

## Post Shorts

### Recycling schedule

The residential and recycling pickup schedule for Jan 16 is paper. Put items in paper bags, boxes or bundles and place them on the curb.



### Noise alert

The Aberdeen Test Center will support a training exercise through Jan. 11.

Residents and boaters in the surrounding community may hear weapons firing and aircraft observe aircraft flying at low altitudes. Illumination devices may create flashes of light visible off post.

Activity may take place in the installation's restricted waters and/or in the air, over both land and water, and may include weapons and use of air and watercraft.

For complaints or more information, call 410-278-1147/1153 or 1-800-688-8705.

### 'Retired Federal Employees' Jan. 15 meeting cancelled

The scheduled Jan. 15 meeting of Susquehanna Chapter 1522 of National National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association for Harford and Cecil Counties has been cancelled.

### MLK Commemorative Prayer Breakfast Jan. 17

Aberdeen Proving Ground will sponsor a Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Prayer Breakfast, 7 to 9 a.m., Jan. 17, at Top of the Bay. Tickets cost \$7.75 per person. Guest speaker will be the Rev. Eva Taylor, Mt. Zion Temple, Havre de Grace.

For more information or to purchase tickets, call Sgt. 1st Class Elwood Veney, RDE-COM, 410-436-4810; 1st Sgt. Larry Tyson, APG Garrison, 410-278-3000; Sgt. 1st Class Michael Jones, 61st Ordnance Brigade, James Rivera, APG EEO, 410-278-1100; or Linda Patrick, CHPPM, 410-436-1023. Tickets will NOT be sold at the door.

### NFFE Local 178 union meets Jan. 17

The National Federation of Employees NFFE-IAM, See **SHORTS**, page 5

## Issue Highlights

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# 'The Voice of the Army Family' is heard through AFAP process

Story by **MARGARET MCKENZIE**  
USAFMWRC

Delegates at the Army Family Action Plan conference reviewed 70 issues from Army installations throughout the world and 10 issues from the Army Wounded Warrior Symposium Dec. 3 through 7.

Each year, the delegates vote to determine the top five conference issues which are then briefed at the next General Officer Steering Committee. This year, seven issues will be reported as a result of a four-way tie.

Gen. George Casey, chief of staff of the Army, opened the conference with a call to action that seemed to predict a larger number of issues than usual being addressed and forwarded to the GOSC.

"I think this AFAP is going

to be different because it is connected to the Army Family Covenant," Casey said. "I need for you to think about [AFAP] in those terms. I think we will get a lot more momentum because of this than we might have had in the past."

Casey said he has been an Army Family member for 59 years, and that the motto in the Casey Family, "make the best of it," is not what Families want right now.

"Listening to the Families, having been in Iraq, understanding what we are asking of them and having lost my own dad in Vietnam, I understand the impact war has on Families. They need more than that, and we are committed to delivering," he said.

In June of 2008, the GOSC will review action plans for

the following issues: minimum disability retirement pay for medically retired wounded warriors; Traumatic Service members Group Life Insurance for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, traumatic brain injury and Uniplegia; and the federal hiring process for Wounded Warriors. The issues caught in the four-way tie were: Health and Wellness Centers; medical care access for non-dependent caregivers of severely wounded Soldiers; staffing to support the Physical Disability Evaluation System; and comprehensive behavioral health program for children.

AFAP was created in 1983 with the initial AFAP planning conference, and developed fully in 1984, the Year of the Army Family, as a program to help the Army address the

needs and concerns of Family members. The program highlights the importance of Army Families and uses representatives of the Army Family from around the world to identify issues that will improve the standard of living for Soldiers and Families. AFAP provides a way for policy change to become a tangible end-product for Soldiers and their Families. It addresses quality-of-life issues for Soldiers, retirees, Department of Army civilian employees and all their Family members.

The process allows for the voicing of what's working and what isn't — and provides a recommended solution to fix it. Senior Army leadership is alerted to areas of concern that need their attention, which gives them an opportunity to put plans into

place to resolve the issues.

In the past 24 years 633 issues identified in the AFAP process have driven 101 legislative changes, 147 Department of Defense Army policy and regulatory changes and 165 improved programs and services.

"[AFAP] enables the military Family voice to reach from the lowest level all the way up to today's Secretary of the Army, the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, the assistant of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs and the Sergeant Major of the Army," said Lt. Gen Benjamin C. Freckley, commander of the U.S. Army Accessions Command. "The Army leadership was here to hear about Army Families, and I think their voices were heard."

See **GOSC**, page 3

# Army to Tap Troops Not Yet Deployed

Story by **FRED W. BAKER III**  
American Forces Press Service

The Army's assignments branch is reaching out to Soldiers who have not deployed to combat in an effort to take some of the strain off of those who have deployed more than once.

More than half of the current 522,000-plus active-duty Army force has deployed to combat, said Army Maj. Gen. Sean J. Byrne, commander of U.S. Army Human Resources Command, in Alexandria, Va. Nearly a third are pending deployment, are in a deployable unit or still going through their initial training, he said.

Only 7 percent, or about 37,000 Soldiers, have not deployed and are not scheduled to deploy, Byrne said during a teleconference with Internet journalists and "bloggers." Those soldiers hold "institutional" slots in the Army at training posts, such as drill sergeants, or in recruiting commands, he said.

Now, the assignments branch is tracking and monitoring those Soldiers and, when it is practical, will swap them out with other soldiers due for second or third deployments.

"We are working to identify those Soldiers who have not deployed and deploy them when it makes sense," Byrne said. "As we move these soldiers into deploying units, those who have deployed can subsequently move out. They can take a break."

Byrne emphasized that managers will not slot Soldiers for combat simply because the Soldier has not deployed, but that assignments managers will match skills, experience and training with deploying positions.

"Deploying a Soldier is much more complex than simply deciding that he or she is to deploy. So we're reaching out to those who have not deployed, but we're trying to do it as smartly as possible," Byrne said. "We don't place people in jobs they're not trained for. It does the Soldier no good, and it clearly does the Army no good."

Rank plays a factor in assignments, as there is a greater need for lower-ranking officers and enlisted Soldiers. As soldiers are promoted, fewer slots are available. Soldiers' military specialty also makes a difference. Some specialties are needed stateside more than overseas. Others are in higher demand in combat than in the United States.

"This is a tough issue. We're doing everything we can to have equity throughout the force. We're doing everything we can to move people out of formations that have deployed more than once, give them a chance to take and break and move the folks into the formations," Byrne said. "We just want to do it right."

He said there is no specific percentage that Army officials want to get down to as far as those who have not deployed. It's more an effort to

make combat deployments equitable across the force. In fact, some Soldiers may never deploy simply because their job is more critical in the United States rather than overseas, he said, citing specifically intelligence and some medical assignments.

He said those Soldiers still are supporting the global war on terror, but are "doing it where their skills and experiences are needed the most."

"Quite often the impact on the battlefield is not always commensurate to the proximity of the battlefield," Byrne said.

The HRC commander said he didn't believe those who have not deployed are avoiding the assignments. Instead, he said many times it is a matter of timing

training, assignments and deployments.

"I hear far many more stories about those Soldiers who want to go back a second time or a third time and be part of the team. And I hear very little about those who don't want to deploy," he said. "There are a lot of Soldiers who have deployed and they are fighting to get back into the fight. We try to do the right thing for the individual and the institution."

Infantry, aviation, engineer, transportation and field artillery jobs are the most frequently deployed to combat, Byrne said.

Soldiers wanting combat tours should contact their assignments branch, he said. They also can state their preference on the Army's Web-based assignments program.

## DoD releases 2008 Basic Allowance for Housing rates

DoD

The Department of Defense released the 2008 basic allowance for housing rates Dec. 12, 2007.

In total, the planned increase in housing allowance funds for 2008 is about \$600 million above the 2007 amount.

Military members received an average housing allowance increase of 7.3 percent when the new rates took effect Jan. 1.

### Three components are included in the BAH computation:

- Median current market rent
- Average utilities (including electricity, heat, and water/sewer)
- Average renter's insurance

Total housing costs are calculated for six housing profiles (based on dwelling type and number of bedrooms) in each military housing area. BAH rates are then calculated for each pay grade, both with and without dependents. An estimated \$17.5 billion will be paid to over 1,200,000 service members in 2008.

For members with dependents, average increases in the BAH are approximately \$83 per month. A typical E-4 with dependents, for example, will find his/her BAH about \$63 per month higher than last year, while an E-8 with dependents will receive about \$79 more than last year.

An integral part of the BAH program is the provision of individual rate protection to all members. No matter what happens to measured housing costs, an individual member in a given location will never see his/her BAH rate decrease. This assures that members who have made long-term commitments in the form of a lease or contract are not penalized if the area's housing costs decrease.

For more information, visit <http://perdiem.hqda.pentagon.mil/perdiem/bah.html>.



## Army launches troop-stationing Web site

Story by **ELIZABETH M. LORGE**  
Army News Service

The Army has now launched its latest Web site, 'Grow the Army,' to illustrate upcoming troop movements and upcoming unit stationing changes.

The site, [www.army.mil/growthe-army](http://www.army.mil/growthe-army), features interactive maps, charts and graphs to show Soldiers and their Families where the Army's new 74,200 Soldiers, six infantry brigade combat teams, eight active-component support brigades, and various-sized combat-support and combat-service-support units will move, grow or activate between fiscal years 2008 and 2013.

"The Army is undergoing the largest transformational change since 1942," said Vice Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Richard Cody at a Pentagon press conference Wednesday. "We've changed our doctrine. We've changed our organizational structure to the Army modular force. We've changed the active component and the reserve component, balancing between formations. We've changed modernization and reset programs, and at the same time, under BRAC 2005, we're changing the footprint of our Army to make it more agile, more expeditionary, but also to place our formations and our Family members in camps and stations that have a higher quality of life, a higher quality of training ranges so that we have the right formations so that we are training as we would fight."

States are color-coded and users can click on them to see specific stationing changes. The state of Texas, for example, is scheduled to gain units at both Fort Bliss and Fort Hood because of both 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Act decisions and new stationing decisions, so the state will be light green on the Web site's map.

Fort Bliss expects to gain more than 25,000 Soldiers, the 1st Armored Division from Germany, three brigade combat teams, including one from Germany, and a fire brigade. It will be marked on the map by green, dark blue and blue stars to represent "Infantry Brigade Combat Team," "Grow the Army," and "Other Stationing Decisions," respectively.

Fort Hood is scheduled to gain slightly less than 6,000 Soldiers, an air-defense-artillery brigade headquarters and a sustainment brigade. It has a dark blue star on the map for "Grow the Army."

Downloadable fact sheets also describe the changes for each state, as well as installations overseas.

"We were given the concept about two weeks ago but we didn't have the content to work with. As soon as we got the comp approved, the team worked to build out the site - with the functionality where you could click on each state included in the plan. We then worked to build out the fact sheets with the information given" said Shannon Sady, art director for the Army.mil team.

## Studying the Army's smallest enemy



Photo by JANE GERVASONI, CHPPM  
Spc. Kalina Welch, preventive medicine technician, U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine, uses a pipette to isolate DNA samples from ticks. The DNA is used in polymerase chain-reaction testing to determine if diseases are present. See story on page 11.



## ASAP continues its prevention message... Tips for Drinking in Moderation

APG ASAP Office

- Know your limit. Most people find that they can consume one drink per hour without any ill effects.
- Eat food while you drink. Food, especially high protein food such as meat, cheese and peanuts, will help slow the absorption of alcohol into your body.
- Sip your drink. If you gulp a drink, you lose the pleasure of savoring its flavors and aromas.
- Don't participate in "chugging" contests or other drinking games.
- Accept a drink only when you really want one. If someone tries to force a drink on you, ask for a non-alcohol beverage instead. If that doesn't work, "lose" your drink by setting it

down somewhere and leaving it.

- Skip a drink now and then. Having a non-alcoholic drink between alcoholic ones will help keep your blood alcohol content level down, as does spacing out your alcoholic drinks.
- Keep active; don't just sit around and drink. If you stay active you tend to drink less and to be more aware of any effects alcohol may be having on you.
- Beware of unfamiliar drinks. Some drinks, such as zombies and other fruit drinks can be deceiving as the alcohol content is not detectable. Therefore, it is difficult to space them properly.
- Use alcohol carefully in connection with pharmaceuticals. Ask your physician or pharmacist about any precautions or prohibitions and follow any advice received.

