

THE JRTC AND FORT JOHNSON

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GUARDIAN



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Community brings color to Autism Awareness Month event

By PORSHA AUZENNE
Public Affairs

FORT JOHNSON, La. — Fort Johnson Families stopped by Honor Field April 12 to participate in the installation’s annual Superhero Chalk the Walk. The event celebrates National Autism Awareness Month, observed each April. Military Families donned their finest capes and shields as they powered up to decorate the paved running track with colorful chalk art.

The event is a collaboration between Army Community Service’s New Parent Support Program and Exceptional Family Member Program. Personnel from each program dressed up to support the cause.

“The tradition started a few years ago and has become a recurring event,” said Trisha Kearns, Fort Johnson EFMP coordinator. “The reason behind the superhero theme is because each individual is unique and special. Most superheroes hide their true identity and people with physical and/or emotional limitations sometimes feel like they are outsiders. This event is to honor their differences and uniqueness as something incredible, worth showing and embracing.”

Anne Bollinger, a nurse who works in the family advocacy and



A youth dressed as Batman draws with chalk on Honor Field April 12 for Superhero Chalk and Stroller Walk. (U.S. Army photo by Porsha Auzenne)

education division at Fort Johnson’s NPSP, expressed how meaningful hosting an event like Superhero Chalk and Stroller Walk is to the community.

“Soldiers, and the Families who serve alongside them, are heroes who overcome a myriad of challenges daily,” Bollinger said. “The NPSP team recognizes the additional challenges that having a child with physical and/or emotional limitations may bring to Fort Johnson parents. The Superheroes Chalk and Stroller Walk

event celebrates these superheroes — the Families and children who soar with super strength to endeavor and overcome those challenges.”

For more information about EFMP call 337-531-2840 / 7456 or visit <https://www.armymwr.com/programs-and-services/personal-assistance/exceptional-family-member-program>.

For more information about NPSP call 337-531-9573 or visit <https://www.armymwr.com/programs-and-services/personal-assistance/family-advocacy/npsp>.



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Links to the Guardian are also included in all-users emails to government email users and by request to non-military units.

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

For more information on Fort Johnson units and happenings visit the [@JRTCandFortJohnson](https://www.facebook.com/JRTCandFortJohnson/) Facebook page.



Cover photo: The Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Johnson’s annual box tour didn’t disappoint when it came to giving folks an explosive and informative view of how Soldiers train at JRTC. (U.S Army photo by Shelby Waryas)

Spouse speaks on impact of enhancing quality of life issues

By MELISSA BOX
Plans, Analysis and Integration Office

FORT JOHNSON, La. — Military spouses are an important part of the quality of life conversation.

They are involved in almost every aspect of life on Fort Johnson through their participation in events, support of their Soldiers, as well as taking advantage of volunteer and career opportunities.

During last year’s Quality of Life Conference, additional opportunities for Spouses were brought to the forefront. For instance, what if spouses could get training, and learn more about the military in the process by being able to participate in the Forging New Leaders program?

Fort Johnson leadership listened and pulled in the Department of Human Resources, Work Force Development, who quickly recognized this as an opportunity to provide spouses with training they otherwise would not have been privy to. The outcome of the recommendation was approval to include active duty spouses in the FNL program.

Fort Johnson’s Forging New Leaders program was established in 2018 and designed to better equip government personnel with tools for personal and professional improvement. This training program offers military spouses a chance to experience different views, giving them an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the military.

For the first time, the current iteration of FNL has two military spouses participating in the program.

Carly Shumate, one of the spouses taking part in the class, took part in the program because she wanted a change after stepping away from her career last year.

She found out about FNL while visiting Army Community Service for resume assistance and thought it might be an avenue worth exploring. Shumate thought she could use the training by building upon her existing management skills.

“My main goal for signing up for FNL was really to soak in all the information and skills to better prepare myself for a new career,” Shumate said. “Networking and forming new relationships was another reason for taking the course. Those relationships are important.”

FNL offers spouses new insights and, in Shumate’s case, has changed the way she looks at the military.

“It’s been interesting to see, hear and learn about different military processes that take place behind the scenes and that most spouses question.”

For example, something as simple as a family fair, has a lot of moving pieces. Many entities are involved, there’s lots of paperwork and it takes months of planning and execution to host the one day event — something many

SEMI-ANNUAL

Joint Readiness Training Center & Fort Johnson

QUALITY OF LIFE CONFERENCE

JRTC and Fort Johnson QoL Initiatives

HOUSING

HEALTH CARE

CHILD CARE

SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT

PCS MOVES

SUPPORT AND RESILIENCE

EXCEPTIONAL FAMILY MEMBER PROGRAM

FINANCIAL READINESS

MORALE, WELFARE AND RECREATION

ARMY COMMUNITY SERVICE

Care for Our People • Build Readiness • Succeed in our JRTC & Fort Johnson Campaigns

Commanding General's Priorities

May 20 at The Warrior Center

9 a.m.-2 p.m.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Welcome – 9-9:05 a.m.

QoL Progress Overview / Recap Last Conference – 9:05-9:10 a.m.

Child Care – 9:10-10 a.m.

Education – 10-10:50 a.m.

LUNCH (1 hr 15 min) – 10:50 a.m.-12:05 p.m.

Housing / Barracks / IHG – 12:05-12:55 p.m.

Infrastructure – 12:55-1:25 p.m.

MWR Events and AAFES – 1:25-1:55 p.m.

Feedback/Closing Remarks – 1:55 - 2 p.m.

This is an event for Soldiers, civilians, retirees and Family members to participate in, and provide feedback or suggestions on the state of QoL on Fort Johnson.

Seating is limited. A catered lunch will be available at a cost of \$15. RSVP to kayla.l.moore16.civ@army.mil no later than May 13, letting us know if you are able to attend and if you would like lunch.

people don’t realize.

Shumate, along with other FNL participants, are assigned a mentor, who works with their student for the duration of the training and is a resource to help advise, coach and encourage throughout the program.

Shumate speaks positively about her mentor.

“She has really helped me dig deeper into where I want to go and has supported me as I gained confidence in my interview skills,” she said.

Shumate believes that having a mentor heightens the overall FNL experience. Her mentor has been her go to for anything related to FNL.

“No question is too big or small to discuss,” she said.

Shumate said FNL has made a positive difference in her life.

“From the first day, I felt welcomed and a part of the team. I am happy to say after only four months into the program, I am already in the process of onboarding with Fort Johnson,” she said.

Though she has never personally attended the Quality of Life Conference, she plans to attend the one taking place May 20 to help make a positive impact on others in the Fort Johnson community.

“Fort Johnson is a community, in every sense of the word,” Shumate said.



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- Keeping resources and important phone numbers close by in case someone needs support.

Learn more by visiting the SAAPM 2024 microsite.



Contact the DOD Safe Helpline: 877-995-5247

www.armyresilience.army.mil



Cajun Dustoff: Flying to **save** lives in Louisiana's skies

By ANTOINE AARON
Public Affairs

FORT JOHNSON, La. — Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Aviation Regiment, also known as Cajun Dustoff, is stationed at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Johnson. The company is a viable resource for those in need of urgent MedEvac evacuation in Louisiana.

Led by Maj. Nick Schaefer, the Cajun Dustoff operates as the state's sole active-duty MedEvac unit, providing round-the-clock assistance every day.

Schaefer highlighted the unit's commitment to its mission.

"We are a real-world MedEvac unit dedicated to saving lives," Schaefer said.

But their primary mission is supporting training rotations in the box.

"We have several local and rotational units training at JRTC. If anyone has any injuries, we're here to support them for real world emergencies," Staff Sgt. Lansing Zaragoza, critical care flight medic, said.

Since October, Cajun Dustoff has executed nine point of entry missions and five patient transfers, showcasing their unwavering dedication to their mission.

According to Sgt. 1st Class Steven Simmons, the company's first sergeant, they fly UH-60 Blackhawks with a crew consisting of two pilots, a repair/crew chief and a critical



1st Battalion, 5th Aviation Regiment, Charlie Company, MedEvac Team prepares to take off from Maks Army Airfield April 18 to respond to an emergency call. (U.S. Army photo by Antoine Aaron)

care flight paramedic.

