

Post Shorts

Recycling schedule

The residential and recycling pickup schedule for Oct. 8, is paper. Put items in paper bags, boxes or bundles and place them on the curb.



Mandatory Security Awareness training Oct. 6 and 8

The 902nd Counter Intelligence Group and the Interagency OPSEC Support Staff will be conducting briefings in conjunction with Security Awareness Month to raise awareness of security issues and to promote best practices. The optional Security Awareness training for APG employees is on a first-come, first-served basis 1 to 4 p.m., Oct. 6, at the Edgewood Area Conference Center, building E-4810 and 9 to noon, Oct. 8 in the Post Theater, building 3245.

Those employees who have not completed their annual mandatory training for fiscal year 2008 should visit the APG intranet site under APG eLearning Modules section: <https://apgrc2gag-intra.apg.army.mil/apg> and complete the annual requirement.

Security Awareness is everyone's first line of defense. Security Awareness Month offers resources, information and tips on how to improve the awareness in your organization.

For more information, call Pete Leon Guerrero, 410-278-7401.

CFC Keyworker makeup session Oct. 7

The APG Combined Federal Campaign Office will host a make-up training session for CFC Keyworkers 2:30 to 4 p.m., Oct. 7 at the Edgewood Area Conference Theater.

Building 320 parking lot closed for roof replacement

The parking area in front of building 320 will be closed the week of Oct. 6 for an extended period of time for roof replacement. Roof replacement will be accomplished in phases. The area will be

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RDECOM demos new technologies

Maryland state officials visit APG to discuss BRAC updates

Story by **RACHEL PONDER**
APG NEWS

Maryland state officials and Army leaders participated in a forum held on Aberdeen Proving Ground to give the Lieutenant Governor of Maryland updates on base realignment and closure planning and execution initiatives Sept. 22.

Maj. Gen. Dennis L. Via, commanding general of the U.S. Army CECOM Life Cycle Management Command, Fort Monmouth, N.J., was present and gave welcoming remarks.

"On behalf of the U.S. Army, the Aberdeen Proving Ground community and Army Team C4ISR (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance), we welcome our Maryland state leaders here for these important discussions," Via said. "Since we met with Lieutenant Governor Brown a year ago, we've made remarkable progress. We've moved out of the planning stage and are now well into the execution phase of our relocation."

Via added that about 140 personnel, who are referred to as the

See **BRAC**, page 2



Photo by SEAN KIEF, APG PHOTO LAB
Lt. Gov. of Maryland Anthony Brown, left, and Maj. Gen. Dennis L. Via, commanding general of the U.S. Army CECOM Life Cycle Management Command, Fort Monmouth, N.J., center, and Maryland state and senior Army officials listen as Capt. B.J. Kraemer, resident engineer for the Army Team C4ISR (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance) construction project, right, gives the official update on the C4ISR construction site Sept. 22.

APG promotes Fire Prevention Week 2008 focuses on preventing home fires

DSHE

Every fire safety team starts with firefighters, but they can't do it alone. Effective fire safety depends on teamwork.

The Fire and Emergency Services Division of Aberdeen Proving Ground will join more than 30,665 fire departments, representing more than a million firefighters across the nation in observing National Fire Prevention Week, Oct. 5 through 11.

For more than 81 years, the National Fire Protection Association has been an official sponsor in developing themes for National Fire Prevention Week. This year's theme is "It's Fire Prevention Week: Prevent Home Fires."

This year's campaign touches on five

simple essential safety lessons that everyone can learn according to Andre' A. Fournier, fire protection specialist for the Fire and Emergency Services Division.

The first lesson to learn is how to practice a home or work fire escape plan.

"Many people are injured by trying to escape from their residence or place of work during a fire," Fournier said. "Take time during National Fire Prevention Week and conduct a home inspection. Pay close attention to your way out of every room in your home. Remove items from stairways and landings. During the middle of the night, in a smoke-filled house, you are not going to see these items; you could fall

See **FIRE**, page 11



Top 10 reasons to donate to CFC

Story by **RACHEL PONDER**
and **CFC STAFF**
APG NEWS

The Combined Federal Campaign Kickoff was held Sept. 29 at the Post Theater. The 2008 contributor's booklet was distributed, as well as training for key persons and program coordinators.

Key persons and program coordinators will be distributing contributor's

booklets throughout APG organizations to federal and military employees, and collecting donations. Donations will also be accepted from contractors.

Government employees have heard of many reasons to donate to the CFC.

"Here at the CFC Office, we decided to put together a list of the Top 10 Reasons to Give to the CFC in hopes of one of the reasons being why someone

might donate this year," said Nancy Sewell, 2008 CFC chairman.

The top ten reasons to give to CFC

10. Contributor would rather select a service charity to help people in need than rely on a government plan to accomplish it.

9. A gift goes farther when it is given 12 or 26 times rather than once.

8. Everyone can look at

See **CFC**, page 12

20th SUPCOM commander pins on star

Story by **KERRY A. CROOKS**
20th SUPCOM

The 20th Support Command (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear Explosives) closed out last week with a "new" commanding general.

Maj. Gen. Fred D. Robinson, commander of APG and the U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command, presided over a packed ceremony Sept. 26 at Top of the Bay and administered the oath of office to newly frocked Brig. Gen. Jeffrey J. Snow, commander, 20th Support Command (CBRNE).

Snow "has twenty-five years of service taking care of Soldiers and their Families and making the hard decisions necessary to carry out the essential tasks of his nation," Robinson said.

Joined by his wife, Lisa, his children, his parents, friends and the Soldiers and civilians of the 20th



Photo by SEAN KIEF, APG PHOTO LAB
Newly promoted Brig. Gen. Jeffrey J. Snow, commander, 20th SUPCOM (CBRNE), left, accepts the one star general officer flag from Staff Sgt. James Stewart and Command Sgt. Maj. Marvin Womack.

SUPCOM, Snow thanked all who made the success of his career possible.

He also recognized those who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

"There's not a day that goes by that I do not think of them," Snow said.

Snow assumed command of the 20th SUPCOM on July 2.



APG closes Route 24 Gate

Aberdeen Proving Ground will close the Route 24 (Hoadley Road) Gate 11 p.m., Oct. 4 to make necessary upgrades and expansions in preparation for the base realignment and closure, or BRAC.

The gate will remain closed until the summer of 2009. The Magnolia Road Gate on Route 152 will open at 11 p.m., Oct. 4 and will operate as the main gate to the Edgewood Area of APG.

It will be open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week including holidays. It will be the only gate open to visitors and commercial vehicles.

The operating hours for the Wise Road Gate on Route 755 will remain the same, 4 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Friday and closed on weekends and holidays. Only vehicles with government and RapidGate identification will be permitted to use the Wise Road gate.

APG drivers are asked to avoid detouring through the residential neighborhoods along Edgewood Road as many children in those neighborhoods walk to school, and the increased traffic creates a safety hazard for those children.

APG leaders appreciate the continued patience of drivers on the installation as construction projects continue.

Magnolia Road, west of Stokes Road, is closed to all traffic because of construction and will remain closed in order to facilitate the new traffic pattern for the Magnolia Gate. In support of this, Atkisson Road is closed from Magnolia Road to Lagoon Road. Traffic to/from the 5800 and 5900 areas will be detoured from Atkisson Road and Magnolia Road via Stokes Road and 40th Street.

Additionally, the access road serving the E-5777 complex will be designated for two-way traffic during this time. For more information, call Capt. Nicholas Stamos, Aberdeen Proving Ground Police, 410-436-2021.

Planning for civilian retirement

CPAC

For anyone preparing to retire, the Army Benefits Center-Civilian strongly recommends submitting a retirement application package to them within 90 to 120 days of the intended retirement date.

"You are also strongly encouraged to obtain an annuity estimate from ABC-C prior to retirement," said Teri Wright, CPAC.

To obtain an estimate, call the ABC-C at 1-877-276-9287.

"Your early submission will help to ensure a timely receipt of your first annuity payment from the Office of Personnel Management. If you submit your retirement package to the ABC-C with less than sixty days notice, you should be financially prepared for a delay in the receipt of your first annuity payment," she said.

Although there are circumstances that may cause a delay in an employee's application submission, the ABC-C strives to complete all packages expeditiously.

"Employees are encouraged to follow the ABC-C's ninety to one hundred twenty day recommendation whenever possible to help achieve a smooth financial transition into retirement," Wright said.

For more information on retirement, visit the ABC-C Web site <https://www.abc.army.mil>, and check out the Guide to Retirement at <https://www.abc.army.mil/Information/ABCRetirement/Information/RetirementGuide.doc>.

For more information, call Wright, 410-278-4331 or e-mail teri.wright@us.army.mil.



Advance party volunteers adjust to change

Story by **DEBBIE SHEEHAN**
Fort Monmouth Public Affairs Office

It wasn't exactly a wagon train heading across the prairie, but the first 50 advance party volunteers who moved earlier this year from Fort Monmouth to Aberdeen Proving Ground were and continue to be pioneers of sorts.

Those who took the journey to work in the Edgewood Area of APG landed in buildings that had been dormant before being refurbished for use.

"There were some problems at first," said Tandra Griffin, CECOM Life Cycle Management Command Logistics and Readiness Center, Logistics and Engineering Operations Directorate. "We did not have things like a fax machine. I could not get into some programs I need-

ed, and the phones kept going down, but the people here at Aberdeen worked very hard to fix the problems and they did."

She said that now the conference room in the Gunpowder Club, the former Officer's Club building is being used as a headquarters for the Command Group and for many volunteers from Army Team Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance, is being put to good use.

"I am set to take part in a teleconference so we'll see how it goes," Griffin said.

The work environment is improving, she said. Employees in some areas may not be as close as they'd prefer to people with whom they're accustomed to working with but, through various forms of communications, they're

able to get the job done.

"It was strange at first, looking around and not knowing anyone," she said. "By the end of the first week, I felt pretty isolated, but once I could be back in touch with my team, I felt better."

For Steven Foster, contracting officer, CECOM Acquisition Center, the whole move has been a bit of a whirlwind.

"I grew up on Fort Monmouth [and] went to day-care there [and] to school. The fort has been a big part of my life, but I have always liked to be on the ground floor of things. That way you have input as to how [things] will be put together, so I saw this as an opportunity for me," Foster said.

Both Griffin and Foster have had a few housing issues. Foster has just purchased his first home,

something he said he could not afford to do in New Jersey.

Griffin had planned on building a new home but, with the current economy, she and her Family are still waiting. They thought they would move into a rental home but that fell through, so they have had to scramble to find an apartment that would accept their pets—a cat and a small dog without a large security deposit.

But Griffin said they're taking things in stride because the big decision has been made.

"We thought---should we do this, should we go [and] when should we go? When we made the decision to relocate, it was as if [a] weight was lifted off of me [and] I could move forward," she said.

Her advice to personnel at Fort Monmouth is to real-

ly think about your Family and their needs and how they can be met with a move.

"I thought I had researched things and I was set but there have been... expenses I had not planned on and you have to have all the facts so you can help your Family."

Also, the motor vehicle system in Maryland is different than in New Jersey. Griffin said attending a Newcomer's Orientation helped her understand what she needed to do.

Both Foster and Griffin have high praise for their sponsors at APG.

The U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command worked with the APG Garrison to match together those who moved early with sponsors from APG. They've acted as advisors, pointing the advance party employees in the right directions to help

them sort out their moves.

Foster said his sponsor helped him understand Motor Vehicle Administration issues and has provided him with other information helpful to a newcomer.

"He was great. He even arranged to meet me in person when I arrived and was there to help," Foster said.

Being flexible is a plus with any relocation and the same holds true with moving to the APG area.

"Some things are different, but everyone has been very supportive...." Griffin said.

As for leaving Fort Monmouth, Foster admitted it was hard.

"Look, I'm a Jersey guy and knowing that the fort is closing is heartbreaking," Foster said. "But at the same time, this isexhilarating.... I just had to convince myself that things [can] change."

Ready Army: Preparedness is a year-round effort

www.acsim.army.mil

Many events can trigger emergency situations with the potential to escalate into disaster. Hazards such as power outages or disease outbreaks can happen anywhere at any time.

Soldiers of all Army components, civilians and their Family members should become familiar with the spectrum of possible dangers and learn how they will be notified about them.

It is also important to give special consideration to local hazards such as hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding, earthquakes or severe winter weather.

Living abroad presents additional preparedness challenges and sometimes less familiar hazards like volcanic eruption and tsunamis.

While the potential threats can seem overwhelming, keep in mind that most of what should be contained in Family emergency plans or put in emergency kits will be useful regardless of the hazard. Preparedness is a year-round



effort that everyone can be a part of by remembering and acting on the three keys to being a Ready Army: Get a kit, Make a plan and Be informed.

Get a kit

Assemble a collection of first aid supplies, food, water, medicines and important papers to sustain the Family until a crisis passes. Consider the unique needs of the Family and pets, and then

assemble emergency supply kits in the home, car and workplace. Emergency kits are an essential tool for meeting that challenge.

To prepare the Family for an emergency, get one or more emergency kits that include enough supplies for at least three days. Keep a kit prepared at home, and consider having kits in the car and at work. These kits will enable the Family unit to respond to an emergency more quickly.

The various emergency kits will be useful whether evacuating or sheltering-in-place.

Suggested basic items to consider for a home emergency kit:

- Water—at least one gallon per person per day for at least three days;
- Food—nonperishable food for at least three days
- Formula and diapers for infants
- Food, water, other supplies and documents for pets
- Manual can opener
- Flashlight, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration battery-powered weather radio, battery-powered cell phone charger and extra batteries
- First aid kit with dust masks, antiseptic and prescription medications
- Sanitation supplies such as moist towelettes, disinfectant, toilet paper and garbage bags
- Important documents—personal, financial and insurance
- Family emergency plan, local maps and your command

reporting information

Additional items can be essential for those serving abroad:

- Passports
 - Birth abroad certificate for children born overseas
 - Cash in local currency
 - Card with local translations of basic terms
 - Electrical current converter
- Many other items could prove helpful:
- Fire extinguisher
 - Any tools needed to turn off utilities
 - Matches in a waterproof container
 - Paper plates, paper cups, plastic utensils, paper towels
 - Coats and rain gear
 - Sleeping bags or other bedding
 - Weather-appropriate change of clothes for each person
 - Books, games, puzzles, toys and other activities for children

Make a plan

Make and practice a Family

See **READY**, page 6

BRAC

From front page

advanced party personnel, are currently working at APG, and many personnel are scheduled to move in 2009.

