



CECOM Speaker Series brings Medal of Honor winner to APG

This is the first article in a professional development series that will highlight distinguished speakers at APG.

By **KELLY LUSTER**
CECOM

Unpretentious, standing about 5 foot 10 inches, 175 pounds, Sal Giunta likely would blend into most crowds on most days. But today, he walked onto the stage to a thundering ovation, motioning “down” with his hands to those who came to hear him speak, “Please, please...take your seats...you’re too kind...”

Such is the character of the man who came to Myer Auditorium at the C4ISR Center of Excellence. Former Staff Sgt. Salvatore Giunta is a very humble man.

Sal, as he prefers to be called, reached into his inside suit pocket and retrieved a light-blue ribbon adorned with 13 white stars in the front, upon which there is an eagle clasping a gold bar upon which the word “Valor” is written, an inverted five-point gold star hanging below. Sal places the medal around his neck just before he prepares to speak. He said, “I only wear this for the people who came to hear me speak, not for me.”

Giunta is one in a lineup of several distinguished speakers scheduled as part of an ongoing professional development series for the employees at the U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Command. Also scheduled are Vernice Armour, former U.S. Marine captain known as “Flygirl,” America’s first African-American female combat pilot; author, motivational speaker, West Point graduate and former Army officer Ed Ruggero; and former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Peter G. Pace.

Giunta began by talking about service and sacrifice.



“This is kind of a special place for me to come to,” said Giunta as he began. “I think this group is different than most groups I talk to. War is not fought by an individual. It is fought by a collective group of people. And it’s not just the people fighting in combat; it’s all the support behind those people in combat. This is a true place of support.”

Although Giunta wears the nation’s highest medal for valor, he paid tribute to everyone who served in the military by asking everyone in the audience who served in the military

to stand to be recognized. “Thank you for your service,” he said, going on to explain why service to one’s country should be held in the highest regard. “To wear the uniform, or having worn the uniform, you have written a blank check to the United States of America for up to and including your life,” said Giunta. “It’s not up to you when it gets cashed. It’s not up to you how much it will be worth or how much it’ll be cashed in for. It’s not for your own benefit, but for our country’s benefit and for that—I thank you.”

As he began recounting the events that occurred in the pre-dawn hours five years ago to the day, Giunta earlier said it doesn’t get easier to talk about.

“I was an easily excitable child. I didn’t have a whole lot of direction. I wasn’t very goal oriented, I had a lot of energy and I liked to go in every direction at the same time. This made me not the best of students, but an exciting kid.”

He remembered Sept. 11, 2001, when he was a high school sophomore in eastern Iowa. His chemistry teacher turned on the TV because a plane had hit one of the twin towers. Then the second plane flew into the second tower, and it became an act of terrorism—an act of war.

“I felt this anger inside of me,” said Giunta. “I felt this burning and steam and I wanted to do something and I wanted to get them back, but I didn’t know how. But, as life does for so many people who are 16 years old and in high school, life moves on.”

His focus moved to graduating high school, and the feelings of getting back at those who had perpetrated the acts of terrorism in New York subsided—or so he thought.

Giunta said there wasn’t a strong military presence in Iowa, nor was there a member of his family in the military.

Late one evening Giunta was mopping the floor at his job at Subway when he heard a radio ad for a local Army recruiter who was giving away free T-shirts.

The next day he found himself face-to-face with an Army recruiter who made the sales pitch of the century.

“Son,” the recruiter said, “we’re a country at war. We’ve been in

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Army Wellness Center coming to APG in 2013

By **YVONNE JOHNSON**
APG News

In the near future, Aberdeen Proving Ground is slated to stand up an Army Wellness Center; a new initiative in achieving overall health for Soldiers and retirees, their families, and Army civilians.

According to the Nov. 7 STAND-TO!, Army Wellness Centers are the outreach arm of the Army Medical Command’s (MEDCOM) Patient-Centered Medical Home, Army medicine’s current primary-care model. The goal is to weave primary prevention into the fabric of everyday life, educating Army community members and their families about how to live longer and healthier lives. Primary prevention, preventing disease and injury before they occur is the key to refocusing Army medicine from a healthcare system to a system for health.

The AWC program is a MEDCOM program overseen by the U.S. Army Public Health Command, headquartered at APG.

“From our perspective at Public Health Command, the Army Wellness Center initiative is truly a partnership,” said Maj. Zack Solomon, APG’s AWC project officer. “Public



Solomon

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Aberdeen pays tribute to vets

Story and photo by
RACHEL PONDER
APG News

Citizens of the city of Aberdeen gathered on a sunny, crisp fall day to honor veterans for their service during a ceremony at Veterans Memorial Park Nov. 11.

“Ordinary people accomplishing extraordinary things. Simply put, that is who veterans are,” said Aberdeen Mayor Michael Bennett, during welcoming remarks. “America owes a debt to our veterans that could never be repaid.”

Bennett said that a high number of veterans provide vital services to their communities, serving as firefighters, police officers, and in other leadership positions.

“When an emergency hits, there is a good chance it is a veteran that is first to respond,” he said. “Whether it is a school teacher, construction worker, or first



(Left) During the annual Aberdeen Veterans Day observance, Officer of the Day Robert Hanson, from the American Legion Post 128, and retired Lt. Col. Elizabeth Kruger, from the Catholic War Veterans Auxiliary, salute during a wreath-laying ceremony held at Veterans Memorial Park Nov. 11.

responder, military veterans take their mission seriously.”

During the ceremony, APG Garrison Commander Col. Gregory McClinton said

veterans are Soldiers for life. “They are professionals, international standard bearers, that other Soldiers

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WEATHER

Thurs.



50° | 36°

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STREET TALK

Do you plan to go shopping on Black Friday?

I'm not sure about this year but when I do go, I don't look for anything in particular. I'm just looking for good deals. Usually it's just too stressful.



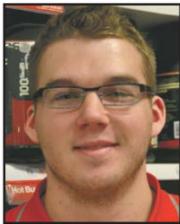
Bridgette Graham
Army Contracting Command

No. I did when I was younger but not anymore. I can't stand the crowds.



Linda Connors
AAFES vendor

I understand why people do, but I'm not into crazy deals. The day before we're giving thanks for what we already have so it doesn't make sense to me.



Steve Barton
GNC sales associate

I prefer to shop online at CyberMonday.com for computer deals. They have all kinds of electronics. You can just relax and browse around.



Maj. Bradley Stremiau
ATEC

History of Veterans Day

By **CHRISIE REILLY**
Staff Historian, U.S. Army CECOM

World War I happened nearly a century ago in Europe. Frank Buckles, the last living American WWI Veteran, died last year at the age of 110. It was the sacrifice of he and of his fellow service members that inspired the holiday Americans are about to observe: Veterans Day.

Originally known as Armistice Day to honor the living veterans of the First World War, Veterans Day has transformed into a holiday inclusive of service members of all eras. Veterans Day is a national holiday of remembrance and recognition of all those who served regardless of branch or duty status, Reserve or active component.

Looking back on Veterans Day as Armistice Day is at once nostalgic as well as historically mindful. Historian Robert H. Ferrell of Indiana University Bloomington reminds readers that what was once a staple celebration represented by World War I era artifacts and culture was translated into a holiday that could span generations. In his work, "Oatmeal and Coffee: Memoirs of a Hoosier Soldier in World War I," Ferrell outlines those Great War Soldiers were a very different breed than their World War II counterparts. Doughboys, as World War I Soldiers were called, were not the same as the Yanks or G.I.s of World War II.