"We support the warfighter at JRTC and Fort Johnson, as well as the surrounding communities," Simmons said.

Schaefer said from extensive training to seamless coordination during missions, Cajun Dustoff exemplifies professionalism and selflessness.

"The best pilots are the ones that are always seeking knowledge and learning new skills," Schaefer said, underscoring the unit's commitment to excellence.

A lot of credit goes to the unit's flight operations team.

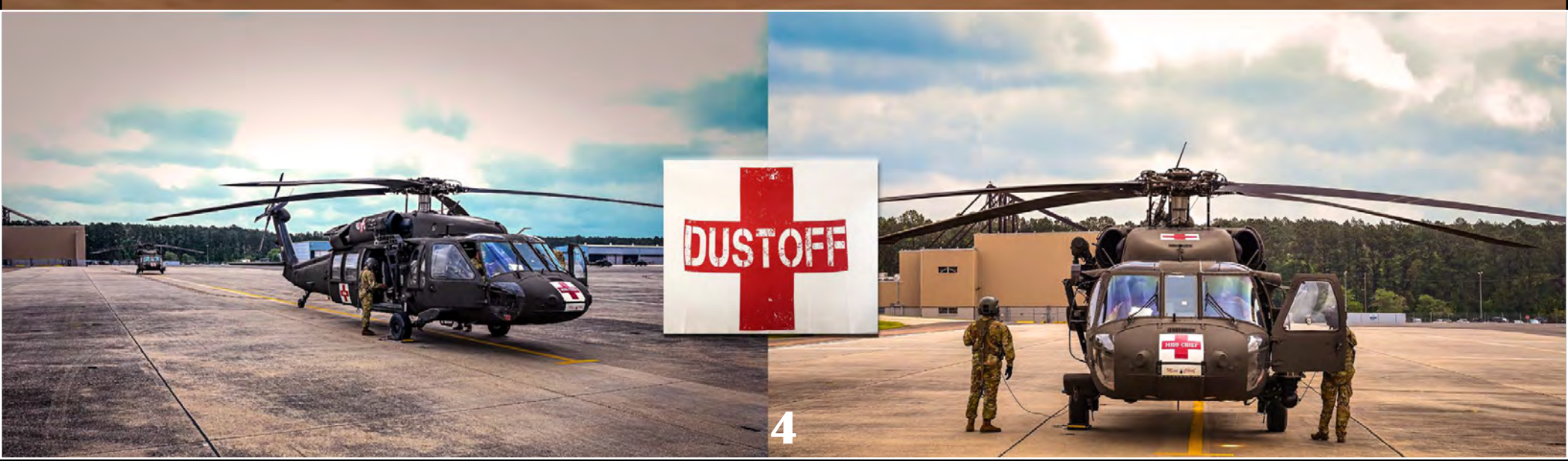
"Flight Ops does a lot of stuff in the background. The mission starts and ends with them. They're very important to the success of our unit," he said.

For the Cajun Dustoff team, he said the greatest reward lies in serving alongside remarkable individuals united by a common purpose.

"It's an awesome thing to see selfless people working together as a team and doing something that's a worthy cause," Schaefer said. "The people that come to this unit know what they're getting into beforehand. They want to be here. The thing about Cajun Dustoff is we love doing our job. Pilots love to fly and medics love to treat their patients," he said.

Simmons encapsulated the spirit of camaraderie that defines their operations.

"Cajun Dustoff's commitment to excellence and selfless dedication to their mission makes them true heroes," Simmons said.



Time to realize Alcohol Abuse no laughing matter

By **CHUCK CANNON**
Public Affairs

FORT JOHNSON, La. — For years, we have laughed at the shenanigans of those who were inebriated. From Otis Campbell, the town drunk on “The Andy Griffith Show,” to the antics of stand up comedian Rodney Dangerfield and crooner Dean Martin, we chuckled at these lovable drunks as they stumbled, slurred and made fools of themselves.

Today, the internet is filled with videos of drunk men and women doing outlandish things aimed at generating laughs from those who watch.

But being under the influence of alcohol is no laughing matter, especially where the Army is concerned.

To bring awareness to the pitfalls faced by those who abuse alcohol, the Army recognizes April as Alcohol Awareness Month. On Army installations worldwide, Soldiers, Family members, contractors and Department of the Army civilians are given the opportunity to update their knowledge about alcohol use disorder and the adverse impact of alcohol abuse on health and society.

The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence offers these sobering facts about alcohol abuse and misuse:

- Alcohol is the most used addictive substance in the United States: 17.6 million people, or one in every twelve adults, suffer from alcohol abuse or dependence, along with several million more who engage in risky, binge drinking.

- More than half of adults have a family history of alcoholism or problem drinking.

- 178,000 deaths are annually attributed to excessive alcohol use.

- Alcoholism is the third leading lifestyle-related cause of death in the United States.

- Up to 40% of hospital beds in the United States (except for maternity and ICU patients) are used to treat health conditions related to alcohol consumption.

Additionally, over time, excessive alcohol use can lead to serious health problems, including:

- Dementia, stroke and neuropathy
- Cardiovascular problems
- Psychiatric problems, including depression, anxiety and suicide

- Social problems, including unemployment, family problems and violence

- Increased risk for many types of cancers
- Gastrointestinal problems, such as pancreatitis and gastritis

Not only can alcohol abuse lead to serious health issues, but the Uniform Code of Military Justice also has strict guidelines for Soldiers who are deemed to be drunk on duty. They can receive a bad conduct discharge, forfeiture

COMMENTARY

of all pay and allowances and confinement for nine months.

For those who have a problem with alcohol abuse, or know of someone who has a problem, help is available through the Army’s Alcohol and Substance Abuse Program. ASAP’s mission is to strengthen the overall fitness and effectiveness of the Army’s workforce, to conserve manpower and enhance the combat readiness of Soldiers.

The program provides services which are proactive and responsive to the needs of the Army’s workforce and emphasize deterrence, prevention, education and rehabilitation.

For more information about the Army Substance Abuse Program on Fort Johnson call (337) 531-2031/1964 or visit the official ASAP website at www.armyresilience.army.mil/

HOW MUCH ARE YOU DRINKING?

WHAT'S IN A STANDARD DRINK?

5 oz of wine
12% ALCOHOL



1.5 oz or a "shot" of
80-proof spirits or liquor
40% ALCOHOL



12 oz of beer
5% ALCOHOL



8 oz of malt liquor
7% ALCOHOL



Each of the drinks above is a “standard drink.”
Because beer, wine and liquor all have different amounts of alcohol in them, standard drinks come in various sizes.

DID YOU KNOW?

- A standard 16 oz plastic drinking cup can help you measure a “standard drink.” The lines on the cup show you how much to pour of beer, wine or liquor without overdoing it.
- Be aware that the drink you order at the bar could be equal to two or three “standard drinks.” It depends on the type and amount of alcohol in the drink.

LEARN MORE AT
ownyourlimits.org/responsible-drinking



Plastic Cup

Bottle of beer

Glass of wine

“Shot” of liquor



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Coined for bravery, service

Karla Garcia, a Fort Johnson Directorate of Emergency Services security guard, was coined April 12 for her efforts to help put out a house fire in her neighborhood. Garcia was walking her dog when she saw the fire. She and other neighbors worked together to keep the fire contained with a fire hose until fire trucks could arrive on the scene. In addition to her brave act of courage, Col. CJ Lopez, Fort Johnson garrison commander, praised her everyday efforts as a security guard at Fort Johnson. He stated he was proud of her hard work, dedication and positive attitude in always welcoming visitors to the installation with a smile on her face. (U.S. Army photo by Angie Thorne)



JRTC AND FORT JOHNSON MOTORCYCLE SAFETY AWARENESS MONTH RALLY



May 3 at the Fort Johnson Thrift Shop parking lot.

All Department of Defense card holders, including active duty Soldiers, reserves, veterans, Family members and DoD civilians are welcome to participate.

