



FORGING THE

WARRIOR SPIRIT

The JRTC and Fort Polk Guardian

Vol. 48, No. 26

Home of Heroes @ Fort Polk, LA

July 1, 2021

Fort Polk invites public to help celebrate America's birthday

By ANNABELLE ARCAND
DFMWR marketing illustrator

FORT POLK, La. — No one takes celebrations more seriously than the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk. On Sunday, the installation opens its gates to the public to celebrate America's birthday.

Fireworks, festivals and parades return as the pandemic and its restrictions fade. Folks in Louisiana are known to "laissez les bon temps rouler," (let the good times roll) but no one goes above and beyond like Fort Polk's Directorate of Family Morale, Welfare and Recreation special events team.

This year, DFMWR partnered with the United Service Organizations and Boots for Troops to celebrate the biggest Independence Day Festival in West Central Louisiana.

Gates open at 5 p.m. Visitors will be able to access Fort Polk from gate 1 on Louisiana Ave. and gate 7 on Avenue K, which are open 24 hours per day and gate 2 on University Parkway and gate 5 on La. Hwy 10 and 467 south, which will open at 3 p.m. and close when all traffic has departed. All visitors will be vetted at the gate.

Festivities begin at 5 p.m. at Fort Polk's Headquarters Field, 1321 Corps Road. Shuttle buses will provide transportation to

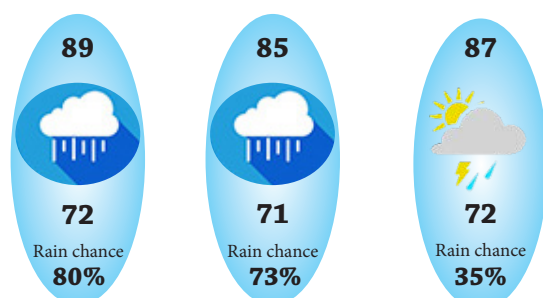


bring visitors to the event from the Commissary parking lot, located at 7445 La. Hwy 467, the Post Exchange parking area, located at 7742 Colorado Ave., Allen Memorial Library, 7460 Colorado Ave. or the Mission Training Center, 6235 Georgia Ave. Shuttle buses are air conditioned and begin

running at 5 p.m. from all locations. Visitors can also park at Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital, 1585 Third Street, where they can park and walk to Headquarter's Field. On-post residents are encouraged to walk.

Please see **Birthday**, page 5

Weekend weather



Inside the Guardian

BJACH changes.....	3	CAP commander.....	10
Soldier pride.....	4	Book review.....	13
Effecting change.....	9	Severe weather.....	14

Viewpoint

In our view

Guardian staff asked the JRTC and Fort Polk community, "What is your favorite summer activity and why?"

Here are their responses:

Pfc. Andrew Nolan:

"I like fishing because you are out on the water where it's peaceful and quiet. It's also nice because if you get up early enough in the morning, you miss all the heat."



Felicia Peters: *"I love to jet ski. It's a great family activity. You can do it for hours on the lake and it's so much fun."*



Sgt. Amelyne Clark:

"Anything having to do with being outdoors that involves barbecue, family and friends."



Darius Hopkins: *"I like to have fun hanging out with my friends and family and creating good memories. I love living it up in the summer and enjoying the heat."*



Spc. Breanna Johnson:

"I would say hiking because I enjoy the scenery and it's relaxing. It helps you clear your mind."



Timijun Gibson: *"I can't handle the heat, so anything to do with being inside and enjoying the air conditioner is my favorite summer activity."*



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The Guardian, is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. Army. Contents of the Guardian are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army or Fort Polk.

The Guardian is published weekly by the Public Affairs Office, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.

The Guardian can be found on the JRTC and Fort Polk web site at **home.army.mil/polk** and the JRTC and Fort Polk Facebook page at **@JRTCandFortPolk/**.

Guardian archives can also be found on the JRTC and Fort Polk website.

Links to the Guardian are also included in all-users emails to government email users and by request to non-military units. To be included on all-users messages email **kimberly.k.reischling.civ@mail.mil**.

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

For more information on Fort Polk units and happenings visit the following Facebook pages:

@JRTCOperationsGrp, **@BayneJonesACH** or **@fortpolkmwr**.

Briefs

Abandoned vehicles

The Directorate of Emergency Services Traffic section releases the following vehicles to a towing company for disposal on Aug. 30, if they remain unclaimed.

Vehicles are listed with the last four numbers of their VIN number.

2000	Audi	A4	7545
1994	Ford	Ranger	7582
2011	BMW	328I	7142
2005	Mazda	RX8	0655
2000	GMC	Sierra	5456
2012	Ford	F-150	6589
2002	Mitsubishi	Montero	9774
2007	Cadillac	CTS	8777
2010	Mini	Cooper S	1729
2002	Honda	Shadow	2420
2003	SAAB	93	3023
2002	Ford	Taurus	7521
2003	Mitsubishi	Lancer	3693

If one of these vehicles belongs to you contact the Fort Polk Police Traffic Section at 531-1806 / 6675 / 2677.

Vaccine appointments

Safeguarding national security and the medical readiness of Soldiers is a priority for Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital. Everyone is encouraged to get vaccinated against COVID-19.

Non-TRICARE beneficiaries (civilian employees and contractors) who work on the installation can make an appointment with the Fort Polk Department of Public Health by calling the Occupational Health Clinic at 337.531.6131 / 2706. Soldiers, Family members, retirees and beneficiaries, 18 and older interested in volunteering for the COVID-19 vaccine should contact the BJACH appointment line at 337.531.3011 or self-book at www.tricareonline.com.

CLICK2GO fee

The worldwide rollout of Commissary CLICK2GO just got better with a waiver of the service charge for a

Please see **Briefs**, page 8

Lt. Gen. Ronald Place, director, Defense Health Agency, (left) meets with Brig. Gen. David Doyle, commanding general of the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk during his visit with the leaders, Soldiers and civilian employees at Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital June 24.



JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES/BJACH PAO

Changes ahead for BJACH with DHA Market Transition

By **JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES**
BJACH PAO

FORT POLK, La. — Lt. Gen. Ronald Place, director, Defense Health Agency, discussed the upcoming transition to the Military Health System with Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital leadership, Soldiers and employees at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk June 24.

DHA was established in 2013 to provide a host of shared health services across the MHS. BJACH will transition to the system within the next 30 days.