### Remember...

A glass of white or red wine, a bottle of beer, and a shot of whiskey or other distilled spirits all contain equivalent amounts of alcohol and are the same to a Breathalyzer. A standard drink is:

- A 12-ounce bottle or can of regular beer
- A 5-ounce glass of wine
- A one and 1/2 ounce of 80 proof distilled spirits (either straight or in a mixed drink)

For more information contact Cindy Scott, ASAP Prevention Coordinator at (414) 278-DRUG or Cynthia.Scott1@apg.army.mil

Moderation information provided by the Alcohol-Problems & Solutions website at <http://www2.potsdam.edu/hansondj/AlcoholEquivalence.html>

## A closer look at Maryland Drunk Driving laws

### Maryland's New Drunk Driving Laws - Effective October 1, 2001

With pressure from MADD and the Washington Post, the Maryland legislature produced a .08 per se law and a law allowing refusals in evidence, that took effect Oct. 1, 2001. Since there is no scientific evidence that all individuals are intoxicated at a .08, the legislature denominated the new .08 offense, under Transportation Article § 21-902(a)(2), as well as the non per se offense of "driving while intoxicated" under Transportation Article § 21-902 (a)(1), as "driving under the influence of alcohol per se" and "driving under the influence of alcohol." Prior to Oct. 1, 2001, this offense required a test result of .10 or more. This yet to be defined offense carries all the criminal and administrative penalties that previously attached to § 21-902(a)(1) when it required intoxication, which was defined as "substantial impairment" of normal coordination as a result of the consumption of alcohol. The lesser offense formerly, called "driving under the influence" under Transportation Article § 21-902(b), which requires some impairment, will now be called "driving while impaired." This bill became effective September 30, 2001.

Under the new legislation, a breath test of .08 or more is considered per se under the influence. A test result of .07 or more, but less than .08, is prima facie evidence that the person is impaired by alcohol. The other inferences and presumptions contained in Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article, § 10-307 remain the same

The legislature also overruled Krauss v. State, 322 Md. 376, 587 A.2d 1102 (1991). Krauss held the State could not introduce evidence of the defendant's refusal to submit to a breath or blood test for alcohol since the statute authorizing the introduction of the evidence, Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article, § 10-309, provided that "no inference or presumption regarding guilt or innocence arises because of a refusal to submit." The new statute, which became effective Oct. 1, 2001, removed that phrase. However the new law does not indicate exactly what the effect the jury may give the refusal.

### Maryland's New Drunk Driving Laws - Effective Sept. 30, 2002

In effect since September 2002, the Maryland legislature added enhanced penalties for repeat offenders. As a result of House Bill 4/ Senate Bill 352 a second conviction of driving under the influence in violation of § 21-902(a) within five years of a prior "a" conviction receives a mandatory one-year suspension of their driver's license or privileges. There is no work permit or interlock restriction allowed for the one year. Preceding the year the person is required to install an ignition interlock system on all vehicles they own for from three months

to one year. They are entitled to a hearing for an Administrative Law Judge to determine the length of the interlock restriction and whether there is financial hardship involved with installing an interlock on more than one car.

Additionally, a second "a" conviction within five years of the first carries a mandatory minimum sentence of five days incarceration or 30 days community service. A third "a" conviction within five years carries a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 days incarceration or 60 days community service. Incarceration includes house arrest or in-patient treatment.

Within 10 days of arrest, to request a hearing with the Office of Administrative Hearings, located in Hunt Valley, Maryland.

If there is a breath or blood test with a result of .08 or more, or the person is alleged to have refused the test, then the arresting officer probably took the driver's license and issued a 45-day temporary driver's license. The temporary license is actually a white piece of paper that should be attached to an almost identical piece of white paper. The second page is the hearing request copy and should be mailed to the Office of Administrative Hearings certified, return receipt requested immediately. Include a check for \$125 made payable to the Maryland State Treasurer.) If the hearing request is postmarked more than 10 days after arrest, the applicable suspension may begin to run if the hearing is scheduled more than 45 days after arrest. If the hearing request is postmarked more than 30 days after arrest, the person probably can't get a hearing.

The hearings are held before administrative law judges in Hunt Valley or at MVA branch offices. The suspension for a test result over .08 is 45 days for a first offense and 90 days for a second or subsequent offense. The suspension for a refusal is 120 days for a first offense and one year for a second or subsequent offense. In some circumstances drivers may be able to avoid a complete suspension if they are willing to install an interlock device in their vehicle for at least one year.

The hearing at the Office of Administrative Hearings, where the driver can lose his or her driver's license or privilege is completely independent of the hearing at court where the potential sanctions can include jail, fine, probation, and imposition of points, for which the driver may have his or her license suspended again, after the DUI/DWI is heard in court.

### High Alcohol Concentration

Maryland has high blood alcohol content laws (also known as high BAC laws) and which is a two-tier system for drunk driving offenses. The standard drunk driving limit is still set at 0.08 BAC, but a second, higher BAC level is established for drivers who are extremely drunk. These high BAC levels range from 0.15 to 0.20.

Some states impose stiffer administrative or judicial penalties for a high BAC offense, while others establish high BAC as a separate offense with separate penalties.

House Bill 525 (passed) establishes a two-tier system of administrative penalties for BAC test results from 0.08 to less than 0.15 and test results of 0.15 or more. The bill increases the administrative suspension period from 45 days to 90 days for a first offense and from 90 days to 180 days for a second or subsequent offense if the driver takes a test of blood or breath that indicates a BAC level of 0.15 or more. For a test result of 0.08, but less than 0.15, the administrative suspension period remains 45 days for a first offense and 90 days for a second or subsequent offense.

In addition to the notice of sanctions that a police officer must currently provide to a driver who refuses a test of blood or breath or a person who has a test result of 0.08 or greater, a police officer must inform a detained driver that if the driver refuses to take a test or takes a test Part G - Transportation And Motor Vehicles G-7 with a BAC of 0.15 or greater, the person may participate in the Ignition Interlock Program for one year instead of requesting a hearing on the administrative penalties if certain conditions are met. The bill establishes the following conditions to authorize participation in the Ignition Interlock Program:

- The driver's license must not be currently suspended, revoked, canceled, or refused;
- The driver must not be charged with a moving violation that arises out of the same circumstances that involved a death or serious physical injury to another person; and
- Within the time limits for requesting an administrative hearing, the driver must surrender a valid Maryland driver's license or sign a statement certifying that the driver no longer possesses the license, and elect in writing to participate in the Ignition Interlock Program for one year.

The bill also specifies that the existing authority of the Motor Vehicle Administration MVA to modify an administrative suspension and issue a restrictive license does not apply to drivers who had a test result indicating a BAC of 0.15 or more. If a driver refused to take a test or had a test with a BAC result of 0.15 or more, the MVA may modify the license and issue a restrictive license only if the driver participates in the Ignition Interlock System Program for one year. If the driver fails to complete participation in the program, the license or driving



privilege must be summarily suspended for the full period applicable to the administrative offense of either taking a test with a result of 0.15 or more, or refusing to take a test of blood or breath.

### Mandatory Suspensions for Young Drivers

National statistics show that motor vehicle crashes are the number one killer of teenagers nationwide. An analysis of the teen driving problem, completed by the University of Maryland Baltimore County in January 2006, showed that in 2003, of 9,089 Maryland traffic accidents due to alcohol and/or drug impairment, 1,070 or 11.8 percent involved teens. Of 179 fatalities from alcohol- and/or drug-related traffic accidents, 34 fatalities or 19 percent, involved teens. Out of 5,187 traffic accidents due to alcohol and/or drug impairment where injuries were sustained, 719 or 13.9 percent involved teen drivers. According to the State Police, in 2005, 57 teen drivers between the ages of 15 and 19 were at fault for fatal crashes and 13 teen passengers were killed in crashes involving a teen driver.

Senate Bill 228/House Bill 310 (both passed) require the MVA to suspend the license of a child adjudicated as delinquent or a child found to have committed a delinquent act for violating alcohol and/or drug-related driving provisions. For a first offense, the license suspension must be for one year. For a second or subsequent offense, the license suspension period must be for two years. The period of suspension is mandatory. The suspension must run concurrently with any other suspension or revocation that arises out of the same circumstances.

Any other suspension imposed due to violation of an alcohol restriction or refusal to take a test of blood or breath must be credited against the suspension imposed under these bills.

The staff of the APG ASAP office: Jareta Coyle, Bill Sanchious, Cindy Scott, Judi Smith, and Samson Robinson, wish each member of the APG Family a joyful new year filled with healthy choices.

For more information, Scott can be reached at 410-278-3784 or Cynthia.Scott1@apg.army.mil.

## Army Contracting Agency implements Wide Area Workflow



ACA APG DOC

Wide Area Workflow is an E-Commerce initiative designed to automate commercial invoices and government receiving reports into a Web-based and paperless environment.

It is the Department of Defense's standard application for the electronic processing of invoices and receiving reports.

Users of WAWF input their invoices and receiving reports into WAWF via the Internet and the information is then routed through the system utilizing the vendor's Commercial Activity Government Entity, or CAGE, Code and the Government's most current Department of Defense Activity Address Code, or DoDAAC.

The Army has been working with the Defense Finance and Accounting Service to implement

this application for the last several years. Many organizations have had the ability to use WAWF since November 2006, but have not made significant progress in utilizing this electronic commerce tool.

The Army Test Center and Army Medical Command coordinated with the Directorate of Contracting and are now using this process.

WAWF requires the activities' active assigned DoDAAC be included in each contract action and that the requiring activities' inspection, receiving and invoice approving personnel are registered and activated in WAWF in order for the automated processes to work.

The activity point of contact must verify the DoDAAC at <https://www.daas.dla.mil/daasinq/>, but know that this procedure requires a login and password.

Requesting and receiving activities' must ensure the information needed for Army elec-

tronic invoicing instructions are included on all purchase requests submitted to their contracting offices in order to utilize WAWF.

It is the requesting activities' responsibility to ensure data provided to the contracting office is current and accurate.

The information required for each purchase request must be clearly visible on it or provided as an attachment to the electronic purchase request.

A link to a form that may be used as an attachment will soon be available on the Directorate of Contracting Web site under "Full Customer Service," "Announcements and News" at <https://www.apg.army.mil/apghome/sites/installation/contracting.asp>.

WAWF training is available online for both requiring activities and vendors at <http://wawftraining.com>.

For additional information, call Martha Mitchem, 410-278-2362.

## APG News

The APG News, a civilian enterprise newspaper, is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. Army. Contents of the APG News are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army or the U.S. Army Garrison, Aberdeen Proving Ground. The newspaper is published weekly by the APG Public Affairs Office, ATTN: IMNE-APG-PA, Building 2201, APG, MD 21005-5001, 410-278-1150. Printed circulation is 8,900.

Everything advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation or any other nonmerit

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21005-5001; call the editor at 410-278-1150, DSN 298-1150; send a fax to 410-278-2570; or send e-mail to editor@apg.army.mil.

Deadline for copy is Thursday at noon for the following Thursday's paper.

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# General Officers Steering Committee completes 10 issues

Story by  
**MARGARET MCKENZIE**  
USAFMWRC

The General Office Steering Committee meets twice a year to work on issues forwarded to them through the AFAP process.

Gen. Richard A. Cody, vice chief of staff of the Army, chaired the GOSC meeting held in November in conjunction with the 2007 AFAP conference.

He stressed the importance of the Army Covenant, which encompasses many of the programs that are briefed and discussed at the AFAP, then reminded participants of the secretary's and Gen. Casey's active involvement.

Senior Department of Defense and Army leaders reviewed 24 issues. Ten were declared completed and nine were ruled "active" and will continue to be worked until declared completed or unattainable. The AFAP delegates also submitted a list of what they voted as the most important issues currently being addressed.

## 10 completed issues

- *Untimely Finance Transactions:* The Defense Joint Military Pay System processes pay twice a month and up to eight times a month for the Reserve Component. Defense Finance and Accounting Service implemented a change to its Defense military pay office suite of software that allow the installation finance offices to track timeliness of pay transactions by source activity using the date received in finance. As of November 2007, the performance standards for pay timeliness across the department is 97 percent, a statistic that is monitored by the Personnel and Pay Council at the Office of the Secretary of Defense level. A Defense Integrated Military

Human Resource System is scheduled to be on line in October 2008.

- *Marriage and Family Counseling Services in Remote Access:* Families can get counseling services through Military OneSource. The military has funded a program to provide therapists to deliver services to Families in remote areas. Between 15 and 30 percent of Families in post-deployment status require some professional intervention in some type of marriage or Family services. A plan is in place to add 42 more chaplains, therapists, and chaplain's assistants to remote areas for Families. Services are also available from the Department of Veteran's Affairs Re-adjustment Counseling Program. TRICARE Information for Reserve Components: TRICARE's services and information is simplified and will be available through brochures, CD's and briefings. A 24/7 toll-free line is available to provide information on dental and medical benefits with explanations available in Spanish. This service is in high demand and is considered very successful in providing clearer, more simplified and understandable information for the user.

- *Non-Chargeable Leave for Deployed Soldiers:* In April 2007 the Office of the Secretary of Defense implemented a post deployment/mobilization respite absence program which provides days of non-chargeable administrative absences to Soldiers who mobilize for deployment with a frequency beyond established rotation policy goals. Rest and Recreation leave increased from 15 days to 18 days for Soldiers deployed for 15 months. This applies to both active duty and Reserves. For Soldiers who are extending there is a request to have additional R&R authorized for them as well.