The ride will take place through the Kisatchee National Forest and end back at the parking lot where the rally began. There will be food trucks and raffles.

Bikes will assemble at 8:30 a.m. and the rally begins at 9:45 a.m.

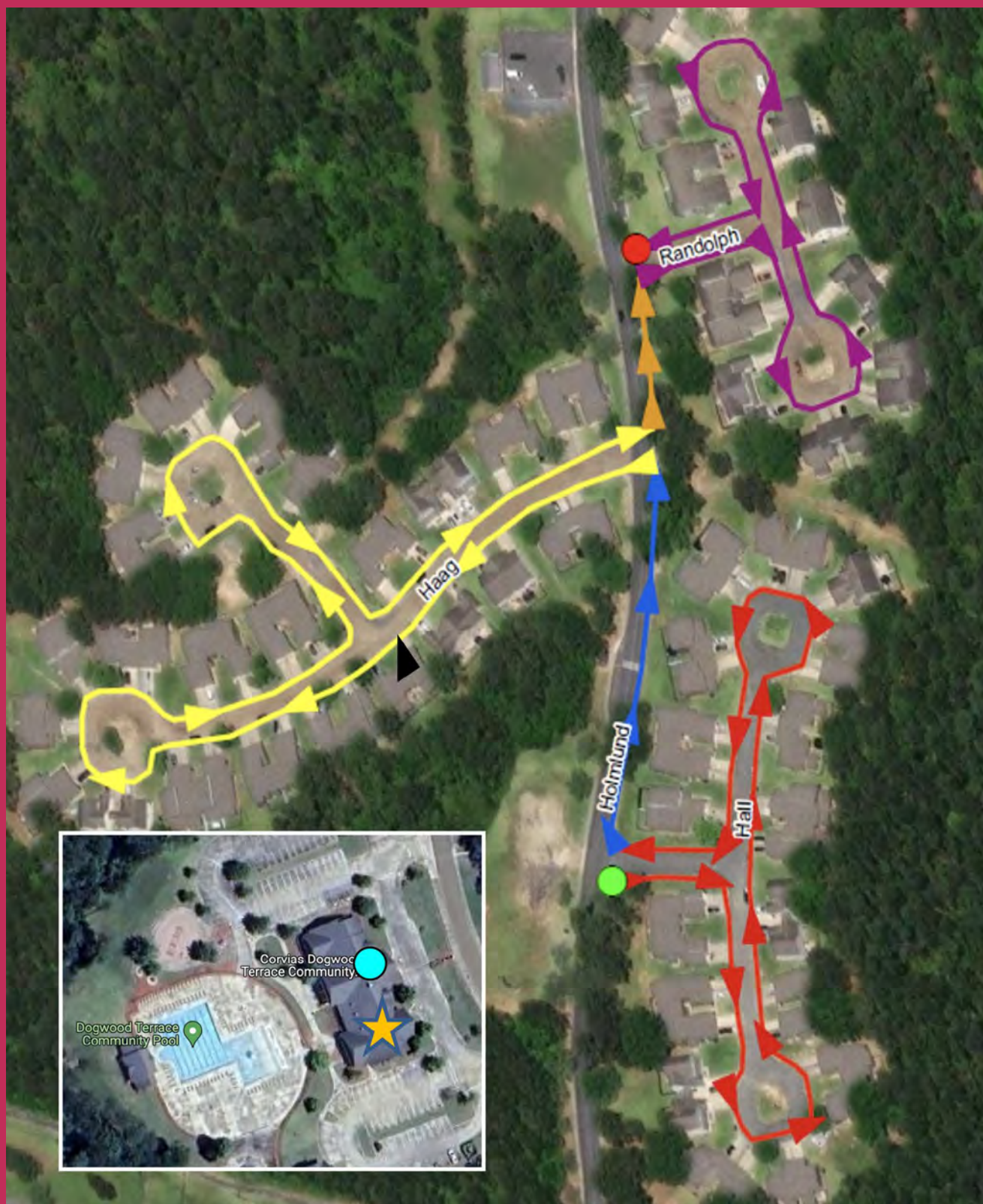
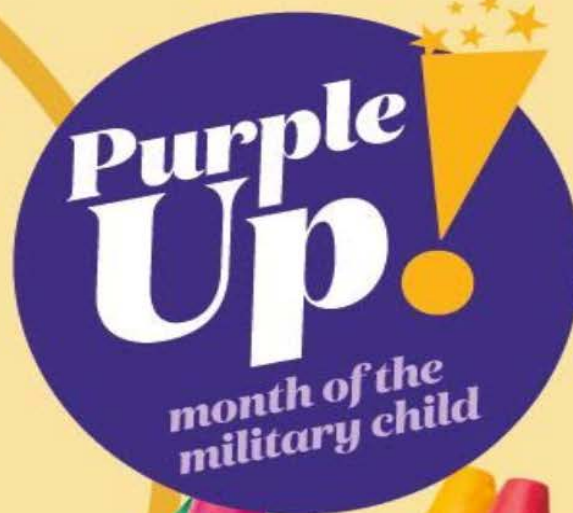
Biker vests/cuts are prohibited. For more information call 719-659-5540.

Coloring Contest

Pick up a coloring sheet from your community center

Return it by April 29

Winners will be announced April 30



Dogwood Terrace



April 22 | 5 p.m.

Sequence of Events

- Start at Hall Court at 5 p.m. for walking tour
- Team will take a right on Holmlund Road
- Left on to Haag Street
- Right on to Randolph Court
- Right on Randolph Court
- Team will end tour at the Dogwood Community Center
- Leadership will open discussion upon completion of walking tour. Town hall concludes at 7 p.m.

Provider shares insight to raise awareness about Occupational Therapy

By JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES
BJACH Public Affairs

FORT JOHNSON, La. — April is Occupational Therapy Month and Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital provides a robust OT program for Soldiers and retirees in the Fort Johnson community.

The BJACH public affairs officer sat down with 1st Lt. Jonathan Ekas, an occupational therapist, to learn more about the profession, his motivation for pursuing the vocation and what BJACH is doing to raise awareness of occupational therapy in April.

Question: What is occupational therapy?

Answer: “To explain occupational therapy, we first need to provide context to the term occupations. Occupations are tasks that individuals do daily. Activities such as self-care; bathing, going to the bathroom, dressing, hygiene, or other activities like driving, cleaning the house, child-care, work, play and social participation are all considered occupations,” Ekas said. “As an OT, we evaluate dysfunction, whether it be physical ailments, emotional or psychological dysfunction. Then, we provide treatment to help patients adapt the task or provide remedial intervention for them to regain independence while performing these tasks.”

Question: How does this apply to Soldiers at JRTC and Fort Johnson?

Answer: “We treat soldiers with the goal of independence and returning them to duty without restrictions as quickly as possible. We want to treat their condition to improve their quality of life at work and home,” Ekas said.

Question: What about Fort Johnson’s retiree population?

Answer: “For older patients, the goal is to create a plan dependent on what the patient needs and wants to be able to do,” Ekas said.

Question: What are common reasons beneficiaries are referred to occupational therapy?

Answer: “Specifically, for our clinic at BJACH, we treat a lot of orthopedic conditions from the shoulder to fingertip, as well as concussion and post-concussion

care,” Ekas said.

Question: What is a “typical” treatment plan for these conditions?

Answer: “For orthopedic conditions, our treatment plan primarily consists of splinting, range of motion and strengthening. Additionally, we work on gross motor and fine motor coordination exercises, simulating the skills necessary to engage in occupational tasks needed for daily life function. We also use a variety of modalities to control pain and prepare patients for treatment,” Ekas said. “For patients with traumatic brain injuries, the treatment plan uses habituation exercises to normalize various vestibular sensations. We try to retrain the brain to take in the stimuli needed to engage in their daily lives without unwanted symptoms that can limit what they can or cannot do.”

Question: How does occupational therapy change lives and improve quality of life?