"The construction on our Phase One campus is proceeding at a rapid pace as you will see today," Via said "It's very exciting to see the steel in the ground and the progress toward our state-of-the-art facility."

Via thanked Brown for supporting BRAC implementation efforts and for the support of many Maryland state, county and local officials who are working hard to help make the relocation a success.

Via told the audience that one of the ways that Maryland leaders have helped Army Team C4ISR transitioning workers is to provide a one-stop transition center at Fort Monmouth, which he said is turning out to be a great success.

"It was truly a fabulous idea to place someone in New Jersey to answer questions immediately and to track down information for the members of our workforce who are considering the move to Maryland," Via said. "That is just one example of the superb efforts of the state of Maryland."

Via mentioned that Maryland leaders have also supported relocation fairs, town hall meetings and motor coach tours for Army Team C4ISR employees to APG's surrounding counties, and have seen to it that members of Army Team C4ISR and their Families who move to Maryland will be eligible for resident tuition rates at state universities and colleges.

"For all of this outstanding support and hard work on your part, we just can't thank you enough," he said.

Via concluded his comments by saying, "as we move ahead in this bold venture, we're looking forward to working with you to

continue to take good care of our people and to ensure that, for the Warfighter on the battlefield, our move to Maryland will be as seamless as possible."

Lt. Gov. Anthony Brown then welcomed Fort Monmouth representatives and introduced cabinet members.

"We understand the importance of preparing a workforce to meet the demands of your mission," Brown said. "Our efforts are aimed to meet both the immediate workforce needs as well as the long-term sustainable workforce that you need for years to come."

Brown mentioned the importance of incumbent worker retention initiatives that include one-stop centers at Fort Monmouth, continued dialogue and outreach to assist those employees and their spouses to meet their professional and educational goals.

Brown also told the audience that Maryland's schools are also focusing on career and technical

education including science, technology, education and mathematics to provide students the skills they need for positions that will be available at APG.

"We know that tomorrow's C4ISR employees are today's fourth graders," Brown said.

Brown added that Maryland officials have worked closely with Maryland colleges to ensure that they are prepared for future Army Team C4ISR employees. The state of Maryland also invested \$81 million last year in capital projects at community colleges and the higher education fund. Tuition was held flat, and the community college operating budget was increased by record levels.

Brown said that county leaders are also anticipating infrastructure challenges. He said he is working with county officials and APG leaders to meet immediate and long term needs.

Brown mentioned "BRAC zones," which refers to legislation that

Gov. Martin O'Malley signed which authorizes the creation of areas affected by the pending BRAC process. Jurisdictions that apply for and receive "BRAC zone" status will be eligible to receive matching state funds for road upgrades and related infrastructure work.

"First applications [for APG] are being accepted next month," Brown said. "First awards will be granted in December. BRAC growth will be smart growth."

Brown also discussed Maryland Department of Transportation strategies to cope with the increased levels of traffic to and from the post and water issues that areas surrounding APG may have in the future.

"I'm engaging the county leaders and the Mayor of Baltimore in substantive talks to establish a memorandum of understanding to avoid water shortages as the population in Cecil and Harford counties grows," he said.

Brown concluded his remarks by thanking Fort

Monmouth personnel for attending the forum.

After Brown's remarks Col. Jeffrey S. Weissman, garrison and APG deputy installation commander, and Col. Andrew Nelson, deputy garrison commander for Transformation, briefed on the status of construction and overall readiness of APG for the mission. After Weissman and Nelson's statements, updates were provided from Maryland state secretaries.

The forum concluded by giving the visiting dignitaries a tour of the C4ISR construction site.

"On behalf of Governor O'Malley and our cabinet I want to say thank you to Soldiers, civilians and contractors working towards BRAC and APG 2012's goals," Brown said. "BRAC is a team effort. What is accomplished through BRAC will ultimately promote freedom and democracy around the world. Let us not forget: it [BRAC] is all about the Warfighter."

APG News

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

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Using the government travel card correctly

Story by
CATHLEEN PERRY
OSJA

Not many people know that incorrectly using a government travel card means jail time.

The government travel card – “the card” – is a credit card designed to streamline the official travel process.

For most, familiarity with the card comes from having to use it while traveling on government business. The card located in many people’s wallet is for use by all U.S. government personnel (civilian and military) to pay for costs incident to ‘official’ business travel.

“The Travel and Transportation Reform Act of 1998,” or TTRA, governs the use of the card. The program is intended to facilitate and standardize the use of a safe, effective, convenient, commercially available method for Department of Defense travelers to pay for expenses incident to official travel, including local travel.

Failure to use the government travel charge card is not a basis for refusing to reimburse the traveler/employee for otherwise appropriate charges. However, failure to use the card may subject the traveler to administrative and/or disciplinary action.

There are several exceptions to this requirement. The exceptions most likely to apply to APG employees are when the employee travels only one or two times a year, if they are a new appointee or if they were previously denied a card.

There are two general rules that govern the use of the card.

First, employees shall satisfy their financial obligations, and second, employees shall use government property only for authorized purposes (5 C.F.R.2635.809 and 5 C.F.R. 2635.704, 31 U.S.C. 1301[a]).

First rule - Paying the bill

As with all credit cards, timely payment is required. This requires promptly submitting a travel vouch-

er. Any charges not paid directly by DFAS to the card company must be paid by the card holder by the date specified on the monthly statement. Failure to make a timely payment will lead to late fees which the card holder (not the government) must pay. Late payments or a failure to pay can cause card issuers to be unwilling to manage DoD’s card system. Because of this, late payments or a failure to pay bills when due, can also lead to disciplinary actions against the traveler.

Travelers often ask why they should pay their bill if they haven’t yet been paid by the government. This situation should not arise if the travel voucher was submitted in a timely manner.

The requirement states that vouchers should be submitted within five days of travel. DFAS must pay within 30 days of the filing (See TTRA, Section 030801.A). If properly done, travelers should not have to pay before reimbursement. The bottom line is that travelers should submit their travel voucher in a timely manner and make prompt payment of any charges.

But what happens if something beyond traveler’s control prevents the timely filing of the voucher, i.e. you’ve been deployed? There is a provision that provides relief for travelers whose duty prevents them from filing their vouchers or making payment within the prescribed times. To apply, the traveler must be designated as being in mission-critical travel status. The

mission critical status must be reflected on the travel order in order for the traveler to be reimbursed for any late charges incurred while in this status. An individual’s charge card account must have been placed in mission critical status before the account was suspended. Should there be outstanding bills, the bills shall be settled within 45 days of removal from this status. (TTRA, section 030901.A).

But what about the situation where the voucher was filed within the required five days but DFAS commits an error or doesn’t timely make payment? Travelers may be reimbursed for late fees imposed by the bank if the non-payment that incurred the late fee was a result of the government’s untimely processing of the travel voucher. Late fees do not incur until 75 days following the billing statement. (TTRA, section 030801.C). Remember that payment of the late fee by the agency will only be done if the delay is the agency’s fault. This section is not applicable if the traveler waited 20, 25 or 30 days to submit a voucher and then faced a late payment.

The second major rule regarding use of the card is that it may be used only for authorized purposes. The rules regarding this are confusing to many people, but the key is to use the card only for expenses incident to “official” travel. This can include expenses for local travel such as tolls and parking. It is not proper to pay for lunch with a government credit

card while on local travel. If traveling from the Aberdeen Area to the Edgewood Area or vice versa, government credit card holders are not entitled to have lunch paid for by the government. As such, it would not be proper to charge it on the government card. Also, gas costs for the trip should not be placed on the card. There is no clear cut, easily definable way of determining which gas would be used for official business and which for personal use.

Under no circumstances is the card to be used for personal, non-duty expenses. It is not sufficient to promptly pay whatever personal expenses were charged. As an example, it would not be proper to charge lunch or dinner with a spouse (even if they accompany the traveler on TDY) and then pay the bill when it comes. The intentional use of the card for non-approved purchases may be considered an

attempt to commit fraud against the U.S. government and may subject the traveler to penalties ranging from disciplinary actions to criminal penalties.

Military members that misuse the card may be subject to courts-martial

under UCMJ Article 92 (failure to obey an order or regulation).

An example of inappropriate use of the card is a Merit Systems Protection Board case involving an employee

See CARD, page 5

September Well-Being Meeting focuses on installation improvements, upcoming events

Story by
RACHEL PONDER
APG NEWS

Aberdeen Proving Ground organization representatives announced upcoming APG events and improvements as well as important information pertaining to the APG community at the Well-Being Council meeting held at the Aberdeen Post Chapel Sept. 18.

Col. Jeffrey S. Weissman, APG Garrison and deputy installation commander, opened the meeting by welcoming attendees, adding that he will give his remarks at the end of the meeting.

AAFES

Debbie Armendariz, store manager at the Aberdeen Post Exchange, told attendees that the AAFES Exchange Online Mall has information at www.aafes.com about a program to help military personnel and their Families recycle their old electronics, cell phone, computers and laptops in an environmentally-friendly way.

She also told attendees of the 'You Make the Grade' program for students earning A's or B's on their report card. Students who bring in their report cards with these grades will receive a special coupon book and have a chance to win up to \$5,000 in U.S. savings bonds through AAFES.

An attendee asked about rising gas prices at the Shopettes due to the recent

hurricanes, and Weissman responded that it is an Army Policy to match the lowest gas prices within a 5-mile radius of the post.

KUSAHC

Lt. Col. James M. Nold, commander of Kirk U.S. Army Health Clinic, announced that they are "still looking for a third pharmacist."

Nold stated that Flumist is now being given to active duty Soldiers. Flumist will be available for all healthy individuals ages 5 to 49.

Flu shots will be given to Family members including children and the elderly as soon as the injectable version of the shots is in.

For more information, call the flu vaccine hotline at 410-306-3588.

Nold also announced that the Harford County Health Department offers tobacco cessation classes at no cost to all tobacco users who want to quit. The pre-quit class is mandatory for anyone who has not attended the class in the past year. The Harford County Health Department requests pre-registration for all classes. For more information or to register, call 410-612-1781 weekdays between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Nold also announced that Soldiers need to take the Post-Deployment Health Reassessment three to six months after they return from deployment.

Commanders are encouraged to make sure that the

Soldiers they are responsible for get this reassessment, and Nold emphasized that commanders should allow them to take time for this appointment.

For more information about the PDHRA program and deployment heal, visit <https://ffhp.osd.mil/pdhrainfo> or call the Deployment health Help Line, 1-800-497-6261.

Housing

Pat Hector, chief of the Housing Division, representing the Directorate of Installation Operations, said that there is a waiting list for Soldiers to live in post housing. She said that her office is working very hard to improve this situation.

"We don't want Soldiers to have to live off post if we can help it," Hector said.

She said that APG is in a "little waiting period as we get those quarters ready."

A question was brought up as to why there are empty quarters on APG when there is a housing shortage.

Command Sgt. Maj. Pedro Rodriguez said that they are trying to improve some of the quarters that haven't been used for years, but it takes time.

"The Housing Office is working really hard. We get complaints, but we are working to try to improve the situation," Rodriguez said.

He also added that previously they did not have the funding to put into renovating the quarters.

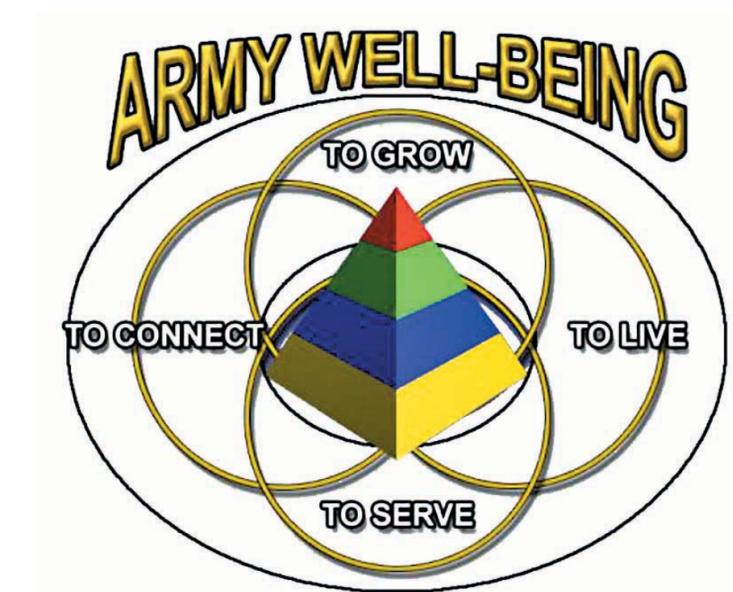
"This is a problem that has been on APG for years," Rodriguez said. "We are trying to fix this but it takes time. We had some quarters that were really broken down, but it takes a lot of resources and time to make those quarters liveable."

Rodriguez added that due to base realignment and closure, some of the quarters will be totally demolished and new quarters will be built.

"It will be a mixture of both," Rodriguez said. "Some of the quarters might appear nice and liveable but the infrastructure isn't up to par. It is just not a safe area."

DLES

Robert Krauer, director of Law Enforcement and Security, stated that everyone knows that construc-



tion is going on post, and it is going to get even more intense.

"We have had some accidents thus far, luckily minor accidents, where people have not paid attention to construction zones and changes," Krauer said. "Please pay attention to the speed limit signs as they have changed."

These signs are not advisories, they are the law. Please follow them. We do not want to see anyone get hurt. If there is no speed limit posted, the speed limit is 25 mph."

