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Walking Town Hall effective form of communication



Fort Polk command, leadership, and representatives from Corvias, Directorate of Emergency Services, Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital and more participated in a Walking Town Hall April 21. The town hall took place in the Palmetto Terrace neighborhood. Residents were asked if they were satisfied with their housing and if there was anything Fort Polk and Corvias could do to improve their living conditions.









Cover photo: The Beauties of the Pacific dance group performed at the Volunteer of the Year celebration held April 8. (Photo Angie Thorne).



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



From I to r: Arianna Nitz, 4, her dad, Jeremiah and brother, Matthew, 2 work on their fishing while Bodhi Jones, 5, focuses on catching a big one at the Educational Earth Day – hosted by Fort Polk's Directorate of Public Works-Environmental and Natural Resource Management Division – held at the Main Post Exchange April 21.

Education Earth Day

Fort Polk's Directorate of Public Works-Environmental and Natural Resource Management Division hosted an Educational Earth Day event at the Main Post Exchange from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. April 21. The event had multiple educational booths covering topics such as endangered species, archaeology, local wildlife, botany, storm water and more.





Fort Polk's Transition Assistance Program hosted a hiring event April 21 in front of Allen Memorial Library and the Education Center. The event offered Soldiers and Family members the ability to choose to attend in-person or virtually.







Arroyo spreads message of 'hope' in face of despair

By CHUCH CANNON Command Information Officer

FORT POLK, La. — Hope.

This simple four-letter word has different meanings depending on a person's circumstances. A student might "hope" to do well on a test. A young man or woman might "hope" their significant other loves them. A person undergoing medical tests has "hope" for a positive outcome.

For retired Capt. John Arroyo, one of 19 Soldiers shot April 2, 2014, at Fort Hood Texas, by Spc. Ivan Lopez, "hope" is the underlying theme of the message he shares with others.

Arroyo is the guest speaker for the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk's National Day of Prayer Breakfast, scheduled for May 5 at 6:30 a.m. in the Warrior Community Center.

Arroyo said the morning of April 2, 2014, started like most mornings for the newly minted lieutenant, who spent 15 years at Fort Bragg as a Green Beret before entering the Army's Green-to-Gold program and earning his commission as a medical services officer, with a follow-on assignment to Fort Hood.

"I woke up early for PT and headed out of my house, just outside the gate of Fort Hood at about 6:30 a.m." he said. "That week I was scheduled to attend a transportation course. I was our unit movement officer and the course would certify me to do load plans for the unit's equipment."

The class began at 9 a.m. and Arroyo said the instructor let the students out early so they could go to their units and get their units' property book.

"That way we could work on our own property in the class," he said. "We wouldn't be working on generic load plans, but on the plans specifically for our individual units. The instructor let us go about 3:30 p.m."

Arroyo said he headed to his unit's headquarters to secure the property book. Arroyo was assigned to the 61st Multifunctional Medical Battalion, part of the 1st Medical Brigade.

"I got there about 4 p.m." he said. "The parking lot was pretty full so I had to park near 1st Medical Brigade headquarters."

After parking his vehicle, Arroyo said he called his sister to tell her he and his wife, Angel, were planning a vacation trip to Cancun.

"The prior September, as I was finishing my basic officer course, my mother—in-law and father-in-law both died nine days apart," he said. "Two years before that my brother-in-law died in a hunting accident. This is what I walked in the door with at Fort Hood — a new officer with a lot of emotional issues. My wife needed to get away to heal."

Arroyo said he ended the conversation,

Please see Prayer, page 5





Retired Capt. John Arroyo in front of his former unit's headquarters at Fort Hood.



Retired Capt. John Arroyo was one of 19 Soldiers shot April 2, 2014, at Fort Hood, Texas. He took a bullet to the throat and lived to tell his story.

Prayer

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hung up and exited his vehicle. As he started making his way to 61st MMB headquarters, he said he heard shots fired.

"It stopped me in my tracks," he said. "As a Green Beret, I know what shots fired sound like. I stopped, and I began to look around."

But since he was on an Army post, behind security, he felt safe, so discounted the threat.

"I thought maybe it's a funeral detail training," he said.

Arroyo said he looked in the direction where he thought the shots came from when a car pulled up in front of him in the parking lot about 15 yards away.

"Who thinks there's danger in a parking lot, on base, behind security?" he said. "I turned my attention back to where I had heard the shots, and the next shot I heard ripped through my throat."

Later reports said the man Arroyo saw in the car, identified as Spc. Ivan Lopez, was shooting at everyone he saw.

"I never saw him raise a weapon," Arroyo said. "The shot struck me from my left to my right. The bullet went from the left side of my throat, all the way through into my right shoulder; it went through my jugular vein. It was a .45 caliber."

As Lopez headed toward 1st Med Bde headquarters, Arroyo said he turned back toward his car and collapsed.

"I'm lying there, and I know I'm shot because there are massive amounts of blood," he said. "I began to think about my family. I had tried to give my family a career, a good life. But all they really wanted was me. I remember telling my wife I want to give you everything. I was trying to achieve a career. As I was bleeding out, I wasn't thinking about my career — I thought about all that mattered most — my Family. As I lay there, I heard an audible voice that came from within me that said, 'John, get up or your wife is going to die.' I shrugged it off, thinking maybe I was talking to myself, and started wondering, 'Is this where it ends? How many more breaths do I have?' Then I heard the voice again, more stern this time, 'John, get up, or your wife is going to die.'

Looking back on that day, Arroyo said he wondered why the voice had to tell him twice.

"Because I didn't listen the first time," he said. "I didn't think that I would have had one more opportunity. I'm a man of faith, and I believe I had a divine encounter. The Army says there is a spiritual pillar in the comprehensive fitness program. For me in that moment, God was speaking to me."

But like most people would think in that situation, Arroyo said he wondered since he was the one who was bleeding out, why would God tell him to get up or his wife would die?



