



FORGING THE

WARRIOR SPIRIT

The JRTC and Fort Polk Guardian

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Home of Heroes @ Fort Polk, LA

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CHUCK CANNON/GUARDIAN

Saslav takes command

Brig. Gen. David S. Doyle, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk commanding general, passes the JRTC Operations Group colors to Col. Andrew O. Saslav, incoming Ops Gp commander, during a change of command ceremony July 13 at the Operations Group Headquarters. See story on page 5.

Weekend weather



Friday



Saturday



Sunday

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Orthopedic specialist sets goal, earns ranger tab

By JEAN GRAVES
BJACH public affairs

FORT POLK, La. — Sgt. Joshua Cardwell, an orthopedic specialist for Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital, graduated from the U.S. Army Ranger School at Fort Benning, Georgia on June 25.

The Ranger course, developed during the Korean War, builds the combat skills of selected officers and enlisted personnel, requiring them to perform effectively as small-unit leaders in a realistic, tactical environment. Ranger School is one of the toughest training courses in the Army and consists of 61 days of training broken down into three phases. Candidates must successfully complete each phase.

Cardwell said he always thought he would serve in the military. Growing up in California, the Navy and Marine Corps were ever present. He never thought he would join the Army but he said he's glad he did.

"I chose my military occupational specialty based on the recommendation of my recruiter. If I had to do again, I would have enlisted to be a 68W, combat medic, because it aligns more with my military aspirations and goals," he said. "I have always wanted to go to Ranger School and am glad to have finally gotten the opportunity."

Cardwell won the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk Soldier of the Year in 2019. After winning the competition, the post sergeant major worked with Cardwell and BJACH to facilitate attending the prestigious training course.

Cardwell said passing an airborne physical, the Ranger screening (psychological review, background check and urinalysis) and securing endorsement memorandums from his chain of command were required before he went to school.

"Ranger School is a leadership course. We developed squad and platoon leadership skills, with the added stressors of sleep and food deprivation," he said. "The course was challenging. We went non-stop for the full 61 days with 30 minutes of sleep each day if we were lucky. Every day we carried a heavy load, conducted a variety of different missions or patrols and exerted ourselves mentally and physically. We also did repelling, rock climbing, mountaineering and water borne operations."

Cardwell said his class started with more than 400 candidates. Only 180 of the original class plus



54 more from previous courses graduated on June 25.

"I'm proud of this accomplishment and happy that I can get a good night's sleep again," he said. "It was a great opportunity. For me in the medical world it's not very common; I think I am the only 68B with a Ranger tab in the Army."

Cardwell said he plans to go to airborne school next and hopes to earn the Expert Field Medical Badge in September.

"My advice to anyone who wants to go to Ranger School is to stay motivated, put in the effort and don't give up," he said. "There are a lot of great opportunities and places you can go in the Army."

Cardwell jokingly said graduation was his favorite part of Ranger School.

"I had some great times during the training and I met some incredible people. We formed a bond through our shared experience and I probably wouldn't have met them otherwise," he said. "Anyone, regardless of branch of service, can participate. Ranger School isn't just for the infantry. Anyone with the drive can do it regardless of rank, gender, MOS or national affiliation."

Cardwell plans to make the Army his career.

"Short term I want to become a special operations medic," he said. "Then I plan to attend the inter-service physician assistant program, become a PA, commission and eventually retire from the Army."



Welcome Home

Brig. Gen. David S. Doyle, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk commanding general, welcomes back the Soldiers of the 204th Military Police Company, 519th Military Police Battalion, Crisis Response Team, from their recent deployment.



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

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

Briefs

Get physicals

Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital has set dates for Child and Youth Services, school and sport physicals. Call BJACH at 531.3011 to schedule an appointment Tuesda or July 20 or 27 from 4-5:30 p.m., Aug. 7 from 8 a.m.-noon or Aug. 24 or 31 from 4-5:30 p.m.

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.

