

SPOUSES GET TASTE OF AVIATION TRAINING DURING FORT RUCKER SPOUSES DAY. SEE PAGE 9

# ARMY FLYER

SERVING THE U.S. ARMY AVIATION CENTER OF EXCELLENCE AND THE FORT RUCKER COMMUNITY SINCE 1956

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PHOTO BY SGT. JAMAR MARCEL PUGH

Soldiers from A Co., 2-5th Cav. Regt., 1st ABCT, 1st Cav. Div. maneuver a Bradley Fighting Vehicle while Soldiers from the 4th CAB, 4th ID maneuver a UH-60 Black Hawk during a combined situational training exercise at the Novo Selo Training Area, Bulgaria, Sept. 15. The exercise was in support of Atlantic Resolve, an enduring training exercise between NATO and U.S. forces.

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Post breaks ground on new lodging facility at Lake Tholocco

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# A VISION REALIZED

## Fort Rucker breaks ground on East Beach Lodge on East Beach Lodge

By Jim Hughes

*Fort Rucker Public Affairs*

A more than 10-year old vision became a reality Oct. 2 as the shovels of Fort Rucker, U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence and contractor construction officials broke ground on the East Beach Lake Lodge and Banquet Facility during a ceremony on the shore of Lake Tholocco.

Getting to the point of breaking ground on the 20-room recreational lodge and 156-guest banquet facility is a story of that vision, and of perseverance, said William “Bill” G. Kidd, deputy to the commanding general of USAACE and Fort Rucker.

While making the lodge a reality was a team effort from a host of people across Fort Rucker, that vision and perseverance belonged to a handful of people, Kidd said, recognizing Tim Laster, former Directorate of Family, and Morale, Welfare and Recreation; Evy Bludsworth, DFMWR chief of support services; and John Clancy, outdoor recreation manager.

“(They) recognized the importance of providing opportunities and recreation for our Soldiers, because that is an integral part of readiness for our families, for our Soldiers and for our units,” he said. “It was a vision they weren’t going to give up on – they were not going to give up on our Soldiers and they

were going to keep pushing.”

He said that his father, an engineer, said that there were three ways that you could traverse a mountain: you could go over it, you could move it, or you could just wear it out. “And, ladies and gentlemen, the Fort Rucker team and the Wiregrass community just wore it out on this one.

“It’s a great feeling and well worth the wait,” Kidd continued. “It will be a wonderful addition. We’re very excited about not just having the building, but what it will bring to our families and our Soldiers as they use this area at Lake Tholocco for recreation.”

The facility is expected to be completed in about a year, said Wayne Bardell, director of Fort Rucker DFMWR, adding that he expects the lodge to attract Soldiers from throughout the Army to the shores of Lake Tholocco and all of the recreational opportunities it affords them: boat rentals, swimming beaches with water slides, fishing, hunting and more.

Besides the numerous amenities associated with the lodging and banquet areas, the 16,880-square foot facility will also feature a boardwalk to a 650-square foot landing deck, a wedding gazebo with a wedding area and paver path to the lake and a 4,850-square foot deck overlooking the lake.



PHOTO BY JIMMIE CUMMINGS

**Fort Rucker, USAACE and contractor construction officials break ground on the East Beach Lake Lodge and Banquet Facility during a ceremony Oct. 2 on the shore of Lake Tholocco.**



PHOTO BY JIM HUGHES

**William G. “Bill” Kidd, deputy to the commanding general of USAACE and Fort Rucker, recognizes John Clancy, outdoor recreation manager; Tim Laster, former DFMWR director; and Evy Bludsworth, DFMWR chief of support services at the groundbreaking ceremony.**



FILE PHOTO

**Traci McNair, retired spouse, speaks with Brenda Fitts, Fort Rucker Commissary produce manager, during last year's retiree health fair at Yano Hall.**

# HEALTH FAIR

44th annual Fort Rucker Retiree  
Health Fair set for Oct. 26

**By Jenny Stripling**

*Lyster Army Health Clinic Public Affairs Officer*

Retirees and their family members are invited to the 44th annual Fort Rucker Retiree Health Fair Oct. 26 from 8 a.m. to noon at Yano Hall – Bldg. 6005 on Shamrock Street.

Lyster Army Health Clinic, along with other outside agencies, will have tables set up along with interactive areas to educate retirees on numerous health topics, including disease management, chiropractic care, digestive health, physical therapy, nutrition and more. Retirees can also receive their 2018-2019 flu vaccination.

“The retiree health fair is a great event for retirees and their family members because it gives them a chance to see what Lyster and on-post agencies have to offer,” said Capt. Mildred Castillo, chief of Preventive Medicine at Lyster Army Health Clinic. “We will also welcome medical professionals from around the local area in celebrating our retirees.”

Other agencies attending include Medical Center Enterprise, Corvias, Flowers Hospital, Covenant Care, Dothan Specialty Clinic, Veterans Affairs Clinic and Red Cross among many others.

For more information, call the clinic at 255-7930.

# HATCH ACT

Law restricts government personnel's  
political activities

**By Keith D. Wilbur**

*Fort Rucker Voting Assistance Officer*

Since 1939, military members and federal employees have been subject to restricted election season activities.

When questions arise about what is permissible and prohibited with regard to a specific political activity, the Hatch Act is the sole source of information. Ignorance of the law does not excuse an employee's violation of the Hatch Act.