"I believe God was telling me that if I died my wife would take her life, that she couldn't take another loss," he said.

As he started moving and getting to his feet, Arroyo said he realized his right arm wasn't working.

"I grabbed my throat with my left hand and started moving toward headquarters," he said. "From a distance I could see a Soldier coming toward me. As we drew closer to each other, I tried to speak, but I couldn't. As we drew even closer, something seemed off."

Arroyo said he stopped about 10 feet away from the other Soldier.

"That's when I realized I was standing in front of the man who had shot me," he said. "He seemed to look through me. I'm convinced it was a divine miracle; he seemed not to see me. He walked in 1st Medical Brigade, shoots three more, then shot himself. He had killed three Soldiers and wounded 16 more before killing himself."

As he continued toward the 61st MMB, Arroyo said he heard Soldiers yelling at me, "Soldier, are you OK?"

"They told me later it looked like I had a red scarf around my neck — it was blood," he said. "I was able to tell them I had been shot."

The Soldiers went to work, helping Arroyo to the ground. Arroyo later learned one of the Soldiers went to get his truck out of the parking lot because they didn't know if he would live long enough for an ambulance to arrive.

"They put me in back of the truck and rushed me to the hospital emergency room.

"One of the Soldiers in back of the truck said

he told me, 'Don't speak,' because every time I did, more blood gushed out," Arroyo said. "He said he told me to squeeze his hand instead, but the squeezes were getting fainter."

Arroyo said an emergency medical technician told him he had a look of horror on his face when he arrived at Darnall Community Hospital.

"He told me, 'I stuck my finger in your throat and said you would be OK. Then your face got a real peaceful look. You had what we call guppy breathing — very shallow just before you expire."

Because of the mass casualties, doctors and nurses at Darnall were all headed to the emergency room.

"Two nurses rushed me to an elevator to go to the ER," he said. "As the elevator doors opened there were two ear, nose and throat surgeons on it. They followed me to the ER and began to work on me right away."

Everything was in place where it needed to be that day, Arroyo said.

"When I obeyed the voice and got up to live for my family, everything I needed was where I needed it to be," he said. "I asked a doc if I died that day. He said, "No, your heart kept pounding and I replaced every bit of blood in your body."

Arroyo's company commander, Capt. Gary Cheatwood, was also in training that day. Cheatwood, now Maj. Cheatwood and the deputy commander for Administration at Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital, said



rayer

Continued from page 5

he didn't immediately know about the shoot- it's something I hope I never have to do again." ings.

"I finished my class and went home," he said. "Shortly after, I heard on the news there had been an active shooter and the installation was locked down. I started getting accountability of my staff and John happened to be one I couldn't get in touch with."

Cheatwood said he thought Arroyo had possibly gotten out of class early and gone home.

"I called his wife, Angel, to ask if he had been home," he said. "I tried not to worry her. Then I got a phone call from the unit that said John had been shot."

Cheatwood said he learned Arroyo had been transferred from Fort Hood's Carl R. Darnall Army Community Hospital after being stabilized, via life flight, to Scott and White Memorial Hospital in Temple.

"I learned the significance of his injuries," Cheatwood said. "I knew that if Angel was going to see him again alive, I needed to do something. I didn't have time to wait for an official military response. I told my wife, we have to go get her."

Cheatwood said he and his wife jumped in their car, and headed to the Arroyo residence, about 10 minutes away.

"As I walked up to the house, the front door was open and you could see through the glass storm door," he said. "I knocked, and Angel just looked at me shaking her head, 'No,' shaking her head no, but she knew. She didn't want to we must go now.' You get training on this but lived," Arroyo said.

Arroyo's story is amazing, Cheatwood said. "I have a medical background," he said. "When trying to understand the type of injuries he had and how things lined up that day, I'd like to say it was a result of Army preparedness and Army readiness, but I don't know that I can say that. I've always been a person of faith. That experience renewed many of my beliefs, confirmed a lot of my beliefs. I wish I - they didn't have to live through that experience. But in hindsight, the way that his life has evolved because of it, I don't think he has any regrets."

Arroyo said that for a long time his prognosis looked bleak.

"Most everyone assumed I wouldn't make it through the night, but I did," Arroyo said.

"April 3, I came out of my second surgery and was placed in a medically induced coma. The doctors told my wife it would be a couple of days before I woke. My wife took hold of my hand to tell me goodbye and that she loved me, and I woke up."

"From that point on, I've been sharing my scars and telling people to get up," he said.

Eight years later, Arroyo admits not a day goes by that he doesn't think about April 2, 2014 and Spc. Ivan Lopez. "I've forgiven him," he said. "I wonder what life was like in his house before he grabbed a gun and shot 19 people and then himself? Had he hugged his wife and kids? I don't know. I think he was broken.

"But one thing I do know: I give all the glory open the door. I told her, 'Angel he's alive, but to God, because I took a .45 to the throat and



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Fort Polk thanks community members at Volunteer of Year ceremony

By ANGIE THORNE Public affairs specialist

FORT POLK, La. — Serving the community through volunteering your time and effort, no matter the focus, was celebrated at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk Commanding General's Volunteer of the Year ceremony held April 8 at Fort Polk's Warrior Center.

The event had a Polynesian flair with leis, Hawaiian shirts, Bermuda shorts, colorful tropical decor and live performances from Beauties of the Pacific — a group performing traditional island dances - setting the tone for the night.

Brig. Gen. David S. Doyle made opening remarks at the celebration. He told those in attendance that he was amazed by the scope and scale of the impact made by volunteers on the Fort Polk community in the last year.

Doyle said there were 186 individuals who chose to get involved by registering with the Volunteer Management Information System that was during a COVID environment.