Armistice day

An armistice, or temporary cease fire, between the Allied Nations and Germany stopped the fighting of World War I on November 11, 1918. Known at the time as the Great War, the end of combat became effective on the eleventh minute of the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. The official end of the war would not come for another seven months, on June 28, 1919, when the Treaty of Versailles was signed. A publication from 1918, America Magazine, marked the day as one of triumph and joy, even amongst those suffering from losses. A passage from this magazine read: "There would be time and enough in the future to grieve for the ravages that had wrought in their own lives, but on the day of the armistice all gave way to universal rejoicing, because mankind was once more free."

President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed the first "Armistice Day" on Nov. 11, 1919, to show solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service. Wilson declared "To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service." The original concept for the celebration was for the suspension of business for a two minute period beginning at 11 a.m., with the day also marked by parades and public meetings.

In 1920, France and the United Kingdom each held ceremonies honoring their unknown dead from the war. An "unknown soldier" of the Great War was buried in each nation's highest place of honor: in England, Westminster Abbey; in France, the Arc de Triomphe. This holiday is now known as Remembrance Day in Canada, the United Kingdom, France, and Belgium, and commemorates all who served.

In 1921, an unknown American Soldier was interred at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Va. Armistice Day officially received its name in America in 1926 through a Congress-

It once commemorated a specific day and a group of people involved, and now is emblematic of service and sacrifice for all military members.

sional Resolution (44 Stat. 1982). This proclamation read: "It is fitting that the recurring anniversary of this date should be commemorated to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nations."

Changes in observance

In 1938, Congress declared Armistice Day a legal holiday (52 Stat. 351; 5 U. S. Code, Sec. 87a), to be held the 11th of November in each year. This was to be a day to be dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be thereafter celebrated and known as "Armistice Day."

If World War I had indeed been "the war to end all wars," Nov. 11, might still be called Armistice Day. Hostilities across the Pacific escalated during the 1930s, battles erupted in Europe in 1939, and the world was once again overrun with war. The ideal of a lasting peace was laid to rest.

Armistice Day was primarily a day set aside to honor veterans of World War I, but World War II saw the greatest mobilization of Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen in the Nation's history. Approximately 16 million Americans served in the Armed Forces during World War II.

Raymond Weeks of Birmingham, Ala., organized a Veterans Day parade for that city on Nov. 11, 1947, to honor all of America's Veterans for their loyal service. The First World War, unfortunately, was not the war to end all wars, and both World War II and the Korean War dramatically increased the number of American war veterans. Recognizing that Armistice Day was limited to a specific conflict and group of Soldiers, the name was changed to Veterans Day in 1954.

Later, U.S. Representative Edward H. Rees of Kansas proposed legislation changing the name of Armistice Day to Veterans Day to honor all who have served in America's Armed Forces. June 1, 1954, President Dwight Eisenhower signed legislation changing the name of the legal holiday from Armistice Day to Veterans Day.

Moving the observance

In the 1960s, federal legislators attempted to make Veteran's Day fall on a Monday, like Memorial Day and Labor Day. The Uniform Holiday Bill (Public Law 90-363 (82 Stat. 250)) was signed on June 28, 1968, to ensure three-day weekends for federal employees by celebrating four national holidays on Mondays: Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Columbus Day. The intention was to encourage travel, recreational and cultural activities, and stimulate the economy during the long weekends.

According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, however, many states did not agree with this decision. The U.S. Army Center of Military history reports that "forty-six states had either continued to commemorate November 11 or had reverted back to the original date based on popular sentiment."

Confusing and unpopular, the first Veterans Day under the new law was observed on October 25, 1971. It mattered to the citizens that Veterans Day was a specific remembrance, and not just a generic type of holiday. Sept. 20, 1975, President Gerald Ford signed a law which returned the annual observance of Veterans Day to its original date of Nov. 11, beginning in 1978.

Collective memory and the modern holiday

Just as personal memories evolve throughout the course of life, so to do things like memorials and holidays. What used to be recognized as a celebration of the end of "the war to end all wars," our modern consciousness sees it differently. It once commemorated a specific day and a group of people involved, and now is emblematic of service and sacrifice for all military members.

In Sarah E. Drake's article from 2002, "The Postwar Home Front: Memorializing Veterans," she wrote about how those service members from World War II and the Korean War actually witnessed this holiday's evolution firsthand. In 1958, unknown American service members from both of these conflicts were also interred at Arlington National Cemetery, which transformed the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier to the Tomb of the Unknowns. The 1921 remembrance of a lone World War I Soldier would be forever changed as these other war dead are now honored there as well.

Historian Gabrielle Kalapos theorizes that the selection of Nov. 11 as a day for the cease fire "may simply be a coincidence" but this day had ancient historic meaning in the old Roman Julian calendar. In her book, The Origins of Modern Holidays, she posits that not only is fall the season for remembering and commemorating the deceased, but that holidays for this were already part of the European tradition long before World War I.

Celtic Samhain and the Germanic Day of the Dead were both celebrated Nov. 11, until the switch to the modern Gregorian calendar moved those days to Nov. 1. In addition, Martinmas, or St. Martin's Day, was celebrated on Nov. 11, once Christianity was established in Northern Europe. Named after St. Martin, a Roman soldier who longed for the life of a Christian monk, died on this date in 397 C.E. While an interesting theory, this notion outlines that honoring the dead was long part of the collective Western psyche long before the hostilities of World War I.

The joyous celebrations of those early Armistice Days should not be forgotten as Americans celebrate Veterans Day. The Revolutionary War hero Nathan Hale said he regretted that he had "but one life to lose for my country." This year, as in all years, it is a time to give thanks for those who have served, pay respect to those who have come home, and honor those who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

APG SEVEN DAY FORECAST

Thurs



50°|36°

Fri



52°|36°

Sat



51°|41°

Sun



49°|42°

Mon



49°|43°

Tue



50°|43°

Wed



52°|41°

APG NEWS

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Supply and Services Division Chief Joseph Balum gives APG Garrison Commander Col. Gregory McClinton a tour of Magazine 742. Twelve Soldiers from the 8th Ordnance Company, Fort Bragg, N.C., recently helped inventory ammunition at the Directorate of Logistics' Ammunition Supply Point.

Ordnance troops help DOL inventory ammo

Story and photo by
RACHEL PONDER
APG News

Twelve Soldiers from the 8th Ordnance Company, Fort Bragg, N.C., recently helped the APG Garrison's Directorate of Logistics inventory ammunition at its Ammunition Supply Point. The Soldiers began Oct. 31 and concluded their operations Nov. 09.

The Soldiers worked under the direction of Keri Hoy, chief of the Ammunition Branch; and Tim Bowers, munitions supervisor at the ASP, Bldg. 714. DOL conducts a 100 percent inventory on the ASP's 42 magazines on a quarterly basis.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Anthony Hall, ammunition officer for the 8th Ordnance Company, led the mission. Hall said most of the unit's Soldiers have recently graduated from Advanced Individual Training, and that this is their first opportunity to work at an ASP. He added that the Soldiers were chosen for this assignment based on their knowledge, training needs and aptitude. Because there is no ASP at Fort Bragg, the Soldiers that work at APG's ASP get a unique learning experience.