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	Taraus	7521
2003	Mitsubishi	Lancer	3693

Dodgeball competition

Intramural Sports is hosting a dodgeball competition on Monday. Registration forms are required by Friday. Secure your spot today! Forms can be found at polk.armymwr.com/programs/intramural-sports.

Kimbrough takes Fort Polk DENTAC helm

By CHUCK CANNON

Public affairs and communications

FORT POLK, La. – Lt. Col. Anita Kimbrough assumed command of Dental Health Activity – Fort Polk during a change of command ceremony July 15 on the installation's Warrior Field.

Kimbrough replaces outgoing commander Lt. Col. Melissa Tucker.

Col. Stefan Olpinski, commander, Dental Health Command-Central, was the keynote speaker. He listed the accomplishments of the unit under Tucker's command.

"This unit stands tall and proud here today thanks to your effort and dedication," he said. "You have upheld the traditions, customs and history of this command to the highest standards."

Olpinski said Tucker is a leader who pours her heart and soul into everything she does.

"Every officer, NCO, Soldier and civilian in this organization recognizes her commitment and devotion to the service, and foremost to the welfare of the Soldiers and Families of the Fort Polk community," he said.

In saying farewell to Tucker, Olpinski asked her to always remember those she served with at Fort Polk.

"You will never forget this place, or time, or the Soldiers who stand in front of you," he said. "You will always carry the great memories of your successful command. You will remember their faces and they will remember you as their commander."

Olpinski then welcomed Kimbrough and



Col. Stefan Olpinski, commander, Dental Health Command Central, passes the guidon to Lt. Col. Anita Kimbrough as she takes command of Fort Polk DENTAC July 15 at Warrior Field.

her Family to Fort Polk.

"I could not ask for a better commander to follow Colonel Tucker," he said. "Anita has a rare and successful blend of leadership, coupled with superior management skills, which will assure success in every undertaking."

Tucker was next to take the podium and she thanked Family and friends for their support and mentorship during her two years in command. She closed by leaving those in attendance with a couple of thoughts.

"Love yourself and love what you do," she said. "If you don't enjoy what you're doing, find something you enjoy."

"And love one another. Not just those who look like you, but everyone. It's been my honor and privilege to serve as your commander."

Kimbrough followed Tucker and thanked those in attendance. She also thanked Army leadership for the opportunity to command Fort Polk DENTAC.

"I look forward to forging an even stronger relationship with the community as we continue in support of our mission," she said.

She closed by referencing Luke 12:48: "Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more."

"I have big boots to fill, but I am ready to start," she said.

Kimbrough is married to Albert Jefferson III and they have four children: Alexandra Olivia, Tyler, Brian and Nathaniel.



Lt. Col. Anita Kimbrough introduces herself and goals after taking command of Fort Polk DENTAC July 15 at Warrior Field.

Army News

Army aims to assist Soldiers during turbulent moving season

By JOSEPH LACDAN
Army News Service

WASHINGTON — To aid Soldiers during a challenging permanent change of station season, which is seeing some delays with household goods shipments due to the current environment, the Army has widened the window for Soldiers to report to their next duty station.

Soldiers scheduled to report to a new assignment between July 6-Sept. 30 can now check in up to 30 days before their scheduled report date and as much as 20 days after. Often a Soldier's report date can be dependent on when a government-arranged moving company can transport their household goods, said Scott Kuhar, deputy chief of the Operations Management Division, or OMD, at Army Human Resources Command's Enlisted Personnel Management Directorate.

However, regardless of a Soldier's report date, they must complete the process and report to their new assignment no later than Nov. 10, when the service begins transitioning to its new Integrated Personnel and Pay System-Army. Kuhar said the service will shut down its personnel systems shortly after that date in order to make the transition.

If Soldiers find they cannot begin in-processing within 20 days of their original report date, they can turn to their installation's military personnel division, or MPD, which can then authorize a deferment of up to 60 days from the original report date if necessary, provided that the extra time does not extend past Nov. 10.

