest.

From Dec. 1-31, Fort Polk Exchange shoppers 18 years and older can submit photos of their pets decked out in holiday attire or with Santa Claus for a chance to win.

Shoppers, including honorably discharged veterans, can visit [ShopMyExchange.com/sweepstakes](https://www.shopmyexchange.com/sweepstakes) to enter. No purchase is necessary to win. Entries must be sent as a JPG, PNG or PDF and include the pet's name, the entrant's legal first and last name, mailing address, email address, phone number and Fort Polk Exchange location. Limit one entry per person.

Winners will be notified on or around Jan. 31.

VCC construction

The Visitor Control Center located at Entrance Road, will undergo exterior window construction beginning Monday at 7 a.m. The construction is expected to last through Dec. 18.

During construction, the VCC will remain operational with little to no impact on customer and visitor processing.

e-Guardian email list

If you're interested in receiving the weekly e-Guardian to your inbox, 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.



CDC urges caution during holiday travel season

CDC.gov

WASHINGTON — Travel can increase your chance of spreading and getting COVID-19. Postponing travel and staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

If you are considering traveling, here are some important questions to ask yourself and your loved ones beforehand.

These questions can help you decide what is best for you and your family.

- Are you, someone in your household or someone you will be visiting at increased risk for getting sick from COVID-19?

If you get infected you can spread the virus to loved ones during travel and when you return, even if you don't have symptoms.

If your household includes one or more individuals at increased risk for severe illness, all family members should act as if they, are also at increased risk. Learn [how to protect yourself and others](#).

- Are cases high or increasing in your community or destination? The more cases at your destination, the more likely you are to get and spread COVID-19 as a result of your door-to-door travel. [Check each state's cases in the last seven days](#).

- Are hospitals in your community or your destination overwhelmed with COVID-19 patients? To find out, check state and local public health department websites.

- Does your home or destination have requirements or restrictions for travelers? [Check state and local requirements](#) or [travel restrictions by military installation](#) before you travel.

- During the 14 days before your travel,

have you or those you are visiting had close contact with people they don't live with?

The following activities can put you at higher risk for COVID-19:

- Going to large social gatherings or events.

- Being in crowds in restaurants, bars, fitness centers or movie theaters.

- Being on trains, buses, airports or using public transportation.

- Traveling on a cruise ship or river boat.

Do your plans include traveling by bus, train or air which might make staying six feet apart difficult?

Are you traveling with people who don't live with you?

If the answer to either of these questions is "yes," you should consider making other plans, such as delaying your travel.

If you do decide to travel, be sure to take these steps during your trip to protect yourself and others from COVID-19:

- Check travel restrictions before you go.

- Get your flu shot before you travel.

- Bring extra supplies, such as masks and hand sanitizer.

- Know when to delay your travel. Do not travel if you or your travel companions are sick.

- Wear a mask to keep your nose and mouth covered when in public settings, including on public transportation and in transportation hubs (airports and stations).

- Avoid close contact by staying at least 6 feet apart (about 2 arm lengths) from anyone who is not from your travel group.

- Washing your hands often or use hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol).

- Avoid contact with anyone who is sick.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

Army News

Senior leaders announce Fort Hood climate, culture review results

By DEVON SUITS
Army News Service

WASHINGTON — The results of a command climate and culture review at Fort Hood, Texas, will lead to an Army-wide cultural change to create a safe environment free of sexual harassment and assault, senior leaders announced Dec. 8.

The Fort Hood Independent Review Committee identified nine findings and 70 recommendations after an extensive three-month evaluation, which included more than 31,000 Fort Hood community members surveyed, more than 2,500 Army personnel interviewed and several meetings with local district attorneys and civic and law enforcement leaders.

“The findings of the committee identified major flaws with the Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention program from implementation, reporting and adjudication,” said Secretary of the Army Ryan D. McCarthy during a media event.

The report also identified “fundamental issues with the Fort Hood Criminal Investigation Command field office activities that led to unaddressed problems on (the installation); and a command climate at Fort Hood that was permissive of sexual harassment and sexual assault,” he added.

Along with the findings, the review committee recommended changes to the Army’s SHARP program structure, Army missing Soldier protocols and Fort Hood crime prevention and response activities, McCarthy said.

“The tragic death of (Spc.) Vanessa Guillen and a rash of other challenges at Fort Hood forced us to take a critical look at our systems, our policies and ourselves,” he said. “Without leadership, systems don’t matter.”

People First Task Force

Upon accepting the committee’s findings, the Army stood up the People First Task Force to address the list of reported recommendations, he said. The new task force will develop a plan of action to address the identified issues and reevaluate current Army policies and programs. Changes to Army policies could come as early as March.

“This is not about metrics but about possessing the ability to have the human decency to show compassion for our teammates



and to look out for the best interest of our Soldiers,” he said.

McCarthy directed the relief or suspension of 14 Fort Hood leaders down to the squad level based on the review’s findings, he said.

The Army has also directed new investigations into the command climate and SHARP program of the 1st Cavalry Division and Army Criminal Investigation Command’s resourcing policies and procedures.

Further, leaders signed a new missing person directive to clarify the expectations and responsibilities of unit commanders and Army law enforcement authorities during the first 48 hours after a Soldier fails to report for duty.

An additional duty status code — absent-unknown — is now established and will prompt unit and law enforcement actions to quickly help locate the missing individual.

“This is an initial step to addressing and fixing these issues. Even though we are part of one of the most respected institutions in the world, living up to the American people’s trust is something we have to do every day,” McCarthy said.

“I believe in this institution, its officers, noncommissioned officers, Soldiers, civilians and their Families — with every fiber of my being — because of the extraordinary things they do on a daily basis,” he added. “I’m confident in our leaders’ ability to overcome this challenge and continue to win our nation’s wars while caring for our people.”