Krauer added that APG is entering the deer season when more deer will be running around the installation, especially during dusk and dawn.

"We will have several 'deer to vehicle strikes' this year like we had last year. Please be careful, they can cause a lot of damage to you and your car. Please watch out for them."

He also asked for drivers to be extra cautious during the fall. With the leaves soon falling the roads will get slippery when it rains which makes it hazardous on the road.

"Please be extra careful in the rain, especially in residential and school areas. The leaves can act just like snow and ice," Krauer said.

A question was brought up concerning why the Route 24 Gate in the Edgewood Area will be closed at the same time that there is construction being done close to the Route 152 Gate (or Magnolia Gate). Krauer responded by saying that the construction being done

close to the Magnolia Gate is a state issue, and he has no control over the construction close to that gate.

Krauer added that construction being done at the Route 24 Gate cannot be delayed because it is a contractual issue. He reminded attendees to allow themselves extra time in their commute while construction work is being completed in the Edgewood Area.

Krauer also announced National Night Out in August was a great turnout, and announced an upcoming event.

"It really brought the community together. We received great support from FMWR and the school liaison office. I really appreciate the community police department putting together a great program."

"On August 22, we also had Movie in the Park which was also a successful turnout," he said.

Krauer said that this year's Fall Fest will be 10 a.m. to p.m., Oct. 25 in the emergency services center on the Aberdeen Area. There will be a bike rodeo, free bike helmets, a place to register bikes, and lots of safety items/information for kids. We will also be celebrating McGruff the Crime Dog's birthday, and have child identification finger printing.

"We would really like to get a lot of community support from it. It was a great event last year and spring fest this year was very successful," Krauer said.

FMWR

Stacie Umbarger, the director of Schools of Knowledge, Inspiration, Exploration & Skills, represented Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation, said that she is also involved in planning the Fall Fest, and added to Krauer's remarks about Fall Fest.

"We are planning a 'wonderful' event with many free activities that the whole Family will enjoy like live music, a car show, bounce houses, climbing wall, face painting and a special guest for the children," she said.

Umbarger also

announced that there are new classes for children being offered through SKIES Unlimited like Beginner Spanish, Be a Star acting class taught by a professional actor, SAT prep, and tutoring.

For more information, call Umbarger, 410-278-2589.

Chapel

(Editor's note: Upcoming chapel events are listed on page 11.)

Open forum

A comment was brought up that some taxi companies in the area are overcharging Soldiers.

Weissman said that if a Soldier is being overcharged they need to report the name of the company and driver to their drill sergeant.

"If we find that they are overcharging, they can be banned from coming onto the installation," Weissman said.

Krauer said that taxis have to be registered. There are state and county laws identifying what the rates are.

Krauer said that he's seen it happen at the gate where Soldiers have been overcharged, and Soldiers have expressed anger over the situation.

Weissman said that they will talk with the U.S. Army Ordnance Center and Schools so that students will be aware that overcharging occurs, and what to do in that situation.

An attendee said that he has seen taxi cabs waiting at the PX for customers.

"Taxi cabs are not allowed to do this, and will be told to leave," Rodriguez said.

School Liaison

Eileen Campbell, APG's school liaison, announced that she, and a military and Family representative from APG will be attending a task force in Fort Meade to discuss whether Maryland should be part of an interstate 'group' that will help students in military Families that move frequently meet their educational requirements.

Weissman concluded
See WELL BEING, page 12

APG Outdoor Journal

Commentary: Coyotes on APG?

By
BILL ARMSTRONG
APG Wildlife and Marine Law
Enforcement Division

Anyone seen the road-runner lately?

An interesting thing happened to me one day last week while I was out and about down in the Edgewood Area checking on the flora and the fauna.

It all started when I got the strangest feeling that I wasn't alone out there traipsing through the woods. I knew it wasn't the boss 'cause he ain't much for wandering around out there amongst the chiggers or ticks, so I just dismissed the notion and continued on my way toward Monk's Creek. After a bit though, the feeling came back even stronger, and to tell you the truth, I kinda got a little bit uncomfortable with it. Something just didn't feel right to me. Finally it got the best of me, so I quietly found me a log and sat down, facing the direction from which I'd just come.

Well sir, it wasn't long before, when just out of the corner of my eye, I caught the glimpse of something moving slowly down the trail I had just made. At first I couldn't tell just exactly what it was because of the underbrush, but as it continued, it finally stepped out in the open. Yep, you guessed it (the picture probably gave it away, didn't it?), it was a coyote; putting a stalk on yours truly.

As it made its way down the path toward me, my first thought was aggravation because my cam-



era was lying on my desk back at the office. Finally, when it was about 30 yards away and still coming, I stood up and clapped my hands. Well sir, the reaction wasn't exactly what I was hoping for; in fact, instead of high-tailing it out of there like I figured it would, it just stood there, head down, curiously watching me. This went on for maybe 15 long seconds. Finally, seemingly unconcerned, it turned around and trotted off, back the way it had come. I guess it must have figured, either I wasn't very tasty or else I wasn't worth the effort.

This is the third time this year I've had an up close and personal encounter with coyotes here at Aberdeen Proving Ground. One was out in the police station parking lot at building E-4420. That time the coyote just non-

chalantly walked across the parking lot as if it owned the place. A couple of weeks ago we had another one killed by an automobile downrange in the Edgewood Area in broad daylight.

The point I'm trying to make is: coyotes are here to stay at APG, just as they are throughout Maryland, and seeing one here on the proving ground isn't that unusual.

Here are a couple of things to keep in mind if you do happen to encounter one:

Coyotes aren't normally aggressive; most of the time they are extremely shy and seldom seen. If you do happen to bump into one, it's probably because they are just being curious, or else they're out looking for something to eat.

Don't feed them or put food

out for them. Easy food sources are an attractant.

If they do approach, clap your hands or yell at them. Most of the time loud noises will make them leave.

If you're a pet owner, keep an eye on your pet. Coyotes will definitely take small dogs and cats.

If you do happen to come across one here at APG that seems overly aggressive or acting funny, give us a call at 410-278-3305 (Aberdeen Area) or 410-436-6181 (Edgewood Area)

National Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day

Just recently the Maryland Department of Natural Resources announced that Nov. 1 has been designated this year as the special waterfowl hunting day for youths 15 years of age or

younger.

This special day, initiated several years ago by the state of Maryland, was set aside to in an effort to promote hunting and hopefully, to help instill in the next generation a genuine appreciation for the outdoors.

As usual there are some rules and regulations that go along with participation in this special hunt:

- Only hunters 15 years of age or younger may participate in the National Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day, and then only if the individual possesses a valid hunting license or is exempt from Maryland hunting license requirements.

- The individual must also possess a Maryland Migratory Game Bird Stamp and be accompanied in the field by an individual who:

- Is 21 years of age or older,
- Possesses a valid hunting license, unless exempt from the licensing requirement.
- Is not afield with a firearm, bow or other hunting device.

The bag limits for the National Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day are: two Canada geese, 15 snow geese, three brant and 15 coots. The duck bag limit is six ducks (including mergansers) but may include no more than five long-tailed ducks, four scoters, four mallards (maximum two hen mallards), three wood ducks, two redheads, two hooded mergansers, two scaup and one each pintail, mottled duck and black duck.

Card

From page 3

of the Veterans Administration. The employee filed an appeal at the MSPB after he was removed for purchasing gasoline for his privately owned vehicle with his government card. During his appeal, the parties entered into a settlement agreement where the employee remained terminated from his position in exchange for the agency not pursuing criminal theft charges against him.

An example involving criminal charges involved a former Department of Veterans Affairs employee who recently pled guilty to one count of theft of government property. The former employee used her government credit card to purchase

expensive items, which she then re-sold or kept for herself. The judge sentenced her to five years probation and ordered her to pay \$170,000 in restitution.

Finally, in a case involving a military member, there was an investigation which concluded that a senior U.S. Marine improperly used his government credit card by purchasing gas for his personal vehicle, dinners and concert tickets as well as obtaining cash advances—all unrelated to official travel. The Marine was counseled by his supervisor and required to reimburse the government for all unauthorized purchases. He retired soon after the investigation.

The bottom line — use the card for official purposes only and pay the bill promptly when it is received.

Army fires first round from cannon on FCS chassis

Story by

FUTURE COMBAT SYSTEMS PROGRAM OFFICE

Army News Service

The Future Combat Systems program successfully fired the first artillery projectile from the manned ground vehicle non-line-of-sight cannon prototype Sept. 23.

The successful firing of the projectile is a milestone for the program, said Lt. Col. Robert McVay, Army product manager for NLOS-C.

"This marks the first 155mm round fired from a fully automated howitzer mounted on an FCS hybrid-electric chassis and remotely commanded through its on-board computers and controls," he said.

The NLOS-C has the ability to rapidly deliver precision munitions in both urban and conventional battle space, officials said, adding that it is the lead prototype in the Army's family of eight FCS manned ground vehicles.

Advanced FCS technology provides the two-man artillery crew with the capability to rapidly deliver highly accurate sustained fires for close and destructive fires. That technology includes a fully automated ammunition loading system, improved accuracy through on-board projectile tracking and the FCS network and sensors.

A total of eight NLOS-C prototypes



Photo by U.S. Army

The Future Combat Systems program successfully fired the first artillery projectile from the manned ground vehicle non-line-of-sight cannon prototype Sept. 23.

will be produced between 2008 and 2009. All will undergo rigorous testing, safety certification and evaluations at various Army test facilities, officials said. They said the NLOS-C prototypes will be used for testing and evaluation of not only the artillery system, but also the MGV common chassis and technologies.

The NLOS-C P1 will fire an additional 500 rounds through early 2009 to obtain a safety release that will allow Soldiers to move, shoot and communicate from an NLOS-C in spring 2009, officials said. Beginning in 2010, Soldiers at the Army's Evaluation Task Force are scheduled to receive the first

of 18 NLOS-C platforms. The AETF will put those vehicles through combat scenarios to provide lessons learned that will be used to enhance and finalize design for the final production of NLOS-Cs and the rest of the MGV family.

See ARMY NEWS, page 16

Ready

From page 2

emergency plan. Consider the range of potential emergencies and all the places the Family members might be. Family members may not be together when an emergency strikes. Planning ahead for various emergencies will improve the chances of keeping in touch, staying safe and quickly reuniting.

Some emergencies require different responses than others, but a Family communications procedure will be helpful in any case. Knowing how to keep in touch and find one another will help the Family stay safe and cope with the confusion and fear that come

when emergencies strike.

Be informed

Emergencies can arise from weather and other natural hazards, industrial and transportation accidents, disease epidemic and terrorist acts. Anticipate the emergencies most likely to affect the Family and learn about related procedures including the Army Disaster Personnel Accountability and Assessment System. Being informed also means knowing first aid and appropriate response measures. Knowing what to do can make all the difference when seconds count.

Frequently asked questions

Q: What does shelter-in-place mean?

A: Sheltering-in-place means to take temporary

protection in a structure or vehicle that is not certified, insured or staffed for emergency conditions. Installation procedures designate which office or party will order personnel to shelter-in-place and for how long the order is in effect.

Preparing to shelter-in-place involves having an emergency kit, being able to turn off heating and ventilation systems quickly and identifying potential interior spaces for sheltering-in-place. Notification of an emergency may be through a voice announcing system, announcements through cellular phones or e-mail, or an Emergency Alert System broadcast over radio or television.

Q: What is a Family Emergency Plan? How do I make one?

A: Your Family also

should have a plan for who you will call and where you will go if there is an emergency. When creating a Family emergency plan, consider the range of potential emergencies and all the places you and your Family might be. Talk to your children about what will happen if they are in school at the time of the emergency, and make sure they understand where you intend to be.

Army Families, in particular, need to know what they do if an emergency occurs when their Soldier is deployed. In case you can't reach each other directly by phone or e-mail, have an out-of-state friend or relative you can both contact to leave word that you're okay, and learn the Army Disaster Personnel Accountability and Assess-

ment System to ensure you are ready to report your status. Soldiers downrange need the peace of mind that their Family is safe so they can focus on their mission at hand.

Discuss your plan with the Family and set up practice evacuations or shelter-in-place drills to ensure everyone knows what to do and where to go in the event of an emergency.

Q: I have pets. How can I prepare for them in an emergency?

A: When you and your Family consider plans and provisions for emergencies, be sure to take your pets and other animals into account. Creatures that rely on us in the best of times can't help themselves when disaster strikes. Good advance planning could prevent tragedy,

worry and the risks you or others might take to affect a rescue.

Know in advance how you will handle your pets if you need to evacuate. Also, your emergency supply kit should also contain provisions for pets, including food and water, a strong leash, a carrier and veterinary records. Make sure your pets' identification tags are up to date and secured on their collars, and consider micro-chipping your pets. If you have advance warning of an emergency, add a tag with your evacuation information.

For more information on Ready Army and emergency preparedness, visit the Ready Army Web site at http://www.acsim.army.mil/readyarmy/ra_about.htm.

Community Notes

**SATURDAY
OCTOBER 4
CECIL COUNTY
FALL FESTIVAL**

The Cecil County Fall Festival will be held 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Oct. 4 at Priapi Gardens located on 5996 Augustine Herman Highway, Cecilton. The festival will be held rain or shine. Events include hayrides, face painting, live music by Mythica, Wendy Woo Woo and her Magical Pumpkin Patch Show, John Deere farm and garden equipment, Blacksmith Seth Barchow, skilled artisans, wine tasting, food with Amish barbecue chicken, Kilby Cream Ice Cream and more. Admission is free.

For more information, call 410-275-9438 or visit www.priapigardens.com or www.cgov.org/tourism/calendar.cfm.

**ZETA PHI BETA
SORORITY
WOMEN'S
SPIRITUAL RETREAT**

Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. Omicron Chi Zeta Chapter will offer a Women's Spiritual Retreat – "A day of spiritual renewal" – 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Boothe Brothers International located on 16 North Philadelphia Boulevard, Aberdeen. Attendees should bring a Bible. Join other women for a day of spiritual enrichment, camaraderie and relaxation. Cost to attend is a donation of \$38 per person and includes continental breakfast and hot lunch.