- *Terminal leave restrictions for Soldiers in the Physical Disability Evaluation System:* Soldiers will be able to use accrued leave during the PDES process as long as leave periods do not conflict with medical treatment or scheduled PDES boards. An independent action by the Army Medical Action Plan working group resulted in a change to terminal leave for active and reserve component Wounded Warriors in transition, Soldiers processing through and Soldiers who have completed the PDES. ALARACT 172/2007, 7 Aug. 07 authorizes these Soldiers to take transition leave, formerly called terminal leave.

- *Equal Compensatory Time for Full-time Non-appropriated Fund Employees:* Effective October, installation commanders have the authority to grant compensatory time for full-time NAF employees.

- *Department of Defense Department School Tuition for Department of Defense Contractors and Non-appropriated Fund Employees:* DoD contractor dependents are eligible for space-created, tuition-paying enrollment effective with the school year 2007-2008. Space, but not the construction or other expansion of facilities may be created for contractor dependents. Department of Defense Education Activity will offer enrollment to contractor students where DoDEA operates an overseas school through one of two contingencies. DODEA will guarantee enrollment for the contractor students when there is space in schools at the appropriate grade. Where DoDEA schools have reached maximum capacity, the sponsor must first apply to international schools. If the student is unable to gain admittance in a local international school DoDEA will guar-

antee enrollment.

- *Family Member Access to E-learning Programs:* Skillsoft Corporation has made a special reduced rate of \$550 a year to government contractors, military/federal retirees, veterans, spouses, and dependents for unlimited use of courseware and books, or \$400 without books. Skill Port e-learning site includes over 2,000 courses and 100 certification preparatory exams. Patrons can access information SkillPort on the Army e-learning portal on Army Knowledge Online.

- *Audio/Video Surveillance at Child Development Centers:* This issue addressed a need for video surveillance systems in child and youth facilities as deterrent measure for child abuse in the facilities. Surveillance systems are now in all child development centers. In 2003, the surveillance systems were expanded to school age and youth centers. Surveillance systems have been funded, and will now be part of the standard designs for all future child and youth facilities.

- *Family Readiness Support Assistants:* As of Nov. 27, 2007, 669 FRSA's have been hired. Funding has been approved for a total of 1,011 Family readiness support assistants in Active, Guard and Reserve deployable units. Funding for these positions has been distributed to the Army commands.

The top six critical actives issues previously introduced into the AFAP process (as determined by this year's delegates) include:

- Allow Soldiers with at least 10 years of service to transfer their Montgomery GI Bill benefits to their dependents.

- Establish a comprehensive inte-

grated rehabilitative program for traumatic brain injury patients at military Medical Centers of Excellence.

- Provide retroactive Traumatic Service Members' Group Life Insurance compensation to Soldiers with qualifying injuries occurring between Oct. 7, 2001, and Nov. 3, 2005, consistent with Soldiers injured in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

- Direct all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories to grant unemployment compensation to military spouses who leave a job because of a PCS move.

- Reduce member cost share to 20 percent for dental services not already covered at 100 percent in the TRICARE Dental Program and TRICARE Retiree Dental program. Increase maximum annual benefit for TDP and TRDP to \$1,500.

- Allow Reserve Component Soldiers and Family members up to one year post-mobilization to identify the need for counseling related to service-connected problems.

Additionally, the delegates voted on the top five mobilization/deployment and Family readiness strengths. Included on the list were: the Army wounded warrior program (AW2); the Army Family Covenant; Family readiness group support; communication with Families and post-deployment programs for Soldiers and Families.

The top five mobilization/deployment and Family challenges as determined by the delegates were: availability and timeliness of mental health care for Soldiers and Families; frequency of deployments; stigma of seeking mental health services; inconsistent wounded warrior treatment/tracking and Family readiness group training.

## GOSC

### From front page

"It is great today to see all the things that are unfolding like care for the military child in the local community and all the wonderful things that General Pinckney has done to provide resources to dispersed Families," Freakley added.

Brig. Gen. Belinda Pinckney is commanding general of the Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command, which oversees the AFAP process to ensure that issues are referred to the appropriate agencies for resolution.

Semi-annual GOSC meetings monitor the progress of each issue until it is resolved or deemed unattainable.

Secretary of the Army Pete Geren directed his comments at the GOSC attendees which included delegates from the annual AFAP conference, who make the grass roots process possible.

"I want to thank all of you for the great work that you've done to bring us where we are today," Geren said. "The initiatives that you all have brought forth from the grassroots already have begun to make a difference in the life of Families.

"But this is a project that will never be finished," he continued. "We must continue as an Army to adapt to the needs of Families, our all-volunteer force, its Soldiers, its spouses and its kids. And if we're going to sustain the health of this all-volunteer force, if we're going to sustain

the existence of an all-volunteer force, we've got to make sure that as an Army, we meet the needs of every piece of that all-volunteer force. So I cannot overstate how important this initiative is."

The secretary thanked all the participants from the various areas, agencies and installations around the Army and the Army community for their efforts and for putting other obligations on hold to commit to this effort.

"Thank you very much for what you do. Thank you for your leadership in this area, and I look forward to continuing to work with you on it," Geren said.

Delegates working the conference were impressed with the process and how it affects them personally through changes on the installations and in the communities that they represent.

"I think this is a very important process," said Sgt. 1st Class Alanna Payne, a drill

sergeant at Fort Jackson, S.C. "As an active duty Soldier, a lot of times changes come through, and you are aware that changes have been made but you don't realize the process. When you are part of the change and you see how things happen, it makes you appreciate the changes and you look at things in a different light.

"It takes on a different meaning when you see how many people are actually involved and what happens when we push issues forward from installations," she continued. "It gives me a new awareness and appreciation for the hard work that goes into this AFAP process."

Spc. Jonathan Maki, the president for the Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers from Grafenwoehr Germany, pointed out that the statistics about the number of legislative changes that have been made through AFAP show how much senior leadership listens.

"I think the AFAP pro-

cess is great because it brings awareness on programs that might not get the attention that they need," he said. "It brings the awareness directly to the senior leadership of the Army to say: 'Hey, we need some help.' The senior leaders do listen, and keep in mind, that is doing good for the Army."

"I am part of the BOSS program, which was an AFAP issue in 1989," Maki continued. "The single Soldiers make up more than forty per-

cent of the Army population and the AFAP process brought BOSS into focus."

As Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management and Commander of the Installation Management Command, Lt. Gen. Robert Wilson has been deeply involved in the AFAP process for a year and a half.

"I think [AFAP] is hugely important to taking care of Soldiers and Families, and now that the Chief and Secretary have put a new emphasis on

Family, it is even going to make it more important to how we address our readiness issues."

The process and the life cycle of an issue brought up during AFAP doesn't end until a decision is made at the GOSC that the issue has been satisfactorily resolved or declared unattainable.

The GOSC will meet June 4, to review issues identified during this conference and to continue efforts to resolve issues identified in previous years.



Photo by SGT 1ST CLASS JENNIFER K. YANCEY, ARMY PUBLIC AFFAIRS Staff Sgt. Jack Greene, left, 85th Medical Detachment, Fort Hood, Texas, holds Budge, a black Labrador retriever, one of two that deployed to Iraq to help combat-weary troops deal with the rigors of war and help erase the stigma attached to mental health. Looking on is one of the dog's handlers, Staff Sgt. Mike Calaway.

# New 'best friends' serve in Iraq

Story by  
**JERRY HARBEN**  
U.S. Army Medical Command

Soldiers serving in Iraq have some new "best friends." Budge and Boe, two black Labrador retrievers, have been enlisted to help Soldiers deal with the severe stresses of combat.

The dogs were donated to the Army by VetDogs, a subsidiary of Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind, Inc. This non-profit organization based in Smithtown, N.Y., provides service animals for disabled veterans.

Staff Sgt. Mike Calaway and Staff Sgt. Jack Greene spent the second week of December in New York learning to care for and work with the dogs. Calaway and Greene are occupational therapy assistants with the 85th Medical Detachment (Combat Stress Control), which provides behavioral-health support for U.S. soldiers in Iraq.

"The therapy dogs are an innovative approach to help establish working relationships with command and assist in developing rapport with soldiers," Maj. Stacie M. Caswell, commander of the 85th, said in an e-mail from Iraq. "The dog's presence in the unit areas will help to build unit morale and cohesion. The love of animals will be the common ground to increase understanding, build empathy and foster

compassion, which are essential components for healing."

"The dog is a modality to break the ice and to break down the negative stigma of mental health," Greene said. "I'm overly ecstatic about this. I see this having a good effect on the Soldiers."

"These are very well-trained and well-disciplined dogs," said Calaway.

The dogs have been trained by Mike Sergeant of VetDogs to work despite loud noises or other distractions, and not to socialize with people who may be afraid or disinterested.

"The dogs are obedience trained. If a Soldier does not want to interact with the dog, all he has to do is raise his hand, and the dog will turn away from that Soldier," Sergeant said.

Calaway and Greene, in turn, have learned basic dog-handling skills.

"We are starting to form a bond with the dogs. We are learning basic commands and how to handle the dogs when there are distractions around," Greene said.

Dogs and other animals are used in hospital settings for various forms of therapy, and to assist people who are blind or otherwise partially disabled. VetDogs has previously donated dogs to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., for such programs. Mili-

tary working dogs are used in military deployments for such missions as guard patrols and bomb detection. However, this will be the first time dogs have been used to facilitate mental-health therapy in a combat environment.

"Research has shown that the use of therapy dogs helps to reduce stress and anxiety levels and increases the feeling of safety of patients participating in traditional therapeutic behavior health groups," Caswell wrote in requesting approval to start the animal-assisted therapy.

"It is known by common experience that when the (military police) or (explosive ordnance disposal) teams bring dogs into groups of soldiers experiencing stressors on the battlefield that these groups will open up: they respond to the dogs with smiles and become more talkative," she wrote.

When the 85th finishes its tour and returns to the United States next spring, Budge and Boe will stay to continue work with the 528th Medical Detachment (Combat Stress Control).

"When the therapy dogs are unable to perform their mission they will redeploy and several options will be available in accordance with the donation agreement signed by VetDogs and the Army Surgeon General. The dogs may be

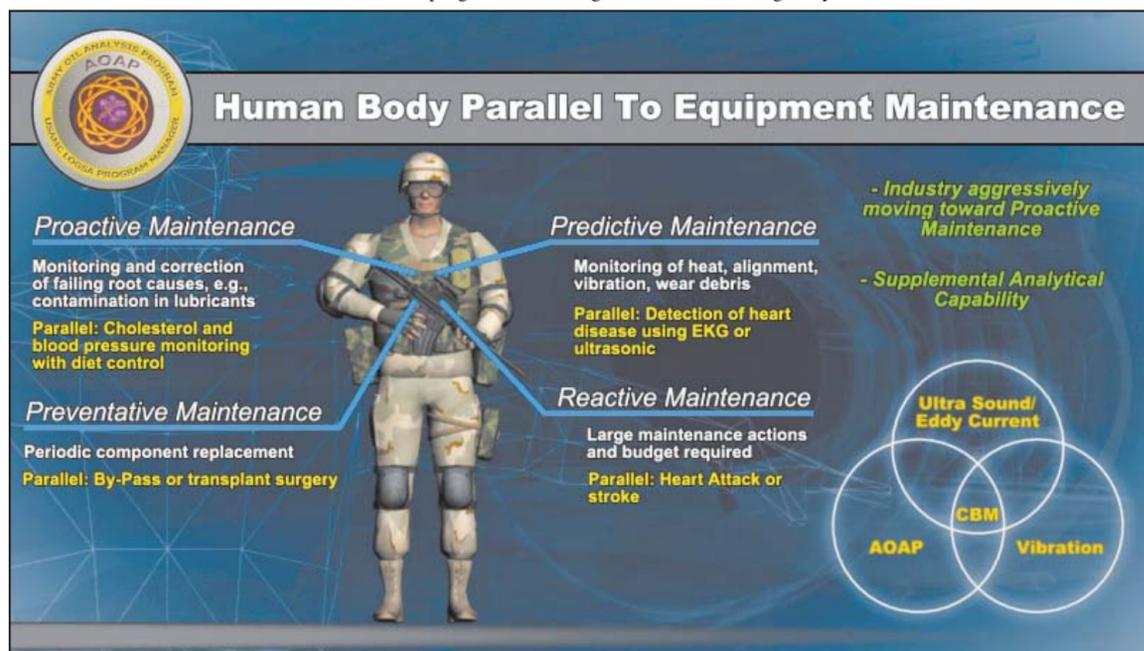
transferred to a medical facility and continue their therapy service, they can be returned to VetDogs or, upon approval by the U.S. Army, they can be adopted by a service member," Caswell said.

Caswell said she expects the dogs to come into contact with about 500 Soldiers and civilians a week while they are working.

"It is hoped that the dogs will help to overcome the barriers to accessing mental-health care by dissolving the stigma associated with providers in this field," she said. "The initial relationships the dogs help to facilitate with the Soldiers and their command will theoretically allow the soldiers to see that the (combat stress control) team members are caring, reasonable people that want to help. It follows that Soldiers will be more inclined to seek our services in the future. Establishing strong, positive relationships has consistently been associated with positive outcomes."

