

THE JRTC AND FORT POLK

GUARDIAN

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QUALITY OF LIFE LINES OF EFFORT



**SPOUSE
EMPLOYMENT**



CHILD CARE



HEALTH CARE



HOUSING

Military spouses should consider **remote** work

By **ANGIE THORNE**
Public Affairs Office

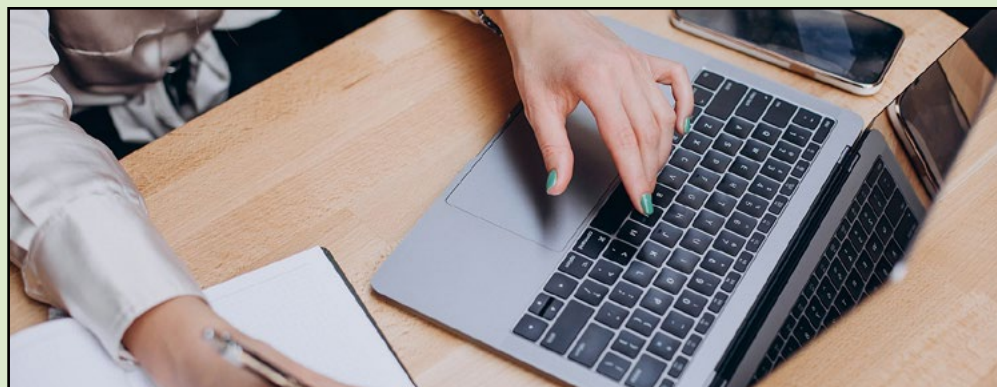
FORT POLK, La. — There are a variety of options when it comes to finding a job at Fort Polk. You can start your own business through the Home Based Business Program, find a job of on or off the installation, apply for a federal position at Fort Polk or try something a little different — working remote from home.

A remote job in the federal government is one where you are not expected to report to an official agency worksite regularly. Instead, you will work from your home or other alternative worksite either within or outside of the commuting area of your agency's official worksite.

Stacey Delgado, Army Community Service employment readiness program manager said it's important to have an option like remote work for military spouses for a variety of reasons.

"Many have spouses who work the rotations (At Fort Polk, that means training that replicates a future deployed mission set for visiting units). This can cause some challenges with children, or for the couple with only one vehicle. Working from home gives them the fluidity to still earn an income but not have to worry about schedules, vehicles and other challenges that working out of the home can create," Delgado said.

Being able to adapt at their cur-



rent location as well as after a permanent change of station move are just a couple of benefits that remote work offers.

"Working from home provides flexibility. It is also usually transferable and the spouse can take her job with them to the next duty station. Being able to have a job that is portable helps to reduce the stress of moving," Delgado said.

Right now there are many federal positions being turned in to remote work-from-home jobs.

"I see at least 35 on the USAJOBS.gov website. These are with other federal agencies, and the military spouse preference can still be used per the Executive Order 13832," Delgado said.

To find remote jobs and more information about how to apply on USAJOBS visit www.usajobs.gov/Help/how-to/search/filters/remote/.

Another site with good information is the Hiring Our Heroes Military Spouse Fellowship Program.

If you don't know your next step, this website, found at [https://](http://https://www.hiringourheroes.org/career-services/military-spouse-resources/)

www.hiringourheroes.org/career-services/military-spouse-resources/, can help you jump-start your career in the industry best suited to your skillset and experience level.

The program provides military spouses with professional training, networking and hands-on experience in the civilian workforce.

Finally, MilSpouse Roadmap at https://www.milspouseroadmap.org is a tool built with input from more than 1,500 military spouses that outlines three common military spouse career paths — entrepreneurship and self-employment, remote work, and reskilling and upskilling.

There are specific steps, suggestions and resources to help along the way.

Remote work can offer flexibility in where or when you work, but it requires self-discipline, advance planning and a healthy work-life balance.

These resources can help you evaluate whether remote work is a viable option for you.



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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. To be included on all-users messages email usarmy.polk.id-readiness.list.fort-polk-pao-office@army.mil

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



Cover photo: Staff Sgt. Justin Genova, 3rd Battalion, 353rd Regiment, Security Force Assistance Brigade, catches a touchdown pass during the Turkey Bowl Nov. 22 at Fort Polk. (Photo by **CHUCK CANNON**)

Thoughtful safety tips to follow as winter temperatures drop

DIRECTORATE of PLANS, TRAINING, MOBILIZATION & SECURITY

FORT POLK, La. — Though Louisiana is warm most of the year, some of its winters (short as they are) can get pretty cold, especially when combined with a storm.

Winter storms are accompanied by dangerously low temperatures, and sometimes by strong winds, icing, sleet and freezing rain.

Winter storms can cause power failures, loss of communication services and icy roads. To keep yourself and your loved ones safe, you should know how to prepare your home and your car before a winter storm hits.

Make a Plan

Plan ahead, especially if you are in an area prone to winter weather, and be sure to create a communication and disaster plan for your family ahead of time.

Weatherproof your home

- Insulate any water lines that run along exterior walls so your water supply will be less likely to freeze

- Caulk and weather-strip doors and windows

- Insulate walls and attic

- Install storm or thermal pane windows or cover windows with plastic from the inside

- Repair roof leaks and cut away tree branches that could fall on your home or other structure during a storm

Have your chimney or flue inspected each year

If you plan to use a fireplace or wood stove for emergency heating, have your chimney or flue inspected each year. Ask your local fire department to recommend an inspector or find one online.

Here are some additional safety recommendations:

- If you'll be using a fireplace, wood stove, or kerosene heater, install a smoke detector and a battery-operated carbon monoxide detector near the area to be heated. Test them monthly and replace batteries twice a year

- Keep a multipurpose dry chemical fire extinguisher nearby

- All fuel-burning equipment should be vented to the outside

- Have your furnace system and vent checked by a qualified technician to ensure they are functioning properly

Keep an easy-to-read thermometer inside your home

If you or a loved one are over 65 years old, place an easy-to-read thermometer in an indoor location where you will see it frequently. The ability to feel a change in temperature decreases with age. Older adults are more susceptible to health problems caused by cold. Check the temperature of your home often during the winter months.

Create an emergency car kit

If it's necessary to travel during winter weather, consider the following items for an



emergency kit for your vehicle.