"This is an opportunity for these Soldiers to practice their MOS (Military

Occupation Specialty), so they can stay proficient in their jobs," he said. "The Soldiers are excited to be here. This is a win-win situation for everybody."

The Soldiers hold the MOS of 89A, ammunition stock control and accounting specialist, and 89B, ammunition specialist. The nine 89Bs were responsible for recording 4,000 stacks of ammunition boxes and containers on inventory count sheets. The 89Bs gave the inventory sheets to the two 89As, who processed the data into a computer system.

The day before they completed their mission, DOL Director Gene Schneck and APG Garrison Commander Col. Gregory McClinton personally thanked the unit and gave each Soldier a Commander's Coin for their effort.

"Be safe out there, make good decisions, and do the right thing," McClinton said. "We appreciate what you do here."

This is the second time the unit assisted DOL. Over the summer, Soldiers from the unit helped DOL inventory and reduce its ammunition supply. Hall added that a team of 8th Ordnance Soldiers will conduct the next ASP inventory in February.

"We want to come here to work, as much as possible," Hall said.

ABC-C introduces new benefit tool, eRetirement

The ABC-C is offering Army serviced employees the new eRetirement web application located in the Employee Benefits Information System (EBIS). This tool will allow you to fill out your retirement application with ease.

With eRetirement, Army serviced employee within one year of retirement, can fill out their retirement application on this secure website. First, logon to the website at <https://www.abc.army.mil> with a Common Access Card (CAC) and select the EBIS icon or web link. Then enter your Social Security Number (SSN) and Personal Identification Number (PIN).

Once the EBIS website is accessed click on the eRetire-

ment button. Complete all the forms listed. When finished, simply print off each form individually, review closely, and sign any applicable forms. Lastly, send it to the ABC-C at 301 Marshall Avenue, Fort Riley, KS 66442. They will review your application closely and send you a letter stating they have received your application.

For more information about eRetirement, call the APG Civilian Personnel Advisory Center at 410-278-1404; visit the APG CPAC website at <http://www.apg.army.mil/cpac1/>; or contact an ABC-C Benefits Counselor at 1-877-276-9287 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

DES team wins regional award

Story and photo by
YVONNE JOHNSON
APG News

For the past several years, members of the Directorate of Emergency Services' Special Reaction Team have taken part in an annual competition hosted by the National Capital Region SWAT (Special Weapons and Tactics) Association. They join 27 other elite police units from Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia, in the test of skills for the right to be called the best at what they do.

This year, for the first time, the APG SRT came away with a trophy after winning third place in the Sniper-Initiated Pursuit event of the competition. The team of six officers was led by Lt. Joel Holdford, SRT commander.

Holdford said the win is a big deal for the SRT as they competed against some of the best teams in the nation.

"They are easily some of the best SWAT teams on the East Coast," he said.

The one-day competition was held Nov. 2 at the Montgomery County Police Outdoor Firing Range. Along with county SWAT units from Maryland, Virginia and D.C. participants included federal police organizations such as the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS); the Federal Bureau of Investigation; the U.S. Department of State; the U.S. Department of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms; the National Security Agency; U.S. Capitol Police and the Pentagon Force Protection Police Department. APG is the only member agency from a military installation, Holdford said.

"We competed well and our accuracy was as good as anyone there," he said.

Competitions like the NCRSA allows commanders to assess their team's abilities compared to other tactical teams in the region and ensures that their training is effective, he added.

"I was able to observe each event and I could see that their accuracy was as good as any," he said. "There were some faster but no one outshined them."



From left, DES Special Reaction Team members Jason Schaffer, Eric Ouimette, Andrew Funke, SRT Commander Lt. Joel Holdford, Brian Zorn, Timothy Patton and Scott Walters won third place in the Sniper-Initiated Pursuit event of the 2012 National Capital Region SWAT Association competition at the Montgomery County Police Outdoor Firing Range Nov. 2.

The four other events in the five-event competition included the Obstacle Course, Ballistic Shield Operations, Handgun Challenge and Bearcat APC Bailout. Team members fired sniper rifles, shotguns, handguns and M4-style carbine weapons.

Holdford said training throughout the year is the key to excelling in such a competition.

"We have to ensure that the training we do keeps our skills sharp. If you're not training all year, you're not going to do well."

Current APG Police Officer of the Year Jason Schaffer was one of the six team members who competed. Schaffer, who has competed in the event "four or five times," said the competition was "very intense" and said that team members were confident in their skills despite the pressure.

"What I like about it is that oth-

er teams root for you as well," he said. "It's not just a competition. It's a time to get out and have a good time with people you don't get to see very often. Everybody has a good, competitive spirit and wants you to succeed."

"We're a big family," he said of his fellow SRT members. "We all know each other's families; we all spend time together and care about each other. And, we train hard to make sure we stay prepared so everybody makes it home safe. This [the SRT] reminds me of the military and that's what drew me to this field."

He credited team captain Timothy Patton's organization skills with aiding the team's success.

"Everybody put in 110 percent to make it happen," he said. Preparation and training brought it all together."

Holdford said the SRT was hon-

ored to be invited to participate and that overall he was "very pleased" with their performance.

"I appreciated the way our guys approached each event – as a mission. Some teams were faster but if you have accuracy as baseline, speed will follow. Speed is good but accuracy is final."

NCRSA

The NCRSA was created in 2005 to promote and encourage communication and mutual support among the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) teams in the National Capital Region by providing highly realistic and affordable training resources and disseminating tactically significant knowledge and information to member law enforcement, military agencies and individuals.

How are we doing? E-mail comments and suggestions for the APG News to the editor at adrienne.c.foss.civ@mail.mil

JPEO-CBD welcomes new leader

By **CICELY LEVINGSTON**

JPEO-CBD Public Affairs

The Joint Program Executive Office for Chemical and Biological Defense hosted a Change of Charter ceremony and welcomed its new leader Nov. 6 in the Aberdeen Proving Ground post theater.

The outgoing Joint Program Executive Officer, Brig. Gen. Jess Scarbrough, passed the organization's leadership reins to Carmen Spencer. Presiding over the ceremony was Lt. Gen. William Phillips, Principal Military Deputy to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology.

The JPEO-CBD is the Department of Defense organization responsible for the research, development, acqui-

sition, fielding, and life-cycle support of chemical and biological defense equipment and medical countermeasures. Scarbrough, only the second Joint Program Executive Officer in the organization's nine-year history, expressed his gratitude to the workforce. He also thanked the numerous support commands and partners with which the JPEO-CBD collaborated during his four year tenure to provide more than 8.3 million systems, equipment items, and medical countermea-



Spencer

ures to Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines around the world.

"The men and women of the JPEO have worked tirelessly to ensure the acquisition system is responsive to our broad range of customers, from the individual warfighter to the national command authority," Scarbrough said during his parting remarks. "It was truly an honor to have been at the helm of such a great organization with a critical mission."

Spencer will build upon the JPEO-CBD's record of achievement and continue the whole-of-government approach to accomplishing the organization's mission by working with partners within the federal government, civilian industry, academia, and abroad.

"No other person in the Army is more prepared to fill the role of joint program executive officer than Carmen," noted Phillips. "I have great faith and confidence in his abilities."