The political activity of government employees has been a concern of government officials since the earliest days of the Republic. Thomas Jefferson, the nation's third president, was among the first to express concern about this issue.

In response to his concern, the heads of the executive departments issued an order that stated that while it is “the right of any officer (federal employee) to give his vote at elections as a qualified citizen ... it is expected that he will not attempt to influence the votes of others nor take part in the business of electioneering, that being deemed inconsistent with the spirit of the Constitution ...”

However, despite the concerns of Jefferson and other American statesmen, almost a century and a half elapsed before Congress enacted a comprehensive law regarding the political activities of government employees.

The Hatch Act, a federal law passed in

1939, limits certain political activities of federal employees, as well as some state, D.C., and local government employees who work in connection with federally funded programs. The law's purposes are to ensure that federal programs are administered in a nonpartisan fashion, to protect federal employees from political coercion in the workplace, and to ensure that federal employees are advanced based on merit and not based on political affiliation. The law was named for Senator Carl Hatch of New Mexico. It was most recently amended in 2012, limiting the activities of certain state and local government employees.

## MILITARY MEMBER GUIDANCE

U.S. military service members are limited when it comes to political activities. Some restrictions are based in federal law, others in military regulations. The main purpose for these restrictions is to avoid the implication or inference that military members represent some official point of view.

The major military prohibition is against any type of partisan activities. A partisan activity is defined as “activity directed toward the success or failure of a [particular] political party or candidate for a partisan political office or partisan political group.”



VOTING *CONT.*

A military member may: register, vote and express personal opinions; encourage other military members to exercise voting rights; join a political club, and attend political meetings and rallies as a spectator when not in uniform; make monetary contributions to a political organization; sign petitions for specific legislative action or place candidate's name on the ballot; write letters to the editor expressing personal views (so long as not part of an organized letter writing campaign); place bumper stickers on private vehicles; and personal participation in local nonpartisan political activities is allowed, so long as not in uniform and no use of government property or resources, no interference with duty, and no implied government position or involvement.

A military member may not: use official authority to influence or interfere; be a candidate for, hold or exercise functions of a civil office; participate in partisan political campaigns, speeches, articles, TV or radio discussions; serve in official capacity or sponsor a partisan political club; conduct political opinion survey; use contemptuous words against certain civilian leaders (10 U.S.C. 888) – applies to commissioned officers only; march or ride in partisan parades; participate in organized efforts to transport voters to polls; promote political dinners or fundraising events; attend partisan events as an official representative of the armed forces; display large signs, banners or posters on private vehicles; display a partisan political sign, poster, banner, or similar device visible to the public at one's residence on a military installation, even if that residence is part of a privatized housing development; and sell tickets for or otherwise actively promote partisan political dinners and similar fund-

# FVA P.GOV

## FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

COURTESY GRAPHIC

raising events.

**FEDERAL EMPLOYEE GUIDANCE**

Permitted activities for federal employees include: may be candidates for public office in nonpartisan elections; may register and vote as they choose; may assist in voter registration drives; may express opinions about candidates and issues; may contribute money to political organizations; may attend political fundraising functions; may attend and be active at political rallies and meetings; may join and be an active member of a political party or club; may sign nominating petitions; may campaign for or against referendum questions, constitutional amendments and municipal ordinances; may campaign for or against candidates in partisan elections; may make campaign speeches for candidates in partisan elections; may distribute campaign literature in partisan elections; and may hold office in political clubs or parties including serving as a delegate to a convention.

Prohibited activities for federal employees include: may not use their official authority or influence to interfere with an election; may not solicit, accept or receive political contributions unless both individuals are members of the same federal labor organization or employee organization and the one

solicited is not a subordinate employee; may not knowingly solicit or discourage the political activity of any person who has business before the agency; may not engage in political activity while on duty; may not engage in political activity in any government office; may not engage in political activity while wearing an official uniform; may not engage in political activity while using a government vehicle; may not be candidates for public office in partisan elections; and may not wear political buttons on duty.

**PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION**

So what is the penalty for violating the Hatch Act? For covered federal employees, the most severe penalty of violation is removal. The minimum penalty is suspension without pay for 30 days.

To find out more about the Hatch Act, visit these sites: <http://www.oge.gov/Topics/Outside-Employment-and-Activities/Political-Activities/>; <https://osc.gov/Pages/HatchAct.aspx>; <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-fix/wp/2014/07/17/do-you-work-in-government-have-you-violated-the-hatch-act-lets-investigate/>; [https://osc.gov/resources/ha\\_fed.pdf](https://osc.gov/resources/ha_fed.pdf); or consult DODD 1344.10 Feb 2008 Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces.

**FORT RUCKER  
MOVIE SCHEDULE****FOR OCT. 19 - NOV. 4****Friday, Oct. 19**

The Predator (R) ..... 7 p.m.

**Saturday, Oct. 20**

The House With A Clock In Its Walls (PG) ..... 4 p.m.

The Nun (R) ..... 7 p.m.

**Sunday, Oct. 21**

The House With A Clock In Its Walls (PG) ..... 1 p.m.

A Simple Favor (R) ..... 4 p.m.

**Thursday, Oct. 25**

The Little Stranger (R) ..... 7 p.m.