"We know this year is more challenging than usual, and we are working to give our Soldiers and Families options, resources, and flexibility to reduce as much stress as possible," said Gen. Edward Daly, commander of Army Materiel Command.

The added flexibility may help ease some of the stress Soldiers face when moving this summer as well as contribute to readiness. Jon Finke, chief of HRC's OMD, said that Soldiers will often request a shipment date, only to learn they will have to wait an extra month for an available moving company.

"You're kind of at the mercy of the moving system," Finke said. "And the Army is realizing that and trying to work with Soldiers and families so that they can move, but we have



Courtesy photo

to honor what the transportation companies can do and how they can support us at the same time."

Last month, Derrick Candler, head of the Transportation Policy Division in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Army Logistics, said the Army had experienced the ripple effect of labor shortages across the country. High demand on the shipping industry has impacted Soldier movement, exacerbated by shortages of drivers and laborers.

In extreme cases, Soldiers have had to report to their next duty assignments without their household goods, temporarily leaving their spouses and family behind during an ongoing moving process.

Finke hopes that providing additional time will eliminate that possibility.

"We are doing our best within our control here to keep family units together during the movement process," Finke said. "By saying 'Soldier, go ahead, report' that leaves a spouse and possibly the children stuck to do the moving process, which would very much be a strain on a family."

Chris Fursman, OMD human resource specialist, said that the HRC receives about 40-60 requests per day to either extend or reschedule report dates.

Previously, Soldiers had to file a request through their chain of command to HRC, a process that took up to 60 days for approval. Now, Soldiers can receive an extension authorization locally through their chain of command within a few days.

"What we've done now is we've taken that long process ... and we're crunching it down," Fursman said, "so we can assist the Soldiers and take some of that burden off of them."

Soldiers will still need to make sure their scheduled leave matches their adjusted report date.

Unpredictable obstacles

Soldiers, Army civilians and families preparing for a PCS move in the summer months should anticipate the unexpected, Candler said.

Some other options to assist Soldiers include extended storage for household goods at the location of origin, and allowing Soldiers to apply for cost reimbursements higher than government rates to hire a commercial moving company.

Candler said Soldiers scheduled to change duty stations may experience delays due to labor shortages and a booming housing market throughout the country.

In addition to reduced travel restrictions, moves across the country have significantly increased, Candler said. Soldiers have reported waiting for up to six weeks before moving companies could transport their household goods to their next residence.

The surge in home sales have presented challenges for military Families looking to extend their temporary rentals. Soldiers have reported that some landlords have asked them to vacate rental homes earlier than expected in order to sell the home, find another renter, or move in themselves, Candler said.

"Right now homes are selling very quickly, which is putting extra strain on the moving industry during the busiest time of year," he said.

Combined with the extra demand, labor shortages have exacerbated the challenges. In April, the Wall Street Journal reported that the country posted a record 9.3 million job

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Saslav takes command of JRTC Operation Group

By **CHUCK CANNON**

Public affairs and communications

FORT POLK, La. – Col. Andrew O. Saslav was installed as commander, Joint Readiness Training Center Operations Group, during a change of command ceremony July 13 on Fort Polk.

Saslav replaces Col. Jason A. Curl who takes over as deputy commanding general for the 10th Mountain Division (Airborne), at Fort Drum, New York.

Brig. Gen. David S. Doyle, commanding general, JRTC and Fort Polk, was the event's keynote speaker and began by thanking Curl for his leadership and contributions to the JRTC and Fort Polk team.

"During his command, Colonel Curl ensured the success of eight large-scale combat operations rotations," Doyle said. "(Curl's) leadership and influence directly contributed to the readiness of four active component divisions in the U.S. Army, numerous total Army elements, and multinational allies and partners. He ensured Ops Group's success, all while under the additional burden imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic."

Doyle said that while these accomplishments were noteworthy, Curl's lasting impact is the legacy of his leadership.

