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PHOTOS BY NATHAN PFAU

The post Christmas tree shines brightly after the official lighting ceremony at Howze Field Nov. 30.



Post lights up Christmas season

By Nathan Pfau
Army Flier Staff Writer

Of all the holiday icons, one of the most recognizable is the Christmas tree, and Fort Rucker rang in the season by lighting up one of the biggest trees around.

The installation officially kicked off the holiday season with its Christmas tree lighting ceremony at Howze Field Nov. 30, where hundreds came together to get in the holiday spirit with a warm cup

of hot chocolate, a bit of caroling and a whole lot of Christmas cheer.

The Maneuver Center of Excellence Fort Rucker Detachment Band set the tone with sounds of the holidays before Col. Brian E. Walsh, Fort Rucker garrison commander, welcomed guests from all over the Wiregrass to kick off the celebration.

"The lights are hung, the tree is

SEE HOLIDAYS, PAGE A4



Children hold up their sign for Santa as they wait for the man in red to visit from the North Pole.

Driving drunk puts lives at risk

By Nathan Pfau
Army Flier Staff Writer

While the cost of a taxi can be substantial and the use of a designated driver can be inconvenient, the bill for driving while intoxicated can often add up to the loss of lives, or heavy fines and the loss of driving privileges.

More than 10,000 deaths resulted from alcohol-related driving accidents in 2016, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and although fatalities from drunk driving have fallen over the years, the risk still remains high.

As the holiday season gets under way and more people brave the roadways to visit family and friends, personal responsibility has a big part to play in making sure people stay safe when it comes to consuming alcohol and getting behind the wheel, said Marcel Dumais, Fort Rucker Community Police chief.

"Just be cognizant If you are going to consume alcohol," said the police chief. "First, the most important thing is, we would like to see people use designated drivers. Before you even start your partying, identify that person in advance.

"Even one drink is too many at times (when it comes to driving), so we ask that if you're going to drink alcohol, do not drive back home," he continued. "Call yourself a taxi, call a friend, call a family member to come get you, so that we're not on the wrong end of that with someone being stopped for (driving under the influence)."

SEE DRIVING, PAGE A5



PHOTO BY NATHAN PFAU

Fort Rucker military police officials warn that driving while intoxicated on post can lead to a one-year suspension of on-post driving privileges and worse.

HELP WANTED

Upcoming workshop helps people build a better résumé

By Nathan Pfau
Army Flier Staff Writer

Fort Rucker's gate guards are the post's first line of defense and officials want to make sure the most qualified candidates are guarding the entrance to the home of Army Aviation.

Fort Rucker will host a Gate Guard Job Fair Jan. 20 at 9 a.m. at Bldg. 5700 where applicants should come prepared to interview for a job as officials will be making offers by the end of the day, according to Mike Kozlowski, Army Commu-

SEE WORKSHOP, PAGE A5



PHOTO BY NATHAN PFAU

Tony Freeman, Fort Rucker Directorate of Public Safety gate guard, scans for proper identification to grant gate access at the Daleville gate Tuesday.

AER director visits to gain insight on better helping Soldiers

By Nathan Pfau
Army Flier Staff Writer

Hardship comes in various forms, but one program exists solely for the purpose of helping Soldiers and families in those hard times.

Retired Lt. Gen. Raymond V. Mason, Army Emergency Relief director, and retired Command Sgt. Maj. Charles Durr, AER financial assistance, visited Fort Rucker Nov. 30 to gain a better understanding of what Soldiers and families need when it comes to emergency relief, said Beth Gunter, Fort Rucker AER financial counselor.

Mason's visit to Fort Rucker was just one stop on his tour of installations and the AER programs within them in order to assess the needs of Soldiers, how AER is meeting those needs and what the program can do to improve the service it provides, said Gunter.

To kick off their visit, Mason and Durr presented Bobby Michael, Army Aviation Center Federal Credit Union president and CEO, and Lisa Hale, AACFCU vice president of marketing, with a certificate of appreciation for the institution's dedication to AER over the past 50 years.



PHOTO BY NATHAN PFAU

Retired Lt. Gen. Raymond V. Mason, Army Emergency Relief director, and retired Command Sgt. Maj. Charles Durr, AER financial assistance, meet with company commanders and first sergeants to discuss the commanders' referral program during a visit to Fort Rucker Nov. 30.

The AER director then met with Fort Rucker AER staff, U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence and garrison leadership, as well as various directorates within the garrison. Mason also met with spouses of senior and junior leaders to better understand the needs from their point of view, as well.

SEE INSIGHT, PAGE A5

PERSPECTIVE

Transition expert explains why it's important to have budget

By Darrel Baxter

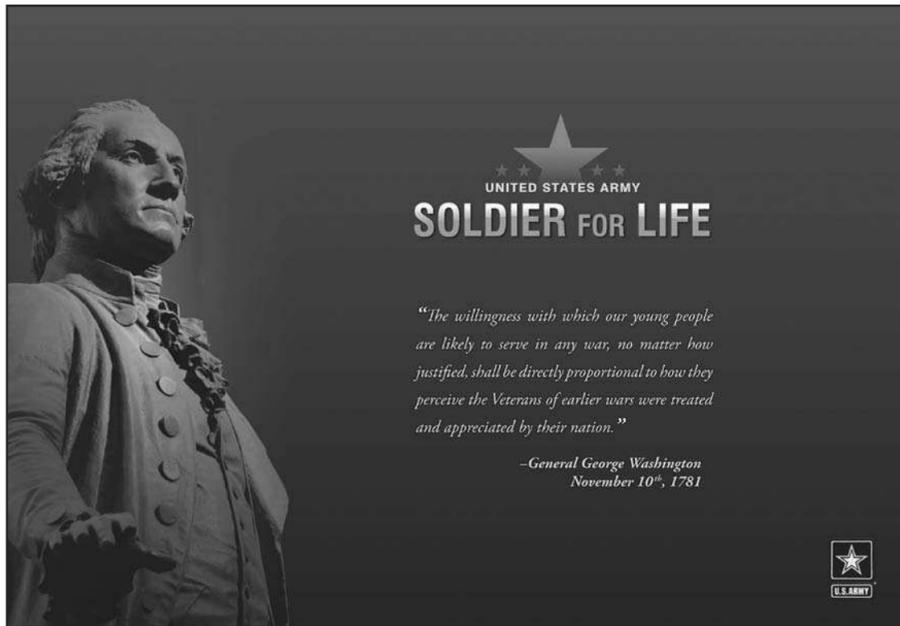
Fort Rucker Soldier for Life
Transition Assistance Program
Financial Counselor

There are several reasons why you should have a budget. Many people associate having a budget with having tight restrictions as if you are on a diet. A budget is not meant to be that way, it is a tool that helps you to better manage your money and achieve financial goals that you have for you and your family.

For those who already use a budget, you understand the benefits that it can bring to you and your family's financial situation. For those who don't have a budget, I recommend you develop one or find one that works for you. A budget can be as simple or as complicated as you make it. As you prepare to transition, you will need to prepare for the changes that will come to your finances and way of life that you have been accustomed to for perhaps a few to many years while you served. Having a budget in place prior to your transition will make things a lot smoother for you and your family.

Below are some of the benefits of having a budget.

1. Helps you control your money. You know what money is coming in and what money is going out. You tell your money where to go, what to do and when to do it. You



are tracking what is going on with your money and you are not confused about what happened to your money. You are in charge.

2. Helps you to live within and below your income. Without a budget, you may find yourself trying to live above your means, which can lead to financial hardship for you and your family. A budget helps keep you from overspending, and staying within your budget. It can keep you from trying to live like the Joneses.

3. Helps you achieve goals, it will help you to achieve both short and long-term goals that you may have, for example saving for a house, car, a vacation or getting out of debt. Having a budget in place allows you to keep things in order and directs your money where it needs to go to achieve the goals that you have set.

4. Helps you to save money for multiple reasons: emergency funds in case of an unexpected event or job loss occurs and you need to pay for something

or cover expenses for a few months; you can allocate what you will save for retirement funds for when you plan to retire and don't plan to work anymore; and college funds, for young children to have money for college when they graduate from high school.

5. Helps you to identify where you may have bad spending habits. It is important that you know where your money is going. When you lose track of your spending, your money can go places that you had no

idea it was going. You can adjust your spending to make better use of your money.

6. Helps to reduce financial stress. You may have heard that financial problems are a big cause for family and relationship problems. A budget can help you to achieve the financial peace that is beneficial for both you and your family. You don't have to worry about the late nights thinking about how you are going to make it to the next pay date because you don't know where your money is going or have enough to cover the expenses.

If you already have a budget, continue to use it and put it use. It will be beneficial to you as you prepare to transition. If you don't have one, it is recommended that you create one or find one online that works for you and easy for you to understand. You don't want to find yourself in a situation where you are unprepared financially.

Start a budget today to get a head start on being financially prepared for your next step and future. There are multiple resources on line that can assist you with developing a budget.

Also, when you schedule your SFL-TAP workshop you will be provided a budget worksheet that you can use. I recommend you develop a budget as soon as possible, don't wait.

Rotor Wash

“The holiday season is upon Fort Rucker and children on the installation are getting their Christmas lists ready. What does Christmas mean to you and what would you like Santa to bring you this year?”



Mathew Grace,
military family member

“Christmas for me means seeing family. Most of my Christmas list is Legos, and an invisible pen and anything else Santa likes.”



Riley Shumway,
military family member

“What Christmas means to me is joy, happiness, laughter and spending time with my family. What I would like for Christmas would be a new bike – possibly in mint color.”



Armond Loisean,
military family member

“What Christmas means to me is joy and happiness, and spending time with family. What I would like for Christmas is a golden hoverboard, so I can ride around the street sharing happiness.”



Caleb Bryant,
military family member

“Christmas means family to me. I just want my family to be together for Christmas – I don't really need anything (else) for Christmas.”



Abigail Butler,
military family member

“I think Christmas means joy and Jesus' birthday. This year I would love a pair of black Nike sneakers.”

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FORT RUCKER COMMANDING GENERAL

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'NOT NORMAL'

Deputy SecDef makes case for budget stability

By Jim Garamone
Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON — The Defense Department has clear orders from President Donald J. Trump “to build a stronger military, take care of our men and women and excel in our business operations,” Deputy Defense Secretary Patrick M. Shanahan said Saturday.

Shanahan was the closing speaker at the Reagan National Defense Forum in Simi Valley, California, and he spoke how the department is putting the president’s orders into effect.

The deputy secretary has been on the job for just under five months and said he is most concerned with managing business practices to find money to make the military more lethal.

The deputy came to the department after 30 years at Boeing, where he shepherded the 787 Dreamliner to production. And while he says the transition from the aircraft manufacturer to DOD has been seamless, there have been some surprises. “I will say a couple of the department’s behaviors strike me as abnormal,” he said. “First, operating without a budget is not normal. Doing so every year for nine years is really not normal.”

STOPPING THE ABNORMAL FROM BECOMING NORMAL

While this tongue-in-cheek statement was met with knowing laughs from the high-powered audience at the forum, it served



Deputy Defense Secretary Patrick M. Shanahan speaks with CNN Pentagon correspondent Barbara Starr during the Reagan National Defense Forum at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, Calif., Dec. 2.

to underscore the problems facing DOD. Shanahan continued his statement of the problem. “Airplanes are meant to fly,” he said. “A service with a significant number of its airplanes grounded and awaiting maintenance is not normal.”

“Part of my job as a leader is guarding against normalization of abnormal behaviors within the department,” Shanahan said. “A high level of performance is not only expected of our military, it is essential for America’s security, no matter the restraints.”

He noted that the U.S. military also faced obstacles to readiness

and modernization in the years immediately preceding World War II.

“While military leaders sought stable funding, political tensions and budgetary pressures stymied readiness efforts until the Second World War arrived on our doorstep,” he said.

Today, artificial constraints once again hold the national defense hostage, Shanahan said. “From budget stresses like continuing resolutions and Budget Control Act caps to disagreements in Congress that affect timely decision-making, right now we have time — one of our

most precious resources. But we lack the stable budget needed to prepare for future fights.”

If a crisis appears, Congress will fund the military, the deputy secretary said, but there will be no time to prepare. “We cannot rely on a crisis to be the catalyst for solutions. The cost of global conflict is simply too high and we value our men and women in uniform far too much. The rapidly changing security environment and budgetary instability have forced our department into a risk management posture, the consequences of which are hard to calculate.”

LIMITED ELASTICITY

The career engineer used an analogy from physics to illustrate his point. A material may be stretched in many ways and will return to form when the stresses upon it are released unless it is stretched too far. Then it will remain deformed. “The Department of Defense has its limits to elasticity,” he said. “Excessive pressure in the form of budgetary instability has the potential to permanently distort the department’s character, and lessen the lethality.”

The department must get away from risk management and seize opportunities to remain competitive. “A risk-balanced, opportunity driven approach with spark innovation and help protect our hard-earned culture of excellence from the unintended distortion of instability,” he said.

Long-term readiness and modernization will be embedded into the National Defense Strategy, the deputy secretary said. “We are building alignment across the department, the interagency, with industry and other partners and allies. We view all these efforts through the critical lenses of lethality and affordability. After all, we must remember the department’s primary purpose is to be as lethal as possible, ensuring our diplomats speak from a position of strength.”

“This is only possible when our enemies know with certainty that we are ready to fight and win our wars, and our allies know we stand steady alongside them,” he added.

Combatant command enlisted leaders discuss operations, NCO empowerment

By Lisa Ferdinando
Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON — Combatant command senior enlisted leaders discussed operations against terrorists in their areas, the state of forces and what NCOs bring to the table internationally during a Pentagon news conference Nov. 28.

Command Sgt. Major John W. Troxell, the senior enlisted adviser to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, hosted the event at the end of the second day of a Defense Senior Enlisted Leader Council conference.

The senior NCOs discussed the global fight against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Ramon Colon-Lopez said ISIS is a problem in U.S. Africa Command’s area of operations.

“With regards to the spread of ISIS, pretty much everything that you’re getting on open source is what we’re seeing,” the chief said. “You have flows of foreign fighters that went from Africa to fight in Iraq and Syria, and they’re coming back. And our job right now is to be able to contain them and keep the pressure on the network to prevent further spread.”

The continent is an attractive area for the terror group. Colon-Lopez noted that more than 50 percent of Africa’s population is under 24 years old and many have no viable future. Also, he said, many African countries have weak governments that are unable to extend control into all parts of their nations, and ISIS is drawn to those areas.

AFRICOM is concerned about the spread not only of ISIS, but also of other violent extremist groups, Colon-Lopez said.

Reporters asked U.S. Special Operations Command senior enlisted leader Command Sgt. Maj. Patrick L. McCauley on the possible overuse of special operators in the last 16 years of war. McCauley said the force is at a sustainable level across the globe now, “but that doesn’t come easily.”

ALWAYS EVALUATING MISSION SETS

SOCOM officials always are evaluating the mission sets, McCauley said, explaining that the command studies all the requests and allocates forces to meet geographic

combatant commanders’ requirements.

“Right now, we feel like we’re in a pretty good place with that, but again, it’s a constantly ongoing process,” he said. “We’re evaluating, divesting of some missions we may or may not be doing and then moving into other areas.”

Troxell addressed the transnational and transregional aspects, saying nothing can really be limited to one area or region any more and noting that threats such as ISIS — born in the Middle East — have spilled over to Africa.

