



## Veterans get boost as Obama signs tax credits into law

By **SGT. 1ST CLASS TYRONE C. MARSHALL JR.**  
*American Forces Press Service*

President Barack Obama delivered a clear message Nov. 22 when he signed two new tax credits into law to increase the hiring of military veterans and wounded warriors.

"For businesses out there, if you are hiring, hire a veteran," he said. "It's the right thing to do for you, it's the right thing to do for them, and it's the right thing to do for our economy."

In August, Obama called on Congress to enact tax credits, included in the American Jobs Act, that will help to get unemployed veterans back to work.

"While we've added more than 350,000 private-sector jobs over the last three months, we've got 850,000 veterans who can't find work," the president said. "And even though the overall unemployment rate came down just a little bit last month, unemployment for veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan continued to rise."

Obama said "that isn't right," and he lauded veterans as the "best that America has to offer."

"They are some of the most highly trained, highly educated, highly skilled workers that we have," he said. "If they can save lives on the battlefield, then they can save a life in an ambulance."

"If they can manage convoys moving tons of equipment over dangerous terrain," he continued, "they can manage a company's supply chain. If they can track millions of dollars of assets in Iraq, they can balance the books of any company here

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## Top of the Bay reopening, community invited to attend

By **JASON DOMINGUEZ**  
*APG FMWR*

APG's historic Top of the Bay reopened Nov. 28, just in time for the holiday season.

The installation's premier restaurant, catering and conference center underwent extensive renovations that fused the facility's old-world charm with today's modern technology.

"We have a lot of pride in the fact that the

facility is now period correct. It's like walking into an elegant old-Hollywood era at historic Aberdeen Proving Ground, but with the most updated of today's modern conveniences," said Linda Edwards, Chief of the Family and MWR Business Operations Division. "We managed to maintain the look and feel of the original structure, so it is historically elegant, yet we're able to satisfy our customers' technological requirements for conferences and training events."

Improvements include video conferencing, infrastructure upgrades, commercial elevator, carpets, furnishings, fixtures, and custom moldings, along with many other special touches. Historic artifacts from the local area are also on display.

"The Top of the Bay is going to be the hub for the APG family to come together to celebrate and share camaraderie. This will

See **RENOVATIONS**, page 7



Photo by Adriane Foss

## It's a Wonderful Life

Charlie Burgos-Lopez, as George Bailey, makes a frantic phone call during a rehearsal scene for "It's a Wonderful Life". The show goes live at the APG Post Theatre this Saturday, Dec. 3 at 7 p.m., and Sunday Dec. 4 at 2 pm. The play is based on the classic Christmas movie starring Jimmy Stewart whose sense of hope is restored at Christmas time when he meets his guardian angel. Tickets can be purchased at the APG North Recreation Center's Leisure and Travel Office, Bldg. 3326, or at the APG South Recreation Center, Bldg. E4140, and Ruggles Golf Course. For more information, call 410-278-4011/4907.

## Wreaths Across America needs volunteers

*JFHQ-NCR/MDW Public Affairs*

Wreaths Across America is a nonprofit organization founded to continue and expand the annual wreath laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery begun by Maine businessman, Morrill Worcester, in 1992.

The organization is seeking volunteers to help lay wreaths on the graves of service members at military cemeteries.

According to their website, the organization's mission is to Remember, Honor, Teach, which they carry out in part by coordinating wreath laying ceremonies on the second Saturday of December at Arlington, as well as veterans' cemeteries and other locations in all 50 states and beyond.

They also organize a week of events including international veteran's trib-

utes, ceremonies at State Houses and a week-long "Veteran's Parade" between Maine and Virginia where they stop along the way to spread their message about the importance of remembering the nation's fallen heroes, honoring those who serve, and teaching children about the sacrifices made by veterans and their families to preserve America's freedoms.

## Ferriter takes command of Installation Management Command

By **TIM HIPPS**

*U.S. Army Installation Management Command*

Lt. Gen. Michael Ferriter took the reins of the U.S. Army Installation Management Command from Lt. Gen. Rick Lynch during a change of command ceremony Nov. 17 at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

Army Chief of Staff Gen. Raymond Odierno presided over the changing of the guard for the command, which relocated from suburban Washington, D.C. to South Texas during the past two years as part of Base Realignment and Closure.

Ferriter, a 1979 graduate of The Citadel, came to Texas from a tour as deputy commander for advising and training for United States Forces Iraq, supporting Operation New Dawn. Before that,

he commanded the U.S. Army Infantry Center and the Maneuver Center of Excellence at Fort Benning, Ga.

As well as IMCOM commander, Ferriter is now the Army's Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management.

All three Soldiers served as "battle buddies" at some point during the war in Iraq.

"Both Rick Lynch and Mike Ferriter, I've known for awhile," Odierno said.

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**Lt. Gen. Michael Ferriter (left) receives the U.S. Army Installation Management Command colors from Gen. Ray Odierno, Army Chief of Staff, at the IMCOM change of command ceremony Nov. 17.**

Photo by Luke Elliott



### WEATHER

Thurs.



53° | 34°

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**ROCKS INC. DEC. 16**

Officer Professional Development returns.  
Find out more **PAGE 5**

# OPINION

## Renaming of Bethesda hospital conjures memories

Nearly 71 years after President Franklin D. Roosevelt laid the cornerstone on the tower at Bethesda Naval Hospital, Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta cut the red ribbon, Nov. 10, officially opening the new Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

A result of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure, the newly enhanced facility is now staffed with Navy, Army and Air Force personnel.

But in the fall of 1968, a bunch of us young Sailors who had just graduated from Great Lakes Hospital Corps School near Chicago and had gained six months of ward duty experience at the Naval Academy in Annapolis, reported to begin Operating Room Technician School.

In the beginning, we called the edifice Mecca -- the be all and end all of medical training, and woe to any tech who had trained at the Naval Medical Center in Portsmouth, Va.

We considered ourselves to be the best as we circulated and scrubbed through every operation of the body: plastic surgery, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Neurology, Cardiology, Inhalation Therapy, Orthopedics and Amputations, Physical Therapy and Ophthalmology.

At the end of six months of intensive training, often 12 hours and more a day, we knew every instrument's name and its use, we had studied with the surgeons at the National Library of Medicine across Wisconsin Ave. from the hospital, and we knew every idiosyncrasy of each surgeon.

When not scrubbing in surgery, or buffing the O.R. hallway, we took turns traveling to Andrews Air Force Base to get patients off of MAC (Military Air-

**“13 hours after being shot in Vietnam, [we] brought them into surgery where we prepped them, anesthetized them and often cleaned out maggots that had been placed on the wounds to eat away the dead tissue and keep the blood flowing.”**

lift Command) flights, 13 hours after being shot in Vietnam, brought them into surgery where we prepped them, anesthetized them and often cleaned out maggots that had been placed on the wounds to eat away the dead tissue and keep the blood flowing.

Three surgeries come quickly to mind when I remember training at this hospital -- an aorta needing repair, a simple procedure that suddenly turned into a splenectomy, and my first C-section.

I was having lunch in the mess hall when this loud nurse came through the large room hollering my name. “McIlvaine, McIlvaine, where are you?”

I thought good God, what's going on? I forgot to properly cover the orange sticks? I left a 4" X 8" gauze lying around....?

“McIlvaine, didn't you hear me?” “Sorry, ma'am,” came my feeble reply. “You need to come with me, immediately. A woman has a prolapsed cord and she's coming down to surgery now. You need to come and scrub up, NOW!”

My stomach knotted and my heart raced. The National Naval Medical Center was and still is a teaching hospital and the operating room theater is exactly that.

I scrubbed my hands and arms,

rushed into the O.R., was assisted into a gown and gloves and immediately tended to my back table and Mayo table, making sure I had all the clamps and sutures, needles and retractors.

I looked up to see nurses and interns looking down from the glass dome above and the room filled with people as I heard the screams of the woman being pushed down the hall. A doctor was on the gurney with her, between her legs with his arm inside her, pushing to keep the baby from tightening the cord around its neck.

It could not have been more than a minute when the baby emerged from the uterus through her belly and was being handed off to a pediatrician while we immediately began sewing her up after delivering the placenta.

I actually had a tear in my eye as I saw my first delivery, whether Caesarian or vaginal.

The second surgery, a simple repair, was my first witness of ego and disaster. The surgeon, inflated with his own wonderfulness, was showing interns how surgery is really done. I offered the necessary retraction but he refused, boasting how he could use his fingers the old-fashioned way. His “way” resulted in pulling on the

splenic artery and ended up becoming a splenectomy. His reputation went far and wide and I was chosen to scrub with him because I had a knack of moving quickly when he didn't like the #20 skin blade or Joe's Hoe -- a heavy device used to facilitate easy access.