Spencer, a member of the Senior Executive Service, has held numerous positions of leadership within the chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear community. Prior to assuming command of the JPEO-CBD, he served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Elimination of Chemical Weapons) and will maintain that role and associated responsibilities.

Spencer told the audience that he looks forward to serving in his new capacity and continuing the important JPEO-CBD mission of preparing the nation.

Wellness Center changes Army health care thinking

Continued from Page 1

Health Command provides the science-based wellness and health promotion expertise, and the standardization and quality assurance from center to center."USAPHC's APG medical partner is Kirk U.S. Army Health Clinic.

"The best part is that Army Wellness Center services are open to everyone on APG and its services are free," said Kirk Commander, Lt. Col. Ellen S. Daly.

The APG Army Wellness Center will be located on the clinic's third floor and will be staffed by nurse and health educators.

Daly said the AWC concept is in line with Army Surgeon General, Lt. Gen. Patricia Horoho's plan to change the way Army providers provide healthcare.

"She is tasking all of us to increase education to encourage good health decisions year-round," she said. "Fortunately for us, the PHC is located on APG and is willing to provide the funding and the staffing to stand up the AWC inside our facility."

The AWC approach is holistic in that it considers the complete person, psychologically as well as physically, Daly said. Any military, DA civilian, retiree, Family member or contractor can make an appointment at the AWC or be referred by their commander or supervisor.

"It's for anyone interested in gaining health information and a better, healthier lifestyle," she said.

Solomon said the AWC premise is based on primary prevention of the onset of disease. The concept, which means reaching out to the population before diseases take effect, is achieved through educating personnel on how to build and sustain good health.

The AWC process begins with six core programs, he said. They include a Health Assessment Review. Then Physical Fitness and Nutrition needs are evaluated. But it doesn't end there.

"In response to increased stress after 12 years of war, the AWC also includes Stress Management training and techniques. Tobacco Education and General Wellness Education round out the six core programs," he said.

"This is the standard program set but the Community Health Promotion Council can survey the community to determine if certain programs will be beneficial to that area and then send recommendations forward to evaluate the goals and objectives.

Programs are individualized to meet patient's current needs, motivation and confidence levels. For example, the Health Assessment Review includes American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) Risk Stratification; a Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire (PAR-Q); a Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) Score and Biometric Screening. From private sources, this testing would cost about \$3,000.

Solomon said the AWC is built

around classes and individual coaching.

"Every visit is documented and everyone receives a printout," he said. "Soldiers receive a full summary that will follow them to every post where there's an AWC. If you are an eligible medical system beneficiary seeing an Army provider, the AWC staff also will document your visit results in your medical record."

Referrals can be made to AWCs by medical providers or unit commanders. Self-referrals are always welcome and can be made by contacting AWCs directly.

"Army Wellness Centers benefit units, unit leaders and individuals," Solomon said. "They improve unit readiness by targeting the fitness and performance of Soldiers—something leaders really appreciate—and they empower individuals to build, sustain and manage their own good health."

The Army Wellness Center program

How the AWC Program works

AWCs are staffed by nurses and health educators who deliver primary prevention programs. (Primary prevention occurs before disease injury or disability occurs). Referrals can be made to AWCs by medical providers or unit commanders. Self-referrals are always welcome and can be made by contacting AWCs directly.

Core programs offered at AWCs

The AWC approach to service is holistic. AWC staff members take into account all of an individual's physical, psychological and social circumstances when providing services. A holistic approach is important because a person's health cannot be full addressed unless the whole person is considered.

Health assessment review: An analysis of a person's health status, risk for disease and ability to increase physical activity safely.

Physical fitness: Using state-of-the-art equipment, physical fitness level I assessed and used to create an individualized exercise prescription.

Healthy nutrition: Use of metabolic testing that synchronizes an individual's resting metabolic rate to provided tailored strategies for weight loss, gain or maintenance.

Stress management: Education in biofeedback and stress relief techniques, positive coping skill and good sleep habits.

General wellness education: Classes on topics such as healthy lifestyles, increased resiliency, preventing chronic disease through healthy living habits, and self-care.

Tobacco education: An assessment of an individual's readiness to change, a discussion of possible options for becoming tobacco free, and provision of the appropriate tobacco cessation education.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

THURSDAY

NOV. 15 SAME MEETING

The Society of American Military Engineers (SAME) Chesapeake Post will hold its November meeting 11:30 am at the Wetland Golf Club in Aberdeen. The featured speaker is Lt. Col. Brad Endres, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Deputy District Commander, Baltimore District. His presentation is titled, "Baltimore District FY13 Program Overview." Pre-register online at <http://www.same-chesapeake.org>. Walk-ins are welcome. For more information call 410-638-9699.

GREAT AMERICAN SMOKE-OUT

The Annual Great American Smoke-Out will take place at APG on Nov. 15. This annual event encourages smokers to quit, even if only for a day. To promote this huge commitment there will be four locations and two events to encourage cigarette/tobacco drop-offs. Free "Bowling" or "Bucket of Balls" coupons will be given to Smokers/Dippers/Chewers who drop off their tobacco of choice and to Non-Users who bring a friend who is making the commitment.

Come early to choose your reward at the APG North Bowling Alley, C4ISR Courtyard, Edgewood Area Recreation Center, or the Edgewood Shopette between 1130 and 1300.

POC: Ann Laughton @ 410-278-1774. Additional activities will include:

- 1/2 mile or 1 mile walk: at the C4ISR Courtyard starting at 1130. POCs: Tiffany Grimes @ 443-861-7910 and Keosha Pointer @ 443-861-7915.

- Bike Rally: starting at the Swan Creek Parking lot, behind 2202 Aberdeen Boulevard, for a 1 hour ride starting at 1130. Wear reflective gear and a helmet. POC: Gale Sauer @ 443-861-9260.

All activities are open to Civilians, Contractors, and Military.

Use the attached link to send an e-card to a smoker that you care about: <https://phc.amedd.army.mil/PHC%20Resource%20Library/GAS%20eCard.html>

VET ENTREPRENEUR DAY

This event provides Veterans an opportunity to meet and listen to other Veterans and to learn of valuable skills

and products they have to offer, the opportunity to begin the contracting or hiring process, to offer their business products and services to potential buyers or partners and to offer problem-solving skills to potential employers.

The event runs from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the APG North (Aberdeen) recreation center, Bldg. 3326. For information, contact Angela Corrieri at 443-6194968 or e-mail acorr@startuppartersinc.org.

FRIDAY

NOV 16 BASKET AND VERA BRADLEY BINGO

Doors open at 6 p.m.; early bird at 6:45 p.m.; BINGO begins at 7 p.m. \$12 first pack of cards; \$5 for each extra set. Sponsored by Aberdeen High School Girls Field Hockey, held at the American Legion Bernard L. Tobin Post 128, 44 N. Parke St., Aberdeen. Tickets available by calling Brenda Conjour (410) 273-7332 or email to Nicole.andriano@hcps.org. Food and drinks available. Bring a canned good and/or non-perishable item for bonus prize ticket.

FRIDAY NIGHT OPEN RECREATION FOR TEENS

The APG North (Aberdeen) Youth Center, building 2522, invites all high school students out to its free Friday Night Open Recreation for Teens, every Friday night, 6 p.m. - midnight. Teens are invited to meet new friends, shoot some hoops or just play some pool. Bring up to two non-DoD friends to join in the fun. For more information, call 410-278-4995.