"Most Americans love dogs. As our commander Maj. Caswell says, sometimes all someone needs is a lick in the face," Greene said.

(Editor's note: Kristin Ellis of Walter Reed Army Medical Center contributed to this report.)



## Army Oil Analysis Program helps prevent failures

U.S. Army Logistics Support Activity

Scenario: Imagine yourself on a mounted patrol where you come under fire; your buddy on the left flank is in need of fire support. As you make the turn to provide the needed fire suppression; your Bradley Fighting Vehicle comes to an abrupt stop. The enemy is now pounding your position; you desperately try to start the engine, just to find that your engine has ceased and is locked up.

In this scenario, the command not only loses a valuable vehicle, it now also requires another asset for recovery of the inoperative weapon system.

However, there is good news. The Army Oil Analysis Program is there to help the Warfighter prevent these types of unexpected failures.

The AOAP is one of several condition-based-maintenance tools available in the maintainer's toolkit. AOAP provides maintenance diagnostic support to the Warfighter for aeronautical and non-aeronautical components through routine analysis of used oil samples.

Oil analysis can mean the difference

between an operational weapon system or one that fails.

The objectives of the AOAP are to improve operational readiness of Army equipment, promote safety, detect impending component failures, analyze the physical properties of lubricants and conserve lubricating and hydraulic oils by applying the Army's On-Condition-Oil-Change Policy said Nicholas Mikus, AOAP Program Manager with U.S. Army Logistics Support Activity, AOAP Preventive Maintenance Office.

The AOAP is effective only when it is fully integrated into the maintenance system, he said. The AOAP does not minimize the need to employ good maintenance practices and strong maintenance discipline.

Industry studies have shown that contaminated oil in oil-wetted components has a direct negative impact on the overall operational capability and safety of equipment.

The AOAP processes include various condition-monitoring techniques; such as spectrometric and infrared oil analysis and ferrography debris analysis. These tests

are used to determine the physical condition of the oil and the internal condition of engines, gearboxes, and transmissions for selected equipment in the Army's inventory.

In addition, commanders and the local installations gain significant savings through the on-condition oil changes by saving on oil and having less hazardous disposal waste costs.

In the short run, AOAP decreases maintenance support costs.

"A comparison to the human body reveals that proactive maintenance can alleviate health problems. The same applies to military vehicles," Mikus said. In the long run, it improves readiness and enhances safety by reducing the number of non-mission capable end items.

"AOAP is one of the most important maintenance tools you have available," per the DoD program.

For more information, visit the Logistics Information Warehouse, <https://liw.logsa.army.mil> or contact the AOAP program manger, 256-955-0869, DSN: 645-0869 or by e-mail [logsa.aoap@conus.army.mil](mailto:logsa.aoap@conus.army.mil).

# Community Notes

## SATURDAY

### JANUARY 12 IF YOU FEED THEM, THEY WILL COME

Join birder Phil Powers to learn what birds frequent backyards in Harford County and their feeder and food preferences. This free program will be held noon to 1:30 p.m. for all ages (Families). Registration is required.

For more information, to register or for directions to the Anita C. Leight Estuary Center, call 410-612-1688 or 410-879-2000, ext. 1688.

### CRITTER DINNER TIMES

Come watch the turtles, fish and snakes eat and learn more about them. This free program will be held at 1:30 p.m. for all ages. No registration required.

For more information or for directions to the Anita C. Leight Estuary Center, call 410-612-1688 or 410-879-2000, ext. 1688.

## SUNDAY

### JANUARY 13 WINTERTREE AND SHRUB HIKE

Hike with forester Frank Lopez on a winter walk to discover the trees and shrubs in the woods and learn fascinating tree lore.

Enjoy hot cocoa after the hike. Be sure to dress warmly. This free program will be held 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. for ages 8 to adult. Registration is required.

For more information, to register or for directions to the Anita C. Leight Estuary Center, call 410-612-1688 or 410-879-2000, ext. 1688.

### MEMORY QUILT

Have a favorite Estuary Center memory? Put a personal touch on a memory quilt to be displayed in the lobby. This is not a traditional quilt and no experience is necessary. Bring memories and creativity. Materials, refreshments and a warm fire provided. This free program will be held 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. for ages 8 to adult. Registration is required.

For more information, to register or for directions to the Anita C. Leight Estuary Center, call 410-612-1688 or 410-879-2000, ext. 1688.

### AMERICAN LEGION BINGO

American Legion Edgewood Service Post 17, located on 415 Edgewood Road, will hold Bingo every Sunday. Doors open 5 p.m., Bingo begins 6:15 p.m. Food, cash awards available, guaranteed jackpot of \$500.

For more information, call 410-676-1167

## WEDNESDAY

### JANUARY 16 THE HIGHLANDS SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE

The Highlands School, located on 2409 Creswell Road, Route 543, Bel Air, will hold two open houses, 1:30 to 3 p.m. and 7 to 8:30 p.m. Each open house will feature a slide presentation, a question and answer session and a facility tour. Snow date will be Jan. 23.

For more information or for directions, call 410-836-1415.

## THURSDAY

### JANUARY 17 SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY JOB EXPO

The Susquehanna Workforce Network will hold a Science and Technology Job Expo, 3 to 7 p.m., at Ripken Stadium, 873 Long Drive, Aberdeen.

Businesses include Booz Allen Hamilton, Custom Direct, Dynamic Science, Inc., Bowhead Technical and Professional Services, SAIC, U.S. Army Aberdeen Test Center, Smith's Detection and more. In the event of inclement weather, the date will be Jan. 18.

For more information, call Stacey Lambert, Susquehan-

na Workforce Network, 410-939-4240, e-mail slambert@swnetwork.org or visit [www.swnetwork.org](http://www.swnetwork.org).

## SATURDAY

### JANUARY 19 LIVING GREEN WORKSHOP

Sick of high energy bills? Heard all the talk about "green living" but not really sure what that means or how much it would cost? Hear what it means to "live green" and how easy it really is. This free program will be held 10 a.m. to noon for adults. Lunch will be provided. Registration is required.

For more information, to register or for directions to the Anita C. Leight Estuary Center, call 410-612-1688 or 410-879-2000, ext. 1688.

### BLUEBIRD NEST BOX

Prepare for the February arrival of bluebirds and brush up on woodworking skills. Build a nest box, learn where to place them, and have fun. Bring a cordless drill and Phillips screwdriver. The program will be held 1 to 2 p.m. for ages 8 to adult; ages 8 to 12 must be accompanied by an adult. Cost is \$5 per box. Registration is required.

For more information, to register or for directions to the Anita C. Leight Estuary Center, call 410-612-1688 or 410-

879-2000, ext. 1688.

### WHITE-TAILED DEER SURVEY

Harford County seems to be experiencing explosive population growth, and not just with humans. Help determine if the deer population of Leight Park and the Bosely Conservancy is a healthy size. Come get the scoop on poop and conduct pellet (deer scat) counts out on the trails to determine how many deer call the park home. This free program will be held 9 a.m. to noon for ages 16 to Adult. Registration is required.

For more information, to register or for directions to the Anita C. Leight Estuary Center, call 410-612-1688 or 410-879-2000, ext. 1688.

## SUNDAY

### JANUARY 20 REPTILE AND AMPHIBIAN RESEARCH AND MONITORING ROUNDUP

Learn about the various opportunities to research and monitor reptiles and amphibians that are available at the Estuary Center and in Harford County, including the North American Amphibian Monitoring

Program, Turtle Telemetry and the Herp Survey and Coverboard Study. Meet some of the animals likely to be found, learn frog calls, train in the use of telemetry equipment and review current data and trends. This free program will be held 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. for ages 12 to adult; ages 12 to 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Registration is required.

For more information, to register or for directions to the Anita C. Leight Estuary Center, call 410-612-1688 or 410-879-2000, ext. 1688.

## SATURDAY

### JANUARY 26 WORMS, WORMS, AND MORE WORMS

Think worms are not gross? Then this is the perfect program. Investigate how worms do "their thing" and make mini-environments to take home. The program will be held 2 to 3 p.m. for ages 5 to 10. Cost is \$4. Registration is required.

For more information, to register or for directions to the Anita C. Leight Estuary Center, call 410-612-1688 or 410-879-2000, ext. 1688.

*(Editors Note: More Community Notes can be seen at [www.apgnews.apg.army.mil](http://www.apgnews.apg.army.mil) under Comm. Notes.)*

## Post Shorts

Federal District 1, IAMAW, AFL-CIO, NFFE Local 178 invites all bargaining unit members to attend the monthly meeting, noon to 1 p.m., Jan. 17, in building E-4415 (RDECOM, ECBC, ECBC matrixed employees, MRICD, 22d Chemical Battalion and Acquisition Center government employees). Topics include the union election results, union member dues and an update on the National Security Personnel System (NSPS).

For more information, call 410-436-3942 or e-mail local178@apg.army.mil.

### Tax Center opens

The Installation Tax Assistance Program, directed by the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, Client Services Division, provides free tax preparation and electronic filing for qualifying active duty service members, retirees and Family members.

The center will officially open with a ribbon cutting ceremony 1:30 p.m., Jan. 23, at building 4311 on Boothby Hill Road behind the Janet Barr Soldier Center.

Tax service will be provided 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., tax returns will be prepared noon to 6 p.m., Jan. 24 to April 10.

For more information, call 410-278-1583/2020.

### Registration open for UMUC Spring 2008.

Registration has begun for the University of Maryland University College Spring 2008 semester, which begins Jan. 23. APG will offer BMGT 364 Management and Organization Theory (3), 6 to 9 p.m., Tuesdays and IFSM 304 Ethics in the Information Age (3), 6 to 9 p.m., Wednesdays. Additional classes are available through distance education formats. Students are advised to register early, as some classes fill quickly.

For more information or to register, visit the APG office of UMUC in building 4305, room 210, or call 410-272-8269 or 410-306-2048.

Information about UMUC is also available at [www.umuc.edu](http://www.umuc.edu).

### 'Retired Federal Employees' meets Feb. 19

Susquehanna Chapter 1522 of National National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association for Harford and Cecil Counties will meet 11:30 a.m. at the Havre de Grace Methodist Church social hall located on Congress and Union avenues. A light lunch with potluck will be served 11:30 a.m. A presentation, "Accent on Elder Law — A New Approach to Serving Maryland Seniors" will be given 12:45 p.m. A business meeting will follow at 1:15 p.m.

For more information, or for reservations, call 410-939-3973.

### Mark the date-- National Prayer Luncheon Feb. 22

Aberdeen Proving Ground will host its annual National Prayer Luncheon 11:30 a.m., Feb. 22, at Top of the Bay. The guest speaker will be Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien, archbishop of Baltimore.

For ticket information, call

410-278-4333.

### CPR and AED classes available

Beginning January 2008, the Aberdeen Proving Ground Fire and Emergency Service will offer CPR and automated external defibrillator classes in APG North and South.

Two classes will be held 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m., the third Wednesday of each month.

In APG South, classes will be held at the Gunpowder Club, building E-4650 in the Osprey Room, on Feb. 20, April 16, June 18, Aug. 20, Oct. 15 and Dec. 17.

In APG North, classes will be held at the Post Theater, on Jan. 16, March 19, May 22, July 16, Sept. 17 and Nov. 19.

Class size will be limited to 30 participants and will be filled on a first-come-first-serve basis. Pre-Registration will be required.

For more information or to register, call Raymond Campbell, 410-306-0566, or e-mail Ray.Campbell@apg.army.mil.

### Education Center

### conducts in-process briefings

The APG Education Center, located in building 4305, second floor, room 213-B, will conduct a monthly in-process briefing for Soldiers within their first 30 days of assignment to APG. The briefings take place 8 to 9 a.m. on the last Monday of each month and are designed to inform Soldiers, enlisted and officers, of programs and services available to meet the requirements of their educational goals and plans. The briefing also will provide information to help establish or recertify the Soldier's long/short-term education goals.

For more information, call Tressie Stout, 410-306-2042.

### NCO Academy 8th Annual Anniversary Dining Out

The Noncommissioned Officer Academy will hold its 8th Annual Anniversary Dining Out Feb. 29 at Top of the Bay. The evening will honor past NCOA commandants from 1987 to present.

Tickets cost \$35. Call to

make a reservation by Feb. 25.

For more information or to RSVP, call Sgt. 1st Class Francis Cruz, 410-278-9129 or e-mail francis.cruz@apg.army.mil or lilly.dillon@apg.army.mil.

### Nominations open for Employer Support Freedom Award

The Department of Defense has opened nomination season for the 2008 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award. National Guard and Reserve members and their Families are eligible and encouraged to nominate employers who have gone above and beyond in their support of military employees.

The award is the U.S. government's highest recognition given to outstanding employers.

Recipients will be announced in the spring and honored in Washington, D.C., at the 13th annual Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award ceremony on Sept. 18, 2008.