But I saved the best for last.

This was my admiration, at the age of 20, for a female surgeon whose eyes burst forth with incredible beauty over her face mask.

“Call me Diane,” she said as she opened up a gentleman who had an aorta needing repair.

“OK, Diane,” said I with an air of dashing Errol Flynn, as I passed some suction or a sponge or a needle on a needle driver to her ... I really can't remember.

“Hemostat, please,” she said as she looked up to me from her work.

“Yes, Diane, anything you want ...,” no, I couldn't have said that ... I just placed the instrument in her hand and watched as her fingers gently took it from me.

This procedure was another operation that was over too quickly.

So, I envy those who are currently being trained at the new Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda and I know the patients who go through those halls I once scrubbed, and the newly constructed and renovated space of about 2.4 million square feet of clinical and administrative space, will get the kind of care they deserve in operations that, hopefully, are over too quickly so they can get back into a life filled with their new-found freedom from pain and debilitation.

**Rob McIlvaine**

*Army News Service*

## True Thanksgiving isn't just a day to eat

So what are you thankful for this year? As we enjoy the Thanksgiving season, do you have a list of people and things you are thankful for?

Before you answer these questions ask yourself what it means to be truly thankful. True thanksgiving comes through remembrance, faith and hope - when we learn to give of ourselves.

Years ago my wife and I went through some really dark days. Experiencing loss may be part of life, but it doesn't make the pain any easier.

There were friends by our side and folks to help us walk through the grief, but we had to decide the steps we would take.

The night after the loss of our child the only verse which came to mind in the midst of the agony was, “In everything give thanks.”

As my wife and I called to remembrance our time with our child, we made a conscious choice to give thanks for the time we had.

What surprised us both was the way

God's presence met us there in our grief and pain and suddenly our hearts were flooded with joy. We came to understand that God had also experienced the loss of a child and could grieve with us, so I am ever so thankful as I call that time to remembrance.

We learned the value of relationship during those dark days and not only to value the one lost, but to appreciate all who we come in contact with every day.

Life and love never seem to get easier - the more I am involved with others lives, the more aware I am of the struggle and pain of our years on this earth.

Recently, I spoke with a woman who had just dealt with shingles and heard what she went through as the doctors worked to determine the diagnosis.

As I listened to this incredible 82-year-old widow, she shared with me all the work she was going to get done right during the midst of her pain.

This woman approached life with faith, which saw past the present suffering to what she could offer to those in need. Her life is contagious with enthu-

siasm, because she doesn't use the dreaded phrase “I deserve better,” rather she gives of herself fully to assist others.

You see this little woman in her eighties doesn't approach life expecting a hand out, but offers her whole person in faith. When I finished talking with this inspiring octogenarian, my own faith was deepened as she shared how many others she was helping.

There were homeless people she was assisting, touching lives through project Angel Tree, and simply living a life of real faith. Amazing what one person can accomplish by living a life of faith.

Hope is essential in the very center of our being when it comes to stretching into the future. Those competing in the next election offer hope of a better nation, through change in the way our nation's leadership handles crisis.

For Christians, lasting and real hope is found in Jesus Christ and is more certain than any change in circumstances. He offers a lasting hope because of what he accomplished - what he fin-

ished - 2,000 years ago, not because of our worthiness.

The desire of the father was to provide for our deepest need, forgiveness. Hope that is based in our ever-changing circumstances leaves us pressured and fearful in our attempts to control our future.

Hope based on a completed work allows one to look forward from a solid foundation, knowing that our greatest need has already been met.

Many of our self-induced pressures in our relationships are caused by our desire to make our relationships work for our own satisfaction, rather than giving to others from a heart filled with hope based on a God of love.

True thanksgiving happens when we live life wherever we find ourselves, from a heart grounded in one who so loved the world that he gave his only Son.

**Army Chaplain (Lt. Col.)**

**Kenneth Sorenson**

*JBBER Deputy Chaplain*

### APG SEVEN DAY FORECAST



## APG NEWS

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# Reading lists aim to promote personal, professional growth

By **DONNA MILES**  
*American Forces Press Service*

Legend has it that Alexander the Great slept with a copy of The Iliad, Homer's epic tale set during the Trojan War, under his pillow.

Almost 2,500 years later, professional reading remains an important part of the military culture. Every service, most professional military schools and an increasing number of geographic and combatant commands offer up reading programs and reading lists as part of their professional development efforts.

In fact, many have multiple reading lists, aimed at different groups within the military at different ranks and stages of their careers.

Navy Adm. James G. Stavridis, commander of U.S. European Command and NATO's supreme allied commander for Europe, recently took this initiative to a new level with an online video encouraging all of his command to check out the EUCOM reading list.

The list is divided into sections with books about different phases of European history, culture and languages, as well as works of literary fiction that provide insight into European culture.

"This reading list is your gateway to really understanding the sea in which you swim when you are part of the U.S. European Command," Stavridis said in his video. "I would say, if you want to help us be stronger together, spend a little time on the U.S. European Command reading list."

Stavridis, a voracious reader who majored in English at the U.S. Naval Academy, is a trailblazer in using a video to emphasize the importance of off-duty professional reading. And by encouraging all members of his command to participate -- not just senior officers and noncommissioned officers -- he's part of a growing chorus of military leaders who promote reading as a route to professional and personal growth.

The Army chief of staff's professional reading list, for example, consists of titles that provoke critical thinking about professional soldiering and the

**"This reading list is your gateway to really understanding the sea in which you swim when you are part of the U.S. European Command."**

**Navy Adm. James G. Stavridis**  
EUCOM commander

role of land power. It also encourages analysis of the past to provide a better understanding of today's Army and the future of the profession of arms.

Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, shared his own recommended reading list while he served as the Army chief of staff.

Dempsey always has been a Soldier-scholar, earning a master's degree in English at Duke University and teaching English at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y.

So it's not surprising that, in addition to volumes on the art of warfare and specific military engagements, he encouraged Army leaders to read books that provide insight into broader issues such as geopolitics and globalization.

Similarly, the chief of naval operations' reading list includes history, fiction, inspirational and patriotic titles, as well as classics on military strategy and theory. According to the Navy Professional Reading Program website, selected volumes are designed to provide readers a deeper understanding and appreciation for naval heritage, the profession of arms and the complex modern world in which they operate.

The Air Force chief of staff reading list consists of 14 books divided into three categories: leadership, strategic context and military heritage. Titles are selected to inform readers about Air Force history, analyze ongoing conflicts and their relevancy to the future, inspire readers with success stories and provide lessons learned from conflicts.

In the same vein, the Marine Corps

commandant's reading list is developed to enrich readers' knowledge and understanding of war. As of July 8, every Marine is required to read "First to Fight: An Insider View of the U.S. Marine Corps," by retired Marine Lt. Gen. Victor H. Krulak. In addition, by regulation, every Marine is required to read "a minimum of one book per grade per year."

Before assuming his post at EUCOM in 2009, Stavridis said his foundation in English and literature has made him a better communicator, analyst and leader.

"Every day I wrote something and communicated to my team; every day I had to analyze problems, most often regarding human personality; and every day I used what I learned as a leader," he told a U.S. Naval Institute blogger.

Stavridis said his reading gave him insights into the complexities of the world and its people military leaders must understand. "What I discovered reading Hemingway, Shakespeare, Dostoyevsky, Faulkner, Updike, Forster, McCarthy and countless other authors shaped my world view and honed my understanding of the most complex terrain in the world: the human heart."

# CECOM Commander welcomes new CSM

By **ANDRICKA THOMAS**  
CECOM

Command Sgt. Maj. Kennis J. Dent accepted the U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Command colors during an assumption of responsibility ceremony Nov. 22, at the C4ISR Center of Excellence at Aberdeen Proving Ground. The ceremony signified his transition and official arrival as the CECOM command sergeant major.

Maj. Gen. Randolph P. Strong, CECOM commanding general, thanked out-going Sgt. Maj. Jurgen Williams for his service as the interim CECOM command sergeant major to bridge the gap of tenure between former CECOM Command Sgt. Maj. Tyrone Johnson and CECOM's newest command group member Dent.

Prior to this assignment, Dent served as the command sergeant major for the 516th Signal Brigade at Fort Shafter, Hawaii.

"We simply needed your skills, talents and expertise," said Strong. "Command Sgt. Maj. Dent has had an incredible

career in the Signal Corps [...] His experience and education are truly a perfect fit for us."

During his remarks, Dent thanked his family and Strong as he expressed sentiments of gratitude for being selected to serve as CECOM's command sergeant major. He said he looks forward to a successful tenure as he works to support a clear vision and a unified command.