"Those people not only volunteered, but entered their data in the system which showed that they worked 9,000 hours. The total dollar amount that we would have accrued if we had to pay for those hours added up to more than \$350,000. We are very fortunate to benefit from those volunteer hours because it makes a difference for our community and installation," he said.

Doyle said the volunteers represented at the ceremony performed a variety of duties throughout the year including helping out at special events and with organizations such as Directorate of Family Morale, Welfare and Recreation, Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers, Army Community Service, Soldier and Family Readiness groups, Religious Support, Child and Youth Services, American Red Cross, Spouses' Community Club, Girls and Boys Clubs and more.

"I just want to say how proud I am to be part of an installation where this is the ideal.

"But what I really want to talk about are the individuals that volunteered. It's not just about the dollars or the hours, it's about the inspiration they provide the rest of us," he said.

Doyle said those volunteers choose to become involved.

"You are not only giving of your time and energy, but you are setting an example. Because you choose to apply yourself in such an incredible way, we may benefit by your example in influencing others to follow in your footsteps," he said.

Doyle said that may be the most encouraging and inspirational outcome of all.

Lindsey Weaver volunteers with D Company, 2nd Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Divi-

Marissa Schuhlein, was named Installation Volunteer of the Year to great applause. Schuhlein (inset/center) stands with Brig. Gen. David Doyle, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk commanding general (left) and Command Sgt. Maj. Nema Mobarakzadeh, interim post command sergeant major (right).







sion Soldier and Family Readiness Group.

Weaver said she wanted to help out with raising money for fun things for Families to do like bounce houses for the kids at FRG events and care packages for Soldiers.

"I want our Soldiers to feel appreciated. Giving them a care package shows them there are people who care," she said.

Weaver said she had volunteer role models who were senior spouses.

"They were so helpful and helped me make sense of military life and to pass that help on," she said.

Leslie Cormack, Army Community Service information and referral specialist, said their volunteers didn't let the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions get in the way.



As volunteers, Family members and the community entered the Warrior Center, they were presented with leis to get them into the spirit of the event.

"Our volunteers were still willing to put themselves out there to support the morale and welfare of Fort Polk," she said.

Sandra Keil, ACS finance specialist, said it's valuable to recognize what volunteers do.

"Many people volunteer selflessly and this is the perfect opportunity to honor them and their many efforts," she said.

Penny Dekerlegand, 13, was named the Installation Youth Volunteer of the Year.

Dekerlegand volunteers at the Religious Support Office and said she began volunteering because there were things that needed to be done on the installation.

"It seemed like the right thing to do, espe-



Coincides with Mayfest

This will be the 36th year of the Armadillo Stampede. Check Facebook for more event details at <u>https://www.facebook.com/events/3061452634123589</u> and register at <u>https://runsignup.com/Race/LA/Leesville/2022ArmadilloStampede</u>.

Volunteer -

Continued from page 7

cially when volunteering can make other people happy when they need a break," she said.

As far as being the Installation Youth volunteer of the Year, Dekerlegand said it's nice. "I'm just glad people notice that I'm doing a good job volunteering," she said.

Installation Volunteer of the Year went to Marissa Schuhlein.

Schuhlein said it feels good to be recognized.

"I wasn't expecting it, so I'm in shock, but appreciative. I'm also proud because I put in a lot of hard work," she said.

Doyle thanked the volunteers for their contributions, as well as the positive influence they have on Soldiers, Family members and kids with their actions.

"They will look at you as you volunteer and they will want to be just like you. When that happens, we are going to see great things," he said.



8



Fort Polk honors past, prepares for future

By THOMAS MILLIGAN DPW — Environmental Division

FORT POLK, La. — At 241,126 acres, the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk, makes up about 1 % of the land area of its home state of Louisiana.

In this space, the installation maintains an archaeological inventory that encompasses approximately 20% of all recorded sites in the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office database. Fort Polk has 4,135 sites with 180 sites eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

"The Cultural Resources Management Team supports the training mission by preserving the past in order to secure the installation's future," said Bradley Laffitte, installation archaeologist. "The challenges we've faced have led us to refocus our energies, create innovative outreach methods to engage and increase communications with stakeholders and partners."

In the 1940s, then Camp Polk was established through eminent domain, resulting in the displacement of hundreds of families. The CRM Team preserves and protects the historic resources from that time, through a comprehensive management approach that uses customized data collection methods, emerging technology and proactive cultural awareness outreach involving 10 federally recognized Native American tribes, nearby universities and local, state and federal agencies.

Managing that responsibility comes with additional challenges brought on by weather-related disasters. Major weather events that tested the installation over the last few years include a 2019 tornado, two hurricanes in 2020 (including Laura, a Category 4 major storm) and Winter Storm Uri in 2021 — making the preservation of sites and materials even more challenging. Hurricane Laura damaged 14 of the 23 historic cemeteries managed by the installation. Hurricane Delta and Winter Storm Uri further damaged the cemeteries by downing leaning, splintered, hanging and dying trees and branches. The total damages to historic cemeteries included more than 300 linear feet of fence, one brick gate and archway, eight grave markers, more than 100 uprooted trees, dozens of hazardous trees and a variety of erosion issues. The impacts resulted in an estimated \$750,000 in repair costs.

In the wake of each disaster, CRM staff deployed to the affected regions of the installation to record the most severely damaged areas and map damages to sites, structures and cemeteries. The damages included uprooted trees that left holes up to 12 feet wide and drove tree limbs up to four feet deep into the ground at archaeological sites and cemeteries.

U.S. Forest Service permitted training land sustained the most severe damage. CRM staff



brought chainsaws to the field for clearing paths into archaeological sites. The team also inspected root balls for artifacts. Fort Polk and the Forest Service used collected data to guide restoration and management activities in consultation with the state historic preservation offices, Native American tribes, Fort Polk Game Enforcement and other stakeholders and partners.

