



## Fiscal cliff legislation affects pay

American Forces Press Service

The legislation that President Barack Obama signed Jan. 2 that postponed the fiscal cliff means changes to military and civilian paychecks, Defense Finance and Accounting Service officials said Jan. 4.

The legislation increases Social Security withholding taxes to 6.2 percent. For the past two years during the "tax holiday" the rate was 4.2 percent.

The increase in Social Security withholding taxes affects both military and civilian paychecks, officials said.

For civilian employees, officials said, this will mean a 2 percent reduction in net pay.

For military personnel, changes to net pay are affected by a variety of additional factors such as increases in basic allowances

for housing, subsistence, longevity basic pay raises and promotions. Service members could see an increase in net pay, no change or a decrease, military personnel and readiness officials said.

For military members, Social Security withholding is located on their leave and earnings statement in the blocks marked "FICA taxes" -- for Federal Insurance Contributions Act.

DOD civilians will see the change on their leave and earnings statement under "OASDI" -- for old age, survivors, and disability insurance.

Reserve component members will be the first to see potential changes in their net pay as a result of the law, DFAS officials said. Changes will be

See **EMPLOYEES**, page 11

## NDAAs boosts pay, requires special training

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

President Barack Obama signed the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2013 into law, Jan. 2.

Among other things, the act authorizes a 1.7-percent increase in Soldier pay, effective Jan. 1, as well as funds for Army procurement, operations, maintenance, and research and development for both the generating force as well as for the operational force engaged in overseas contingency operations.

The act means that Congress has approved a plan for how the Army can spend money for fiscal year 2013, which actually began Oct. 1, 2012, and runs through Sept. 30, 2013.

The National Defense Authorization Act, or NDAAs, authorizes the Army, and other departments, to spend money. But Congress must still pass additional legislation to "appropriate" money,

See **ACTIVE**, page 11

## MLK celebration slated Jan. 15

By **YVONNE JOHNSON**  
APG News

For the first time, Team APG will present a full day of events commemorating the birthday of slain civil rights leader, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



With the theme: "Remember! Celebrate! Act! A day on, not a day off," the morning starts out with the 2013 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration at the post theater 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Jan. 15.

Brig. Gen. Barrye L. Price,

See **MLK**, page 11



(From left) Manor View Brainiacs team members Jerel Mitchell, Daniel Hankinson, Gabriel Ramirez, and coach Lisa Evans watch as their autonomous robot performs a task during the FIRST LEGO League Challenge qualifying rounds at the U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command headquarters Jan. 5.

## FIRST LEGO League Challenge held at ATEC

Story and photo by **RACHEL PONDER**  
APG News

More than 180 students from across the state competed in the second annual FIRST LEGO League Challenge at the U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command headquarters Jan. 5.

Sixteen teams competed for the top six positions to advance to the Jan. 19 championship at University of Maryland Baltimore County.

ATEC, UMBC and Team APG partnered to organize the event. FLL is a LEGO robotics program for 6 to 14-year olds designed to get stu-

dents excited about science, technology, engineering and mathematics, or STEM, while teaching employment and life skills.

FIRST means: For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technolo-

See **LEARNING**, page 10

## Free tickets, more at nearby USO center

Story and photo by **RACHEL PONDER**  
APG News

Free coffee and donuts are not the only things offered at the USO. APG active duty service members and their Families can also receive free tickets to local sporting events, plays, concerts, museums and other entertainment.

Through the USO-Metro TicketLine program, tickets donated by sponsors are distributed to USO centers nation-



Register for the USO-Metro TicketLine program for free local tickets.

See **FREE**, page 10

## Gospel extravaganza set Jan. 27

By **YVONNE JOHNSON**  
APG News

Get ready for an uplifting evening of praise as MWR hosts the "2013 United As One" Gospel Concert Tour at the APG Post Theater, Sunday, Jan. 27.

This must-see ensemble of talent features gospel recording artists James Fortune & FIYA, Le' Andria Johnson, VaShawn Mitchell and Zacardi Cortez and is hosted by Shuckey Ducky.

Doors open 4 p.m.; show begins 5

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Thurs.