Dent said this was an exciting time to join the CECOM team as it refocuses its priorities in light of the mission shift from downrange to optimizing the integration of the Army's Network modernization effort.

**Command Sgt. Maj. Kennis J. Dent accepts the U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Command colors during an assumption of responsibility ceremony Nov. 22, 2011, at the C4ISR Center of Excellence at Aberdeen Proving Ground.**

Photo by Kelly Luster



# Holiday Worship Services

There will be a combined Christmas Eve Candelight Service, Saturday, Dec. 24 at 7 p.m. at the Main Post Chapel. Everyone is welcome to attend. For Information call 410-278-4333.

## Main Post Chapel (Aberdeen Area)

### Catholic Mass

Sun., Dec 4	2nd Sunday of Advent	8:45 a.m.
Thur., Dec 8	Holy-Day/Obligation 1	1:45 a.m./5:30 p.m.
Sat., Dec 10	Hispanic Mass/Social	5 p.m.
Sun., Dec 11	3rd Sunday of Advent	8:45 a.m.
Sun., Dec 8	4th Sunday of Advent	8:45 a.m.
Sat., Dec 24	Christmas Caroling	11:30 p.m.
Sat., Dec 24	Midnight Mass	Midnight
Sun., Dec 25	Christmas Mass/Pageant	8:30 a.m.
Sat., Dec 31	Holy Day/Obligation	6:30 p.m.
Sun., Jan 1	Holy Day/Obligation	8:45 a.m.

### Protestant worship

Sun., Dec 4	2nd Sunday of Advent	10:15 a.m.
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Sun., Dec 11	Christmas Cantata	10:15 a.m.
Sun., Dec 18	4th Sunday of Advent	10:15 a.m.
Sun., Dec 25	Christmas Day Service	10:15 a.m.

### Gospel workshop

Sun., Dec 4	2nd Sunday of Advent	Noon
Sun., Dec 11	3rd Sunday of Advent	Noon
Sun., Dec 18	Dance/Drama Play	7 p.m.
Sat., Dec 24	Christmas Eve	7 p.m.
Sun., Dec 25	Christmas Day Service	Noon
Sat., Dec 31	Watch Night Service	10 p.m.

## South Post Chapel (Edgewood Area)

### Catholic Mass

Sun., Dec 4	2nd Sunday of Advent	10:45 a.m.
Thur., Dec 8	Holy Day/Obligation	Noon
Thurs., Dec 11	3rd Sunday of Advent	10:45 a.m.

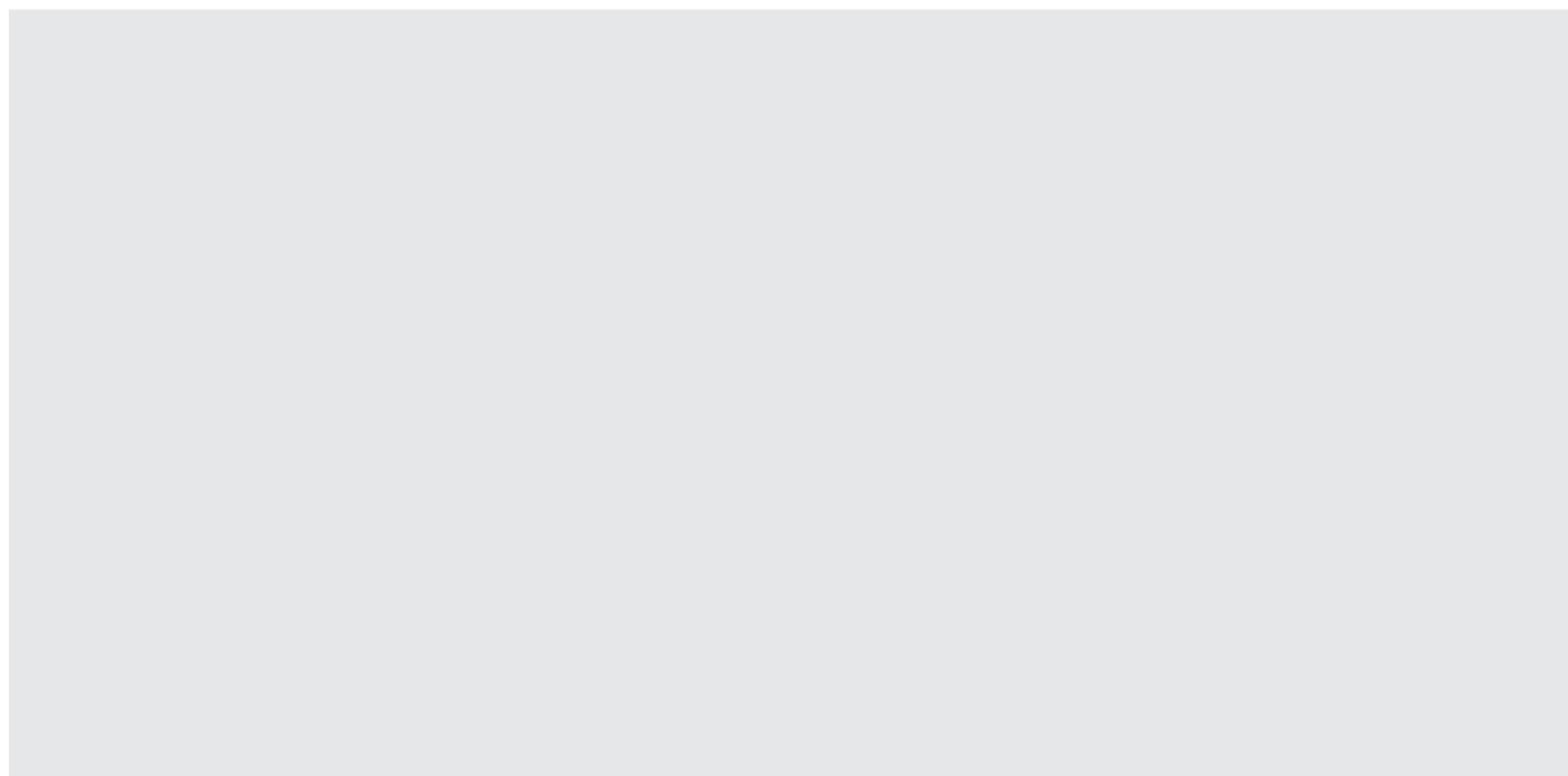
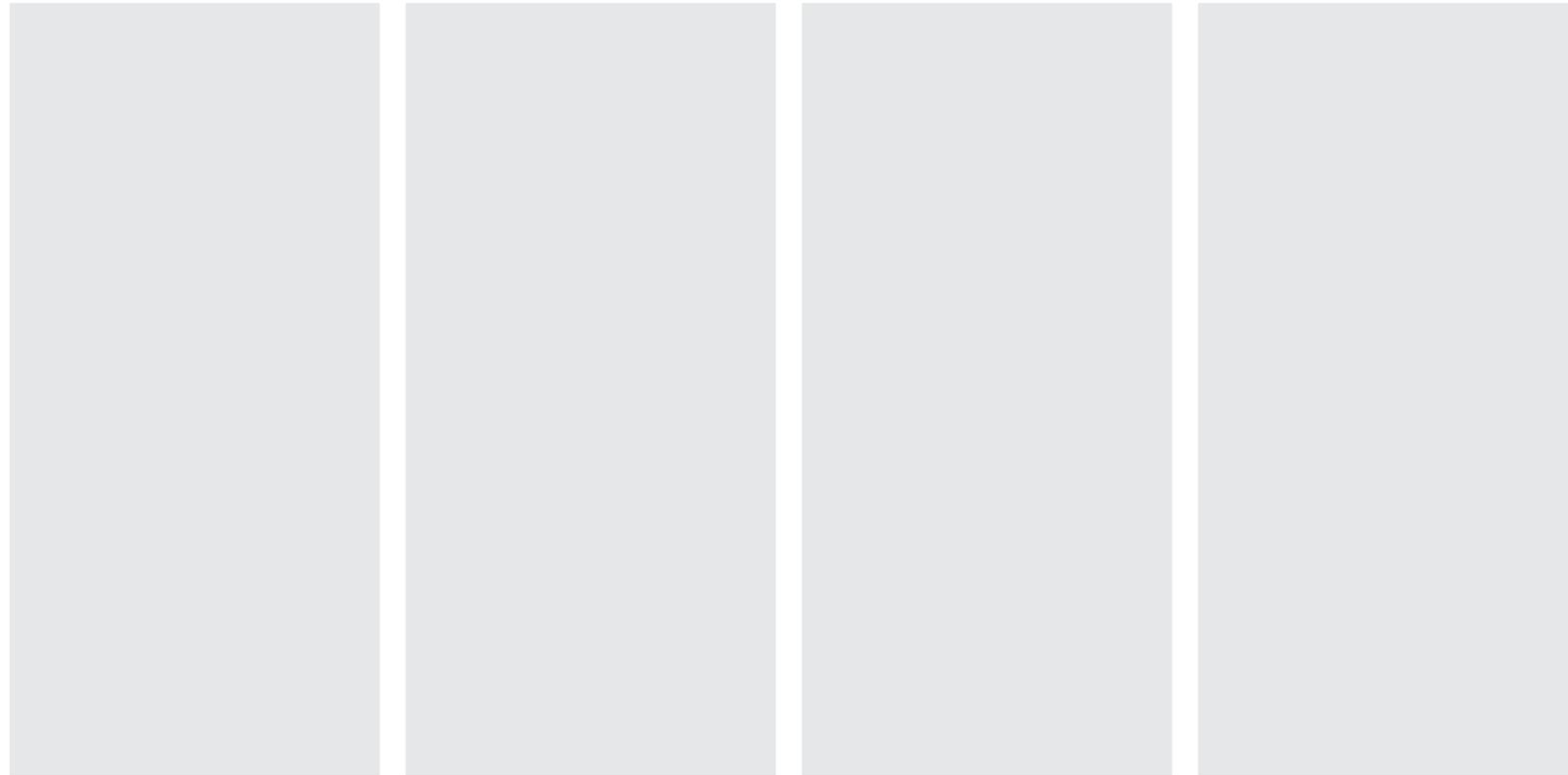
Sun., Dec 18	4th Sunday of Advent	10:45 a.m.
Sun., Dec 25	Christmas Day Mass	10:45 a.m.
Sun., Jan 1	Holy Day/Obligation	10:45 a.m.