“We’ve seen attacks in Europe, but we’ve also seen them in the Pacific, as well,” he said. “So when we talk global integration, it’s key that all of us here work together and from a perspective of by, with and through our partners in building partner capacity.”

One aspect that is truly important, he added, is to help partner nations develop small-unit leaders, specifically NCOs who can execute disciplined initiative within their commanders’ intent to accomplish the mission.

The combatant command senior enlisted leaders said they understand that fighting a transregional threat requires transregional cooperation. Colon-Lopez spoke about the first continentwide gathering of African NCOs that AFRICOM sponsored in Garmisch, Germany.

He said it was a positive experience “just to be able to have a dialogue over four days on what are some of the things and initiatives that we need to be getting more aggressive on, and what methods we need to further utilize to ensure that they have professional forces,” he said.

Being together like that impressed on the African NCOs that they must work together, Colon-Lopez said. “I will quote the African partners when they stated at the end, ‘We came here as NCOs of our country. We leave here as NCOs for Africa. We need to tackle these problems together,’” he added.

READINESS CHALLENGES

Troxell acknowledged that the U.S. force and its combatant commands face readiness challenges.

“Sixteen years of high operational tempo and unstable budgets have caused us to defer some modernization programs that we needed to get after,” he said. “It’s caused us not to be able to get after maintenance programs. And



PHOTO BY SGT. AMBER I. SMITH

Command Sgt. Maj. John W. Troxell, senior enlisted adviser to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, makes a point as he and the senior enlisted leaders for the U.S. combatant commands brief Pentagon reporters at the conclusion of a conference Nov. 28.

it’s caused some of our service members to use worn-out equipment.”

The military needs a stable budget to address these issues, he said.

The senior enlisted leaders act as the eyes and ears of the combatant commanders. They are at the side of four-star generals and admirals, and they have a voice at the military’s highest levels. And the fact that enlisted service members have that kind of experience and influence sends a powerful message to partner nations, Troxell said.

It is tough for some nations to empower enlisted personnel, either through culture or tradition, he told reporters, and those nations also haven’t had the combat experience of the U.S. military.

“We’ve learned over the last 16 years that you can expand the commanders’ reach and their area of responsibility by empowering enlisted leaders,” Troxell said. “But that has to come through with training, education, and then you have trust. And when you have trust, you can empower those enlisted leaders.”

News Briefs

Security guard job fair

People with security or law enforcement experience who are interested in becoming a federal security guard at Fort Rucker are invited to attend a free informational workshop that covers the essentials of the federal application process, with particular emphasis on crafting a quality USAJOBS-compliant résumé for this position. The workshop is scheduled for Tuesday and Wednesday at the Kelly Adams Building in Rm. 212 at 435 Luther Drive, Troy. There will be two, two-hour iterations of the workshop — at 9 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Attendees do not need to bring anything with them. All workshop materials will be provided to every attendee, including free copies of Kathryn Troutman’s “The Jobseekers Guide, Ten Steps to a Federal Job® for Military and Spouses.” People don’t even need to bring their résumé for review as there will not be adequate time for the presenter to tweak the document between sessions, according to organizers.

Mike Kozlowski, a certified federal job search trainer and Career Coach® will guide attendees through the steps they need to create a federal résumé for this position, as well as directing them through some of the finer points of the application process. Representatives from Fort Rucker’s Department of Public Safety will also be on-hand to field people’s questions and concerns.

Seating is limited to 30 people per session. To register or get more information, call 334-255-2594. People can also make reservations by calling 334-347-0044.

Fall clean up

The Fort Rucker fall clean up is scheduled for Wednesday to Dec. 15. All garrison, mission and tenant units are required to participate.

For more information, call 255-0739.

Beauty shop closure

The beauty shop inside the mall at the Fort

Rucker Post Exchange will close today until a replacement contractor can be found. Army and Air Force Exchange Service officials said they hope to have a replacement in operation in the mid-January timeframe.

For more information, call 334-503-9044.

Lunch and learn

The Fort Rucker Army Wellness Center will host lunch and learn sessions in collaboration with the Fort Rucker Ready Resilient Training Center. All lunch and learn sessions are open to all eligible beneficiaries, including active-duty Soldiers and their dependents, retirees and Department of Defense civilian employees.

All sessions will be located at LAHC in V-130 from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. the second Tuesday of the month.

For more information, call 255-3923 or 255-9218.

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.

PTSD group

A post traumatic stress disorder education group meets Tuesdays from 5-6:30 p.m. in the Fort Rucker Spiritual Life Center in Bldg. 8939 on Red Cloud Road. The group follows the Veterans Affairs protocol PTSD Recovery Program and is for anyone interested in learning more about PTSD.

For more information, call 255-3903.

Army fields Modular Handgun System ahead of schedule

By Devon L. Suits
Army News Service

WASHINGTON — In an effort to improve Soldier and unit lethality, the Army fielded the new Modular Handgun System to the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) 18 months ahead of schedule, according to Lt. Col. Steven Power, product manager for individual weapons within Program Executive Office Soldier.

“The Army selected the 101st Airborne based on the alignment of the new handguns and ammunition being available, and the unit’s training and deployment schedules,” Power said. “The XM17 and XM18 Modular Handgun System program is one of the first in a whole line of modernization efforts that the Army will pursue over the next few years.”

PEO Soldier held a media roundtable Nov. 30 to discuss the fielding of the MHS.

The Army plans to field the MHS to infantry brigade combat teams, Stryker brigade combat teams, heavy brigade combat teams, National Guard tactical



PHOTO BY SGT. SAMANTHA STOFFREGEN

The XM17, or Modular Handgun System, is the Army’s newest handgun currently being fielded to Soldiers. The 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) is the first unit in the Army to field the service’s new handgun. The 101st ABN began fielding the MHS, Nov. 28.

combat forces, Department of the Army civilian gate guards, and the U.S. Army Special Forces Command, according to Debi Dawson, PEO Soldier.

The 1st Security Force Assistance Brigade at Fort Benning, Georgia, is slated as the next unit to receive the new MHS.

Because the M9 and M11 are approaching 30-years of service, the Army needed to find a new

handgun system that is “more accurate, ergonomic, reliable and durable, and has increased terminal effects,” according to sources at PEO Soldier.

The preexisting handgun systems have several key deficiencies. The M9, for instance, had a manual safety in the form of a decocking lever. The M11 has no external safety lever, according to sources at PEO Soldier. Fur-

thermore, the M9 has poor ergonomics, lacks integrated rails for attaching targeting enablers, and does not support Army-issued suppressors.

During the source selection process, handguns and the ammunition went through rigorous operational, developmental, and user-acceptance testing. The Army Armament Research, Development, and Engineering Center and the Army Research Laboratory played a key role in determining the level of lethality of each weapon system and caliber, according to Daryl Easlick, the Maneuver Center of Excellence Lethality Branch deputy.

“We wanted to find a weapons system that fit a more offensive capability,” Eastlick added.

Moving forward, the Army’s next challenge stems from the execution of fielding, to include the “alignment of funding, production schedules, weapon and ammunition delivery, and coordinating unit availability and user acceptance from gaining major commands,” Dawson said.

After the fielding logistics are sorted, Dawson said, weapons,

magazines, spare parts, and accessories, such as holsters, can be delivered to each unit.

Additionally, Soldiers assigned an MHS will qualify similarly to what they would have done with their M9s, Dawson added. While qualification standards have not changed, user testing has indicated that proficiency scores can be expected to improve.

DUAL-ARMING SOLDIERS

With the fielding of the new MHS, a recent change in Army policy will require team leaders and above to dual-carry the XM17 and M4, according to Easlick. Aside from special operations and military police units, junior leaders are not typically required to carry a sidearm.

In coordination with other proficient units and under the guidance and support of the MCOE, the 101st is laying the foundation for an Army-wide training program that will teach Soldiers how to properly cycle between both weapons, while keeping lethality on target, according to Sgt. 1st Class Andrew Flynn, the 101st master gunner.

FORSCOM CG:

Next Generation Combat Vehicle must be effective in megacities

By David Vergun
Army News Service

LIVONIA, Mich. — The likelihood is high that the Army won’t get to pick the time and place of its choosing for the next battle, said Gen. Robert Abrams.

But it’s likely that the next battle will take place in a megacity, said Abrams, commander of U.S. Army Forces Command. He spoke Nov. 30 in Livonia during the Future Ground Combat Vehicles Summit.

“The chance of fighting in a megacity is going to go through the roof,” he said, pointing out that there are currently 25 megacities across the world. A megacity is defined as a city of 25 million or more inhabitants. By 2035, the number of megacities is projected to double.

Coincidentally, 2035 is also the target delivery date for what is currently the Army’s conceptual Next Generation Combat Vehicle, he said.

Recent fighting in countries throughout the Middle East validate the value of combat vehicles in urban areas, but also reveal vulnerabilities, Abrams said. The NGCV will address such shortfalls.

Dense, urban terrain diminishes the effectiveness of fighting vehicles, which are impacted by obstacles, large civilian populations, and confined spaces, he noted. In such confined spaces, enemy dismounts are better able to isolate individual vehicles at close range, and employ anti-armor fire and IEDs of all types.

In light of those difficulties, requirements for NGCVs will include enhancements to optimize performance in urban environments, he stressed.

OTHER NGCV REQUIREMENTS

Another key consideration in the design of the NGCV is that the vehicle must contribute to a reduced logistics tail, or supply line,



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. KEITH ANDERSON

Gen. Robert Abrams, commander, U.S. Army Forces Command, said the Next Generation Combat Vehicle must be as revolutionary as the Bradley, when it was first introduced. A Bradley belonging to the 1st Cavalry Division is shown here in Rukla, Lithuania, during Operation Atlantic Resolve.

Abrams said. Reducing the logistics tail will enable the maneuver force to move more quickly and with greater agility.

The general offered several ways this could be accomplished. If the NGCV were to employ hybrid energy systems, for instance, that could reduce the need for fuel resupply convoys.

Other ways to reduce sustainment requirements include such things as speed diagnostics that support field maintenance and component ruggedness and life extension, he said.

Other capabilities of the NGCV might include:

- Reactive armor;
 - Active protection systems;
 - Artificial intelligence;
 - Autonomy and/or teaming;
 - Advanced target sensors;
 - Lasers;
 - Precision, extreme-range lethality; and
 - Potential to accommodate future upgrades.
- “That’s an aggressive list,” Abrams said. “And it is unlikely all of these can be built into the Next Generation Combat

Vehicle in that timeline. But that’s OK.”

What’s important, he said, is that those items signal a green light from the Army to industry to deliver the most capable system that can be produced with existing technology, anchored in doctrine.

Another challenge, he pointed out, is balancing the age-old tradeoff of survivability with weight, agility and lethality.

“Ideally, we would be able to trade weight for protection other than armor,” he said, explaining that will require advances in material science, along with innovations in active and passive defenses.

Whatever the outcome, the end product must be able to dominate peer enemies that have fielded their own version of a next-generation vehicle, he said.

AVOID ENVY SYNDROME

Abrams said when developing the NGCV, the Army must resist the urge to do side-by-side comparisons with other combat vehicles.

For instance, the Russian T-14 tank provided “an avalanche” of recent discussion about their approach of putting all the crew in the hull for the first time for protection, using auto-loaders and re-introducing capabilities to launch missiles through the main gun, Abrams said.

“Don’t rush to judgment that Next Generation Combat Vehicle should have similar capabilities like an automated turret and putting all the crew in the hull,” he said.

“Instead, the conclusion of what the vehicle should look like should be based on optimizing advantages for how we conduct combined arms maneuver and not simply that we want to match Russian or other country approaches,” he said.

REALISTIC APPROACH

Abrams outlined a strategy for pursuing the NGCV.

“I will continue to recommend that we lay out a realistic program, matched with engineering realities and communicate that frequently to Army senior leaders and to Congress. That is a far better approach in my opinion, than our history of overpromising and under-delivering,” he said.

He pointed to the Armed Reconnaissance Helicopter Program that was terminated in 2008 as a “cautionary tale of what happens when we adopt too aggressive a timeline linked to gold-plated requirements.”

That does not mean there should be a sub-optimal solution, he added.

The NGCV must have “leap-ahead, breakthrough technology which should be a revolutionary improvement over what’s available today,” he said, noting his own experience in the 1980s as an armor officer, going through the transition to the M-1 Tank and M-2 Bradley Fighting Vehicle.

Those were revolutionary in many aspects, he said.

The M-1 introduced superior crew protection, all-condition precision firepower on-the-move, maneuverability and dash speed which altered the geometry of the battlefield and provided decisive overmatch against Cold War enemies and every enemy since then, he said.

The Bradley was the first true infantry fighting vehicle, he said. Unlike with its predecessor, the M-113 Armored Personnel Carrier, the Bradley gave the Army the ability to get troops to their objective under armor with turret weapons and multiple precision direct fires options: the Bushmaster Chain Gun, Coaxial Machine Gun and TOW anti-tank missile.

“Today, 40 years later, they’re still our primary fighting vehicles,” he concluded. “We’ve made tremendous incremental improvements but they are reaching the end of their lifecycle. We’re in a race against time.”

Holidays

Continued from Page A1

trimmed, Christmas lists have been painstakingly written and the cookie baking has commenced,” said the garrison commander during the ceremony. “You can just sense that the children’s eager anticipation and excitement are in the air. With that said, Christmas is the perfect time of the year to reflect on our blessings, gather with friends and family, and celebrate the Christmas spirit.

“We have so much to be thankful for – our freedom and those who have served to protect our freedom, good health, family, friends and the privilege to wear the U.S. Army uniform and the insignia of this Branch,” he continued. “We’re also thankful and remember our service members whose duties have called them elsewhere, so in addition to being thankful tonight, let us remember to give this holiday season.”

Walsh suggested that people give in simple ways, such as a smile, opening a door for someone, paying a compliment, lending a hand to someone in need or offering an ear to someone who needs to talk.

“Reach out and lend a helping hand to those who are less fortunate – that’s, in part, what Christmas is about,” he said.

Following the garrison commander’s remarks, the win-

ners of the Directorate of Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation ornament contest were announced, with the winners getting the honor of flipping the switch to light the tree.

The winners of this year’s ornament contest were: James Wathen, 3-5 year-old winner; Leah Meadows, 6-8 year-old winner; and William Jensen, 9-11 year-old winner.

Following the lighting of the tree, a special guest from the North Pole made a visit to greet children and family members to help finalize their Christmas lists.

For Keegan Bolton, civilian from Daleville, the ceremony is a great way for him and his family to kick off the holiday season in the only way he knows how – supporting his community.

“I like to come out each year to support Fort Rucker, especially during this time of year,” he said. “I know that there are lots of families here who don’t have their Soldiers with them, so to be able to show them that they’re part of a community that cares is huge. I want to be able to support them the way that they support us.”

For Haley Wild, military spouse, the tree lighting was an opportunity for her and her family to recapture the Christmas spirit that they miss from the white winters they’ve been accustomed to in the past.

“It’s so nice to see that the post puts on events like this to

really make it feel like Christmas is coming around, because here in the South, it doesn’t really feel like Christmas,” she said. “We’re from the North and we get 12 inches to a couple feet of snow, sometimes, so it’s a huge difference coming down here. It feels like you have to try extra hard to make it feel like Christmas, and I can see that’s what they’re doing here.