- Cell phone portable charger, and extra batteries

- Items to stay warm such as extra hats, coats, mittens and blankets

- Windshield scraper

- Shovel

- Battery-powered radio and flashlight with extra batteries

- Water and snack food

- First aid kit with any necessary medications and a pocketknife

- Tow chains or rope and tire chains

- Canned compressed air with sealant for emergency tire repair

- Cat litter or sand to help tires get traction, or road salt to melt ice

- Booster cables with fully charged battery or jumper cables

- Hazard or other reflectors

- Bright colored flag or help signs, emergency distress flag, and/or emergency flares

- Road maps

- Waterproof matches and a can to melt snow for water

Listen to weather forecasts and check your supplies

- Emergency supplies should include your food and water supply whenever you are expecting a winter storm or extreme cold. Even though you can't always predict extreme cold in advance, weather forecasts can sometimes give you several days of notice to prepare.

Bring your pets indoors

- If you have pets, bring them inside. If you can't bring them inside, provide adequate shelter to keep them warm and make sure they have access to unfrozen water.

Get your car ready

- Service your vehicle as often as the manufacturer recommends. Keep your car in good working order. Be sure to check the heater, defroster, brakes, brake fluid, ignition, emergency flashers, exhaust, oil and battery.



In addition, consider the following each fall

- Have the radiator system serviced or check the antifreeze level yourself with an antifreeze tester. Add antifreeze as needed

- Replace windshield washer fluid with a wintertime mixture

- Make sure the tires on your car have adequate tread and air pressure

- Keep the gas tank near full to help avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines

Hospital earns Louisiana Department of Health **gift** designation

By JEAN CLAVETTE GRAVES
BJACH PAO

FORT POLK, La. — Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital earned the Louisiana Department of Health Gift designation. This evidence-based designation program provides resources to increase breastfeeding rates, improve birthing service and enhance patient-centered care at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk and at civilian medical facilities in Louisiana.

Amanda Greagoff, registered nurse on BJACH's labor, delivery and postpartum ward, spearheaded the initiative to earn the designation.

"Breastfeeding has many benefits for both mothers and newborns," Greagoff said. "As a participating facility with the Gift program we are provided with training, information, and the opportunity to network with others in our field."

Providing support to families by having trained team members gives Greagoff's department the ability to empower mothers with the information necessary to make educated choices about breastfeeding.

"Our team is working very hard to go above and beyond as we continue to strive to improve the quality of care we provide our community," she said. "Next year, our goal is to earn the Shining Star designation, which has more rigorous requirements."

Allison Harrison, military lactation counselor, serves as an ambassador for the Mom2Mom Global chapter at Fort Polk and is an American Red Cross volunteer for BJACH.

"Mom2Mom is a peer support community for any pregnant, lactating or formerly lactating parent to support each other through the unique challenges that breastfeeding parents face," Harrison said. "I formed the local chapter in summer 2021. My goal was to create a safe space where parents could ask questions and receive appropriate and respectful advice based on the mother's breastfeeding goals and the infant's wellbeing. I want parents to have up-to-date American Academy of Pediatrics and World Health Organization recommendations on breastfeeding."

Harrison said most parents that stop breastfeeding do so because of lack of support.

"I am so incredibly happy that BJACH has earned the Gift designation. It is a great step in the right direction," she said. "I hope the staff in every department is encouraged to look at their own social, personal, religious, or cultural biases about breastfeeding in an effort to provide the best possible care to our lactating parents."

Harrison has completed the certified lactation counselor course and is awaiting the results of her credentialing examination. She



Amanda Greagoff (left) and Capt. Jennifer Regan (right), registered nurses on the Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital labor, delivery, recovery and postpartum ward sat down with Syble McGrew (second from left) and Stacy McLean (third from left) from American Red Cross Service to Armed Forces and Mom2Mom ambassador Allison Harrison (second from right) to discuss the best way to educate, empower and support breastfeeding parents July 25 at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.

hopes to become a TRICARE approved lactation provider in 2023.

"In the meantime, I became a Red Cross volunteer to help BJACH fill some of the gaps in their lactation services," she said. "I have been working with the hospital referral resource for patients with lactation related questions. I receive numerous phone calls, texts, and social media messages each week from parents who need help breastfeeding or pumping. I make house calls when able to help new parents who are having difficulty latching comfortably and effectively. I spend most of my time educating and empowering new parents on what questions they can ask their own medical providers to best ensure their breastfeeding goals are respected."

Maj. Sandra Rodich, clinical nurse in charge of BJACH LDRP said her goal is to increase lactation services in her department and to create a system where parents can come back for breastfeeding assistance at any time.

"During the first 12 weeks they can come back to triage for assistance," Rodich said. "Eventually I would like to hire a lactation consultant. I'm thankful for our Red Cross volunteer who is always willing to assist. I want our patients to feel like they can breastfeed without pressure and get assistance as needed."

Rodich's staff keeps up on evidence-based best practices about breastfeeding, provides patients with the most up-to-date information and coaches fathers on how they can assist.

"We are currently working on a lactation room for the patients to have a private place to come when they do need help," she said. "Our patients need to feel like they oversee their own

bodies and decisions concerning their babies. I think educating them on the benefits of breastfeeding is very important, but we never want patients to feel badly about not breastfeeding either. Each patient should have a good understanding of the basics when they are discharged from the hospital and if they don't, we want them to feel comfortable enough to say something."

Capt. Jennifer Regan, registered nurse, BJACH LDRP, knows first hand about the benefits of breastfeeding.

"As an active-duty Soldier, and the mother of twins I feel that breastfeeding provided me with so many benefits," she said. "Breastfeeding takes energy and made it easier for me to lose the weight I gained during pregnancy. Breastfeeding allowed me to maximize my hours of sleep because I didn't have to get up in the middle of the night to make bottles. The milk was always readily available and at the correct temperature. Going back to work and leaving my babies was harder emotionally than I had ever imagined. However, knowing that my babies were getting my pumped milk allowed me to feel like I was providing them with the nutrition they needed when we were physically separated."

There are regulations in place that protect a Soldier's right to a clean place to pump and to properly store milk.

"I believe breastfeeding is a personal choice and there is no wrong way to feed your baby. A fed baby is the best baby," Regan said.