**Friday, Oct. 26**

Hunter Killer (R) ..... 4 &amp; 7 p.m.

**Saturday, Oct. 27**

Hunter Killer (R) ..... 4 &amp; 7 p.m.

**Sunday, Oct. 28**

Hunter Killer (R) ..... 1 &amp; 4 p.m.

**Thursday, Nov. 1**

Hunter Killer (R) ..... 7 p.m.

**Friday, Nov. 2**

The Nutcracker and The Four Realms (PG) ..... 4 &amp; 7 p.m.

**Saturday, Nov. 3**

The Nutcracker and The Four Realms (PG) ..... 4 &amp; 7 p.m.

**Sunday, Nov. 4**

The Nutcracker and The Four Realms (PG) ..... 1 &amp; 4 p.m.

TICKETS ARE \$6 FOR ADULTS AND \$5 FOR CHILDREN, 12 AND UNDER. MILITARY I.D. CARDHOLDERS AND THEIR GUESTS ARE WELCOME. SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL 255-2408.



PHOTOS BY JIM HUGHES

A Soldier does push-ups at the exercise point erected in honor of CW3 Clifton Wolcott, who was killed during the Battle of Mogadishu in 1993, during the Mogadishu Mile physical training event Oct. 1.

# BATTLE OF MOGADISHU

*Fort Rucker looks back on historic 1993 battle in Somalia*

**By Jim Hughes**  
*Fort Rucker Public Affairs*

Fort Rucker Soldiers, civilian employees and family members took time to remember the past during numerous activities Sept. 29 to Oct. 4 as part of the post's 25th Anniversary of the Battle of Mogadishu Week of Remembrance.

Veterans from the battle visited the post throughout the week that kicked off with a memorial run Sept. 29.

Next came retired CW4 Mike Durant speaking at the post theater before a free

showing of the movie, "Black Hawk Down," by the Army and Air Force Exchange Service Sept. 30.

Soldiers and accompanying family members then packed Howze Field early the next morning for a remembrance ceremony featuring a 21-gun salute and the playing of "Taps," followed immediately by taking part in the Mogadishu Mile physical training event.

The Mogadishu Mile entailed a mile-long run with stops every few hundred yards where participants would take part in a physical activity named after one of the fallen of the battle. Several veterans from the battle, including retired CW5 Dan Jollota and Durant, took

part in the event. Concurrent with the event, the NCO Academy hosted its Iron Squad competition.

The rest of the events consisted of guest speakers -- all veterans of the battle -- and a prayer breakfast. The following are brief summaries of what the speakers discussed during their presentations.

## JOLLOTA

Jollota, who flew the combat search and rescue UH-60 Black Hawk Super 68 during the battle, and his wife, retired Lt. Col. Jane O'Connor, who was at the base in Mogadishu during the battle, spoke Oct. 1 in the U.S.



Jollota



## Mogadishu *CONT.*

Army Aviation Museum about how they came to be a couple, their careers, their experiences on Oct. 3, 1993, and the aftermath, and also shared some wisdom to today's Soldiers.

"The thing I want to pass on to senior company commanders and senior leaders out there is that my company commander knew my life," he said. "He knew exactly what I was going through as we were getting ready to deploy – the better you know your Soldiers out there, the better you're going to be able to support them in their professional lives as they try to balance their professional lives with their personal lives."

He also advised Soldiers to do their best with that professional and family life balancing act.

"I was telling the kids today, as you go down this path of your career, you will get to crossroads where you will decide whether to go left or right, and try to figure out your career path," he said. "You don't know what that career path looks like – you can't look at it 10 years from now. You've got to look at the next crossroad and decide which way to go on that crossroad."

"And when you get to my age, you look back at the decision points that you made for your family or your career. If you make the right decisions, which are for your family, by the way, it will all work out. I know guys in their 70s and 80s these days and they're our nation's finest heroes and warriors. They've done everything the nation's asked of them, but they have three or four ex-wives and they have kids that hate them because they just have not made the decisions that they needed to make (to maintain that balance between work and family life)."

Another thing the couple emphasized to Fort Rucker Soldiers is the importance of working with families, with O'Connor adding that a strong family readiness group and strong

**"...at the end of the day, the political fighting, the institutional fighting doesn't really matter – it's who you're sitting next to that matters."**

*-- Retired CW5 Dan Jollota*



**Siegler and Spalding**

communication between the unit and the families helped get their team through that difficult time.

"It's not all that easy – you're going to have some outliers in every unit, you're going to have some weaker people," she said. "You're going to build your team and your family teams are just as important as your work teams – we had such a strong group of people that really helped us through a difficult time in an era where we weren't really used to that happening."

Touching on some points Durant made when he spoke the day before, Jollota said, "the woulda, shoulda, coulda out there – if we had AC-130s, if we had tanks, etc. Soldiers out there take a plan and try to do the best that they can with that plan. Oftentimes, when you have a plan and want more, sometimes you're denied what you want, and Soldiers have to be adaptive to what is given to them and what is not given to them."

"I try to teach Soldiers that, at the end of the day, the political fighting, the institutional fighting doesn't really matter – it's who you're sitting next to that matters," he added.

### SIEGLER AND SPALDING

Retired CW2 George Siegler and then-Spc. Eric Spalding may not have been sitting next to each other during the battle, but they were both Rangers on the ground during the battle, and shared their experiences Oct. 2 at the museum.