Fort Hood Independent Review Committee

In July, McCarthy chartered the Fort Hood Independent Review Committee to conduct a full review of the installation and the surrounding area, said Chris Swecker, the committee’s chair.

“The establishment of an independent committee of civilians to review the Army’s command actions is not unprecedented, but it is extremely rare and reflects (the Army’s) sincere desire to identify the issues and address them,” Swecker said.

The team had more than 90 days to assess the impact of the command climate on the health, safety and readiness of personnel, along with the command’s effect on preventing sexual assault, harassment and other crimes.

The report identified Fort Hood leadership’s ineffective execution of the SHARP program and a failure to culturally integrate SHARP throughout the enlisted ranks, where nearly 90% of sexual assault victims are reported, he said.

“The committee noted that Fort Hood leadership afforded the highest priority to maintaining equipment, conducting field training and ensuring deployment capability ... at the expense of the health and safety of all Soldiers, particularly for women at the brigade level and below,” Swecker said.

Committee members interviewed about 500 female Soldiers from the 3rd Cavalry Regiment and 1st Cavalry Division during the review process, Swecker added. Many

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Robotic

Continued from page 1

power and includes issues such as ensuring Soldiers get the required rest needed to operate a vehicle. That's where the Expedient Leader Follower program — or simple Leader Follower for short — comes in.

"What if we could do this by having one truck with a driver in it and eight or nine trucks behind it that have no driver?" he asked. "Think about how much more stuff you could move, and how you could then use those Soldiers to do other missions."

That's what Leader Follower is attempting to do, Langhout said.

"We're trying to figure out a way to move more without having to use the manpower or womanpower, so those Soldiers can be used for other things," he said.

The premise is simple, Langhout said. The lead driver makes the decision, then with the aide of an Xbox-type controller, leads the other trucks in the convoy to make the same moves. Uses include offloading ships or barges, as was done recently by the 101st Airborne (Air Assault) and 25th Infantry Divisions during their rotation deployments to the JRTC and Fort Polk. The 101st Abn arrived in Alexandria via barges from Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and the 25th ID travelled by ships from Hawaii to Port Arthur and the Port of Beaumont, Texas.

Langhout said testing will continue at Fort Polk through December 2021.

"What we're doing today is an operational technology demonstration," he said. "We're operating on version 1.1 software, so that tells you how far along we are in the process. The folks here in the 41st are figuring it out; they're telling us what works, what doesn't work, what they like and what they don't like."

About every 60-90 days, Langhout said his team will drop a new version of software based on findings and recommendations from Fort Polk's 41st Transportation Company, 519th Military Police Battalion, commanded by Capt. Ellen Johnson, the unit tasked with field-testing the system.

"Maybe there is a technical issue we have to deal with, or a major software drop that requires the Army Test and Evaluation Command formal approval," he said. "This is an ongoing process until we get to December next year, and then we'll assess if it's working. At that time the Army will have to make a decision whether or not to turn it into a program of record, and make it available to the entire Army." Another option would be to continue to refine the tech-



CHUCK CANNON/GUARDIAN

Maj. Gen. John A. George, commander, Combat Capabilities Development Command, receives tips on how the Expedient Leader Follower Program works during a visit to the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk Dec. 8.



Maj. Gen. John A. George, commander, Combat Capabilities Development Command, (inside vehicle), Brig. Gen. David S. Doyle (right), commander, JRTC and Fort Polk, and Capt. Ellen Johnson, commander, 41st Trans Co, receive a briefing on the Expedient Leader Follower Program Dec. 8.

nology, Langhout said.

"This is hard," he said. "It's the first time we're introducing driverless ground vehicles into the middle of our operational forces. This is a big step for us."

"There are so many things that have to

be worked out. There are multiple safety redundancies. There are provisions in the event the lead driver goes into a ditch — you don't want all of the vehicles to go into the ditch. If you can imagine, there are in-

Please see **ROBOTIC**, page 6



CHUCK CANNON/GUARDIAN

Air/land operations

Royal Air Force and U.S. Air Force air traffic controllers and pilots practiced landing a C-17 aircraft from Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina, on the dirt air strip at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk's Geronimo Drop Zone Dec. 8. The multi-nation training concluded Dec. 9 as the C-17 flew back to Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina.

Robotic

Continued from page 5

finite opportunities for things to go wrong."

Langhout said there is a multitude of potential problems, making the program a challenge.

"That's why it's so difficult to figure this out," he said.

"There are so many things you can run into or drive into. What looks good on paper may not look good on grass and dirt. That's why we're here. Engineers can do all the planning, but it really doesn't matter until we put real Soldiers in and let them use it. They're training themselves, and we're observing and taking note of what we hear from them."

Langhout had high praise for the 41st Trans Co.

"We're honored that U.S. Army Forces Command selected the 41st, and it's been nothing but good," he said.

"This is such a professional unit and we're honored that they are the ones figuring this out for our Army."

Johnson said the opportunity to test the new program has been a learning and growth experience for her Soldiers.

"It's awesome to see members of our company, specialists and non-commissioned officers, talking to two-, three- and four-star generals about this program," she said. "And it's finally hit home to them that we're not just doing this for the com-

pletion of testing, but for the entire Army. It's impressive to see what our Soldiers are capable of doing and the long-term affect of their testing."

Through the testing process, Johnson said her command team and Soldiers have learned there is going to be a limitation to where and when the system can be used.

"In a secure compound there's less of a threat to the driver being taken out, so we can use it in that element," she said.

"In a real-world mission, we'll have to determine the threat and if it is viable to use the system."

Johnson said there are variables and "what-ifs" that can pop up.