SATURDAY

NOV. 17 SCRAPBOOKING CROP

Aberdeen Area Recreation Center, Bldg 3326, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.. Gather your photos and enjoy a day of scrapbooking with your friends! Whether you are a seasoned scrapbooker or have always wanted to try scrapbooking, come and "Crop Till You Drop" Lunch will be served; door prizes and giveaways will be available. Vendors will be on hand so you may purchase a variety of scrapbooking necessities. The price for a full day of cropping is

\$25.00. Call to reserve your spot or table of friends. Please call Patti Harkins at the Civilian Welfare Fund Office for more information or to make reservations (410)436-4467, or e-mail at patricia.e.harkins.naf@mail.mil.

MONDAY

NOV. 19 VETERANS EDUCATION DAY

As part of American Education Week, Aberdeen Proving Ground is sponsoring Veterans Education Day at the APG North (Aberdeen) recreation center, Bldg. 3326, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information, contact Tressie Stout at 410-306-2042.

HOLIDAY SHARING PROGRAM

The APG community is constantly reminded of the great sacrifices of the men and women in the U.S. Armed Forces. During these difficult and stressful times, some military Families are experiencing hardship and require additional assistance. Aberdeen Proving Ground works closely with these military Families, providing supportive services throughout the year. To make this holiday season a little bit brighter for some of these Families. APG is hosting the "2012 Holiday Gift Sponsor Program." Individuals, groups, organizations and agencies desiring to sponsor a military Family can contact the ACS Financial Readiness Program Manager at 410-278-2450, or FAX 410-278-9685.

FRIDAY

NOV. 23 DES BADGING OFFICE CLOSED

The DES Badge Offices (Aberdeen and Edgewood) will be closed on 23 Nov 2012.

Both offices will re-open on 26 Nov. For questions or more information, contact Sam Seay at 410-278-3127

SATURDAY

NOV. 24 NEW YORK CITY BUSTRIIP

Spend the day in the Big Apple, at your leisure. There will be plenty of time for shopping, taking in the

sights or catching a Broadway Show. The cost is \$46 per person for round trip coach fare. Bus departs APG at 6 a.m. and returns approximately 10 p.m. For more information or to make reservations, contact Patti Harkins, Civilian Welfare Fund Office, at 410-436-4467 or e-mail patricia.e.harkins.naf@mail.mil

TUESDAY

NOV. 27 NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

RDECOM along with Team APG will host this year's National American Indian Heritage Month Observance at the APG North (Aberdeen) recreation center, Bldg. 3326, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. For more information or to volunteer, contact Sgt. 1st Class David J. Hall, RDECOM Equal Opportunity Advisor at 410-306-2425 or e-mail david.j.hall.mil@mail.mil

WEDNESDAY

NOV. 28 HCC MILITARY APPRECIATION BASKETBALL

Harford Community College invites all active duty military, veterans and their Family members to attend double-header Men's and Women's basketball games free-of-charge.

The HCC Fighting Owls will take on Baltimore City Community College. Women's tipoff is at 5 p.m. and the men's game follows at 7 p.m. in the school's new arena.

Service members and veterans are asked to show their ID at the ticket window. Each will receive up to four tickets to the games.

For more information, visit www.facebook.com/harfordcc or call 410-836-4000, Ext. 2408.

SATURDAY

DEC. 1 THE ABERDEEN ROOM

The Aberdeen Room Archives and Museum, 18 N. Howard Street in Aberdeen, will host its 25th Anniversary Open House from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Enjoy punch and cookies while taking in a guided tour of the museum's artifacts and learning about the

rich histories of the city of Aberdeen and Aberdeen Proving Ground. The Open House is free and open to the public. For more information, call 410-273-6325; e-mail sayhello@aberdeen-room.org or visit the Aberdeen Room website at www.aberdeenroom.org.

THROUGH DEC. 3 APG SOUTH FOOD, TOY AND GIFT DRIVE

This event benefits civilian and military Families in the community. Donation boxes are located in the lobbies of JPEO-CBD, Bldgs. E2800, E3551, E5101; PEO ACWA, Bldg. E3331; CMA, Bldgs. E4405, E4517, E4585, E4586, E4588; ECBC, Bldgs. E3150, E3330, E3400, E3510, E3516, E3549, E3831, E3942, E4301, E5100, E5232, E5234, E5560, E5951; and USAMRICE, Bldgs. E3100, E3081.

For more information, contact Mary Doak at mary.l.doak.civ@mail.mil or phone 410-436-7231

SATURDAY

DEC. 8 FREE SKATING AT ICE WORLD

Enjoy free admission courtesy of CWF from 5:45 to 7:45 p.m. Bring your own skates or rent them. Advance reservations required. For more information or to make reservations, contact Patti Harkins, Civilian Welfare Fund Office, at 410-436-4467 or e-mail patricia.e.harkins.naf@mail.mil.

ONGOING DONATE TO CFC

The annual Combined Federal Campaign is underway. For a list of charities or to make a contribution, visit https://www.cfcnexus.org/_chesapeake/ For more information, contact Tom Johnson at 410-278-6456 or e-mail thomas.g.johnson5.civ@mail.mil.

THURSDAYS SOCIAL HOUR

Socialize, network or just unwind with fellow Soldiers, coworkers, friends and Family while enjoying good food, music and camaraderie during Thursday Socials, 4 to 7 p.m., in the Top of the Bay Gunpowder Lounge.

Thursday Socials include complimentary light refreshments and a cash bar with additional fare for sale.

For more information, contact Teri Hall at 410-278-3062.

THANK THE TROOPS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Shutterfly, Inc. has launched its Thank the Troops campaign and invites everyone to send a thank you card to military service members and veterans in VA hospitals this holiday season.

Sending a free card is easy. Simply access the Facebook app, select a card, add a personal message or photo, and click send.

Shutterfly will take care of the printing and delivery. Completed cards will be distributed to troops and veterans nationwide and overseas. Pick up MyArmyphotos post cards at APG recreation centers to login for a free Photo Book. To learn more and to create a card visit <https://apps.facebook.com/thankthetroops/>.

CPR, AED CLASSES SLATED

The APG Fire and Emergency Services Division of the Directorate of Emergency Services is offering CPR and automated external defibrillator classes in the coming weeks. Two classes will be held the third Wednesday of each month from September through December.

Dates, times and locations are:

- Nov. 21, 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. at the APG North Chapel

- Dec. 19, 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. at the Edgewood Conference Center, Bldg. E4810

Class size is limited to 30 participants.

For more information or to register, contact Mike Slayman, assistant chief of EMS, at 410-306-0566 or e-mail michael.p.slayman.civ@mail.mil.

USMC HERITAGE AWARDS

The Marine Corps Heritage Foundation is accepting submissions for its annual awards program. Each year the foundation presents awards honoring outstanding, creative work of individuals in preserving Marine Corps history, traditions and culture.

Marines, civilians and retirees can submit their own entries or the work of others. All winners receive a \$1,000 cash prize, a medallion and a commemorative brick along the Semper Fidelis Memorial Park pathway at the Marine Corps Heritage Center.

Awards will be presented during the foundation's annual ceremony April

20, 2013. Submission deadline is Jan. 9, 2013. E-mail submissions to Susan Hodges, vice-president of administration, Marine Corps Heritage Foundation, at hodges@marineheritage.org.