"Colonel Curl provided composed, measured direction to the team," Doyle said. "Putting people first, Jason made caring for

his team a daily mission ... his example of selfless service is the model for Army leadership.

Doyle then welcomed Saslav.

"I have no doubt that Ops Group will continue to thrive under Saslav's steadfast leadership," Doyle said. "His service as the COG will be critical as we ensure the combat readiness of Soldiers and units as they prepare to fight and win on today's battlefields."

Curl thanked those he served with during his year as COG and offered special thanks to his Family and his Soldiers' Families.

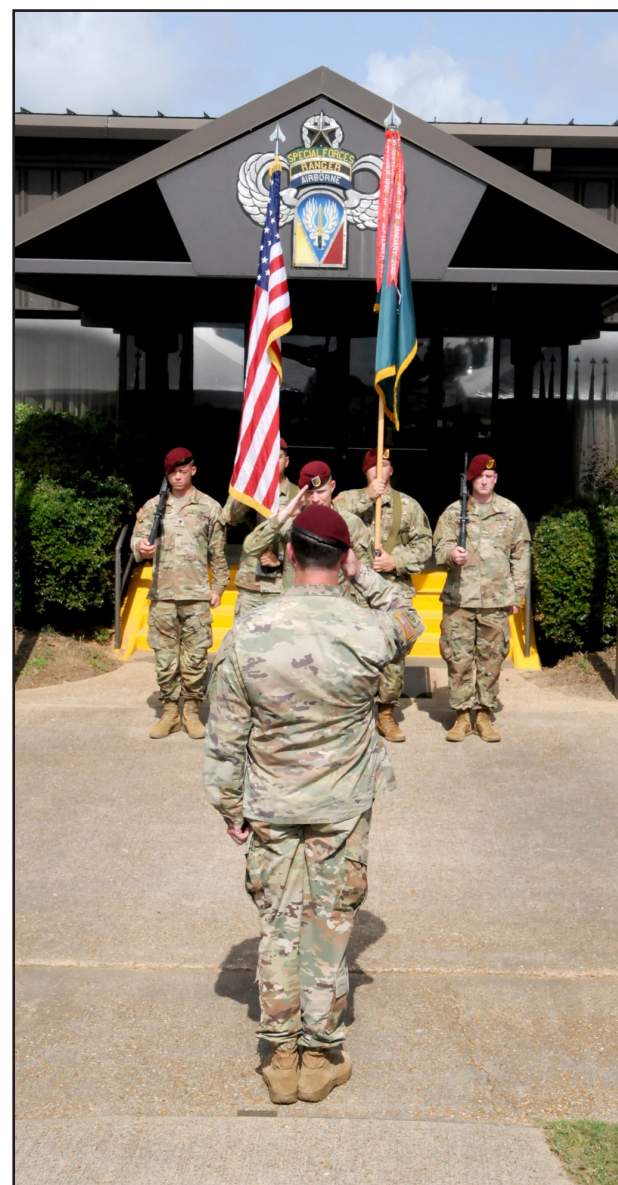
"Thanks for putting up with us being in the field three weeks out of every month, and some pretty intense weather phenomenon," he said. "We could not do what we do without you."

Curl said he had learned more about warfighting in the past year than in his previous 25 years.

"I learned an absolutely immeasurable amount from all of you and I appreciate it, along with your hard work, humor and friendship," Curl said.

Saslav followed Curl and thanked Doyle for the opportunity and responsibility of leading JRTC Ops Gp.

"Since 1941, Fort Polk has helped prepare the Army to fight our nation's wars," he said. "We will continue to be our nation's leadership lab and help our Army prepare."



CHUCK CANNON/GUARDIAN





Garrison leadership sign a pledge to promote service culture while introducing the Installation Management Command's Service Culture Campaign at the Warrior Information Exchange July 14. Photo at left: Col. Sam Smith, Fort Polk garrison commander, signs the proclamation launch-



ing the Service Culture Campaign. Photo at right: Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Ausbun, Fort Polk garrison command sergeant major, signs the proclamation launching the Service Culture Campaign.