“Cost, quality and access are the reasons we are changing to the military health care system,” Place said. “Health care has gotten increasingly more complex. In small community hospitals or outpatient clinics complexity is moderate, but if you think about our largest medical centers and our multi-service markets with large hospitals, ambulatory surgery centers, outpatient clinics and our civilian partner facilities, making it all work together is complicated. The purpose of it is to support the readiness of the force and the readiness of the medical force.”

Congress directed DHA to assume responsibility for the administration and management of health care at all military medical treatment facilities from the Army, Navy and Air Force on Oct. 1, 2018. Accord-

ing to the DHA, this is a once-in-a-generation reform effort to improve force readiness and health care services to warfighters, retirees and military Families through standardization across all military departments.

“We are focusing on those service members who are protecting our freedom and that’s the purpose of the military health care system,” Place said. “The number one priority of the Defense Health Agency is to produce great outcomes for our service members. Whatever we learn to create those great outcomes for our military personnel can also be applied to our Families and retirees.”

Military hospitals and clinics exist to keep combat forces ready to go to war, and sustain the readiness, currency and competency of medical personnel to support war-time requirements.

“Are you ready to do the job when you need to do it? How does our work inside our MTFs continue to keep us ready to do those tasks?” he asked. “The military health benefit is a huge factor in retention. Understanding what that means to those we serve is very important. Our military health system is an extraordinarily powerful health system and in many cases the best in the world.”

Place discussed the transition with Sol-

Please see **BJACH**, page 8

LGBTQ Soldiers celebrate diversity, speak their truth

By THOMAS BRADING
Army News Service

WASHINGTON — Soldiers representing the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community virtually celebrated Pride Month Thursday as part of a discussion that marked another step in the Army's growing recognition toward the LGBTQ community.

The participants shared personal stories and experiences, as well as equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts taken by the Army, along with how the policies have impacted their lives. The Soldiers also discussed the importance of LGBTQ representation within military ranks.

Every June, Pride Month is a national observance that is held to commemorate the Stonewall Uprising in Manhattan, New York, in 1969, a historic tipping point within the gay liberation movement to empower all LGBTQ Americans.

Since then the LGBTQ community has made significant progress toward equality. However, with change have come setbacks.

In 1993, the Department of Defense Directive 1304.26, commonly known as Don't Ask Don't Tell, or DADT, was written into law.

The directive was a compromise measure that barred LGBTQ-identifying persons from military service, but also prohibited military personnel from discriminating against, or harassing, closeted gay and lesbian troops.

In 1984, when Maj. Rebecca A. Ammons, a transgender Army chaplain, first enlisted as a Marine, DADT did little to change her life. Even in 2011, after lawmakers repealed the directive, the repeal only ensured gay, lesbian and bisexual troops could openly serve. It did not permit transgender service members from serving.

"(DADT) wasn't even an issue" in the 80s, she said during the panel discussion. "I was explicitly asked on my (enlistment) forms: Are you gay? Of course, there wasn't even a block to say: Are you trans?"

Despite that, "I had this overwhelming compulsion; this need to serve," Ammons said. Yet, with that need came "this overwhelming feeling of isolation."

Two landmark events came years later. In 2015, the repeal of the Defense of Marriage Act allowed all Americans, including



Master Sgt. Ilpe DeKoe, personnel security manager and equal opportunity leader for the U.S. Army Reserve, participates in a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer panel discussion June 24.

service members, to marry their same-sex partners in all 50 states.

Before this, a handful of states legalized same-sex marriage. Since 2013, all same-sex spouses were eligible to receive identification cards and all associated benefits.

Another milestone within the military came earlier this year with a policy that allowed transgender individuals to openly serve.

These changes are reflective of the Army's direction of putting "people first," said retired Maj. Gen. Tammy Smith, moderator of the event.

Smith, who retired earlier this month, helped forge the Army's People Strategy, which focuses on individual Soldiers and how to deliberately manage their skills, improve their overall quality of life and develop a modernized talent management system.

"I had the privilege of working on the Army's People Strategy and the quality of life portfolio," Smith said, in her opening comments. "This is a tangible example that the Army means it when they say 'people first.' Our strength comes from diversity."

For the retired general, the purpose is simple: An inclusive Army means a more lethal, stronger force, she said.

"We've come a long way as an institution. I think it's important that we have

people first, as far as a great No. 1 priority," said Col. Samuel P. Smith Jr., garrison commander of Fort Polk, Louisiana.

Truth seemed to be the theme of the night, as each panel member shared their own personal journey. The panel showcased an array of Soldiers, each with unique experiences and backgrounds, and who, according to the moderator, were examples of what the Army of today represents.

Among the panel members was Ammons, who said the fear of coming out as transgender weighed heavily on the chaplain's shoulders.

Ammons recalled the trepidation she felt when coming out to her peers, especially within the faith-based community she serves. She worried how they would respond to the news, she said.

Ammons publicly came out last July and with it came her name change and the aggressive medical procedures she planned to go through for her transition. She was surprised by how "heartwarming and honestly amazing" her fellow chaplains and other Soldiers have treated, and continue treating her, she said.

But isolation still happens. That feeling, whether caused by orientation or gender,

Please see **Pride**, page 6

Birthday

Continued from page 1

Once festival attendees reach Headquarters's Field, they can choose from local and international cuisine sold by various food vendors to take care of their culinary requirements.

After the live entertainment concludes, the festival will come to an end with one of the biggest fireworks show in the area.

"We are excited to bring our legendary Freedom Fest back to Fort Polk and the local community," said Stormie Tippit, DFMWR special events coordinator. "Each year we strive to give back to the community and our Soldiers by presenting the biggest July Fourth celebration in West Central Louisiana."

To encourage a patriotic spirit, military static displays will be on site to view and learn about. People will be allowed to explore and sit in some of the displays to get a small taste of what Soldiers experience.

"We are looking forward to this year's event. It is a big move for Fort Polk, considering that we were not able to hold this event last year," said Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher M. Ausbun, garrison command sergeant major. "Thanks to the partnerships we have on, as well as off the installation, this is a great opportunity to provide an amazing event for our Soldiers, Families and civilians assigned to Fort Polk, as well as the local community."

Morgan Collins, a Department of Defense civilian, said the best part about Fort Polk's Freedom Fest is the patriotic atmosphere.

"The community is able to come together and enjoy everything the installation provides," he said.