### Protestant worship

Sun., Dec 4	2nd Sunday of Advent	9:15 a.m.
Sun., Dec 11	3rd Sunday of Advent	9:15 a.m.
Sun., Dec 18	4th Sunday of Advent	9:15 a.m.
Sun., Dec 25	Christmas Day Service	9:15 a.m.

### Ecumenical events

■ Ecumenical Christmas Special, Sun, 4 Dec, 3 p.m. at Main Post Chapel





Courtesy photo

## Not cutting corners

(From left.) Former 143rd Ordnance Battalion Chaplain (Capt.) Chad Davis and Former APG Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Rodney Rhoades perform the saber cake cutting during last year's Soldier Santa Ball at the Hilton Baltimore, where more than 400 revelers attended. This year's event will be held at Aberdeen Proving Ground, which will "increase awareness about APG and hopefully bring an even larger turnout than last year," said Karen Holt, CSSC manager and a planning committee member. "The Soldier Santa Ball is a great opportunity for government, military, industry and local businesses to come together and celebrate our growing defense community while supporting APG Soldiers and their Families this holiday season." Tickets are on sale now. Call 410-306-6144 Ext 214 or visit [www.SoldierSantaBallAPG.com](http://www.SoldierSantaBallAPG.com) for information.

## ROCKS Inc. seminar set Dec. 16

*Special to the APG News*

APG will host an Installation Officer Professional Development seminar, in association with ROCKS Inc., 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Ball Conference Center Dec. 16.

Brig. Gen. Leslie Smith, commander of 20th Support Command (CBRNE) will host the event and the guest speaker is Maj. Gen. Nick Justice, APG senior leader and commander of RDECOM.

The ROCKS Inc. is a tax-exempt non-profit organization comprised of active duty, reserve, retired, former commissioned and warrant officers, ROTC cadets. The organization was formed to provide mentorship, professional devel-

opment and social interaction to strengthen the officer corps.

With more than 23 chapters worldwide, including in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is the largest professional military officer organization with a majority African-American membership.

In addition, Army Officer Professional Development has been added to the new Army Officer Evaluation Report (OER), DA Form 67-9, according to Capt. Malukah McCormick, commander, HHC Garrison and an organizer of the event. For more information, call McCormick, at 410-278-3000 or e-mail [malukah.s.mccormick.mil@mail.mil](mailto:malukah.s.mccormick.mil@mail.mil).

# AROUND THE FORCE

## Survey shows growing gap between civilians, military

By **DONNA MILES**  
*American Forces Press Service*

A new report confirms a concern defense and military leaders have long recognized: There's a growing disconnect between Americans and their military.

The report, published last week by the Pew Research Center, notes that a smaller share of Americans currently serve in the armed forces than at any time since the peacetime era between World Wars I and II.

Just one-half of 1 percent of Americans served in uniform at any given time during the past decade -- the longest period of sustained conflict in the country's history -- the report says. Meanwhile, as the military shrinks in size, the connections between military members and the broader civilian population "appear to be growing more distant," the report says.

The report was based on surveys of more than 2,000 civilian adults and almost 1,900 veterans, more than 700 of whom served after 9/11.

Among the respondents, most said they have family members who are serving in the armed forces or have served in the past. However, older Americans were considerably more likely to have close military ties.

More than three-quarters of civilian adults ages 50 and older reported having an immediate family member -- a spouse, parent, sibling or child -- who served or serves in the military. For many, that service took place before the end of the draft and the introduction of the all-volunteer force in 1973.

Only 57 percent of civilian respondents ages 30 to 49 said they had an immediate family member who served. The percentage dropped to one-third among respondents ages 18 to 29.

The report appears to confirm that for many Americans, military service is a family tradition. Seventy-nine percent of veterans surveyed reported that

**I fear [civilians] do not know us. I fear they do not comprehend the full weight of the burden we carry or the price we pay when we return from battle.**

**Retired Navy Adm. Mike Mullen**  
Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

an immediate family member is serving or has served in the military. That compares to 61 percent among the civilian respondents.

Decisions to serve also appear to be influenced by race, region and political preference, the report showed. Sixty-eight percent of whites, 59 percent of blacks and 30 percent of Hispanic respondents reported having immediate family members who serve or have served in uniform.

Sixty-four percent of Southerners reported immediate family ties to the military. The percentage for those living in the Northeast was 56 percent, and in the West, 57 percent. City dwellers were somewhat less likely than those in the suburbs or rural areas to say a family member served in the military.

Political party also appeared to be an influencing factor. Seventy-three percent of Republicans, 59 percent of Democrats and 56 percent of Independents said an immediate family member served in the military.

The report confirmed perceptions by civilians as well as veterans that the American public doesn't understand the problems faced by those in the military. Seventy-seven percent of veterans and 71 percent of the general public shared this view.

Retired Navy Adm. Mike Mullen spoke frequently during his tenure as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff about what he called a "worrying disconnect" between civilians and the military.

Speaking earlier this year at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y.,

Mullen expressed concern that civilians don't fully understand the sacrifices military members make.

"Our work is appreciated, of that I am certain," he told members of the 2011 graduating class. "But I fear [civilians] do not know us. I fear they do not comprehend the full weight of the burden we carry or the price we pay when we return from battle."

This is important, Mullen said, "because a people uninformed about what they are asking the military to endure is a people inevitably unable to fully grasp the scope of the responsibilities our Constitution levies upon them."

Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta, speaking last month at the Woodrow Wilson Center, called the tiny percentage of Americans who make up the all-volunteer force the most important ingredient of U.S. national defense.

Panetta praised the "men and women who represent less than 1 percent of our nation, but who have shouldered the burden of protecting the American people and who have shown the strength of the American character in their willingness to put their lives on the line to defend our values, our interests and our freedom."

The secretary emphasized the need for the country to provide them the support they deserve -- even in the face of budgetary challenges.

"The 1 percent of the country that has served in uniform, and their families, have borne the heavy costs of war for 10 years," he said. "They cannot be expected to bear the full costs of fiscal austerity as well."

## Chairman dismisses notion of military in decline

By **JIM GARAMONE**  
*American Forces Press Service*

In two venues here Nov. 28, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff emphatically dismissed the notion that the U.S. military is in decline.

During an interview on the BBC program "Newsnight," Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey bristled when Jeremy Paxman began the interview by asking, "General, what's it like to take over the military at a time when it is in decline?"

"We're not in decline," Dempsey asserted. "The incline or decline is not an affect of size, it's a function of capability."

Dempsey explained that the U.S. military has learned much over the past 10 years of war. "We tend to face adversaries who don't mass against us -- they decentralize," he said. "We've had to become a network to defeat a network."

The chairman cited other examples, noting that before 9/11, responsibility was hoarded at higher levels in the U.S. military. Today, he said, the impetus is to push responsibility down to those who need it.