CHUCK CANNON/GUARDIAN

IMCOM leaders introduce service culture campaign, sign pledge

By KAYLA MOORE
PAIO

FORT POLK, La. — What is the Service Culture Campaign? Lt. Gen. Kenneth R. Dahl, former Installation Management Command commanding general, launched the Service Culture Initiative in April 2017 (now referred to as the Service Culture Campaign as of August 1, 2018), with the basic premise that when personnel feel valued and respected for the work they do, are properly trained, and live the Army values, they in turn pass on a positive attitude to their coworkers and customers. The campaign indoctrinates a culture of service excellence through leader and workforce engagement; on-boarding programs that welcome and integrate newly assigned Soldiers and civilians to IMCOM; employee recognition programs that effectively further Army mission, goals and values; and standardized customer service training implemented garrison-wide.

One component of the Service Culture Campaign is the Leadership Pledge. On July 14, Col. Samuel P. Smith Jr. and CSM Christopher M. Ausbun continued Fort Polk's tradition of signing the Installation Management Command's Leadership Pledge. The signed pledge is meant to serve as a visible reminder to leaders and employees of the requirements and expectations of effective, caring and engaged leaders. The pledge signifies a promise

from IMCOM leadership, down to front-line supervisors to their employees. This promise gives employees a guide to what they can expect from their leadership. It also keeps leaders accountable to their employees.

The pledge elements are:

- An impactful onboarding and orientation experience to welcome you to the IMCOM team. To accomplish this element, new employees, attend a New Employee Orientation hel on the last Friday of every month. New employees are briefed by the garrison commander and command team, given an overview of important directorate functions, and participate in standardized customer service training.
- Clear performance standards; to include standards for service excellence. Every employee is on clear performance standards and meeting with their supervisor to discuss their performance throughout the year. Three of these meetings are formalized and recorded in the performance standards program.
- An Individual Development Plan developed with your supervisor; reviewed during periodic counseling. Employees develop an IDP with their supervisor to map out their career progression and a plan for self-improvement. Supervisors meet with their employees to discuss IDPs in periodic counseling.
- Opportunities for personal growth and professional development. Leadership, and supervisors seek to provide op-

portunities for personal and professional development, through special projects, formalized trainings and mentoring. The Directorate of Human Resources Workforce Development Program sponsors many formalized trainings yearly, and oversees the Forging New Leaders Program.

- A recognition program to reward service and performance excellence. Supervisors are encouraged to recognize and reward outstanding employees who demonstrate exceptional service which are consistent with the Army and IMCOM's values. An award ceremony is usually held at garrison's all hands meetings.

- Engaged leaders who seek and welcome your input and take action to continuously improve the organization. The Garrison Innovation Program is a direct communication to the workforce for innovative ideas. Leadership embraces these ideas and examines them thoroughly for implementation. Anyone can submit their innovative ideas through the ICE system at <https://ice.disa.mil/index.cfm?fa=card&sp=144893&s=257>.

- An organization that embraces the concept of team, teamwork and empowerment. Respect all and seek to engage all employees and provide them with an inclusive environment.

- A promise to hold ourselves and each other accountable. All concerns are addressed in a timely manner, and leadership has an open door policy.

Move

Continued from page 4

moves across the country have significantly increased, Candler said. Soldiers have reported waiting for up to six weeks before moving companies could transport their household goods to their next residence.

The surge in home sales has presented challenges for military Families looking to extend their temporary rentals. Soldiers have reported that some landlords have asked them to vacate rental homes earlier than expected in order to sell the home, find another renter, or move in themselves, Candler said.

“Right now homes are selling very quickly, which is putting extra strain on the moving industry during the busiest time of year,” he said.

Combined with the extra demand, labor shortages have exacerbated the challenges. The Wall Street Journal reported that the country posted a record 9.3 million job openings. Candler said because of pandemic restrictions, moving companies trained fewer truck drivers, packers and loaders.