Answer: “Occupational therapy is a client-centered discipline focusing on restoring function and regaining independence in daily life. Practitioners focus beyond treating the ailments by including the “what’s next” part in the plan of care,” Ekas said. “We treat conditions like any other discipline, but we are geared towards teaching and training our patients the skills needed to perform their own self-care, home management tasks, hobbies and the vocational duties needed to succeed in their personal and professional lives. Their quality of life is improved when we can help them regain their independence, so they advocate for themselves. This process helps them build the confidence necessary to return to doing the things they enjoy.”

Question: Why did you become an occupational therapist?

Answer: “I became interested in occupational therapy when I was an undergraduate studying health science. Internships with various providers including dietitians, physical therapists, physician assistants and occupational therapy were a required part of my education. When shadowing occupational therapy, I witnessed individuals go from bedridden to



1st Lt. Jonathan Ekas, occupational therapist at Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital, uses heat to treat a painful condition affecting the tendons on the thumb side of Shelby Snyder's wrist. (U.S. Army photo by Jean Clavette Graves)

returning to the things they loved. Through their occupational treatment plans, they were able to start gardening, walking their dogs, knitting and being able to care for themselves at home independently again,” Ekas said. “The foundational principle of occupational therapy is to empower a patient’s return to independence and the activities they value. The focus of care is to restore patient’s lives versus treating the condition and calling it a day. This type of care really attracted me. Giving patients’ their lives back motivates and gives me purpose daily.”

Question: What does it take to become an occupational therapist?

Answer: “To become an occupational therapist, you need to earn a four-year degree in an allied health concentration. Next, students need to apply for a suitable graduate program. I earned my master’s degree; however, in 2027, occupational therapy practitioners will require a doctorate degree. This means new therapists will need four to six years of additional education beyond the bachelor’s level, depending on the university they attend. After completing the doctorate degree, passing the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy examination is required,” Ekas said.

Question: How does your clinic plan to highlight the profession and celebrate OT Month?

Answer: “We are hosting an open house at noon April 15 in the BJACH OT Clinic. My goal is to provide an educational opportunity to learn about the profession, what we do for our patients and how we impact the multidisciplinary team here at BJACH. I want my peers to learn more about what we do and how important we are to the healthcare team here at the hospital, as well as downrange,” Ekas said. “We are a jack-of-all-trades profession, since occupational dysfunction can happen in a variety of ways, whether it is an orthopedic condition, brain injury, spinal cord injury, or behavioral health condition. Occupational therapy, as a discipline, has applications everywhere from rehabilitation programs, in our school systems, in outpatient clinics, nursing homes, community programs and more. Wherever a person experiences dysfunction with daily tasks, occupational therapy has a place.”

To learn more about the occupational therapy services offered at BJACH visit their website at <https://bayne-jones.tricare.mil/Health-Services1/Specialty-Care1/Occupational-Therapy1>

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2024

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Seeing Fort Johnson's history through eyes that experienced it first hand

By GABE WALKER

Public Affairs

FORT JOHNSON, La. — John Gates spent 31 years in federal service.

He was an active-duty Marine for four years in World War II and spent 27 years working as a civil engineer for the Army Corps of Engineers. Eighteen of his 27 years were at Fort Johnson. Gates retired from civil service in 1984.

Gates was born March 24, 1927, to Army Master Sgt. Thurmon Gates and his spouse, Martha, while assigned to the 14th Infantry Regiment in Panama.

The Army next stationed the Gates family with the 2nd Infantry Division at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. Gates graduated high school as World War II was in full swing. The Battle of the Bulge had recently been fought, and there were significant casualties. It seemed certain the armed services were going to draft all eligible young men to fill their ranks, though you could choose to volunteer. The main difference between volunteering and being drafted was volunteers were allowed to choose a career field, while draftees were told what career field to enter.

Gates's recruiter told him only active-duty positions were available. He volunteered for the Marine Corps on Feb. 5, 1945, and chose engineer demolitions as his career field. He went to basic training at Parris Island, South Carolina, followed by advanced individual training at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

Gates already knew a lot about engineer demolition.

"I spent a lot of time with Soldiers and my dad doing engineer demolition while my dad was stationed at Camp Walters, Panama," he said.

The United States dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, and the war ended while Gates was still in training. Draftees, Reserve and National Guardsmen were sent home. Gates stayed on for another three years since he signed up for active duty.

"I felt homesick watching the others depart for home, but I continued to do my duty," Gates said.

Gates was stationed in Camden, Arkan-

sas, after a 32-month overseas tour. It was there he met his wife, Bridget McIntyre, while serving on a color guard. "Boy, was she beautiful," Gates said.

The two went on the first of many dates, then married and were together until Bridgett passed away Feb. 20, 2021.

"We were married for 70 years, seven months and 17 days. I always thought I would go before her. I miss her everyday," Gates said.

After Gates got out of the Marines he majored in civil engineering and attended college in El Paso, Texas. He then transferred and graduated from the University of Arkansas with a degree in civil engineering in 1953.

After graduation, he worked for the Texas Highway Department for two years.

In 1955, Gates went to work for Headquarters, 4th Army Engineers in San Antonio, Texas, where he was the pavement engineer for a five-state area (Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas, Texas and Oklahoma).

In 1962, Gates was sent to Fort Polk in two week increments to assess and fix the installation's deteriorating roads, which were either dirt or gravel, and bridges. The infrastructure improvements were necessary for continuing training efforts.

The bridges at Fort Polk were built strictly with timber trestle prior to WW II and were crumbling. There was a shortage of steel to put in concrete built bridges due to the war efforts. According to Gates, the worst bridges were the two on Entrance Road leading into Fort Polk.

He acquired funding to build concrete bridges on Entrance Road and to replace

other bridges on the installation.

At the time, the Texas National Guard's 49th Armored Division trained at Fort Polk. The Soldiers

arrived in hundreds of cars. Most vehicles were stuck on the muddy roads or bogged down in pastures due to heavy rains.

Gates was flown in a helicopter over Fort Polk to assess the damages.

"There were literally hundreds of cars stuck in mud everywhere you looked. Boy,



John Gates as he sits in his office at home. (Photo courtesy John Gates)

it was one big mess," Gates said.

Fort Polk received its first regular Army commanding general, Maj. Gen. Jim Skelton, in 1962. Skelton worked with Gates to remedy the road and bridge problems. Skelton told Gates, "John, sign my name to anything that will get funds for Fort Polk when you go to Washington D.C. or 4th Army."

Gates made several trips to Washington D.C. to visit the Corps of Engineers and congressmen to acquire funding and equipment for Fort Polk. Gates also had a meeting with Louisiana senator Huey P. Long, who promised and delivered funding for Fort Polk construction projects. Gates convinced the Corps of Engineers it was cheaper and longer lasting to stabilize and pave in lieu of putting gravel on roads and leveling roads with graders.

He acquired 12 brand new Caterpillar graders which greatly helped with road upgrades at Fort Polk. Nonappropriated funds were received to build the Officer's Club, movie theater, swimming pool and temporary post exchange.

The sweat and labor Gates and his team performed at Fort Polk was an important part of building the physical foundation of a great installation. That work made Fort Johnson what it is today.

"We developed a long-term master plan to get our construction projects funded and approved by the Corps of Engineers and Headquarters, Department of the Army. The roads and bridges you see today are the results of that master plan," Gates said. "But what I enjoyed the most about my job at Fort Polk was the people. The job had its challenges, but having good people made it all work."



FORT JOHNSON

HIRING AND EDUCATION EVENT



APRIL 25
Hiring and Education
Event
10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Fort Johnson Library and Education Center
7460 Colorado Ave., building 660

Please contact
Fort Johnson Transition Assistance Program
for more information at
337-531-1591/4621
or
usarmy.johnson.id-readiness.mesg.tap@army.mil



Fort Johnson, surrounding community enjoys annual box tour



A sold out box tour took place April 13. Family members and stakeholders from the communities surrounding the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Johnson enjoyed the opportunity to better understand the training that takes place in their backyard. (U.S. Army photo by Shelby Waryas)



Writer reflects on giving back during National Volunteer Week

By JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES

BJACH Public Affairs

FORT JOHNSON, La. — “Never volunteer for anything,” was the sage advice an older veteran gave me as I headed off to basic training. I’ve never been one to take advice, opting to learn things the hard way. However, ignoring his advice was one of the best and most rewarding decisions I ever made. As we celebrate National Volunteer Week April 21-27, my goal is to convince others “never volunteer” is a misguided military adage.