Siegler fast-roped in from a Black Hawk while Spalding was in the initial convoy.

Siegler said when they made their approach to the target on the aircraft, they started hearing pops – pops they hadn't heard on previous missions into the city. After fast-roping into the street and taking up his position to provide security, he was unaware that things were going wrong until his team leader said that a Black Hawk had went down and they had to move out to the crash site of Super 61.

For Spalding, he knew it wasn't just another mission when the convoy rounded a corner near the target building.

"The volume of fire went to max," he said. "You can say what you want about the movie being inaccurate, but the volume of fire (on the convoy) was correct."

And that volume of fire would continue to be directed at Spalding and the convoy for most of the day as it continuously tried to find its way through the heavy fire it was taking to the Super 61 crash site, he said. "Practice, train, practice, train – I had this mentality that I was going to do this right. That was my biggest fear – screwing up. It wasn't getting hurt or anything like that."

Spalding did end up getting injured -- hit in both legs – and also "driving by braille" by directing the driver of the truck he was in, who'd suffered a head injury and couldn't see, with voice directions.

While the convoy was getting smaller and suffering



## Mogadishu *CONT.*

mounting casualties, Siegler's group of Rangers had made its way through severe fire of its own to the area of the crash site, and eventually decided to make a building and courtyard a stronghold after suffering numerous casualties, as well, he said.

After pulling security outside for hours under constant fire, Siegler was able to go inside the building knowing that the convoy that was supposed to pick them up had been chewed up horribly and had limped back to the base to regroup. It was dark, and the Rangers on the ground were on their own ... except, not really.

"All I could hear was the constant miniguns and rockets going off outside – really comforting for me. Loved my Aviator brethren back then – told Little Bird guys over the years that if it wasn't for you guys, I wouldn't be alive ... period ... no doubt. Not a doubt in my mind. They kept that going on constantly. They drew a line in the sand."

Siegler eventually had to navigate with much of his team what was termed the Mogadishu Mile from the crash site to a rally point just beyond the Olympic Hotel where he was able to cram into an armored personnel carrier and get taken to the Pakistani Stadium.

"It was one of those pivotal moments for the Army as a whole," he said about the battle, adding that there were a "whole lot of lessons learned on the Aviation, medical and ground sides. And as an individual, I looked at what I could do to make myself better prepared for things such as this. I



Kulsrud

was lucky enough to be a part of it -- lucky enough to survive it, and here we are telling tales."

### KULSRUD

One of those drawing the line in the sand with the Little Birds was retired CW5 Larry Kulsrud, who spoke at the Wings Chapel Oct. 4.

"By that point, we had two aircraft down in the city, one back at the airport, destroyed, one in New Port, destroyed for all intents and purposes," Kulsrud said. "Of the original eight UH-60s, we were down to four. The MH-6s were pulled off and sent back to airport and that left four AH-6s over the city trying to protect the first crash site, the Rangers moving around in the city and the convoy that was trying to get to the first crash site.

"We were providing close air support to the guys on the ground. Once they consolidated on (the Super 61) crash site and the buildings around there, things settled down as best they could, but the only aircraft left up was CSAR and four Little Birds over the city," he said. "Our miniguns fire 4,000 rounds a minute each, so both of them fire at 8k a minute, plus we have the 2.75-inch rockets. Throughout the night, we shot as close as 15 meters to the friendlies because we had to.

"That's how it went throughout the rest of the night," Kulsrud added. "We flew about 17 ½ hours and we didn't get out of the aircraft unless we had to go to the bathroom – we did that when rearming."

He then talked of the importance of the Air Force combat controllers on the ground telling the pilots what to shoot at, so they could avoid hitting their comrades.

"In Army Aviation, hopefully you're always above it and not down in it, but you have to be prepared to be down in it because, as in this day, we had a number of aircraft and crews that ended up on the ground – the experience is not the same ... not the same," he said. "We can't do what we do without the guys on the ground."

He also praised the maintainers who armed and kept the limited aircraft flying almost non-stop.

"We had five AH-6s – four crews and one spare – that spare was used three times," he said. "While we were out, the ground guys repaired that aircraft and then (pilots would leave the one they were in and) take the spare. It was like a NASCAR pit crew."



Soldiers work together to overcome an obstacle during the Iron Squad competition.

# MISSION OF MERCY

## MP recognized for his efforts in World War II

By Sgt. Audrey Hayes

MANASQUAN, N.J. -- "I remember the night and the trip to Carentan. You'll remember that no one was on the road, except for the five of us in the horse drawn carriage. There is one thing that has stayed with me over the forty years, it was the fact that we never knew each other's names, nor did we ever see one another's faces."

That is an excerpt from a letter that Walter "Rookie" Pruikisma wrote about an event that took place a few nights after the mighty invasion of Normandy, France, during World War II.

He dubbed it his "Mission of Mercy," when he volunteered to escort an injured French woman and her two children to a hospital, 12 miles through war-torn land, by horse and buggy.

Seventy-four years later, Pruikisma, now 95 years old, and a resident of Brick, New Jersey, was recognized -- not only for his heroic acts that night, but also for his contribution as a military police Soldier during World War II.