One notable and delicate operation involved team members restoring a grave at Fullerton East Cemetery after Hurricane Laura uprooted a tree and exposed the burial site. Two more trees fell on top of the burial, knocking the headstone loose from its base. The CRM crew removed the root ball and replaced it with dirt, taking care not to disturb any human remains.

In 2021, Folk Polk celebrated 80 years of training Soldiers. Brig. Gen. David S. Doyle, JRTC and Fort Polk commanding general was the speaker at the anniversary celebration. Doyle said Fort Polk Soldiers were proud to serve at an installation with such a rich history. It is the CRM Team whose mission is to preserve and protect that history.

Take part in JRTC, Fort Polk recycling program

DPW

FORT POLK, La. — In 2008, the Directorate of Public Works, Environmental Office established a Recycling Center for the JRTC and Fort Polk, under the Army's Qualified Recycling Program. The Recycling Center is located at the corner of Georgia and Maine, bldgs 3620/3622. Available markets for the sale of recyclables determine what commodities the

QRP can recycle. Customers may drop off scrap metal, aluminum, lead acid batteries, cardboard, paper, used cooking oil, motor oil, #1 plastic bottles, and ink toner cartridges.

Business hours are 8 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday through Friday. Customers can take advantage of the curbside unloading assistance offered by the QRP technicians by driving through the open gate to the building. This service is especially convenient for customers when they have bulk and heavy recycling items to donate.

The Recycling Center offers a 24-hour drop off point outside the facility gate for cardboard, #1 plastic, and aluminum cans. Additionally, there is a 24-hour drop off point for cardboard at the old Fort Polk Commissary, bldg 830.

The Recycling Center will not accept spent brass, which must be turned in to the Ammunition Supply Point for demilitarization. Drop off only approved commodities at the Recycling Center and 24-hour drop off points. Fort Polk Command encourages the community to be good stewards of the environment and take advantage of the Recycling Center. Recycling donations and proceeds from sales directly benefit Soldiers and family members on the installation.

In 2013, the JRTC and Fort Polk QRP Committee established the "Riche\$ from Recycling" incentives award program for military units on Fort Polk. Units that participate in the program and recycle throughout the year can earn a cash award for their unit fund. The commanding general recognizes the units who recycle the most with 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place Riche\$ from Recycling winner checks, during the 1st Quarter Commanding General's Excellence Awards ceremony. Not all units can generate scrap metal, lead acid batteries, used oil, and ink toner cartridges, so the competition is limited to the following commodities: Cardboard, paper, aluminum cans and #1 plastic bottles. Units make recycle donations at the Recycling Center during business hours, and their donations are then tracked by the QRP Manager.

The QRP's unique authority to sell recyclables and have the revenues from sales returned to the installation, allows unit incentive funds to be available. QRP funds also pay for some Directorate of Family, Morale, Welfare, and Recreation sponsored activities such as the annual Youth Catfish Derby, the annual Hayride



and Snowflake festivals, movie nights, Freedom Fest fireworks and installation facility energy conservation projects. Since the Riche\$ from Recycling program's inception, the QRP has allocated more than \$100,000 to JRTC and Fort Polk military units. Information on Riche\$ from Recycling is available by contacting the QRP Recycling Center at (337) 531-5335/7556.

There are other opportunities besides recycling for service members and their family members to protect the environment and participate in Environmental activities. In FY19, the Installation began the JRTC and Fort Polk installation environmental Quality Awards Program. Annually, the command recognizes and rewards the great work that individuals and teams do to sustain the installation and protect the environment. Award recipients receive an engraved trophy from the Commanding General during the Commanding General's 1st Quarter Excellence Awards Ceremony. Both Soldiers and Civilians are eligible to compete for the individual awards. Directorates, battalions, detached companies, missions staff, and special staff are all eligible to compete for the team award.

Fort Polk 2021 unit award winners

• Riche\$ from Recycling 1st place award recipient: 1st/5th Aviation Regiment in the amount of \$5,148.89.

- 2nd place award recipient: BJACH in the amount of \$2,733.89.
- 3rd place award recipient: 46th Engineer Battalion in the amount of \$1,826.50.

2021 Installation Environmental Quality Awards

• Environmental Conservation Steward of the Year Award: Sgt. 1st Class Keith Boone, 258th MP Company, 519th Military Police Bn.

• Environmental Volunteer of the Year: Staff Sgt. AnnMarie Leifeste, Operations Group

• Environmental Professional of the Year Award Recipient: Jessica Lockton, lab Tech, Environmental Compliance Officer, BJACH

Seven medical Soldiers and one hospital unit emerge as winners

By Sgt. QUINTIN GEE

24th Theater Public Affairs Support Element

FORT BLISS, Texas — With the desert sun shining on their faces and their newly awarded Army Accommodation Medals, seven Army leaders were recognized as winners in the 2022 Regional Health Command-Central (RHC-C) Best Leader Competition hosted by the William Beaumont Army Medical Center.

The Reynolds Army Health Clinic of Fort Sill, Oklahoma, took home the trophy as the competition's best squad.

"Whenever we go to war we are integrated with the warfighter," Cpt. Erik Heitman, the RHC-C BLC Officer in charge, said. "So our medics need to be able to do the same things as our combat Soldiers."

For five days, 64 of the Army's medical Soldiers converged on the 1.2 million-acre training area to compete against each other in numerous administrative, athletic and warrior tasks and battle drills to determine who would reign supreme as the RHC-C's best medical leaders. Heitman says the event is important to further the mission of the Army's medical personnel.

1st Lt. Cara Adams assigned to the General Leonard Wood Army Community Hospital was selected as the winner among all officers who competed.

The Attleboro, Massachusetts, native said she gained a lot of confidence following her success in the competition.

"I think a lot of the people around me almost believe more in me than I do," Adams said. "Going forward I am more capable than I thought I was, and that's a great place to be in."