I learned quickly that volunteering in basic training gave me an opportunity to listen to music and have some alone time buffing floors on Sunday mornings while the rest of the company was at the chapel.

It got me out of the cold Missouri winter by volunteering for kitchen patrol (KP) duty and elevated me to a leadership role with my drill sergeant after voluntarily sharing concerns of suicidal ideation expressed by a fellow recruit. So, I say volunteer for something, for anything, and you will be rewarded.

I often joke that I get “suckered” into things, like my current volunteer role as the chairman of the board for the Home of Heroes Thrift Shop. Last year, the former chair approached me, and I reluctantly said, “I guess!” But through this volunteer experience, I’ve met some amazing women I wouldn’t have known otherwise. I’ve made new friends, and I get to give away thousands of dollars to good causes in our community. Serving on the thrift store board has been so rewarding, I decided to volunteer for another year.

Now, some say to me, “But Jean, I’ve got a full-time job; am a full-time student; have four kids; home school; my husband is deployed; I don’t have time to volunteer.”

COMMENTARY

Honestly, volunteering can only enhance all those things you do to build a fulfilling life. Once upon a time, lost in the woods, far, far, away, at Fort Leonard Wood, I was a volunteer Army Family Team Building instructor and eventually master trainer. The experience was great in and of itself. I got to help new military spouses navigate this unique world we live in. I taught them how to read a leave and earning statement, about military customs and courtesies, etiquette and leadership skills. When my husband got orders to move to Fort Carson, Colorado, I added that experience to my resume and was hired as the Casualty Assistance and Notification Officer Trainer. Volunteering isn’t a job title, but it can lead to a pay grade. The experience and training I gained volunteering with AFTB qualified me for my position with the Fort Carson Casualty Assistance Center.

Working as a casualty specialist, especially when my spouse was deployed, took a toll on



Home of Heroes Thrift Store Board: Front Row from left: Tiffany Koch, parliamentarian, Jessica Reiter, publicity chair, Eevee Gardner, officer/advisor, Jessie Zaragoza, volunteer coordinator, Back Row from left: Jess Hagen, thrift shop assistant manager, Sam Rowlands, thrift shop manager, Mande Gutauskas, secretary, Mary Lopez, vice chair, Jean Graves, chairman, April Barnett, community grants. (Photo courtesy Jean Graves)

my heart. So, when my son took an interest in the Boy Scouts, I took him to a membership rodeo and he joined the Cub Scouts. I remember standing at Iron Horse Park, surrounded by a bunch of first through fourth grade boys running amok, when Cindy Howick asked if I wanted to be a Tiger Den Leader. Cindy said, “Tiger parents have to be at meetings anyway, you might as well volunteer as a den leader.”

For the next ten years, I volunteered with the Boy Scouts of America at Fort Carson and also when we moved to Fort Johnson. My husband, an Eagle Scout, also volunteered, eventually serving as Scout Master of BSA Troop 124. Yes, we did it all while serving on active duty and working full time. We taught our son about service to the community, and he eventually earned his Eagle Scout too.

I’ve also heard “But Jean, I’m not really into scouting!”

No worries, I’m not here to plug scouting, but for my family it was a perfect fit. For you, it might be youth sports, your church, 4H, the American Red Cross, Kiwanis Club, the Sgt. Audie Murphy Club, Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers, The Lions Club, The Pilots Club, Junior League, Fort Johnson Community and Spouses Club, your unit family readiness group, or Army Family Team Building. The possibilities are endless. There are so many organizations out there that do so much for our community.

There are also things you can do as a volunteer without affiliating yourself with any one

organization. Participate in a community clean up project, walk dogs at the shelter, place flags and wreaths at the veteran’s cemetery, pick up trash on the side of the road, plant a community garden, teach a class about something you are passionate about, drive your neighbor to the airport or watch their kids while they have doctor appointments; again, the possibilities are endless.

I’ve found that things that are good, beautiful, or beneficial to a community are often spearheaded by a group of dedicated volunteers who want to improve something. I was recently asked to serve on the Leesville Friends of Main Street Board, and I agreed without hesitation. People always complain there is “nothing to do here” but I know that’s not true. I know Tammy Anderson and the rest of the Friends of Main Street team have been working hard to attract business and revitalize 3rd Street. If you haven’t been in a while, come down any Saturday, enjoy the farmers market, check out the boutiques, and have lunch.

Friends often remark, “But Jean, how do you juggle it all with a full-time job?”

I’m inspired every single day by other volunteers.

At Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital, we have a dedicated group of American Red Cross volunteers who support our clinics and administrative departments throughout the hospital. We have volunteers who man the desk at Entrance B and help patients navigate the facility. We have a volunteer who works

Please see **Volunteer**, page 14

Volunteer

Continued from page 13

in our linen department folding laundry every day. When she isn't volunteering here, she's volunteering at the main post chapel. We have a volunteer in our managed care office answering phones and assisting patients. We have a volunteer who works in our information management division providing customer service. When he isn't volunteering at BJACH with the Red Cross, he's volunteering at the Alexandria Zoo. We have nurses volunteering in our labor, delivery, and postpartum ward. Combat medical specialists from other units volunteer in our emergency department. We also have volunteers who participate in deployment fairs, the new family welcome and other on and off post events.

At BJACH, we also have individual employees who volunteer to spearhead diaper drives, food drives, breakfast with Santa, Easter egg hunts, trunk or treat, breast cancer support groups, make New Year baby baskets, or raise awareness about a variety of health-related causes. They volunteer outside of their normal day-to-day activities to enhance the organization or help their fellow Soldiers or staff members. They volunteer to educate patients and improve the lives of our beneficiaries.

I volunteer because of them. I make time to volunteer for causes that are important to me because I'm inspired by other volunteers.

I'm inspired by colleagues who volunteer with the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans and the Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association,

to name a few. These colleagues dedicated their lives to the service of our country, work full time in a variety of roles across the installation and still give back through their volunteer service.

"But Jean..."

I'm not saying go out and over commit yourself, but if you see a need; before you hit the keyboard and post your indignation about something our community is lacking, maybe think about how you can help improve the situation. Have an issue with your daughter's school? Volunteer. Not enough coaches for your son's little league team? Volunteer. Not enough time for your high school football, baseball, tennis, soccer, volleyball player to eat before an away game? Volunteer. Not enough adults for the scouts to camp? Volunteer. Think the park is a mess? Volunteer. Wanting to make friends? Volunteer.

April 21-27 is National Volunteer Week. If you are considering volunteering, make a commitment this week to volunteer for something, anything that will help our community, build your resume, and contribute to our society. We are all in this thing called life together, and volunteerism is a great way to support each other and make a positive impact.

"But Jean, I wouldn't know where to start, even if I wanted to volunteer."

No worries, Army Community Service has someone who can help. Joanna Garcia is the Army Volunteer Coordinator for the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Johnson;



Jean and Baker Graves planting trees for Arbor Day. (Photo courtesy Jean Graves)

and she will help connect you with a rewarding volunteer opportunity. You can call her at 337-531-1895 or send her an email at joanna.garcia11.civ@army.mil and she can help you find the right volunteer organization or opportunity for you.

Still not convinced...

Then simply take an opportunity this week to thank a volunteer for everything they do for our community! Happy National Volunteer Week!

A large collage of various photographs showing volunteers in different settings. The photos include group photos of volunteers, individuals receiving awards or certificates, and people working on projects like planting trees or working in a kitchen. The collage is framed by a dark purple border.