In addition, Dempsey said, the U.S. military is a joint force in ways that service members who served even as recently as the Persian Gulf War wouldn't recognize. Navy electronics warfare officers routinely deploy with Army and Marine Corps units to help defeat threats posed by roadside bombs; and Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines work alongside civilians in provincial reconstruction teams in Afghanistan.

"We can find a way to rebalance ourselves to find capabilities that we didn't have 10 years ago, and still be a military very much where it needs to be for the world," Dempsey said.

Budget challenges do exist, and the U.S. military will do its part to help the nation over the deficit crisis, the chairman said. The military is cutting \$450 billion in spending over the next 10 years, he noted, a level of cuts he said is manageable.

"Anything more and it risks being unmanageable," he added. "But I can't see that far yet."

Dempsey said he believes a psychology contributes to talk about decline. "We are neither in decline nor are we victims," he said at the Colin Cramphorn Memorial Lecture following his talk with the BBC. "We are simply responding to what one might argue is a historic cycle of resources."

Historically, Dempsey said, the U.S. military has expanded during times of conflict and shrunk following the conflicts.

"The key," he said, "is that we have to ensure that what we do in contraction is 'expandable,' so if we get the future wrong -- which, by the way, we have an uncanny capability to do that -- that we'll have enough capability to get through the initial challenge and then be able to expand the force."

## Deadlines to mail holiday packages approaching

By **C. TODD LOPEZ**  
*Army News Service*

If you want to send cookies or crocheted underwear to your Soldier overseas and have it in his hands before Christmas, the time to drop it in the mail is now -- or at the latest, Dec. 17.

There's actually a range of deadlines the Military Postal Service Agency has established to ensure before-Christmas delivery of packages and letters to service members in deployed locations.

To get mail to a service member by Christmas at APO/FPO/DPO AE 090-092, 094-098, 340, or 962-966, the latest a package can be sent to arrive on time is Dec. 17 -- that means senders have to pay for Express Mail. If senders have already got packages ready and they want to send earlier -- and pay less -- they can put them in the mail by Dec. 10 and pay for either

1st Class or Priority mail.

Mail to APO/FPO/DPO AE 093 must be sent by Dec. 3, regardless of the class of mail service used.

Mail sent to deployed service members is handled almost entirely by commercial contractors -- almost. By the time it reaches what the Army calls "the last tactical mile," however, it might also be handled by Soldiers, Marines, Sailors or Airmen.

"Once it gets into Afghanistan the military postal folks will sort it, to get it out to the different combat outposts," said Peter Graeve, with the Military Postal Service Agency. Getting it out to the combat outpost, he said, might involve "a military helicopter or a ground convoy -- or whatever access they have available at that level to get it out to the furthest reach of the spear."

Where it used to take weeks or months to deliver mail to deployed Soldiers, it

now can be done in days, Graeve said. That's good for moms, spouses, significant others and Soldiers.

"It's a real morale booster, a touch of home, if you are sitting out there in a combat outpost and getting shot at and you get a card from home," Graeve said. "A little perfume from your wife or girlfriend means a lot to a person that is under a lot of stress out there. Getting some cookies when you're used to eating MREs (meals, ready-to-eat), that's a good thing. We try to keep that in mind when we are processing the mail out to the folks."

Those sending mail to overseas locations should also consider that customs forms may need to be filled out before items can be sent.

More information about military mail and mailing dates can be found at: <http://hqdainet.army.mil/mpsa/>

# New IMCOM commander takes reins

Continued from Page 1

“Most important, I got to see them operate in combat. These are two Soldiers who not only understand what it’s like to take care of our Families, but they understand what it’s like being at the tip of a spear. There’s no better person to lead us in installation management than somebody who’s experienced both.”

Ferriter’s combat tours include Operation Restore Hope in Somalia and two tours in Iraq.

“I’m confident that Mike Ferriter is the right man for the job – a proven leader with the right experience to lead us into the future,” Odierno said. “He understands Soldiers and Family and is the right leader at this important time of transition for our Army.”

Ferriter and wife Margie have four children who understand Army life: Dr. Meghan Ferriter, Capt. Dan Ferriter, Capt. Paddy Ferriter and 1st Lt. Mary Whitney Whittaker.

“The Ferriters are a great Army Family and IMCOM is fortunate to have them,” Odierno said. “Always remember that the strength of our nation is our Army. The strength of our Army is our Soldiers. The strength of our Soldiers is our Families. And that’s what makes us Army Strong.”

Ferriter said, “there are hundreds of thousands of Army Families that are exactly the same, and that’s where we get our inspiration.”

Lynch, the only commander IMCOM has known, was quick to thank Odierno for his mentorship.

**“I’m confident that [Lt. Gen.] Mike Ferriter is the right man for the job - a proven leader with the right experience to lead us into the future.**

**Gen. Raymond Odierno**  
Army Chief of Staff

“I’ve been blessed in my 35 years of uniformed service,” Lynch said. “One of the top ... blessings is my relationship with Ray Odierno.”

Odierno thanked Lynch for a career well done, capped by the complex move of an Army command from the nation’s capital to the heart of South Texas.

“Lt. Gen. Rick Lynch has served selflessly in our Army with extraordinary distinction for nearly 35 years,” Odierno said. “He’s devoted his career to taking care of Soldiers and their Families. I have watched Rick for years, always step forward, raise his right hand, and say ‘Put me in. I want the toughest job. I want the tough jobs and I’ll make it work. I’ll make it happen.’”

“We thought he was the perfect person to lead IMCOM and transform it into a world-class organization focused on our customers. The customers are our Soldiers and their Families and our retirees.”

He cited the 120,000 people who make up IMCOM.

“We are grateful for the dedicated Army civilians and contractors that have made IMCOM such a large success,” Odierno said. “In short, the IMCOM team has been and will remain a key ingredient in our ability to protect and sustain combat forces around the world. I thank each and every member of IMCOM for your untiring effort and commitment to our Soldiers, their Families and the Army.”

Odierno commended Lynch for embodying words like courage, confidence, candor and compassion.

“In your 35-plus years, you have made history,” Odierno told Lynch. “You have lived in the arena and you have excelled inside that arena. Thank you for your steadfast dedication and loyal service to our Soldiers and our nation.”

Odierno applauded Lynch’s wife, Sarah, for her dedication to the mission.

“Sarah has been serving alongside Rick every step of the way,” Odierno said. “She’s dedicated herself to our Soldiers and Families. Whether it be leading

[Family Readiness Groups] or working with the Families of fallen Soldiers, Sarah has met and listened to the Gold Star Families to assess how the Army was meeting their needs and helped the Army improve its services.

“I could go on and on, but the bottom line is that Sarah has selflessly given of herself to the Army, to our Families and to our nation. Sarah, you are a true American patriot and hero. We want to thank you for all you’ve done and sacrificed throughout the years for our Army.”

The ceremony also marked the passing of the responsibility of IMCOM command sergeant major from Command Sgt. Maj. Neil Ciotola to Command Sgt. Maj. Donald Felt. Felt, top noncommissioned officer for the IMCOM Central Region, will serve until the scheduled arrival of Command Sgt. Maj. Earl L. Rice.

“I want to personally recognize Command Sgt. Maj. Neil Ciotola,” Odierno said. “He was side by side with me for 15 months in Iraq when I was the multi-national corps commander probably during the most difficult time there was in Iraq. And frankly, I couldn’t have done it without him. We were merged at the hip. We were merged in our own minds with each other.”

“There is no other finer NCO, no other noncommissioned officer I would have liked by my side than Neil Ciotola. He’s a Soldier’s Soldier, a combat leader, and the epitome of a command sergeant major.”

# Federal government hires 120,000 vets

Continued from Page 1

in the United States.”

Obama noted the United States has benefited “enormously” from veteran’s service abroad and would benefit greatly from their service at home.

“And that’s why, under my direction, the federal government has already hired more than 120,000 veterans,” he said.

Obama praised First Lady Michelle Obama and Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden, for their efforts in the “Joining Forces” campaign, which has secured pledges from private-sector companies to hire 135,000 more veterans and military spouses.

“Today, we’re giving those businesses just one more reason to give veterans a job,” he said.

The president also credited Congress for the legislation.

“Today, because Democrats and Repub-

licans came together, I’m proud to sign those proposals into law,” he said. “And I urge every business owner out there who’s hiring to hire a veteran right away.”

Obama pledged continued support to the nation’s veterans and wounded warriors.

“So to our veterans, know that we will stand with you as long as it takes for you to find a job,” he said. “And to our businesses, let me say again, if you are hiring, hire a veteran.”