48° | 36°

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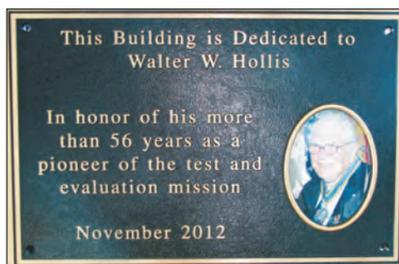


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## STREET TALK

### What is your New Year's resolution, and how is it working out?

I want to travel more. I play the Mega Millions and Powerball and if I win, I want to visit Rome, Italy, and take my daughter with me. I'm Catholic and it's always been my dream to see the pope.



**Master Sgt. Andrea Cassells**  
22d Chemical Battalion

My goal is the same every year – to be a good person, do good things and not hurt anyone or any animal. The world would be a better place if everyone had the same goal.



**Harry Quinones**  
retired DOD civilian

My resolution is to get back in shape so I can get back in the Army. I'm [in the Hoyle Gym] five days a week focusing on cardio and strength training. I was in the Army eight years and I want to finish what I started. I'm looking forward to leading Soldiers again. You don't realize how rewarding it is until it's gone.



**Selinda Rosario**  
Army veteran

Last year I ran 20 miles a week; this year I want to extend that to 25 miles a week. I'd love to do the Army Ten Miler. I plan to participate in local runs and hope to join the APG MWR Team for this year's race.



**Capt. Nathan Lee**  
22d Chemical Battalion

# OPINION

## Danger on the range

As I pulled into my driveway after a long day at work, the last thing I wanted to receive was a phone call from the brigade S-3.

He asked, "Jay, who is the approving authority on a risk management worksheet for a demolition range?" I knew this question could only mean one thing ... an accident! My hunch was correct; three of our Soldiers received injuries in a training accident involving demolitions. I immediately headed out to the range.

When I got there, I was met by the range officer in charge, the range safety officer and multiple levels of leadership from the platoon. I walked over to where the accident happened and saw a pile of gear soaked in blood. Then I started asking questions.

As I discussed the sequence of events with the company commander, he explained that his unit was performing static breaching operations, which consisted of blowing doors for entry purposes. So far so good, I thought. He said that under the supervision of the master breacher, Soldiers were placing two C4-constructed charges on practice doors and initiating the charges. The types of charges used were flex linear and c-charges. Using two charges for redundancy, the flex linears were placed vertically up and down the length of the door, and the c-charge around the door handle to breach the lock. Each scenario was followed by a hot wash/after-action review. The commander had been running the same training conditions all morning and afternoon up until the accident.

Digging deeper, I learned that when the accident occurred, the training had been modified without prior coordination with everyone involved in the scenario. This particular time, an assault team was injected into the training. Ordinarily, this wouldn't have been a problem; however, since everyone involved wasn't read in on the modification, this iteration of training became a recipe for disaster.

The training started normally as the demolition charges were placed on the door. When the time fuse was pulled to burn, the team sought cov-



er on the side of the building. The c-charge on the door detonated without issue and, three seconds later, the three-man assault team made their way toward the breach. The first two team members had just made their way through the doorway and the third was still in the entry when the second flex linear charge detonated. All three Soldiers absorbed the impact of the blast and suffered facial lacerations and fragmentation to the legs and arms. Fortunately, they were wearing proper personal protective equipment, which mitigated further injuries.

The "so what" of this unfortunate incident is that the initial risk management worksheet didn't discuss modifications to the training. By adding an assault team to the exercise, the unit incurred an additional risk. The Soldiers didn't have adequate supervision before and during the entry, and rehearsals weren't conducted using multiple charges. The list could go on and on, but the bottom line is this accident was preventable if leadership had exercised proper risk mitigation and risk management.

We can't fail fast enough when it comes to hastily modifying training just to achieve desired results. Take time and thoroughly plan your

training and remember that if you decide to modify a training event, take the time to perform proper risk management.

### Did You Know?

The Ground Risk Assessment Tool empowers leaders and Soldiers to reduce accidental loss and injury by incorporating risk management into a quick, user-friendly system that eases the mission-planning process. By providing users with up-to-date accident statistics, relevant accident vignettes and guidance, including regulations, training circulars, field manuals, and tactics, techniques and procedures, GRAT helps ensure users capture a complete picture of hazards and controls they may not have previously considered.