Inspirational speaker and discussion leader will be the Rev. Roxanne G. Parton, Star of Bethlehem AME Church, Baltimore. Praise and worship leader will be Sisters With Anointed Voices. Register by Sept. 20. For more information, call L. Boyd, e-mail tygjhs@verizon.net, or R. Clay, e-mail roberta@qis.net.

**DARLINGTON
APPLE FESTIVAL**

The Darlington Apple Festival will be held 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., rain or shine, in the village of Darlington. The festival will include all day entertainment, hundreds of country crafters, mums, pumpkins, and of course, apples. There will also be a children's area with games and pony rides, and kids can even stuff their own scarecrows. There are also hayrides for the whole Family all day. Food includes all the usual things plus pit beef, barbecue, apple fritters and of course, Maryland crab soup.

No dogs or other pets are allowed on the festival site with the exception of handicapped assistance dogs, dogs used by law enforcement and dogs displayed at the festival site under the restriction and control of qualified handlers.

Parking costs \$3 at all sites (buses transport people from the sites to the festival). Accessible parking is available at the Darlington Elementary School located next to the festival.

For more information or directions, visit <http://www.darlingtonapplefest.org/>.

**CHILDREN'S
GARDENING –
PUMPKIN POWER**

Have fun growing food and flowers at the Leight Center and at home. Enjoy crafts, game, and science disguised as fun while learning about seeds, life cycles, and growing food and flowers in a watershed-friendly way. This program will be held 11 a.m. to noon for ages 5 to 10. The cost is \$4 and registration is required.

For information, registration or directions to the Anita C. Leight Estuary

Center, call 410-612-1688 or 410-879-2000, ext. 1688.

**TRACKS AND SCAT
HIKE**

Find out who has been wandering around Boseley by looking for what they left behind. This program will be held 1:30 to 3 p.m. for Families. The cost is \$5 per Family, and registration is required. For information, registration or directions to the Anita C. Leight Estuary Center, call 410-612-1688 or 410-879-2000, ext. 1688.

**SUNDAY
OCTOBER 5
NATURE TALES -
MIGRATION**

Come listen to some stories, learn new songs and move like the animals. This program will be held at 2 p.m. and is free for all ages. No registration required.

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

**WHAT'S IN THE
WATER**

Spend some time splashing around in the water before getting down to the business of looking for microscopic life and testing the estuary water using cool equipment. This program will be held 2 to 3:30 p.m. for ages 7 to adult. The program is free but registration is required.

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

LEGION BINGO

American Legion Rising Sun is sponsoring a basket bingo to benefit Boy Scout Troop 28. Early Bird begins at 2:50 p.m.; games start at 3 p.m. Cost is \$10 for three cards for 20 games, extra cards cost \$5 per set of 3. There will be three raffles.

For more information call 410-658-3915, or email basketbingo@zoominternet.net

**WEDNESDAY
OCTOBER 8
WEDNESDAY WEE
WONDERS**

Celebrate fall by joining the naturalist and her wee one for stories, songs, live animals and outdoor exploration. This program will be held 10 to 11 a.m. for children up to age 4. The program is free but registration is required.

For information, registration or directions to the

Anita C. Leight Estuary Center, call 410-612-1688 or 410-879-2000, ext. 1688.

**THURSDAY
OCTOBER 9
HARFORD COUNTY
JOB FAIR**

The 20th annual Harford County Job Fair will be held 2 to 6 p.m. in the Richlin Ballroom and Ramada Inn and Conference Center located on 1700 Van Bibber Road, Edgewood. Organizations include healthcare, food service, finance and education, emergency services, communications, construction, utilities, manufacturing and distribution, APG Civilian Personnel Office and many BRAC and government contractors.

Dress professionally and bring copies of resume. Be prepared for applications and interviews.

For more information, visit www.swnetwork.org for a list of participating employers.

**FRIDAY
OCTOBER 10
BASKET BINGO**

The Tall Cedars of Lebanon Forest No. 142 will hold basket bingo at the Aberdeen Fire Hall, located on 21 North Rogers Street. Doors open at 6 p.m., games start at 7 p.m. Tickets cost \$12 per person, additional package of cards costs \$5 per person and includes door prizes (purses from XO, South Pole, Chinese Laundry, Guess, MC Leather and Nine West), special games and raffles. Food, desserts and drinks will be available. There also will be a gift table with Boyd's Bear collectibles for sale. Proceeds will benefit muscular diseases.

For more information or to purchase tickets, call Connie Beardsley, 410-420-1002.

**SATURDAY
OCTOBER 11
THE GRAW DAYS
FESTIVAL**

Havre de Grace Main Street presents The Graw Days Festival, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the downtown Havre de Grace shopping district. Bring the Family to the first annual free street festival celebrating a significant era in Havre de Grace history – horse racing at "The Graw." Enjoy the Roaring '20s with jazz and ragtime music in the streets (including the Peabody Ragtime Ensemble), period attire, a wide variety of local food, a beer garden, historic displays and presentations, horse-drawn carriage rides,

street performers, a silent auction, arts and crafts vendors, sidewalk sales and games and contests (including pumpkin carving) for kids of all ages. Downtown streets will be closed to traffic.

For more information, call Marita at 410-939-1811 or e-mail hdgmainstreet@verizon.net.

**HORSESHOE
TOURNAMENT AND
PIG ROAST**

The American Legion Susquehanna Post 135 located on 300 Cherry Street, Perryville, will hold a Horseshoe Tournament and Pig Roast, 1 to 5 p.m. Entry fee costs \$20 per person and includes a pig roast for players. Food and beverages will be available for purchase. Participants will draw for teams; there will be double eliminations.

For more information, call 410-642-2771.

**TRAIL TREK:
SUSQUEHANNA
STATE PARK**

Enjoy a three-mile day hike with volunteer Eugene Burg along the banks of the Susquehanna. Bring lunch. This program will be held 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. for ages 10 to adult. The program is free but registration is required.

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

**NATURE'S
PUMPKINS**

Celebrate Halloween by decorating a pumpkin "creature" with natural items collected in Leight Park. This program will be held 1 to 2 p.m. for all ages, under 8 with an adult. The cost is \$5 and

registration is required. For information, registration or 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 under Community Notes.)

Adventures in driving decision making



Panic on the highway!

Installation Safety Office

"Adventures in driving decision-making" is brought to everyone by the Installation Safety Office.

Situation #3

Imagine you're driving the legal speed limit when you come to an intersection. Another car is approaching the intersection from your right, but it has a stop sign – you don't. There's no traffic ahead of you. You find yourself in the intersection before you see the car on your right is not stopping. What should you do?

A. Floor accelerator and honk, or

B. Turn hard left.

Answer B. To "turn hard left," under certain circumstances, would be the way to go. In this situation, however, you'd be able to get through and out of the way if you had decided to "floor the accelerator and honk." Chances are the driver of the other car would be breaking while you're accelerating. But if you couldn't get through, the thing to do would be to turn left. You'd get hit, but you'd be side-swiped. And, in case you had thought you should brake to stop, you couldn't have stopped in time to avoid being hit in case you had thought you should brake to stop, you couldn't have stopped in time to avoid being hit roadside. This is a situation where you have to choose the "least" of several "worst" possibilities. Answer A is the best choice.

Answer A. To "floor the accelerator and honk" is probably the wise thing to do. If you really floored it and honked, chances are you'd get through and not be hit. The driver of the other car will react to your honking and chances are he'll brake. That'll give you more time to get out of his way. Under certain circumstances your other choice, to "turn hard left," could also be the way to go. Hopefully, you'd be able to get through and out of the way by accelerating. But, if you couldn't, the thing to do would be to turn left. You'd get hit, but you'd be side-swiped. And, in case you had thought you should brake to stop, you couldn't have stopped in time to avoid being hit roadside. That would be the worst choice in this situation.

POST SHORTS

cordoned off by yellow tape and traffic cones. The parking area also will be closed on weekends due to scheduled power outage when required.

Office Eagle customers should beware during admittance to the store.

For more information, call Michael Hardwick, 410-306-2305.

KUSAHC closes for holiday

Kirk U.S. Army Health Clinic will be closed for a training holiday Oct. 13.

For emergencies, call 911; KUSAHC does not have an emergency room. During after hours and federal holidays, call 410-

278-1725 and ask for Staff Duty.

Blue Cross/ Shield visits APG

The Civilian Personnel Advisory Center has made arrangements for a claim representative of the Service Benefit Plan Blue Cross/Blue Shield to visit Oct. 7. The representative will be available 9 to 11:30 a.m. in building 305, room 211, Aberdeen Area and 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in building E4520, Chemical Demilitarization Training Facility, Edgewood Area, to discuss claim problems and plan coverage. No appointment is necessary.

For more information, call Teri Wright, 410-278-4331.

Army receives funds for single Strong Bonds retreats

There will be a Strong Bonds Single Soldier retreat

at the Willow Valley Resort in Lancaster, Pa., Oct. 8 through 10. Sign up now through Oct. 2 at the Main Post Chapel Office, or call 410-278-4333. Spots are filled on a first-come first-served basis. For planning purposes, more dates will be announced in a future Post Short.

Hispanic American Heritage Month

The APG Hispanic Heritage Committee will present National American Heritage Month, 11 a.m. to noon, Oct. 8, at the Aberdeen Area Recreation Center, building 3326. Guest speaker will be Jorge Christian, a mechanical engineer with the U.S. Army RDECOM-Edgewood Chemical Biological Center. The theme for 2008 is "Getting Involved: Our Families, Our Community, Our Nation."

For more information, call Sgt. 1st Class Elwood Veney, RDECOM, 410-436-4810; Master Sgt. Gail

Brennan, OC&S, 410-278-2529; Sgt. 1st Class Michael Jones, 61st Ordnance Brigade, 410-278-4408; Sgt. 1st Class Cesar Salcedo, 410-436-4953; Linda Patrick, CHPPM, 410-436-1023; or Sheryl Coleman, ARL, 410-278-5964.

Thrift Shop holds \$2 bag sale in October

The Thrift Shop will hold a \$2 bag sale in October for all items displayed in the parking lot, or the sale room. For more information, call 410-272-8572 during store hours: Wednesdays, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Thursdays 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. the first Saturday of the month. Consignments are taken 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. on Wednesdays and 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Thursdays.

(Editors Note: More Shorts can be seen at www.apgnews.apg.army.mil under Shorts.)

Chapel News



Photo courtesy of APG MAIN CHAPEL

Gerri Merkel, director of Religious Education Services, left, and Susie Kim, wife of Chaplain Young D. Kim, flank several members of the U.S. Marines during the first themed Sunday service Sept. 7 to honor the Marines stationed at Aberdeen Proving Ground. The Protestant Service will host themed Sundays once a month to honor units and organizations on APG. Members of the Air Force will be honored 10:15 a.m., at the Oct. 15 service.

Protestant Service hosts Marine Corps Sunday

Story by
YVONNE JOHNSON
APG News

The Protestant Service of the Aberdeen Area Chapel hailed the U.S. Army Ordnance Mechanical Maintenance School's U.S. Marine Corps Detachment during its first themed Sunday service Sept. 7.

Led by Chaplain (Maj.) Young D. Kim, the Protestant Service will be hosting themed Sundays once a month to honor units and organizations on Aberdeen Proving Ground.

Kim said that more than 80 Marines from the detachment participated in the ser-

vice. Led by their executive officer Capt. Jason Lacias, the Marines read scripture, served as ushers and collected the offering.

"A special Marine choir even presented a tribute song for that day," Kim said.

In addition, Dr. Walter Egerton, congregation president, and former Kirk U.S. Army Health Clinic commander, presented the detachment commander with a plaque honoring the Marine's service to the nation, and each Marine received a leather-bound Bible with a gold embroidered emblem of the Marine Corps on the cover.

"The congregation was excited and delighted to have the opportunity to share their worship with the Marines, and they received them with warmth, and a

special luncheon following the service," Kim said.

He added that his sermon offered words of encouragement for challenging times, noting that many will leave here for the war zone.

"I told them, 'He has promised to be with us in all our ways, throughout all of our days,' Kim said. 'He will be with you in the day of battle and in the day of victory. He will be with you my dear brothers and sisters in Christ, especially my dear Marines, even in combat.'"

Kim said that themed Sundays are designed to recognize APG units and organizations.

"We want to show that the members of the APG Protestant Service appreciate the efforts of the service members and civilians who serve our nation," he said.

Thrift Shop aids Family displaced by kitchen fire



At the Aberdeen Proving Ground Thrift Shop, Spc. Donna Burns, left, adds a pair of lamps to items to a cart of items donated by the shop to her Family after a kitchen fire in her Patriot Village quarters. Looking on is Burns' mother-in-law, Brenda Nelson, right, and her children Kali, 4, center, and Jasmine, 2.

Story and photo by
YVONNE JOHNSON
APG News

An Aberdeen Prov-

ing Ground Family had to be moved to new quarters after a kitchen fire in their Patriot Village home

in September resulted in more than \$40 thousand in damages to the unit.

No one was injured by

the fire which occurred in the Loyalty Court home of Spc. Donna Burns, a laboratory technician with the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine.

APG fire inspector T.C. Glassman of the Directorate of Safety, Health and Environment's Fire and Emergency Services Division, said the fire, which occurred the afternoon of Sept. 7, was the result of unattended cooking, a grease fire confined to the stove area.

"There was mostly smoke damage as well as damage to the kitchen cabinets and counter area," Glassman said.

In addition, firefighters had to remove much of the drywall to check for smoldering flames.

Burns said that she had left to take her children, Kali, 4, and Jasmine, 2, to the park and didn't realize she had left the stove on.

Her husband and her oldest child, Lacey, 9, were not at home at the time.

"When we got home the kitchen was on fire," she said.

Although the Family was relocated to new quarters on Pledge Court, much of their belongings sustained smoke and water damage.