Nominations will be accepted at [www.esgr.mil](http://www.esgr.mil) through Jan. 21, 2008.

### CBRNIAC offers technical inquiry service

The Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Defense Information Analysis Center, or CBRNIAC, provides a technical inquiry service.

The service offers up to four hours of technical analysis service at no cost to authorized users from Department of Defense agencies, other federal government agencies, DoD and federal contractors, state and local governments and emergency response organizations. The service covers the full range of CBRN defense and related homeland security topics.

To take advantage of CBRNIAC's Inquiry Service, complete the "Submit an Inquiry" form on its Web site, <http://www.cbrniac.apgea.army.mil/info/inquiry.php>, or call James M. King, 410-676-9030.

*(Editors Note: More Shorts can be seen at [www.apgnews.apg.army.mil](http://www.apgnews.apg.army.mil) under Shorts.)*

## APG closing announcements

If the installation is closed, is experiencing a delay in opening or if liberal leave is in effect due to weather or other emergency situations, check for postings on the local television and radio stations, WAPG-TV Channel 21 (on Aberdeen Proving Ground) or call 410-278-SNOW (7669).

A recorded telephone message will contain updated information and should begin at about 5 a.m.

Announcements about federal offices in the greater Baltimore metropolitan area do not apply to Aberdeen Proving Ground; listen for those that name APG specifically.

For general information, call the APG Public Affairs Office, 410-278-1147.

Station	Frequency	Location
WAMD	AM 970	Aberdeen
WXCX	FM 103.7	Havre de Grace
WBAL	AM 1090	Baltimore
WIYY	FM 97.9	Baltimore
WPOC	FM 93.1	Baltimore
WDEL	AM 1150	Wilmington, Del.
WSTW	FM 93.7	Wilmington, Del.
WSBA	AM 910	York, Pa.
WARM	FM 103.3	York, Pa.
WROZ	FM 101.3	Lancaster, Pa.
WBAL-TV	Channel 11	Baltimore
WMAR-TV	Channel 2	Baltimore
WBFF-TV	Channel 45	Baltimore
WJZ-TV	Channel 13	Baltimore



# MORALE, WELFARE & RECREATION

## Activities/Events

### Free movies at the Post Theater every weekend in January

MWR hosts free movies at the Post Theater, 7 p.m. Saturdays and 2 p.m. Sundays.

Movies are open to active duty, National Guard and Reserves personnel and their family members, retirees, DoD civilians, and APG contractors. Children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult regardless of the movie rating.

For more information or movie schedule call the Movie Hotline, 410-278-8000 or check the APG MWR Web site, <http://www.apgmwr.com>.

Snack Bar will be open for all performances.

**WE OWN THE NIGHT (R)** Saturday, Jan. 12, 7 p.m.

A bloody 1980s struggle between New York City police and a Russian mob that targeted law officers and their families.

**RENDITION (R)**, Sunday, Jan. 13, 2 p.m.

A thriller that centers on Isabella El-Ibrahimi, the American wife of Egyptian-born chemical engineer Anwar El-Ibrahimi, who disappears on a flight from South Africa to Washington.

**DAN IN REAL LIFE (PG)**, Saturday, Jan. 19, 7 p.m.

Advice columnist Dan Burns is an expert on relationships, but somehow struggles to succeed as a brother, a son and a single parent.

**THE COMEBACKS (PG)**, Sunday, Jan. 20, 2 p.m.

This spoof comedy follows an out-of-luck

coach, Lambeau Fields, who takes a rag-tag bunch of college misfits and drives them towards the football championship.

**AMERICAN GANGSTER (PG)**, Saturday, Jan. 26, 7 p.m.

Based on the life of drug-kingpin-turned-informant, Frank Lucas, who grew up in segregated North Carolina, where he watched as his cousin was shot by the Klan for looking at a white girl.

**MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM (PG)**, Sunday, Jan. 27, 2 p.m.

Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium is the strangest, most fantastic, most wonderful toy store in the world. In fact, it's a magic toy store and everything in it comes to life — including the store itself. The emporium asks only one thing of its customers — you must believe it to see it.



## SCHOOL LIAISON

### LIONS Homeschool Co-op meetings

The LIONS Homeschool Co-op needs students in grades one through 12 to participate in art and other classes. The LIONS Homeschool Co-op meets 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., every Wednesday at the Aberdeen Area Youth Center and welcomes all government ID card holders. Parents can pick and choose the classes that meets their children's or family's needs. The Co-op offers support for the families who are just beginning homeschooling or for the veteran homeschooler. Check out the LIONS Homeschool Co-op.

For more information, call Chel Shupp, 443-655-0271 or E-mail [ccttshupp@comcast.net](mailto:ccttshupp@comcast.net).

### Parent notification of school delay/cancellation due to weather

Harford County Public Schools will notify all parents of a school delay/cancellation due to snow or hazardous weather using the Alert Now System (automated phone messaging.)

All parents will receive phone calls at 5:45 a.m. on the morning of the school delay or cancellation. Please be sure that the schools have up-to-date phone numbers.

Traditional media outlets (TV, radio) will remain in effect as well.

If using the Internet, visit [www.schools-out.com](http://www.schools-out.com) to get emergency information or other important school system information.

Families can also arrange to have emergency information sent directly to their e-mail addresses for a small fee.

### Open house at St. Joan of Arc school

Join St. Joan of Arc School for its open house 9 to 11 a.m., Jan. 25. Prospective parents and students can see first-hand all of the wonderful things happening at St. Joan of Arc School in Aberdeen.

For more information, call the school office, 410-272-1387.

### Fifth Annual College Night Feb. 19

The Fifth Annual College Night will be held 6 to 8 p.m., Feb. 19, at C. Milton Wright High School, located on 1301 N. Fountain Green Road, Bel Air. Snow date is Feb. 20. College Night is free to all Harford County public school students and parents.

For more information, call 410-638-4110.

For more information on any APG school related topic, contact Eileen Campbell, 410-278-2857 or e-mail [eileen.campbell@apg.army.mil](mailto:eileen.campbell@apg.army.mil).

## ACS upcoming events

All scheduled events will be held at the Army Community Service Center, building 2754, Rodman Road unless otherwise noted.

A Support Group for Survivors meets 6 to 8 p.m. each Tuesday. The topic is "Talking It Out." The support group is open to adults affected by unhealthy relationships including domestic and/or sexual violence.

The ACS Employment Readiness Program in partnership with Aberdeen Proving Ground Federal Credit Union and Harford Community College Small Business Development Center sponsors *Smart Start Your Business seminars*. This free 90-minute orientation program provides an overview of the ways to start a business, the skills and duties of a successful entrepreneur and how to write a strategic business plan. Other services offered by the SBDC will also be discussed.

For more information, call 410-278-9669.

The Waiting Families Support Group is scheduled for 6 to 7 p.m., Wednesdays, at ACS, building 2754 Rodman Road. This group is designed to provide resource infor-

mation to assist spouses and Family members remaining behind while the military sponsor serves on unaccompanied tours, extended TDY or deployments.

For more information, call Marilyn Howard, ACS, building 2754 Rodman Road, 410-278-9669/7572.

A Support Group for Survivors meets 6 to 8 p.m. each Tuesday. The topic is "Talking It Out." The support group is open to adults affected by unhealthy relationships including domestic and/or sexual violence.

Family Information Network Meeting, or FIN, support group meets 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., the second Wednesday of the month. It is designed to provide education, information and support to those Families who are living with or caring for an exceptional Family member.

Victim Advocacy APG 24-Hour hotlines: Domestic Violence-410-652-6048; Sexual Assault 1-410-322-7154.

### MWR hosts 'Losers ARE Winners' weight loss competition

A new weight loss competition will start Jan. 14 and end April 4. Participants must enter with a partner (groups of 3 will be accepted).

Participants will weigh in once a week. Participants who lose the most weight based on a percentage will win a prize.

Registration will begin Jan. 14 at the AA Fitness Center, building 320 or Hoyle Gym and Fitness Center, building E-4210. Entry fee is \$5 per person.

For more information, call Jeff Pettway, 410-278-9725

### Discount ski lift tickets available

MWR Registration, Tickets and Leisure Travel Center has discount ski lift tickets for Bear Creek, Blue Mountain, Camelback, Jack Frost/Big Boulder Ski Resorts and Ski Liberty, Ski Roundtop and Whitetail.

For more information, call MWR Registration, Tickets and Leisure Travel Center, 410-278-4907/4011, building 3326, or e-mail [mwr\\_registration@usag.apg.army.mil](mailto:mwr_registration@usag.apg.army.mil).

### Body Worlds 2 Exhibit

MWR Leisure Travel Services offers tickets to The Body Worlds 2 Exhibit at the Maryland Science Center, from Feb. 2 through March 16.

Body Worlds 2 educates the public about the inner workings of the human body and shows the effects of poor health, good health and lifestyle choices.

Tickets cost \$20.50 for adults and \$14.50 for children ages 3 to 18. Cost includes entry into the Science Center exhibit hall and the Body Worlds 2 exhibit.

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit MWR Leisure Travel Services located in the AA Recreation Center, building 3326, 410-278-4011/4907 or e-mail [MWR-LeisureTravel@apg.army.mil](mailto:MWR-LeisureTravel@apg.army.mil).

### Scrapbooking Crop

The Civilian Welfare Fund will sponsor a Scrapbooking Crop, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Jan. 26, at Top of the Bay.

For any seasoned scrapbooker or those who would like to try scrapbooking, come and "Crop Till You Drop."

Cost is \$22 per person and includes lunch, door prizes and welcome gifts for everyone. Vendors will have items for all scrapbooking needs; optional classes will be offered; and a massage therapist will be available for an optional massage. This will be a stress-free day for all with plenty of pampering.

For more information or to make a reservation, call Angela Keithley, 410-278-4603.

### Grease on Broadway

Sandy and Danny reunite once again. See Grease, 2 p.m., May 17, on Broadway. Tickets cost \$165 each and include bus transportation and Broadway play. This event is open to all DoD ID card holders. Purchase tickets in advance.

For more information or to

purchase tickets, call MWR Leisure Travel Services, Aberdeen Recreation Center, building 3326, 410-278-4011/4907 or e-mail [MWR-LeisureTravel@apg.army.mil](mailto:MWR-LeisureTravel@apg.army.mil).

### Choice of shows at The Hippodrome Theater

MWR Leisure Travel Services has discounted tickets for several shows at The Hippodrome Theater, located at the France-Merrick Performing Arts Center, 12 N. Eutaw Street, Baltimore.

### Shows include:

- "Cirque Dreams," 2 p.m., Jan. 26 and Feb. 2, 2008
- "High School Musical," 2 p.m., Feb. 23; and 8 p.m., Feb. 29
- "Camelot," 2 p.m., March 29
- "The Color Purple," 2 p.m., May 3; 2 p.m., May 10; and 6:30 p.m., May 11.

Tickets are available for a limited time — purchase them now. Tickets range in price from \$33 to \$87. To order tickets, visit [www.eventusher.com](http://www.eventusher.com); enter the special password: 105MWRAPGMD and follow the instructions on the ordering page.

Price includes show ticket only, no transportation is provided. Open to all DoD ID card holders.

For more information, or to purchase tickets, visit the MWR Leisure Travel Office located in APG North Recreation Center, building 3326, call 410-278-4011/4907 or e-mail [MWR-LeisureTravel@apg.army.mil](mailto:MWR-LeisureTravel@apg.army.mil).

## MWR Leisure Travel Service has specially priced tickets

MWR Leisure Travel Service has specially priced tickets to the following venues. To purchase tickets or for more information, contact MWR Leisure Travel Services, Aberdeen Area Recreation Center, Bldg 3326. 410-278-4011/4907, or email [MWR-LeisureTravel@apg.army.mil](mailto:MWR-LeisureTravel@apg.army.mil).

### Washington Capitols NHL Hockey

Location: The Verizon Center, Washington, D.C.

Tickets: \$64.05 Lower Level; \$30 Center Mezzanine; \$20 End Mezzanine. Open to all DoD ID card holders.

### Madam Tussaud's

Location: Washington, D.C.

Museum containing life-like wax images of famous people.

Tickets/Discounts: Adults - \$17.75 (\$26.44 at the door), Senior (ages 60+) - \$16 (\$24.32 at the door), Children (ages 4-12) - \$12.75 (\$19.04 at the door)

### Disney on Ice: Finding Nemo

Feb. 6-10, 1st Mariner Arena, Baltimore. Tickets cost \$18.75 each. Last day to purchase tickets is Feb. 1.

### Great Wolf Lodge, Williamsburg, Va.

Special prices are for a standard family suite with 1-6 people per room. Rooms come with 6 complimentary water park passes with each family suite. There is a 2-night minimum stay for weekends, holidays and premium periods.