GRAT allows users to save time, learn from others' mistakes and integrate risk management into all their activities, whether on or off duty. By incorporating safety into mission planning at every echelon, GRAT ensures leaders and Soldiers have the information they need to reduce accidental loss and protect and maintain combat power.

Check out GRAT today by visiting <https://grat.safety.army.mil/> GRAT (AKO login required).

Jay Mang, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division



### AFPS Launches 'Year in Photos 2012' Review

Each year, American Forces Press Service features the best images of U.S. military photographers in an annual review. The "Year in Photos 2012" offers images of troops as they conduct operations around the world, compete in athletic events such as the Olympics, and reunite with their families. Above, U.S. Navy Lt. Lawrence White distributes stuffed animals to children at San Gaspar Vivar in Antigua, Guatemala, Jan. 12, 2012. White is assigned to the Maritime Civil Affairs Team, aboard High Speed Vessel 2 Swift. The visit was part of Southern Partnership Station 2012, an annual deployment of U.S. ships to the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility in the Caribbean, Central and South America. Visit this and other Year in Photo images at [www.defense.gov/home/features/2012/1212\\_yip/](http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2012/1212_yip/).

Photo by U.S. Navy Lt. Matthew Come

### APG SEVEN DAY FORECAST

Thurs



48°|36°

Fri



46°|45°

Sat



57°|48°

Sun



58°|53°

Mon



54°|50°

Tue



58°|43°

Wed



49°|36°

## APG NEWS

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

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# Team APG establishes STEM agreement with Harford schools

By **DAN LAFONTAINE**  
RDECOM Public Affairs

The U.S. Army is bolstering its commitment to science and math education in northeast Maryland to increase the number of students seeking high-tech careers.

Eight major Aberdeen Proving Ground, or APG, tenant organizations agreed to a partnership Dec. 14 with Harford County Public Schools, or HCPS, to expand educational outreach efforts in science, technology, engineering and math, commonly known as STEM.

The agreement will help increase participation and improve HCPS students' performance in STEM and programs that expand academic opportunities, officials said.

About 30 Army uniformed and civilian personnel and HCPS officials attended the ceremony at the headquarters of the U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command.

RDECOM Director Dale Ormond said the agreement will strengthen the existing relationships between APG and HCPS. RDECOM is the installation's lead organization for STEM education outreach.

"The partnership that we sign today between Aberdeen Proving Ground and Harford County Public Schools reaffirms our commitment to advancing STEM education in northeast Maryland and beyond," Ormond said. "We look forward to expanding our STEM outreach with Harford County students and educators. The goal of our agreement is to lead the way in the vital task of developing our future STEM workforce."

Participating APG organizations are RDECOM; Army Communications--Electronics Command; Army Test and Evaluation Command; Army Public Health Command; Program Executive Office for Command, Control, Communications Tactical; Program Executive Office for Intelligence, Electronic Warfare



Photo by Tom Faulkner

Senior APG officials signed an educational partnership agreement with Harford County Public Schools, Dec. 14, 2012. (Top row from left): Doug Bryce, deputy of Joint Program Executive Office for Chemical and Biological Defense; Maj. Gen. Leslie Smith, commander of 20th Support Command (CBRNE); Maj. Gen. Jimmie Keenan, commander of Army Public Health Command; Doug Tamilio, deputy chief of staff of Program Executive Office for Command, Control, Communications Tactical. (Bottom row from left): Maj. Gen. Genaro Dellarocco, Army Test and Evaluation Command; Dale Ormond, director of U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command; Robert Tomback, superintendent of Harford County Public Schools; Maj. Gen. Robert Ferrell, commanding general of Army Communications Electronics Command and senior Aberdeen Proving Ground commander.

and Sensors; 20th Support Command (CBRNE); and Joint Program Executive Office for Chemical and Biological Defense.