"Some we can plan for, others you hope never happen," she said.

"You just hope at the end of the day everyone is trained proficiently enough to handle the situation."

When the program first came out, Johnson said people asked, "What type of operations will this be used for?"

"If I have a mission set where we have to drop off ammo and another where we have to drop off water, we'll use the leader follower program to do the water," she said. "I want hands-on for the ammunition drop or pickup."

Johnson said it will boil down to company commanders assessing where they are

going to use the system and what's the risk.

"It's a balancing act," she said. "What are the mission sets we have, and which ones need Soldiers' hands?"



CHUCK CANNON/GUARDIAN

Maj. Gen. John A. George, commander, Combat Capabilities Development Command, visits the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk to observe testing by the 41st Transportation Company on the Expedient Leader Follower program. George was joined by Fort Polk leadership, including JRTC and Fort Polk Commander Brig. Gen. David S. Doyle, JRTC and Fort Polk Command Sgt. Maj. Michael C. Henry, Lt. Col. Shawn C. Keller, commander, 519th Military Police Battalion, and representatives from the Ground Vehicle System Center in Detroit Arsenal, Michigan.



JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES/ BJACH

Focus on victory

Maj. Joseph Ahlborn, chief of the Department of Optometry at Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center, Fort Hood, Texas, gets dirty doing the low-crawl portion of the obstacle course during the Regional Health Command – Central Best Medic Competition Dec. 8 at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.

Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital hosted 14 Soldiers for the RHC-C Best Medic Compe-

tion Dec. 8-10. The Best Medic Competition is open to any Soldiers with a medical occupational specialty and who have earned the expert medical badge.

Winners from this competition will represent RHC-C at the Army Best Medic Competition.

The Command Sergeant Major Jack L. Clark Jr. Best Medic Competition will be conducted at Fort Gordon, Georgia, Jan. 25.

BJACH celebrates laboratory technician's graduation

By JEAN CLAVETTE
GRAVES BJACH PAO

FORT POLK, La. — Leaders and staff from Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital held a graduation ceremony for Pfc. Jackie Payne, medical laboratory technician, Dec. 4. Becoming a clinical medical laboratory technician in the U.S. Army takes 52 weeks, and Payne underwent six months of rigorous training at BJACH to complete his advanced individual training for his military occupational specialty.

"I wanted my siblings to have a positive role model, so I decided to join the Army," said Payne. Payne chose to be a medical laboratory technician because it is a military career that offers certifications recognized in the civilian sector.

During the second phase of the training, Payne was re-

quired to pass the American Society of Clinical Pathologists certification.

Staff Sgt. Heather Adkins, medical laboratory phase II coordinator, said the certification is recognized nationwide.

"The certification (Payne) earned makes him marketable for a civilian lab tech position," she said.

"Payne is a phenomenal Soldier who has been an asset as a student from the moment he walked in the door," said Adkins.

Payne is headed to Fort Detrick, Maryland, where he will be doing virology research. He said he is excited to be on the cutting edge of virus analysis and exploration. "If given the opportunity to remain at Fort Polk, I would happily stay. The Soldiers and civilian staff at the lab have been like family," he said.



JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES/ BJACH

Pfc. Jackie Payne thanks his trainers and colleagues from Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital laboratory during his graduation ceremony Dec. 4. Payne said the professionals in the lab became like family during his six months of phase-two training certifying as a medical laboratory technician.

Recognizing quirky Christmas shopping characteristics

By **ANGIE THORNE**
Public affairs specialist

FORT POLK, La. — Tis the season that people tend to max out credit cards and spend like there's no tomorrow. That may be a grinchy point of view, but it's still true for most people on the hunt for the perfect gifts for love ones this season.

I've experienced, whether by accident or design, myriad ways to pursue that holy grail of gifts for each person on my Christmas list. As a result, the experience I've gained over years filled with mistakes, busted budgets and fighting other shoppers for the last of anything on the shelf, have honed my shopping skills and shaped the way I purchase gifts today.

No matter how you like to shop, online or in-store, one of the most important tips is to create and maintain a budget, especially if there's not a lot of money to go around to begin with. Believe me, I've been there myself. You have \$10 dollars to spend on a person, but you see the perfect gift and it's only \$20. That's not too much over budget, right? Wrong — if that overspending happens for every person on your list, those dollar signs can quickly get out of control — enter credit card debt. Stick to your budget.

Now that the money aspect is out of the way, the type of Christmas shopper you are comes into play. Yes, there are types. I've met, talked to and tried on for size each of the following subsets of Christmas shopping styles.

The first approach to Christmas shopping comes into play the day after Thanksgiving.

That's right, I'm talking about Black Friday shoppers. Let me just say it only took me a couple of trips down this particular



The Fort Polk Main Post Exchange is just one of the many local stores where you can check presents off your Christmas list.

form of holiday madness to know it wasn't for me. Getting up before dawn, making retail employees miss Thanksgiving with their Families, literally watching people fight for the same item and power shopping through the majority of their Christmas list is just too stressful and exhausting

as far as I'm concerned. That doesn't mean other people don't thrive on the limited time bargains and stress-inducing

struggle to successfully buy the present they want at a price stores promise you can't beat. These types of shoppers seem to get a rush from the experience, which amazes me.

Maybe it fulfills a deeply seeded, primitive hunting gene that I lack. Who knows? At this point in my life, I try to sleep in the day after Thanksgiving and make it as

relaxing as possible while recovering from all the cooking I did on Turkey Day. In fact, I try not to shop.