On Oct. 13 at the Manasquan First Presbyterian Church in Manasquan, New Jersey, Pruikisma received the Order of the Marechaussee medallion in Silver. Maj. Gen. Phillip M. Churn, the assistant to the chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff, Reserve Matters, presented him with the medallion, which is



PHOTO BY SGT. AUDREY HAYES

**Walter Pruikisma poses for a portrait after receiving The Military Police Regimental Association's Order of the Marechaussee in Silver, during an award ceremony Oct. 13 Manasquan, N. J.**

awarded by Military Police Regimental Association.

The Marechaussee was established in 2000 and is the highest honor an MP can receive. It recognizes exceptional dedication and contribution to the MP Corps over an extended period of time.

Pruikisma was drafted into the Army in

September 1943. The following February, he boarded a ship and sailed to Great Britain with his unit, D Company, 783rd Military Police Battalion.

Four days after D-Day, D Company, along with C Company from the 783rd, arrived on Utah Beach in Normandy. They were the first MPs on the battle-ridden shore. Their

mission was to set up traffic control points, process prisoners of war and establish the Red Ball Express -- a highway that was used to move an endless supply of cargo to Gen. George S. Patton's Army.

Pruikisma's company set up its headquarters in Sainte-Marie-du-Mont, Normandy, and established a traffic control point. But it was two days later, June 12, 1944, when his most memorable event -- the Mission of Mercy -- occurred.

A local French boy came to his post late at night and asked an officer if someone could help him transport his mother to a hospital.

She was injured on D-Day, when a German Soldier threw a grenade into their home.

Pruikisma recalls the officer saying, "I'm not going to assign anyone for this mission. But, I will take volunteers."

Pruikisma said he thought of his mother and how he would want someone to help her, so he volunteered. Then, Cecil Morris, another MP from his company, said he would go, too, to help pull security during the trip.

At 1 a.m., Pruikisma, Morris and the French boy, along with his sister and injured mother, boarded a small two-wheeled, horse-drawn carriage and began their mission to the hospital in Carentan -- 12 miles away and in no man's land. Pruikisma knew which direction Carentan was because he watched the glow of the city burning the night before.

"The only thing I could hear was the sound of the horse's hooves and iron wheels



MISSION *CONT.*

hitting the cobblestone,” said Pruikisma. “The streets were completely empty.”

When they reached the scorched town, Soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division were watching from windows and doorways as the carriage rolled by, not stopping them to investigate where they were going.

When they reached the hospital, Pruikisma saw a church across the street. In front of the church building were two piles of dead German and American Soldiers that reached five feet high.

They quickly jumped out of the carriage and rang a bell at the hospital. A pegged-leg French man hobbled to them and opened the gate.

Nurses, or perhaps nuns, Pruikisma said, received the injured French woman and were so thankful for his and Morris’ service. After a couple of minutes, they got back on the carriage and headed back to their headquarters.

Just like that, it was over.

Although it was a sliver of time compared to the rest of his duration in the war, that mission remained his most memorable.

“You know, I never talked about any of this for nearly 40 years,” said Pruikisma. “I left all that stuff on the boat.”

Until one day, when he had an urge to know with whom he shared the lonely, dangerous road to Carentan.

“It was like a book, but without the last chapter,” said Pruikisma.

He started to write letters inquiring about the injured French woman and the pegged-leg man. He sent one to a church in Saint-

Marie-du-Mont and another to the town’s mayor.

The newspaper of Saint-Marie-du-Mont published an advertisement with Pruikisma’s inquiry about the family he helped, but no one responded.

A couple of years later, Pruikisma tried again. This time, he sent a letter to the mayor of Carentan. And, this time, the mayor replied. The letter included the names of the people he escorted to Carentan, 40 years prior.

Pruikisma and the daughter of the injured French woman -- whose name he now knew as Madame Andree Tourraine -- wrote letters to each other explaining what they remembered of the events that night.

“Upon learning your name, I finally feel like I began to read the last chapter and the story is coming to a completion,” Pruikisma said in a letter to her.

Pruikisma wasn’t officially recognized for his selfless service during the war until 2016. The French government awarded Pruikisma with the Legion of Honor, the country’s highest recognition.

And now, two years later, the Military Police Regimental Association is bestowing their highest honor upon him, as well.

“I’m proud to have served as an MP,” said Pruikisma. “When I was in France and Belgium and Holland, it didn’t matter what other [national] army I was working with. They knew I was authority when I had my MP brassard on.”

## SPOUSES DAY



PHOTOS BY KELLY MORRIS

**Fort Rucker spouses learn survival techniques like building a shelter during the Fort Rucker Spouses Day event here Oct. 12. The day included a survival event, team building event at the Leaders Reaction Course, an opportunity to fire weapons at the EST 2000 and fly in the flight simulators at Victory Hall. The event provided the participating spouses a taste of what their Soldiers do and a chance to build camaraderie with other spouses.**



**Fort Rucker spouses practice tying a variety of knots as part of Fort Rucker Spouses Day.**

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# Esper: Civilians play a huge role in Army's modernization

By Gary Sheftick

*Army News Service*

WASHINGTON -- It's up to civilian employees to sustain the Army's current momentum of modernization and reform, said Secretary of the Army Mark Esper Oct. 10 after he awarded the first of a new set of service pins for civilian personnel.

"We are in a renaissance ... I believe it in my bones," Esper said at a Department of the Army Civilian Luncheon during the Association of the U.S. Army's Annual Meeting and Exposition.