Jan. 1 - Feb. 29:  
\$192 per night, Sunday thru Thursday  
\$255.25 per night, Friday thru Saturday

### Busch Gardens Europe / Water Country USA Season Passes

Both parks are open March 21 to Oct. 26  
Busch Gardens Europe / Water Country Gold Season Pass  
\$104 (\$154.95 at the gate)  
Busch Gardens Europe Silver Season Pass  
\$82 (\$114.95 at the gate)  
Water Country USA Silver Season Pass  
\$82 (\$114.95 at the gate)

## January Bowling specials



The APG Bowling Center, building 2342, is holding the following specials during the month of January:

- Jan. 16, 23 and 30  
Red Pin Thursday, 5 p.m. to closing, throw a strike on the red head pin and receive a free game.
- Jan. 12 and 19  
Soldier Special, \$2 each game, \$1 shoes, 5 p.m. to closing.
- Jan. 23  
Wednesday Bowling Special, 6 p.m. to closing, all games FREE!
- Jan. 26  
Kids' Night Special, all kids \$1 per game, \$1 for shoes, 5 p.m. to closing.

## APG Bowling Center Snack Bar specials Building 2342

### Week of Jan. 7

Special #1: Chicken salad sub with mayonnaise, lettuce, tomato, pickles, onions, potato chips, one cookie and soda for \$7.35.

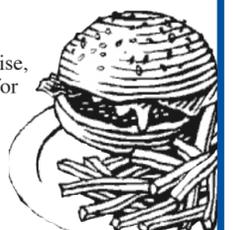
Special #2: Chicken tender sub, with mayonnaise, lettuce, tomato, pickles, onions, cheddar cheese, potato chips, one cookie and soda for \$5.95.

### Week of Jan. 14

Special #1: Grand Daddy Burger with bacon, cheese, mayonnaise, lettuce, tomato, pickles, onions, potato chips, one cookie and soda for \$7.85.

Special #2: Grilled cheese with the soup of the day, one cookie and soda for \$4.25.

For more information or to place an order, call 410-278-4041. Orders must be placed before 10:30 a.m.





Your health is KUSAHC's goal



# Health Net extends TRICARE's new Behavioral Health Care Assistance Program to beneficiaries

**Health Net**  
Health Net Federal Services, LLC, the government operations division of Health Net, Inc., announced Dec. 21 TRICARE's new Behavioral Health Provider Locator and Appointment Assistance Service to locate behavioral health providers and receive assistance with routine and urgent appointments.

This service is available for all TRICARE Prime and TRICARE Prime Remote active duty service members and their enrolled Family members living or traveling in the United States. Active duty Family members enrolled in the TRICARE Overseas Program also can use the service line when traveling in the United States.

"As the Managed Care Support Contractor for the TRICARE North Region, we are pleased this program is now available for beneficiaries. It addresses the challenges of locat-

ing behavioral health providers," said Steve Tough, president, Health Net Federal Services. "As hundreds of thousands of U.S. personnel deploy to Iraq and Afghanistan, military Families face heightened stress, increased anxiety and long separations, affecting Family dynamics and creating an increased need for support to overcome these challenges."

The Behavioral Health Provider Locator and Appointment Assistance Service is a dedicated toll-free telephone line at 1-877-747-9579 where service representatives offer assistance in locating and making outpatient appointments with behavioral health care providers. The service is available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. EST (7 a.m. to 5 p.m. CST), excluding holidays. All calls and requests are kept strictly confidential. Beneficiaries should note that the Behavioral Health Provider Locator and Appointment Assistance Ser-

vice is an appointment assistance line and does not offer behavioral health counseling, treatment or advice.

Active duty service member behavioral health care is usually provided at a Military Treatment Facility. In those instances when care cannot be provided at an MTF, all active duty service members must obtain a referral for civilian behavioral health care from their primary care manager.

All TRICARE Prime and Prime Remote active duty Family members may receive up to eight outpatient behavioral health visits per fiscal year (Oct. 1 through Sept. 30) without a referral or prior authorization. However, beneficiaries must receive care from a TRICARE network provider, otherwise point-of-service cost-sharing will apply, unless the beneficiary obtains approval for non-network care from Health Net.

The Behavioral Provider Locator and Appointment Assistance Service

line is very useful for active duty service members and enrolled Family members seeking civilian behavioral health care.

Non-enrolled active duty Family members, retirees and their Family members should continue to seek behavioral health customer service assistance through the 1-877-874-2273 telephone line.

**About Health Net**

Health Net Federal Services, LLC, a subsidiary of Health Net, Inc., has a long history of providing cost effective, quality managed health care programs for government agencies including the Department of Defense and Veterans Affairs.

As the managed care support contractor for the TRICARE North Region, Health Net Federal Services provides health care services to over 3 million uniformed services beneficiaries, active and retired and their Families.

Health Net, Inc. is among the

nation's largest publicly traded managed health care companies.

Its mission is to help people be healthy, secure and comfortable. The company's health plans and government contracts subsidiaries provide health benefits to approximately 6.7 million individuals across the country through group, individual, Medicare, Medicaid and TRICARE and Veterans Affairs programs.

Health Net, Inc.'s behavioral health subsidiary, MHN, provides mental health benefits to approximately 7 million individuals in all 50 states. The company's subsidiaries also offer managed health care products related to prescription drugs, and managed health care product coordination for multi-region employers and administrative services for medical groups and self-funded benefits programs.

For more information on Health Net, Inc., visit the company's Web site [www.healthnet.com](http://www.healthnet.com).

## Getting behavioral health treatment easy with TRICARE

**TRICARE**  
TRICARE is making behavioral health care access simpler for Prime beneficiaries by offering assistance with appointments.

The Behavioral Health Provider Locator and Appointment Assistance Service is open for business.

All active duty service members and their enrolled Family members living in the United States who need help locating and making appointments with behavioral health care providers can now contact their Managed Care

Support Contractor for assistance.

"This program is especially helpful for those who may find it hard to locate a behavioral health care provider in the network," said Maj. Gen. Elder Granger, deputy director, TRICARE Management Activity. "The contractor can even engage the beneficiary in a conference call with the provider to ensure scheduling is satisfactory."

For assistance making behavioral health appointments the toll-free numbers are: West Region, 1-866-651-4970; North Region, 1-

877-747-9579; and in the South Region the number is 1-877-298-3514. Hours vary according to region.

All active duty service members must have a referral from their primary care manager for behavioral health care before calling the MCSC appointment assistance line. TRICARE Prime active duty Family members can receive the first eight outpatient behavioral health care visits per fiscal year (Oct. 1 through Sept. 30) without a referral, but they must receive the care from TRICARE network providers to

avoid point-of-service cost sharing charges. TRICARE Overseas Program beneficiaries can also use the appointment assistance line when traveling in the U.S.

Beneficiaries are reminded that the Behavioral Health Provider Locator and Appointment Assistance Service is not a help line for behavioral health treatment, counseling or advice.

For more information about TRICARE and the behavioral health appointment assistance service, visit the mental health and behavior section at [www.tricare.mil](http://www.tricare.mil) and enter a profile.

### TRICARE beneficiaries saving time, money

Make the switch to Mail Order Pharmacy

**TRICARE**  
Nearly 20,000 TRICARE beneficiaries are saving money on their prescriptions after making the switch to mail order through the new Member Choice Center. After only two months of operation, beneficiaries saved approximately \$600,000 on prescriptions by switching from retail to the TRICARE Mail Order Pharmacy's.

In all, individual beneficiary's savings through TMOP could range from \$24 a year for each regular formulary generic drug to as much as \$176 a year for each non-formulary brand-name drug. The savings increase with each additional prescription.

"Beneficiaries are saving time in addition to money," said Army Maj. Gen. Elder Granger, deputy director, TRICARE Management Activity. "TMOP offers the convenience of ordering and receiving prescriptions without leaving home."

The Department of Defense is saving money too, projecting a savings of approximately \$6.9 million on the 39,500 prescriptions converted so far from retail to TMOP. DoD could save up to \$24 million a year with just a 1 percent shift of prescriptions from retail to mail order. Beneficiaries that do not have other health insurance and are currently using a retail pharmacy can now go online to [www.expresscripts.com/TRICARE](http://www.expresscripts.com/TRICARE) to complete the registration, without downloading or mailing forms, and request that their prescription be converted to mail order from retail.

A toll free number is also an option in the United States. A patient care advocate at the MCC at 1-877-363-1433 can initiate the process to obtain a new prescription from the beneficiary's provider to be filled by the TMOP.

TMOP also notifies beneficiaries by letter when one of their medications is switching to the third tier, which has the most expensive co-pay. This gives beneficiaries time to ask their doctor to switch them to the formulary drug at a lower co-pay before they need a refill.

For more information about the new Member Choice Center and filling prescriptions through the TMOP program, visit the prescription area on the "My Benefit" link of [www.tricare.mil](http://www.tricare.mil).

### Free stop tobacco classes

The Harford County Health Department will offer free stop tobacco classes for anyone who wants to become tobacco-free in the new year. A six-week class will be held in Bel Air and Edgewood.

Classes include developing a plan to quit using tobacco, learning stress management techniques, receiving information on keeping weight under control while quitting and discussing relapse prevention.

Nicotine patches and lozenges will be available to those participants who qualify.

Pre-registration is required. The Pre-Quit Class is mandatory for all first-time participants.

**Bel Air**

Regular classes will be held 6:30 to 8 p.m., at the Harford County Health Department located on 119 South Hays Street, every Monday, Jan. 14, 21, 28 and Feb. 4 and 11.

**Edgewood**

A pre-quit class will be held 6 to 8 p.m., Jan. 11, at the Edgewood Senior Center located on 1000 Gateway Road. Regular classes will be held 6 to 7:30 p.m., every Monday, Jan. 18, 25 and Feb. 1, 8 and 15.

For more information or to register, call the Harford County Health Department, 410-638-8405, or visit the Harford County Health Department Web site [www.harfordcounty.health.com](http://www.harfordcounty.health.com).

## DoD, VA begin pilot Disability Evaluation System

**DoD News**  
The Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs recently implemented a pilot test for disability cases originating at the three major military treatment facilities and the VA hospital in the national capital region.

This pilot will run for one year. The leadership of DoD and VA will review pilot progress during this period to assist in determining when the program can be expanded to other locations.

The pilot will test a new DoD and VA disability system. The pilot will be a service member-centric initiative designed to eliminate the duplicative and often confusing elements of the two current disability processes of the departments.

Key features of the pilot program include one medical examination and a single-sourced disability rating.

One goal of the pilot is to enable service members to more effectively transition to veteran status and provide them with their VA benefits and compensation.

The DoD and VA are examining the continuum of care they provide from the point

of injury through rehabilitation to community reintegration. The objectives of the pilot are to improve the timeliness, effectiveness, and transparency by integrating DoD and VA processes, eliminating duplication, and improving information provided to service members and their families.

To ensure a seamless transition of those wounded, ill, and injured from the care, benefits, and services of DoD to the VA system, the pilot will also test enhanced case management methods and identify opportunities to improve the flow of information and identification of additional resources to the service member and Family. As soon as the service members in the pilot transition from the military, the VA is poised to provide benefits and compensation to these veterans.

The scope of the pilot includes all non-clinical care and administrative activities, such as case management and counseling requirements, associated with disability case processing from the point of service member referral to a military department medical evaluation board to the point of compensation

and provision of benefits to veterans by the VA.

The pilot process has been developed over the last several months and is focused on recommendations that could be implemented without legislative change from the reports of the Task Force on Returning Global War on Terrorism Heroes, the Independent Review Group, the President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors (the Dole/Shalala Commission), and the Commission on Veterans' Disability Benefits.

The pilot is part of a larger effort to improve care and services to wounded, injured and ill, service members.

Some other ongoing initiatives include improved information technology and data sharing, facility enhancements, recruitment and retention of care professionals, new methods to care for brain injuries and mental health concerns including post-traumatic stress disorder, and the use of life long care plans to fully support wounded, ill, and injured service members from recovery through rehabilitation to community integration.

## Shingles vaccine available to TRICARE beneficiaries age 60 and older

**TRICARE**  
Following a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendation, TRICARE now covers Zostavax, the vaccine designed to prevent shingles for beneficiaries 60 and older.

Shingles is a painful viral disease that affects more than one million Americans every year. More than half of those cases happen in people age 60 or older. The CDC recommends a single dose of shingles vaccine for everyone age 60 and older.

In a shingles prevention study done by the Veterans Administration Cooperative Trial, run by Dr. Michael Oxman out of the University of California, San Diego, Zostavax was more than 50 percent effective in reducing the incidence of shingles and more than 60 percent effective in reducing some of its associated symptoms. Even in people who suffer from the disease, most of those who were vaccinated experienced less pain.

"Offering this vaccine to our beneficiaries is further evidence of TRICARE's commitment to provide first-rate health care to Uniformed Service members and their Families," said Army Maj. Gen. Elder Granger, deputy director, TRICARE Management Activity. "We cover all immunizations recommended by

the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and formally endorsed and adopted by the CDC."

Beneficiaries who receive the shingles vaccine must have vaccinations administered in a provider's office. Zostavax is covered under the TRICARE medical benefit and is not reimbursable under the pharmacy benefit. Beneficiaries with coverage or claims questions should contact the TRICARE regional claims processor found on their beneficiary explanation of benefits notice, or if living overseas contact the local TRICARE Service Center or the TRICARE Area Office for the area in which they live.