“There is a nationwide labor shortage in numerous industries ... the moving industry is having problems finding enough employees to provide the required services,” Candler said.

He said moving companies used by the Defense Department accept moves based on available resources and labor.

If Soldiers find themselves in a situation where they must wait for an extended period before movers can deliver their household goods to their next duty station, they can contact their chain of command, turn to their installation’s transportation office, or use the new chat function in the Army’s PCS Move app to speak with a live transportation specialist for more information on how to plan a move or address unique challenges during the moving process.

Soldiers can download the app in the Google Play and Apple App stores. They can also call a 24-hour hotline for questions on PCS moves at 833.645.6683.

Candler said his office has been monitoring moves across the Army and has worked with installation transportation offices to help prepare Soldiers and their families.

Transportation offices are the first line of support for PCS moves, and can help Soldiers and Families through each stage of the moving process. Soldiers should first learn about their available entitlements before deciding whether to make a personally-procured move, or PPM, or use a government

arranged moving company. For the latter, Soldiers should work with transportation offices to begin planning the packing and shipping of their household goods immediately after receiving their PCS orders.

The Army changed its policy on PCS orders requiring that orders be sent at least 120 days prior to a Soldier’s report date to allow for longer planning timelines.

“Soldiers should make their household goods pickup the first priority on their planning checklist, scheduling their move months in advance,” said Gene Thomas, the transportation division’s personal property policy lead.

If Soldiers face problems when moving companies fail to pick up or deliver household items by the scheduled dates, they can receive an inconvenience claim paid by the transportation service provider. Soldiers now also have up to 180 days to notify moving companies of damages incurred during the move.

Another issue that Soldiers may face during their PCS is that moving truck rental services and non-DoD approved moving companies might inflate the cost of a move, Candler said. He added that Soldiers should be aware of scammers and use only a government-approved moving company.

“For example, one year ago, it may have cost \$3,000 to rent that truck to go from coast to coast. Today, it may now cost as much as \$9,000 to go from coast to coast” Candler said. “In addition, what we’re finding out is when people are going out and hiring their own moving companies, in some cases, that cost could be three times as much when compared to previous years due to supply and demand.”

Thomas warns Soldiers to remain wary of “fly-by-night companies” that look to profit from the moving Soldier’s or Family’s desperation. He said that non-DoD approved moving companies may quote a Soldier one price and then raise the cost exponentially in the middle of the moving process.

If Soldiers choose to hire a commercial mover, they should consider a mover registered with the federal government at www.fmcsa.dot.gov/protect-your-move. Soldiers can avoid potential dilemmas by moving with a DoD-arranged moving company that establishes fixed, government-regulated rates for moves.

The goal is always a smooth move scheduled in advance, but Soldiers have a few options if they have leave or move-in dates



looming.

“Each case will be different but Soldiers may choose to speak to their leadership about extending their tour of duty, or they may choose to perform a PPM.” Candler said. “Whatever a Soldier decides, they should still coordinate work with their installation’s transportation office, especially if they run into delays.”

The COVID-19 pandemic remains an obstacle for some Soldiers and Families as restrictions on movement at either their departure or arrival location can slow their transition, especially for overseas moves.

Finally, Army leaders remain committed to supporting Soldiers and their families throughout the PCS process and this summer’s unpredictable challenges, Candler said. Army leaders have worked to provide transportation officers with tools to address moving emergencies and dilemmas.

“We are in this together; patience and flexibility will be essential in making it through this peak PCS season” Candler said.

Soldiers who are PCSing should make contact with their installation transportation office their first priority upon receipt of orders. Transportation offices are the first line of support for household goods coordination and will provide necessary information for all questions related to moves. Fort Polk’s Transportation Office can be reached at 337.531.7098. Fort Polk transportation office opens at 7:30 a.m.

Moving resources can be found at <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/moving-housing/moving/moving-resources/>.

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