Glassman suggested that they turn to the Thrift Shop for assistance, and Thrift Shop manager Barbara Layton was happy to help.

"This is exactly why we're here," Layton said as she helped Burns pick out kitchen ware and clothing items to replace the items the Family lost.

Layton said the shop provides replacement items for displaced Families free of charge.

"We're a not-for-profit business here for our Soldiers and their Families," Layton said.

"I knew the Thrift Shop was here because we've shopped here before, but I was very surprised by the help," Burns added.

Her mother, Barbara Nelson, who traveled from Pennsylvania when she heard about the fire, said she was impressed with the assistance.

"Five years ago we lost everything in our house from an electrical fire, so I know every little bit helps," Nelson said.

Burns said that she has renter's insurance that also will assist in the Family's recovery.

She expressed her thanks to Layton and to Glassman who accompanied her to the Thrift Shop and even purchased a bicycle that Kali had been eyeing.

She said she learned from the experience.

"Take the extra minute to double check yourself," she said. "It could make a world of difference."

Fire

From front page

down the stairs and injure yourself. Check the hallway and remove items that would hinder a clear passage to an exit door. Keeping hallways and stairways clear provides for a clear passage in the event emergency medical services personnel have to bring a stretcher and other life saving equipment in the residence to care for you or a Family member."

The second lesson is to install and test smoke alarms. Four out of five fatal fires occur in the home.

"Roughly eighty four percent of home fire deaths result from fires in homes with no smoke alarms, or no working smoke alarms," he said. "Smoke alarms or smoke detectors are the greatest safety success story of the twentieth century, but only when they are working properly."

"It still amazes me how since the 1980s all new construction of homes requires smoke detectors to be installed in all residential occupancies," Fournier said. "Yet last year there was a five percent increase in residential fire deaths."

"All smoke detectors regardless whether they are battery operated or electrically hard wired should be tested once a month. It's a sound you can live with."

"If you have a battery-operated smoke detector, this is a good time to replace the batteries and conduct fire drills," he added.

Smoke detectors are appliances, just like toasters, stereos and furnaces. Unlike other appliances, these devices function quietly in the background. Its alarm, in response to a real smoke situation or to testing, is the only evidence that it works. A stereo that does not play will not lead to tragedy, but a worn-out smoke detector, failing to

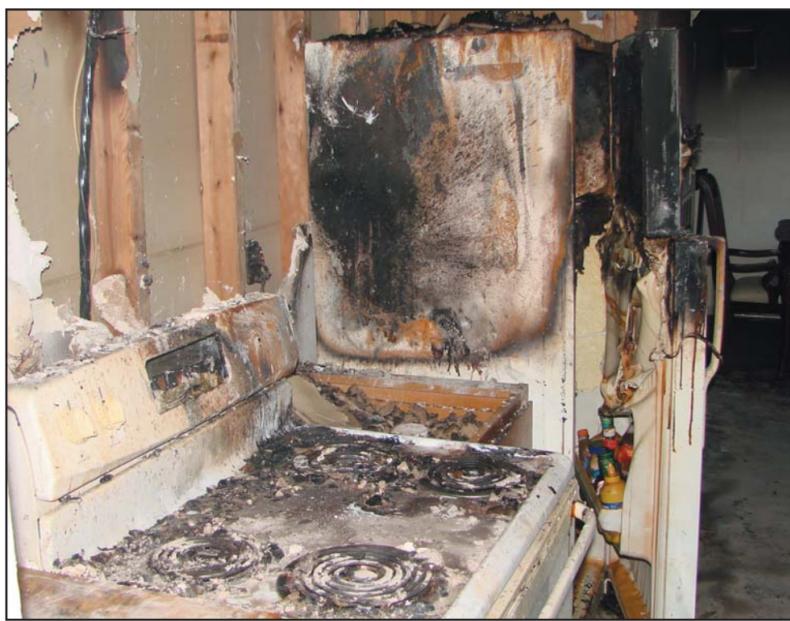


Photo by FIRE INSPECTOR 'T.C.' GLASSMAN, DSHE

An unattended deep-fryer is to blame for the fire that destroyed the kitchen and most of the first floor of Quarters 3927D Sept. 7. The Directorate of Safety, Health and Environment's Fire and Emergency Services Division is reminding all personnel that unattended cooking is one of the largest causes of fires within the home. Never leave the kitchen while cooking is in progress.

sound in a fire could. Every state in the United States has laws requiring that smoke detectors be installed and fully operational in residential occupancies.

The third lesson is to look for home hazards.

"Take the time to conduct a fire safety inspection, and you will reduce your Family's risk of being harmed in a home fire," Fournier said.

Keep cooking areas clean and clear of materials that could catch on fire, such as potholders, towels, paper towels, rags, drapes and food packaging.

Replace or repair electrical devices that have loose, frayed, or broken cords.

"If you are a smoker, make sure ashtrays are large and deep and won't tip over," he said. "Always have a metal container such as a coffee can to discard smoking material before discarding into the household trash."

Make sure electrical cords are in good condition, not frayed or cracked. If using an extension cord, make sure it is large enough

to carry the load. Only connect one extension cord to an electrical outlet.

"People get in trouble when they daisy-chain extension cords together especially during the holiday season," he said.

Make sure that combustible and flammable liquids are stored in a safe place away from a flame source like gas-operated water heaters and home furnaces.

The fourth lesson is to stay warm safely. The fall season means cooler evenings and the use of alternative heating methods to take the chill out of the air.

Give space heaters plenty of space. Space heaters should be at least three feet (one meter) away from anything that can burn. Always make sure to turn heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.

"If you use solid-fueled heating equipment such as wood or coal stoves, or fire places, make sure that your chimney has been inspected and cleaned by a qualified professional annually," he said. "Also, have your central heating equipment

serviced every year by a licensed professional."

The fifth lesson is to be careful when cooking. The leading cause of kitchen fires is unattended cooking.

"For the last thirty-five years of my fire service career, I have heard it time and time again: 'I only left the stove for a second.' We have conducted test fires here at APG to see how long it actually takes for a pan of grease on the stove to catch on fire. In every test conducted, it took ten to twelve minutes for the grease to begin to boil. At twelve to fifteen minutes the pan of grease began to smoke which is actually grease vapors. After fifteen minutes, the vapors above the stove ignited causing a column of flames about four feet above the stove."

"If there were wooden cabinets above and around the top of the stove, they would have ignited because of the heat produced by the pan."

"Fire doesn't care who you are or where you live. We recently had a fire in APG military housing. This

fire caused more than forty thousand dollars in government damage. This does not include what the Family suffered by losing their personal belongings. The lesson is learned time and time again; never leave the kitchen while frying, broiling or grilling foods.

"Always make sure that you keep a lid close by to smother a fire giving you time to turn the stove off and dial 911, regardless of the size of fire," Fournier advised.

Although there has been steady progress through public education programs in fire safety, U.S. fire deaths relative to population remain among the highest in the world. Every year, thousands of people die in home fires and tens of thousands more are injured. In 2007, 115 firefighters across the nation gave the ultimate sacrifice in protecting life and property and tens of thousands more were injured.

"Because of this, members of the APG Fire and Emergency Service Division have been working with the Housing Division by going into Family housing units and testing smoke detectors, making sure that windows and doors work properly before these units are issued to new occupants," Fournier said. "In addition, the Fire and Emergency Services Division has developed a Voluntary Home Inspection Program for military housing."

This program is designed to assist the occupants in developing a fire escape plan, in selecting a meeting place outside of the home, in the proper way to test the smoke detector and how to conduct a general fire prevention inspection around their home.

The fire inspectors will assist the occupants in getting assistance to correct any deficiencies found. A voluntary form will be provided to Family occupants during Fire Prevention Week, and a member

of the Fire & Emergency Services Division will contact the occupant to schedule a time to come out and conduct the inspection with the occupant. Anyone who would like to have an inspection of their quarters, should call 410-306-0572 in the Aberdeen Area, and 410-436-4451 in the Edgewood Area. When dialing these numbers, ask the dispatcher to connect you to a Fire inspector to schedule an appointment.

"We can do better, and Fire Prevention Week can show us how," Fournier said. "Aberdeen Proving Ground will join other fire departments during National Fire Prevention Week by conducting unannounced fire drills throughout the installation. We want to make sure that our employees and residents are prepared in the event of a fire."

Additionally, most building occupants think that their fire alarm system is connected directly to the fire department. This is only true for a portion of the buildings on this installation.

"People need to be reminded that anytime the fire alarm is activated, someone needs to dial 911 and report the activation," he said.

Building occupants may be familiar with the sound of the fire alarm, but they may not be familiar with or know an alternate way out of their building.

"We want to make sure that everyone knows how to get out of a burning building, and the only way to know is to practice fire drills. It could very well be the change that saves your life," he said.

"Remember, when you change your clock back one hour this fall, change the battery in your smoke detector. It is also recommended that when you change your clock to spring forward, change your battery again."

"Please practice fire prevention every day of the year," Fournier said.

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 Carolyn Russell, 410-306-0078, fax 410-306-0100, or e-mail carolyn.russell2@us.army.mil.

Employees eligible for donations in the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program

Donald Adamson
Neoma Amberman
Angela Barnett
Karen Blades
Debra Bonsall (daughter has brain tumor)
Jeanie Bowman
Michelle Brooks
Donna Butler
Jane Calahan
Donna Cianelli
Joyce Clark
Barbara Crossley
John Daigle

Liesolette Dorsey
Lisa Foust
Rita Fowler
Miriam Garcia
Jerome Hesch
Linda Hindman
William Horn
Sinclair Joe
Beverly King (caring for husband)
Dana Kirkley
Glenn Kresge
Randolph Larracuente
Joy Meadows

Frantz Midy
Karen Milton
Cheryl Mitchell
Marie D. Nowak
Dorothy Nowak
Cindy Orwig
Adrienne Pearson
Michael Querns
Judith Ratledge
Reta Reynolds
Steven Sadler
Gloria Scott
Barbara Seker

Donna Sexton
Algje Shaw
Mark Shipman
Melvin Showell
Willie Stevenson
Angela A. Taylor
Carrie Theiss
Gale Thompson
Mark Walker
Joyce Woods
Charles Young
Barbara Zenker

Chapel News

Chapel hosts Air Force Sunday

Air Force Sunday will be held 10:15 a.m., Oct. 5, at the Main Post Chapel during the Protestant Service.

Upcoming events

- Oct. 8-10: Single Soldier's Retreat at the Willow Valley Resort in Lancaster, Pa. Sign up now at the Main Post Chapel office, or call 410-278-4333.
 - Oct. 31: Hallelujah Harvest (Ecumenical), 6 to 8 p.m.
 - Nov. 14: Garrison Thanksgiving Prayer Luncheon, 11:30 a.m. at Top of the Bay
 - Dec. 14: Protestant Christmas Cantata, 10:15 a.m.
 - Dec. 24: Combined Candlelight Christmas Eve service, 7 p.m.
- (Note: All events are at the Main Post Chapel unless otherwise stated.)



FAMILY, MORALE, WELFARE & RECREATION

Activities/Events

Drivers Ed

Drivers Education classes are conducted by Rules Driving School, Inc. Monday thru Thursday, 6 to 9:15 p.m. There are no classes on federal holidays.

Classes are held in Aberdeen at the Community Center, 34 N. Philadelphia Boulevard, room 304, Oct. 6 thru 22; Oct. 27 thru Nov. 12; Nov. 17 thru Dec. 3; and Dec. 8 thru 23.

Class includes 30 hours of classroom instruction and 6 hours of behind-the-wheel instruction.

Cost is \$295 per student. Last day to register for the class is one week prior to the first class. Students must be between 15.9 and 18 years of age. Parents must attend the first day of class. Open to all DoD ID cardholders.

Beginner Spanish 101

Hola! habla Espanol? Beginner Spanish 101 is a great opportunity for children ages 5 and older, to learn Spanish through games and student centered activities. The class is for students with little to no Spanish language experience.

Two classes will be held: 5:30 to 6:20 p.m. for ages 5 through 7 and 6:20 to 7:30 p.m., for ages 8 through 11. Classes will be held on Tuesdays, Oct. 14 through Nov. 18, at the Aberdeen Area Youth Center, building 2522.

The class will include hands-on activities such as games, songs, crafts, stories, and some familiar movies, all in Spanish.

Class price is \$55 per student with a minimum of

six students per hour and a maximum of 16 students only. Deadline for registration is Oct. 7. Open to all DoD ID card holders.

CWF trip to Massachusetts in November

Take a "pilgrimage" to Massachusetts for an opportunity to see American history and heritage.

The Civilian Welfare Fund has scheduled a trip to Massachusetts, Nov. 20 to 23. Tour locations include Plymouth Plantation, Salem, Rockport, Gloucester and Newport, R.I.

Passengers will depart BWI at 10:30 a.m. and arrive at Logan Airport, Boston, at 11:50 a.m.

Cost per person is \$1,275 for adult single; \$975 for adult double; \$925 for adult triple; and \$905 for adult quad. Cost for children ages 17 and under is \$945 for double, \$895 for triple and \$875 for quad.

Cost includes round-trip airfare; three nights lodging; private motorcoach for tours; three continental breakfasts; three dinners, including one lobster and clam bake and meal at Plymouth Plantation; entrance into the Salem Witch Museum and Mayflower II replica; travel insurance and tips for the driver and guided tour manager.

For more information or to make reservations, call CWF, 410-273-2075 or e-mail Patti Harkins, patti.harkins@us.army.mil.

Acting Lessons

Acting lessons will be offered for youths ages 6

through 18 at the Aberdeen Area Youth Center, building 2522.

Aspiring young actors and actresses will express themselves through improvisation, storytelling, theater and concentration games while learning performance techniques and production skills. Students will learn from award nominated actor Michael Boynton.