"This renaissance means we look at everything differently," he said. "We turn it upside down and inside out. We look for efficiencies. We look for better ways to be effective.

"We look for reform in every nook and cranny and every seat cushion to make sure we free up the time, money and manpower to focus on readiness and modernization."

## UNITY OF EFFORT

With establishment of Futures Command, the Army for the first time has an entity in charge of all acquisition, Esper said.

"It was all over the place," he said of the legacy "Big A" acquisition system. "You had RDECOM down here, months ago you had testing up here, you had contracting over here. There was no one single person in charge."

He said experts were doing acquisition and were passionate about the Army, but no single organization was there to provide clear guidance. Now, Army Futures Command will bring unity of command and unity of ef-

fort. "We've drawn the boxes; we've tightened up the lines," he said.

In response to a question about civilian employees worried about being forced to move, Esper said that wasn't the intent of Army Futures Command. Only the headquarters of AFC is located in Austin, Texas, and the vast majority of acquisition employees working under the command will remain where they're at.

No one has been forced to move, he said, adding the fundamental purpose of Futures Command was simply to provide unity of effort. It's not to "rip people away" or take away responsibilities, Esper assured -- rather, it's to breed collaboration.

## REQUIREMENTS IMPROVEMENT

One of the big acquisition shortcomings over the past 20 or 30 years has been the requirements process, Esper said.

Unachievable requirements were requested that caused programs to go over budget and be delayed, he said.

"You have people out there saying, well, I need a tank that can swim underwater; that can shoot a round 10,000 miles ... that can see at night," he quipped.

Now Futures Command and its cross-functional teams will be in charge of requirements. They will huddle at the very beginning with contractors, technology experts, budget specialists, testers and everyone involved, he said. It will be more of a team approach.

"It's no longer a relay race with 12 differ-

ent people handing off the baton ... nobody knows where the race began, nobody knows who slowed down and who sped up."

The new process will be more like a football team, he said. "You go in a huddle, you talk about what you're going to build, you all agree -- one, two, three, break -- you go out and run your play."

It's all about empowering people to do it well, he said, and do it in far less time. "It's all about readiness and modernization. It's about doing what is best for our Soldiers, our civilians and their families."

## NEW SERVICE PINS

One way leaders take care of people is to recognize them for the great jobs they do, Esper said.

The idea of a civilian service pin was brought to him several weeks ago, "and it wasn't hard to decide this one, because it was such a great idea."

The idea was brought to him by Diane Randon, the senior official performing the duties of principal to the assistant secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs). He called her up on stage to receive the

first pin.

"It's really an important way to recognize our DA civilians who served the Army for many years, and many decades in some cases," Esper said.

A bronze pin will be given to employees after one year of civilian service. A silver pin goes to employees with 10 years or more of service.

The words "Army Civilian Service" on the pin circle the traditional Army emblem designed by the Army Institute of Heraldry.

A gold pin will be presented to employees upon retirement.

"The gold rays emanating from the triangle allude to the future years ahead of them," Randon said of retirees.

Zeli King of the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management, known as ACSIM, was presented the first gold pin. She is scheduled to retire Oct. 13.

John Ursel of the Army's G-1 was awarded a silver pin and Taneshia Gray of Installation Management Command at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, was awarded the first bronze pin.

"We hope Army Civilians will wear these pins in pride," Randon said.



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. B. NICOLE MEJIA

**Secretary of the Army Mark Esper, pictured here during the AUSA conference Oct. 8-10 in Washington, D.C., says his 'hope and aspiration' is that Army Civilian employees will sustain a 'renaissance' that has begun to modernize and reform the Army.**



# FROM DFMWR

## YOUTH CENTER THEMED ACTIVITIES

The Fort Rucker Youth Center will host a themed night of activities and food each Friday and Saturday in October from 6-9:30 p.m. Youth ages 11-18 (Grades 6-12) are invited to attend and can bring a friend.

For more information, call 255-2260.

## EMPLOYMENT READINESS WORKSHOP

Mark your calendars and make plans to attend the employment readiness program workshop scheduled for Oct. 25 from 8:45-11:30 a.m. in Bldg. 5700 in the Army Community Service Multipurpose Room. Patrons will meet in Rm. 350 at 8:45 a.m. for paperwork and attendance prior to the session. They'll get the essentials about how to conduct a successful job campaign, to include crafting a winning resume, prepping for job interviews and other helpful tips. Advance registration is required.

For more information and to reserve your seat, call 255-2594.

## FORT RUCKER RIGHT ARM NIGHT

Leaders, bring your right-hand man or woman out for Fort Rucker Right Arm Night Oct. 25 from 4-6 p.m., hosted by NCO Academy at The Landing. Fort Rucker Right Arm Night is an old Army tradition, promoting a night of camaraderie and esprit de corps as leaders come together and treat those standing to their right – the ones helping them get through daily missions. Complimentary appetizers will be served while supplies last. Fort Rucker Right Arm Night will be held every month. Both military and civilians are invited to attend.

For more information, call 255-0768.

## 'LET'S DANCE NOT FIGHT'

The Fort Rucker Family Advocacy Program's victim advocates will conduct the "Let's Dance Not Fight" Zumba dance party Oct. 26 from 6-8 p.m. at The Landing. For more information, call 255-3898 or 255-3246.