“They want to make sure their community and families are being taken care of and thought of, and I feel like they’ve done that,” she continued. “My kids are enjoying it, and if they’re happy, then I’m happy.”



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Workshop

Continued from Page A1

nity Service employment readiness program manager.

"It will be a one-stop shop where every agency involved in the hiring process will be there and, by the end of the day, they'll have made offers with the goal of hiring for all of the vacancies," he said.

In order to help people prepare for the job fair, ACS will host a special resume workshop Tuesday and Wednesday at Troy University's Trojan Center in Troy that will be geared toward people interested in gate guard positions. The workshop will be held in two sessions: 9-11 a.m. and 2-4 p.m., and space will be limited to 30 people per session.

During the sessions, Kozlowski said he'll offer his federal job workshop, which is typically a

four-hour workshop, and compact it down to the first hour, followed by educational exercises to help better prepare potential applicants.

"That first hour is when I'm going to talk about (how to build their resume), and after I finish that process, I'll get them to work on a couple of practical exercises," he said. "We'll conclude that portion and open up the floor to a (question and answer session), and we'll have a couple of representatives from (the Fort Rucker Directorate of Public Safety) to answer any questions."

Additional workshops are in the works, and details will be announced as they're ironed out, he added.

One of the issues that the workshops hope to address is poorly constructed resumes that don't properly identify the quali-

fications of applicants, resulting in too few hires, said Kozlowski.

"In the past, (DPS) has received a slew of applications or resumes – hundreds of them – and out of that stack only (a couple) might get hired," he said. "They asked me to teach these folks how to write a resume because the major glaring thing that they noticed is that people wrote (inefficient) resumes."

One of the main culprits of a poorly constructed resume that Kozlowski said he noticed were that people tend to focus more on themselves than their accomplishments.

"People pretty much created autobiographies, or what I call chronological obituaries," he said. "They talked a lot about themselves, but did not connect the dots between their experiences to the job requirements."

Because of this, many applicants who may have been qualified might be overlooked because they weren't able to properly word their experience to showcase their ability to fill the position, said the ERP manager.

"There probably were a few that might have gotten tossed out of the pile because they just didn't voice it correctly," he said. "If you're applying to be a gate guard, you'd better have some sort of security background or at least have some level of expertise in that area."

"You've got to think outside of the box in some cases, and think how your experiences at your current employment or past employment fits the job that's been posted – not the other way around," Kozlowski continued. "Too many people place themselves at the center of the uni-

verse, and when you focus on yourself, your tendency is to create that autobiography that doesn't make a connection between your skills and the job requirements."

That's where the workshop comes in, he said. The workshop will help people reverse the tables and look at their own resumes from the eyes of their employers and ask the question, "What's in it for me to hire you?"

"I always tell my clients to ask yourself that question every day," said the ERP manager. "The job announcement should be the center of your universe, so we'll perform a little bit of heart surgery on that job announcement and find out what it is they need to do. You're the best person to toot your own horn on your resume."

For more information, call 255-2594.

Driving

Continued from Page A1

Dr. Wendy Blevins, Army Substance Abuse Program alcohol and drug control officer for Lyster Army Health Clinic, said it's this time of year that people who might not normally consume alcohol will drink to partake in celebrations with friends and family, and because of that, people should be extra aware of their intake.

"In some cases, things can get out of hand," she said. "Getting a costly DUI has no benefits or return. With fines, court costs,

bail, attorney's fees, towing and other costs from arrest to conviction – not including physical and emotional damages."

According to the NHTSA, a first-time offense can cost a driver up to \$10,000 in fines and legal fees, with penalties ranging from license revocation to jail time.

"A taxi ride home only costs an average of \$20 in comparison, which is money better spent on gifts and goodwill," said Blevins. "Good cheer, festivity and romantic celebrations can be achieved without high-risk behaviors. Please make plans to re-

sponsibly celebrate, so that you can enjoy the fun without tickets and fines or worse."

And things can get worse with alcohol-related crashes resulting in thousands of deaths annually in the U.S. alone, and although a death resulting from DUI is painful any time of year, it can be particularly difficult around the holidays.

"These are the worst kinds of accidents because they are preventable," said Dumais. "It's just on the driver themselves – as long as they don't get behind the wheel after drinking alcohol,

we won't see these types of accidents."

If drivers are arrested on post for DUI, they will incur a mandatory one-year suspension of driving privileges on the installation, which can affect the jobs of those who work on the installation, said Dumais.

"If you're civilian, you will be prosecuted by the state's attorney for the DUI, but regardless of your affiliation with the military, there is a one-year mandatory suspension from driving on Fort Rucker," said the police chief. "That's the big thing for

people who work on post. At that point, if you lose your license for a year on post, how will you get to work?"

Dumais said that before people consume alcohol, they should be aware of how it will affect their judgement because the effects of alcohol are different from person to person depending on height, weight and tolerance.

But regardless of size or tolerance, he said people should remember one thing.

"The best thing to do is if you're going to drink over the holidays, do not drive," he said.

Insight

Continued from Page A1

"Our spouses are involved in the finances of their household and AER is there to help the Soldiers and their family members, so (they discussed) how can we provide more education on the benefits of AER, and how they go about requesting assistance and those types of things," said Gunter.

Dolores Mabe, military spouse and ACS volunteer, was among the spouses to meet with Mason. As a spouse of 18 years, she said it's comforting to see that senior leadership cares enough about their Soldiers and family members to discuss the issues they face from the ground up.

"It's great," she said. "It definitely shows that there is some buy-in from higher up to try to fix the problem lower on the ground."

One of the main issues Mabe said facing AER is that many Soldiers believe there is a stigma attached to getting assistance through the program, which can deter someone in genuine hardship from seeking help.

"I had one family I worked with in my last job and they needed some financial assistance, but wouldn't go through AER because they were fearful of any repercussions through their unit," she said. "To me, it was more of an education issue that they didn't know that they don't come with those kinds of ramifications."

"In the last 18 years of doing this with my Soldier, the big thing is making sure that spouses and families know how to get help when they need it," she continued. "If that's financial help (they need), then AER is the way to go."

Mason also took the opportunity to meet with company commanders and first sergeants to discuss the commanders' referral program, whereby company commanders

and first sergeants have the approval authority to grant assistance of up to \$2,000 for a Soldier in financial hardship, said Gunter. He then met with sergeants and staff sergeants who have close working relationships with junior-enlisted Soldiers.

"They have a lot of experience in the military working closely with Soldiers and some may have utilized AER also, so by meeting with them, (Mason) could find out if we're getting the information down to the unit level and if we're reaching out to the Soldiers to see if they're aware of (the program) and not to feel a stigma to come to AER to request assistance," said the financial counselor. "We have to ask, 'How can we overcome that stigma?' because we do want to be that first choice rather than have them utilizing lenders that may be putting a Soldier in greater financial hardship rather than helping them out."

Keeping Soldiers from seeking off-post lending agencies that could potentially put them in greater hardship is one of the main goals of the program, said Mason.

"One of the things that we're battling across the force is what we call predatory lending agencies," said the AER director. "Unfortunately, many of these are right off post as you go off of military installations ... and some of these folks are actually preying on our Soldiers and our family members."

Through these predatory lenders, Mason said oftentimes Soldiers end up paying between 300- to 500-percent annual percentage rates, and nearly 50 percent of Soldiers ranked E-4 and below have visited an off-post lender at least once.

"Whatever we can do to educate the force, which is what my battle buddy, Charles Durr, (and I) do – we travel around and do a sensing session with E-4s and below, and we'll talk to them about that," he

said. "This whole financial education side is critical to the readiness of our Army and the Soldiers."

AER exists to help Soldiers and their family members in emergency situations, but Gunter said sometimes Soldiers aren't aware that their hardship might constitute an emergency that they AER can assist with.

"What do you consider an emergency?"

asked the financial counselor. "Emergency travel is our primary assistance program that is utilized, but vehicle repairs constitute an emergency because you're putting yourself into financial hardship because that unexpected vehicle repair occurred."

"The definition of how broad an emergency is where we need to look at it," she said. "It needs to be looked at as an unexpected hardship – that's an emergency."

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2017

Holiday Worship Services & Events Schedule

CATHOLIC (MAIN POST CHAPEL, BLDG 8940)	
22 Nov (1700)	Thanksgiving Eve Mass
24 Dec (1600)	Children's Christmas Eve Mass
24 Dec (2200)	Christmas Eve Mass
25 Dec (0900)	Christmas Day Mass
31 Dec (1700)	New Year's Eve Mass (Holy Day of Obligation)

JEWISH (MAIN POST CHAPEL, BLDG 8940)	
12-20 Dec (1700)	Hanukkah

PROTESTANT (HEADQUARTERS CHAPEL, BLDG 109)	
22 Nov (1130)	Thanksgiving Service

PROTESTANT (MAIN POST CHAPEL, BLDG 8940)	
10 Dec (1600)	Annual Children's Christmas Drama
13 Dec (1700)	German Christmas Service
24 Dec (1100)	Combined Protestant Worship Services
24 Dec (1900)	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
31 Dec (1100)	Combined Protestant Worship Services

For more information, contact the Religious Support Office, 334-255-2989/2012.

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146 COUNTY RD 752: This seller has made so many improvements that you just need to make an appointment to see this home before it's GONE! Yard large enough to put in a pool, and the sprinkler heads in the back yard have been capped. Privacy fence with cedar trees lining the back fence and solar lights attached to give a little ambience in the yard at night in the back with recessed lights down to dusk on the front and sides of house. The garage features two doors with storage on each side and a door to the side. **EVELYN HITCH 406-3436**

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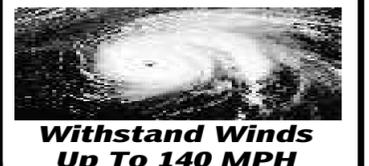
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Experimental test pilots are combat Aviators with engineering skills



Experimental test pilots participate in degraded visual environment flight testing.

U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Research, Development and Engineering Center Public Affairs Staff Report

REDSTONE ARSENAL — Experimental test pilots play a major role in science and technology development at the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Research, Development and Engineering Center's Aviation Development Directorate.

"XPs are advanced, combat Aviators with unique flying and engineering skills," said ADD Director Dr. William Lewis.

"Prior to attending Test Pilot School, XPs serve as operational combat aviators. The U.S. Navy Test Pilot School provides the selected combat aviators with knowledge and skills required to conduct and analyze in-flight experiments.

XPs must be able to translate complex engineering results into language that is understandable by nontechnical personnel."

An XP is required to have a strong academic background, years of combat experience and a proven career of success. Most have served several deployments, making them attuned to how helicopters operate on the battlefield, Lewis said.

"We rely heavily on the operational experience of our test pilots to help influence and shape the technology for future systems," said Lt. Col. Carl Ott, chief of flight test for ADD.

"To be able to bring operational experience early into the process is exciting and very meaningful work. There will continue to be a

SEE TESTING, PAGE B4

ALLIED SPIRIT

12th CAB supports Lithuanian brigade at exercise in Germany

By Capt. Jaymon Bell
12th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs

HOHENFELS, Germany — Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment and B Company, 1st Battalion, 214th Aviation Regiment, 12th Combat Aviation Brigade participated in Exercise Allied Spirit VII at the 7th Army Training Command's Training Area at Hohenfels Oct. 30 to Nov. 22.

Allied Spirit VII is a force-on-force training exercise involving approximately 4,050 participants from 13 nations: Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The Lithuanian Motorized Infantry "Griffin" Brigade was the lead mission command element for the exercise, and directed fire support, offensive, defensive and stability operations.

The eight AH-64 Apaches from 1-3rd Avn. Regt. and four CH-47 Chinooks from 1-214th Avn. Regt. made up the Aviation task force that began the exercise from a tactical assembly area outside 40 Sierra. The secure gated area provided concrete parking pads for the helicopters, and also concreted areas for hot and cold fueling.

This rotation focused on the battalion's ability to tactically move their operations center and forward arming and refueling point locations multiple times in a contested area with a near-peer adversary.

"Our primary training objective was to conduct expeditionary operations as a battalion," said CW3 Aaron Simbro, battalion master gunner, 1-3rd Avn. Regt. "Moving the TOC and FARP increases our tactical survivability."

The task force moved the TOC and FARP twice during the exercise and were only hindered from moving a third time by severe weather restrictions. The inability to fly the helicopters allowed the BN to develop a better area defense plan and use the engineer assets to dig in hardened fighting positions.

The AH-64 Apaches were used as elevated LP-OP positions by using the FLIR, and target acquisition and detection system on the helicopters to scan the area from a maintenance hover.



Two Soldiers from the 1-3rd Avn. Regt. walk toward an AH-64 Apache to perform pre-flight maintenance.

ALL SECURE



PHOTO BY SPC. JOHN SCARPATI

A 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Soldier provides security for a CH-47 Chinook during a mission to transport simulated noncombatants during Decisive Action Rotation 18-02 at the National Training Center in Fort Irwin, Calif., Nov. 18.

MARAUDERS

Task force assists with Aviation support in western Afghanistan

By Staff Sgt. Isolda Reyes
29th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs

AFGHANISTAN — U.S. Army Soldiers with Task Force Marauder provided Aviation support to ground troops in western Afghanistan Nov. 10-22 as part of an expeditionary advisory package.

TF Marauder provided MedEvac, air transportation, over-watch support, and forward arming and refueling point operations for the Train, Advise, and Assist Command - West to assist with ground missions in the region, said Capt. Lucien Lapierre Jr., TF Marauder, 1-151st Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, B Company commander and AH-64 Apache pilot.

"We've been providing situational awareness and attack assets to the troops on ground," Lapierre said. "We provide them eyes in the sky to tell them where the enemy is, so they can safely make movement on the ground."

In addition to the attack helicopter assets providing protection to the ground troops, TF Marauder also utilized CH-47 Chinooks to transport the troops to and from their missions in the area, as well as MedEvac assets to provide medical aid and transportation for any casualties. There were also UH-60 Black Hawks on standby to act as a quick reaction force, if needed.

The success of the EAP relied heavily on team work, explained 1st Lt. Daniel Cruz, TF Marauder, 238th General Support Aviation Battalion, B Co. platoon leader and CH-47 Chinook pilot.

"We have a really good team here," said Cruz. "We do a lot of talking



PHOTOS BY CAPT. JESSICA DONNELLY

Soldiers with Task Force Marauder prepare to travel to western Afghanistan as part of an expeditionary advisory package providing Aviation support to ground troops in November.



A Task Force Marauder UH-60 Black Hawk sits ready to provide Aviation support in western Afghanistan in November.

with each other, and the customer, and know that we have each other's backs."

Cruz added there were many lessons learned during the EAP that TF Marauder could learn from for future missions to provide the best support to the ground forces.

"Things are always changing, but we're also learning from it," said Cruz. "We're working better as a task

force and provide a team effort."

TF Marauder consists of Soldiers from South Carolina National Guard, Illinois National Guard, Iowa National Guard, as well as the active-duty component, and provides Aviation capabilities with AH-64 Apaches, UH-60 Black Hawks, CH-47 Chinooks and MedEvac assets in Afghanistan under the 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade while deployed.