Lessons will be held Thursdays, Oct. 16 through Nov. 20. Lessons for ages 6 to 11 will be held 5:30 to 6 p.m.; lessons for ages 12 to 18 will be held 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Classes cost \$65 per student. A minimum of six students are needed for the class to be held. Deadline for registration is Oct. 9. Open to all DoD ID card holders and their Family members.

For more information or to register, call the Central Registration Office located in building 2522, 410-278-7571/7479 for an appointment or e-mail Stacie.umbarger@conus.army.mil.

MWR daily bus trips to Atlantic City

Roll the bones on daily trips to Atlantic City, N.J. FMWR Leisure Travel Services offers daily bus service to Trump Taj Mahal Casino. Cost of the trip to is \$35 per person with \$25 back in cash and a \$5 buffet coupon. Only for ages 21 and over. The bus will leave Vitali's Restaurant, Best Western in Edgewood at 9 a.m. and return at 9 p.m.

For more information, contact FMWR Leisure

Travel Services, AA Recreation Center, building 3326, 410-278-4011/4907 or e-mail apgr-usag-mwr-liesure-travel@conus.army.mil.

Comedy Jam at the Post Theater

The public is invited to a Comedy Jam, Oct. 18, at the Post Theater, building 3245. Doors open at 7 p.m., and the show starts at 8 a.m.

Comedy acts include Roy Woods Jr., Eric Meiser and Lawrence Owens.

Tickets cost \$15 for active duty military, \$20 for civilians and \$25 at the door. Attendees must be 18 years of age and older.

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit FMWR Leisure Travel Services, building 3326, 410-278-4011/4907 or Hoyle Fitness Center, building E-4210, 410-436-7134.

Youth Basketball registration

APG Youth Basketball Registration will take place Oct. 15 through Nov. 9, at building 2752, Rodman Road. Walk-in registration will be held 7:30 to 10:30 a.m. After 10:30 a.m., call for an appointment at 410-278-7571. To register for the Edgewood Area Youth Center program, call John Lee, 410-436-7131.

There will be league teams for ages 7 to 8; 9 to 10; 11 to 12; and 13 to 14 (age as of Dec. 31, 2008). A clinic will be held for ages 4 to 6 (age as of Dec. 31, 2008). Cost to join a league is \$45 per person; the clinic costs \$35 per person.

Practices will be held weeknights. Games will be held Saturdays beginning Jan. 3.

Youth Basketball Cheerleading registration

APG Youth Basketball Cheerleading Registration will take place Oct. 15 through Nov. 9, at building 2752, Rodman Road. Walk-in registration will be held 7:30 to 10:30 a.m.; after 10:30 a.m., call for an appointment at 410-278-7571. To register for

the Edgewood Area Youth Center program, call John Lee, 410-436-7131.

Ages 6 to 14 can register. Squads will be broken down by age groups. Cost to register is \$45 per person.

Practices will be held weeknights. Games will be held Saturdays beginning Jan. 3.

Infant/Child First Aid, CPR Class

An Infant/Child First Aid and CPR class will be held 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., for ages 13 and older, Oct. 17, building 2752, Child and Youth Services administration building. The class costs \$5 per person.

MWR presents Stepping Up

FMWR presents Stepping Up, performed by Step Afrika, 7 p.m., Oct. 4, at the Post Theater. Step Afrika celebrates stepping, an art form born at African American fraternities and sororities, based in African traditions. As the first professional company dedicated to stepping, Step Afrika's intricate kicks, stomps and rhythms mixed with spoken word pound the floor and fill the air.

Advance tickets cost \$15 for active duty military, \$20 for all others and \$25 at the door. This event is open to the public.

For more information or to purchase tickets, call Leisure Travel Office, building 3326, 410-278-4011/4907 or Hoyle Fitness Center, building E4210 or call 410-436-7134.

Pennsylvania Renaissance Faire tickets available

Tickets are available for the 2008 Pennsylvania Renaissance Faire, located on 2775 Lebanon Road, Manheim, Pa.

Tickets cost \$22.50 each for adults and \$9 for children ages 5 through 11. The Renaissance Faire will be held on weekends through Oct. 26. Enjoy a marvelous trip back in time to the days of yore featuring 35 acres of Jousting knights and

royal delights. Tickets are good for any day entrance to either the Celtic Fling & Highland Games or the Pa. Renaissance Faire.

For more information or to purchase tickets, call the FMWR Leisure Travel Services, Aberdeen Area Recreation Center, building 3326, 410-278-4011/4907 or e-mail MWR_registration@apg.army.mil.

Shop at Potomac Mills Nov. 29

Feel like a little bargain hunting for this year's Christmas shopping? Potomac Mills Shopping Outlets offers more than 200 of the best brand names to help save this year. Travel to Potomac Mills Shopping Outlets Nov. 29. The bus will depart Edgewood Best Western at 7:45 a.m. Cost of the trip is \$29 per person. Space is limited, reserve tickets today.

For more information or to purchase tickets, call FMWR Leisure Travel Services, AA Recreation Center, building 3326, 410-278-4011/4907, e-mail apgr-usag-mwr-liesuretravel@conus.army.mil.

Free babysitting course

Become a certified babysitter after taking the free 4-H/Army Child and Youth Services babysitting class for ages 13 and older.

The class will be held 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Nov. 3 and 4 at the EA Child and Youth Services, building E-1902. The objectives are to familiarize participants with the responsibilities of babysitting. This class is open to all DoD ID card holders.

For more information, to register or for an appointment, call Central Registration Office, 410-278-7571/7479.

Do-it-yourself New York City tours

FMWR has scheduled several day trips to New York City – eight hours for sightseeing, shopping, seeing a Broadway matinee, venturing into China Town and more, Oct. 18 and Nov. 15.

Cost is \$40 per person. The bus will depart 7:55 a.m. and will return 10 p.m. Open to all DoD card holders.

For more information or to register, call or visit FMWR Leisure Travel Services, Aberdeen Area Recreation Center, building 3326, 410-278-4011/4907 or e-mail MWR_Leisure_Travel@apg.army.mil.

SKIES Unlimited

For more information or to register for a SKIES Unlimited class, call the Central Registration Office, building 2752, 410-278-7571/7479. Open to all DoD ID card holders. For an appointment, e-mail stacie.umbarger@conus.army.mil.

Private piano lessons

SKIES Unlimited private piano lessons will be given 3:30 to 7:30 p.m., on Fridays, Oct. 31 through Dec. 12. (No class Nov. 28.) Classes will also be given 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., on Saturdays, Sept. 13 through Oct. 18 and Nov. 1 through Dec. 13. (No class Nov. 29.)

Lessons cost \$102 per student and include six weeks of 30-minute lessons once a week. Parents choose which time frame session they want to sign-up for when they register their child.

Students are responsible for purchasing the required books for the course recommended by the instructor.

SKIES Unlimited offers Driver's Ed

Drivers Education classes are conducted by Rules Driving School, Inc. Monday thru Thursday, 6 to 9:15 p.m. Classes will be held in Aberdeen at the Community Center, 34 N. Philadelphia Boulevard, room 304, Oct. 6 thru 22 (no class Oct. 13); Oct. 27 thru Nov. 12 (no class Nov. 11); Nov. 17 thru Dec. 3 (no class Nov. 27) and Dec. 8 thru 23.

Class includes 30 hours of classroom instruction and 6 hours of behind-the-wheel instruction.

Cost is \$295 per student. Last day to register for the class is one week prior to the first class. Students must be between 15.9 and 18 years of age. Parents must attend the first day of class. Open to all DoD ID cardholders.

SKIES Unlimited gymnastics program

Gymnastics classes will be held Sept. 13 through Nov. 8 on Saturdays. Class groups include ages 2 and a half to 4, 9 to 10 a.m.; ages 5 to 7, 10 to 11 a.m.; and ages 8 to 18, 11 a.m. to noon.

To register, call the Central Registration Office, building 2752, 410-278-7571/7479.

For more information or to make an appointment, call 410-278-4589, or e-mail stacie.umbarger1@conus.army.mil.

Private Voice Lessons

Ages 7 and older can register for private voice lessons, 4 to 7 p.m., Mondays, Sept. 29 through Oct. 27 (no class Oct. 13), at the Aberdeen Area Youth Center, building 2522.

An award-winning singer/songwriter will instruct students. No experience necessary. Singing lessons cost \$132 per student and includes one 30 minute session per week for four weeks. Parents choose which time frame session they want to sign up for when they register their child.

Taekwondo classes offered

Taekwondo promotes discipline, as well as muscle toning and conditioning. Classes will be held at the Aberdeen Youth Center, building 2522, Monday and Wednesday, Oct. 20 through Nov. 12, 5:30 to 6:15 p.m. (ages 6-11) \$65 per student and 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. (ages 12-18) \$75 per student.

Students must wear a white T-shirt and sweat pants.

Open to all DoD ID card holder Family members.

Well Being

From page 4

the meeting by providing a few remarks.

"Obviously there are a lot of changes at APG, and you can see a lot of construction going on in the roadways," he said. "If you think we have a lot of con-

struction going on now, a year from now the construction will probably be three to four times as heavy as it is now. We need to continue to make safety a top priority. We need to make safety a way of life in this community.

"We have a lot of good news stories going on at APG especially in the FMWR arena," Weisman

continued. "We are really trying to improve our FMWR facilities."

Weisman said that FMWR is currently overseeing renovations in the Hoyle Gym, the Bowling Center and the golf course. "We also want to improve all of the food services on the installation, starting with the South Side Grill on the Edgewood Area," he said.

Weisman added that about 210 to 215 new homes will be built over the next three to five years and most will be built in the next one to two years. Their will also be a community center built near the new houses with a swimming pool, fitness room and a picnic area with walking trails.

In November or Decem-

ber there will be a town hall meeting about the Residential Community Initiative to discuss an exact timeline so that the community knows what to expect.

Weisman also announced that Oct. 18 is Retiree Appreciation Day at the Recreation Center in the Aberdeen Area from 8 a.m. to noon. There will be a guest speaker and lots of

booths providing services to retirees, including issuing new ID cards. Service members are also invited to come and interact with the retirees and their Families. Retirees and their Families are also invited to eat lunch at the dining facility.

The next Well-Being Meeting will be in the Edgewood Area Chapel 9:30 a.m., Oct. 16.

CFC

From front page

thousands of charities in the CFC book and see how much is spent on administrative costs to select the charity which makes the best use of their donation.

7. It's much easier to turn down phone solicitations when telling the caller "I give through

the CFC," or when "send money" letters come in the mail.

6. Contributor gets a nicer incentive gift than address labels for a donation.

5. Contributor would rather select a service charity to help people in need than rely on a government plan to accomplish it.

4. The CFC is held right around the holidays during a time when people want to help the needy.

3. Anyone could be one disas-

ter away from needing assistance. Just because the need hasn't been there doesn't mean it won't be in the future.

2. During these tough economical times everyone is feeling the pinch, but imagine those that were already struggling prior to the current state of the economy. While cutting back on the extras may only be for the time-being, those that were already struggling may now not know

where their Family's next meal will come from or how they're going to pay the power bill this winter.

And the number one reason to give to the CFC is:

1. CFC is a campaign of the three C's: Choice, Convenience and Confidence. With CFC you will know the charities were selected by your fellow federal employees, and are not "fly by night" scams.

"You all know your individual situations, but if you feel you can spare \$1, \$5, or \$10 extra per pay period to help your favorite charity, please consider donating to the CFC this year," Sewell said.

For more information contact Sewell, 410-278-9917.

(Editor's note: See next week's article in the APG News for more details on the CFC kickoff event.)



Health Notes

DoD agencies, organizations 'Take the Pledge' to combat childhood obesity

DoD Military Health System

In the past decade childhood obesity rates have risen to epidemic proportions.

The United States Surgeon General is encouraging all Americans to "Take the Pledge" to combat childhood obesity and this includes Families of the uniformed services.

TRICARE, the Defense Commissary Agency, Military OneSource and the Army and Air Force Exchange Service are partnering with Health and Human Services on a Human Resources and Services Administration initiative to raise awareness of the

problem among military Families and encouraging them to take the pledge during National Children's Health Month in October.

The partnership is aimed at increasing the effectiveness of healthy lifestyle campaign programs within the Department of Defense. This initiative also highlights Children's Health Month in October and National Child Health Day, the first Monday in October, which focuses on childhood obesity.

This year's theme for National Child Health Day is "Healthy Youth for a Healthy Future" which supports the Surgeon General's efforts to encourage chil-

dren to stay active, have healthy eating habits and make healthy choices.

More than 12.5 million children and adolescents (17.1 percent of people ages 2 to 19 years) are overweight. The percentage of children with weight problems at DoD Dependents Schools-Europe has doubled in the past four years, according to a survey conducted by the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventative Medicine-Europe.

A 2005 Health Behaviors Survey revealed that approximately two out of three non-active duty beneficiaries are overweight; one

out of three is obese and 18.9 percent of DoD dependent adolescents are obese. Overweight children and adolescents are more likely to have risk factors associated with cardiovascular disease such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol and Type 2 diabetes.

Parents and caregivers are the primary influencers for children and can be role models for children, promoting healthy lifestyles to prevent obesity. The partnership – which includes materials from TRICARE, DeCA, Military OneSource and AAFES – will use multiple media, including the Pentagon Channel, to create awareness of childhood obe-

sity prevention within DoD and encourage children to eat right and exercise.

During October, anyone can visit <http://www.tricare.mil>, <http://www.commissaries.com>, <http://www.militaryonesource.com> and <http://www.aafes.com> as well as the HHS and HRSA Web sites for articles, advice columns, blogs and more about childhood obesity.

"Take the pledge" to help prevent childhood overweight and obesity and secure a healthy future for America's children at <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/obesityprevention/pledges/index.html>.

Commentary: Childhood obesity recognized as problem in America

Story by
DENISE MCKINNEY
KUSAHC

Childhood obesity is an ever-worsening problem in this country and is associated with serious and potentially life-threatening complications such as cardiovascular and kidney disease, high blood pressure and diabetes.