Regan's department is fully prepared to sup-

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Gift

Continued from page 3

port those who choose to breastfeed. “The Gift designation provides families with free resources to help them be successful with breastfeeding,” she said. “Breastfeeding offers some unique benefits to the mother which includes decreasing a mother’s risk of developing breast and ovarian cancer, diabetes and heart disease. It enhances bonding with their baby. A baby who breastfeeds exclusively has increased protection from illness during the first six months to a year of life. They are also less likely to have diarrhea, respiratory and ear infections. Breastfeeding can reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome as well as decrease diabetes and obesity later in adult life. Breastmilk is specific to the child it is made for and provides exactly what that child needs through each stage of development. It is like having their own personal nutrition blueprint.”

Greagoff said the Gift designation is important to BJACH and the Fort Polk community. “The standards that we are held to with this designation along with patient feedback is helping us improve the quality of care and support our families need and expect. We are



committed to meet each patient where they are and teaching them more about breastfeeding,” she said. “The quality of service and support we provide families continues to improve as we educate ourselves and our patients.”

For more information on the Louisiana Department of Health Gift Program or Mom-2Mom Global/Breastfeeding in Combat Boots visit their websites at: <https://thegiftla.org/> or <https://www.mom2momglobal.org/>.



ANGIE THORNE/ ©GUARDIAN

Holiday Story Time

Col. Sam Smith, Fort Polk garrison commander, dropped by Allen Memorial Library's Story Time Nov. 29. Children and parents alike listened as Smith read "And Then Comes Christmas," by Tom Brenner. After the story, children were invited to work on creating their own Christmas ornament during craft time.



Col. Sam Smith, Fort Polk Garrison Commander, shakes Alexander Clark's hand after Clark presented Smith with a certificate of appreciation.



From left to right: Sgt. Patrick Hayden and his children, Addison, 1, Evelyn, 2, and his spouse Kim, decorate Christmas ornaments together during the crafts portion of Story Time Nov. 29 at Allen Memorial Library.



ANGIE THORNE/ ©GUARDIAN

Hero tree dedication

Fort Polk's Allen Memorial Library hosted its annual "Our Heroes' Tree" dedication ceremony Nov. 29. The tree honors and supports veterans. Handmade ornaments made by family members and organizations are placed on the tree to celebrate Soldiers and the many sacrifices they make.



NOVEMBER 2022

The Buzz

ON RESPONSIBLE DRINKING



Conquer Stress (Without Alcohol) This Holiday Season

Although the holidays can be exciting for Service members, this time of year can also cause stress. While traveling, being away from loved ones and holiday gatherings can be overwhelming, remind Service members that there are ways to handle stress without alcohol this holiday season:



- **Practice positive self-talk.** Feeling overwhelmed during holiday gatherings, such as visits from extended family or work-related holiday get-togethers? Rather than reaching for that extra drink, tell yourself "I got this!" and remember this gathering is only temporary. Practice other [supportive phrases](#), such as – "I can enjoy the holidays and still own my limit" or "If I can crush a heavy workout, I can handle this tough situation."
- **Get moving for a boost in endorphins.** Caught up in holiday stress and looking for a quick way to calm down? Exercise is one of the best ways to [ease stress](#). Instead of grabbing a beer with buddies, suggest a quick workout together, go for a walk or start a game of football to get yourself moving. Bonus points for getting those [gains in](#) and keeping those extra holiday pounds off.
- **Plan ahead to celebrate (and drink) safely.** Ensure [holiday festivities](#) are safe and stress-free by making plans ahead of time. Avoid the stress of putting yourself and friends in a risky [drunk driving situation](#) by planning a ride home. Remember, celebrating responsibly is something you have control over!
- **Lean on others.** Sometimes this time of the year can feel lonely, especially if you are not with loved ones. A great way to overcome holiday blues is reaching out to a loved one or peer. Also consider reaching out to your chaplain or [Military Family Life Counseling](#) for confidential, non-medical counseling and support.
- **Reach out for help.** If you find yourself constantly [leaning on booze to cope](#) during the holidays, consider talking to your health care provider or another [Service-specific resource](#) for ways to get help with drinking concerns. Learn how to [conquer stress without alcohol](#) by reaching out to [Military OneSource](#).

While the holiday season may seem stressful at times, remind Service members that there are ways to address stress, stay positive and enjoy their time off duty without alcohol.

THE CAMPAIGN

Are Service members aware of the risks when drinking and taking prescription or over-the-counter medications? Help them understand [what to watch out for when mixing alcohol and medication](#) (even when drinking responsibly) to protect their health and career.

Also share [this new interactive infographic](#) with Service members to remind them what a standard alcoholic drink looks like, and to own their limit this holiday season!

ONE LAST THING



Do Service members find themselves drinking alone to cope with stress, especially during the holidays? A new [study](#) found that young adults who drink alone had more binge drinking episodes and were at greater risk of developing alcohol use disorder symptoms later in life. Share this [new resource guide](#) with Service members so they learn how to understand their drinking habits and can use these responsible drinking tools to cope with stress during the holiday season.

All topics and resources highlighted in the e-Newsletter can be found at [www.ownyourlimits.org](#).

OWN YOUR LIMITS
[www.ownyourlimits.org](#)

SERVE HONORABLY. DRINK RESPONSIBLY.

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U.S. Department of Defense

Sustaining an optimal training environment at Fort Polk

By TIM SCHOMMER

Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands

On a cool, but sunny morning in mid-October, the sun slowly rose over the acres of towering longleaf pines that cover most of Fort Polk, a U.S. Army installation in west-central Louisiana.

I was traveling down a dirt road through the pine forest in a pickup with three seasoned land management operators who were showing me around the installation's training lands.

Fort Polk, roughly 150 miles west of Baton Rouge, is a 240,000 acre swath of predominantly longleaf pine forest, an optimal setting for preparing soldiers for overseas combat. The installation supports the Joint Readiness Training Center, which provides advanced-level training for Army, Air Force, Army National Guard, Navy, Marine and international military units under conditions simulating low- and mid-intensity conflicts.

JRTC typically conducts 10 training rotations per year. These combined rotations involve the coordination of thousands of Soldiers and the maneuvering of hundreds of vehicles, including Humvees, tanks, and other heavy equipment.