The Returning Heroes Tax Credit provides businesses that hire unemployed veterans with a credit of up to \$5,600 per veteran, and the Wounded Warriors Tax Credit offers a credit of \$9,600 per veteran for businesses that hire veterans with service-connected disabilities.

Under the Recovery Act, employers who hired certain unemployed veterans

were eligible for a tax credit of up to 40 percent of the first \$6,000 of wages, for a maximum credit of \$2,400 for veterans who had been unemployed at least four weeks. This credit expired at the end of 2010. For employers who hire veterans unemployed for longer than six months, a new credit of 40 percent of the first \$14,000 of wages, up to \$5,600, will be applied.

The Wounded Warrior Tax Credit will double the existing tax credit for long-term unemployed veterans with service-connected disabilities. A new credit of 40 percent of the first \$24,000 of wages, up to \$9,600, will apply for firms that hire veterans with service-connected disabilities who have been unemployed longer than six months.

The law will maintain the existing Work Opportunity Tax Credit of up to

\$4,800 for veterans with service-connected disabilities.

The new tax incentives continue an ongoing effort to ease unemployment among veterans. A White House statement released today notes that in August the president challenged the private sector to hire or train 100,000 veterans or military spouses by the end of 2013.

With the help of Joining Forces, the statement says, more than 1,500 private-sector companies have stepped up so far to employ more than 18,000 veterans and spouses and have committed to hiring 135,000 veterans and spouses by the end of 2013.

“Hire a veteran today,” Obama said at the signing ceremony. “They will make you proud, just as they’ve made this nation proud.”

# See renovations during Dec. 8 grand opening

Continued from Page 1

be the heart of the APG community,” said Teri Hall, Manager of Top of the Bay.

Hall said customers who are familiar with the former Top of the Bay will be pleasantly surprised by the transformation, but can look forward to a quality dining experience.

“Much of the \$3.2 million project can’t be seen - its behind the walls and above the ceilings. But the cosmetic improvements recall the classy era of the 1930’s,” said Col. Orlando Ortiz, APG Garrison and deputy installation commander.

In addition to the newly reopened lunch services, the Top of the Bay will host post-wide activities, offer full catering services, and serve as the ideal spot for impromptu get-togethers.

Menu options include hors d’oeuvres, an expansive salad bar featuring fresh fruit and vegetable selections; local favorites such as carved beef, ham and

turkey and seafood entrees; and full bar services.

“The scenic Chesapeake is a beautiful backdrop for any event or special day, so we’re looking forward to hosting events on our patio overlooking the water,” Hall said.

The reopened facility will be able to accommodate holiday celebrations, retirement parties and luncheons, organizational conferences and meetings.

Daily lunch hours are Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Community members are encouraged to see the renovations firsthand during the facility’s grand opening celebration Dec. 8 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For more information about the Top of the Bay grand opening celebration or renting rooms for an event, contact Teri Hall at 410-278-3062, [teri.s.hall@us.army.mil](mailto:teri.s.hall@us.army.mil) or visit <http://apgmwr.com/community/totb.html#2>.



Photo by Lamont Harbison

**This view of the Top of the Bay ballroom shows just some of the many improvements to the facility. See the rest during the grand opening set for 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Dec. 8.**

# FAMILY AND MWR

## Activities/Events

### Universal Orlando Resort

Universal Orlando Resort is proud to offer a discount ticket program to all active duty, retired military and Department of Defense personnel. All Universal Studio tickets must be purchased at least 3 weeks before the trip. Universal Studios includes two theme parks, non-stop nightlife and more all in one convenient location. At Universal CityWalk® enjoy the best in restaurants, nightclubs, shopping and movies.

For more information, call 410-278-4011 for price breakdown.

### Personal Training

APG Sports Branch is offering personal training programs. All active duty military and Family members, DoD civilians and Family members, and DoD contractors are eligible.

Training is offered at the athletic center, fitness center and Hoyle Gym to assist customers in meeting their personal fitness needs. The program is offered in individual half-hour and one-hour sessions and blocks of sessions. Individual half-hour sessions cost \$40 each; one-hour sessions cost \$55 each. Blocks of six half-hour sessions for the cost of five sessions is \$200; blocks of six sessions for the cost of five sessions is \$275

Contact the athletic center or Hoyle Gym for details.

### APG Running Club

The APG Sports and Fitness Branch has begun a Running Club for organized weekly runs. Club members meet at 5 p.m. every Tuesday at the Aberdeen Area Athletic Center and 5 p.m. every Thursday at Hoyle Gym in the Edgewood Area. Byron Reasin, Morale, Welfare and Recreation, Aberdeen Athletic Center, oversees the club. For more information, contact Byron at 410-278-7933/7934 or e-mail, Byron.a.reasin@us.army.mil.

### Slots still open on girls basketball team

The APG Youth Services girls basketball team is seeking members, ages 10-12. Practices are Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:30-8:30 p.m. at the Youth Center. To register or for more information, call

CYSS at 410-278-7571 or Youth Sports and Fitness at 410-306-2297.

### Holiday performances for the whole family

The community is invited to attend several holiday performances presented by the APG MWR Theater Group.

A stage adaptation of *It's a Wonderful Life* will be performed Saturday, Dec. 3, at the post theater at 7 p.m. and a Sunday matinee will be performed Dec. 4 at 2 p.m.

The film version of *It's a Wonderful Life* was nominated for five Oscars and starred James Stewart as a man whose pending suicide on Christmas Eve brings about the intervention of his wingless guardian angel.

Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* will be performed tentatively Monday, Dec. 19, at the APG North recreation center at 7 p.m. *A Christmas Carol* includes some of the holiday's most memorable characters—from the hard-hearted Scrooge, four ghosts, Tiny Tim and the kindhearted Bob Cratchit.

Bring the family and make it an evening to remember, or gift the gift of entertainment by purchasing a ticket for a friend.

Visit the MWR Leisure and Travel Office to purchase tickets, or buy them over the phone by calling 410-278-4011.

*It's A Wonderful Life* tickets cost \$10 for the general public, \$5 for active duty service members and children 12 and under. *A Christmas Carol* tickets are \$5 for the general public and free to active duty service members and children under 12.

(A dinner theater performance of *A Christmas Carol* will also be presented at the Clarion Hotel in Aberdeen. Call 410-273-6300 for information on the dinner theater.)

### Armed Forces Vacation Club

Planning a vacation? The Armed Forces Vacation Club has tons of incredible discounts on spacious accommodations all over the world. Seven-night stays at select location start as low as \$349.

All active military service members and their direct dependants, retired military and their direct dependants, DoD civilian employees and their direct dependants and 100 percent disabled American Veterans are authorized to take advantage of these amazing deals. Discounts are valid for Space Available Inventory only. Remember to enter base

code 105 at the time of the booking. If you have questions, please call

410-278-4011/4907 or e-mail APGR-USAG-MWR-LeisureTravel@conus.army.mil.

### ACS Holiday Card Making Event

The ACS Hearts Apart Support Group will host its Holiday Card Making Event at ACS, Bldg 2503 High Point Road, December 7, 2011, 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

All participants will be given the opportunity to decorate a card for their deployed family member. There will be light refreshments for all who participate. Hearts Apart seeks to empower Families (military and DOD civilians) with information to help prepare the Families for the separation during deployments and TDYs.

ACS offers a comprehensive array of programs and services dedicated to maintaining the readiness of the Total Army Family by fostering self-reliance, stability and resilience.

For more information, call Wilhelmina Cromartie at 410-278-2464.

### EFMP Bowling on Sundays

Exceptional Family Member Program Families and all individuals with disabilities are invited to bowl at APG bowling center from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Sunday. The APG bowling center is on Aberdeen Proving Ground next to the Burger King and Post Exchange.

The center offers video games, food and fun for all. Contact Ann Battaglia to reserve lanes at 410 838- 5026 or tabat@msn.com.



**MORE ONLINE**

For a listing of FMWR activities and events, or to read the weekly MWR newsletter, scan the code.

## November bowling specials

■ Early Bird Special from 7am till 10am. Bowl for \$1.50 each game.

■ Friday Night Special after 9pm. Rent A Lane for \$10.00 for the hour. Includes up to 6 people as well as their shoes.

■ Sunday Football Special: 1 Hour of bowling for \$10.00, wings \$.50 each, Jr. Hot Dogs \$1.00 each, Slice

Cheese Pizza \$1.00 each slice, 16oz soda \$.50 and draft beer \$1.50.

### Bowling rates

Bowling costs \$3 per game, Monday to Friday from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.; games cost \$3.50 each on Fridays, 9:30 to 11 p.m.; Cosmic Saturdays cost \$3.75 per game; and \$3 per game on Sundays.