The next type of shopper tends to procrastinate. It's almost as if they don't like shopping at all, whether it's because they have a genuine issue figuring out what to buy for the folks in their life, or they are just short on funds. I call this subset the Christmas-Eve shopper. I did this a few times when I was in college and rather poor — I hated it. I don't like being that stressed and rushed at a time that is supposed to be happy and joyful. It can also lead to bad present-shopping decisions because, let's be honest, by the day before Christmas, the pickings are slim. But again, I know people who shop like this on purpose, and they enjoy it. It seems to be an

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CISA urges Americans to be alert for holiday scams, cyber threats

CISA

WASHINGTON — With more Americans expected to do their holiday shopping online during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency is urging consumers to be on alert for holiday shopping scams and cyber threats, which historically spike during the holiday season.

It's a prime time for hackers, scammers and online thieves. Due to the pandemic, this holiday season may look and feel a

bit different, but shoppers still need to be aware of the potential dangers online shopping can bring and the ways they can protect themselves. While millions of Americans will be online looking for the best gifts and deals, hackers will be looking to take advantage of unsuspecting shoppers by searching for weaknesses in their devices or internet connections or attempting to extract personal and financial information through fake websites or charities.

"Americans are adjusting their travel and shopping habits for a holiday season that's

sure to be unlike anything we've experienced," said Acting CISA Director Brandon Wales. "Hackers, scammers and thieves will take advantage of these changes and the generosity of the public during the holidays to target online shoppers and those giving to charities. There are a few simple steps everyone can take to lower their risk and have a safe and enjoyable holiday season."

The best defense against holiday scams and cyber threats is awareness. CISA rec-

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Shopping

Continued from page 8

adrenaline rush for them, not to mention they claim bragging rights because they got all their presents in one fell swoop. Most of the time it's a toss-up as to whether this way of shopping saves money or not.

There are last minute deals; but if they can't find what they are looking for, the shopper has no choice but to buy something more expensive because they have to show up with a present or two the next morning.

The last type of shopping — the buy in advance Christmas shopper — is the cate-

gory into which I fall. I've found over time that it works best for me.

I have a gift cubby in one of my closets, and I add gifts for people as I find them throughout the year. I find good deals and snap them up. I don't even have to throw a punch or two to get the item I'm eyeing. I use both in-store and online shopping to gather my gifts. It's kind of like a dragon watching their hoard grow with every purchase.

The difference is I'm happy to bestow this beautiful bounty on Christmas morning.

To be fair, other shoppers have told me that they just can't get into the Christmas spirit if they shop in advance.

Another issue comes into play when people are impatient and can't wait to give the gift they bought early. They end up giving the gift to the person and have to buy another one for Christmas.

Of course, there are other ways to Christmas shop, but no matter how you accomplish this yearly holiday hoopla, may you find joy in the process — whatever it may be — and be successful in your efforts to fill Santa's shoes on Christmas morning.

Scams

Continued from page 8

ommends these three simple steps to keep consumers safe when shopping:

Check your devices

- Before starting your hunt for the best deal, make sure your devices are updated and all of your accounts have strong passwords. Ask yourself if they each have strong passwords. Also, if multi-factor authentication is available, utilize it. If you purchase an internet connected device or toy, change the default password and check the device's privacy and security settings to make sure you're not sharing more information than you want.

Shop through trusted retailers

- Before making a purchase and providing any personal or financial information, make sure you're using a reputable, established vendor. Similarly, if you're planning to make a charitable donation, research who or where your donation is going to ensure it's a legitimate organization.

- Think about how you're searching online. Are you searching from home or on public Wi-Fi? How are you finding the deals? Are you clicking on links in emails or going to trusted vendors? Are you clicking on ads on webpages? You wouldn't go into a store with boarded up windows and without signage — the same rules apply online. If it looks suspicious, something's probably not right.

- Some attackers may try to trick you by creating malicious websites that appear to be legitimate. Always verify the legitimacy before supplying any information. If you've never heard of it before, check twice before handing over your information.

- Many people receive emails from retail-

ers about special offers during the holidays. Cyber criminals will often send phishing emails — designed to look like they're from retailers — that have malicious links or that ask for you to input personal or financial information.

- Don't click links or download attachments unless you're confident of where they came from. If you're unsure if an email is legitimate, type the retailer's link or other company into your web browser as opposed to clicking the link. If you receive a suspicious email that you think may be a phishing scam, you can report it at us-cert.gov/report-phishing.

- Never provide your password or personal or financial information in response to an unsolicited email. Legitimate businesses will not email you asking for this information.

- Make sure your information is being encrypted. Many sites use secure sockets layer to encrypt information. Indications that your information will be encrypted include

a link that begins with "https:" instead of "http:" and a padlock icon. If the padlock is closed, the information is encrypted.

Using safe methods for purchases

- If you can, use a credit card as opposed to a debit card. There are laws to limit your liability for fraudulent credit card charges, but you may not have the same level of protection for your debit cards. Additionally, because a debit card draws money directly from your bank account, unauthorized charges could leave you with insufficient funds to pay other bills. Also, use a credit card when using a payment gateway such as PayPal, Google Wallet or Apple Pay.

- You'll likely make more purchases over the holiday season, so check your credit card and bank statements for any fraudulent charges frequently. Immediately notify your bank or financial institution and local law enforcement of unauthorized charges.

For more information about shopping online safely this holiday season, visit [CISA.gov/shop-safely](https://www.cisa.gov/shop-safely).



Snowflake Festival kicks off Fort Polk holiday season

The Grinch made a delightfully grouchy appearance at Fort Polk's annual Snowflake Festival, held Dec. 4 on the grounds of the Main Post Exchange. The Fort Polk community attended the event celebrating all things merry. The festival included a tree lighting ceremony, station to write letters to Santa, ice skating and more.



ANGIE THORNE/GUARDIAN



COL. RYAN ROSEBERRY/ U.S. ARMY



ANGIE THORNE/GUARDIAN

Alexis Edmonds, 11, uses a candy cane pen to write her letter to Santa at the Snowflake Festival held Dec. 4.