## MOTHER RUCKER'S HAUNTED MANSION PARTY

It might be scary, it might be full of fright, but you will never know if you don't show up at night. Join Mother Rucker's Oct. 26 from 8 p.m. to midnight for its Haunted Mansion. The event will feature a costume contest and there will be Halloween specials. A courtesy shuttle will be available for on-post guests. The event is open to the public for those ages 18 years old and up.

For more information, call 255-3916.

## WHITE WATER RAFTING: TEEN RESILIENCY TRAINING

Fort Rucker Child and Youth Services will host a white water rafting trip to Columbus, Georgia, Oct. 27. The adventure begins with a 5:30 a.m. departure from the youth center and 6 p.m. is the estimated time of return. This trip is free for youth ages 13-18 years old. There are only 13 spots available and they are open on a first-come, first-served basis. Patrons can sign up at the youth center or parent central services. Participants must be CYS members.

For membership information, call 255-9638.

## SKETCHING 101

The Center Library encourages artists of all skill levels to come to its Sketching 101 Oct. 27 from 2-3:30 p.m. All you need to



Visit Fort Rucker Army Community Service on Facebook for a calendar of our activities!

bring is a couple of No. 2 pencils and your enthusiasm for art. This free event is open to authorized patrons and is Exceptional Family Member Program friendly.

For more information or to register, visit the Center Library or call 255-3885.

## COMMANDING GENERAL'S GOLF TOURNAMENT

Silver Wings Golf Course will host the Commanding General's Golf Tournament Oct. 27. The format is four-person team scramble and begins at 8 a.m. There will be \$10 door prize tickets available for purchase. Entry fee is \$60 for non-members/\$50 for members. Entry fee includes tournament course fees, 18 holes of golf, range balls, carts, breakfast and lunch, and prizes. Prizes go to the longest drive, closest to the pin, Top 3 teams and the highest scoring team.

For more information, call 255-0089.

## ZOMBIE RUN

The Fort Rucker Zombie Fun Run and Costume Contest is scheduled for Oct. 27 at 4 p.m. at West Beach, Lake Tholocco. There is no admission fee for this non-competitive 5K run. Runners are encouraged to dress up in Halloween costumes or as a member of the undead. Runners need to be prepared to avoid actors dressed as hungry Zombies along the 3.1-mile route. There will be a costume contest after the fun run and the winners will receive a trophy. The costume contest categories are the scariest, the most original, and the best family theme with winners chosen for children and adult age groups. Be sure to register for this event – registration forms can be picked up at both physical fitness centers. Walkers are welcome to participate.

For more information, call 255-2296 or 255-1951.

## HAUNTED MAZE

Step into your nightmares and navigate your way through heart-pounding frights as creatures of the night come out to play. You never know just who – or what – will be around the corner in the Haunted Maze. For the younger kids that don't want to go through the haunted maze, we'll have some friendly ghosts handing out candy. The Haunted Maze will be at the Fort Rucker Youth Center Oct. 29-30 from 6-8 p.m. and Oct. 31 from 6-9 p.m. Admission is free. There will be strobe lights and fog machines present, and this event is not recommended for people with seizures or asthma, or anyone under the age of 8. Children ages 12 and under require adult supervision.

## FAMILY FORT NIGHT

In honor of Month of the Military Family, the Center Library will host its Family Fort Night Nov. 1 at 6 p.m. The Center Library asks people to join its staff for the regularly scheduled pajama story time, during which time they will build forts, read stories and play games inside the library. Bring a flashlight, pillows, blankets and wear your pajamas for this fun family event. Open to authorized patrons of all ages. Visit the Center Library or call 255-3885 for more information.

## CAMPING UNDER THE STARS

As part of Month of the Military Family, Fort Rucker will host its eighth annual Camping Under the Stars event Nov. 2. All military and Department of Defense

# DFMWR

families will be able to attend this free outdoor event beginning at 5 p.m. at West Beach, Lake Tholocco. Enjoy two family friendly movies on an inflatable outdoor movie screen starting at 6:30 p.m. provided by the Army and Air Force Exchange Service. During the movie, s'mores and hot chocolate will be provided. Other activities throughout the night will include a story reading to the children under the gazebo beginning at 6 p.m., as well as games and other activities. Families are welcome to camp overnight or just stay for the evening festivities. So, don't forget to bring your tents, blankets and chairs. Outdoor recreation is offering free use of tents for the overnight camp out. Tents are limited, so call and reserve your tent early to ensure availability by calling 255-4305. For more information on the event, call 255-9810.

## BLUE ANGELS AIRSHOW DAY TRIP

MWR Central will host a trip to the Blue Angels Homecoming Air Show Nov. 3 in Pensacola, Florida. Pushing their F/A-18 Hornets to the limit, the Blue Angels will amaze the patrons with their speed, precision and daring maneuvers. The team is stationed at Forrest Sherman Field, Naval Air Station Pensacola during the show season. Patrons are advised to bring money to purchase from the vendors that will be at the show. The cost per person is \$35 and there is a minimum of 14 people for transportation to be included. Plan to depart at 6 a.m. and to return around 6 p.m.

For more information or to reserve your spot, call 255-2997 or 255-9517.