I was visiting the installation to meet with members of Fort Polk's Integrated Training Area Management team, a partnership between Fort Polk and my employer, the Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands, headquartered at Colorado State University. I wanted to learn more about the extent of the training conducted on Fort Polk, and the team's efforts in ensuring the long-term sustainability of the training environment. I was surprised to learn that a team of just 16 people is responsible for maintaining Fort Polk's 221,000 acres of training land.

As we wove our way through pine forest on some of the installation's over 800 miles of maneuver trails, we talked about the ITAM team's mission, a mission the team doesn't take lightly.

"Our role is to provide the best training environment possible so that American soldiers can safely prepare for deployment," said Wayne Fariss, Fort Polk's ITAM Coordinator. "If they are better prepared here, then they're more likely to return home safely."

The ITAM staff of three Department of the Army civilians and 13 CEMML employees perform a wide array of tasks, including analyzing training land conditions with remote sensors; regularly maintaining trails, water crossings, and training fields; repairing damage caused by equipment maneuvers during training and by severe weather events; and ensuring the team's efforts remain effective in the long term. "In the most basic terms, we manage the dirt," Fariss said. "We



Equipment and vehicles are moved into position during one of several large-scale training exercises throughout the year at Fort Polk.



Red Cockaded Woodpecker artificial cavity work.



The team repairs damaged trails.

repair, reconfigure and maintain the land so that it is optimal for current and future training operations."

Driving farther into the shady forest, we stopped at areas where rehabilitation and maintenance work had recently been conducted and areas where upkeep and reconfiguration was still required. While the tasks seemed endless, my tour guides in the truck did not seem fazed in the least. They noted new maneuver damage or eroded trails, had a quick conversation about possible solutions, and we kept going.

"We build it, so they can train," said Kerry Cooley, CEMML Land Rehabilitation and Management Operations Coordinator at Fort Polk. "It's really that simple. If we're not doing our jobs, then the soldiers can't do theirs."

Cooley's responsibility is to coordinate a team of heavy equipment operators in the implementation of variety of maintenance and repair work. It's more than just moving dirt around and filling in holes. The team tries to

anticipate where future problems like erosion may occur and take actions that help prevent them, such as laying down gravel on steep dirt trails and building in runoff pathways that reroute rainwater off trail. The team's equipment operators understand the nuances of the landscape and know how to reshape it to fit a specific need.

The team uses Geographic Information System mapping to efficiently record data and cre-

ate maps to conduct assessments and identify priority areas. In fiscal year 2021, the ITAM team maintained 87 multi-use clearings covering over 1,200 acres, and repaired or maintained 420 miles of trail. The team also restored nearly 600 acres that had been damaged during maneuvers.

On any given day, there is no shortage of work to be done.

Another of the team's recent projects has been to create a new training area on 40,000 acres acquired from a logging company a few years ago.

The land required additional efforts to "bring it to baseline" for JRTC training, such as widening roads and expanding clearings. Unplanned factors sometimes bring extra tasks as well. For example, in the wake of Hurricane Laura in 2020, the team spent six months clearing trees and other debris across Fort Polk in addition to their regular assessment, maintenance, and upkeep routine.

As our drive in the pickup truck came to an end and I parted ways with my tour guides, it was clear that as long as soldiers continue to be trained at Fort Polk, this team will be dedicated to ensuring the ground on which they train is in optimal condition. "We are here to reduce risk and make sure JRTC and the Fort Polk home station can carry out their training work safely and effectively," said Roy Cloud, CEMML Range Training and Land Assessments Coordinator. "We're proud to do our small part to support the military training mission."

COMMENTARY

For your safety, recognize, retreat and report **unexploded** ordnance

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

FORT POLK, La. — Military munitions that were used, but fail to function as intended are called UXO or unexploded ordnance. Military munitions abandoned without proper disposal or removed from storage in a military magazine or other storage area for the purpose of disposal are called discarded military munitions or DMM. The United States has always maintained a trained and ready military to protect its national interests.

As a result of the munitions-related activities (e.g., live-fire training and testing, disposal operations) required to maintain this force, and other actions (e.g., souvenir collecting), UXO or DMM can be found almost anywhere.

Although the military controls access to areas known or suspected to contain UXO on active installations, a number of areas that are known or suspected to contain military munitions that were once used by the military have been transferred to public uses.

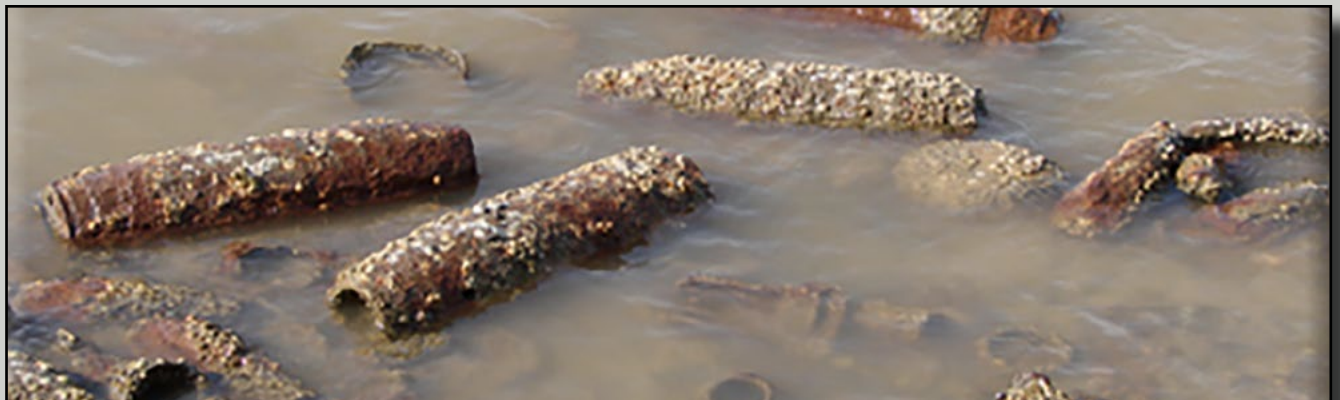
When anyone encounters or believes they may have encountered a munition, they should consider it extremely dangerous. To protect their family, friends and neighbors, everyone should learn and follow the 3Rs of explosives safety: Recognize — Recognizing when you may have encountered a munition and the potential danger. It's key to reducing the risk of injury or death. If you encounter or suspect you may have encountered a munition, consider it extremely dangerous. Remember, munitions are sometimes hard to identify.