This year's Freedom Fest celebration features country music singer Randall King, and up and coming music performer Trent Cowie.

To give you a chance to learn about King and raise your excitement for the upcoming concert, DFMWR sat with King for some questions and answers.

Q: Randall, you have been the hottest star in Texas country music since your first single released, in 2016. Was a career in music always a dream?

A: "A national and worldwide career has always been my dream. I don't consider myself Texas Country, I'm modernized traditional country. I'm proud to be from my home state, but I deliver a much broader landscape musically. I've wanted to sing, write and play music since I could talk. I've played guitar since I was 7, played in bands



Country music star Randall King says he is excited to perform at the 2021 Fort Polk Freedom Fest.

since middle school. I've worked my ass off in every form to put my music out there and the fans have built it every step of the way with me. I have the hardest working band and team combined with the greatest fans you could ask for," he said.

Q: What is your biggest inspiration in life, and what do you believe shaped your music the most?

A: "My biggest inspiration was definitely my father and the work ethic he instilled in me. He led by example and showed me how to build a business. He saw my dream and worked with my momma to shape and build that dream with positive support and pushing me to work at it. He gave me direct and honest feedback, which could be brutal but needed," he said.

Q: The song "She's Gone" has a fun and easy beat to it, but talks about a breakup. What is the story behind it?

A: "It's just a fun song about a break up, you don't always live your songs but I've seen it through others' eyes and, honestly, I sang the back half into existence. I lost my dog to my ex. He was a damn good'n too," he said.

Q: Last but not least, could you imagine a life without coffee?

A: "Nope. Coffee is life," he said.

If you plan to attend, the following health, safety and security guidelines must be followed:

- The personal belongings of all persons entering a federal installation are subject to search at the event entry point. No backpacks or large bags.

- Coolers and similar containers are not allowed.

- Outside food and drink, including alcohol, are not permitted inside the gates. Glass bottles are not allowed. Refreshments and food are available for purchase.

- Beer is served only to patrons displaying an alcohol wristband. Receive a wristband at the designated area.

- No weapons are permitted. (Includes small knives, leatherman tools)

- No cannabis or recreational drugs are permitted.

- No pets (except service animals), glass, fireworks or Frisbees.

- No tents or canopies.

- No professional cameras with telephoto lenses.

- Unruly behavior will not be tolerated.

- Military police will staff the event to maintain safety and security.

Attendees can bring blankets, lawn chairs, cash (limited ATMs will be on-site), sunscreen, strollers and small insulated coolers for infant formula or water and diaper bags.

For more information call 531.1959 or visit polk.armymwr.com and stay tuned to the Fort Polk MWR Facebook page.



Pride

Continued from page 4

can be “incredibly isolating and damaging,” said Master Sgt. Ijpe DeKoe, an Army reservist who was among the plaintiffs linked to the Supreme Court decision on same-sex marriage.

“It took me years to understand that kind of trauma. Years later when I look back, I’m very troubled by anyone who has to go through that for whatever reason,” he added.

Finding support

One way to overcome isolation, according to the panelists, was finding the right support group.

“It took me a while (to be true to myself),” Smith said. “I had a close circle of friends who helped me through it, which is important if you are isolated, so I was very fortunate.”

For years, Smith struggled with his orientation. In 2004, amid DADT, he knew it was time to be honest with himself, to be honest with the girl he was dating and to his family, he said.

However, the missing piece was his career. Outside of his small support group, he could not be open to the Army.

He questioned whether or not he could endure 20-plus years in the Army while internally struggling with his orientation. “I didn’t know whether the two could align: Me being gay and serving in the Army,” he said.

Even when he came out to his friends and family, the colonel still felt closeted at work. He couldn’t talk about his boyfriend. Instead of saying his partner’s name, he used

a traditional girl’s name with the same first letter. He couldn’t have certain pictures on his desk. He couldn’t talk about his weekend plans with coworkers.

“I love the Army, and I was a good ([Soldier],” he said. But “I could not be myself.”

Instead, Smith “got used to it,” he said. “That’s just the way things were. I accepted that.”

As time passed, the colonel became more confident in his orientation. “As I matured, I realized I (wasn’t) being authentic and at some point, I think people are going to see through me, and some leaders did that,” he said.

Not only did he feel transparent, but Smith also felt like he owed it to the people he worked with, his subordinates, and himself to stop being fake. “I had to be authentic, or it was going to cost me my career,” he said.

Once DADT was overturned, “it was like a big weight lifted off your shoulders,” Smith said, no longer feeling like he had to think carefully about how he discussed his love life to ensure he followed DADT policy.

‘Be visible’

Despite mostly upbeat cheerfulness displayed during the panel, the Soldiers understood the challenges closeted Soldiers, not ready to come out, may feel.

“Understand that this environment is open and inclusive and it welcomes you,” said Capt. Julian Woodhouse, an officer in charge of the 315th Military History Detachment in Manhattan. “As long as you

work on your internal value and your internal love for yourself, because that’s the biggest enemy we all face.

“Be visible so that Soldiers who are also queer (or questioning) can feel comfortable seeing someone in leadership,” Woodhouse said. “They can be proud of who they are and not having an issue with communicating that.”

Capt. John Cloutier, a cyber officer with the 780th Military Intelligence Brigade, echoed Woodhouse’s sentiment to closeted Soldiers. “Be visible, but not everyone is going to want to have lunch with you or talk about their deepest feelings,” he said.

“Some people may not be comfortable putting a picture on their desk. But do something as simple as mentioning what you did over the weekend, using the right pronouns because people pick up on that stuff,” he said.

“The more we are visible, the more people will realize there are LGBT people all around, and it is OK,” Cloutier added.

According to Ammons, the first step all Soldiers should take, regardless of orientation, is simply to understand each other, “as opposed to judging and putting people in a box,” she said. “We need to learn to listen and understand.”

“People who identify under the greater LGBTQ umbrella, and those who don’t, whether allies or adversaries, need to take the time to understand each other first,” she said. “Meet me as a human. I will meet you as a human first, and we can figure out the other stuff later.”