## APG Bowling Center Snack Bar specials

Building 2342

### Week of November 28

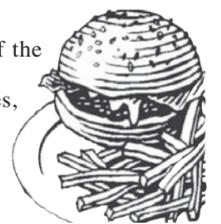
Special #1: Egg salad sandwich with chips, cookie and regular soda for \$4.50.  
Special #2: Cheese steak pizza sub with french fries, cookie and regular soda for \$7.25.

### Week of December 5

Special #1: Grilled Ham and cheese with soup of the day, cookie and regular soda for \$5.95.

Special #2: Chicken tender Sub with french fries, cookie and regular soda for \$7.25.

*The Bowling Center also serves breakfast. For more information or to place an order, call 410-278-4041. Orders must be placed before 10:30 a.m.*



# Post Shorts

## Visit Ladew Gardens Christmas Open House

The APG Community Women's Club is planning a visit to Ladew Topiary Gardens Friday, Dec. 9, for their Christmas Open House & Greens Sale. The circa 1747 Manor House is decorated by volunteers and garden clubs in honor of the holiday season. Holiday arrangements, greens and gifts will be available for sale. Regular admission is \$10, with military ID \$8, children (age 2-12) \$3. The group will meet in the café, have lunch, then tour the house and gardens. Ladew is at 3535 Jarrettsville Pike, Monkton, MD 21111, and more information can be found online at [ladewgardens.com](http://ladewgardens.com). The club is open to all affiliated with APG, whether military, civilian, contractor, or spouse. To attend with the group, contact Doris Pickerd, 908-601-8609 or [reservations@apgcwc.org](mailto:reservations@apgcwc.org).

## Thrift Shop opens two Saturdays in December

The APG Thrift Shop will open 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturdays, Dec. 3 and 10, for the convenience of holiday shopping. Come check out the decorations,

toys, gifts and holiday fashion. For more information, call Fran during business hours at 410-272-8572.

## Community Women's Club holiday luncheon Dec. 13

Please join us for a festive luncheon at Aberdeen Proving Ground's newly-renovated Top of the Bay Tuesday, Dec. 13 at 11:30 a.m. Cost is \$15 and includes choice of stuffed chicken breast or pasta primavera; green salad, Bahama vegetable blend; cheesecake; coffee, iced tea, holiday punch. Club is open to all affiliated with APG, whether military, civilian or contractor, or spouse. RSVP to Doris Pickerd, 908-601-8609 or [reservations@apgcwc.org](mailto:reservations@apgcwc.org).

## Join APG Community Women's Club today

Join the club and make friends while making a difference in the community. Activities are scheduled during the day, in the evening, on post and off post. There is no obligation to attend meetings – just come to events that interest you. There is something for everyone –

bunco, luncheons, book club, dinners, and local trips. Prospective members are welcome to come to events before joining –and bring a friend. Membership is open to all with an affiliation with APG, whether military, civilian, contractor, or spouse. Learn more by visiting [www.apgcwc.org](http://www.apgcwc.org) or call Gerry Reno, membership chair, at 410-642-3080.

## Scholarships available

Apply now for APG Community Women's Club scholarships. Applications and information are available on the club website at [www.apgcwc.org](http://www.apgcwc.org). Three categories will be awarded— Graduating High School Seniors, Continuing Education Students, and Club Member/Spouse Scholarship. Applications are due by March 31, 2012. For information, Amy Lueders at [scholarships@apgcwc.org](mailto:scholarships@apgcwc.org).

## Christmas Special

Teachers and children from the post chapel's Religious Education will host an ecumenical (Catholic, Gospel and Protestant) Christmas Special Dec. 4 from 3-5 p.m. at the main post chapel.

The event will include an enactment of the Jesse Tree Symbols, the O Antiphons, The Nativity Masks Drama, the Empty Manager Activity, the Posadas and a Joy to the World Dance. Refreshments will be provided.

## Celebrate Holiday by the Bay

All Picerne Military Housing residents are invited to join in the festivities and celebrate the holiday season with neighbors and the Picerne team at Holiday by the Bay. The event is free for residents and will be held at 2727 Chesapeake Blvd. Dec. 2 from 6 to 9 p.m.

Enjoy holiday music, hot chocolate and holiday treats, work on crafts at Santa's Workshop and take a picture with Santa himself.

For more information, call the Neighborhood Office.



**MORE ONLINE**

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

# COMMUNITY NOTES

## THURSDAY

### DECEMBER 1 NATURE STORYTIME

Eden Mill Nature Center offers "Nature Story Time" at 11 a.m. on Dec. 1 and 15. All are welcome who enjoy children's literature. Join us for a children's story and craft related to a theme about nature. Pre-registration is required by calling 410-836-3050 or emailing [edenmillnaturercenter@gmail.com](mailto:edenmillnaturercenter@gmail.com) for information.

## HISTORIC GRIST MILL MUSEUM

For more than 200 years, the Historic Grist Mill Museum was hailed as the most significant grist mills in Harford County. Filled with milling equipment and displays along with a vintage turn of the century power plant, Eden Mill is a must see experience for all ages. The museum is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and most Sundays from 1 to 4 p.m. Closed on Sundays in December. Call Eden Mill at 410-836-3050 in advance to confirm. For information, visit [edenmill.org](http://edenmill.org).

## SATURDAY & SUNDAY

### DECEMBER 3-4 STEPPINGSTONE CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE

The Steppingstone Museum, located at 461 Quaker Bottom Road, Harve de Grace, will hold its annual Christmas Open House noon to 4 p.m., Dec. 3 and 4. Admission is free. There will be tours of the historic farmhouse decorated for the holidays, Christmas music, cookies and cider. The museum store will be open for holiday shopping. The event will be held rain or shine. For more information, call 410-939-2299, 888-419-1762, or e-mail [steppingstonemuseum@msn.com](mailto:steppingstonemuseum@msn.com) or visit [www.steppingstonemuseum.org](http://www.steppingstonemuseum.org).

## SATURDAY

### DECEMBER 3 SKELETAL CSI

Learn how to identify animals by their bones. Feel free to bring skulls and bones to try to figure out what they came from.

This program will be held 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. for ages 12 to adult. The program is free but online registration is required at [www.otterpointcreek.org](http://www.otterpointcreek.org).

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

## SUMMER RESEARCH ROUND UP

Volunteers, members, and general public come for fascinating research updates and highlights from the 2011 OPCA summer research interns, Donny McKnight and Nathan Byer. Hear monitoring updates on the Maryland Amphibian and Reptile Atlas (MARA), box turtle survey, and turtle telemetry. Learn the answers gleaned from research questions about predator response time in green frogs; sedimentation rates in HaHa Branch; and water, soil, and vegetation of the vernal pond along the Discovery Trail. Refreshments will be served. This program will be held 1 to 3 p.m. for ages 12 to adult. The program is free but online registration is required at [www.otterpointcreek.org](http://www.otterpointcreek.org).

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

## HISTORY OF THE HOLIDAYS TEA

Dress up and come out for a lovely Victorian afternoon tea with a history of the holidays to get participants into the spirit. This program will be held 3 to 4:30 p.m. for parents and children ages 5 and up. The cost is \$10 per parent & child, and \$5 per additional child and online registration is required at [www.otterpointcreek.org](http://www.otterpointcreek.org).

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



**MORE ONLINE**

More calendar events can be seen at [www.apgnews.apg.army.mil](http://www.apgnews.apg.army.mil) under Community Notes.

## 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 Joan Campbell, 410-278-5668, e-mail [joan.campbell@us.army.mil](mailto:joan.campbell@us.army.mil).

**All donations must be submitted by Dec 22.**

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

Patricia Adams	Megan Farley	Linda Patrick
Audrey Alba	Meghan Faughnan	Mary Pettitway
Debra Bonsall	Tiana Ford	Donna Pierce
Cheryl Black	Melanie France	Sheba Ratliff-Coble
Diane Bratton	(PSI-COE)	Pedro Rodriguez
Roberta Brown-Thurman	Arya Golriz	Viollaunda Ruiz
(Ft Huachuca)	Marilyn Grebe	(Ft Huachuca)
Mikale Gerdes Brutus	Shawn Heinlein	Lee Anne Sellare
Holly Cacciapaglia	LaTasha Hines	Paul Shelley
(Vets Administration)	Walter Holland	Lena Shelton
Sara Campbell	Sarah Ingram	Bridgette Smith
Cheryl Cerqueira	Kari Jackson	Danielle Smith
Sharon Colclough	LaKia Johnson	Robynn Squires
Kelly Correia	Bernard King	Nicole Stallings
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# RDECOM News



Spc. Timo Swaner engages a close range target with a prototype light machine gun during a military unit assessment at Fort Benning, Ga.