Many health care professionals use the term "epidemic" in discussing obesity in the pediatric population. In fact, the incidence of type II diabetes, a condition traditionally associated with middle

aged or older adults and previously rare in children, is being recognized now in overweight adolescents.

This past June, an expert committee of medical and nursing organizations issued recommendations to health care providers concerning the assessment and management of childhood obesity. This statement included guidelines regarding screening of height and weight, use of the Body Mass Index and evaluation of nutrition and activity levels in pediatric patients.

Children who eat most

of their meals at home, avoid excessive consumption of sweetened drinks and eat age-appropriate portions are less likely to become overweight than those who do the opposite.

The child's activity level is also quite important in maintaining a healthy weight. Sixty minutes of moderate physical activity per day is recommended. A total of less than two hours daily of television/video watching, computer use and video game playing is also recommended. All pediatric experts emphasize that tele-

visions should not be present in children's bedrooms.

In general, children should be encouraged to eat breakfast daily and not skip this important meal. Meals outside the home, especially at fast food restaurants, should be limited, and ideally, dinner prepared and served at home six nights per week is helpful in supplying a balanced diet.

Meal time can be a wonderful opportunity for parents to model good nutrition and eating habits, as well as a time for socialization and Family bonding.

Children should not be forced to eat or to finish their plate, but rather permitted to recognize and develop a sense of fullness to prevent overeating.

Fruit juice should be limited to 4 to 8 ounces per day and milk to 16 to 24 ounces. Sodas, Kool Aid and other such drinks should be replaced with plenty of water.

A healthy diet should contain natural sources of fiber and calcium, limited fats, limited sweets and plenty of fruits and vegetables. Calorie intake should be appro-

priate to age and gender.

Parents and children are urged to visit www.mypyramid.gov to review food pyramid guidelines. Other helpful Web sites include www.aap.org for nutrition guidelines and obesity prevention recommendations for various age groups.

Other general nutrition Web sites include www.cnpp.usda.gov and www.health.gov.

Pediatric primary care providers are available to address the topic of childhood obesity with their patients.

Commentary: Suicide prevention means taking action

www.hooah4health.com

Inaction and the failure to recognize signs or symptoms of someone who may be contemplating suicide are the greatest obstacles to saving that person's life. 'Ask your buddy,' 'care for your buddy' and 'escort your buddy' are the Soldier's three keys to taking action to prevent suicide. If [anyone] suspects that a fellow Soldier is thinking about suicide, TAKE ACTION:

Ask your Buddy

Stay calm and have the courage to ask the question, "Are you thinking of killing yourself?"

Care for your Buddy

Remove any means that could be used for self-injury.

Calmly control the situation; do not use force

Escort your Buddy

Never leave your buddy alone. Escort your buddy to the chain of command, a chaplain, a behavioral health professional or a primary care provider.

According to the Counseling Center at the University of California at Los Angeles, about 70 percent of people who commit suicide give some indication of their intentions. If someone knows a person who is going through a life crisis such as the death of a loved one, the end of a relationship, or a strong reaction to having been in combat, they should watch for warning signs of suicidal intent:

From UCLA's "Suicide Prevention"

Many persons convey their intentions directly with statements such as "I feel like killing myself," or "I don't know how much longer I can take this."

Others in crisis may hint at a detailed suicide plan with statements such as "I've been saving up my pills in case things get really bad," or "Lately I've been driving my car like I really don't care what happens."

In general, statements describing feelings of depression, helplessness, extreme loneliness, and/or hopelessness may suggest suicidal thoughts. It is important to listen to these "cries for help" because they are usually desperate attempts to communicate to others the need to be understood and helped.

Often persons thinking about suicide show outward changes in their behavior. They may prepare for death by giving away prized possessions, making a will, or putting other affairs in order. They may withdraw from those around

them, change eating or sleeping patterns, or lose interest in prior activities or relationships. A sudden, intense lift in spirits may also be a danger signal, as it may indicate the person already feels a sense of relief knowing the problems will "soon be ended."

How you can help

Most suicides can be prevented by sensitive responses to the person in crisis.

Remain calm.

In most instances, there is no rush. Sit and listen--really listen to what the person is saying. Give understanding and active emotional support for his or her feelings.

Deal directly with the topic of suicide.

Most individuals have mixed feelings about death and dying and are open to help. Don't be afraid to ask or talk directly about suicide.

Encourage problem solving and positive actions.

Remember that the person involved in emotional crisis is not thinking clearly; encourage him or her to refrain from making any serious, irreversible decisions while in a crisis. Talk about the positive alternatives which may establish hope for the future.

Get assistance.

Although there is a need to want to help, do not take full responsibility by trying to be the sole counsel. Seek out resources which can lend qualified help, even if it means breaking a confidence. Let the troubled person know you are concerned--so concerned that you are willing to arrange help beyond that which you can offer.

The Army offers great training in suicide prevention for Soldiers through the office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for the Army (G-1) at <http://www.armyg1.army.mil/HR/suicide/default.asp>.

Remember these lifelines for immediate help in suicide prevention:

- Army G-1, Army Well Being Liaison Office - 1-800-833-6622
- Wounded Soldier and Family Hotline - 1-800-984-8523
- www.armyfamiliesonline.org - 1-800-833-6622
- www.militaryonesource.com - 1-800-342-9647
- National Suicide Hotline - 1-800-SUICIDE
- www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org - 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- Emergency - 911

For more information, visit the Army's Hooah4Health Web site, <http://hooah4health.com/>.

KUSAHC REX patients receive medications in record time

Story by
DR. VIKAS DANE
KUSAHC

The Kirk U.S. Army Health Clinic Pharmacy has had its Automated Refill Dispensing Machine (known as REX to clinic staff) in place for several months.

It is the first machine of this type to be used in any U.S. Army Medical Treatment Facility. The U.S. Air Force is currently using several of these machines with great success at several of its MTFs and other remote locations.

Currently patients waiting to pick up refill prescriptions must wait in line with patients picking up new prescriptions. When there are staff shortages and computer problems, there are prolonged waits.

"The increased amount of foot traffic and an increase in the sheer number of refills being handled were the reasons that refill processing time was increased to forty eight hours," said Deborah Dodsworth, patient advocate.

"The idea behind REX is that a patient can bypass the pharmacy and directly pick up prescription refills from a machine that is as easy to operate as an ATM. It is a great investment for our patients that will allow them to pick up their prescriptions in a lot less time," she said.

There have been many favorable comments about REX from satisfied patients.

It needs to be stressed that this service only applies to refills of maintenance medications. Medications that require a signature, such as controlled prescriptions, or refrigerated prescriptions, such as insulin, will still be picked up from the KUSAHC Pharmacy. Large volume prescriptions and bottles cannot fit inside the compartments of REX. Therefore, all other medication will be processed by the pharmacy as usual.

REX is another way of dispensing medication from the pharmacy to its beneficiaries.

Any comments about this new service can be made on the comment forms provided at the machine and deposited in the patient advocate's mailbox located near the REX.

The staff of the KUSAHC Pharmacy strives to provide the best service possible to their military Families.

Frequently asked questions

Question: How do I sign up for REX?

Answer: The REX business cards available at the pharmacy need to be filled out with the pertinent information so that the Pharmacy Staff can enroll the Sponsor and Dependents for this service. These cards can be filled out and given

directly to any pharmacy staff member, or placed in the suggestion box located beside window 2 in the pharmacy lobby. Patients can also drop off the REX card in the Patient Advocate's mailbox located in close proximity to REX.

Question: Why must I sign up for this service?

Answer: The Sponsor/Dependent(s) must establish a unique 4-digit pin number that will be used to pick up any refills from REX. This pin number must be treated like any other pin number and only given to trusted people authorized to pick-up refills. There are security features established by the company to ensure the correct patient is getting the medications, such as the patient's photograph being taken and an electronic signature requirement printed on a receipt recording the refill transaction. The picture and signature are saved in case there is any question about who and when prescriptions were dispensed from REX.

Question: Okay, I've established a pin number and I'm ready to use REX. What is the process to get my refills from the machine?

Answer: Refill requests are made by calling 1-800-248-6337 and following the following prompts:

- Press #3 for Maryland locations; then
- Press #4 for APG Kirk U.S. Army Health Clinic Automated Dispenser; and
- Follow the rest of the prompts.

As soon as the computer transfers the request to the pharmacy, the prescription label is generated. Once the label is printed, Refill requests are ready for pick up in 48 hours. Refills phoned in on a Friday will be ready for pick up the following Wednesday because the 48 hours start the next business day (Monday) after the refill request is phoned in.

To use REX the patient will stand in front of the machine:

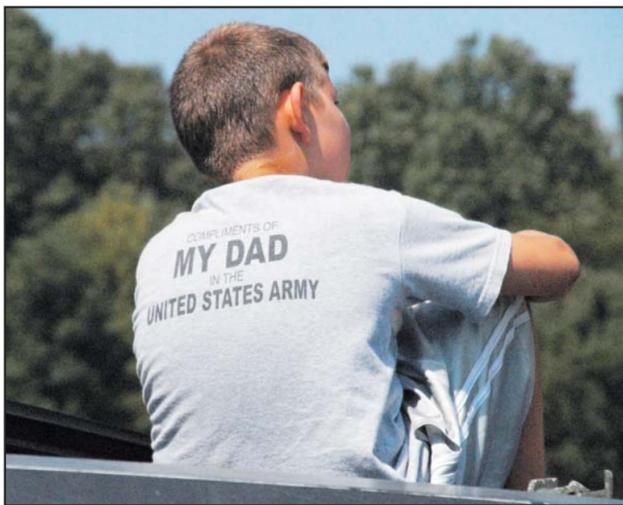
- input the correct prefix (20 for Sponsor, 30 for spouse, 31 for second spouse if Sponsor is divorced and remarried, the children's prefixes go 01 from oldest to youngest) and the Sponsor's SSN;
- input the 4-digit pin number
- REX will announce how many prescriptions are for the patient and cycle to the appropriate bin(s) and the door will open;
- The patient reaches inside and removes the prescriptions and signs on the electronic signature pad;

A receipt with the medication information will print out and serve as your record that the prescriptions were picked up.



Army News

Kids talk about growing up Army



An Army kid rests on top of a Bradley at Operation Purple's Camp Sandy Cove in High View, W.Va., a summer camp for military kids. The front of his shirt reads "Got Freedom?"

Story and photo by
ELIZABETH M. LORGE
Army News Service

Constant moving, difficulty making and keeping friends, parents who may leave for months at a moment's notice, extra responsibilities, loneliness, missed birthdays and holidays and constant fear that this time mom or dad might never come home.

These are the hallmarks of life as a military "brat," said Army kids at an Operation Purple summer camp for military children. But with these drawbacks come immense pride and patriotism, maturity and strength, along with a national and often global outlook.

Army kids also said that no matter what, they know their moms

and dads are real-life superheroes.

"My mom's my hero since forever, because even before the war she was always a strong person," said 16-year-old Jeremy Beale. "She graduated when she was about my age. And knowing that this is her third time over, it's just amazing to me that the Army would send her three times and she would just keep going."

Jeremy's mother is currently on her third deployment to Iraq, and his father has also deployed. Jeremy said that his parents worked hard to keep from deploying at the same time, and that he's closer to his mother, so having her gone is particularly hard.

Although she tries to call every day, and both his grandmothers live with the Family, he

said it isn't the same. No amount of phone calls, e-mails, letters or packages can make up for a missing parent.

"It was really hard because my dad doesn't really do all of the taking care of and stuff - it was normally my mom," Jacob Gaz, 11, said. "The hardest part was just not having her there. Like when you accomplished something, she'd be all the way over in [another part of] the world. You just couldn't tell her."

Like Jeremy, Jacob had grandparents who tried to fill the void when his mother was deployed to Kuwait in 2005, although Jacob said he also tried to look out for his little brother.

In fact, when one parent is gone, an older sibling like Jacob or 13-year-old Audrey Zipperer, often has to take up some of the slack.

With her mother often busy as a Family readiness group leader, Audrey said she became almost a second parent during her father's two deployments. She sometimes cooked dinner, she cleaned the house with her 9-year-old sister Abigail and she potty-trained her baby brother.

"Being an Army kid is definitely different than being your normal, average kid," she said. "We go through a lot tougher situations that require us to have certain things like courage and the ability to withstand pressure. And you have to be responsible, definitely."

"You have to be prepared for anything, because anything can happen, and you have to be pre-

pared for bad things and good things," added Abigail.

Audrey said that she got angry when her father left - angry at him, angry at the situation and angry in general. It just wasn't fair, she said, but her mother would remind her that her father didn't start this war. She should be angry, her mother said, with the people who did.

"We'd cry and get sad, but we knew that we couldn't change it. We couldn't say, 'You can't do this.' It was his job. He had to do it," Audrey said.

Most of the kids had a special, treasured memento to help them stay connected to their absent parent as they counted down the days and cried when they had to add more days as deployments were extended.

Jacob has a bear with his mother's picture that he would look at when he missed her badly. Katherine Riley, 12, wore an anklet her grandmother had engraved with "Capt. Gerald B. Riley, be safe, come home soon." The two Zipperer girls had received stuffed animals with recordings of their father's voice from Build-a-Bear.

"I'd press the hand and the message came up. It's dead now because I pressed it so much when I was upset, and I still sleep with it. It's really special. That helped a lot," Audrey said.

The kids also agreed that the uncertainty and confusion of deployments was exacerbated by frequent moves and starting over in schools that might not have many other military kids. Civil-

ian kids might try to understand what it's like to send a parent to war, but it's impossible, they said.

"Some people think that starting over is pretty much something that they would want to do," Jeremy said. "Starting over's not always the greatest thing. This last move was the hardest because I moved right in the middle of middle school. Going to school off base was a little different because making friends with military kids would be easier because they have something in common. It's a little weird because you don't know what to say to kids or you don't know if they have military parents. You've just got to wing it."

Jeremy's mother actually deployed in order to avoid moving him in the middle of high school.

Like Audrey, he said it's useless to get mad or expect his parents to change who they are. He said that he's grateful to simply have parents when so many kids do not, especially parents he can be proud of.