Sgt. 1st Class Timothy McCool, assigned to Reynolds Army Community Hospital, was selected as the winner for all senior noncommissioned officers.

The husband and father of two, said the week-long event was vigorous and physically demanding and the troops had little time for sleep. But, as a senior leader, McCoole was especially proud of the Soldiers he was competing with and against.

"It was awesome seeing Soldiers get out of their comfort zones," McCoole said. "Some of the Soldiers here haven't seen this type of environment to this extent, it was cool to see them giving it their all."

Additionally, Staff Sgt. Tabitha Moore and Sgt. Garrett Paulson both assigned to the Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital at Fort Polk were announced as the winners for the junior noncommissioned officers.

Rounding out the individual winners were three junior enlisted Soldiers:

Spc. Conner Crisafi and Pvt. Stefano Vendraminetto, both assigned to Evans Army Medical Center, and Spc. Paulo Dasilva with Reyn-



Staff Sgt. Tabitha Moore, a medic for Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital, fills her trousers with air to use them as a flotation device April 10, at Fort Bliss, Texas. Soldiers participating in the Regional Health Command - Central water survival event must tread water for a minimum of five minutes. The competition challenges the Army's best leaders in a demanding, continuous, and realistic simulated operational environment. Moore earned the title of Best Junior NCO for her efforts during the competition.



Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital Regional Health Command Best Leader Competition team consisted of (left to right) Capt. Christopher Julian, chief of occupational therapy; Staff Sgt. Tabitha Moore, combat medic, Sgt. Garrett Paulson, combat medic; Spc. Carlos Cardona, pharmacy technician; Spc. Roberto Ramos, radiology technician; Pfc. Savana Neves, operating room technician. The team completed all challenges during the competition at Fort Bliss Texas with Moore and Paulson earning the title of "Best Junior NCOs." The duo will represent RHC-C at the MEDCOM competition at Fort Benning, Georgia in a few months.

olds Army Health Clinic.

Reflecting on the competition, Heitman said he was not only proud of the winners, but all the Soldiers who competed in the event because the Army Medical Command troops are still Soldiers first.

"People look at these Soldiers that maybe

wear scrubs all day and they're on a hospital floor treating patients," he said. "They don't really think of a MEDCOM Soldier as doing something like this."

Heitman concluded that just because your day job environment is climate controlled doesn't mean you can't adapt to a battlefield.

Fort Polk transitions to "fence-to-fence" Army Maintenance Application

DPW

FORT POLK, La. - Requesting routine maintenance repairs to most Fort Polk facilities is now easier. Fort Polk is one of 73 installations using the new Army Maintenance Application exclusively to eliminate emails, walk-ins and calls about routine work orders. As part of the Army's continuous effort to improve quality of life and modernize services from the industrial age to the information age, a streamlined digital process is available for more than just barracks spaces. Any registered user who notices a maintenance issue on their Army installation will be able to report the routine problem with ease either with the app or with their Common Access Card.

ArMA was originally utilized for Soldiers living in the barracks, but has now expanded to facilities across Fort Polk. Most facilities on the installation, except for housing, that are supported by the Directorate of Public Works are now available in the ArMA database. That means that anyone with CAC access or the ArMA App on their phone can submit routine work orders using those means. There are several ways to access ArMA.

One way is to visit <u>www.armymaintenance.</u> <u>com</u> and register an account using username and password, your CAC or by accessing the Digital Garrison app. There are training videos on the website and in-person training bi-monthly in the Facility Manager Training class.

Aligned with Army modernization efforts, ArMA digitizes the work order process for all Army-owned facilities with a centralized system for submission and tracking, enabling Soldiers, Family members, civilians and contractors who live or work on post to submit online routine work orders for any Army-owned facility.

"Automation of the maintenance-customer relationship is at the core of what we are doing," said Doug Enfield, ArMA program manager. "Customers expect this. It's part of the Army operating in the information age not just for housing but for all facilities on the installation, which is what we call fence-tofence."

Fort Knox, Kentucky was the first installation to transition to fence-to-fence in January. Fort Polk transitions are complete.

Derrick Raney, business operations and integration division branch chief at Fort Knox, said ArMA has "improved the process time efficiency while simplifying operations for the customer and the work order team.

"ArMA has and will continue to improve customer relations and communications with the DPW work order team," he said.

"ArMA offers great benefits to our end users," added Jason Root, Fort Knox DPW director. "Everyone is now able to identify and



track the routine work that needs to be accomplished around them."

The ArMA system has processed more than 200,000 housing and barracks work orders since its launch in January 2021.

At Fort Polk, ArMA currently services 89 barracks support facilities across the installation and has processed nearly 5,000 work orders through its system since January 2021. Of this amount, 66% were entered through the website versus in-person or telephone requests. ArMA officials estimate this saved more than 5,000 hours of manpower annually.

By including pictures and being as descriptive as possible when entering work orders, ArMA users enable service technicians to show up and resolve issues in as little as one visit. The system decreases the average age of a work order by 25% when pictures are included in the submission.

"The user can submit photos along with the work order to help the teams understand what needs to be done, which minimizes the times technicians need to come to the job site," Root explained. "All in all, this is a giant leap forward for the user compared to what we had."

Soldiers in the barracks have been submitting routine work orders through the user-friendly online application available 24/7, eliminating the need to make appointments or phone calls to service technicians. First-time users without an account are able to submit work orders in less than five minutes when using the CAC-authentication function. The technology improves the entire maintenance program and will streamline the information flow and help give ownership to the service members and civilians in Fort Polk facilities.

ArMA is only for routine work orders. Emergency work orders will continue to be accepted by phone, walk-in or online. Directorate of Public Works personnel man the work order desk from 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. daily and maintain an after-hours service for emergencies. The number to call is (337) 531-1379.

From now through the end of May, the ArMA team will reach all 73 IMCOM installations through a mix of on-site and remote support in an effort to complete expansion across the enterprise.