## New light machine gun aims to 'SAW' Soldiers' load

Story and photo by  
**ERIC KOWAL**  
RDECOM Public Affairs

Nearly 20 Soldiers participated in a two-week assessment of a prototype light machine gun to demonstrate its potential impact on mission effectiveness and to help engineers develop possible improvements to the weapon and its unique ammunition.

The evaluation sought the warfighter's perspective after enduring a series of strenuous combat performance drills with the weapon.

It had taken six years to get from a concept to a fully functioning weapon that was ready for evaluation, but Kori Phillips, a project management engineer in the Joint Service Small Arms Program, or JSSAP, said it was well worth the wait.

"This is exactly what we have been waiting for," said Phillips. "This is what we need to move forward."

The Soldiers' feedback will be used to influence the user community to develop a Capability Development Document. A CDD is required before the system can transition to a program of record and enter the Engineering and Manufacturing Development phase of the acquisition life cycle.

This would be the next step needed for the program to move forward toward an eventual fielding of the weapon to Soldiers in the field.

The light machine gun is part of the Lightweight Small Arms Technologies, or LSAT, program, which is managed by the JSSAP, part of the Army's Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center, or ARDEC, at Picatinny Arsenal, N.J.

The LMG is a gas-operated, cased telescoped light machine gun. It is air-cooled and belt fed with selectable semi-automatic and fully automatic fire and fires from the open-bolt position. Its rate of fire is approximately 650 rounds per minute.

The JSSAP team hopes that the LMG will eventually replace the M249 Squad Automatic Weapon, known as a SAW, as the standard issue machine gun used by Soldiers in combat zones.

### Getting to know the weapon

The machine guns and their operators were tested through automatic rifleman tasks and operational scenarios.

The purpose was to assess how the lighter machine gun affects the Soldiers' ability to effectively engage targets from various firing positions after completing tasks that induced physical stress and an elevated heart rate.

The weapons were also evaluated on their suitability regarding portability, safety, compatibility with Soldier equipment, durability in challenging envi-

ronments, ease of use, and impact on Soldier mobility.

"We ran Soldiers through with both weapon systems and timed them to look at how much faster they could complete the course with the lighter weapon and to gain subjective feedback on mobility and portability issues while they negotiated the obstacles," said Maj. Matthew Bowler, a military advisor to the small arms program.

Immediately after each event, the Soldiers filled out surveys where they offered opinions about how they felt physically, and any issues or malfunctions they experienced with either weapon or its ammunition. They could also include any additional feedback.

On the first day of the second week, the Soldiers marched six miles in full combat gear, including body armor, a 50-pound rucksack and a basic load of ammunition for their respective weapons. Half the Soldiers carried the SAW and the other half carried the LMG.

After the road march, the Soldiers immediately started firing their weapons to measure the effects of muscle fatigue and stress while firing.

Sgt. Brandon Vega, an infantryman with the 2/29 Infantry Battalion, saw an increase in his accuracy when firing the LMG after the march compared to the SAW.

"The first six round bursts were within the size of a quarter," Vega said. "Then I got three on top of one so I was real impressed with that."

Vega added that, using the SAW, he has yet to achieve the same level of accuracy.

According to a study conducted in 2005, the average fighting load for the SAW gunner is 79 pounds. That is nearly twice the weight a Soldier should carry, according to Army doctrine.

"The Soldier carries too much weight so anything we can do to reduce Soldier load

increases the Soldier's effectiveness, his capability on the battlefield and his survivability," said Bowler.

The weight reduction provided by the LMG would have a significant effect on the SAW gunner, the most heavily burdened Soldier in the squad.

With a basic load of 1,000 rounds, the light machine gun and its cased telescoped ammunition is 20.4 pounds lighter than a traditional SAW with the same amount of standard, brass-cased ammunition.

During the assessment, more than 25,000 rounds were fired from eight prototype LMGs.

The suggested rate of fire for machine guns is three to five round bursts whenever possible, eight to ten round bursts at the most. This gives the gunner time to readjust his aim and helps keep the bar-

rel from overheating as quickly.

A high rate of fire increases the possibility of a "cook off." Cook off occurs when the propellant is unintentionally ignited by the heat in the weapon chamber, firing a round unexpectedly and causing a significant safety hazard.

Because of the design of the chamber, the LMG is very unlikely to experience a cook off, Phillips said. Technical tests showed that more than 250 rounds could be fired without a risk of cook off. The M249 SAW has been known to cook off at 220 rounds under certain circumstances.

### Other Assessments

In another assessment of shooting while under physical stress, Soldiers wore body armor and sprinted 200 yards with their weapons and a basic load of ammunition, then rapidly engaged close-range targets from the standing position. Again, they performed this task with both weapons. Many Soldiers saw an improvement in their overall time with the lighter weapon.

"Today we ran with the LSAT and with the SAW," said Cpl. Nickolaus Hammack, one of the military police Soldiers participating in the assessment. "Both were pretty trying but the SAW hands down is way heavier. Especially going up a hill, you feel the weight on you. (The) LSAT is a lot lighter weapon. It really is a joy to have."

The third week of assessment involved Soldiers of the 75th Ranger Regiment. They used two of the LMGs as part of a squad maneuver live-fire exercise to determine how the attributes of the new weapon system would impact squad effectiveness.

The exercise was conducted in an urban setting where the Soldiers used the weapon for suppressive fire and for room-clearing.

The Rangers said they liked the semi-auto feature that made the LMG a much more viable weapon for room-clearing than the SAW.

Additionally, one Ranger commented that the weight of the LMG as a system was "noticeably better" than that of the Mk 46 variant of the SAW that they currently use, because of the significantly lighter ammunition that dramatically increased his mobility while maneuvering as part of the squad.

### Future of the gun

Overall, the Soldiers' comments were positive and they overwhelmingly preferred the LMG to the SAW. They were impressed by the weapon's light weight, decreased felt recoil, and related increase in accuracy and better control.

The Soldiers' input could lead to design changes to any final product. However, no decision has been made on whether the LMG will eventually be fielded.

Spc. Brandon Smith, an infantryman, spent two weeks comparing the weapons.

"I could see a whole squad carrying it (the LMG)," he said. "You would own the battlefield."

To view video of the assessment and prior videos on the LMG on the Picatinny Arsenal YouTube channel go to <http://www.youtube.com/user/PicatinnyArsenal>, or <http://www.army.mil/article/67917/>

## APG to unveil alternative energy source

By **DAN LAFONTAINE**  
RDECOM Public Affairs

The U.S. Army is installing hydrogen fuel cells at three Aberdeen Proving Ground facilities as part of an initiative to boost alternative energy sources at military installations, officials announced Nov. 14.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, or USACE, and U.S. Department of Energy are leading the fuel-cell project at 24 buildings across nine federal sites. APG will be the first to be completed, with the other installations scheduled for the next six months, said Nicholas Josefik, project manager with the USACE Engineer Research and Development Center.

APG's fuel cells are electro-chemical devices that use hydrogen as a fuel to produce backup electricity without having to combust the fuel, Josefik said.

APG held a ribbon-cutting ceremony Nov. 16 at the Building Operations Control Center (Building 325) to mark the project's completion. The Edgewood Area snow removal center (Building E2194) and Aberdeen Test Center range control (Building E7010) will also receive fuel cells.

"This project provides an opportunity to evaluate quiet, non-polluting fuel cells for a specific application - backup power. These fuel cells can provide energy security and increase mission performance," Josefik said.

Fuel cells have several advantages for backup power compared with combustion generators, Josefik said. In addition, Fuel cells:

- Do not produce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Are quieter than combustion generators when operating.
- Perform self checks and send notices when service is required.
- Can be remotely monitored to determine usage and fuel levels.
- Are twice as efficient as combustion generators.
- Can continue providing power to the load with no loss of service when a grid outage occurs; typically, combustion generators require time to start up resulting in a loss of power for equipment.
- Automatically detect when grid power is restored and shut down automatically.

Finally, there is no need for human intervention for the fuel cells to provide emergency backup power.

USACE is also using wind, solar, geothermal, biogas, biofuel and waste-to-energy to support Department of Defense green initiatives, Josefik said.

The DOE Fuel Cell Technologies Program funded most of the \$2.5 million project, which allows cost sharing with federal agencies to spur early markets for fuel cells. The fuel cells will operate for five years with an option for the host sites to fund an extension.

Other installations that will receive fuel cell units are Fort Bragg, N.C.; Fort Hood, Texas; the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y.; Picatinny Arsenal, N.J.; Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Base, Colo.; U.S. Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms, Calif.; the Ohio National Guard; and NASA's Ames Research Center at Moffett Field, Calif.

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