449th CAB conducts aerial gunnery in deployment prep

By Capt. Briana McFarland
449th Theater Aviation Brigade

FORT HOOD, Texas — U.S. Army National Guard Soldiers with the 1-126th General Aviation Support Battalion and the 1-244th Assault Helicopter Battalion, assigned to the 449th Combat Aviation Brigade, prepared for mobilization to the Middle East by conducting aerial gunnery from mid-October to early November at Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

Although there are no organic Aviation units assigned to Fort Sill, Henry Post Army Airfield, opened in 1917, is the longest continuously open airfield in the continental United States.

The aerial gunnery training includes support operations utilizing the forward arming and refueling point, airfield management and Aviation maintenance.

“Post-mobilization training at Fort Sill is important because it allows us to exercise distributed

command using various geographical locations to more closely simulate the operational environment in Iraq,” said CW5 Tom McAuliffe, standardization officer and senior pilot instructor.

For the 449th CAB, this training is important because the battalions are working together for the first time, and it is crucial they establish a battle rhythm and operate efficiently.

Helicopter crewmembers in UH-60 Black Hawks and CH-47 Chinooks engage targets through door gunnery with an M-240H machine gun. Their exercise includes ground tables, in-route tables and engagements within a landing zone.

Aerial gunnery exercises are important because they increase the proficiency of the rated crewmembers, and allow them to know the limitations of their weapons and enhance positive threat identification while overseas.



PHOTO BY SGT. MARA BUDWEG

A CH-47 Chinook takes off from the forward arming and refueling point at Fort Sill, Okla., Oct. 27.

The A Company, 1-126th GSAB commander, Eric Beauregard, feels the same way.

“This opportunity refines crew synergy and the skills they need to optimize mission readiness

and provides a force multiplier for our ground forces that depends on support from above,” said Beauregard.

The 449th CAB is an Army National Guard unit headquar-

tered in North Carolina. The unit is scheduled to deploy later this year in support of Operation Inherent Resolve and Operation Spartan Shield in the Middle East.

Testing

Continued from Page B1

critical and important role for test pilots to play in the future as the Army develops the technologies that will eventually replace the current fleet of aircraft,” Ott added.

He currently executes 15-20 experimental flight test programs annually. A large portion of his duties include ensuring tests are properly and safely managed and resourced.

Ott describes himself as having a typical operational aviation background prior to becoming an experimental test pilot. He has flown Black Hawks in the Army for 24 years with multiple company command tours in Europe and deployments to Kuwait, the Balkans and Afghanistan. He was commissioned through West Point and attended the University of Washington earning a master’s degree in aerospace engineering before going through test pilot training in 2006.

“This was something that appealed to me as a career path because it allowed for me to earn an advanced degree in engineering and serve the Army as both an Aviation officer and engineer,” Ott said.

XPs undergo a selection process and attend USNTPS, as well as normal acquisition education. During their time at school they experience a rigorous curriculum including academics, flight testing and report writing. After USNTPS, XPs are assigned to the Redstone Test Center and some choose assignments later with AMRDEC’s ADD for

S&T work.

“You have to have the ability to tackle academic material,” said CW3 Nathan Woelke. He attended West Point to earn his bachelor’s degree and then Georgia Institute of Technology to earn his master’s. He has served 20 years as a warrant officer with deployments to Iraq in 2003 and Afghanistan in 2012.

Now Woelke understands better why field decisions were made. “I get to interject my opinion,” Woelke said. “We are working to improve the operator’s life. You don’t want them continually worrying about aircraft instead of mission. You want their actions to become second nature. Their success in that translates into mission impact and mission relation. XPs become very skilled in project management and risk management.”

“XPs have to be that branch between engineers who may not have military experience and those who will end up using the technology,” said Maj. Mark Cleary. “You must be able to speak intelligently with engineers and relay to those in the field how to implement. It is also important to learn how to interface with industry.”

Cleary earned a degree in aerospace engineering from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. During his 14 years in the Army, he flew the OH-58 Kiowa before switching to the CH-47 Chinook, and deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. He was 10 years into his career when he was selected to be an XP and attended U.S. Naval Test Pilot School. Now

stationed in ADD at Fort Eustis, Virginia, he is responsible for managing test teams, writing test plans and test reports, and implementing those plans.

According to Lewis, XPs are experienced combat aviators who are able to relate complex technical analysis to warfighters, to inform requirements developers, and provide acquisition analysis to decision-makers. It is important that these pilots be able to articulate needs and concerns because technical data from these XP tests often drives programmatic decisions.

“The key to being a good experimental test pilot is good communication skills,” said CW3 Thomas Wiggins.

Wiggins went to the Air Force Academy and graduated in 1999. For the next 20 years, he flew the HH-60G in combat search and rescue missions. In 2009, he joined the Army specifically to be in 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, and began flying MH60K and MH60M.

His main responsibilities include synchronization and implementing test methodologies. He works closely with the System Integration Management Office and Special Operations Command.

CW4 Jonathan Mihalka agreed, “Test pilot schools are all about developing good

communication skills. The Instructor Pilot is always asking what is wrong with the pilot. The Experimental Test Pilot is trained to ask ‘Why is it so hard to fly?’ and ‘Why is this hard?’ We don’t want the pilots to spend their energy constantly compensating.”

Mihalka graduated from West Point in 1988. He deployed to Kosovo in 1999 followed by two deployments to Iraq and one to Afghanistan. He went to test pilot school in 2017.

These pilots face many challenges as program managers and test directors in a world of continuously constrained resources. Despite these challenges, XPs use their operational and combat experience, advanced training and communication skills to support critical technology programs.

“XPs see new technologies and mature them to transition to the warfighter,” said Col. Steven Braddom, director of ADD’s Aviation Applied Technology Directorate. “It is new proof of concept type of work. They can translate complex technical issues and their operational impact to acquisition decision makers to get the best outcomes for the warfighter. Their combination of operational experience, acquisition training, technical education and engineering expertise is what makes them so valuable.”

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DECEMBER 7, 2017

WINTER DRIVING



PHOTOS BY NATHAN PFAU

Chris Erthal, automotive technician, and Phil Schmitz, supervisory lead technician, work on a truck together at the automotive skills center Tuesday. The center offers free vehicle inspections by appointment throughout December.

Preparation key to navigating a frosty Mother Nature

By Nathan Pfau
Army Flier Staff Writer

Although winters in the South tend to be mild, Mother Nature will sometimes send a cold front that can ice over roads or even bring a little snow, leaving the most experienced Southern drivers unable to cope.

Fort Rucker officials want to make sure that people on the installation are ready for anything, especially when hitting the roads this winter season, said Rebecca Ghostley, garrison safety director.

Ghostley suggests that people stay prepared by making sure their vehicles are in tip-top shape before they take long trips or venture out in less-than-favorable weather conditions, adding that they can make sure they're ready by having necessary maintenance checks performed.

People should make sure they get an engine tune-up and check to make sure that all lights are in good working order, said the safety director. They should also have their brakes adjusted, and have their battery and voltage regulator checked, as well.

To ensure that their vehicle's engine is able to perform in colder weather, people should switch to winter-weight oil if they aren't already using all-season oil, she said, and make sure to check tires.

When checking tires, people should make sure to check tire tread to make sure the tires aren't too worn and ensure the

tires are properly inflated, she added.

Having a car in proper working order isn't the only thing people should consider before heading out on trips, said Ghostley, who offered up tips people should consider before taking an extended trip:

- Get plenty of sleep the night before and never drive while tired;
- Map out a route prior to leaving;
- Let others know their route, destination and estimated time of arrival;
- Check weather forecast along the route and avoid traveling in areas with advisories;
- Never warm up a vehicle in an enclosed area due to possible carbon monoxide poisoning; and
- Prepare an emergency kit in the event they become stranded.

An emergency kit should include blankets, warm clothing, food and water, booster cables, flares, flashlights, battery-powered radio with extra batteries, cell phone, first-aid kit and any needed medications, said Ghostley.

While driving, people should always take extra caution, especially when operating a vehicle in inclement weather, she said.

"Always ensure everyone in the car is buckled up, and take a break at least every two hours," said the safety director. "Never use cruise control when driving on slippery or wet surfaces, and make sure you're familiar with



Erthal inspects the undercarriage of a vehicle at the automotive skills center Tuesday.

your braking system before attempting to drive on wet or slick roads. Be extra careful when it rains after an extended dry period because the oil on the road will have built up creating an ultra-slick surface.

"People should always maintain a safe following distance behind another vehicle," she continued. "Depending on road conditions and speed, the following distance can vary between three to 10 seconds from the vehicle in front of you, with a minimum of six seconds during inclement weather."

In the event that people become snow-bound or stranded, she said the best course of action

is to stay with the vehicle, which will provide a temporary shelter and make it easier for rescuers to locate them. Additionally, people should continue to move their arms and legs to keep blood flowing; tie a bright cloth on their antenna to signal they're in distress; turn on the dome light at night; make sure the tailpipe isn't blocked or clogged with snow or mud; run the engine and heater no more than 10 minutes every hour to conserve gasoline; and keep a downwind window open for ventilation.

In order to help people on Fort Rucker stay safe throughout the holidays, the automotive skills center is offering winter vehi-

cle inspections by appointment through the month of December for authorized personnel.

"We want to make sure Soldiers and their families are safe before they go on long trips," said Tina Barber, auto skills center program manager.

The mechanics will perform an overall inspection of the vehicle – checking multiple areas, including engine fluid levels, radiator fans, tire condition, belts and lights. Appointments are encouraged for the inspections, so people should call ahead and reserve a time.

For more information or to make an appointment, call 255-1075.

HISTORY IN THREADS

U.S. Army Aviation Museum's patch collection tells Soldiers' stories

By Jay Mann
Fort Rucker Public Affairs

(Editor's note: This is the first in a three-part series on the U.S. Army Aviation Museum's patch collection.)

Army shoulder sleeve insignias tell a story about the Soldiers who wear them and the Soldiers who came before them.

Walking around Fort Rucker, Soldiers wear many different patches, either current unit or combat patches. But according to Bob Mitchell, curator at the U.S. Army Aviation Museum, if people want to see some stranger insignias that tell different stories, they need to look back at the history of Army Aviation.

"One of our really early ones is the 1105th Aero Replacement Squadron 'flying elephant' patch from WWI," said Mitchell. "There are probably three or four of these original patches in existence. A veteran who lives north of here donated that patch – it is extremely rare."

"Modern day Army Aviation was not a branch until 1983," explained Mitchell. "Prior to that, the Transportation Corps had an interest in the cargo aircraft, MI



PHOTO BY JAY MANN

Bob Mitchell, curator at the U.S. Army Aviation Museum, points out the recurring themes in unit patches on display at the museum.

[Military Intelligence] had an interest in surveillance aircraft, and the Medical Services Corps had an interest in the MedEvac [medical evacuation] aircraft. What we see as Army Aviation today was fractured into other branches of the military.

"Prior to 1983, our officers would be Armor, Infantry, or Artillery officers – that's where they would be trained. Of course, they were Aviators, too, but their primary corps was Artillery, Infantry or Armor. This led to some interesting unit patches – like you see here in the museum."

The museum maintains a collection of over 160 aircraft, many with unit insignias painted on or accompanied by unit patches in the historical property collection.

It was normal in the past for units to just draw insignias up when units were formed, re-designated, split or combined, said Mitchell. "Like for our H-19 Chickasaws, they asked Walt Disney, a former Red Cross ambulance driver in post-WWI France, to design the insignia."

"Patches come and go," said Mitchell. "Just in the last 10 years with the global war on terrorism, I've seen a plethora of new patches created. Not only individual company patches, but also numbered unit patches. It is a constant ebb and flow when it comes to unit names, designations and patches."

Mitchell says people interested in collecting patches should just start looking. "There are lots of great stories in these patches and there are a lot of people all over the world who collect them. Just go on the internet, and there are groups who post photos of patches they find to share information and trade patches."

ON POST

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO FORT RUCKER EVENTS, SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES. DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS NOON THURSDAY FOR THE FOLLOWING WEEK'S EDITION.

Blended Retirement System Seminar

The Army Community Service Financial Readiness Program will present its Blended Retirement System Seminar Tuesday from 6-7 p.m. in the Soldier Service Center, Bldg. 5700, in Rm. 282. The seminar will be a discussion of the significant changes to the current military retirement system, including how retirement pay will be calculated, continuation pay and the Thrift Savings Plan with matching government contributions. The discussion will be facilitated by accredited financial counselors. Pre-registration is required by Monday. Free childcare is available with registration.

For more information and to register, call 255-3765 or 255-9631.

Holiday craft

The Center Library will host a holiday craft making session Tuesday from 3:30-4:30 p.m. for children ages 3-11. Light refreshments will be served. Space will be limited to the first 40 children to register. The event will be open to authorized patrons and be Exceptional Family Member Program friendly.

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

Resilience training

Army Community Service will host its resilience training Tuesday and Dec. 14 from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in Bldg. 5700, Rm. 350. People need to register by Friday. Resilience training is designed to provide family members and civilians with the tools to better cope and overcome adversity and challenges, as well as perform better in stressful situations, according to ACS officials.

For more information to attend a resilience training workshop or two-day training, or to schedule resilience training for a family readiness group or staff members, call 255-3161 or 255-3735.

Single-parent family game night

Army Community Service and the Army and Air Force Exchange Service will host a single-parent family game night Dec. 14 from 5-7 p.m. at the AAFES post exchange food court. Free giveaways will be included. The event will be Exceptional Family Member Program friendly event. The event is an initiative of the Fort Rucker Community Health Promotions Council (CHPC) Community Resiliency Work Group. The event will be open to authorized patrons. Registration deadline is Friday and is limited to the first 20 families to register. The event will be open to single parents who are active duty, retired, Department of Defense employees and their families.

To register or get more information, call 255-3359 or 255-9805.

Youth center lock-in

The Fort Rucker Youth Center will host a lock-in Dec. 15 for registered child and youth services teens. Teen can be dropped off at 8 p.m. and be picked up the next morning at 6 a.m. Cost is \$20. For additional details, call 255-2260. Youth must be CYS members, ages 11-18 and in grades 6-12 to participate.

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

Winter Wonderland Skate Night

The Fort Rucker School Age Center will host its Winter Wonderland Skate Night Dec. 15. Attendees are welcome to dress up as a snow princess, ice prince, snow boy or snow girl. Judges will pick the best costume and prizes will be presented to the winners. There will also be giveaways and picture taking sessions. Safety Skate will cost \$2 and will run from 5-6 p.m. Regular skate will cost \$5 and will run from 6-8 p.m. Only cash payment will be accepted. All participants must have a current pass with child and youth services.

For more information, call 255-9108.

Teen babysitters course

The teen babysitters course is scheduled for Dec. 20 at the youth center from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The babysitters course is limited to 14 participants who must be ages 13-18. A valid child and youth services registration is required. Participants must bring a snack and lunch. Permission forms must be signed by a parent for the child abuse training, and release forms for the youth names to be placed on the CYS babysitter list. Youth must complete



PHOTO BY NATHAN PFAU

Breakfast with Santa

The Landing will host its annual Breakfast with Santa Saturday from 9 a.m. to noon. Children will be able to meet with Santa and also have a breakfast that will include favorites like pancakes, eggs, bacon, hash browns, fruit and more. The Military Family Special costs \$32.99, which includes breakfast for two adults and up to 2 children, ages 12 and under. Individual pricing is \$12.99 for people ages 13 and older, \$6.99 for children ages 3-12, and children 2 and younger eat for free. The Landing officials recommend people make reservations if they plan to attend. For more information and to make a reservation, call 255-0769. Pictured is a scene from a previous event.

the one-day training to receive certification. The training course will cover the following: American Red Cross CPR and First Aid Training, home and fire safety training, basic childcare, feeding, diaper changing and basic child abuse training.