Those in attendance at the Snowflake Festival gather around to see the tree lighting ceremony take place.



ANGIE THORNE/GUARDIAN

1st Sgt. Rommel Antonio helps his son, Troy, learn to ice skate at Fort Polk's annual Snowflake Festival held Dec. 4.



ANGIE THORNE/GUARDIAN

Siblings Asher, 5, (left) and Scarlett Jackson, 4, magically become elves thanks to a cut-out display set up at the Snowflake Festival Dec. 4.



ANGIE THORNE/GUARDIAN

Santa makes his arrival at the Snowflake Festival to listen to Fort Polk children as they tell him their Christmas wishes Dec. 4.

Black Knights, Midshipmen wage annual gridiron battle Saturday

GUARDIAN STAFF

WEST POINT, N.Y. — On Saturday, the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and the U.S. Naval Academy will meet on the gridiron for the 121st time. A game steeped in tradition is bound to have some interesting details associated with it. Here are a few you may not know.

1. The Army and Navy have faced off a total of 1,206 times. To date, Navy has 61 wins, Army has 52. There have been seven ties. Navy has posted the largest victory, 51-0, in 1973. The midshipmen also hold the longest winning streak at 14, from 2002-2015. Navy won last year's contest 31-7.

2. Cadets and midshipmen played the first Army-Navy football game Nov. 29, 1890 on "The Plain" at West Point. Navy had been playing organized football since 1879 and defeated the newly established Army team, 24-0.

3. The 271 members of the Corps of Cadets each contributed 52 cents to pay half of the Navy's traveling costs for the 1890 game.

4. Although today the game is known as an annual tradition (and it has been such since 1930), there have been 10 times when the Army-Navy game was not played.

It's said that the longest interruption, which lasted from 1894 to 1898, came about after an argument between an Army general and a Navy admiral almost resulted in a duel following the 1893 game.

The game also wasn't played in 1909. That year, Army canceled its remaining games after Cadet Eugene Byrne died from an injury sustained in an October game against Harvard.

Twice during World War I, in 1917 and 1918, games were canceled on orders from the War Department. And in 1928 and 1929, the academies could not reconcile player eligibility standards.

5. On Nov. 27, 1926, the game was held in Chicago for the formal dedication of Soldier Field in honor of the American servicemen who had fought in World War I.

6. Going into both the 1944 and 1945 games, Army and Navy were ranked No. 1 and No. 2, respectively. Army won both games.

7. Army has three Heisman Trophy winners: Doc Blanchard (1945), Glenn Davis (1946) and Pete Dawkins (1958). Two midshipmen, Joe Bellino (1960) and Roger Staubach (1963) were also Heisman winners.

Dawkins served in the Army from 1962-1983 and retired as a brigadier general.



Blanchard entered the Air Force after graduating from West Point in 1947 and served until 1971 when he retired as a colonel.

Davis served as a lieutenant in the Army until 1950, when he resigned his commission and played for the Los Angeles Ram in the National Football League.

8. The tradition of mules as mascots for Army dates back to 1899, when a quartermaster officer decided the team needed a mascot to counter the Navy goat and chose a white mule used to pull an ice wagon.

However, the first "official" mule was a former U.S. Army pack mule named "Mr. Jackson" that arrived at West Point in 1936. Since Mr. Jackson, there have been 17 "offi-

cial" Army mules.

"Buckshot," the only female of the bunch, arrived at West Point in 1964, a gift from the Air Force Academy. Today, three mules serve as Army mascots: Raider, Ranger II and General Scott.

9. Instant replay made its American debut in the 1963 Army-Navy game.

10. A 1973 episode of "M*A*S*H" referenced a fictional Army-Navy game that ended 42-36 Navy.

To this day, no Army-Navy game has ended with that score. The radio announcer in the episode says the game is the 53rd Army-Navy game. That game was played in 1952; Navy won, 7-0.

Please see **FOOTBALL**, page 16

BOSS toy drive helps Fort Polk Families create happy holiday



ANGIE THORNE/GUARDIAN

Suzanne Mese (left) and Krissy Carrigan (right) shop the Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers Toy Drive Dec. 9. The toy drive is just one of the many community outreach events hosted by BOSS.



ANGIE THORNE/GUARDIAN

Sgt. Elijah Johnson, the new Better Opportunities For Single Soldiers president, waits to check shoppers in to the Toy Drive event Dec. 9.



COMMAND SGT. MAJ CHRISTOPHER AUSBUN

Staged toys wait to be placed on display tables and shelves by Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers members for a BOSS Toy Drive Dec. 9.



ANGIE THORNE/GUARDIAN

Staff Sgt. Mohammad Rasekh selects a stuffed toy at the Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers Toy Drive event Dec. 9.



ANGIE THORNE/GUARDIAN

Staff Sgt. Joseph Mask (left) enters the Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers Toy Drive after BOSS representative, Spc. Shana James, checks his temperature Dec. 9.

Soldiers punished for UCMJ violations, civilians plead guilty

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

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

- A sergeant, assigned to 3rd Squadron, 89th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, was separated under Chapter 14-12c(2) (Commission of a Serious Offense) for wrongful use of a controlled substance. The Soldier was issued a General under Honorable conditions characterization of service and a bar to post. Generally, this characterization of service results in the loss of a service member's educational benefits.

- A sergeant, assigned to 519th Military Police Battalion, was punished under Article 15 for fraternization and providing alcohol to individuals under 21 years of age in violation of Article 134, Uniform Code of Military Justice. The Soldier was sentenced to a reduction to E-4, suspended, to be automatically remitted if not vacated on or before May 12, 2021; and extra duty for 30 days, suspended, to be automatically remitted if not vacated on or before May 12, 2021.