APRIL 21-27

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION WEEK

FORT JOHNSON

VOLUNTEERS

Thank You



**American
Red Cross**

Service to the Armed Forces

2024 SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAM

**In partnership with Bayne-Jones
Army Community Hospital**

10 June - 12 July

A 5 week volunteer program that gives youth a chance to learn new skills, enhance their resumes, make new friends, and fulfill community service hours.



Youth Ages 13 - 18

Scan the QR Code To Register

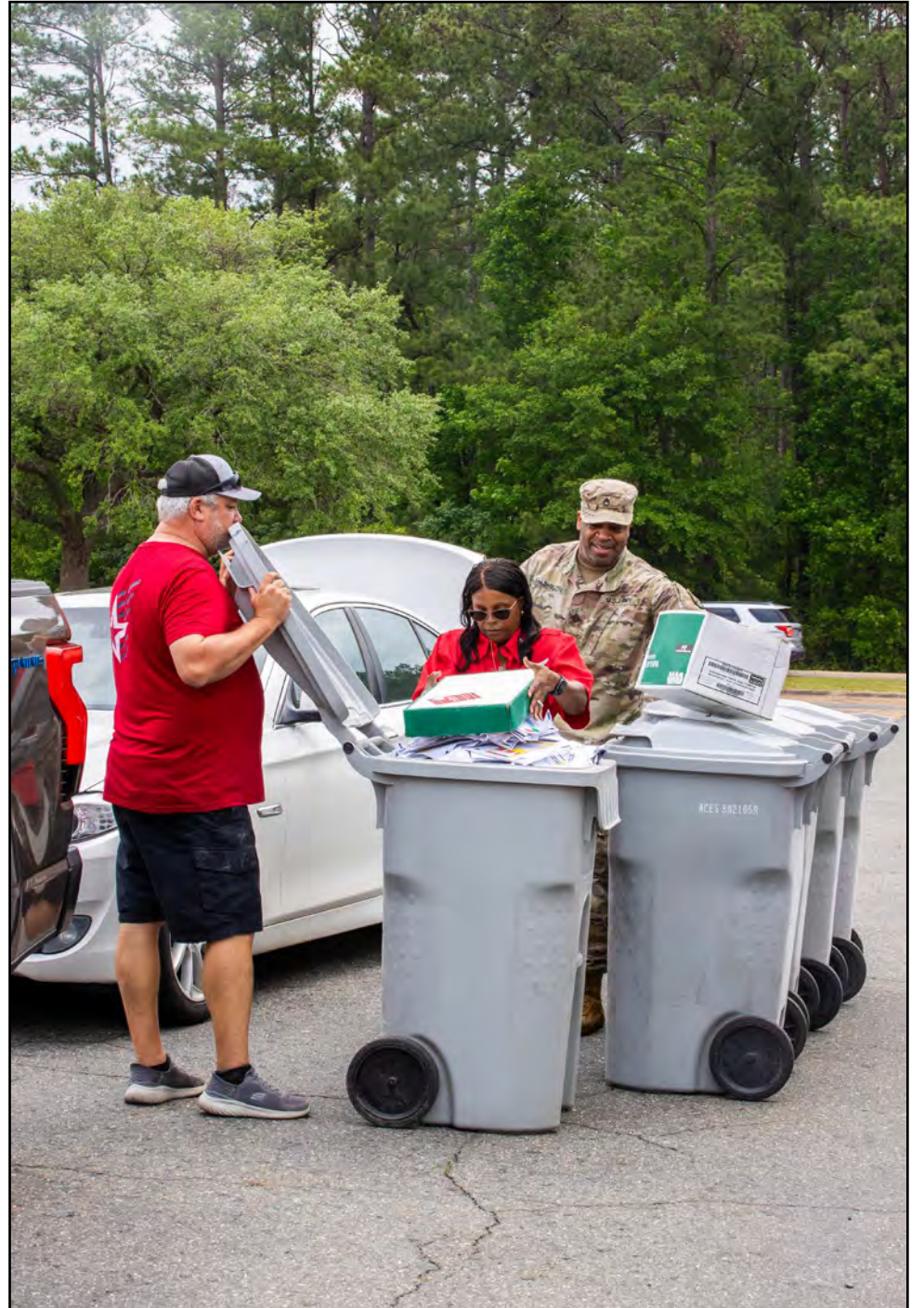


**REGISTRATION DEADLINE MAY 10
LIMITED VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES
FOR QUESTION OR MORE
INFORMATION
CONTACT
FORTJOHNSON@REDCROSS.ORG**



Fort Johnson fills truck

Fort Johnson's Mass Shred Day was held in the Fort Johnson Thrift Shop parking lot April 18. (U.S. Army photos by Porsha Auzenne)



IMCOM TIP OF THE WEEK

Did you know? "Military Youth & Children: Brave, Fearless and Resilient" is the 2024 Month of the Military Child theme.



home.army.mil/johnson



Headquarters Installation Management Command

VIRTUAL EDUCATION COUNSELING



.....>
On-Demand Education Counseling Now Available
.....<

 **Connect on Microsoft (MS) Teams**



Download MS teams app to
your mobile device



Scan the QR code



Sign in as a guest with
rank and full name



Connect with an Army
Education Counselor



SERVICE HOURS

10 a.m.-2 p.m. Central Time

Contact Us



TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT OUTSIDE OF THE SERVICE HOURS
usarmy.jbsa.imcom-hq.mbx.g1-aces-virtual-education-center@army.mil

BOSS
is for...

SINGLE SOLDIER PARENTS

The Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program supports the overall quality of life for the single Soldier and helps to maintain and improve Soldier readiness.

BOSS identifies Soldier issues and concerns by recommending improvements through the chain of command. BOSS encourages and assists single Soldiers in identifying and planning for recreational and leisure activities. It gives single Soldiers the opportunity to participate in and contribute to their respective communities. Additionally, BOSS provides unique opportunities for personal and professional growth and development through skills training and events.





U.S. ARMY

U.S. Army Shreveport Commemorative D-Day 80th Anniversary Norwegian Foot March (NFM) Event

When: Saturday, May 18, 2024 at 2000 Hrs; Step Off at 2200

Hrs. Where: Hoban Hall, Barksdale AFB



Important Information

The Norwegian Foot March (NFM) will be an individual event consisting of an 18.6-mile ruck march.

- This event is only for Military, Civilian, or DOD Contractors at least 18 years of age or older. All participants must have DOD access to Barksdale Air Force Base. **Military personnel must be on active-duty (title 10) orders.**
- Military personnel must wear field uniform within regulations during the march. Civilian participants may wear civilian clothing, including long trousers and boots.
- Participant must bring water source filled with water, head lamps, rucksack and reflective belt.
- Participants are encouraged but not required to bring a Non-Perishable Food donation as a registration SIGN-UP FEE. (All non-perishable food items will be donated to local veteran community organization.)

NFM Competition Standards:

- Complete the 18.6-mile route within the time standard (see below) wearing duty uniform and boots.
- Rucksack or military backpack with 25 pounds (Dry)

ONLY CERTIFICATES WILL BE DELIVERED FOR THOSE WHO ACCOMPLISH THE NFM REQUIREMENTS.
NO BADGE WILL BE ISSUED.

POC: CPT Medina and Lt. Edwards. Phone: (504) 813-2177. Email: usarmy.knox.usarec.list.3t9@army.mil



Norwegian Foot March Badge



Age group	Requirements	
	Women	Men
18-20	5h25m	4h35m
21-34	5h15m	4h30m
35-42	5h25m	4h35m
43-49	5h30m	4h40m
50-54	5h40m	4h50m
55-59	5h50m	5h0m
60+	6h0m	5h15m



SPRING HERITAGE TOUR

2024

Saturday, April 27

Peason Ridge Tour • 8 a.m.-12 p.m.

Pine Grove Church (Highway 118)

*It is recommended guests bring food, snacks and drinks for Peason Ridge tour.



Main Fort Tour

Warrior Memorial Park

Social/Lunch Hour • 11 a.m.

Ceremony • 12 p.m.

Tour Departs • 12:15 p.m.