To register, call 255-9638 or 255-0621, or visit <https://webtrac.mwr.army.mil>.

Bowling New Year's Eve

Rucker Lanes will host its Wild West Countdown New Year's Eve Party Dec. 31. Reservations are required. Cost will be \$35 per person or \$50 per couple, and will include a meal, unlimited bowling, shoe rental, party favors and a beverage to ring in the New Year. Two sessions will be available to choose from: 6-9 p.m. or 10 p.m. to 1 a.m. The event will be open to the public. No open bowling will be available during these times.

For more information or to make a reservation, call 255-9503.

Winter reading program registration

Registration for the Center Library's winter reading program runs Jan. 3-16. The program's kickoff event is scheduled for Jan. 6 from 2-3:30 p.m. The Center Library will offer events designed to allow time for creativity, reading and family time. This program will be open to all ages and people can register as individuals, groups or families to win prizes. The first 20 registrants will receive a special prize. The free program will be open to all authorized patrons and be Exceptional Family Member Program friendly.

The kickoff event will be a Maker Faire where there will be several makerspace areas where people can imagine, create, and design. The event will also feature a 3D printer, virtual reality system, yarn loom, paper crafts, and other ways for people to engage their creative ideas.

For more information, visit the library or call 255-3885.

Employment readiness class

The Fort Rucker Employment Readiness Program hosts orientation sessions monthly in the Soldier Service Center, Bldg. 5700, in the Army Community Service multipurpose room, with the next session Jan. 4. People who attend will meet in Rm. 350 at 8:45 a.m. to fill out paperwork before going to the multipurpose room. The class will end at about 11:30 a.m. The sessions will inform people on the essentials of the program and provide job search tips, as well. Advance registration is required.

For more information, call 255-2594.

Riding trails trip

MWR Central will host a day trip Jan. 13 to Sunshine Riding Trails, which includes over 10,000 acres of sand hills and preserved forest to explore on horseback with Tennessee Walking Horses. The cost is \$75 per person, and includes a two-hour

DFMWR SPOTLIGHT

The Landing | Open to the Public

Breakfast with Santa

9 am–12 pm | December 9

<p style="margin: 0;">Kids get your picture taken with Santa!</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Breakfast includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pancakes • Bacon • Eggs • Fruits & more! 	<p style="margin: 0;">\$12.99 ages 13+</p> <p style="margin: 0;">\$6.99 ages 3-12</p> <p style="margin: 0;">FREE ages 2 & under</p>	<p style="margin: 0;">\$32.99 Military Family Special (two adults and up to two children ages 12 & under)</p>
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Be sure to register for door prizes!

Reservations are recommended!

For more information call The Landing, (334)255-0769.

rucker.armymwr.com

horseback ride and transportation to Chipley, Florida. A beginners course will be offered for people who don't know how to ride horses.

To register for the trip or get more information, call 255-2997 or 255-9517.

International Spouses Get Together

Army Community Service hosts its International Spouses Get Together the first Friday of every month at 9 a.m. at the Allen Heights Community Center. According to ACS officials, the get together is a place for spouses to find support, and help with finding resources for obtaining U.S.

citizenship, education, drivers licenses and more. Multilingual volunteers are available.

For more information, call 255-3735.

Army Family Team Building app

People can complete Army Family Team Building training through AFTB's app. Visit <http://www.ftuckerarmwr.com/acs/army-family-team-building/> to find the direct link to the app. Once complete, people can contact Fort Rucker AFTB to receive their certificate. Search for AFTB in the app store for Apple devices. For more information, call 255-9637.

FORT RUCKER MOVIE SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER 7-10

Thursday, December 7

Marshall (PG-13)7 p.m.

Friday, December 8

The Foreigner (R)7 p.m.
Happy Death Day (R)9:45 p.m.

Saturday, December 9

A Bad Mom Christmas (R)4 p.m.
Only the Brave (PG-13)7 p.m.

Sunday, December 10

Only the Brave (PG-13)1 p.m.
The Snowman (R)4 p.m.

Corps of Engineers completes 1,131 school assessments

By Elizabeth Lockyear
For Army News Service

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Infrastructure Assessment team inspected the last school Nov. 27. Their mission was to assist in evaluating the damage Hurricane Maria did to schools across the island.

USACE and contractors working for the Government of Puerto Rico assessed 1,131 schools. The evaluations will be used by the Puerto Rico Department of Education to decide whether to pursue temporary repairs through FEMA, have permanent repairs made, or close the school completely.

“USACE only provides the technical assessment of structural damage, damage to electrical or mechanical equipment and general safety,” said Brandon Works, USACE construction manager and Infrastructure Assessment mission manager.

Opening the schools is one step towards restoring a sense of normalcy to the island after Hurricane Maria’s devastation. Some schools with “minimal” damage have been able to reopen, marking the damaged areas off limits to students. At other schools, staff and the local community made some of the repairs themselves so that they could reopen at least portions of the school to students.

One English teacher likened the effects of the hurricane to a bomb going off. “It’s not normal,” she said. Classes at her school resumed only a few days before the Infrastructure Assessment team visited on Nov. 22.

The students “were very happy to come back,” she said. “They missed their friends and the teachers. They were tired of being home.”

“While every mission that the Corps of Engineers is executing is important, completing school assessments it is one of the more



PHOTO BY ELIZABETH M. LOCKYEAR

Brandon Works, USACE Infrastructure Assessment mission manager, and Carl Sellers, Infrastructure Assessment Team training officer, assess a building at Escuela Luis T. Balinas in Caguas, Puerto Rico, Nov. 22.

fulfilling. These assessments are provided to the Department of Education so they can make a decision to resume classes and allow children to continue their education. The children of Puerto Rico have been through a lot and we are honored to help restore some normalcy to their lives,” said Brig. Gen. Diana Holland, commander, USACE South Atlantic Division.

Daily, each IA team would get a list of schools to visit and conduct a detailed assessment. Sometimes

the school was closed and locked. These schools were marked and revisited at another time. Many of the open schools were only “available for assessments from 8 a.m. to noon Monday through Friday, so the window for conducting the assessment was small,” said Works. “Some schools in the mountains were difficult to get to with landslides, heavy rains and other road closures, so sometimes there were multiple attempts to get to a school.”

Upon reaching the school,

the inspectors would speak with whoever was in charge and get a sense of the amount and type of damage. Sometimes there was no official translator, so the team improvised. At one school, one of the students interpreted for the inspectors as there was no one else there who spoke English.

At the school, inspectors would seek to find out information such as “What is the condition of the fencing around the school?” and “Does the school have power? Running water? Air condition-

ing?” Then they examined the damaged areas. Afterward, they would enter the information and photos into the reporting software on a tablet they carried with them. The Department of Education received daily status updates on the assessments.

“We were well received at each school and the staff was very helpful during our assessments. It was rewarding to be involved with the Puerto Rico Department of Education to reopen schools,” Works said.

Extended family of 41 Soldiers trains at Fort Lee

By T. Anthony Bell
For Army News Service

FORT LEE, Va. – Enlisting in the Army with a childhood friend or relative is a generations-old practice meant to bring familiarity and comfort to an experience fraught with stress and uncertainty.

So, does signing up with more than one recruit further ease the difficulties associated with initial military training?

The answer is an emphatic “yes” as it relates to members of a Samoan family with a decidedly large footprint at Fort Lee. There are 41 of them enrolled in various Sustainment Center of Excellence courses here, twisting the old adage “strength in numbers.”

“This is good for us,” said 30-year-old Spc. Joseph Tauiiili, assigned to P Company, 244th Quartermaster Battalion, and the oldest among relatives in various stages of advanced individual training. “We come from American Samoa, and we’re basically thousands of miles away from home. Seeing them by my side keeps me motivated every day.”

American Samoa is a U.S. territory and part of the Samoan Islands, an archipelago that also includes the independent nation of Samoa. It is located in the Pacific Ocean roughly 2,500 miles southwest of Hawaii and a little over 2,000 miles northeast of New Zealand.

The Samoans in training here – first, second, third and fourth cousins – hail from Poloa, an area near the capital city

of Pago Pago. All are related to the same malietoa or chieftain. Their decision to join in close proximity was partly based on strong familial and cultural ties, said Pvt. Siiva Tuiiolemotu, assigned to W Co., 244th Quartermaster Battalion.

“We wanted to stick together in training,” the 20-year-old said, noting her country’s communal culture.

Most of the Samoans are training in the Unit Supply Specialist Course taught at the Quartermaster School. A few are enrolled in courses for other quartermaster military occupational specialties and at least one attends the Ordnance School.

American Samoa, which has struggled economically, boasts strong traditions of military service, said Tuiiolemotu. In 2014, a local Army recruiting station was the most productive in the world, according to the Samoa News website. Still, kinship is what drives most to take the oath of service.

“The thing we care about is supporting our families,” she said. “If that means (sacrificing) our lives, yes, we have to fight for them.”

It also is legacy. Many of the Soldiers are the latest to uphold family traditions. “Most of my siblings are in the military, and I’m the youngest, so I wanted to follow in their footsteps,” said 25-year-old Pfc. Vasait Saua, W Co., 244th Quartermaster Battalion.

Pvt. Talalelei Ames said his parents also spent time in uniform and his father is a retiree. Enduring long periods of

separation while they served, he said his military ties were not strong, but that has changed since he took the oath.

“Wearing the uniform makes me feel I am more connected to them,” said the 19-year-old. “I think it’s pretty awesome. I never had this much fun in my life and never had this much responsibility. Now, I know what my parents went through to protect the country.”

The question of whether the Samoans are a close-knit clan or a loose group of relatives was answered during a recent photo session. The Quartermaster School’s Sgt. Maj. Micheal Lambert, who organized the gathering, said there were smiles, hugs and kisses reminiscent of a family reunion. To top it all off, they

postured as if performing a traditional dance complete with contorted facial expressions

“They are definitely a family,” he said.

At some point during their training, the Samoans must face an inherent component of Army life – family separation. The sheer number of Samoans wearing uniforms, however, along with the richness of Samoan culture is comforting in light of the prospect, said Tuiiolemotu.

“I’m the first one who will leave the group,” she said, noting a pending Fort Riley, Kansas, assignment. “I’m not worried because there are a lot of us out there. I’m bound to meet another relative somewhere. That’s for sure.”



PHOTO BY T. ANTHONY BELL

More than 30 members of an American Samoa family pose for pictures Nov. 8 at Thompson Hall, Fort Lee, Va.

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Airmen of Note ring in the holidays

Army Flier
Staff Reports

The Airmen of Note Glenn Miller Christmas Concert is scheduled for Dec. 13 at 7 p.m. at the Davis Theatre, 251 Montgomery Street, Montgomery. The Airmen of Note's 35th annual holiday concert will pay tribute to the band's great legacy, featuring the music of Maj. Glenn Miller — plus a selection of holiday favorites. The concert is free and open to the

public, but tickets are required. Tickets are available during normal business hours at the MAX Credit Union locations at 3401 Malcolm Drive, Montgomery; 400 Eastdale Circle, Montgomery; and 10 East Selfridge Street, Maxwell Air Force Base.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Seats will be released to non-ticket holders 15 minutes prior to downbeat.

For more information, call 334-241-9567 or visit www.facebook.com/events/503586683373249/.



WIREFLASS COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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ANDALUSIA

ONGOING — The American Legion Post 80 has regular meetings the second Monday of the month, starting at 6:30 p.m., at the Legion Hall. For more information, call 222-7131 or visit www.andalusialegionpost80.org.

ONGOING — The American Legion Post 80 hosts a dance with live music every Saturday from 7:30-11:30 p.m. For more information, call 222-7131 or visit www.andalusialegionpost80.org.

DALEVILLE

DEC. 14 — The Above the Best Silver Chapter of the United States Warrant Officers Association will hold its monthly meeting at 11:30 a.m. at Ole Choppers BBQ. Association membership is open to past and present warrant officers.

ONGOING — Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 6020 Franchise J. Ballard Post membership meetings are at the post headquarters on State Road 84 every third Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. Breakfast is served Sundays, and games and TVs are available for entertainment. Meetings are open to all. The post can host parties, weddings, and hails and farewells. For more information, call 598-6211, 598-1297, 598-6211 or 379-9187.

DOTHAN

ONGOING — Disabled American Veterans Chapter 87 meets the third Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. at the Doug Tew Recreation Center. For more information, call 334-86-0217 Ext. 122 or email davchapter87@gmail.com. The chapter maintains office hours at 545 West Main St. (Mixon Business Center, Rm. 122), Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. to assist, free of charge, disabled veterans and their spouses with disability compensation claims and other benefits.

ONGOING — The American Legion Post 12 holds monthly meetings on the second Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. Meetings are held at the post's facility at 3087 Hwy. 605, which is Brannon Stand Road at the intersection of Park Avenue. For more information, call 400-5356.

ONGOING — Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3073 Wiregrass Post membership meetings are at the post headquarters at 1426 Taylor Road every third Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. There is a fish fry every Friday night from 5-7 p.m., then karaoke beginning at 6 p.m. Breakfast is served Sundays from 8-11 a.m. The post can host parties, weddings, and hails and farewells.

ENTERPRISE

ONGOING — The American Legion Post 73 meets at the American Legion building at 200 Gibson Street on the fourth Saturday of each month beginning at 9 a.m. The building

is across the street from the Lee Street Baptist Church. For more information call 447-8507.

ONGOING — Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 6683, John Wiley Brock Post monthly membership meetings for the VFW Post 6683 and Auxiliary are on the third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the post headquarters building located at 2615 Coffee County Road 537. The post mailing address is P.O. Box 311752 Enterprise, AL 36330. For more information, call 334-464-1171 or the auxiliary at 334-464-2222. The post also has a Facebook site at vfwpost6683.com.

ONGOING — Military Order of Purple Heart meetings are the third Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. at American Legion Hall on East Lee Street. For more information, call 334-347-2727 or 334-447-6954.

GENEVA

ONGOING — The Geneva County Relay for Life meets the last Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m. at the Citizens Bank. For more information, call 248-4495.

MIDLAND CITY

ONGOING — Residents are invited to town hall meetings on the first Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. at Town Hall, 1385 Hinton Waters Ave. For more information, call 983-3511.

NEW BROCKTON

DEC. 14 — The Disabled American Veterans Wiregrass Chapter 99 will hold its sixth annual Community Christmas Get to Gather from 6-8 p.m. at the New Brockton Senior Center to show its appreciation to all in the Wiregrass, along with active-duty military, veterans and family members, that have supported the chapter's efforts. Beverages, hors d'oeuvres and Christmas sweets will be available. People should RSVP by Dec. 9. For more information or to RSVP, call 334-347-0114.

ONGOING — Tuesdays and Wednesdays, from 9-11 a.m., Disabled American Veterans Chapter 99 maintains a service office in the New Brockton Town Hall (old armory building) at 706 McKinnon Street. The office will assist veterans who were injured or disabled while in military service. DAV service officers help veterans and their spouses with disability compensation claims, Veterans Affairs pensions, death benefits, VA medical care, Social Security disability benefits, veterans job programs, homeless veterans services and other veteran services. All veteran services are provided free of charge. For more information, call 334-406-6700.