Retreat — If you encounter or suspect you may have encountered a munition, do not approach, touch, move or disturb it, but immediately and carefully — do not run — leave the area following the same path on which you entered. If you can, mark the general area, not the munition, in some manner (e.g., with a hat, piece of cloth, or tying a piece of plastic to a tree branch).

Report — When you think you may have encountered a munition, notify your local law enforcement — call 911. Tell them what you saw and where you saw it.

Although military munitions will most likely be found in areas that the military currently uses or has used in the past, they could be encountered anywhere (e.g., Civil War battlefields, in homes as Family souvenirs). Following the 3Rs when you have or think you may have encountered a munition can prevent a tragedy.

UXO are often referred to as duds, bombs, dummy rounds, or by other terms. Regardless of what you call them, they should be considered dangerous. Never approach, touch, move or disturb munitions. Even Civil War cannon balls and souvenir munitions that may have been kept by a family and handled for years can be extremely dangerous.



Remember UXO:

- Come in many shapes and sizes
- Can look like a:
 - *Pointed pipe
 - *Soda can
 - *Baseball
 - *Muffler
- They may:
 - *Be visible on the surface or be buried
 - *Be exposed by erosion or fires
 - *Look new or old

*Be complete or in parts

*Be found alone or in groups

*Should be considered dangerous regardless of size or age

Munitions including their components (e.g., projectiles, fuzes, rocket motors) may contain high explosives, propellant or pyrotechnics. Munitions should never be collected as souvenirs or “trophy.” No matter how old or damaged a munition may look, it can still be as or more dangerous than the day it was made.

FLU VACCINE FOR SERVICE MEMBERS



**ARE YOU AN ACTIVE DUTY OR GUARD/RESERVE MEMBER?
YOU'RE REQUIRED TO GET THE FLU VACCINE.**

3 OPTIONS FOR GETTING THE FLU VACCINE

ALWAYS CALL AHEAD TO MAKE SURE THE FLU VACCINE IS AVAILABLE



MILITARY HOSPITAL OR CLINIC

- You have priority at military hospitals and clinics.
- Call to make sure it is available.

PARTICIPATING NETWORK PHARMACY

- You can also get vaccines at participating retail network pharmacies. Not all network pharmacies participate in giving vaccines. Call ahead to confirm.
- Be sure to get your vaccine from the pharmacist, not from a health provider in a pharmacy clinic, to avoid possible out-of-pocket costs.
- If you go to a participating network pharmacy, you won't have any cost-shares or copayments if the flu vaccine is administered by a pharmacist. You can also go to a TRICARE-authorized provider at a participating network onsite clinic.

TRICARE-AUTHORIZED PROVIDER

- If seeing a provider other than your Primary Care manager (PCM), you must have a referral from your PCM.
- In addition, you may have to pay copayments or cost-shares for the office visit.

**AVOID HAVING TO GET
THE SHOT TWICE!
SAVE YOUR RECEIPT.**

FOR YOUR RECORDS

WHEN YOU GET A FLU VACCINE FROM A PARTICIPATING NETWORK PHARMACY OR A TRICARE-AUTHORIZED PROVIDER, FOLLOW YOUR SERVICE POLICY GUIDANCE FOR RECORDING THE VACCINE IN YOUR SHOT RECORD. YOU'LL NEED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

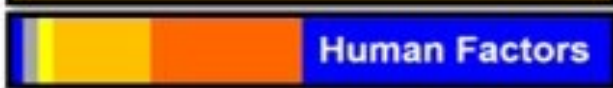
- THE DATE THE VACCINE WAS GIVEN
- THE VACCINE NAME OR CODE
- MANUFACTURER
- LOT NUMBER



TRICARE.mil/flu



FALL PROTECTION



- 1% Poor Lighting
- 2% Stairs
- 2% Ladders
- 16% Housekeeping Issues
- 25% Wet or Slippery Surfaces
- 54% Human Factors

Employers should make sure their training includes slips and trips prevention:

- ☐ CONDUCT regular inspections
- ☐ IDENTIFY high risk areas such as stairs, entrances, and high traffic areas
- ☐ TRAIN managers, supervisors and workers



DON'T BE THE FALL GUY

Reminding you to drink responsibly this holiday season

By AMELIA CONNOR
Army Substance Abuse Program

FORT POLK, La. — Every December many people go out to have fun at parties and drink with Family and friends.

This holiday season, the Fort Polk Army Substance Abuse Program asks you to take a minute to think about being responsible while you are having a good time.

Since 1981, every president of the United States has proclaimed December as National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month, also known as 3D, to help underscore the public's commitment to preventing impaired driving and promoting the use of designated drivers and sober ride programs.

Since the holiday season has a higher average accident rate than other times of the year, it is important to be in a sober state of mind when behind the wheel. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 32 people in the United States die every day in alcohol-related crashes on average. That's one person who dies every 45 minutes. People who drink and drive after holiday parties and festivities make the period between Thanksgiving and New Year's one of the year's most

Even Blitzen knows not to drive blitzed.



deadly and dangerous seasons due to alcohol-related crashes. Please stay safe during the holidays and remember that buzzed driving is drunk driving. If you "feel it" you are already impaired, so please plan before you go.

Throughout the month of December, the

Fort Polk Army Substance Abuse Program will post several resources on its Facebook page (Army Substance Abuse Program – JRTC & Fort Polk). Also, check out the Department of Defense's responsible drinking campaign at <https://www.ownyourlimits.org/>.



Mind Your Mental Health

May 2022



What is Mental Health?

According to the Center for Disease Control, the term mental health is inclusive of “our emotional, psychological, and social well-being” (CDC, 2021). Our mental health encompasses how we behave, think, and communicate, as well as how we interact with others. Contrary to popular belief, mental health is not simply the absence of mental illness; Instead, mental health is a psychological state of well-being which determines one’s capacity to navigate tasks productively, overcome life’s challenges and stressors, and to live harmoniously.