CG, BJACH visit BYRD

Leaders from the Joint Readiness Center and Fort Polk and Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital spent the afternoon at Byrd Regional Hospital June 28 to foster good relationships with neighboring facilities that augment services offered at BJACH. Byrd, owned and operated by Allegiance Health Management, is the largest rural health care organization in Louisiana. Col. Aristotle Vaseliades, BJACH commander said, "Brigadier General Doyle is committed to

providing the best quality of life for Fort Polk Soldiers and their Families. Part of that quality of life is the ability to seek and receive health care at BJACH and off-post medical facilities. Engaging with local health care network leaders opens the dialogue to express the needs of Army Soldiers and Families, and enables a better transition of care to the network if needed."



Brig. Gen. David Doyle, commander, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk, discusses health care services with Keven Quinn, CEO, Byrd Regional Hospital, during a tour of the facility in Leesville June 28.



Col. Aristotle Vaseliades, commander, Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital, thanks Sam Fulton, physician recruiter, Allegiance Health Management, during a tour of Byrd Regional Hospital in Leesville June 28.

BJACH visits BYRD

Army Community Service bid farewell to a long-time ACS Volunteer, Karen Diaz. She was presented with a "Volunteer Superstar" award and an ACS Coin June 25. The Fort Polk Army Community Service and Fort Polk Army Volunteer Corps said goodbye to an amazing ACS volunteer, said Yamel Munoz, ACS, outreach program coordinator. "Karen volunteered throughout ACS while stationed at Fort Polk. She volunteered at the front desk of the Family Readiness Center and the main Army Community Service building. Karen assisted the Relocation Readiness Program with its weekly Newcomers Briefings and other duties. Karen completed all three levels of the AFTB courses and always took the opportunity to share the programs and resources ACS has to offer with others. Karen volunteered outside of ACS as the treasurer for her husband's SFRG as well. For Karen's continued support across the installation and for her heart and dedication to serving the Fort Polk community, we presented her with a "Volunteer Superstar" award and an ACS coin. Fort Polk ACS would like to wish Karen and her Family the very best on their next journey."











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Continued from page 3

diers and civilian employees assigned to the hospital. He assured them there would be no reduction in staff as markets stand up and recognize the civilian workforce as a valued asset, with important knowledge and skills critical to the MHS enterprise. The biggest change, he noted, was that upon transfer to DHA, BJACH staff members will become Department of Defense employees and be issued new common access cards.

Several employees at BJACH asked for clarification on the market transition and what that means. According to Place, a market is a group of MTFs in one geographic area working together with its TRICARE, Veterans Affairs hospital, other federal health care organizations, private teaching hospitals, medical universities and other health care partners.

The DHA has established a market-based structure to manage the hospitals and clinics. Each market provides shared administrative services, responsible for generating medical readiness of active duty service members and ensure the readiness of medical personnel. BJACH will be part of DHA's Small Market and Stand-Alone MTF Organization, also called the SSO. SSO MTFs are centered on inpatient community hospitals, focused on providing ambulatory and some



Lt. Col. Michelle O'Neill, chief nurse-in-charge, Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital Emergency Department, discusses mass casualty plans pertaining to heat injuries impacting rotational units with Lt. Gen. Ronald Place, director, Defense Health Agency, during his visit to the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk June 24.

JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES/BJACH PAO

specialty and inpatient care across their regions.

Place ended his session with BJACH health-care professionals and support staff by thanking everyone.

"Thanks for taking care of me and my Family for the past 35 years," he said. "Whether it's me or mine, or one of the other 2.2 million service members in uniform;

active, Reserve or National Guard or our 9.6 million beneficiaries. Thank you sincerely for choosing this profession and putting your patients first."

Editor's Note: To learn more about the MHS transformation, the market structure or infrastructure or manpower changes visit: <https://health.mil/Military-Health-Topics/MHS-Transformation>

Briefs

Continued from page 3

limited time, as an added incentive for new and old customers alike to use the improved online shopping experience.

Effective now, Commissary CLICK2GO customers will not have to pay the \$4.95 service fee applied for each order. The waiver comes less than a month after the agency announced it is rolling out its internet shopping, store curbside pickup service to all stateside commissaries by the end of the year, and to overseas stores soon thereafter.

The service fee is normally waived the first 30 days after Commissary CLICK2GO is initiated at a store. The waiver now applies to all Commissary CLICK2GO locations until further notice.

Got News?

Call the Guardian
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SAFETY ALERT

**Fort Polk
United States Army Garrison**

WATCH FOR DEER!

BLUF: Deer are active on Fort Polk.

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Chp 11-9, d. Motorcycle and all-terrain vehicle rider protection.

ENSURE WIDEST DISSEMINATION

SAFETY ALERT

Writer explains use of effecting change in Army setting

By **BEN ILES**

Operations Group physical security manager

How does one effect change in an organization? One of the most famous men to delve into the subject is professor emeritus from Harvard, Dr. John Kotter.

Kotter stated, “guiding or leading change in an organization may be the ultimate test of a leader.”

I happen to agree with him.

So, back to my original question, “how does one effect change in an organization?”

Understand, my opinions have been heavily influenced by my association with the U. S.

Army and the mistakes I have made over the years.

Kotter’s experiences and research within the corporation environment offers a much broader approach from which to opine. There are several factors I believe come into play.

First, one must lead from the front. If you want things to change, you — the leader — must change.

A leader can’t very well expect those surrounding him to change, if in fact he/

she isn’t willing to set the example.

Secondly, one must be consistent. A leader cannot expect subordinates to change, at least not willingly, if everyone is not treated fairly and with consistency.

When leaders play favorites, everyone observes those actions and can cause the motivational level of the other employees to bottom out fast.

Thirdly, the change must be identified and defined in a way that everyone in the organization understands it.

You cannot expect people to change if they do not understand who, what, when and why the change is being implemented.

Lastly, the change needs to have “buy-in” from subordinates. Leaders who fail to spend time in a “receiving mode,” at least allowing subordinates to give input and opinion, will often find themselves wondering why the change is/was so hard.

Kotter points to eight critical errors made by leadership when trying to effect change in an article written in 1996 — “Leading Change, Why Transformation Efforts Fail”.

Originally published in his 1995 book,

“Leading Change,” Kotter describes the errors made by large and small organizations, of varying degrees.

The eight errors include not establishing a sense of urgency, not creating a powerful enough guiding coalition, lacking a vision, under communicating the vision by a factor of 10, not removing obstacles to the new vision, not systematically planning for and creating short-term wins, declaring victory too soon and not anchoring changes in the organization’s culture.

He gives detailed examples of both successful and failed companies who tried to effect change.