Mailed submissions should be sent to Susan Hodges, c/o Awards Program, 3800 Fettle Park Drive #104, Dumfries, VA 22025. The 2013 Awards Program Submission Form must accompany all submissions.

For information, contact Hodges at 703-640-7961, e-mail hodges@marineheritage.org, or visit <http://www.marineheritage.org/Awards.asp>; click on "Programs" then "Awards."

RENT CAPA FIELD

Rent CAPA Field picnic area in Edgewood for \$250 for the entire day for Family reunions, graduation parties, birthdays, anniversaries, etc. The site includes a covered pavilion with picnic tables, grills, an ice machine and sports equipment. Reservations are accepted starting March 1. For more information or to make reservations, contact Patti Harkins, Civilian Welfare Fund Office, at 410-436-4467 or e-mail patricia.e.harkins.naf@mail.mil

FIREWOOD FOR SALE

Firewood is now available at a cost of \$20 per level standard 8-foot pick-up truck; \$15 per level standard 6-foot pick-up truck; and \$5 per car trunk load. Permits to buy wood are good for ten days, or until an order is filled, whichever comes first. Loads must be checked at either DES police stations in Bldg. 2200 in APG North (Aberdeen) or Bldg. E4420 in APG South (Edgewood) before exiting post.

Permits will be issued on a first-come-first served basis 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. APG South Bldg. E4630 Monday through Thursday. For more information, call Kathy Thisse, 410-436-8789 or Scott English, 410-436-9804.

NOMINATE MILITARY CHILD OF THE YEAR BY DEC. 15

Operation Homefront has announced that nominations for the Military Child of the Year Awards are being accepted online at <http://militarychildoftheyear.org/> through Dec. 15. Winners will be recognized in April 2013.

The Military Child of the Year Award recognizes children who stand out among their peers. Ideal candidates for the award demonstrate resilience,

strength of character, and thrive in the face of the challenges of military life. These young heroes embody leadership within their families and communities.

This award is presented to an outstanding child from each branch of service – Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. The winners each receive \$5,000 and a laptop, and will be flown with a parent or guardian to Washington, D.C., for a special recognition ceremony at the Ritz-Carlton in Pentagon City on April 11.

For more information on how to nominate a child in your family or community, log on to <http://militarychildoftheyear.org/>

CHAPELS NEED EDUCATION COORDINATOR

An Ecumenical religious education coordinator is needed at the APG post chapels.

This is a part-time position, lasting for 12 months. The flexible work schedule consists of 50 hours a month including Sundays. If interested or for more information, contact Gerri Merkel at 410-278-2516 or e-mail caroline.j.merkel.civ@mail.mil.

REPORT POWER OUTAGES TO PICERNE MILITARY HOUSING

During the fall and winter, the weather brings a lot of rain and snow. Often times this can lead to power outages.

All residential power outages should be reported to the Neighborhood Office at 410-305-1076. This will allow staff to determine if the outage is widespread or specific to the home and coordinate the responsible provider to restore power.

In the event a neighborhood office loses power, the phone system may also be affected. If the office cannot be reached, residents should call the following toll-free numbers to report outages and maintenance emergencies. Calls to the toll-free number will directly connect residents to the emergency on-call service.

Aberdeen Proving Ground: 1-866-958-5412

Patriot Village: 1-866-871-6257
NH Office: 410-305-1076



**MORE
ONLINE**
More events can be seen at www.apgnews.apg.army.mil/calendar.

Garrison Commander gives thanks, praise to vets

Continued from Page 1

around the world seek to emulate,” he said.

McClinton said that in August 2011, President Barack Obama passed the Veterans Opportunity to Work (VOW) to Hire Heroes Act. The VOW Act expands training and educational opportunities for veterans and provides tax credits for employers who hire veterans with service-connected disabilities. McClinton added that Team APG will host a Veteran’s Entrepreneurial Day on Nov. 15, where veterans will have a chance to present their businesses to local investors.

“Supporting our Soldiers and veterans requires a team approach by the Army, government agencies and local communities like Aberdeen,” he said.

He added that veterans make exceptional employees in any organization because, in serving their country, they have acquired invaluable skills including decision-making skills, proven leadership honed in a challenging environment, team-building experience, and a work ethic that is committed to excellence.

He said the community can do its part by encouraging businesses to hire veterans and their Family members. Businesses that provide employment opportunities to veterans can register on the National Resource Directory, <https://www.nrd.gov/>, a website that provides information and resources to wounded warriors, veterans, service

members and their Families and caregivers.

“Don’t just thank veterans, show it through your actions,” he said.

American Legion Post 128 conducted the ceremony in coordination with the City of Aberdeen, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 10028, Catholic War Veterans Post 1841 and Korean War Veterans Post 271.

The program opened with the posting of the Colors by the American Legion Post 128 Honor Guard and the national anthem, played by the Aberdeen Middle School band. Robert Hanson of Post 128 served as Officer of the Day and escort during the placing of wreaths at the memorial. Each of the Veterans Service Organizations laid a

wreath to commemorate the service men and women who have fallen, followed by a moment of silence, a memorial salute fired by the Post 128 Honor Guard, and the playing of Taps.

After the service, Aberdeen resident Robin Lancaster, said she has attended the service for the last five years with her children, and looks forward to the annual ceremony.

“I agree with the guest speaker (McClinton),” she said. “Our community should protect and assist veterans. We need to break the trend of veterans’ unemployment and homelessness. We should help veterans reintegrate back into the work world. I am happy to hear about the VOW Act.”

Meet **Bob McNabb**, CECOM Occupational Safety and Health manager. Some of his duties include performing on-site staff assistance visits and assessments, accident investigations, safety program evaluations, providing safety promotional awareness for all employees, special surveys of operations, procedures, and processes associated with CECOM activities and organizations.

McNabb said recently the CECOM Directorate for Safety created a detailed and extensive Emergency Action Plan template for all C4ISR buildings and put the plan to test in Bldg. 3200.

“We also concluded a very successful series of safety drills and exercises for C4ISR employees including active shooter training, shelter-in-place training, emergency evacuation



Bob McNabb
CECOM Occupational Safety and Health Manager

training, and more,” McNabb said.

McNabb said what he enjoys most about his job is his interactions with people, and knowing he can make a difference.

“Simply knowing that by doing my job well, I’m probably keeping our

employees out of harm’s way, and possibly saving valuable resources and equipment,” he said. “It also helps to have the type of leadership and management within my directorate that truly lead by being the example; they live and breathe safety and they sup-

port everything I do because it’s in the interest of safeguarding people.”

McNabb added that his co-worker, Cindy Massangale, also a CECOM Occupational Safety and Health manager, is essential to the CECOM Directorate for Safety team.

“She believes in the safety program as I do, and is willing to go the extra mile to get it done. She takes the safety profession very seriously and she cares,” he said.

McNabb is located in Bldg. 3200, room 4300. The office is open for business 6 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Contact McNabb at 443-395-3568; robert.p.mcnabb2.civ@mail.mil, or visit the CECOM Occupational Safety and Health website at https://cecomsafety.apg.army.mil/safety/osh/dsosh_home.aspx.