"Army kids are full of pride," Audrey said. "Especially with our parents. I'm very proud of my dad. He looks to me for support and love and comfort...They can't help their job; they can't help what they do. We might not like them going overseas and stuff, but we have to know that that's what they signed up to do. They signed up to help protect our country. We just have to say, 'Okay, I love you so much. I'm so proud of you all the time.'"

Children get lessons on deployment

Story and photo by
SPC LINDSEY M. BRADFORD
Army News

It's tough for children to be away from their parents while they are serving tours overseas but on Aug. 14 and 15, children of Triple Nickel Soldiers were able to experience part of a deployment first-hand as part of the 555th Engineer Brigade Deployment Camp.

"The goal of this camp is to give the kids a little bit of experience with deployment; to see how their parents are living, eating and sleeping," said Capt. Jessica Forman, operations officer [for the brigade]. "We want to help put their mind at ease while their parents are away."

Forman explained that the planning for this event, a first for Fort Lewis children, began back in May with the help of key members throughout the brigade and each battalion's Family Readiness Support Assistant.

"We ended up having to turn some kids away because there was just such an overwhelming response," said Capt. Audrey Terry, [the unit's] rear detachment executive officer.

During the planning phases, the team thought about 15 to 20 kids would take part but soon that number rose to more than 50, which was the maximum number of slots the brigade had.

The first day of the kids' 'deployment' started after they were broken into companies, based on age, and assigned a first sergeant and commander.

That morning, the 'Ripper recruits' were bused to their forward operating base, complete with tents, showering trailers and a makeshift dining facility, surrounded by the same high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicles their parents would be using downrange.

Each company rotated throughout the FOB, [the children] curiously touching and climbing on everything they saw.

As lunch approached, each child was handed a Meal Ready-to-Eat, and they wasted no time digging into the packaged food.

While some were pleased with the meal, others said they could do without.

"I had the chicken and salsa, and it was pretty good," said Noah Squires, 9, whose dad recently returned from a tour in Afghanistan.



After being called to attention, a "squad" from 555th Engineer Brigade's deployment camp sounds off with its company motto.

After exploring the FOB and devouring their lunches, the kids were taken back to Triple Nickel's Able Field where battalions within the brigade set up booths to show the kids mission-essential equipment and answer any questions they had.

"This is really super fun," Tim Stringer, 11, screamed as he chased after the TALON robot belonging to the 110th Chemical Battalion (Technical Escort).

As the sun glared down on the kids, much like the heat their parents face in the Middle East, exhaustion kicked in. Ready to unwind from a very eventful first day of deployment, the young Soldiers were able to get some much needed rest and prepare for day two.

After a physical training session, the second day focused on trust and team building.

"We want to show them how to work as a team and how to rely on each other," Forman said.

All of their hard work paid off at the end of their tour, as the kids were greeted at a welcome home ceremony. At the ceremony, they received medals for their hard work and deafening applause from the majority of the brigade's staff.

"It started out sluggish at first, but the turnout was outstanding," said Sgt. 1st Class Willie Wooten, Rear Detachment noncommissioned officer-in-charge and commandant of the deployment camp.

Wooten said that because of the tremendous support within the brigade and from brigade sponsors, the camp will become an annual event.

"The parents were all for it. The kids loved it," Terry said.

(Editor's note: Spc. Lindsey M. Bradford is assigned to the 1 Corps Public Affairs Office.)

New tool may enhance the way Soldiers communicate with locals in theater

Story by
STAFF SGT. JON CUPP
1st Cavalry Division Public Affairs

Soldiers of the 1st Cavalry Division could soon have a new tool for their upcoming deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom that enhances the way they communicate with the people living in Iraq.

A few First Team troopers, along with senior leaders, got their first glimpse of the Vcommunicator Mobile, a light-weight, compact, hand-held translation device and cultural awareness aid, during a demonstration of the capability at the 1st Cavalry Division headquarters July 21 and 22.

Currently in use by approximately 700 military service members in Iraq and Afghanistan, the one-way translation device offers hundreds of phrases in five different languages to include Iraqi Arabic, Kurdish, Dari, Pashto and Modern Standard Arabic. It also offers, via video cues, cultural gestures in the form of hand signals that may be common to a specific region, allowing for cultural awareness.

"It's very useful in situations where you may have only one to two interpreters on the ground, and about eighty to ninety Soldiers on the ground, so you may not have enough interpreters to go around in a particular situation," said Ernie Bright, one of the developers of the Vcommunicator, who gave the demonstration of the tool. "The real beauty of it is that the technology has been designed so that anyone who hasn't had any training on it, can use it."

"Soldiers see that this will help them to reduce mistakes and misunderstandings because they will be able to communicate with the local population," he added, explaining that the device has been designed to help reduce language and cultural barriers Soldiers experience while in theater.

The main parts of the compact system include an iPod, which attaches by a cord to a small speaker and then both parts fit into two straps that are placed on a Soldier's arm. The Vcommunicator kit also includes a solar charger and a carrying pouch.

"Soldiers are wearing eighty pounds of gear already, so it was important for them to have something that is light weight, very compact and that fits into a small pouch," said Bright. "The device can be attached to their arm so their hands are always free."

With the swipe of a finger over the device, Soldiers can select the language they need from a menu and choose a topic from a mission list to find an appropriate phrase for whatever situation they find themselves in. The menu includes such topics as basic conversation; cordon and search; intelligence gathering; building trust and relationships; raids; detainee processing; vehicle checkpoints and coordinating missions with Iraqi Security Forces among many other possible missions.

Once they choose the mission, they will see a list of phrases in English. Each of the phrases have a phonetic Arabic translation

beneath them and when Soldiers press on the phrase they want to use, a video will play showing an animated, virtual Soldier saying the phrase in Arabic and the voice of the animated character plays through the device's speaker. Along with that, the phonetic spelling of the Arabic phrase also appears on the screen.

Bright explained that there are three major aspects to what the Vcommunicator does - a learning piece, a communication piece and a mission-aid piece.

Soldiers can learn Arabic or other language phrases from the Vcommunicator or they can use the device to communicate for them through the tool's speaker, according to Bright.

The tool also comes in handy when Soldiers need to make announcements to large crowds, as the device can be attached to a loud speaker. Within the mission-aid piece, Soldiers can add new information and updates to the device as often as they need to.

"By using commercial off the shelf software, there are a plethora of items you can add to it," said Bright. "The (Vcommunicator) gives Soldiers a full customization capability-where they can download maps, photos, videos, new missions and new vocabulary," said Bright.

One of the ways photos and maps would come in useful, according to Bright, are when Soldiers need assistance from locals in a village to find out information.

"All they need to do is point to the map displayed on the screen and use the Vcommunicator to communicate phrases such as 'shows me on the map,'" he said.

Bright saw the device go from concept to usage in just nine months, from November 2006 to August of 2007. In April of this year, he fielded the device to Soldiers in the 10th Mountain Division and said he never gets tired of helping Soldiers.

"I have tremendous pride in my job getting to do this and you can see the light in the eyes of the Soldiers and it's interesting when you go to conferences and hear them say 'this will make my life so much easier,'" Bright said.

Bright will be giving nine of the devices to three of the 1st Cavalry Division's brigades, allowing these units an opportunity to work with the devices in training prior to their upcoming deployment to Iraq.

First Team Soldiers who saw the capability demonstration said they see the utility for the new tool, especially as they prepare to deploy to Iraq later this year and early next year.

"It's easy to use and it offers a lot of applications," said Enterprise, Utah native Sgt. Edward Hunt, an intelligence analyst for the 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division "It's better than any system I've seen out there, especially with it having an iPod, so there are a lot of things it can do and it has a lot of promise."

"I can't wait to actually see it in use in the field," he added.

RDECOM demonstrates samples of its newest technologies at the 2008 Infantry Warfighter Conference



Dutch DeGay, U.S. Army Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center, explains the Future Warrior Technology Integration efforts of NSRDEC to Soldiers attending the 2008 Infantry Warfighter Conference in Columbus, Ga.

Story by
ANDRICKA THOMAS
RDECOM

The U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command participated in the 2008 Infantry Warfighter Conference Sept. 16 and 17 in Columbus, Ga. Six of nine RDECOM laboratories and technology centers showcased technologies, demonstrating the innovations the Army is working towards for the Warfighter.

This year's theme, "The Infantry: Heart of the Army in the Contemporary Operational Environment," provided opportunities for Soldiers to discuss recent transitions in the infantry operations environment and how to best train American forces.

RDECOM elements present included: the U.S. Army's Research Laboratory; Communications-Electronics Research, Development and Engineering Center; Edgewood Chemical Biological Center; Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center; Army Simulation Training and Technology Center and the Tank-Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center.

ARL showcased its Flexible Display technology from the Flexible Display Center in Tempe, Ariz. The center has 21 industry partners for efforts in the maturation of flexible displays.

"Flexible displays are really the next revolution in warrior display technology," said Eric Forsythe, ARL team leader and associate program manager for Flexible Display Center technology. "They offer the Warfighter and the commercial sector technologies that are inherently rugged."

Contributing to Future Combat Systems and Army Transformation, the center aims to replace glass-based display screens in existing Soldier equipment with light-weight, rugged flexible display screens that use less power. This technology will help increase Soldier efficiency and reduce the amount of weight the dismounted Warfighter carries.

ARL's Survivability, Lethality and Enabling Materials research project demonstrations address vehicle armor research, transparent armor developments, smart munitions advancements and lightweight protection for the Warfighters. Smart munitions technology was displayed, where Soldiers could learn more about the efforts in precision-guided munitions. Potentially, a Soldier could alter the course of a bullet after it has been fired to ensure greater precision when engaging a target.

"It is really important in today's urban environment in Warfighting operations to minimize collateral damage," said Steve Taulbee, ARL engineer with the Weapons and Materials Research Directorate. He said that the Smart munitions could provide course correction and precision engagement of targets from various ranges.

CERDEC demonstrated the increased power capabilities for the Warfighter on the move. CERDEC displayed its various power sources. Portable power continues to be a daily challenge for the dismounted Warfighter.

The Command and Control Army Power Division, part of CERDEC, works steadily to improve portable and mobile power resources to extend mission times, reduce portable power source weight and quantities to decrease total logistics carried by the Warfighter on a mission.

One Soldier attending the Basic Officer's Leadership Course at Fort Benning, Ga., was particularly interested in Soldier power sources.

"I wanted to see the versions and improvements they've [the Army] made in the technologies and how it will affect us [Soldiers] moving forward," said 2nd Lt. Jason McKnight, 1/11th Delta Company and conference attendee. He said his unit is using the

older batteries, but was happy to learn that the Army is working to provide something better.

ECBC supports the Surrogate Buffalo Training program by building mock Buffalo vehicles for training. A Buffalo is a heavily armored vehicle with a long hydraulic arm that can be used to check for roadside bombs during convoy operations and allows Soldiers to inspect suspected objects from a safe distance. ECBC builds two surrogates every 45 days that are designated for points all over the U.S., and abroad according

Technology, Systems and Program Integration Directorate. "We've identified new and emerging technologies that we can put in a laboratory environment to benefit Soldier training on equipment." With this software technology network integration will be enhanced for current and future platforms. Soldiers will potentially be able to communicate with personnel in other vehicles such as humvees and helicopters or even unmanned aerial and ground vehicles when this software matures.

STTC exhibited the Soldier Training Enhancement Package. This mission planning and rehearsal system will work with the Future Warrior Integration Technology to enable Future Warrior leaders to create and disseminate a mission plans and also allow Soldier to rehearse a mission virtually before entering actual combat.

"The software could work for the platoon leader or squad leader in a mission planning capacity, or for the Soldier who will execute the plans with its mission rehearsal capability," said Tim Roberts, simulation and technology manager for Dismounted Soldier Simulations. With



Steve Taulbee, U.S. Army Research Laboratory engineer with the Weapons and Materials Engineering Directorate, talks with Ron Andruss from Fort Benning-TV about ARL technologies including the SMART Munitions and helmet materials innovations at the 2008 Infantry Warfighter Conference.

to Robert Pazda, team leader for the Electronic Design and Integration Team of Advanced Design and Manufacturing at ECBC.

"The surrogate allows Soldiers to get acquainted with the equipment they will have to use in theatre before they arrive," Pazda said. He said that after Soldiers get finished using the trainer, they can enter theatre even more prepared and knowledgeable about the Buffalo equipment and controls, which allows more attention to the overall mission.

NSRDEC is developing software applications to be compatible with the Future Warrior Technology Integration system.

"We're trying to look at new technologies that will make the dismounted Soldier an integrated hub to either push or pull data from," said Dutch DeGay, NSRDEC

this software, each Soldier can perform mission rehearsals, in a virtual environment, based on the gear he will wear in battle. STEP also shows future trends and will better prepare Soldiers for their missions

TARDEC showcased its award winning HEAT and SPARK technology, which was recognized as one of the 2007 Army's Greatest Inventions. HEAT, or the Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer, trains Soldiers how to react in vehicle rollover situations. This helps Soldiers overcome the natural fear and disorientation associated with this type of incident. The Improvised Explosive Device Mine Roller Self Protective Adaptive Roller, or SPARK, provides additional protection to vehicles and crews against pressure-activated improvised explosive devices and mines.

TARDEC showcased the iRobot® Packbot and the Markbot. Specifically, the Packbot-EOD has several missions, including explosive ordnance disposal, route clearance, engineering support, reconnaissance and surveillance.

The Markbot IV is a low-cost wheeled reconnaissance robot designed to provide Warfighters with a remote, visual capability. Robots are being increasingly used to extend Warfighter visual capabilities.

"The small robotics market is dramatically growing especially since the onset of the war," said Lonnie Freiburger, TARDEC engineer. He says the Packbot-EOD provides standoff capability to the Soldier which is urgently needed when addressing IED situations on the battlefield.

The Tank-Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center showcases the iRobot® Packbot at the 2008 Infantry Warfighter Conference.