Shingles is caused by the varicella-zoster virus, the same virus that causes chickenpox in children. It remains in the body for decades, sleeping in nerve cells along the spinal column. A shingles rash usually appears on one side of the face or body and lasts between two and four weeks. It is painful and can be accompanied by fever, headache, chills and upset stomach.

For more information on shingles and the vaccine, visit the CDC Web site, [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/downloads/vis-shingles.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/downloads/vis-shingles.pdf).

## LEAVE DONATIONS

To participate in the Voluntary Leave Program, use forms OPM 630, Application to Become a Leave Recipient Under the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program; OPF 630-A, Request to Donate Annual Leave to Leave Recipient Under the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program (within agency); and OPM 630-B, Request to Donate Annual Leave to Leave Recipient Under the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program (outside agency). For more information, call Ronda McKinney, 410-278-8988, or e-mail [rondamckinney@usag.apg.army.mil](mailto:rondamckinney@usag.apg.army.mil).

### Employees eligible for donations in the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program

- |  |                  |                                   |                  |
|--|------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Neoma Amberman                           | Joyce Clark      | Jerome Hesch                      | Melvin Showell   |
| Karen Blades                             | George Colletta  | William Horn                      | Gloria Scott     |
| William Bond                             | Barbara Crossley | Beverly King (caring for husband) | Donna Sexton     |
| Debra Bonsall (daughter has brain tumor) | John Daigle      | Glenn Kresge                      | Mark Shipman     |
| Henry Cason                              | Wayne Doyle      | Coby Lantry                       | Willie Stevenson |
| Donna Cianelli                           | Lisa Foust       | Mickey Morales                    | Charles Young    |
|  | Betty Genuardi   | Cindy Orwig                       |                  |
|  | Hester Hayes     |                                   |                  |



# Army News

## Human Terrain Team helps Soldiers in Iraq understand cultural landscape

Story by  
**SGT MIKE PRYOR**  
Army News Service

On a bright afternoon, Dave Matsuda traveled with a group of U.S. Soldiers to tour a food distribution depot in Baghdad's Ur neighborhood. The Soldiers were worried about how to keep the depot from being infiltrated by Moqtada Al Sadr's Shi'ite militia army, which controls that part of the Iraqi Capital.

The chief of security at the depot, however, assured them the warehouse was safe, because his "organization" protected it from Sadr's influence.

The Soldiers were doubtful the warehouse was safe. The chief's independence seemed inexplicable given what they knew about the area - it was a puzzling anomaly in a sea of data pointing in the other direction. Professor Matsuda, though, believed he could put the pieces of the puzzle together.

He began asking the chief questions about his Family, his extended Family, his tribe, and the tribe's affiliations with other tribes. Later, he was able to chart the relationships on a diagram to show how the chief's tribal hierarchy operated, giving the Soldiers a rare glimpse into the complicated inner workings of Iraqi society.

It was a valuable insight drawn not from standard military intelligence gathering techniques, but from the science of anthropology.

"A military person would say 'Let's look at this in political or military terms,'" Matsuda said, "but an

anthropologist says, 'Let's look at the tribal relationships underneath everything.'"

There's a reason Matsuda knows what an anthropologist would look for: he is one. Back home, Matsuda teaches at California State University, East Bay. He holds a double doctorate in anthropology and developmental psychology. Tall, soft-spoken, and bespectacled, he fits the image of the bookish professor perfectly. But these days, Matsuda has traded in his professor's tweeds for combat boots and a bullet-proof vest. In September, he brought his expertise to Iraq as part of a small group of cultural experts called the Human Terrain Team, which is attached to the 82nd Airborne Division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team operating in Northeast Baghdad and Sadr City.

The HTT's mission is to diagram Iraq's cultural landscape - its "human terrain" - in the same way intelligence analysts map out Iraq's cities, roads and rivers. It's a function that has become increasingly important as the U.S. military has turned its focus to counterinsurgency operations, in which cultural understanding is the key and knowing the human terrain is absolutely essential, said the team's leader, Lt. Col. Edward Villacres.

### The Team

The 2nd BCT's Human Terrain Team uses history and social science to provide cultural awareness that supports the brigade's operations, Villacres pointed out.

HTT consists of the team chief,

an area specialist, a social scientist, and a research manager. Matsuda, the social scientist, is a civilian, while the other members are active-duty Army with specialized knowledge. All team members have specialized knowledge specific to their HTT jobs.

"We've got people who know the culture in and out," said 1st Lt. Sami Tioni, the team's research manager and a native Arabic speaker.

To accomplish its mission, the team draws on two pools of knowledge: information that has already been collected and information the team members collect themselves. They then analyze the information and present their conclusions and advice to the brigade commander.

"It gives him an additional level of insight as he prepares to make decisions," Villacres said.

Officials with the 2nd BCT said they appreciate the contributions the HTT has made to the brigade's operations so far.

"They add a critical dimension to the fight, one that has been missing up to now" said Lt. Col. David Oclander, the 2nd BCT's executive officer.

Outside the military, however, the teams have sparked some controversy. Much of the opposition has come from people in the academic world, who, according to Matsuda, fear the army will misuse the knowledge offered by social scientists.

"Some are saying anthropology can't be part of the Army without being corrupted," he said.

Matsuda said some of the concerns

are valid, and some are motivated by knee-jerk anti-militarism. Regardless, he said, the stakes are too high in Iraq right now to sit on the sidelines.

### Knowing the Script

Even though Operation Iraqi Freedom is in its fifth year, Villacres said many in the U.S. military still fail to appreciate the differences between Arab and Western culture.

"Arab society doesn't have any of the common foundations we have," he said.

As a result, it can be difficult for Iraqis and U.S. Soldiers to find common ground, despite good intentions on both sides. Matsuda gave as an example an instance where U.S. Soldiers thought they had settled a dispute with people in a village by making a condolence payment. But when the Soldiers returned a few days after making the payment, they were attacked. The Soldiers thought they had been betrayed, but in the villagers' eyes, the agreement had never been valid because the traditional reconciliation ritual hadn't been conducted, Matsuda explained.

Anthropologists believe all societies operate according to a certain "script," Matsuda said. Iraqis have one script, Americans have another. The HTT's mission is to provide an interpretation of the Iraqi cultural script that will help Soldiers make the right decisions.

The team has carried out that task in ways both small and large. One small way they affected operations came when the brigade was about to put out a wanted poster featuring an

image of the scales of justice. Prof. Matsuda pointed out the idea behind the scales of justice was a Greek-derived, Western concept that meant nothing to Iraqis. Instead he proposed changing the poster to show two open hands - an image drawn from ideas in the Quran - in order to make it more resonant with Iraqis.

"We try to find the assumptions and motivations behind what people do," the professor said.

### Why it Matters

First Lt. Tioni said the value of insights the HTT offers shouldn't be underestimated.

"We fight an enemy who is very fluid, and the only way we're going to defeat them is by knowing the culture," he said.

The team's work isn't simply an academic exercise, team members said. Tioni said he is convinced greater cultural awareness will help protect Soldiers out on the streets and that knowing how to interact with the population will save lives.

In justifying his work in Iraq, Matsuda returned to the example of the Soldiers who were attacked even after making a condolence payment because they didn't understand the importance of cultural traditions.

"I don't want those guys going into that village thinking they got it all taken care of and they end up getting shot," Matsuda said. "I want everyone to come home."

*(Editor's note: Sgt. Mike Pryor serves with 2nd BCT, 82nd Airborne Division Public Affairs.)*

## 'Awakening' in Iraq signals citizens' rise against al Qaeda

Story by  
**CAPT. JOHNNY GIROUX**  
Army News Service

Determined to rise up against al Qaeda terrorists, concerned local citizens, working together with coalition forces, have started neighborhood watch programs in northern Iraq.

The citizens are calling the movement "Sahwa," an Arabic term that means "awakening."

The neighborhood watch programs were established Nov. 14, two weeks after local citizens approached Soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division's 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Battalion, 87th Infantry Regiment, with the idea. More than 1,000 citizens showed up, ready to be recruited to take up arms in defense against the ter-

rorists in the region.

The program provides the citizens with weapons and a regular paycheck and has the goal not only of providing employment, but also improving security throughout the region.

"This is the biggest thing going on for the local Iraqis ... because one, it's putting money in their pockets and stimulating the local economy, and two, these people really want to provide their own security," said Maj. John Allen, 1-87 Infantry operations officer.

These newly drafted members of the local Multaka Night Watch, as they also are known, will take to the streets as sentinels against terrorist activity while receiving salaries based on the effectiveness of their performance.

For example, for every roadside bomb attack that occurs in their neighborhood, a certain amount of money will be withheld from that pay period as a penalty, while consistent periods of tranquility will be rewarded with bonuses.

"What this program is doing is creating significant problems for the insurgents, because it drives a wedge between them and the populace," said 2nd Lt. Alan Finnie, 1-87 Infantry. "By taking away the one incentive advantage the insurgents had over the government, namely money, the people now have every reason to reject terrorist intimidation and embrace the responsibility of eliminating al Qaeda in Iraq influence in their communities."

As a result, coalition and Iraqi forces benefit from the

increased freedom of maneuver provided by the citizens groups, allowing them to more effectively seek out and eliminate the terrorist threat, 2nd Lt. Finnie said, also noting that many recruits appeared quite enthusiastic.

"It was good to see regular people showing up in street clothes taking pride in their own area so they can stand on their own feet and provide their own security instead of relying on us to do it for them," said Army Cpl. Evan Siegrist, 1-87 Infantry Personal Security Detachment squad leader.

Such a show of force by Iraqi citizens willing to confront terrorists sends a message to insurgents that their destructive influence among the population will no longer be

tolerated.

"Al Qaeda in Iraq is threatened by the Sahwa," Allen said as he described immediate intelligence reports of disrupted terrorist movements due to citizens group activity.

The success of this initial recruitment effort marks the

beginning of a two week-long initiative to enlist volunteers for the program throughout the 1-87 Infantry Battalion's area of operation.

*(Editor's note: Army Capt. Johnny Giroux is assigned to the Multinational Division North Public Affairs Office)*

## Arabic cultural-awareness training now available

Story by  
**MAJ KEITH THOMPSON**  
Army News Service

Arabic cultural-awareness training from Third U.S. Army/U.S. Army Central and the Jordanian Armed Forces is now available to all American service members.

More than 600 service members will be able to attend the annual training at the Peace Operation Training Center in Jordan Feb. 17 to March 27 in support of the Central Command Theater Support Cooperation Program, at little or no cost to their units. The training is an integral part of the U.S. Army Forces Command training strategy for Soldiers deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan, officials said.

Course topics include the hierarchy of tribes and the structure of Iraqi society, Family social structures, women in Arabic society, Iraqi dos and don'ts, the Arabic language and cultural awareness.

The course consists of six rotations: one three-day senior leader seminar for brigade and battalion commanders, sergeants major and field-grade officers (O-4 and above), and five rotations of junior-leader training (O-3 and below).

Junior-leader rotations include three situational-training exercises on checkpoints,



A female Soldier practices searching an Arabic woman at a checkpoint during a cultural-awareness situational-training exercise.

building searches and mounted patrols. The STX lanes focus on many aspects of Arabic culture and will be taught by Jordanian officers and supported by American observers/controllers/trainers and numerous role players.

STX missions involve searches, clearing and speaking with the media about a family home or mosque used to store money and weapon caches to support insurgents. Troops must

learn to complete their missions while respecting the Arabic culture and religious beliefs.

This training can also be incorporated into home-station training at the squad and team level, officials said.

Cultural-awareness training is held in Jordan because the Jordanians are familiar with their Iraqi neighbors. The two countries share similar languages, histories and customs.

Points of contacts for res-

ervations are Maj. Alfredo Ferrer, 404-464-1897 or e-mail alfredo.ferrer@arcent.army.mil and Maj. Keith Thompson at 404-464-4973 or keith.a.thompson1@arcent.army.mil.

For more information visit "Cultural Awareness Training" under useful links on the Third U.S. Army/USARCENT's homepage, [www.arcent.army.mil](http://www.arcent.army.mil).

*(Editor's note: Maj. Keith Thompson is the training officer for Third U.S. Army.)*

## U.S. Army Provides Military Arabic Version of Rosetta Stone® via Army e-Learning

Distributed Learning System

The U.S. Army announced that Rosetta Stone Inc., the creator of the computer-based language immersion program Rosetta Stone, developed a new version of Arabic for the U.S. Army with a military focus that includes 123 military terms and an emphasis on military language tasks such as talking with civilians at a vehicle checkpoint, reacting to an improvised explosive device (IED) attack, and training allied Soldiers. The new Arabic Military version, available online exclusively, was released via Army e-Learning on the Army Knowledge Online (AKO) in November 2007.