Medal of Honor recipient speaks at APG

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Afghanistan since 2001. March 26, 2003, we entered Iraq. We're fighting on two fronts. At 18 years old if you want to make a tangible difference—a physical difference you can see at that moment, join the military.”

Giunta said it was a solid speech, but didn't sell him. “I just came here for the free T-shirt,” he said. But over the next 10 days, the recruiter's words resonated. So he went back to the recruiting station to sign up.

The recruiter said, “Alright, what do you want to do?” Giunta said he didn't know there were jobs in the Army.

“I want to spit, swear, shoot guns, jump out of planes, fight bad guys and drink beer,” said Giunta. “The recruiter said, ‘We have that job description—Airborne Infantry—it's going to be perfect.’”

He joined for four years, but didn't set goals other than getting deployed and fighting the enemies of his country. But he learned—you don't just get to join and go fight, come back and kiss pretty girls and drink beer—there is respect, service and responsibility.

“Most people learn most lessons through pushups and flutter kicks. That's how I learned best,” said Giunta.

The Army brought together people from different backgrounds, dropped them into one place and watched them grow into one cohesive unit.

“We were from all over the United States...from Washington, Florida, New York, and Iowa. They put us with each other but not as leaders and subordinates, but as peers in a completely different situation than any of us were used to. They taught us things none of had thought to learn before. We learned not to rely on ourselves, but rather to rely on those around us.

After basic training Giunta went to Airborne School and then reported to his unit in Vicenza, Italy, the 173rd Infantry. “I remember sitting in that recruiter's office looking at a magazine,” said Giunta. “There was a picture of this guy down on one knee, he had parachute crap hanging all over the place, he was muddy in the dirt, and he had just jumped into Iraq. That was the 173rd.

“They were a special group—not just any Soldiers, but Soldiers with experience, with knowledge, men who were willing to impart that knowledge through counseling through mentorship, through pushups! It was a pretty good place to be able to come in and be able to be put to the test immediately.”

The men Giunta served with led by example. “We didn't need a dictator of the standard to comply to the standards ourselves. In the 173rd, they didn't ask me to run a 12-minute 2-mile, they ran a 12-minute 2-mile and they said you better keep up!”

Giunta said the day before his unit deployed to Afghanistan was one of the most exciting days of his life.

“I have never been more excited for anything in my entire life. I was never more ready to get something underway than my first chance at combat—my first chance to serve my country. But then I got there and I realized, Afghanistan is a really different world than what I expected, it wasn't going to be what I had seen on TV, it wasn't going to go down how I expected.”

After arriving in Afghanistan, Giunta and approximately 35 other men spent most of their time about 20 kilometers away from any other “friendly” in the middle of the mountains running missions. Not long after they arrived at their mud hut, a truck bringing supplies to fortify their position hit an IED killing several men. Giunta was among the Soldiers detailed with helping with the recovery of remains.

“This was the first time I ever experienced a true loss,” he said. “I've served with these guys. I've seen what their capable of. This isn't someone who forgot to look both ways when crossing the street. These were the biggest, the strongest the fastest people I'd ever met. They died in a second—reduced to a mess on the ground—and it hurt me. I didn't know how to handle it. I'd seen dead people before, but they were all old and they weren't wearing the same uniform I was wearing...this was different.”

Within a week, Giunta's unit was tracking a high value target when they lost another Soldier. Their numbers dropped from 35 to 29 and had a dire effect on Giunta's emotional state.

“I got down on my stomach and I started thinking this isn't really what I signed up for, I'm not signing up to be a target or a sucker, but I don't how to handle this any other way and I have a pretty good feeling this crappy moun-



“To wear the uniform, or having worn the uniform, you have written a blank check to the United States of America for up to and including your life. It's not up to you when it gets cashed. It's not up to you how much it will be worth or how much it'll be cashed in for. It's not for your own benefit, but for our country's benefit and for that—I thank you.”

Staff Sgt. Salvatore Giunta
Medal of Honor recipient

tain in Afghanistan is going to be the last place I see.”

If not for one of the experienced 173rd NCOs, Giunta might have remained in his slump.

“My team leader came in, Sergeant Post and he had said, ‘What's wrong dude?’ and I just told him, I think this isn't going to play out well for us. I think this is Bad News Bears and he said in the simplest words, ‘Tomorrow will come whether you're in it or not, what you have is the opportunity to do is make a difference. If when it's your time to make a difference, you give 100 percent, you cannot regret the outcome.’ Simple words, I'm a simple man, but meaningful, but he was right. If I get sad or get down on myself, I can't be productive at the level I was before.”

Upon arriving back in Italy he learned another lesson that was common, though tough among Soldiers across the Army at the time—Stop Loss. While Giunta was nearing the end of his enlistment and was ready to end his adventure and move on to the next chapter, the Army made other plans.

“I was able to get promoted,” said Giunta. “I became a leader. I had the ability to lead the way I was led—and that's by example. A leader by definition should be in front.”

Becoming a leader was only a small part of what the Army had in store for Giunta. Elements of the 173rd were preparing to deploy to Afghanistan, including Giunta's unit.

Arriving in country in 2007, Giunta recognized they were in a different world than his previous deployment, much more mountainous. “We were halfway up a mountainside. About 135 guys spread across a valley, six miles by six miles. We had three FOBs (Forward Operating Bases) set up. The closest one was directly across the valley—straight-line distance probably two clicks (2 kilometers) walking distance four to eight hours depending on the weather and how high the river was. And [enemy] contact was every day.”

The other thing Giunta said was different about this deployment was his ability and confidence to lead his team of men. “As a leader I was able to instill the confidence in my guys that was instilled in me—the same confidence that was instilled in me through work ethic,” said Giunta. “We know we came here more prepared...we're bigger, we're faster, we're stronger, and we worked harder.”

Oct. 25, 2007, was like any other day in Afghanistan. The platoon set out in the pre-dawn hours to recover critical equipment taken from a scout and gun team overrun by enemy fighters. They had an “M240-Bravo, suppressed M4s, Night Vision Goggles, lots of ammo,” he said. “One of the critical pieces for us was the Night Vision Goggles. We owned the night. We can see things they can't, we used infrared lasers for a lot of the stuff we do. We mark with infrared lasers. All of the sudden they can see everything we can see.”

After sitting in place 14 hours with the sun setting, his unit started planning to withdraw.

Uncharacteristically, the platoon had to leave by the same route it arrived. “We never go in the way we go out,” said Giunta. “It creates a pattern. It's bad business, we don't do it.”

Because the terrain was so difficult to traverse the platoon walked single file with about 15 meters between each Soldier to avoid an incoming grenade killing more than one. Within 400 meters, “...it seemed like the whole world kind of exploded on us,” said Giunta. What exploded was an L-shaped ambush Giunta's comrades had just walked into.

His immediate reaction was to check the two men directly under his command. He saw Pfc. Kaleb Casey standing with an M249 SAW (Squad Automatic Weapon), his finger press-

ing the trigger. Giunta said, “He stood there and just started roping rounds. He shot all 200 rounds, he didn't stop, and he didn't take his finger off the trigger...at night, when you shoot that fast—he looked like a dragon blowing fire. By him doing this, he allowed us the freedom of movement.”

Pfc. Garrett Clary began firing his M203 grenade launcher, 40mm grenades, about the size of a fist. The ambush line, according to Giunta, was extremely close, so the grenades were likely landing beyond the line. Giunta turned his attention toward the ambush.