Stateside installations are expected to be complete by the end of April, with Europe and Asia following in May.

To use ArMA, visit <u>www.armymaintenance.</u> <u>com</u> or follow the link from within the Digital Garrison mobile app.



Sexually transmitted infections/diseases: National dilemma

By TONI L. PRITCHARD Army Public Health Nurse

FORT POLK, La. - The Department of Health and Human Services published its sexually transmitted infections national strategic plan in 2021. The plan specifically focuses on the four most common sexually transmitted infections seen in the United States - chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, and Human Ppapilloma Virus.

DHHS reported that nationally, chlamydia is the most commonly diagnosed STI with a 19% increase incidence since 2011. Gonorrhea rates, which were at an all-time low in 2009, have risen by 80% since then and half of all gonorrhea cases tested were resistant to at least one antibiotic. Finally, DHHS reported that syphilis rates have risen 71% since 2014.

Human Papilloma Virus is the most frequently diagnosed viral STI in the U.S. Despite the availability of a vaccine to prevent HPV it is estimated to be the cause of more than 90%of cervical cancer and 70% of oral/throat cancers. The vaccine is recommended for both males and females as part of their 11-12 years old immunizations since the immune system response at that age is much more robust than if people wait until age 18.

When given as recommended, 11-12 year olds only require two doses of the HPV vaccine. Those who receive the vaccine later require three doses to achieve the same level of Polk is under the age of 35; and data shows that protection. DHHS reported that as of 2018 only 40% of adults aged 18-26 had received one or more doses of HPV vaccine.

While Louisiana appears to be headed in the right direction, the state is still not out of the woods. Louisiana dropped from first in the nation to third overall for STI/STDs (CDC, 2021). However, at Fort Polk the numbers don't reflect an improvement. The installation's overall numbers for chlamydia and gonorrhea remain steady; chlamydia is still the number one STI diagnosed on post, with gonorrhea following in second place. The incidence of syphilis, however, has doubled in the past year.

Health disparities associated with STIs are a major focus in the DHHS Strategic Plan with age, race and sexual orientation playing a big role in the STI epidemic in the country. While 15-24 year olds make up about 25% of the population of the country, they account for nearly 50% of all STI cases.

In addition, sexual orientation plays a big role in risk for contracting syphilis with more than 50% of syphilis infections occurring in the — men who have sex with other men (MSM) — population. DHHS further reports that STI rates are higher in the American Indian, Alaska Natives, and African American populations compared to the white population.

According to the 2020 Health of the Force report, 82% of the active duty component at Fort

the active duty component account for 86% of all STI/STD reports on Fort Polk.

The fact that 50% of men and 75% of women who have either chlamydia or gonorrhea have no symptoms is a major obstacle in breaking the chain of infection. It gives young people a false sense of security because if they don't feel sick, they don't think they could possibly have an infectious condition. Thus, they don't get tested.

Consequences associated with untreated chlamydia and gonorrhea include chronic pelvic pain, ectopic pregnancy, infertility and epididymitis, as well as an increased risk of contracting Human Immunodeficiency Virus. Additionally, DHHS reported that 42% of the MSM population that has syphilis also have HIV.

The Fort Polk Department of Public Health has an STI/STD walk-in clinic daily from 8-9:30 a.m. at bldg 3515 on Georgia Ave. by the Fontaine Troop Medical Clinic. Services are confidential.

If you are in the high risk MSM population you might be interested in taking Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP).

Ways you can protect yourself against STIs include avoiding social media hook-ups, getting tested before you start a new relationship and using protection. For more information call (337) 531-6131.



A moment in time

On Oct. 27, 1955, General Order No. 63: Camp Polk is re-designated as Fort Polk. The 1st Armored Division is moved to Fort Polk, and the start of the largest peace time maneuvers held in west Louisiana since World War II. "Exercise Sage Brush," is held between Oct. 31-Nov. 15, 1955. The purpose was to conduct various units in a simulated conventional warfare against nuclear, biological and chemical attacks between U.S. Army and Aggressor forces. Units that participated included the 1st AD, 82 AD and the US Air Force flying over seven southern states.



Remembering Spc. Vanessa Guillen during Sexual Assault Awareness Month

By Spc. KELLY ACEVEDO Public affairs specialist

FORT POLK, La. — April 22 marked two years since the disappearance of Spc. Vanessa Guillen from Fort Hood, Texas.

Guillen continues to be remembered through her family, friends and activists around the world who share her story.

Her untimely death changed the way the military handles sexual assault and harassment issues in work environments. Changes made to the Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention program aim to mitigate toxic work environments that make reporting difficult and aim to educate.

Born and raised in Houston, Guillen left her home at 18 to enlist in the United States Army. Her mother, Gloria Guillen, shared that her daughter sparked an interest in the military at a young age. Her mother said that Guillen had always been athletic, perfect for the military scene.

Her sister, Mayra Guillen, has continued to advocate for improvement on sexual assault misconduct reporting since her death. The Senate passed the "National Defense Authorization Act" which will now make sexual harassment a crime under the Uniformed Code of Military Justice.

The act aims to reduce conflicts of interest and protects victims of sexual harassment. Her sister was pleased with the act, hoping to bring change for those that need it. "I'd rather my sister be honored than forgotten," she said.

Guillen was last seen April 22, 2020. Her disappearance was reported the following day. On April 24, 2020, the Criminal Investigation Command asked for the public's help in search for Guillen on and near Fort Hood. Her body was eventually found on June 30, near Leon River in a large box that came from her company's arms room.

A charge was made against Spc. Aaron Robinson on July 2, for the murder of Guillen. Robinson was detained, but somehow got away and committed suicide before an actual arrest could be made. His girlfriend, Cecily Aguilar, was the only person charged in connection to Guillen's murder.