- A sergeant, assigned to 2nd Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 3rd BCT, 10th Mtn Div, was punished under Article 15 for dereliction of duty by utilizing night-vision goggles in an unsafe manner while acting as the vehicle commander, in violation of Article 92, UCMJ. The Soldier was sentenced to extra duty for 14 days.

- A private, assigned to 519th MP Bn, was separated under Chapter 14-12c(2) (Commission of a Serious Offense) for wrongful use of a controlled substance. The Soldier was issued a General under Honorable conditions characterization of service. Generally, this characterization of service results in the loss of a service member's educational benefits.

- A private, assigned to 2nd Bn, 30th Inf Reg, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mtn Div, was punished under Article 15 for unlawfully striking another Soldier in the face with his hand, in violation of Article 128, UCMJ. The Soldier was sentenced to a reduction to E-1; extra duty for 45 days; and restriction for 45 days.

The below individuals pleaded guilty in the western district of Louisiana.

- A sergeant first class pleaded guilty to DUI and was sentenced to a \$760 fine, 10 days in jail, suspended; one year of probation; 32 hours of community service; and alcohol abuse counseling.

- A private first class pleaded guilty to DUI and was sentenced to a \$760 fine; 10 days in jail, suspended; one year of probation; 32 hours of community service; and alcohol abuse counseling.

- A civilian pleaded guilty to DUI and was sentenced to a \$760 fine; 10 days jail, suspended; one year of probation, 32 hours of community service; and alcohol abuse counseling.

- A staff sergeant pleaded guilty to DUI and was sentenced to a \$760 fine; 10 days in jail, suspended; one year of probation; 32 hours of community service; and alcohol abuse counseling.

- A specialist pleaded guilty to DUI and was sentenced to a \$760 fine; 10 days in jail, suspended; one year of probation; 32 hours of community service; and alcohol abuse counseling.

- A civilian pleaded guilty to trespassing and was assessed a \$1040 fine.

- A civilian pleaded guilty to theft and received a \$525 fine.

- A specialist pleaded guilty to reckless operation and received a \$240 fine.

- A civilian dependent pleaded guilty to criminal damage to property and received a \$240 fine.

- A civilian pleaded guilty to possession of drug paraphernalia and received \$235 fine.

- A civilian pleaded guilty to attempted theft and received a \$225 fine.

- A civilian dependent pleaded guilty to disturbing the peace and received a \$140 fine.

- A civilian dependent pleaded guilty to disturbing the peace and received a \$140 fine.

- A civilian dependent pleaded guilty to speeding and received a \$71 fine.

Corvias urges residents to complete survey, offers prizes

CORVIAS

Fort Polk, La. — On-post housing residents now have the opportunity to complete the 2020 Department of Defense Tenant Satisfaction Housing Survey. The survey gives residents an opportunity to provide feedback to the Army and Corvias. Then, that feedback is used to evaluate the current state of the partnership and guides future improvements to the housing facilities and residential services.

Residents of Fort Polk who complete the survey have the opportunity to win prizes. The third-party survey vendor will hold three drawings throughout the survey period, each for a \$25 gift card.

Residents who moved in prior to Nov. 10 received a survey from **ArmyHousingSurvey@CELAAssociates.com** on Dec. 2. Residents who did not receive a survey should contact **ArmyHousingSurvey@CELAAssociates.com** with their installation name and address. The local garrison housing office and Corvias community offices are also available to assist with any concerns.

The survey takes less than 10 minutes to complete. Questions assess the residents' evaluation of their present home, community amenities, resident activities, the community maintenance team and property management team.

"The results we collect from the survey will be instrumental in helping us achieve our goal to provide residents with the best service and quality, on-post living," said Wil Motta, operations director for Corvias. "Previous surveys helped identify areas to

change and implement new customer service initiatives based on the feedback."

From 2019 survey data, Corvias has overlaid roofs in Dogwood Terrace and paved 3 miles of road at Maple Terrace.

The survey is administered by CEL and Associates Incorporated, an independent, third-party group. All survey answers are strictly confidential, and residents are urged to offer honest responses. Personal data is not tabulated, and the survey does not identify the resident in any way.

Got News?

Call the Guardian
at 531-1416

Make the holidays merry: Avoid alcohol-related mishaps

By JULIE SHELLEY
USACRC

FORT POLK, La. — With the beginning of the holiday season, “don’t drink and drive” becomes a common refrain in everything from public service campaigns to family members saying goodbye to loved ones headed to a party or other social gathering.

Unfortunately, it’s not just drinking and driving that can kill you or others — it’s drinking and pretty much anything else.

“It’s important to recognize that alcohol impairs judgment and slows reaction time,” said Command Sgt. Maj. William L. Gardner II, U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center. “Drinking can place you at higher risk of having a mishap during any activity.”

During the past five fiscal years, at least 25% of all off-duty fatal events recorded Army-wide between Thanksgiving and the week after New Year’s Day involved alcohol, USACRC data shows. That number could be even higher due to disconnects between civilian law enforcement agencies, which most often investigate off-duty, off-installation

situations, and Army units that report them to the USACRC.

“Toxicology reports can take time to come back, and the unit won’t receive that information until well after the initial report, if at all,” explained Tracey Russell, USACRC safety manager. “While alcohol was verified in at least a quarter of off-duty holiday fatality reports from 2016 to now, we suspect it’s probably more.”

While Soldiers have been killed in alcohol-related falls and pedestrian-vehicle collisions, privately owned weapons and drinking are a particularly deadly mix.