Managing Workplace Stress

One of the most critical elements of creating a healthy work environment is learning to combat and mitigate stress in the workplace. According to the World Health Organization, work related stress can occur when an employee feels that there is a mismatch between one’s knowledge and capabilities, and the demands of a workplace (WHO, 2020). However, developing healthy coping strategies when one begins to feel overwhelmed is instrumental in managing, and in many cases, eradicating workplace stress. One example of a healthy coping strategy is maintaining fluid communication with coworkers and supervisors. Employing fluid communication can ensure that expectations and needs are understood and fulfilled. In addition, establishing set goals and priorities can assist in maintaining productivity, and can create a sense of accomplishment when tasks are completed. Finally, taking time to recharge by stepping away from your desk during your lunch break allows time to recenter yourself, and can assist in combating a sedentary lifestyle!

Did You Know?

Anxiety disorders are the most common mental illness in the U.S., affecting 40 million adults in the United States age 18 and older, or 18.1% of the population every year.

Anxiety disorders develop from a complex set of risk factors, including genetics, brain chemistry, personality, and life events.

*Source: Anxiety and Depression Association of America, 2022

The EAP

Who can I call? The [Employee Assistance Program](#) (EAP) can provide support and referrals for a vast array of employee and family concerns including mental health services, caregiving, childcare, legal matters, and financial issues. See how EAP can be right for you and your family needs. Utilize OPM’s [Work-Life Contact Tool](#) to locate your agency’s EAP coordinator today!

Gift variety of holiday **safety** tips to Family, friends

By Spc. KELLY ACEVEDO
Public Affairs Office

FORT POLK, La. — With Christmas and New Year's around the corner, it's difficult not to be consumed by the holiday spirit. Decorations are hung, angelic ornaments are made and ugly sweaters have once again made their appearance.

As exciting and happy as this time can be, it's easy to become complacent. So remember to include caution and safety into the festivities.

Gathering new and old Christmas decorations for the house can be a great way to pass the time with family. When decorating outside use the appropriate ladders. This will reduce the chances of falling from high places. Additionally, it's best to hang outdoor decorations when it's sunny and warm rather than rainy or snowy.

While hanging up all the holiday trimmings, remember to never string together more than three sets of incandescent lights, along with not overloading electrical outlets.

That includes decorating inside. Whether you choose a real or artificial tree, remember they can cause serious damage if they catch fire. For a live tree, ensure it has plenty of water. Check artificial trees for fire resistant labels when shopping for one.

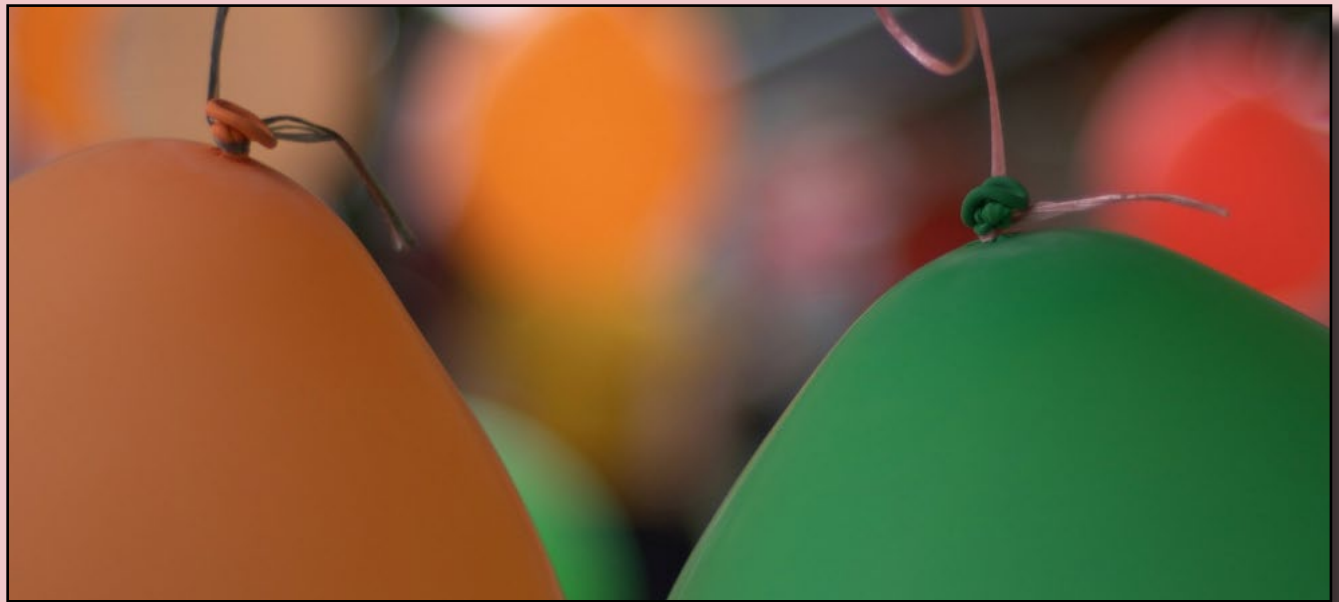
With the change in season comes the need to stay warm. As cozy as "cuddle weather" can be, consider a carbon monoxide detector to prevent gas poisoning from heaters. The Center for Disease Control has guidelines to follow to prevent fires and gas poisoning at <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2019/p1119-8-holiday-tips.html>. They encourage the public to keep candles away from kids, pets, walkways, trees and curtains.

Notably, never leave fireplaces, stoves or candles unattended. Generators, grills and other gasoline or charcoal-burning appliances should never be used inside a home or garage.

Safety measures are not limited to physical activities. They apply to the online world as well. Holiday shopping is done throughout the country and gives cyber criminals an opportunity to obtain sensitive and personal information. The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency is committed to help people protect themselves online.

CISA advises people to implement multi-factor authentication on accounts for added security. MFAs can be used on smartphones as a fingerprint or facial recognition. Also use strong and unique passwords for important accounts.

Confirm information put online is encrypted. "All reputable merchants use encryption to transmit information from consumers browsers to their servers. The browser's location bar will indicate encryption," as stated on the



CISA website at <https://www.cisa.gov/>.

If a website address begins with "http:" instead of "https:" there is no encryption and someone on the other side may be trying to steal information. Also look for the padlock icon. If the padlock is locked, information is encrypted.

Suspicious emails that are suspected to be part of a phishing scam, can be reported to us-cert.gov/report-phishing.