Released court documents revealed Robinson confessed to Aguilar that he repeatedly struck Guillen on the head with a hammer, resulting in her death. After placing Guillen's body in the box, Robinson picked up Aguilar from her job and drove to the lake where they dismembered and burned Guillen's remains.

Aguilar has since been indicted for her involvement with the murder, facing 11 criminal counts.

Before she was murdered, Guillen reported two incidents where she was sexually harassed to her company, but no action was taken. A to-



tal of 21 of Guillen's leaders were fired or suspended after an investigation was launched to see how sexual assault and harassment incidents are handled within the unit. Sexual harassment complaints against Robinson were also made by other Soldiers with no action taken by the command.

The death of Guillen has opened the eyes of many, especially in the military. Reform was needed in order to make environments for all Soldiers better.

Survivors in the military will now be allowed to report SHARP related incidents outside of the military through the "I am Vanessa Guillen Act" where protection against relation will also be offered.

Although Guillen's time in the military was cut short, her story lives on forever. Her death transformed the way sexual assault reporting is handled within the ranks and proves how important it is to intervene when needed. The month of April is dedicated to bring awareness to sexual assault, but awareness and change does not have to end there.

If you or anyone you know have been a victim of sexual assault, call the SHARP 24-hour emergency helpline at (831) 682-8746 or visit safehelpline.org.



New ministry

The Community: An experience for all, is a new ministry that focuses on meeting the needs of a rapidly growing portion of the military community that may not feel comfortable with traditional services. The ministry will focus on holistic health and fitness. The first meeting takes place at the Anvil May 1 at noon. Food will be provided. The ministry will be led by Chap. Maj. Wade Shepard. If you are interested in more information call (903) 539-1279.

Spring Heritage tours

The Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk hosts its annual Spring Heritage Tours April 30. A bus tour of Peason Ridge, led by local historian Rickey Robertson, begins at 8 a.m. at the Pine Grove Baptist Church, La. Hwy 118, Florien. A caravan tour of four main Fort Polk cemeteries will begin at Warrior Memorial Park, South Fort Polk, at noon. The cemeteries for this tour are Davis, Zion Hills, Brack, and Haymon-Watson. The grounds of Warrior Memorial Park will be available for picnics and socializing beginning at 11 a.m. If you need a visitor pass to access the installation, please note that the Visitor Center is open from 5 a.m.–9 p.m. Monday-Friday and 8 a.m.–4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

For more information, contact Amy Brennan at (409) 504 -2445 or email **amy.c.brennan3.ctr@ army.mi**l.

Pharmacy wait times

Due to unavoidable issues, Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital is experiencing longer delays at the out-patient pharmacy. BJACH encourages the Fort Polk community to use the four hour drop-off and pick-up option. Simply wait in line at window #1, ask for the four-hour option. If you drop off your prescription before 12:30 p.m., your prescription will be ready for pick-up the same day after 4 p.m. If you drop off your prescription after 12:30 p.m., your prescription will be ready to pick up the following morning at 9 a.m. BJACH respects your time and wants you to realize that this is always an option for you. Your continued understanding and patience is appreciated as these issues are being resolved.

Walk-In hearing appointments

The Hearing Readiness Department located in bldg 3508 will be closed for walk-in hearing appointments today through April 29 and May 2-6 to support the April and May birth month SPRs. Walk-in hearing tests will resume on May 9 at 8 a.m. Sudden hearing loss is a medical emergency that must be evaluated within 72 hours of onset. In the event of a sudden hearing loss during this two-week period, Soldiers should contact Lt. Col. Leanne Battler via email: **leanne.m.battler. mil@mail.mil** directly to arrange for immediate testing.

BJACH appointments

Attention BJACH beneficiaries: Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital will temporarily defer some routine primary care appointments for Families of active duty personnel, retirees and their Families to the local network partners in Leesville, Deridder and Many. This will ensure you get the medical care you need in a timely manner. You will continue to call the centralized appointment line at (337) 531-3011 to request a primary care appointment, at which time you will be transferred to a nurse or have your call returned by a nurse who will place a medical referral for your request. Once the request has been submitted, one of the local network partners will contact you to schedule your appointment. BJACH anticipates this will last for about 5 weeks.

This will not impact Soldiers.

Soldiers will continue to be seen at their current medical clinic. Your understanding is appreciated during this transition as BJACH remains dedicated to serving you and taking care of your healthcare needs.

Additional resources available to you are:

1. The Nurse Advice Line is available 24/7 at MHSNurseAdviceLine.com for web/video chat or (800) 874-2273.

2. Urgent Care — for non-emergencies:

a. Active duty service members should work through unit sick call procedures first. If after sick call hours, as deemed appropriate by your health care team, contact the clinic for a referral to be seen by an Urgent Care Center. After hours or on weekends, call the Nurse Advice Line for a referral. The emergency room should be your last option unless it's an emergency situation.

b. Beneficiaries — Urgent Care Centers off post do not require a referral. Doctors on Demand is a new telephonic or web-based service that requires no referral for Urgent Care or behavioral health needs (please do not use for emergent concerns) — <u>https://doctorondemand.</u> <u>com/microsite/humana/</u>

Garrison innovation program

Do you have a good idea? Don't let it go to waste. The Plans, Analysis and Integration Office wants the Fort Polk community to know that the garrison team is not only listening, but also taking action on many of the great ideas that have already been submitted through the Garrison Innovation Program. Yours could be next. The program works by asking individuals to share their concepts to increase efficiency and enhance garrison processes for the Fort Polk community. Submit your ideas through the Fort Polk Interactive Customer Evaluation system.

ACP hours change

The Fort Polk community should take note of the current changes to access control points taking place on Fort Polk.

•ACP 5 (La. Hwy 467 — south/post office gate) — Through May 6, ACP 5's operational hours are reduced Monday-Friday from 6 a.m.-6 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m.-4 p.m. and closed on federal holidays. The senior commander has determined the need to reevaluate the traffic demand of ACP 5 with reduced operational hours in a follow-up traffic study. The results will help determine traffic volume, which influences manning and ACP hours.