“Alcohol was a factor in all the fatal incidents reported across the Army over the past five holiday seasons and a common factor in these mishaps year-round,” Russell said. “This is not negotiable — if you’re consuming alcohol, don’t handle a weapon. If you’re handling a weapon, don’t consume alcohol.”

Drinking is an ongoing hazard for Soldiers regardless of season, but the danger during the holidays is distinct from other times of the year.

“It’s not necessarily riskier to



drink during the holidays than during the rest of the year,” Russell said. “The issue is that, during the holiday season, some individuals might have a tendency to drink more often and in larger quantities.”

According to Gardner, holiday safety is about accountability, not restriction.

“We’re not telling Soldiers not to drink,” he said. “As long as they’re of legal-drinking age and manage their consumption and associated activities responsibly, the decision to drink is a personal one.”

First-line leaders counseling Soldiers before holiday block leave should encourage them to control their drinking, but also

remain realistic that some will surpass their limits.

“It’s imperative to discuss planning ahead and what to do if you find yourself in a situation you didn’t plan for, such as calling a friend or leader for a ride home or getting a cab or ride-sharing service,” Gardner said. “If firearms are present while you or others are consuming alcohol, have the presence of mind to make sure the weapons are put away safely.”

The USACRC released a communications campaign to manage risk during the exodus period. The complete campaign, including feature articles, posters and public service announcements, is available [here](#).

Fort Polk’s fire inspectors stress holiday fire-safety caution

By CHAD ESTES
Fort Polk Fire Inspector

FORT POLK, La. — It’s that time of year for family, friends, good food and celebrating. It’s also time for beautiful (and sometimes excessive) decorations. With fire places, space heaters, candles and combustible decorations throughout homes, it’s one of the busiest times of the year for fire departments.

Hopefully, the following safety tips can help you keep the holiday season merry, bright and safe.

- Selecting a tree for the holiday — needles on fresh trees should be green, hard to pull from the branches and shouldn’t break. Once you get the tree to its final location, cut the base of the tree trunk at a 45 degree angle to ensure no sap has built up on the end, preventing it from absorbing water.

- Caring for your tree — do not place your tree close to a heat source, including a fireplace or heating vent. The heat will dry out the tree, causing it to be more easily ignited by heat, flames or sparks. Be careful not to drop or flick cigarette ashes near a tree. Do not put your live tree up too early or leave it up for longer than two weeks. Keep the tree stand filled with water at all times.

- Maintain your holiday lights — inspect holiday lights each year for frayed wires; bare spots; gaps in the insulation; broken or cracked sockets; and excessive kinking or wear before putting them up. Only use lighting listed by an approved testing laboratory.

- Do not overload electrical outlets — do not link more than three light strands, unless the directions indicate it is safe. Connect strings of lights to an extension cord

before plugging the cord into the outlet. Make sure to periodically check the wires — they should not be warm to the touch.

Do not leave holiday lights unattended.

Avoid using lit candles — if you do use them, make sure they are in stable holders and place them where they cannot be easily knocked down. Never leave the house with candles burning.

Never put lit candles on a tree — do not go near a Christmas tree with an open flame.

In any season, ensure working smoke alarms are installed on every level of your home — test them monthly, keep them clean and equipped with fresh batteries at all times. Know when and how to call for help, and remember to practice your home escape plan.

Give your family the gift of joyful, safe holiday memories by following these tips.

Fort Polk's FAP suggests holiday stress coping tips

By TERRI TARPLEY

Family Advocacy Program trainer

FORT POLK, La. —The holiday season often brings an unwelcome guest — stress. It's no wonder, as the holidays often present an array of demands — cooking meals, shopping, baking, cleaning and entertaining. And with COVID-19, you may be feeling additional stress, or you may be worrying about you and your loved ones' health. You may also feel stressed, sad or anxious because your holiday plans may look different during the pandemic.

These practical tips may help minimize the stress that accompanies the holidays. You may even end up enjoying the holidays more than you thought you would.

1. Acknowledge your feelings: If someone close to you has recently passed away, or you can't be with loved ones for other reasons, realize that it's normal to feel sadness and grief. It's OK to take time to cry or express your feelings. You can't force yourself to be happy just because it's the holiday season.

2. Be realistic: The holidays don't have to be perfect or just like last year's holiday season. As families change and grow, traditions and rituals often change as well. Choose a few to hold on to and be open to creating new ones.

For example, if your big family celebration isn't possible, find new ways to celebrate together, such as sharing pictures, emails or videos or meet virtually on a video call.

Even though your holiday plans may look different this year, you can find unique ways to celebrate; perhaps, even creating some new traditions.

3. Set aside differences: Try to accept family members and friends as they are, even if they don't live up to all of your expectations. Set aside grievances until a more appropriate time for discussion. Be understanding if others get upset or distressed when something goes differently than planned; chances



es are they're feeling the effects of holiday stress too.

4. Stick to a budget: Before you do your gift and food shopping, decide how much money you can afford to spend. Stick to your budget — don't try to buy happiness with an avalanche of gifts.

Try these alternatives:

- Cook at home instead of dining out.
- Give homemade gifts.
- Start a family gift exchange.

5. Plan ahead: Set aside specific days for shopping, baking, connecting with friends and other activities. Consider whether you can shop online for any of your items. Plan your menus and then make your shopping list. That'll help prevent last-minute scrambling to buy forgotten ingredients. Also, make sure to line up help for meal preparation and cleanup.

6. Learn to say no: Saying yes when you should say no can leave you feeling resentful and overwhelmed. Friends and colleagues will understand if you can't participate in every project or activity. If it's not possible to say no, try to remove something else from your agenda by asking someone else to help complete that task in order to make up for the lost time.

7. Don't abandon healthy habits: Don't let the holidays become a free-for-all. Overindulgence only adds to your stress and guilt.