Make a habit of checking credit card and bank statements for any mistakes or fraudulent charges and report them.

There's nothing more satisfying than checking names off a gift giving list. Especially after making safe online purchases. However, be cautious when shopping for kid-friendly presents.

Exchanging gifts is the best part of Christmas for some people. Although exciting, verify gifts for children are appropriate for their age and abilities. Kids toys have age requirements for who can play. The United States Consumer Product Safety Commission at <https://www.cpsc.gov/Safety-Education/Safety-Education-Centers/Holiday-Safety> recommends to pair safety gear such as helmets for scooters, bikes and other self-propelled vehicles.

Small balls and toys with small parts should never be gifted to children younger than three years old. After opening presents immediately dispose of plastic wrappings, toy packaging and other harmful trash before children begin to play with the leftover scraps.

Deflated balloons should never be easily accessible to children younger than eight years old. It's crucial to keep an eye on kids while at gatherings or parties where balloons are part of the decorations. Children can accidentally inhale a balloon in when attempting to inflate it. CPR on a child choking on a balloon can be difficult due to the balloon inflating and deflating inside.

This season take advantage of being surrounded by loved ones and enjoy being around. Keep and advocate these safety tips. They could possibly be the greatest gift for someone else. Happy holidays!

Geronimo prevails at annual Turkey Bowl competition

Eight teams vied for bragging rights and the title of Turkey Bowl champions during Fort Polk's annual Turkey Bowl tournament Nov. 22 at the post's Anvil Field. After more than six hours of exciting action, 1st Battalion, 509th Infantry Regiment (Airborne) "Geronimo" defeated the blue team from 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, in overtime 26-20. Here are a few photos of the action.




Holiday on the Bend
 Don't freeze your toes & wear warm clothes!

A Toledo Bend Holiday Experience



10 & 11 December 5 - 8 p.m.

Holiday themed boat excursion on Toledo Bend Reservoir

Enjoy story time, crafts, hot chocolate, cookies and s'mores before & after journey

Preregistration required

Call (318) 565-4235 to reserve your spot!

\$15 per person or \$90 to reserve entire boat
8 people max. per boat • 30 min. duration

1310 Army Recreation Rd. Florien, LA 71429

ACS PRESENTS
Mom Hacks

**TUESDAY
DEC 6
1 PM**

"Mom Hacks doesn't add to your to-do list, it makes it easier to do. So you have more 'I've got this.' So you can be the mother and woman you want to be."

-Darria Long Gillespie, MD

Come join us at ACS (Bldg 920)!
 337-531-1938/0636




 1591 Bell Richard Ave. Bldg. 920
 Fort Polk, LA 71459

Have Ideas?

Fort Polk's garrison commander recognizes you have great ideas to share and is looking for innovation from Soldiers, Families and civilians to increase efficiency and enhance garrison processes and quality of life.

ICE link: <https://ice.disa.mil/index.cfm?fa=card&sp=144893&s=257>

Submit your innovative ideas through the Interactive Customers Evaluation system under the Plans, Analysis and Integration Office Garrison Innovation Program by the clicking the link above.

Story Time

Bring your little ones to Allen Memorial Library each Tuesday at 11:30 a.m. to enjoy stories and crafts. Share the wonders of imagination with your child as a story takes them to other worlds.

The next Story time is Dec. 6. If you are interested, call (337) 531-2665 to register.

Youth art show

Fort Polk's Middle School and Teen Youth Art Show takes place Dec. 9 at the temporary MST location, building 744. The event showcases the remarkable artistic talents of Fort Polk's youth. The winner will go on to participate in Boys and Girls Club of America's national competition. The showing takes place Dec. 7-9.

Judging is Dec. 9. For more information call (337) 531-1992.

Christmas candyland

The Exceptional Family Member Program hosts a Christmas Candyland Dec. 9 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Army Community Service, 1591 Bell Richard Ave, building 920.

Enjoy the Christmas candy-themed wonder-

land filled with activities, crafts and fun galore. Plus, a special guest visitor will be stopping by! For more information call (337) 531-1941.

5k run

Get warmed up at the Jingle Jammies 5k fun run Dec. 10 at Perez Field. The event is free and open to everyone!

The run starts at 9 a.m. Prizes will be awarded for best holiday jammies! Categories include Soldier, Family and Youth. Register on site from 8-9 a.m.

For more information call (337) 531-6004.

Holiday on the Bend

Make your holiday unique by heading to Toledo Bend Dec. 10 at 5 p.m. and Dec. 11 at 8 p.m. Enjoy crafts, hot chocolate, cookies and smores, both before and after your journey on the Toledo Bend Lake! There is an eight person maximum per session, which lasts 30 minutes. Preregistration is required. Reserve your spot today by calling the Toledo Bend Army Recreation Park office at (318) 565-4235/4484.

Sunday brunch

Make plans to attend the Sunday Brunch at

Fort Polk's Warrior Center Dec. 11 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Whether you pick an egg white frittata, treat yourself to some chicken and waffles or build your own omelet, make sure to pair your meal with some classic brunch beverages.

Bar services are available and brunch is à la carte. For more information call (337) 531-7668.

Fort Polk pet care

The Veterinary Treatment Facility is open Monday through Wednesday from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. and Friday from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. All pets on post are to be registered and microchipped.

Register in person or by email. Your pets should also be up to date on all mandatory and recommended vaccines. For more information call (337) 531-1322.

Spouses workshop

Take the opportunity to participate in the Stars are Lined Up for Military Spouses for Federal Careers workshop held Jan. 10 from 10-11:30 a.m.

Registration is required. To register email stacey.r.delgado.civ@army.mil. There are only eight spots available.

#FortPolkThingsToDo

Dec. 10: Leesville Christmas parade.

The theme for 2022 Leesville Christmas parade is Superheroes Celebrating Christmas. The parade kicks off at 5:30 p.m. in downtown Leesville on Third Street Stop by to watch the lighted floats go by and enjoy this annual festive part of the Christmas season.

Dec. 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23: Christmas in Roseland 2022, Shreveport.

The American Rose Center is transformed into a whimsical winter wonderland from the day after Thanksgiving until the weekend before Christmas.