Even though many of the changes Kotter used as examples were from extremely large organizations, I found them interesting and many could still be effective in smaller units within the Army.

Effecting change isn’t easy. Effecting change can actually be extremely difficult. But change in and of itself isn’t a bad thing. Perspective plays a huge part in the need or perceived need for change.

Either way, change offers us all an opportunity to excel.

Change forces us out of our comfort zones and that’s when I learn the best.

COMMENTARY

MILITARY HEALTH SYSTEM MHS GENESIS

MHS GENESIS, the Department of Defense's new electronic health record is coming soon!

For more information visit health.mil/mhsgenesis

MHS GENESIS
the new EHR is

Coming Soon!



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
MHS GENESIS

Ops Group Soldier leads Leesville Civil Air Patrol squadron

By ANGIE THORNE

Public affairs and communication

FORT POLK, LA. — The Leesville Composite Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol held a change of command ceremony June 22 at the Leesville Municipal Airport. Outgoing commander, retired Air Force Lt. Col. C. Ronald Kariker, passed the guidon and leadership to incoming commander Capt. William Bryant.

Bryant holds the rank of captain within CAP, but is also a Chief Warrant Officer 3 with Joint Readiness Training Center Operations Group.

CAP is a Congressionally chartered organization — Congress passed a law on May 26, 1948, designating CAP as an official Air Force Auxiliary — and it operates as a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit corporation. CAP performs services for the federal government, states and local communities.

The organization is made up of eight geographic regions consisting of 52 wings (the 50 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia). It is a strategic partner of the Air Force, serving as a member of its total force. CAP has three primary missions — emergency services, cadet programs and aerospace education. Cadet programs educate youth in leadership, aerospace, fitness and character development and offer opportunities for community involvement, orientation flights and more.

Though focused on cadets, CAP also requires pilots to make the organization's structure work.

CAP owns the largest fleet of single-engine piston aircraft in the nation, according to go-civilairpatrol.com.

The aircraft are primarily Cessna 172s and 182s. CAP pilots are able to fly those planes to perform CAP missions in service to their local communities. Missions can include reconnaissance for homeland security, search and rescue, disaster relief and more. When they aren't flying missions, qualified pilots fly orientation rides for CAP cadets, as well as mentor them.



COURTESY CIVIL AIR PATROL

Retired Air Force Lt. Col. C. Ronald Kariker, addresses the audience at the Civil Air Patrol change of command June 22 before the ceremony begins.

Kariker was the driving force in the establishment of the Leesville squadron in August 2019. Kariker said the unit is a composite squadron made up of young cadets and senior pilots that was growing quickly before the COVID-19 pandemic began.

"We had 19 cadets before COVID-19 shut everything down. We were down to nine cadets, but now that things are getting better, we are back up to 14 and have a goal to recruit more this year," he said.

As the outgoing commander, Kariker said he had been looking for someone to guide CAP to the next level and Bryant has the energy and passion he was looking for.

"Will is intelligent, has amazing skills, pilots his own plane and has been an outstanding addition to our CAP organization. This is just the next step and I think he will help us grow and expand into the future," said Kariker.

Bryant said being a private pilot and with his experience in Army aviation as a mechanic early in his career, not to mention his love of flying, were just a few of the reasons he was curious about the Civil Air Patrol.

Add into that mix an ingrained sense of community service, thanks to a youth spent in the Scouts that carried over into adulthood, Bryant said joining CAP seemed as if it were meant to be.

After doing some research and realizing there was a new squadron in Leesville, he reached out to Kariker.

"I liked everything that I read about the organization. I met Ron (Kariker) and at-

Please see **Squadron**, page 11

Squadron

Continued from page 3

tended a few meetings and soon became a member," he said.

CAP has a weekly meeting every Tuesday at the Leesville Municipal Airport and they try to do at least one Saturday or weekend event each month.

Bryant said he has held a variety of positions since joining the organization and was groomed by CAP leadership to take over as commander.

Apart from volunteering, serving the community and mentoring the cadets, Bryant said he wanted to join to be a CAP pilot.

"I'm almost done with my certification to become a CAP pilot. It's an area the Leesville squadron is trying to increase through recruitment," he said. "We are lacking in our emergency services aspect. It requires a lot of certifications and training for the squadron at the wing level. I would encourage people who have any interest at all in CAP as a qualified pilot or serving the community, to stop by and talk to us about membership."

Bryant said he loves his Army career and enjoys the job he has as a planner within Operations Group, but he said CAP offers an additional way to use his talents and skills by leading an organization and helping it grow.

"I looked at it as a challenging but rewarding opportunity. Based on the work of the previous leadership, CAP has a plan moving forward for the next six to 12 months in our three mission areas, as well as recruiting and retention," he said.

The current goal is to grow the cadet portion of the squadron to 35 members by the end of 2021.

"Motivating and listening to the input of senior members and cadets as they cooperate as a team helps CAP become a stronger, better organization while working to reach goals like this, said Bryant.

Bryant said he and other active duty and retired military volunteers mentor the cadets in achieving their personal goals, whether that means joining the military or supporting them as they pursue another career path.

Bryant said he understands, coming from a small town himself, that CAP offers cadets opportunities that may not be available otherwise.

"I understand where they are coming from and that the organization broadens their horizons beyond the local level," he



COURTESY CIVIL AIR PATROL

Chief Warrant Officer 3, William Bryant, Joint Readiness Training Center Operations Group and incoming commander of the Leesville Composite Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol, thanks the parents, cadets and volunteers at the change of command ceremony held June 22.

said. "The aviation experience alone is a huge advantage if they have any desire to be a part of the aviation or aerospace field."

Strengthening the cadet program is Bryant's focus.

"We want to keep the cadets we have and the ones we gain by involving them in activities and further development in CAP to help them achieve whatever they want to do after high school, whether that means

going to college or joining the military," he said.

Bryant said becoming commander was a special moment, but it's not really about him. "It's about the members, family members and volunteers that support CAP and where we go from here," he said.

For more information about the Leesville Civil Air Patrol Squadron call 281.732.5812 or visit www.gocivilairpatrol.com.

Reading Colors Your World

JUNE 13 - JULY 24

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Fort Polk Department of Public Health to vaccinate employees, contractors

By JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES
BJACH PAO

FORT POLK, La. — Safeguarding national security and the medical readiness of Soldiers is a priority for Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital. Soldiers, Family members, retirees, Department of Defense Civilian employees and contractors who work at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk are encouraged to get vaccinated. BJACH offers the Moderna Vaccine, a two dose, mRNA vaccine available for adults 18 years and older. You are not considered fully vaccinated against COVID-19 until two weeks after your second dose in a 2-dose series.