Try these suggestions:

- Have a healthy snack before holiday meals so that you don't go overboard on sweets, cheese or drinks.

- Eat healthy meals.
- Get plenty of sleep.
- Include regular physical activity in your daily routine.
- Try deep-breathing exercises, meditation or yoga.
- Avoid excessive tobacco, alcohol and drug use.

- Be aware of how the information culture can produce undue stress and adjust the time you spend reading news and social media, as you see fit.

8. Take a breather: Make some time for yourself and find an activity you enjoy. Take a break by yourself. Spending just 15 minutes alone, without distractions, may refresh you enough to handle everything you need to do. Find something that reduces stress by clearing your mind, slowing your breathing and restoring inner calm.

Some options may include:

- Taking a walk at night and stargazing
- Listening to soothing music
- Reading a book

Stress can ruin your holidays and hurt your health. However, being realistic, planning ahead and seeking support may help ward off stress during the holiday season.

Review

Continued from page 4

individuals indicated their fear of speaking up or seeking help, as they worried about retaliation, stigmatism or ostracism and its subsequent impact on their career or assignment.

"What we did discover ... is a number of

unreported sexual harassment and sexual assault incidents," said Queta Rodriguez, a committee member.

Moving forward, Army senior leaders will continue to emphasize the role of non-commissioned officers and first-line su-

pervisors, Swecker said.

"The problems that we saw are cultural, and everybody is involved in culture from the highest levels to the one-on-one interaction" between a squad leader and their Soldier, he added.

 CHRISTMAS/NEW YEARS Holiday Hours of Operation				
Facility	Christmas Eve Thursday 24 Dec	Christmas Day Friday 25 Dec	New Years' Eve Thursday 31 Dec	New Years' Day Friday 1 Jan 2021
Main Store	1000-1800	CLOSED	1000-1900	CLOSED
Military Clothing	1000-1600	CLOSED	1000-1800	CLOSED
Starbucks	0700-1700	CLOSED	0700-1800	CLOSED
Subway	0900-1800	CLOSED	0900-1900	CLOSED
Charley's	1030-1700	CLOSED	1030-1800	CLOSED
Qdoba	1030-1700	CLOSED	1030-1800	CLOSED
Panda Express	1000-1800	CLOSED	1000-1800	CLOSED
Optical Shop	1000-1800	CLOSED	1000-1900	CLOSED
Concessions	1000-1800	CLOSED	1000-1800	CLOSED
Patriot Outfitters	1000-1800	CLOSED	1000-1900	CLOSED
GNC	1000-1800	CLOSED	1000-1900	CLOSED
Trophy Shop	1000-1800	CLOSED	1000-1900	CLOSED
Alterations	1000-1600	CLOSED	1000-1800	CLOSED
GameStop	1000-1800	CLOSED	1000-1900	CLOSED
Stylique	1000-1800	CLOSED	1000-1800	CLOSED
Barber Shop	1000-1800	CLOSED	1000-1800	CLOSED
Enterprise	1000-1730	CLOSED	1000-1730	CLOSED
Mini Mall (BLDG 3310)	CLOSED	CLOSED	0700-1800	CLOSED
Barber Shop	CLOSED	CLOSED	0900-1700	CLOSED
Firestone	0700-1600	CLOSED	0700-1800	0700-1800
Smoothie King	CLOSED	CLOSED	0730-1800	CLOSED
Hospital Express	0900-1600	CLOSED	0900-1600	CLOSED
Barber Shop	0800-1400	CLOSED	0800-1400	CLOSED
Burger King Dining Room	0800-1600	CLOSED	0600-1800	CLOSED
Burger King Drive Thru	0800-1600	CLOSED	0600-1900	CLOSED
Express 1 (BLDG 5498)	0700-1900	CLOSED	0600-2300	0900-1600
Express 3 (BLDC 7000)	0800-1600	CLOSED	0800-2000	CLOSED
Class Six	1000-1600	CLOSED	1000-1800	CLOSED
Hickory Smokehouse	CLOSED	CLOSED	1100-1800	CLOSED
Bayou Theater	1800	CLOSED	1800	CLOSED
Pizza Hut (South Fort)	1000-1600	CLOSED	1000-2400	1000-2400

Temporary hours of operation will resume Saturday, 02 Jan 2021.
All facilities not listed remain temporarily closed.



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COMMISSARY HOLIDAY HOURS

Dec. 21: 9:30 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Dec. 24: 9:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Dec. 25: CLOSED

Dec. 31: 9:30 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Jan. 1: CLOSED

Review

Continued from page 4

11. The Rose Bowl is the only site west of the Mississippi River to host the Army-Navy game — it did so in 1983.

12. Only six Army-Navy games have been held on the campus of either academy. Two of those games were during World War II, one in 1942 and the other in 1943. This year's game, scheduled for West Point, will be the seventh.

13. New York's Polo Grounds holds the record for the most games hosted outside of Philadelphia, although the last game played there was in the 1920s.

14. Following each game, players sing both teams' alma maters. The winning team joins the losing team and sings facing the losing team's students. Then the losing team joins the victors on their side of the field and sings the winner's alma mater to its students. This act is a show of mutual respect and solidarity.

15. This year's contest will take place at West Point, the first time the game has been played there since World War II. The game was moved from Philadelphia due to COVID-19 concerns. To answer those who

asked if this year's game might be cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic, Lt. Gen. Darryl A. Williams, West Point superintendent and a former Army defensive lineman said, "This game must be played. We'd play this game in a parking lot if we'd have to."

Editor's note: Information for this article came from various Army Heritage and Education Center documents, West Point Athletics, and the articles "When Army and Navy meet, there is no other game with deeper foundations or greater prestige" and "The First Army-Navy Game."