OZARK

ONGOING — The Friends of Ozark holds a monthly meeting on the second Tuesday of every month at 6 p.m. at

the Ozark-Dale County Library. For more information, call 477-6221 or email wcholmes53@hotmail.com.

ONGOING — Every Wednesday, the Ozark-Dale County Public Library hosts free Wii Zumba from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Teens and adults are invited. For more information, call 774-5480.

ONGOING — Every Monday through Friday, aerobic classes are open to the public at the Autrey Recreation Center from 8-10 a.m. Call 774-2042 for more information.

PINCKARD

ONGOING — The public is invited to the Cross Country Workshop every Sunday at 6 p.m. at the Pinckard United Methodist Church. For more information, call 983-3064.

SAMSON

ONGOING — The Samson City Council meets monthly the first and third Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m. at the Samson Community Center.

ONGOING — American Legion Post 78 meets monthly on the second Tuesday at 7 p.m.

TROY

ONGOING — Troy Bank and Trust Company sponsors senior dance nights every Saturday night from 7-10 p.m. at the J.O. Colley Senior Complex. The complex is transformed into a dance hall and features music from the 40s, 50s, and 60s with finger foods and refreshments. For more information, call Janet Motes at 808-8500.

WIREFLASS AREA

DEC. 12 — The Retired Officers Wives Association will host its ornament exchange luncheon at 10:30 a.m. at The Landing at Fort Rucker. All wives and widows of retired officers are invited and asked to bring a wrapped holiday ornament to exchange. To make a reservation, call 334-347-7878 noon Dec. 8. Cancellations need to be made by noon Dec. 11.

ONGOING — A German coffee takes place the last Thursday of every month except November at 10 a.m. at The Landing on Fort Rucker. The group has been meeting for more than 40 years.

ONGOING — The Marine Corps League, Wiregrass Det. 752, welcomes all Marines, Navy corpsmen and chaplains, and their families, to its monthly meetings. Meetings are held the first Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. Attendees are welcome to arrive early for food and camaraderie. The next meeting will be at the Golden Coral in Dothan. For more information, call 718-4168 or 805-7335.

Beyond Briefs

MOOey Christmas

Montgomery's MOOey will host its second annual MOOey Christmas Dec. 8 from 8 a.m. to noon and 1-4:30 p.m. The MOOey has also partnered with the Marine Corps to be a Toys 4 Tots drop-off location. There will be no admission charged for the event where people are welcome to come out and meet Cowboy Santa and his cattle, according to organizers.

For more information, visit www.facebook.com/events/173684719880310/. The MOOey is located at 201 S. Bainbridge Street.

Living Christmas tree

The First Baptist Church in Montgomery welcomes people to come out and enjoy its living Christmas tree Dec. 8-10 at 7 p.m., and see the sights and sounds of Christmas come to life. The event will feature a choir of more than 150 singers with a full live orchestra and thousands of lights on the decorated tree, according to organizers.

The Living Christmas Tree has been presented each year since 1981. The program varies from year to year, so even if someone has seen the tree in the past, there is new music and a new program to experience. There is a suggested \$5 per ticket donation. Tickets are available online at <http://www.montgomeryfb.org/>, by calling 334-241-5156 or by visiting the ticket office at 305 South Perry Street. Ticket office hours are 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Dec. 4-8. | 9 AM to 1 PM.

For more information, call 334-241-5156.

Holiday lantern tours

Historic Pensacola, Florida, offers holiday lantern tours led by living history interpreters dressed in Victorian finery. The guides will take people inside the Lavalle, Dorr and Lear/Rocheblave houses, each decorated in keeping with the holiday traditions of the Colonial, Victorian and Edwardian periods. Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$8 for children younger than 12. People can meet begin the tours at 205 E. Zaragoza Street.

For more information, call 850-595-5985, Ext. 111.

Beach Ball Drop

Panama City Beach, Florida, will host its New Year's Eve Beach Ball Drop Dec. 31 from 5:30 p.m. to midnight Pier Park. A family-friendly countdown will take place at 8 p.m. that will culminate with fireworks, live music and 10,000 beach balls being dropped over the crowd. As the seconds tick down to midnight, thousands will watch the Celebration Tower as a glowing beach ball descends to signify the start of a new year and kicks off a second round of fireworks,

according to organizers.

For more information, visit <https://www.visitpanamacitybeach.com/events/new-years-eve-beach-ball-drop/>.

'A Christmas Carol'

The Alabama Shakespeare Festival puts on its production of "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens at various times through Dec. 24. Tickets may be purchased at <http://tickets.asf.net/single/PSDetail.aspx?psn=11828>.

For more information, call 334-271-5353 or visit www.asf.net/project/the-christmas-carol/.

Zoo Christmas lights festival

The Montgomery Zoo transforms into a winter wonderland sparkling with thousands of lights and festive decorations during its annual Christmas lights festival now through Dec. 31, according to zoo officials. People will be able to take a leisurely stroll, a brisk train ride or see the lights from atop the Zoofari SkyLift Ride. There will also be a visit by Santa, live nightly entertainment, hot chocolate and fresh-baked cookies. Regular night time admission is \$15 for ages 3 and older. Ticket includes entry and one train ride.

For more information, call 334-240-4900 or visit <http://montgomeryzoo.com/announcements/christmas-lights-festival-week-1>.

Governor's mansion Christmas tours

Alabama Governor's Mansion Christmas Candlelight Tours will be available Dec. 11 and 18 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Admission is free and tickets are available at the Governor's Mansion Gift Shop. No reservations are required.

For more information, call 334-834-3022 or visit governor.alabama.gov/governor-kay-ivey/governors-mansion.

Mobile Delta: Glass & Light

The Mobile Museum of Art is hosting the exhibit, "The Mobile Delta: Glass & Light" through March 11. Rene Culler's site-specific work is a mural in glass that celebrates the species-rich delta and its atmospheric qualities. The delta is a changeling environment that is constantly shaped and molded by the weather and waterways, according to museum officials. As the grasses, almost transparent, catch the light, Culler's drawings and painting in glass suggest the landscape that southern Alabama holds so dear. The composition is a wall of natural light utilized as a glass canvas for drawing, painting and printing with vitreous enamels. The museum is located at 4850 Museum Drive in Mobile. Admissions is \$12 for adults, \$10 for seniors, \$8 for military members and students, and children under 6 are admitted for free.

For more information, visit <http://www.mobilemuseumofart.com/>.

OPERATION TOY DROP

U.S., 8 partner nations participate in world's largest combined airborne op

By Spc. Alicia Pennisi
For Army News Service

FORT BRAGG, N.C. — The U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne) is hosting its 20th annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop, which is the largest international airborne operation conducted worldwide, through Friday.

Army Reserve Soldiers from the 350th Human Resources Company are supporting the event.

Operation Toy Drop is an annual joint service and multi-national training event where airborne Soldiers exercise their jump skills and maintain their focused readiness under the direction of jumpmasters from partner nations and potentially earn their foreign jump wings. With almost 4,200 Soldiers jumping, each flight and Soldier must be carefully slotted and inserted into each manifest.

This year, eight countries are participating, including Colombia, Canada, Latvia, the Netherlands, Sweden, Italy, Germany and Poland.

Building solid relationships with NATO allies is a pivotal part of this exercise. Strengthening foreign bonds while potentially being able to earn the coveted foreign jump wings makes the exercise a win-win for the U.S. and participating nations, according to Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Barnes, a Special Warfare Training Group NCO.

He added that this operation serves as a great training platform, while giving back to the community, and that it also allows Soldiers to try and earn their foreign wings. "It builds relationships with



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. TIMOTHY R. KOSTER

Paratroopers await airborne operations at Sicily Drop Zone at Fort Bragg, N.C., during the 20th annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop, Dec. 2.

our NATO allies and also for the soldiers it's important because they're allowed to wear them on their Army service uniforms."

The Netherlands was just one of eight partner nations who participated in the exercise. Despite the language barrier, training and safety structure remained consistent with the United States Army airborne operations.

"The team that we have right now actually all work at the Dutch airborne school, essentially, so they're all cadre at an airborne school in the Netherlands. They're very well prepared, they've got a lot of experience, they're all free-fall qualified, as well — they have a massive amount of parachute jumps," he said.

Established in 1998 by then-Staff Sgt. Randy Oler, a USACAPOC(A) Soldier,

Operation Toy Drop started as a training event, airborne operation and community relations event. The first Toy Drop had more than 1,200 Soldiers participate with 550 toys donated.

Now, the event allows Soldiers to train on their military occupational specialty, maintain their airborne readiness while increasing their overall readiness, and potentially earn foreign jump wings.

Official details how Air Force raises military working dogs

By Air Force Airman 1st Class Lane Plummer
27th Special Operations Wing Public Affairs

CANNON AIR FORCE BASE, N.M. — Candy is a military working dog with six deployments under her collar, and Nov. 9, she was finally able to rest her paws when she officially retired from duty during a ceremony at the base.

Her career, like hundreds of canines before her, serves as a reminder of how powerful a four-legged airman can be.

For most of these working dogs, it all starts across the Atlantic Ocean. The Military Working Dog Buying Program will travel to European kennels to purchase canines for the Defense Department. In some cases, however, MWDs are born and raised at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, where

training occurs for both canines and their aspiring handlers. The way to tell the difference between foreign and domestic canines is in their name. For example, if their title is "MWD Kkeaton" or "MWD Ttoby," the double consonant will signify they're a dog raised through Lackland's Puppy Program. Names without the double consonant are for all other adopted dogs.

After being adopted, the dogs live with foster families before the initial training regimen begins when they are 18-24 months old. Once they enter the training program, the dogs have 120 days to graduate.

TRAINING DOGS, HANDLERS

During this training, they learn all the basics. Basic

commands such as down, sit and stay are the starting point. Once they learn these commands, the canines begin learning more advanced techniques such as patrol work, detection and more. Successfully completing the four-month program means they'll graduate and be assigned their base.

Simultaneously, aspiring dog handlers are training nearby. It was an experience that, for Air Force Staff Sgt. Kyle Pethtel, a dog handler with the 27th Special Operations Security Forces, was fun and filled with challenges for both canine and handler.

"It felt hard at times because you didn't know how much work it takes to become [a handler]," Pethtel said. "I remember how nervous we'd be [when] pulling our first working dog."

Before they get to handle their first working dog, the handlers must also learn the basics and proper commands. Not only that, they also must learn how to groom the dogs and keep them fit to fight.

When the newly trained dogs arrive at their first assignments, they will be assigned a handler and begin learning more advanced techniques.

TEAMWORK

From there, it's all about strengthening the bond between handler and canine. Just like airmen in an office, team chemistry is a vital component for these working dog teams to accomplish the mission. Between base patrols and deployments, the bond only strengthens each time they put their bulletproof armor on.

"When we do convoys, canines lead," said Air Force Staff Sgt. Paul Little, a 27th SOSFS dog handler. "When we're downrange, dog teams lead the way. It's one of the most vital components to any mission they're involved in."

It's an honor that Candy, one of the most experienced and decorated military working dogs in the Department of Defense, had one last time before she traded in those heavy vests for a simple collar and leash. After eight years of service, she received an Air Force Commendation Medal and retired to her new home in Colorado with Air Force Tech. Sgt. Joshua Fehringer, one of her former handlers.

From puppy to airman, the career cycle of these canine service members is long and arduous, and requires as much sacrifice as the thousands of human airmen they serve and protect.



PHOTOS BY AIR FORCE AIRMAN 1ST CLASS LANE PLUMMER

Candy receives an Air Force Commendation medal from Air Force Lt. Col. Mark Hamilton, the unit's commander, during her retirement ceremony.



Candy, a military working dog assigned to the 27th Special Operations Security Forces Squadron, wears an Air Force Commendation medal during her retirement ceremony at Cannon Air Force Base, N.M., Nov. 9. After eight years of service, she retired and was adopted by one of her former handlers.

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Marshall Center hosts security policy seminar

By Christine June
George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies

GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCHEN, Germany – Romania has the highest growth in defense spending in Eastern Europe after achieving NATO’s goal of 2 percent of its gross domestic product on its defense budget this year.

To learn how to effectively spend this money to protect their fellow citizens, parliamentarians from the Committee for Defense, Public Order and National Security of the Chamber of Deputies of Romania looked to the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies. The Marshall Center is a German-American international security and defense studies institute, based here.

ROMANIA’S IMPORTANT ROLE

“Romania is experiencing very strong economic growth, which was one of the things discussed here the last two days,” said Dr. Matthew Rhodes, Marshall Center’s director of the Central and South Eastern Europe Non-Resident Program.

Rhodes and his team hosted a tailored seminar in security policy for 13 members from this committee Nov. 16 and 17.

“This seminar was important because of the role that Romania plays within its neighborhood, and the broader security effect it has even beyond its own borders,” Rhodes said. “Romania shows particular commitment to building a strong partnership with the United States, Germany and NATO.”

SECURITY CHALLENGES

The majority of the seminar topics were requested by the committee, said retired Lt. Gen. Keith Dayton, Marshall Center director.

“These topics reflect the multiple current security challenges that Europe is facing, as well as the particular roles of parliaments in addressing them,” Dayton said. “We often speak now about different kinds of threats along the eastern and southern flanks of Europe, and Romania’s history and geographic



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. TIMOTHY R. KOSTER

Retired Lt. Gen. Keith Dayton, director of the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies in Garmisch, Germany, welcomes 13 members of the Defense, Public Order and National Security Committee of the Chamber of Deputies of Romania during a tailored seminar on security policy held Nov. 16 and 17 at the center.

location connect it to both.”

He cited the fact that Romania shares borders with Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, whose conflicts with Russia have shaken assumptions about a peaceful post-Cold War order in Europe.

Topics included the role of parliament in defense budgeting and planning, state secrecy versus transparency, approaches to good governance to counter corruption, cyber security and energy security.

“We had very concrete discussions about energy related matters and security in the Black Sea Region,” said Dorel Caprar, chairman of the Defense, Public Order and National Security Committee of the Chamber of Deputies of Romania. “This is important because in the future, vital decisions will

have to be made in parliament.”

ENCOURAGING PARTNERSHIPS

Caprar said they learned new and useful information on topics that the committee comes across daily in their work, like how to purchase equipment for the armed forces, decide on a supplier for military equipment and liaison with foreign companies investing in the defense sector.

“We also learned more about our strategic partners within NATO, European Union and the U.S.,” Caprar added. Romania joined NATO in 2004 and the EU in 2007.

“Seminars like this one are welcomed for members of parliament because in our legislative work, we come across many of the issues and problems that we need to regulate,”

he said.

The Marshall Center hosts tailored seminars for parliament members of countries not only from the Central and South Eastern Europe, but also from Central Asia and Black Sea Eurasia.

“These seminars certainly play into our overall mission to encourage productive democratic partnerships in the security and defense fields,” said Rhodes, who added that two to three seminars like this one is held every year at the Marshall Center for countries in the Central and South Eastern Europe. “It’s important to include parliaments in our outreach programs as they play an important role in overseeing defense in passing legislation that affects the ability of their countries to respond to security challenges.”

Post Religious Services

WORSHIP SERVICES

Except as noted, all services are on Sunday.