Louie Lopez, RDECOM STEM outreach program manager, said the partnership has three primary goals:

1. encourage and enhance study in STEM disciplines and provide laboratory and technical experiences that support the pursuit of STEM courses, collegiate STEM majors, and STEM careers
2. provide technical assistance to the school system
3. leverage regional STEM efforts that support students, government, industry

and nonprofit organizations

Maj. Gen. Robert Ferrell, CECOM commanding general and senior APG commander, reiterated the installation's focus on developing America's future scientists and engineers.

"We are committed to tomorrow," Ferrell said. "We are providing an opportunity to ensure that we have the right resources with the right intellect and energy. This STEM initiative today is a tremendous step."

HCPS Superintendent Robert Tomback said that expanding the partnership with APG is vital to the success of Harford County students.

"The partnership agreement that

we are about to sign is critical to our mission," Tomback said. "It's critical to our mission at Harford County Public Schools to provide you with the next generation of workforce -- those students who are motivated in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics."

"We are absolutely thrilled that you are willing, able and eager to support our school system in ways that are tangible, meaningful and productive," Tomback continued. "Thank you for your willingness and eagerness to work with our students as we prepare them for our nation for many years to come."

## Volunteers honored for eCYBERMISSION service

By **DAN LAFONTAINE**  
RDECOM Public Affairs

The U.S. Army honored three civilian employees, Dec. 19, for their commitment to enriching students' experience in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, commonly known as STEM.

Dale A. Ormond, director of the U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command, thanked the employees for their efforts with the eCYBERMISSION program and presented each with a Presidential Volunteer Service Award.

"It's great things to get kids engaged in science and engineering, looking at problems and coming up with innovative solutions. None of this is possible without volunteers," Ormond said. "Science, technology and engineering is going to make a difference, and we have to get our young people involved."

RDECOM is the Army's executive agent for the eCYBERMISSION program, a free web-based STEM competition for sixth- through ninth-grade students, in which teams compete for awards while working to solve

**The best part about eCYBERMISSION is you can volunteer as much or little time as works for you. If you want to be a cyber guide, you come online when you're available.**

**Lauren McNew**

Program Executive Office for Command, Control, Communications Tactical

problems in their community.

The award recipients are Lauren McNew of the Program Executive Office for Command, Control, Communications Tactical; Philip Chan of the Army Research Laboratory; and Christopher Tarsi of Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives.

Each award recipient volunteered at least 100 hours during a 12-month period in support of eCYBERMISSION.

The program relies heavily on volunteers to provide a successful experience for students, said Louie Lopez, RDECOM STEM outreach program manager. In the 2011-12 school year, about 15,400 students participat-

ed and 1,773 adults volunteered as ambassadors, cyber guides and virtual judges, Lopez said.

"Our cyber guides provide three to five hours a week over an eight-month period of registration and submission," Lopez said. "They are critical to our students and teachers since they provide the technical expertise."

"Our virtual judges also play an important role," Lopez said. "Last year, we had about 3,500 projects submitted. Each one has to be graded five times. That's 17,500 scores we have to generate within a one-month period. As we increase our program, we're going to need more and more volunteers. That's why these volunteers we're honoring today are very important."

McNew has volunteered with eCYBERMISSION for three years and was named cyber guide of the year for the 2011-12 competition. She said she enjoys the flexibility offered through the program.

"The best part about eCYBERMISSION is you can volunteer as much or little time as works for you," McNew said. "If you want to be a cyber guide, you come online when you're available [to] answer questions for students. Or you can be an ambassador and go to schools and talk to students about getting involved. You can be a virtual judge on your own time. There isn't anything that gets in the way of volunteering for your community."

Chan has been volunteering in local and national science fair competitions since 1999 and with eCYBERMISSION as a virtual judge and mentor since 2005. He is working to build a STEM program for home-schooled students in the Baltimore area.

"If you're interested in science and engineering, this is the right time to volunteer," Chan said. "In 1999, I had to physically open the books and go to the library to dig up resources."

# Kick radon out with new Living Healthy campaign

By **KARLA SIMON**

U. S. Army Public Health Command

January is National Radon Action Month. The Environmental Protection Agency has launched the “Living Healthy & Green Campaign” to educate the public about how easy it can be to kick radon out before and after a home, school or worksite is built.