As Giunta moved forward he saw Staff Sgt. Erick Gallardo drop and his head twitch “in a bad way,” Giunta said. “I was overcome with anger. I ran forward because I thought I needed to grab Gallardo because I thought I needed him not to get shot up. I ran forward and I grabbed the handle on the back of his vest. As I was running back he started stumbling to his feet.”

After a quick inventory of grenades, Giunta and Gallardo began bounding forward to link up with two other Soldiers who were still forward of their position, Spc. Frank Eckrode and Sgt. Josh Brennan. After throwing grenades at enemy positions and bounding, they made it to Eckrode, who was shot twice in the leg and twice in the chest. The vest stopped both of the shots to the chest. Knowing because of what we trained, because of what Gallardo instilled in us—confidence in one another—I knew Eckrode was going to be fine.”

As the night continued to explode around him, Giunta continued to make his way forward looking for Brennan. “I ran all the way up front. I figured I'd go run and I'd fight next to Brennan. I knew Brennan charged the ambush line.”

But as he arrived where Brennan should have been, he was perplexed—his friend was not there. He continued a little further when he finally saw three figures in the dimly lit night. But this too was confusing.

“I couldn't grasp who beat me up there and why they were going so far in the wrong direction,” he said. Two enemies were carrying away Brennan. I shot both of them—dropped one on the spot—the other one jumped over the side. I grabbed Brennan and took off back the direction I came. The same way I had with Gallardo, by that handle on the back of his vest, he [Brennan] was alive...he was shot about seven times, in his legs, his arms, his chest, his mouth. He was talking the whole time...”

Giunta provided as much first aid as he could while calling for a medic, reassuring his friend he'd be telling ‘hero stories’ one day.

As the firefight ended a Medevac arrived to get the wounded and dead out. Brennan was hoisted first due to the seriousness of his injuries.

As the men completed the two-hour hump back to their base camp, they found out Eckrode was going to be fine. Two other Soldiers who were also injured in the firefight were also fine. But the unit's beloved medic, Spec. Hugo Mendoza, was killed-in-action during the ambush and Brennan succumbed to his injuries during surgery.

Over the next few days the Soldiers conducted after action reviews and wrote up sworn statements ensur-

ing they did what they were supposed to do. The Army prides itself on learning from mistakes and lessons learned. On the third day, Giunta's company commander told him he was being recommended for the Medal of Honor. He said “How can you try to award something on such a terrible day? How can you award me with anything? That entire firefight I shot maybe 30 rounds—maybe one magazine. While Casey stood up and roped out a 1,000, maybe 2,000 rounds and made himself a target. Staff Sgt. Erick Gallardo had done everything I did. I did exactly what was expected of me and what I would expect anyone else to do. We no longer worked at Subway. We were professional Soldiers. We didn't sign up to learn accounting or learn how to type. We signed up to shoot guns and shoot bad guys. This is what was expected of us.”

As was expected of good Soldiers, four days later, he and his buddies were back out on patrol. “One bad day happens all the time to different units or different groups—not just in the Army. But what we're expected to do is to continue. We still have a job, we still have a mission, and we still have a team that exists. And now, we owe it to our brothers to continually give 100 percent because they already gave their 100 percent the day they needed to,” said Giunta. He and his friends in the 173rd wouldn't leave Afghanistan until the following July, after more than 15 months in combat.

Ending as he started—ever so humble—taking his right index finger and pointing to the Medal of Honor around his neck Giunta said, “The only reason this is around my neck is because that's where it's supposed to be worn. The only reason why I'm the only one wearing it is because it's only big enough for one. What this medal represents is all of us—all of us who have fought—those who have died, not just in this war, but also past wars. Those who have made America, America, and those who keep America, America.”

While Giunta has few regrets in life, he would have loved to have gone to Ranger School. “I can't do it as a civilian,” he said. Also, while he may be the recipient of the Medal of Honor, there were so many other good men on that mountain that night—names often pushed aside when his is recognized. “Those guys who cared more about the people to the left and to the right—the guys who are the reason why I was standing on that stage. In this time in this picture that is painted, my brush stroke wasn't the first, isn't the last, wasn't the most spectacular, wasn't the biggest or the brightest, it just simply filled that space, all the other space was filled by the men around me.”

Today he speaks to young adults in high school and college.

“They don't understand how many opportunities are out there for them. Everything is an opportunity. Doors only close when let them close.”

“I talk about commitment and I enjoy service and I use the military because that's where I got it from, but we're all capable of doing anything we want,” said Giunta. “An average person can become an incredible person with what you decide to do with your life and how you decide to go about it.”

Rare opportunity

The opportunity to hear a Medal of Honor recipient speak is rare. According to the Medal of Honor Society official statistics, there are 81 living Medal of Honor recipients with only three from the current war in Afghanistan including Giunta, Sgt. 1st Class Leroy Petry, and retired Marine Sgt. Dakota Meyer.

Four Medals of Honor were awarded Posthumously for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of their lives above and beyond the call of duty while serving in Iraq by Sgt. 1st Class Paul R. Smith, Master-At-Arms 2nd Class Michael A. Monsoor, Army Pfc. Ross A. McGinnis, and Marine Cpl. Jason L. Dunham.

VETERANS' DAY

A peek at the events making news in and around U.S. Army Garrison Aberdeen Proving Ground. For complete photo coverage, visit <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usagapg/>.



WE DON'T WANT YOUR PITY

Guest speaker and disabled veteran Craig S. Carpenter encourages listeners to do all they can to assist veterans in gaining employment during the APG Veterans Day Ceremony Nov. 10. Along with local veterans and community leaders, representatives from local Veteran Service Organizations, Boy Scout Troops and 135 motorcycle riders who participated in the Thunderblast III Victory Ride for Veterans from 13 VSOs in Harford and Cecil counties attended. A free pancake breakfast in the APG North (Aberdeen) recreation center followed the ceremony.

Photos by Yvonne Johnson

HAVING A BOOT SCOOTIN' GOOD TIME

From left, Installation Command Sgt. Maj. Kennis Dent, Country singer Dean Crawford, Installation Commander Maj. Gen. Robert Ferrell, Gloria Dent and Vicky McClinton, the wife of Garrison Commander Col. Gregory McClinton, have a boot-scootin' good time while the Dunn's River band plays on during the free concert honoring veterans in the APG North (Aberdeen) recreation center Nov. 10. The concert by the Baltimore-based band closed the morning's APG Veterans Day activities that included a Fun Run and a Pancake Breakfast.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE

Sgt. Mikhail Missick of the 20th Support Command (CBRNE) looks on as APG Installation Commander Maj. Gen. Robert Ferrell greets veteran William Anderson during the Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers (BOSS) program's visit to hospitalized veterans at the Perry Point VA Medical Center in Perryville Nov. 7.



LAUGHING OUT LOUD

Comedian Josh Blue had the audience in stitches as he shared humorous tales about dealing with Cerebral Palsy, married life and fatherhood. Blue headlined the 2012 Laugh Out Loud Comedy Tour which featured the GIs of Comedy. The show, which closed out the APG Veterans Day activities, was free for veterans and active duty service members.



FUN RUN/WALK

Runners kick off APG Veterans Day activities with the Veterans Day 5K/1 mile Fun Run/Walk in front of the APG North (Aberdeen) Recreation Center Nov. 10.