Zion Hill Cemetery • Brack Cemetery • Mill Creek Cemetery
Woods Cemetery • Haymon-Watson Cemetery • *Holly Springs Cemetery
*Six-Mile Community Dipping Vat

*If time permits

For both tours, participants are welcome to ride in the bus provided or to caravan behind the bus. If anyone would like to attend both events, it is recommended that they caravan behind the bus for the Peason Ridge tour so they can depart with enough time to make it to the Main Fort tour.

For more information please contact Amy Brennan at
amy.c.brennan3.ctr@army.mil or 409-504-2445.

Saturday, May 11, 2024
North Beach on I-10
10am-2pm



Register
Here



CANOE BUILDING COMPETITION

Divisions for
Middle School,
High School, &
Post High School.

Cardboard, tape,
and safety gear
are provided.

Awards for
functionality,
design, and more!

For more information, call (337)491-1280 or email parks@cityoflc.us.

VETERANS BRUNCH



Saturday, May 18, 2024

10:00AM

WAR MEMORIAL CIVIC CENTER

*Free event for all veterans
and active duty military
and their families.*



TOUCH A TRUCK

Touch A Truck provides the unique opportunity for children to explore vehicles of all types, including public service, utility, construction, landscaping, military, and delivery- all in one place!

May 18, 2024

9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

"Quiet Hour" 11:00 AM -12:00 PM

Downtown Leesville

109 E Texas Street

Leesville, LA 71446

**Craft-makers, artisans, food/beverage
trucks, various activities for children!**

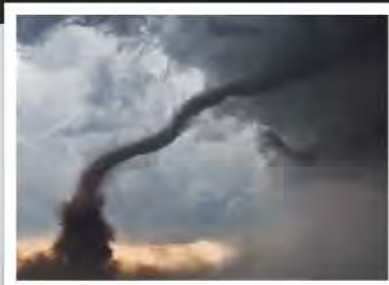
 **JUNIOR LEAGUE OF
LEESVILLE**



**TIP
#1**

TORNADO

SAFETY TIPS



**Know the signs of a tornado,
including a rotating, funnel-shaped
cloud, an approaching cloud of
debris, or a loud roar like a freight
train.**

Fort Johnson's environmental team hosts [Earth](#) Day event at Post Exchange



Fort Johnson Solid Waste



CONSOLIDATED SOLID WASTE COLLECTION POINT

MONDAY – FRIDAY | 0800 – 1530
(337) 535 - 1155

SOLID WASTE (SCRAP METAL AND WOOD DISPOSAL)

QRP/RECYCLING CENTER

Bldgs. 3620 & 3622 – Corner of Georgia and Maine Aves.

MON-FRI 0800 -1600 (337) 531-7556

• Organizations should turn-in scrap metal to the QRP facility.
8300 BLOCK

MON-FRI 0800 -1530 337-535-1155

- Organizations should turn-in scrap wood to Solid Waste Consolidation Point (8300 block).
- Wood greater than 3 ft. long cannot be placed into the dumpsters.
- Don't place scrap wood next to dumpster.
- Used furniture/bulk items must be disposed of at the 8300 block.
- No hand receipt items.

BULK ITEMS IN HOUSING DISPOSAL INFORMATION:

All residents living in South Fort & North Fort military housing are authorized to dispose of bulk items into the roll off located at Corvias Warehouse site marked "RESIDENTIAL WASTE ONLY". This is for "Housing Residents Only" not from barracks, Garrison entities or from off post. The site is located @ 6528 Holmlund Street next to the Dogwood "Bark Park". Operating hours are M-F 0800-1700.

KEYS TO SOLID WASTE SUCCESS

- Keep dumpster lids and doors closed to comply with Louisiana regulations to avoid state action (Title 33, Part VII, ref. 507.D).
- Don't bury, burn, or dispose of waste in the field or garrison.
- Sort hazardous and regulated waste from insert waste at the point of generation.
- Purge refrigerators, ACs, and freezers with freon before disposal at QRP Recycling Center.

Personal appliance DMOs are not accepted.

(FAQ) FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I request a roll-off for a large amount of scrap wood and how long can my unit keep it?

Call (337) 535-1155 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. with your facility number or location, name, phone number. POC is responsible for items and other materials that are placed inside roll-off. Wood only. No trash or debris.

Where do I deliver scrap metal?

QRP recycling center, building 3620. Call (337) 531-7556 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Can my unit dispose of bread racks in dumpsters from our field training exercises?

No. Deliver to building 4366 cold storage facility on Virginia Avenue for reuse.

Can my unit deliver used/damaged furniture to the CSWCP 8300 block?

Yes, but furniture must not be on the organization's hand receipt, and units must provide a detail to unload.

How does my unit request solid waste support for upcoming training or ranges?

Call (337) 535-1155 and provide unit name, POC, grid location or range number and dates needed.

Why didn't my unit or facility dumpsters didn't get serviced today?

The dumpster was blocked by a vehicle or equipment, too heavy from unauthorized items, had safety issues or contained a restricted item.

Where can my unit dispose of bags of leaves, pine straw, tree limbs and other yard waste from unit area cleanup?

The 8300 block on North Fort. All plastic bags must be emptied into the roll-off. For assistance call (337) 535-1155 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Where can I dispose of clean cardboard?

Any green dumpster, building 3620 (QRP) or building 830 north of the Thrift Shop (old commissary) parking area.

Take part in RAB

Officials at Fort Johnson are exploring public interest in forming a Restoration Advisory Board to address ongoing environmental restoration activities at the installation. A RAB is designed to promote community involvement by giving interested citizens an opportunity to regularly review and discuss the progress of the environmental restoration program with Fort Johnson decision-makers. If you want to take part in this process, please contact Georgia Louis for more information. Participation in a RAB is voluntary and the Army does not provide any form of financial compensation to community members who choose to participate. Contact: Georgia Louis, Installation Restoration Program Manager: Phone Number: 337-531-2894 or by E-mail at georgia.j.louis.civ@army.mil.


TURN AROUND DON'T DROWN



Six inches of moving water can knock you down



One foot of moving water can sweep your vehicle away



**APRIL IS
CHILD ABUSE
PREVENTION
MONTH**

Everyone plays a role in keeping our children safe and healthy. Learn more at militaryonesource.mil

Discipline can help or hurt. Know the difference.

Connect with others. Learn about parenting resources like the New Parent Support Program, counseling, and more at your local Military and Family Support Center or Military OneSource at 800-342-9647.

Children deserve to be protected. If you see child abuse or neglect, call your installation Family Advocacy Program or the National Child Abuse Hotline at 800-422-4453.



JRTC and Fort Johnson

Catfish Derby

April 27 from 7-11 a.m. at Catfish Cove

Enjoy activities, raffles, games, prizes, educational booths and a fillet demonstration.

Children 15 and under are allowed to fish. People 16 and older are allowed to assist children fishing. This event is open to the public.

For more information call Amy Brennan at 409-504-2445.



April is:

Financial Literacy Month

APRIL 2024 CLASSES OFFERED

Refresher course

★ April 24 from 9 a.m.-noon ★

Prepare finances for divorce

★ April 24 from 1-2 p.m. ★

Prepare finances for a disabling sickness or condition

★ April 24 from 2:30-3:30 p.m. ★

Prepare finances for a promotion

★ April 24 from 3:30-4:30 p.m. ★

All classes are offered in-person, monthly at ACS or online at olms.armyfamilywebportal.com

Please call ACS at
(337) 531-1957/1958
1591 Bell Richard Ave
Bldg 920

Scan me



Check VIN numbers

The Directorate of Emergency Services Traffic Division will release the following vehicles to MWR 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 Johnson Police Traffic Division at 337-531-1806, 6675 or 2675.

1994	Ford	F250	3432
2014	Chevrolet	Cruze	0491
2002	Pontiac	Grand Prix	1285
1995	Dodge	1500	8277
2016	Jeep	Patriot	9883
2005	Buick	LeSaber	7593
2001	GMC	Yukon	6444
2010	Hyundai	Genesis	5409
UNK	UNK	Utility trailer	N/A
2016	Hyundai	Elantra	3891
2008	Yamaha	R6	5446
2016	Yamaha	R3	2153
UNK	UNK	Boat trailer	UNK
UNK	UNK	Kayak trailer	UNK
UNK	UNK	Boat trailer	UNK
UNK	UNK	M/C trailerBoat	UNK
2001	Ford	F150	0450
2000	Ford	Ranger	3852
2006	Nissan	350Z	4586



MILITARY HEALTH SYSTEM
MHS GENESIS

Refills are here!