The Fort Polk Department of Public Health has begun administering the vaccine to contract and civilian employees who are not otherwise Tricare beneficiaries. This initiative is designed to capture those employees who work on post who are otherwise not authorized care from the military treatment facility.

Dr. April Draper Davis, chief of occupational health medicine, Fort Polk Department of Public Health, said they are trying to reach contractors and employees who are not normally authorized medical care on post.

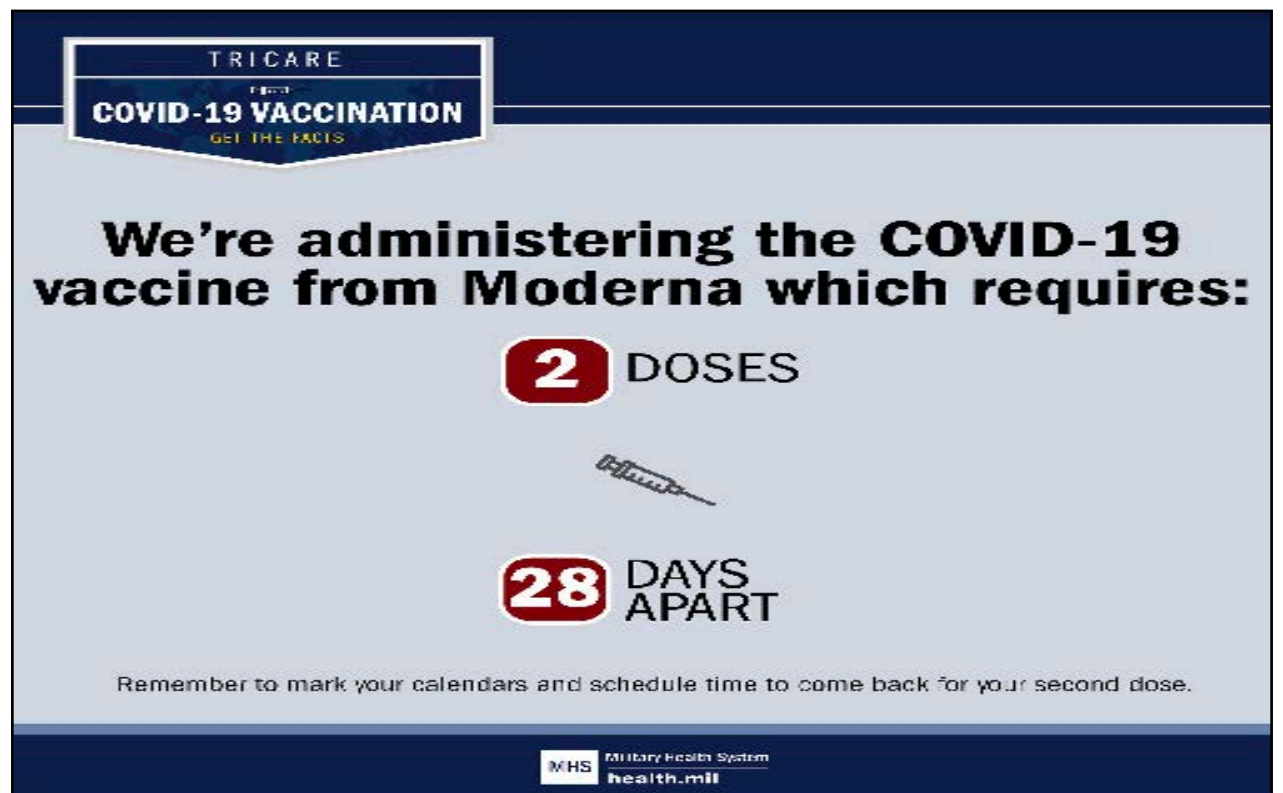
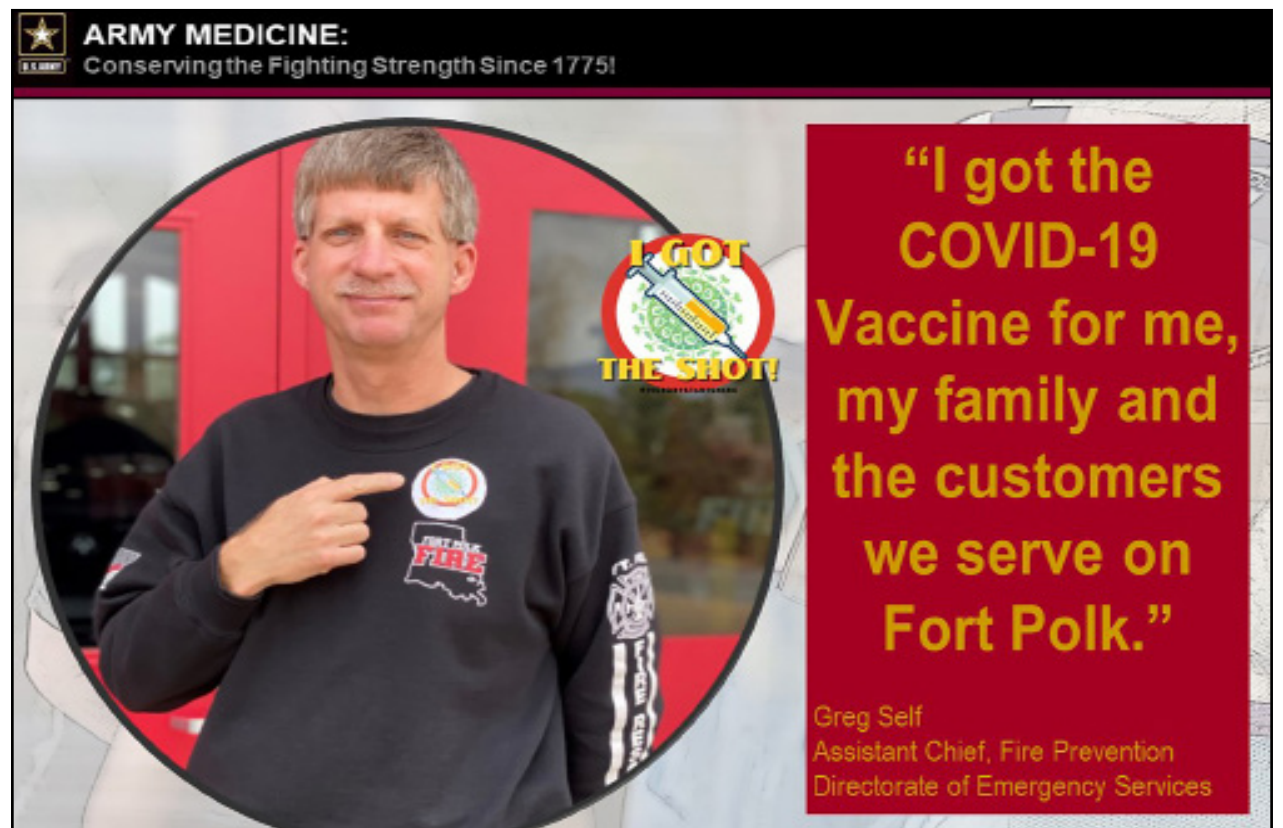
“At the Fort Polk Department of Public Health, we are offering the COVID-19 Vaccine to non-beneficiaries, DoD civilian employees and contractors,” she said. “We want them to be aware of the multitude of ways they can get vaccinated. They can get the vaccine at any off post facilities, but as civilian employees and contractors they are authorized to get it on post as well.”