## ATV AND DIRT BIKE TRAIL RIDE

Hit the trails at ODR's ATV and Dirt

Bike Trail Ride Nov. 3 from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. Pre-registration is required and the cost is \$20. Drivers must pass the safety driving test through ODR before participating. Participants must provide their own ATV or dirt bike and also provide their own protective gear including helmets, boots, etc., that must be worn at all times.

This event is open to the public, ages 16 and up.

For more information, call 255-4305 or 255-2997.

## THOMPSON SQUARE ACOUSTIC CONCERT

Fort Rucker will host an Army Entertainment concert featuring Thompson Square – American country music duo composed of husband and wife, Keifer and Shawna Thompson – Nov. 3 at The Landing.

Opening for Thompson Square will be the very talented trio, Honey County. Doors open at 6 p.m. and the show begins at 7 p.m. This event is open to the public, ages 18 and over.

Tickets are available online at Eventbrite.com – general admission tickets start at \$15. Reserved seating is not available for general admission. A limited number of tickets will be available at the door for \$20 while supplies last. This show is expected to sell out, so get your tickets early.

There will be a 100-percent identification check at the door.

For more information, call 255-0767 or 255-0769.

## FORT RUCKER BIG BUCK CONTEST

ODR will host its Big Buck Contest Nov. 3 to Feb. 10 during daylight hours. Entry fee is \$25 per person and the contest is open to the public.

Participants must be registered before harvesting their buck and the buck must be harvested on Fort Rucker to qualify. Fort Rucker requires that hunters ages 16 and older have an Alabama State Hunting License, a Fort Rucker Post Hunting Permit, and a Hunter Education Card.

For more information and to register, call 255-4305.

## NATIONAL PEANUT FESTIVAL TRIP

CYS will host a trip to the National Peanut Festival Nov. 3 from 3-10:45 p.m. Cost is \$20, which gets you a ticket into the festival and dinner at a pizza restaurant.

There are limited seats, available on a first-come, first-served basis. Youth must be CYS members to participate and can sign up at the youth center.

For membership information or to sign-up for membership, call 255-9638.

## ORNAMENT CONTEST

DFMWR will host a handmade ornament contest for children ages 3–11 Nov. 5–30. Ornaments may be turned into the youth center, child development center or MWR Central.

Prizes will be awarded to first-place entries in the following categories: 3–5 years old, 6–8 years old and 9–11 years old. Awards will be presented at this year's Fort Rucker Christmas Tree Lighting. The overall winner will light the tree at this year's Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony Dec. 3. All handmade ornament entries will be displayed on the post Christmas tree.

Label your entry with the child's name, age, and guardian's name and contact information.

For more information, call 255-1749.

trick  
-OR-  
treat

WEDNESDAY  
OCT. 31  
6-8 PM  
POST HOUSING



# NEWS IN BRIEF

## POWER OUTAGE

In order to conduct maintenance, Alabama Power has scheduled a power outage that will affect power throughout post. The outage is scheduled from Oct. 20 at 11 p.m. to Oct. 21 at 7 a.m.

## RETIREMENT CEREMONY

Fort Rucker will host its quarterly retirement ceremony Oct. 26 at 2 p.m. in the U.S. Army Aviation Museum. All are welcome to attend and honor the post's latest retirees and their families for their service.

## TRICK OR TREAT HOURS

Trick or treat hours for on-post residents is Oct. 31 from 6-8 p.m. Parents need to ensure children are supervised at all times, according to Directorate of Public Safety

officials. Drivers need to pay particular attention to children and other pedestrians to help prevent any accidents. DPS will have patrols in the housing areas. Before children start out on their trick or treat rounds, parents should: pin a slip of paper with the child's name, address, and phone number on their costume or place it inside the child's pocket in the event they are separated from the group; tell children not to eat any treats until they return home, so they can be properly checked; teach children to stop only at houses that are well-lit and never to enter a stranger's home; plan and discuss the route trick-or-treaters intend to follow; and know the names of older children's companions.

## BAZAAR

The Fort Rucker Spouses Club will host

its annual bazaar Nov. 2 and 3 in Yano Hall. The bazaar will run from noon to 6 p.m. Nov. 2 and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Nov. 3. Admission is \$5. For more information, visit <http://www.fortruckerpsc.com> or the club's Facebook page.

## TIME CHANGE

People are reminded to set their clocks back one hour Nov. 4 at 2 a.m. for the end of Daylight Saving Time.

## VETERANS DAY CEREMONY

Fort Rucker will host its Veterans Day ceremony Nov. 9 at 11 a.m. at Veterans Park.

## RETIREE COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Fort Rucker Installation Retiree Council meets the first Thursday of each

month in The Landing at 11:30 a.m. The meeting is an open forum and all retirees are invited to attend. Retirees are also encouraged to apply for one of the open positions on the council.

For more information, call 255-9124.

## LOST AND FOUND

People who have lost or misplaced property while on Fort Rucker can call the Directorate of Public Safety's lost and found point of contact at 255-3239 to inquire if their property has been turned in. To claim their property, people must be able to demonstrate ownership of the property. DPS retains property found or turned in at special events held on the installation, such as Freedom Fest – the most common items turned-in are keys, cell phones and wallets.

# ARMY FLIER

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Fort Rucker Commanding General

**Col. Brian E. Walsh**  
Fort Rucker Garrison Commander

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