Featuring thousands of twinkling lights, dozens of lighted displays, giant Christmas Cards to the Community, nightly entertainment, photos with Santa, and tons of fun for the whole family!

Please note that Christmas in Roseland is a walking event only and no carts are available.

<https://www.rose.org/christmas-in-roseland>

Through Jan. 1: Christmas Light Show, DeRidder.

The DeRidder Christmas Light Show takes place through Jan. 1 from 5:30 to midnight in downtown DeRidder, near city hall, 200 S. Jefferson St. Tune into FM 101.1 as you arrive. The show gets bigger and better each year and is free for the whole family. The nightly show is weather permitting.

Through Dec. 31: Victorian Christmas at the

Joseph Jefferson Home and Rip Van Winkle Gardens, New Iberia.

Celebrate the holiday season at the Joseph Jefferson home, built as a hunting lodge on Jefferson Island in 1870. He was an actor and played the part of Rip Van Winkle on stage more than 4,500 times. That is where the garden got its name: Rip Van Winkle Gardens on Jefferson Island. The Joseph Jefferson Home and Rip Van Winkle Gardens are decorated for the holiday Season.

<https://ripvanwinklegardens.com/>

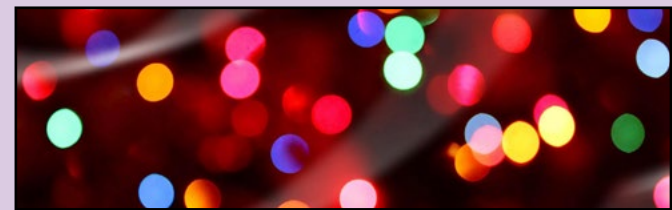
Through Dec. 31: Shadows Holiday Harvest Home and Garden, New Iberia.

You could make a day of it in New Iberia and take both the Jefferson and Shadows tours. The Shadows offers a special holiday home and garden tour which explores what the holiday season meant to both the Weeks family and those enslaved on the family's plantations.

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

Through Jan. 6: Natchitoches Christmas Festival, Natchitoches.

Named after a Native American tribe, Natchitoches (pronounced Nack-a-tish) is the oldest permanent settlement in the Louisiana Purchase Territory. Since 1927, its been home to one of the oldest community-based holiday celebrations in the country. Starting as a one-day festival, the Natchitoches Christmas Festival has evolved into a six-week long Christmas Season event.



The Festival begins on the Saturday before Thanksgiving and concludes on Jan. 6, the Epiphany. More than 300,000 lights and 100 plus set pieces are on display every night at dusk.

<https://www.natchitocheschristmas.com/>

Through Dec. 25: Dark Woods Christmas, Natchitoches.

Dark Woods Christmas in the Park provides the perfect setting for family holiday memories. This event runs select dates from Black Friday through Christmas Day.

Experience the sights, sounds and smells of a hometown holiday while taking a leisurely stroll through more than 250,000 dazzling LED twinkling lights.

Gather the whole family for homemade doughnuts and gourmet hot chocolate. Plus, enjoy other seasonal favorites like caramel apples, campfire s'mores, Natchitoches meat pies and other delectable treats. There is interactive fun for kids, uplifting holiday music, nightly entertainment including special meet and greet locations for the kids to see Mr. and Mrs. Claus and other holiday character favorites.

<https://www.darkwoodschristmas.com/>



Fort Polk Soldiers charged with UCMJ violations

OFFICE of the STAFF JUDGE ADVOCATE

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 private assigned to 1st Battalion, 509th Infantry Regiment was separated from the Army with an other than honorable conditions discharge for wrongfully stealing approximately \$20,000 dollars of Basic Allowance for Housing. This discharge may result in a loss of benefits and could cause significant difficulty in obtaining civilian employment.

•A private assigned to 46th Engineer Battalion was separated from the Army with a general discharge for wrongful use of tetrahydrocannabinol.

•A private assigned to 519th Military Police Battalion was separated from the Army with a general discharge for wrongful use of THC and underage drinking.

•A private assigned to 519th Military Police Battalion was separated from the Army with a general discharge for wrongful use of THC, and violating the Army’s Equal Opportunity policy.

•A specialist assigned to 1st Battalion, 509th Infantry Regiment was separated from the Army with a general discharge for domestic violence.

•A specialist assigned to 317th Brigade Engineer Battalion received a Field Grade Article 15 for wrongfully using THC. They received a punishment of reduction to E-3, and 30 days extra duty.

NEW YEAR
NEW ME
2023

JAN 9 TO MAR 3

PREREGISTRATION OPENS
DECEMBER 1ST

337-531-6795
peyton.g.fahringer.naf@army.mil
polk.armymwr.com

Scan to
register!
Don't limit your challenges
Challenge your limits!

\$40
entry fee

New Year New Me is an 8-week program to get people more involved in their fitness/health for the new year. Participants will be provided with a fitness journal, exercise guide, calendar, t-shirt, and water bottle

Orientation will take place
JANUARY 9 @ 1 PM
at the
ARMY WELLNESS CENTER

Check VIN numbers

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

| | | | |
|------|-----------|------------|------|
| 2010 | Nissan | Altima | 6499 |
| 2016 | Chevrolet | Malibu | 5420 |
| 2003 | Honda | Accord | 6673 |
| 2003 | Jeep | Liberty | 3545 |
| 2001 | Ford | F150 | 0450 |
| 2004 | Ford | Mustang | 4127 |
| 2008 | BMW | 328i | 9559 |
| 2007 | Audi | A4 | 6439 |
| 2013 | Audi | A6 | 7319 |
| 2011 | Hyundai | Elantra | 4018 |
| 2007 | BMW | 650i | 2192 |
| 2000 | Honda | Accord | 0717 |
| 2005 | Kawasaki | M/C | 0133 |
| 2010 | Jeep | Patriot | 0760 |
| 2005 | Ford | Focus | 4767 |
| 2006 | Ford | Escape | 3900 |
| 2009 | Ford | Mustang | 0250 |
| 2010 | Dodge | Challenger | 9430 |
| 2006 | Accura | 3.2TL | 6947 |

Holiday

LIFE SKILLS

December 9
1 PM
ACS Bldg 920

Discussion of anger, stress, and crisis management, financial planning, and substance abuse.

Call
337-531-1938/0636
For More Info

Got News?
Call the Guardian
at 531-7203

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