TRICARE® beneficiaries can order prescription
refills through their MHS GENESIS Patient Portal.



To learn more visit:

www.tricare.mil/MHSGENESISRxRefills





Participating in SHARP training

Members of the Fort Johnson community attended voluntary Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention program training April 17. Dr. Vanessa Guyton led the training to provide quality instruction in a number of areas pertaining to SHARP.



SUMMER EXPLORATION ADVENTURES

JUNE 3 - JULY 26

* NO CAMP ON JUNE 19 OR JULY 4

AGES 5-10 • 7:30AM-5:00PM

Week 1:
June 3-7

**COMMUNITY
SUPER HEROES**



Week 2:
June 10-14

Character Books



Week 3:
June 17-21*

AVIATION



Week 4:
June 24-28

**LOUISIANA'S
ANIMAL KINGDOM**



Week 5:
July 1-5*

Olympic Games!



Week 5:
July 8-12

STEM



Week 5:
July 15-19

Performing Arts
Music • Dance • Theater



Week 5:
July 22-26

Splish Splash



Registration Is **Online Only**, April 10th - May 23rd

Parents can register their children by visiting
cityoflakecharles.com/summercamp

\$40 Weekly, **\$10** T Shirt (Required)

Bellard
2808 Hillcrest Dr.

College Oaks
3518 Ernest St.

Donald Ray Stevens
1619 Cessford St.

Henry Heights
801 East School St.

LIMITED SPACE AVAILABLE. LUNCH PROVIDED.

For more information, please call 337-491-1280

BRIEFS

Assisted stretch therapy

Cantrell Fitness Center is now hosting assisted stretch therapy sessions. Benefits of stretch therapy include improved performance in physical activities, joint stiffness prevention, stress reduction, enhanced flexibility and more. Cost is \$20 for 30 minutes and \$30 for 60 minutes.

<https://johnson.armymwr.com/happenings/assisted-stretch-therapy>

Story time

What's better than a listening to an adventure and then working with glue, glitter and more? If you agree, sign up at Allen Memorial Library as they host Story Time each Tuesday and Friday beginning at 11:30 a.m.

Library staff, or a special guest, read a story to children from the Fort Johnson community. After listening, kids participate in a craft.

For more information call (337) 531-2665.

Cars and coffee

Join the Auto Skills Center for discussion about cars around a hot cup of coffee. Takes place every third Saturday from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

For more information call 337-531-6149.

Movie night

Stop by Headquarters Field April 26 for pop-

corn, face painting and a showing of Wall-E on the big screen! Concessions open at 7 p.m.

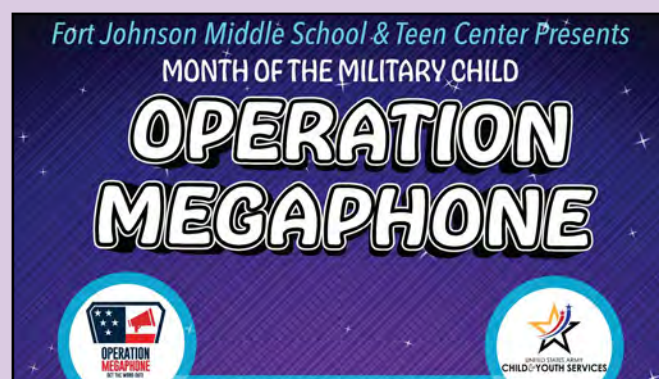
<https://johnson.armymwr.com/calendar/event/movie-night-wall-e/6384711/87232>

Operation Megaphone

In honor of Month of the Military Child, the Middle School and Teen Center is hosting their annual Operation Megaphone event.

Events include escape rooms, bowling and more. Cost is \$15 per child. Registration is required and can be done by contacting Parent Central Services at 337-531-1955.

<https://johnson.armymwr.com/calendar/event/operation-megaphone/6384729/87245>



Kids fishing tournament

Get ready to catch some fish! Bring your little ones out to Toledo Bend Army Recreation Park

for a day of fishing and fun April 28.

The tournament takes place from 9 a.m.-noon. Prize categories include largest fish, most fish and smallest fish.

Registration is on-site the day of the tournament from 8-8:45 a.m. at the Toledo Bend Boat House.

<https://johnson.armymwr.com/calendar/event/kids-fishing-tournament/6384721/87239>

Commander's golf scramble

Come join Col. CJ Lopez on the green for the monthly garrison commander golf scramble! This tournament swings off noon May 3 at Warrior Hills Golf Course.

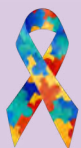
<https://johnson.armymwr.com/calendar/event/garrison-commanders-golf-scramble/6319383/83163>

Youth archery competition

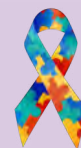
Ages 8 and older are invited to channel their inner Katniss Everdeen, Robin Hood and Hawkeye May 4 at Perez Field.

Registration will be on-site from 9 a.m.-10 a.m. and the competition will commence at 10 a.m.

<https://johnson.armymwr.com/calendar/event/youth-sports-archery-competition/6383741/87184>



FORT JOHNSON THINGS TO DO



April 24: Spring Tea Tasting Lake Charles, La.

Stop by Imperial Calcasieu Museum to sample six complimentary loose tea blends offered by Tea at Walden Writing & Tea. Learn the basics of making a good cup of tea and taste a variety of white, green, and black teas as well as a couple of herbal teas. Stay and browse the art exhibits. Light refreshments will be served.

<https://www.visitlakecharles.org/event/spring-tea-tasting/46836/>

April 24-28: Festival International Lafayette, La.

The largest international festival in the nation! Each April, Downtown Lafayette comes alive for a five-day cultural celebration. Festival International boasts top-notch music from around the world, gourmet food, handcrafted artworks and so much more. People of all ages come from near and far to experience the Festival's magic.



Where else can you enjoy authentic Asian, Cajun or Greek food, while listening to an acclaimed African band, as beautifully costumed French

stilt walkers dance by? Attend the festival to experience the world and never leave Louisiana.

<https://www.festivalinternational.org/>

April 26-27: Choctaw Apache Tribal Pow-Wow, Sabine, La.

This bi-annual festival features arts and crafts, an art walk, demonstrations and a wild game cook-off. All dancers and guest drums are welcome.

<https://www.explorelouisiana.com/events/cultural-event/choctaw-apache-tribal-pow-wow>

April 26-28: Annual Étouffée Festival Arnaudville, La.

Get a taste of the competition at the Mayor's Cook-off at the Annual Étouffée Festival, which will feature a diverse variety of étouffées including crawfish, seafood, vegetable and even wild game! Festivities include carnival rides, award winning bands, bingo, various vendor booths, an auto show and, of course, étouffée!

<https://cajuntravel.com/events/arnaudville-etouffee-festival/>

April 27: Taco Wars Shreveport, La.

From noon-8 p.m., get ready for the most amazing taco, salsa and Latino cultural music fest the world has ever seen! Taco Wars is a family friendly event and entry to the festival is

free. Aside from some of the most amazing tacos you've ever eaten, Taco Wars features outdoor food vendor tents, plenty of seating, live music, a kids area, traditional snacks and desserts and much more!

<https://www.prizefest.com/tacowars/>

May 17-19: Jurassic Quest Lafayette, La.

Check out North America's top-rated dinosaur experience!

There's no better place to make wonderful memories than while playing with adorable baby dinosaurs, excavating fossils, or even training a raptor while being surrounded by behemoths like sky-scraping Spinosaurus and, the king himself, Tyrannosaurus Rex! Get your tickets for Lafayette now, before they go extinct!

<https://www.cajundome.com/events/detail/jurassicquestlafayette24>