Operational units that need access to training areas may contact Directorate of Emergency Services at <u>usarmy.polk.imcom.mesg.des-</u> <u>psi@army.mil</u> or call (337) 531-1159/6988.

•ACP 6 (Chaffee gate) — the gate has changes to weekend hours — opening Saturdays from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. and closed Sundays and federal holidays. This action is the result of the installation wide traffic study, which demonstrated a tapered demand after 10 a.m. and little to no activity after 6 p.m. on Saturdays. There are no changes to the weekday operations for ACP 6, which remains open Monday-Friday from 5 a.m.-9 p.m.

•ACP 8 (Joint Readiness Training Center box gate) — The gate is closed indefinitely, Monday-Sunday and federal holidays. The action is also the result of the installation wide traffic study, which demonstrated low traffic volume.

Alabama Ave. closure

The segment of Alabama Avenue north of Louisiana Avenue is closed for one to two months pending weather. Motorists accessing facilities along Ninth, 10th, 11th, and 12th streets will be detoured to Mississippi Avenue. Fourth Street will remain open for through traffic.

Facilities with access limited to Alabama Avenue will be accessed off of Georgia Avenue with flaggers or channelizing devices providing safe passage across the work zone (Alabama Avenue). Georgia Avenue will be converted to twoway traffic during this closure.

Rough road conditions and loose aggregate are possible near these work zones. Motorists should anticipate traffic delays due to closures and flagging operations around the work zones and pedestrians are encouraged to stay clear of work zones.



Soldiers charged with UCMJ violations

OSJA

FORT POLK, La. — The preamble to the Manual for Courts-Martial states, "The purpose of military law is to promote justice, to assist in maintaining good order and discipline in the armed forces, to promote efficiency and effectiveness in the military establishment, and thereby strengthen the national security of the United States." At the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk, the commanding general and subordinate commanders take good order and discipline seriously.

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

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

•A captain assigned to 32nd Hospital Center received a permanently filed GOMOR for fraudulently collecting parachute pay.

•A specialist assigned to 3rd Battalion, 353rd Regiment received a permanently filed GOMOR for refusing to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

• A specialist assigned to 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment received a Field Grade Article 15 for failing to report six times.

The Soldier received a punishment of reduction to E-3, forfeiture of \$1,217 pay per month for two months, suspended for six months, 45 days of extra duty, 45 days of restriction and an oral reprimand.

• Three Soldiers from across the installation received permanently filed GOMORs for driving under the influence of alcohol.

•Two Soldiers assigned to 46th Engineer Battalion were separated from the Army with general discharges for refusing to be vaccinated against COVID-19. A general discharge may result in a loss of some benefits and could cause substantial difficulty finding civilian employment.

•A Soldier assigned to 1-509th Infantry Regiment was separated from the Army with a general discharge for getting tattoos on their hand and neck and subsequently refusing to have them removed.

•A captain assigned to 1-5 Aviation Regiment was involuntarily eliminated from the service with an Under Other Than Honorable Conditions discharge for exchanging sexually oriented text messages with a child under the age of 16.

•A sergeant assigned to 1-509th Infantry Regiment received a Field Grade Article 15 for negligently discharging a personally owned firearm in the Fort Polk housing area.

They received a punishment of reduction to the rank of specialist suspended for three months, extra duty for 18 days and an oral reprimand. Noncommissioned officers found guilty at Article 15 proceedings must have a record of the proceedings permanently filed in their AMHRR.

Check VIN numbers

The Directorate of Emergency Services Traffic Division will release the following vehicles to Family Morale, Welfare and Recreation for disposal, if they remain unclaimed. Vehicles are listed with the last four of their VIN number. If one of these vehicles belongs to you, please contact the Fort Polk Police Traffic Division at (337) 531-1806, 6675 or 2677

2002	Honda	CRV	7722
1988	Chevrolet	3500	4195
2011	Dodge	Avenger	1373
2014	Nissan	Altima	6092
2005	Nissan	Altima	9465
2006	Dodge	Charger	5068
2000	Ford	Ranger	3852
1998	Honda	CRV	6564
1995	Ford	Crown Vic	4288
1995	BMW	530i	4287
2005	Chevrolet	Cobalt	1230
2009	Pontiac	G6	7014
2001	Kawasaki	650	0233
2011	Dodge	Durango	6226
2002	Ford	Mustang	1003
1979	Kawasaki	KZ650	5918
2013	Utility	trailer	3802
2013	Mitsubishi	Eclipse	2929
2007	Volkswagen	Jetta	9197
2001	Mitsubishi	Eclipse	4078
2002	Kia	Reo	5808
1992	BMW	4dr	7858
2005	Dodge	Magnum	9914
2005	Kia	Optima	8345
2010	Honda	Civic	5428
2001	Ford	Explorer	3754
2008	Ford	Escape	0697
2000	Dodge	Avenger	9243
2013	Volvo	S 40	1073
2001	Mercury	G. Marquis	1956
2013	Chevrolet	Camaro	0144
2013	Acura	RDX Turbo	1092
2007	Nissan	Sentra	5638
1995	Chevrolet	Caprice	3876
1999	GMC	1500	0147
2006	Hyundai	Sonata	3189
2008	Chevrolet	1500	0226
2008	Ford		0228 1971
	Nissan	Edge Versa	
2017		Aura XE	1496
2008	Saturn		3244
2004	Chevrolet	Trail Blazer	8828
2003	Toyota	Tacoma	7528
2006	Nissan	35OZ	6628
2010	Nissan	Altima	6499
2005	Ford	Explorer	4483
2012	Chevrolet	Malibu	1689
2016	Chevrolet	Malibu	5420