Headquarters Chapel, Bldg. 109
8 a.m. Traditional Protestant Service

Main Post Chapel, Bldg. 8940

8:30 a.m. Catholic Confessions
9 a.m. Catholic Mass
11 a.m. Collective Protestant
12:05 p.m. Catholic Mass (Tuesday-Friday)
4 p.m. Catholic Confessions (Saturday)
5 p.m. Catholic Mass (Saturday)

Wings Chapel, Bldg. 6036

9:30 a.m. Protestant Sunday School
10:45 a.m. Latter-Day Saints
10:45 a.m. Wings Crossroads (Contemporary Worship Protestant Service)
11 p.m. Eckankar Study (4th Sunday)
Spiritual Life Center, Bldg. 8939
10:15 a.m. CCD (except during summer months)

BIBLE STUDIES

TUESDAYS
Crossroads Discipleship Study (Meal/Bible Study)
Wings Chapel, 6:30 p.m.

Protestant Women of the Chapel
Wings Chapel, 9 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Adult Bible Study
Spiritual Life Center, 7 p.m.

Fort Rucker Chapels 2017
Holiday Worship Services & Events Schedule

CATHOLIC (MAIN POST CHAPEL, BLDG 8940)	
22 Nov (1700)	Thanksgiving Eve Mass
24 Dec (1600)	Children's Christmas Eve Mass
24 Dec (2200)	Christmas Eve Mass
25 Dec (0900)	Christmas Day Mass
31 Dec (1700)	New Year's Eve Mass (Holy Day of Obligation)

Worship with us!

JEWISH (MAIN POST CHAPEL, BLDG 8940)	
12-20 Dec (1700)	Hanukkah

PROTESTANT (HEADQUARTERS CHAPEL, BLDG 109)	
22 Nov (1130)	Thanksgiving Service

PROTESTANT (MAIN POST CHAPEL, BLDG 8940)	
10 Dec (1600)	Annual Children's Christmas Drama
13 Dec (1700)	German Christmas Service
24 Dec (1100)	Combined Protestant Worship Services
24 Dec (1900)	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
31 Dec (1100)	Combined Protestant Worship Services

For more information, contact the Religious Support Office, 334-255-2989/2012.
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DECEMBER 7, 2017

'CRUSHING THAT GOAL'

Functional fitness mirrors, strengthens common movements

By **Jeremy Henderson**
Army Flier Staff Writer

Fort Rucker's functional fitness community continues to grow and, for many participants, results and camaraderie provide continuous motivation.

Setting and shattering goals has been the driving force behind 17-year-old Natalie Banda's functional fitness addiction.

"I love to feel myself getting stronger," Banda, military family member, said. "It feels great to set a goal like increasing weight and then crushing that goal."

Denae Barajas, military spouse, agrees that results are a driving force behind the appeal of functional fitness.

"You can tell you are getting stronger from week to week," she said. "The movements are natural and mirror day-to-day activities. I enjoy seeing the results."

Moriah Harmon, military spouse and frequent workout partner for Barajas, said the camaraderie of the functional fitness community plays an integral role in her continued success and progress.

"I love the friendly, competitive spirit of the community," she said. "The camaraderie is amazing. We all push each other to be stronger."

According to Zea Urbiztondo, fitness program specialist, the functional fitness area allows patrons to perform exercises and movements that are multi-planar and multi-joint, mirroring movements that are performed in everyday life.

"You are not restricted to a machine that forces you to perform isolated movements," she said.

The functional fitness area originally opened with a few pieces of equipment, but has since grown to accommodate a wide range of exercises.

"Right now, there is a 20-yard (area with) artificial turf with six lanes for sprints, tire flips and sled use," Urbiztondo said. "We have a 14-foot rig that houses three



PHOTO BY JEREMY HENDERSON

Moriah Harmon, military spouse, performs a deadlift while her workout partner, Denae Barajas, military spouse, records the movement.

adjustable squat racks, multiple height pull-up bars and rings. There are two lifting platforms, two power racks, weighted bars, kettle bells, medicine balls, slam balls, eight rowers, four assault bikes, four spin bikes, sandbags, two 20-foot climbing ropes and two free-standing heavy bags.

"In addition, workouts are posted Monday through Friday, designed to improve speed, power, agility, strength, mobility and aerobic endurance," she added.

Equipment availability grew rapidly and, according to Urbiztondo, the functional fitness area now contains six Olympic lifting platforms, four power racks, two TRX rigs with suspension units, rogue sleds complete with towing harnesses and ropes, battle ropes, tires for tire flips, plyometric boxes, Brute Force tactical sandbags,

and agility equipment. The indoor artificial turf has also been extended to 65 feet.

Functional fitness may be a new concept for some, but Urbiztondo said its purpose is straightforward and beneficial to Soldiers.

"Functional fitness involves exercises designed to improve an individual's performance of daily tasks and/or activities by training muscles to work together in simulated common, repetitive movement patterns," she said. "It is beneficial because it trains muscles to work simultaneously, safely and efficiently. It also focuses on core stability and injury prevention, preparing the body to perform well in a variety of situations, and improvement of quality of life. When paired with tactical training, functional fitness can vastly improve per-

formance as a Soldier."

Urbiztondo is available Mondays-Fridays from 5 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. for any assistance or questions that patrons may have. If there is a piece of equipment or exercise that a patron is interested in, she is available to assist the person in learning about how to use the equipment.

"The biggest thing that a lot of people lose sight of is the quality of their movements," she said. "It is not about how heavy you lift or how fast you move if your form is poor. Too often, people rush to get through their sets and reps and compromise good form in the process."

"Because functional fitness focuses on mirroring every day movements outside the gym, you want to make sure that the quality of your movement inside the gym

counts," she added. "By utilizing good solid form when performing exercises with weights, you are training your body to perform the same quality movement in any situation."

For those patrons interested in trying functional fitness training for the first time, Urbiztondo urges them to step outside their comfort zone.

"There is nothing frightening or scary about functional fitness," she said. "You are simply taking things you're doing on a normal basis, and adding an element of strength and power to it. Do not be hesitant to step out of your comfort zone because everyone can benefit from functional fitness, regardless of their fitness level."

For more information, call 255-2296 or email Zea.G.Urbiztondo.NAF@mail.mil.



ARMY PHOTO

A Soldier provides medical care.

Army to provide care to research volunteers

By **U.S. Army**
News Release

ARMY MEDICAL COMMAND, Falls Church, Va. – The U.S. Army is notifying veterans that they may be eligible to receive medical care if they participated in U.S. Army chemical or biological substance testing from 1942 to 1975 and have an injury or disease that they believe was proximately caused by their participation.

Recently a class action lawsuit filed by the Vietnam Veterans of America required the U.S. Army to provide medical care to veterans who volunteered to contribute to the advancement of the U.S. biological and chemical programs.

To apply, eligible veterans must have the following:

- A Department of Defense Form 214 or War Department discharge/separation form(s) or the functional equivalent.
- Served as a volunteer medical research subject in a U.S. Army chemical or biological substance testing program from 1942 to 1975, including the receipt of medications or vaccines under the U.S. Army investigational drug review.
- A diagnosed medical condition they believe to

SEE MEDICAL CARE, PAGE D3

ALL FOR ONE, ONE FOR ALL

Military health conference focuses on teamwork

Military Health Systems
Communications Office Staff Report

SILVER SPRING, Md. — The whole of the Military Health System is greater than the sum of the individual services' parts.

That was the key theme of the Defense Health Agency/Department of Defense Plenary Session Nov. 30 at the 126th annual meeting of the Association of Military Surgeons of the United States and the Society of Federal Health Professionals. The meeting was held at the Gaylord National Resort and Conference Center in Oxon Hill.

"Military medicine has made its greatest contributions during the past 15 years of war," said Vice Adm. Raquel Bono, director of the Defense Health Agency.

Credit for this achievement doesn't go to one service alone, she said, "but all of us working together. It's time we replicated our successes on the battlefield at home."

"There's greater power in centralizing and bringing together our strengths, designing a Military Health System that's responsive to patients' needs," Bono said.

Tom McCaffery, acting assistant secretary of defense for health affairs, said moving from a siloed system to a triservice-integrated operation will improve the ability to meet readiness requirements. It also will lead to better access and outcomes while lowering costs, he said.

McCaffery singled out three areas for modernization: the knowledge, skills, and abilities of health care providers; TRICARE; and MHS GENESIS.



COURTESY PHOTO

Military health leaders gathered for the Defense Health Agency/Department of Defense Plenary Session Nov. 30 at the 126th annual meeting of the Association of Military Surgeons of the United States and the Society of Federal Health Professionals at the Gaylord National Resort and Conference Center in Oxon Hill, Md.

"What's exciting is this is a historic opportunity to create something that's a model for what military health and national health can become," Bono said. Focusing on integration leads to faster decisions; streamlined planning, programming, budgeting, and execution; and standard management in military treatment facilities that will lead to "seamless care in multi-service markets, giving our patients the best outcome every time."

Bono said outside partnerships were also an important aspect. "There's got to be collectivism in the impact we create. We need to recognize that we don't have all those answers from within. So we need to partner with outside industry, because we don't necessarily have the organic expertise to deliver."

Rear Adm. Colin Chinn, the Joint Staff surgeon, showed a map originally created in the '80s that showed areas of conflict. "It was a totally different world then," he said. "The type of conflicts we're

involved in now don't follow these neat lines, and neither do health and disease threats."

Other panelists during the session were Maj. Gen. Ronald Place, who represented the Army surgeon general, Lt. Gen. Nadja West; Vice Adm. Forrest Faison III, the Navy surgeon general; Lt. Gen. Mark Ediger, the Air Force surgeon general; and retired Army Maj. Gen. Richard Thomas, president of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences.

"We're interoperable to a point," Ediger said. "We need to move that point further." He said partnering with civilian medical facilities enables military trauma surgeons to keep their skills sharp and that focus needs to be renewed on chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear threats.

"None of us is doing our job for fame or glory," Faison said. "We're doing it to help people, and to make a difference in their lives." To continue the success, he said, "We all have to be all in."

DOWN TIME



Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez

T R I V I A

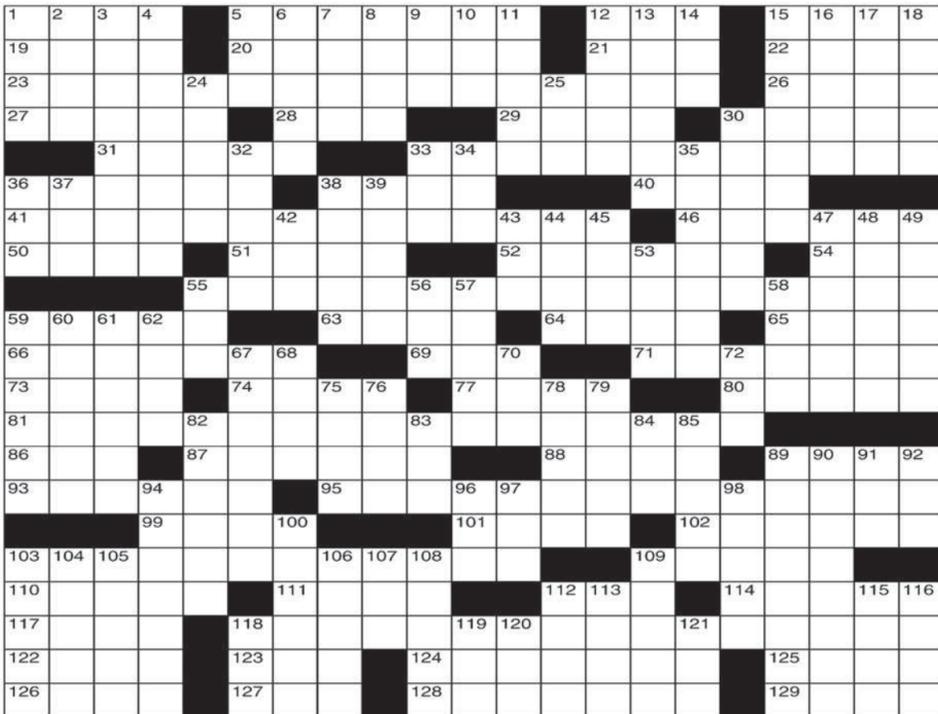
1. GEOGRAPHY: What was the former name of the country Burkina Faso?
2. MEDICAL: What common malady would you be suffering from if you had epheles?
3. ASTRONOMY: Where is the SETI (Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence) Institute located?
4. MOVIES: What country was the film "The Killing Fields" about?
5. LITERATURE: In what 20th-century novel did the Gamekeeper Oliver Mellors appear?
6. MUSIC: Which 1960s-70s band was associated with brothers John and Tom Fogerty?
7. FOOD & DRINK: What type of liquor drink is Courvoisier?
8. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Which president popularized the phrase "the buck stops here"?
9. U.S. STATES: Which of state's nicknam is The Bay State?
10. MYTHOLOGY: What Greek goddess was believed to possess a universal remedy?

See Page D3 for this week's answers.

Super Crossword

STICKING TO THE GOAL

- ACROSS**
- 1 Roman god with a bow
 - 5 Knitting craft
 - 12 Move like a kangaroo
 - 15 Overquick
 - 19 Be a wanderer
 - 20 Moral
 - 21 Actress Gasteyer
 - 22 Comical Kett
 - 23 Jack London novel
 - 26 Dumbfound
 - 27 Flynn of films
 - 28 Prone (to)
 - 29 Big name in credit cards
 - 30 Cake coater
 - 31 Writer Verne
 - 33 Easy targets to attack
 - 36 Lacking a musical key
 - 38 Writer Bellow with a Nobel
 - 40 Mystery novelist — Stanley Gardner
 - 41 Relative of soul
 - 46 Infuse with oxygen
 - 50 Sphagnum, e.g.
 - 51 Cookie with a "Thins" line
 - 52 One-masted sailboats
 - 54 Chic, '60s-style
 - 55 Really, really quick
 - 59 Drive off
 - 63 Pretty low grades
 - 64 "That is — ask"
 - 65 "Picnic" playwright William
 - 66 With 13-Down, giant in internet service
 - 69 Sports org. with the eight teams featured in this puzzle
 - 71 Trip to a rain forest, maybe
 - 73 Vicious
 - 74 Eban of Israel
 - 77 Foreboding
 - 80 Shimon of Israel
 - 81 2011 Jim Carey comedy
 - 86 Head sweller
 - 87 Tie up again, as shoes
 - 88 Don't skip, as an event
 - 89 Oaf's cry
 - 93 Waters off Eritrea
 - 95 2007-13 pickup truck model
 - 99 Clearasil treats it
 - 101 Designer Saarinen
 - 102 Old TV tube
 - 103 Be engulfed in fire
 - 109 Ate
 - 110 Writer Bret Easton —
 - 111 Know — fact
 - 112 Actor's help
 - 114 The blabs
 - 117 Rake feature
 - 118 Hawaiians and Tongans
 - 122 Tennis' Lendl
 - 123 TV producer
 - 124 In a very angry way
 - 125 Filmom's — Lund Laszlo
 - 126 Bird setting
 - 127 Sinuous fish
 - 128 Vilify
 - 129 Gambol
 - 5 Ex-Giant Ott
 - 6 Gazetteer shelfmate
 - 7 Hew
 - 8 Falling-out
 - 9 Masquerade
 - 10 — jongg
 - 11 Chosen few
 - 12 Papa Doc's place
 - 13 See 66-Across
 - 14 Inflate falsely
 - 15 Hero, often
 - 16 Top-floor storage site
 - 17 Reeked
 - 18 With 56-Down, surfs like a pro
 - 24 God, in Islam
 - 25 Clever type
 - 30 Most lazy
 - 32 "St. — Fire" (1985 film)
 - 33 Hero in a deli
 - 34 Fluish, say
 - 35 Shown with explicit detail
 - 36 It has biceps
 - 37 However, informally
 - 38 Golf's Sam
 - 39 — of one's own medicine
 - 42 Dog cry
 - 43 Naval vessel abbr.
 - 44 Fitzgerald of song
 - 45 Loam, e.g.
 - 47 Key of "Für Elise"
 - 48 Mouth organ
 - 49 Lawn care tools
 - 53 Eye creepily
 - 55 — Baba
 - 56 See 18-Down
 - 57 "... woman who lived in —"
 - 58 Evening, casually
 - 59 Rear-ending car, e.g.
 - 60 Arise
 - 61 Natural legume case
 - 62 Cube maker Rubik
 - 67 Peninsula northeast of Boston
 - 68 Brother in Genesis
 - 70 Pre-O trio
 - 72 Mil. missions
 - 75 Bric-a —
 - 76 Yiddish writer Sholem
 - 78 Actress Samantha
 - 79 Italian for "new"
 - 82 Summary
 - 83 16th letter
 - 84 "Don't make — habit"
 - 85 Nick of "Warrior"
 - 89 Potato chip topping
 - 90 Singer Helen or actor Jerry
 - 91 Univ. award
 - 92 Envision
 - 94 Wise
 - 96 22nd letter
 - 97 "Indubitably"
 - 98 "Grease" actress Eve
 - 100 Erase
 - 103 Gain entry
 - 104 Drab color
 - 105 Forelimb bones
 - 106 Close-by
 - 107 "Exodus" protagonist
 - 108 Don's group
 - 109 Cuts down, as a tree
 - 112 Refer to
 - 113 Tech support seeker
 - 115 Bear, celestially
 - 116 "By Jove!"
 - 118 Adolescent leader?
 - 119 Taxing org.
 - 120 Beret, e.g.
 - 121 Senate vote
- DOWN**
- 1 Johnson of "Laugh-In"
 - 2 Comic actor Jay
 - 3 Elates
 - 4 Tells in detail



See Page D3 for this week's answers.