Draper Davis said supervisors are not allowed to ask about vaccination status but it can impact employees return to duty or isolation if they have not been vaccinated as well as training and travel opportunities.

“We know being vaccinated is starting to affect TDY opportunities,” she said. “Civilian employees and contractors hoping to go to in person training are being required by the school houses to be fully vaccinated.”

Draper Davis said this is a readiness issue. She said recent studies indicate that those getting hospitalized with the virus are individuals who have not gotten vaccinated.

“The vaccine is very effective, but even in break-through cases of vaccinated people, the symptoms and severity is less than those who choose not to vaccinate,” she said. “We are also learning with the new



delta variant the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine we offer here, is effective against it.”

Mike Jefferies, chief of human resources for BJACH said that as of April 14 DoD employees can use up to four hours of administrative leave per vaccination event to receive the COVID-19 vaccination.

“I recommend contract employees talk to the company they work for to determine their eligibility to get vaccinated during duty hours,” he said. “But DoD civilian employees are encouraged to get vaccinated as part of Executive Order 13991, ‘Protecting the Federal Workforce,’ dated Jan. 20, which established the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force. This executive order pri-

oritized the distribution and administration of the vaccination to federal employees and authorized the use of administrative leave to be absent from duty for purposes of receiving a COVID-19 vaccination.”

Civilian employees and contractors who are not normally seen at BJACH can call the Occupational Health Clinic at 337.531.6131/2706 to schedule a vaccination appointment.

Editor’s note: The Fort Polk Department of Public Health Occupational Health Clinic is located at 8099 Georgia Avenue, bldg 3515. The building is located behind the Fontaine Troop Medical Clinic, often referred to as the “Red Roof Inn.”

Writer finds masterful work in previously disregarded read

By Retired Lt. Col. MARK LESLIE
DPTMS

To all the readers out there, please accept my apologies for the long lapse in reviews.

It has been an extremely busy few months and while I have not stopped knocking out books on the Chief of Staff of the Army reading list journey, obligations have kept me from penning a worthwhile review. The reason for these reviews is to try and stimulate interest in professional reading by giving the reader an introduction to the author's work and lay out for the "leader reader" why these books are on the Chief's list and what he hopes for us to garner from this book to make us better leaders.

This book, *The Unforgiving Minute*, by former Army Capt., Craig Mullaney, earns three out of five anvils on the Fort Polk Chief of Staff of the Army reading list scale.

Three anvils is high praise considering that I actually read this book a few years ago and discarded the idea of doing a review. I decided to reengage and read the book again to see if I was off the mark in my initial impressions. I am glad I did — I was not even on the target with my initial assessment.

The author masterfully tells the story of his journey from high school, through the trials of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, to his time as a platoon leader in garrison and combat, an adjutant in combat, the Old Guard in D.C and finally as an Army instructor at the Naval Academy at Annapolis. He brings in what is absent in many books of this type — humanity. You get to see the personal side of his life and the influence it had on his transformation as a leader. You can tell he reconstructed the book from the journals he diligently kept throughout his military career. How?

Because in the book you can read and feel the change of the author's perspective from high school student, to West Point Cadet, the new platoon leader and finally an instructor at the tail end of his military career.

It is not from the perspective of how he feels now reflecting, but how he felt then in that time with the education, training and experiences of that position. The masterful piece is that we get to see the

evolution of a leader. His maturity and transformation is evident in the title of the book and contained within its pages. The author describes the unforgiving minute that a leader may train a lifetime for and in the platoon leader's perspective, it comes down to about 60 seconds in intense combat. In that 60 seconds the leader will

make decisions that determine if the mission is accomplished and those in their charge survive, and even if everything is done right, some may not.

For any current or future platoon leader, I highly recommend this book. It will help you know the hefty weight of responsibility and obligation that does not go away when you drop your ruck, but stays

with you as long as you are a leader. However, I do not think that is why the Chief wants us to read this book. After all, there are a lot of books out there that deliver a similar message, if not better, than this work.

What I think the Chief wants us to take away from

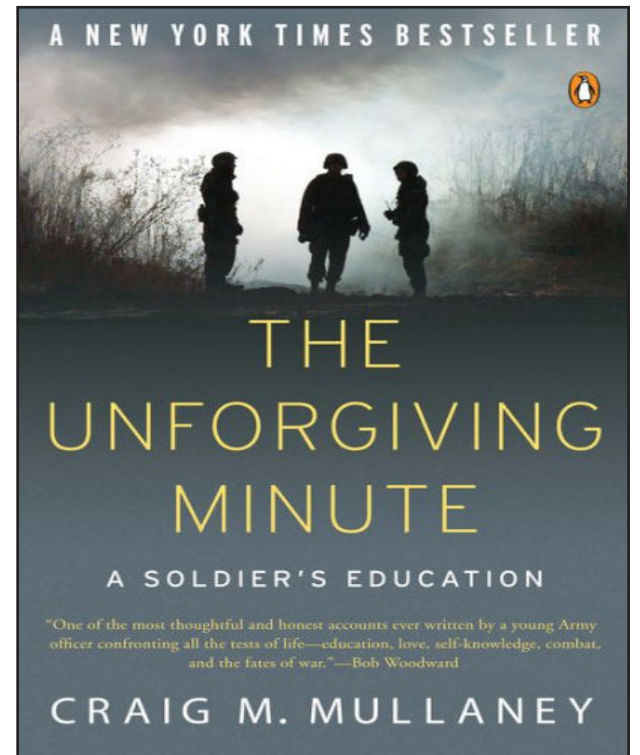
this book is something that I do not think the author even realized he was doing when he wrote it. That one thing is the impact, influence and importance of mentorship. The author talks in each chapter of his life and career of leaders that mentored and influenced him and made him into the leader and man he has become.