Rosetta Stone on-demand foreign language training is available at no cost to all active Army, National Guard, Reservist and Department of the Army Civilian personnel worldwide, through Army e-Learning. Army e-Learning is the latest component of the Army's Distributed Learning System, a product under the Program Executive Office Enterprise Information Systems.

Providing Fast, Critical Access to Foreign-Language Instruction

Units preparing to deploy across the globe, especially in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), are using Army e-Learning for pre-deployment training, including foreign-language instruction. Courses in Arabic, Farsi and Pashto are not only making measurable differences in basic communication skills, but may also aid in intelligence gathering capabilities related to the Global War on Terror.

The Army has realized success integrating Rosetta Stone into Army e-Learning. Available since November 2005, 115,000 Soldiers have spent 600,000 hours studying Rosetta Stone's 30 languages. In just the three OIF and OEF related languages (Arabic, Farsi, and Pashto), Soldiers have completed 90,000 hours of language training.

In May 2007 the Army expanded Rosetta Stone options to include a network version for a single language for units deployed to locations with unreliable internet access that could be loaded on the unit's computers. Twenty units in Iraq and Afghanistan have requested licenses for 300 such computers. The Army also provides access to Rosetta Stone language training to both Army and non-Army students at all Army schools that include language training as part of the curriculum.

"I have been using the Rosetta Stone program to teach myself Arabic for the last month. I have studied Arabic off and on for the last year, but it has been very difficult to make much progress with no teacher and no real guidance. The Rosetta Stone program provided me with both," said Pfc. James L. Tollefson. "I believe every platoon in the Global War on Terror needs at least one individual with the language skills to communicate with local allies and the indigenous populations. I intend to be that person by the time my company deploys to Iraq."

# CHPPM entomologists wage war on the smallest enemies



Dr. Ed Evans, U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine Entomological Sciences Program manager, feeds lab mosquitoes to encourage them to continue breeding.

Story and photos by  
**JANE GERVASONI**  
U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine

Tucked away in an obscure corner of the south area of the Aberdeen Proving Ground, lies a small, red-brick building. Inside, a team of intrepid civilians and Soldiers spend their days hunting down some of the military's smallest enemies.

With names like *Ixodes scapularis*, *Phlebotomus perniciosus* and *Anopheles superpictus*, these diminutive creatures have caused more harm to Soldiers in the guise of disease non-battle injuries than many implements of modern warfare.

From earliest times, lice, fleas, ticks, mosquitoes, flies and other pests have rendered countless military personnel unfit for battle due to the diseases they carry.

The Entomological Sciences Program team at the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine at APG has been in the front lines of the war against these tiny terrorists for many years.

Entomologist Dr. Ed Evans, leader of this group for more than two decades, has been at the forefront of his profession in determining what arthropod-borne

disease may affect the Soldier, his Family and the civilians who support him. (Arthropods include insects, spiders and centipedes, as well as some other segmented creatures.)

"It doesn't matter if a Soldier is at home in his backyard or in an armed camp in Afghanistan, he is vulnerable to any number of disease-carrying arthropods," he explained.

Evans and his team include a pair of father and son entomologists who search for preventive techniques to ensure the health of the Soldier. Their weapons include everything from pesticides to appropriate methods to treat and wear uniforms—all aimed at finding the best and safest methods to stop the spread of arthropod-borne diseases.

Tom Harkins has made his work a Family affair. His son, Kevin, inherited his father's skills and interests, recently joining CHPPM's Entomological Sciences Program. Kevin Harkins is helping design an outreach program for kindergarten through 12th grades to increase awareness of the science and potentially recruit new talent to support the military.

Soldier education, however, is the program's top educational goal.

"One of our major responsibilities is to educate Soldiers about vector-borne diseases and how to protect themselves," Evans said. "We don't want them to find out about these diseases the hard way."

CHPPM Biologist Sandra Evans prepares and edits educational materials for Soldiers and gives lectures to inform military and civilian personnel about arthropod-borne diseases. Part of the education process involves the development of fact sheets that are posted on the CHPPM Web site. These fact sheets explain everything from what types of insect repellents are best and how to use them to explaining about various disease vectors including ticks and mosquitoes. The latest fact sheets include one on schistosomiasis, a parasitic disease that affects over 200 million people worldwide, and plague, a flea-borne disease caused by bacteria.

Ellen Stromdahl and her small crew spend much of their time from early spring through early winter testing ticks sent to CHPPM from all over the United States. Using DNA testing, Stromdahl determines if a person who has been bitten may have been exposed to Lyme disease, Rocky Moun-

tain spotted fever, ehrlichiosis or other tick-borne diseases.

"We've collected ten years of data on ticks, their diseases and their habitat that can be mapped using geographical information systems to give commanders a better idea about where and when they can safely deploy troops in training exercises and other



Denise Adams, biological sciences laboratory technician, left, observes as Tom Harkins, entomologist, removes a black-widow spider's egg case suspended from the spider's web.

field maneuvers in the United States," she explained.

In addition, the same techniques can be used in deployed settings to help ensure safety for Soldiers. CHPPM subordinate commands in the United States, Europe and Japan are also able to do tick testing as well as testing for various mosquito-borne diseases.

When West Nile virus first came into the news, groups of military entomologists from CHPPM's headquarters at APG and members of CHPPM's three continental U.S. subordinate commands assisted installation preventive medicine activities by setting up mosquito traps to determine the presence of infected mosquitoes and help map the spread of the threat. They shared invaluable information with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other health services and enabled other scientists to begin work on ways to protect people and animals.

Working as members of the Armed Forces Pest Manage-

ment Board, the team members coordinate with entomologists from other services, share information and develop products that get information into the hands of commanders and military personnel who need it.

"We have a relatively safe environment in this country," Evans said, "but in developing nations and some of the areas where our Soldiers are deployed, vector-borne diseases play a major role in health threats. One of our jobs is to ensure that commanders and preventive medicine personnel are aware of local disease threats and know how to respond to them."

From Afghanistan to Zimbabwe arthropod-borne disease threatens the health of military personnel every day, but CHPPM entomologists meet the threat with an array of preventive efforts that reduce the incidence of illness from these small but powerful enemies.

CHPPM fact sheets are available on the Web at <http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/ento/>.



CHPPM Biologist Sandy Evans left, explains methods of treating military uniforms to protect the wearer from arthropod-borne diseases to Spc. Kalina Welch.

## Army News

# Army forges partnership with 10 colleges

Story by  
**ALIA NAFFOUJ**  
TRADOC News Service

Higher-education leaders from across the country came to Fort Monroe Nov. 14 to discuss the Army's new "College of the American Soldier," a partnership with 10 participating colleges.

The partnership promotes educating Soldiers through the Non-commissioned Officer Education System and aims to provide Soldiers the opportunity to obtain their bachelor's degree with minimal obstacles, according to U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command officials. They said the partnership accelerates NCO development by streamlining the process of pursuing a higher education.

Coastline, Barstow, Limestone and Thomas Edison State offer associate degrees through the program. Thomas Edison College, Austin Peay, Franklin, Limestone, Park, Strayer, Maryland and Empire State offer bachelors degree programs.

"This program not only benefits Soldiers but serves the best interest of institutions as well," said Gen. William S. Wallace, TRADOC com-

mander, at the Nov. 14 kick-off event for the College of the American Soldier. "Improving civilian-education opportunities for Soldiers throughout their military careers helps promote the ideal of lifelong learning and extends the pursuit of knowledge well beyond a Soldier's service commitment."

The session gave TRADOC senior leaders a chance to talk face to face with the college educators who will help the Army get the College of the American Soldier off the ground.

"It is important for our leadership to get out there and support this program so Soldiers know that the College of the American Soldier has a bunch of colleges that will help streamline their ability to achieve a bachelor's or associates degree," said TRADOC's Command Sgt. Maj. John D. Sparks.

The program is designed to maximize a Soldier's potential college credits based on military training and education, officials said. They said a Soldier could realistically attain a bachelor of arts or bachelor of science degree before reaching retirement based on the American Council on Education's recommended credits for military training

and education and completion of college classes, working with the Service Members Opportunity Colleges Army Degrees member schools.

Jim Cronin, assistant vice president, Department of Defense program manager for the University of Maryland, was one of the attendees at the meeting. His impression of the program was that you "can see it's an NCO-run program based on an NCO idea." The college representatives saw there was a lot of support from Sparks and other military officials and respected the time they put into this program.

"The way TRADOC packaged this is a very forward-looking thing for the NCOs. It allows the Soldier to see how training equates to civilian education," Cronin said.

Participating colleges will certify the amount of credit up front to be applied to a career noncommissioned officer degree based on the American Council on Education's credit recommendations.

The College of the American Soldier program also aims to make it easier for NCOs to assess where they are in attaining their degree.

The College of the American Soldier will link with a portal called the Army Career Tracker, which will show a Soldier a specific "map" toward a degree. Soldiers will be able to see what Noncommissioned Officer Education System courses will transfer as equivalent credit at any point in their career - from basic training through the Sergeants Major Course. The portal will list exactly what a SOCAD school will grant, get each credit source and provide a list of other ways guaranteed to meet degree requirements.

"If Soldiers can see the benefits of the program up front, they're much more likely to do it," Sparks said.

The program is designed to benefit the NCO Corps directly by developing a lifelong-learning strategy for a warrior leader-development program. This program increases the scope of military training and education materials being evaluated for college credit, including the Army Correspondence Course Program, which will result in limiting the residency requirements at participating schools.

"Continued civilian education helps develop confident, multi-skilled, and

adaptive leaders with enhanced competencies and improved capabilities earlier in their career," Wallace said.

The flexibility of the program also encourages an NCO's lifelong learning strategy because there is no time limit for completion.

The program is a departure from how things have been done in the past. Previously, Soldiers could begin their education at one post and then arrive at a new post to discover that their credits would not transfer or would only count as electives, making it very difficult to eventually receive a bachelor's degree. Sometimes the same degree programs were not available at the new post, or there would be different educational program criteria at the new post.

The program will benefit Soldiers regardless if they make a career of the Army or not.

"It is better for the armed forces because they are more educated, and if they leave the armed forces more educated, it is better for America," said the TRADOC deputy commanding general, Lt. Gen. Thomas F. Metz. "I believe it is a win-win situation."



## Veterans' Voices

### Certain payments to disabled veterans ruled 'tax-free'

IRS

Payments under the Department of Veterans Affairs Compensated Work Therapy program are no longer taxable and disabled veterans who paid tax on these benefits in the past three years can now claim refunds, the Internal Revenue Service announced Dec. 12.

Recipients of CWT payments will no longer receive a Form 1099 from the Department of Veterans Affairs. Disabled veterans who paid tax on these benefits in tax-years 2004, 2005 or 2006 can claim a refund by filing an amended return using IRS Form 1040X.



According to the VA, more than 19,000 veterans received CWT in fiscal year 2007.

The IRS agreed with a U.S. Tax Court decision issued earlier this year, which held that

CWT payments are tax-free veterans' benefits. In so doing, the agency reversed a 1965 ruling which held that these payments were taxable and required the VA to issue 1099 forms to payment recipients.

According to the VA, the CWT program provides assistance to veterans unable to work and support themselves. Under the program, the VA contracts with private industry and the public sector for work by veterans, who learn new job skills, re-learn successful work habits and regain a sense of self-esteem and self-worth.



## Deployment News

### Evacuated Soldiers now get immediate Combat Injury Pay

Story by

**C. TODD LOPEZ**  
Army News Service

When Soldiers are evacuated from a combat zone due to a combat-related injury, they no longer need to wait 30 days to begin receiving their Combat-Related Injury Rehabilitation Pay.

Now, CIP kicks in immediately, ensuring troops continue to receive an additional \$430 dollars a month, even while they are recovering in a military hospital.

The change is more in line with what Congress envisioned when the program was created, said Craig Taylor, Combat Injury Pay program coordinator.

"This will alleviate the hardship of the stopping of the hostile combat pay when a Soldier is medically evacuated from the theater of operation," Taylor said. "Soldiers medically evacuated out of theater up until now had to wait one to two months to see the CIP in their pay, and that is counter to what the Congress intended for the program."

Military members may be entitled to receive

special benefits such as hostile fire pay, hazardous duty pay and imminent danger pay while deployed to places such as Iraq or Afghanistan. That pay can add up to \$430 dollars a month.

Military Families often plan their finances around that special pay continuing for the duration of a deployment. But when a military member is forced to leave the combat zone for medical reasons, that pay stops. The CIP is meant to alleviate the hardship caused by that unexpected loss of income.

Active duty Soldiers who receive CIP will see this benefit annotated on their Leave and Earnings Statement as "Fly Deck Pay." National Guard and Reserve personnel will see it annotated as, "Other Credits," with an explanation in the remarks section.

Soldiers who believe they may be eligible to receive CIP should contact their Warrior Transition Unit chain of command, local Wounded in Action DFAS representative, or call 1-800-237-1336. Additional information about the program can be found at [https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/Active/TAGD/TSGLI\\_CIP\\_Page/index.htm](https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/Active/TAGD/TSGLI_CIP_Page/index.htm).