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

		5		9			8	
	8		5				4	
1	4			6		9		
		7	8	4				2
5				6		1		
	2			7		6		
6				2		5		
8				5		3		1
		3	9					7

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

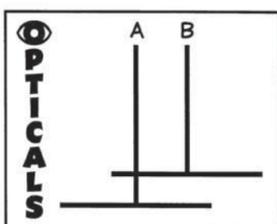
DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦

- ♦ Moderate
- ♦♦ Challenging
- ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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See Page D3 for this week's answers.

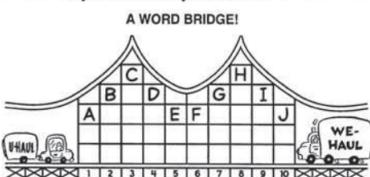
KID'S CORNER



OPTICALS
OF THE TWO figures above, A and B, which one's height and width are equal?

A CHEERFUL ADDITION! To solve this problem, you must replace the letters in the AlphaMath puzzle with the digits 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9, so that you have a correct addition problem. The same letters get the same digits. See if you can get a higher total than we did.

IT'S MAGIC! Use the numbers 1 through 10 to fill in our Magic Square. The numbers in each horizontal row and vertical column should total 37. We've filled in six of the squares. The rest is up to you.



The bridge above contains 10 supporting words. We give you the first letter of each, plus plenty of hints.

1. Commercial announcements.
2. To criticize harshly.
3. Superman and Batman have them.
4. A small dent or nick.
5. A female sheep.
6. To strike out (baseball).
7. To erode away gradually.
8. Disorder or chaos.
9. Mischievous children.
10. Type of bird.

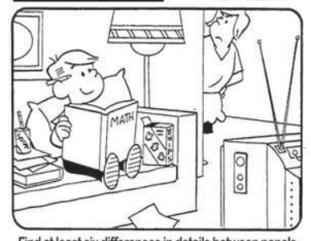
Wishing Well®

2	4	2	6	7	6	5	4	5	8	6	3	6
M	L	A	T	B	A	A	I	P	S	K	D	E
8	4	6	8	6	4	8	5	6	2	5	3	7
T	F	A	I	C	E	C	P	T	K	L	E	E
4	2	8	3	4	3	6	3	7	6	5	2	3
I	E	K	C	S	I	S	S	O	A	A	I	
2	8	6	2	8	3	6	4	7	6	8	3	8
M	T	N	E	O	O	N	F	E	O	Y	N	O
5	7	8	5	3	4	3	6	2	4	3	5	8
U	L	U	S	S	U	A	W	N	L	R	E	R
5	7	5	4	2	8	3	8	7	3	7	3	7
F	F	O	L	D	G	E	U	R	M	E	A	L
3	5	3	8	5	7	8	7	5	7	5	2	7
D	R	E	N	Y	I	S	A	O	N	U	S	T

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Service members share 'art' of healing

**Military Health System
Communications Office
Staff Report**

SILVER SPRING, Md. — Service members, veterans and caregivers gathered to share their love of comedy, visual artistry, performance artistry and share stories of how the arts saved their lives around the National Harbor in Oxon Hill Nov. 16.

"A Day of Healing Arts: From Clinic to Community" is an ongoing collaboration with organizations across military health agencies, community-based organizations and the National Endowment of the Arts.

"Today is about storytelling. I want us all to share stories of the resilience of our military force. Art is just as important as athletics," said Barbara Wilson, Office of Warrior Care director of training and outreach. "I can see the spark in your eyes and how much you enjoy the work you are doing. Thank you for sharing that with us."

The event recognized wounded, ill and injured service members and veterans showcasing the various ways music, performance art, visual art and other activities inspired their recovery. Though each story and situation differed from person-to-person the narrative remained the same: art saved my life.

Guest speaker retired Brig. Gen. Nolen Biven expressed how art can help people navigate differences, boost self-esteem, process tragedy, and connect them with their humanity.

"We want to restore individual services members, families and caregivers," said Biven. "This is a grassroots effort among the art



Air Force Staff Sgt. Natalie Lopez talks with Army veteran and former Green Beret Michael Rodriguez about her painting.

PHOTO BY ROGER L. WOLLENBERG

community to heal service members and veterans. People can select themselves for the program and sleeve the stigma."

ART OF HEALING

After a short comedy show from the Veterans of Comedy, participants were able to walk around an art gallery showcasing work created by service members and veterans. They also had the opportunity to talk with the artists, like Air Force veteran Adriana Ruark, about their pieces, the meanings and how creativity helped them cope.

"I'm a survivor of childhood abuse. Back then, my grandmother's garden was a safe haven for me. Now I use my art," Ruark said. "I love to express how I'm feeling through my drawings. I got my grandmother's flower garden tattooed on my arm to remind me of my safe space and to remind me to be a safe haven for

others."

ART OF RECOVERY

Rock to Recovery founder and former Korn guitarist, Wes Geer, led a group of caregivers in the vocal performance dedicated to their loved ones.

"When we end up in these dark places, whether they [are] from alcohol, isolation, etc., I think the symptoms are similar," said Geer. "I ended up in a rough space. I lost my career. I lost my friends. Music became very important for me because it showed me that it could transform how I felt. I hear people say all the time, 'but I'm not musical,' but if I turn on some music right now, what's the first thing your body does? Dance. So yes, we are all musical."

Rock to Recovery is a non-profit that helps people in recovery, whether from addiction or trauma, learn to express themselves through songs they com-

pose during workshops.

Regardless of a person's prior musical experience or ability, Geer said this music therapy helps people explore their feelings and offers a creative, intimate outlet for expression.

"When you rock out, you do it organically. We aren't trying to be perfect — this is just us trying to express [what's in] our hearts and our souls," Geer said.

Veteran Ja'Miracle Morant joined the Air Force for a better chance at "making her own choices," but trauma from a sexual assault "flipped her world upside down." Rock to Recovery helped her put her world back together.

"When [the assault] happened I didn't know what to do. I was ready to die and didn't feel like I had anything left in life, but then I got an email from Wounded Warriors inviting me to an event in Florida," said Morant. "One

day, someone heard me singing and told me I should try Rock to Recovery."

ART OF CONNECTION

The artists at the event seemed to echo one point: people improve their healing when they connect with others.

"Music and poetry have always been my release, my oxygen. [Rock to Recovery] helped me express myself and realize that I'm much stronger than I thought. Having people who care and understand is the best part of the program."

Morant, motivated by her journey, is learning how she can help others.

"I'm in college now — a double major in social work and psychology," she said. "I want to help other people like me."

As the event came to close participants exchanged long hugs, shared words of encouragement, and expressed gratitude.

Bill O'Brien, senior innovation advisor at National Endowment of Arts, challenged people to think differently about art and how to use it to "create an opportunity" to heal. He shared how the Greeks considered the arts as a critical element to military readiness because it helped warriors prepare fully: "mind, body, spirit and soul."

"I'd like to use the arts to do that for our service members and veterans," O'Brien said.

To learn more about the ways the Office of Warrior Care promotes creative expression through art, music, writing and dance for service members and veterans, visit <http://warriorcare.dodlive.mil/carecoordination/masp/healingarts/>.

Medical care

Continued from Page D1

be a direct result of their participation in a U.S. Army chemical or biological substance testing program.

Medical care, to include medications, will be provided

at the closest military medical treatment facility that has the capability and capacity. Medical care will be provided on a space available basis for a specific period of time as described in the authorization letter, and is supplemental to the comprehensive medical care a plaintiff

is entitled to receive through the VA based on their status as a veteran.

Eligible veterans are encouraged to go to <http://army-medicine.mil/Pages/cbtp.aspx> or call 1-800-984-8523 if they have any questions or need assistance.

FORT RUCKER SPORTS BRIEFS

Ugly Sweater 5K

The Fort Rucker Physical Fitness Center will host the annual Ugly Sweater 5K and 1 Mile Fun Run Saturday. Runners are welcome to wear their ugliest Christmas sweater for the ugly sweater contest that will begin at 7:30 a.m. Race day registration will take place from 7:30-8:45 a.m., with the 5K starting at 9 a.m. The Fun Run will begin after the 5K race is complete, and will be open to all children, free of charge. Each fun run participant will receive a medal from Santa at the finish line. The cost for the 5K is \$25 with a T-shirt while supplies last. There is also a \$15 no-shirt option. Teams cost \$160 with a T-shirt while supplies last. Trophies will be awarded in various categories. Refreshments will be provided and the event will be open to the public.

Participants are encouraged to pre-register at either PFC.

For more information, call 255-2296.

Tactical Throwdown

The Fort Rucker Physical Fitness Center Tactical Throwdown's fourth quarter challenge continues through Friday. The challenge for the fourth quarter is the tactical movement challenge. Participation in this challenge is free and open to all Fort Rucker active-duty Soldiers. Official attempts will be conducted during posted dates and times, or by appointment with a functional fitness specialist.

For more information and a complete listing of the challenge rules, call 255-2296.

Intramural basketball coaches meetings

The Fort Rucker Physical Fitness Center will host intramural basketball coaches meetings Tuesday at 9:30 a.m. and again at 5:30 p.m. The meetings will

be open to anyone interested in coaching a basketball team. Meetings will be held in the Fort Rucker PFC's conference room.

For more information, call 255-2296.

Thursday Evenings on the Range

Silver Wings Golf Course hosts its Thursday Evenings on the Range with PGA professional Ty Andersen Thursdays from 5-6 p.m. at the driving range. Cost is \$10 and can be paid at the pro shop before the session starts. The afternoon is a supervised practice with unlimited range balls.

For more information, call 255-0089.

Holiday Ham Golf Shootout

Silver Wings Golf Course will offer people a chance to win a holiday ham at its Holiday Ham Golf Shootout Dec. 16. Tee times will be from 7-9 a.m. Participants must tee off no later than 9 a.m. Cost is \$20 per person, plus cart and green fees, if applicable. The game will be a Stableford tournament where participants' U.S. Golf Association handicaps will be used to determine the number of points they must pull. Weekend dogfight points can be used if a USGA handicap is not established. Hams and gift certificates will be awarded as prizes to the winners. Registration deadline is Dec. 16 at 9 a.m. The event will be open to the public.

For more information, call 255-0089.

Deer season

The Fort Rucker 2017-2018 Deer Season has begun. Archery season continues through Feb. 10. Gun season continues through Feb. 10. Antlered bucks only, with three points or better on one side for both archery and gun deer season.

For more information, call 255-4305.

Fort Rucker Big Buck Contest

Fort Rucker Outdoor Recreation hosts its Big Buck Contest through Feb. 10 during daylight hours. The 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 individuals 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.

Youth soccer registration

Youth spring soccer registration will run from Dec. 21 to Jan. 19. All interested participants must have a current sports physical, and a valid child and youth services registration. Children must meet the age requirements by July 31, 2017. Cost is \$25 for youth ages 3-4 years and \$45 for youth ages 5-14. Additional children will receive a percentage discount to be determined at parent central services during registration. Parents who used Webtrac to register their children need to call 255-22548 to let the staff know what size shirt and shorts to order. Practices will begin around Jan. 29 and the season will begin Feb. 20. There will be a parents meeting Jan. 24 at 6 p.m. in Bldg. 2800, the youth center, located on Seventh Avenue. To register, visit parent central services or use Webtrac.

For more information, call 255-9638 or 255-2254.

Stars and Strikes

The Rucker Lanes Bowling Center will host its Stars and Strikes special Jan. 15 in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. The specials will feature 25-cent games and 50-cent shoe rentals from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. The event will be open to the public.

For more information, call 255-9503.

PUZZLE ANSWERS

Super Crossword

Answers

AMOR	MACRAME	HOP	RASH
ROVE	ETHICAL	ANA	ETTA
THECALLOFTHEWILD	STUN		
ERROL	APT	CITI	ICING
JULES	SITTINGDUCKS		
ATONAL	SAUL	ERLE	
RHYTHM	MANDBLUES	AERATE	
MOSS	OREO	SLOOPS	MOD
ASF	ASTASLIGHTNING		
REPEL	DEES	ALLT	INGE
AMERICA	NHL	ECOTOUR	
MEAN	ABBA	OMEN	PERES
MRPOPPER	SPENGIN		
EGO	RELACE	GOTO	OOPS
REDSEA	CHEVIYAVALLANCHE		
ACNE	EERO	TRIODE	
GOUPI	NFLAMES	FEDON	
ELLIS	FORA	CUE	ENNUI
TINE	PACIFICISLANDERS		
IVAN	RCA	IRATELY	ILSA
NEST	EEL	ASPERSE	PLAY

Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

3	7	5	4	2	9	1	6	8
9	8	6	5	3	1	2	4	7
1	4	2	7	6	8	9	3	5
6	1	7	8	4	3	5	9	2
5	3	8	2	9	6	7	1	4
4	2	9	1	7	5	6	8	3
7	6	1	3	8	2	4	5	9
8	9	4	6	5	7	3	2	1
2	5	3	9	1	4	8	7	6

TRIVIA

Answers

1. Republic of Upper Volta
2. Freckles
3. Mountain View, California
4. Cambodia
5. "Lady Chatterley's Lover"
6. Creedence Clearwater Revival
7. Cognac
8. Harry Truman
9. Massachusetts
10. Panacea



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