He recalls with amazing clarity years later, the advice and lessons from West



LESLIE

Review



Point leaders, Ranger instructors, battalion commanders and NCOs. That, my fellow leader readers, is impact. Those that mentored Craig Mullaney continued to lead in our Army and continue to do so through the pages of this book.

The power and obligation of mentorship is the untold story of the Craig Mullaney story and the lesson I think the Chief wants us to take away from this. All leaders are mentors, good or bad. Be the good and diligent mentor and never pass up an opportunity to mentor positively. We owe it to them when they find themselves in an unforgiving minute.



Employment Readiness Program

Home Based Business Market

Support Military Spouse owned home-based businesses

July 3

Weather permitting at the old Commissary parking lot

To become a home-based business and participate in these events, please contact the Employment Readiness Program at 531.6922 or email stacey.r.delgato.civ@mail.mil. Packets are available on the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk website.

Louisiana summers mean severe weather chances

GUARDIAN STAFF

FORT POLK, La. — Summer in Louisiana means residents can expect the chance of thunderstorms daily. Most are lightning and rain producers that are short-lived and no more than a nuisance.

Others can spawn tornadoes and torrential rains that can result in flash flooding.

Severe thunderstorms are officially defined as storms that are capable of producing hail that is an inch or larger or wind gusts over 58 mph. Hail this size can damage property such as plants, roofs and vehicles. Wind this strong is able to break off large branches, knock over trees or cause structural damage to trees.

Some severe thunderstorms can produce hail larger than softballs or winds greater than 100 mph, so it's important to pay attention to the weather so you know when severe storms are possible.

Is it a "Watch" or "Warning?"

Do you know the difference between a National Weather Service Severe Thunderstorm Watch and a Severe Thunderstorm Warning?

- **Severe thunderstorm watch:** Be prepared! Severe thunderstorms are possible in and near the watch area. Stay informed and be ready to act if a severe thunderstorm watch is issued. The watch area is typically large, covering numerous counties or even states.

- **Severe thunderstorm warning:** Take action! Severe weather has been reported by spotters or indicated by radar.

Warnings indicate imminent danger to life and property. Take shelter in a substantial building. Get out of mobile homes that can blow over in high winds.

Warnings typically encompass a much smaller area (around the size of a city or small county) that may be impacted by large hail or damaging wind identified by an NWS forecaster on radar or by a trained spotter/law enforcement who is watching the storm.

Before a storm strikes

Preparation is key to staying safe and minimizing impacts of thunderstorms. Follow these tips to make sure you and your family are prepared in the event of a severe thunderstorm.

- **Be Weather-Ready:** Check the forecast regularly to see if you're at risk for severe weather. Listen to local news or a NOAA Weather Radio to stay informed about severe thunderstorm watches and warnings. Check the Weather-Ready Nation for tips.



- **Sign up for notifications:** Know how your community sends warnings. Some communities have outdoor sirens. Others depend on media and smart phones to alert residents to severe storms.

- **Create a communications plan:** Have a family plan that includes an emergency meeting place and related information. Pick a safe room in your home such as a basement, storm cellar or an interior room on the lowest floor with no windows. Get more ideas for a plan at: <https://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan>.

- **Practice your plan:** Conduct a Family severe thunderstorm drill regularly so everyone knows what to do if damaging wind or large hail is approaching. Make sure members of your family know where to go when severe thunderstorm warnings are issued. Don't forget pets if time allows.

- **Prepare your home:** Keep trees and branches trimmed near your house. If you have time before severe weather hits, secure loose objects, close windows and doors and move any valuable objects inside or under a sturdy structure.

- **Help your neighbor:** Encourage your loved ones to prepare for severe thunderstorms. Take CPR training so you can help if someone is hurt during severe weather.

When a storm strikes

Acting quickly is key to staying safe and minimizing impacts when a severe thunderstorm strikes.

- **Stay weather ready:** Continue to listen to local news or a NOAA Weather Radio to stay updated about severe thunderstorm watches and warnings.

- **At home:** Go to your secure location if you hear a severe thunderstorm warning. Damaging wind or large hail may be approaching. Take your pets with you if time allows.

- **At your workplace or school:** Stay away from windows if you are in a severe thunderstorm warning and damaging wind or

large hail is approaching. Do not go to large open rooms such as cafeterias, gymnasiums or auditoriums.

- **Outside:** Go inside a sturdy building immediately if severe thunderstorms are approaching. Sheds and storage facilities are not safe.

Taking shelter under a tree can be deadly. The tree may fall on you. Standing under a tree also puts you at a greater risk of getting struck by lightning.

- **In a vehicle:** Being in a vehicle during severe thunderstorms is safer than being outside; however, drive to the closest secure shelter if there is sufficient time.

After the storm

When the lightning and thunder stop and it looks like the severe thunderstorm is over, follow these tips:

- **Stay informed:** Continue listening to local news or a NOAA Weather Radio to stay updated about severe thunderstorm watches and warnings. More severe thunderstorms could be headed your way.

- **Contact your Family and loved ones:** Let your Family and close friends know that you're okay so they can help spread the word. Text messages or social media are more reliable forms of communication than phone calls.

- **Assess the damage:** After you are sure the severe weather threat has ended, check your property for damages. When walking through storm damage, wear long pants, a long-sleeved shirt and sturdy shoes. Contact local authorities if you see power lines down. Stay out of damaged buildings. Be aware of insurance scammers if your property has been damaged.

- **Help your neighbor:** If you come across people that are injured and you are properly trained, provide first aid to victims until emergency response team members arrive.

For more information on thunderstorms and other types of severe weather visit www.noaa.gov.