The EPA estimates that nearly one out of every 15 homes in the United States has elevated radon levels. Although radon is a naturally occurring gas, it is radioactive. According to the EPA, exposure to radon in the home is responsible for at least 21,000 lung cancer deaths in the United States each year. Radon is colorless, odorless and tasteless. This invisible enemy can only be detected by testing.

## Test for Radon

There is no known safe level of exposure to radon. What can you do to protect yourself and your family? Test for radon. This is accomplished by measuring the levels of radon gas. It is a relatively easy and inexpensive process.

Most often, the radon in your home’s indoor air can come from two sources, the soil underneath your house or your water supply. Radon migration through the soil into the lowest level of your home is the main cause of radon problems. However, if

## Healthy Living

[www.apg.army.mil/apghome/sites/local/](http://www.apg.army.mil/apghome/sites/local/) click on Well Being

Healthy Living is a recurring feature in the APG News. It addresses health topics that matter most to our readers. To view more health topics and the Community Health Promotion Council calendar of events, visit the APG homepage <http://www.apg.army.mil/> and click on the Community Health icon at the bottom right, or scan the QR code (at right) with your smart phone or enabled device. To suggest health-related topics for the Health Living series, email [adrienne.c.foss.civ@mail.mil](mailto:adrienne.c.foss.civ@mail.mil) or call 410-278-1150.



you have a private well, consider testing for radon in both air and water. The devices and procedures for testing your home’s water supply are different from those used for measuring radon in the air.

Test kits are available at most hardware stores for about \$20–\$30. Some state programs offer low-cost or free kits. Those who are not comfortable performing the radon test can find a qualified contractor familiar with radon to do the testing for them.

The amount of radon gas in the air is measured in picocuries (pronounced pee-co-curries) per liter of

air or pCi/L. However, the EPA has set level for radon gas of 4.0 picocuries. The EPA strongly recommends that you take immediate action to fix your home, school or workplace if the results from the radon test show 4.0 pCi/L or more. Elevated radon levels can cause lung cancer. If your test level shows between 2 and 4 pCi/L, consider making changes to reduce the amount of radon levels.

Here are some steps you can take to prevent and reduce radon levels in your home:

1. The EPA recommends that you test

your home every two years or after home renovations to monitor radon levels.

2. If you are building a new home, school or business, ask about radon-resistant construction.

3. If elevated levels of radon are detected, repair any problems with the foundation. Seal cracks and other openings around pipes and drains.

4. Cover any exposed earthen walls.

5. Paint concrete floors with a sealant.

6. Maintain the heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems in your home. Have them serviced to ensure proper operation.

7. If confirmed high levels are found in the air, have a radon reduction system installed. Consult with a qualified professional to determine the best system dependent on the foundation type: basement, slab-on-grade, or crawlspace.

8. If elevated levels of radon are detected in your water supply, treat the water at the point of entry or at the point of use. It may require that you have a water treatment system installed to remove the radon before it enters the building or right before it comes out of the tap.

For more information about radon, visit the Environmental Protection Agency, [www.epa.gov/radon/index.html](http://www.epa.gov/radon/index.html).

# Lose weight without fad diets

By **AMY COWELL**

U.S. Army Public Health Command

It’s the start of a new year and you are determined to make this the year you stick to your resolution to lose those extra pounds. But with so much information out there, where should you start?

If one does a quick Google search for “weight loss,” more than 500,000

results appear, headlined with advertisements for the latest and greatest diets, all claiming to have the new secret to weight loss. So which do you choose?

The Atkins, Baby Food, Cabbage Soup, Caveman and Grapefruit diets promise quick and easy results—not to mention the abundance of weight loss pills, equipment and centers that

claim to deliver the body of your dreams (for a small fee)

Would you believe that the BEST thing you could do to achieve your goals is to avoid all of these fads? Dawn Jackson-Blatner, a spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association says, “Don’t be fooled into thinking it is because of some magical food, pill or potion. Crazy, unbalanced diets cause weight loss because they are basically low-calorie diets.”

These diets limit your nutritional intake, can be unhealthy, and tend to fail in the long run. Follow the ADA’s advice and stay away from any diet, pills or products that claim:

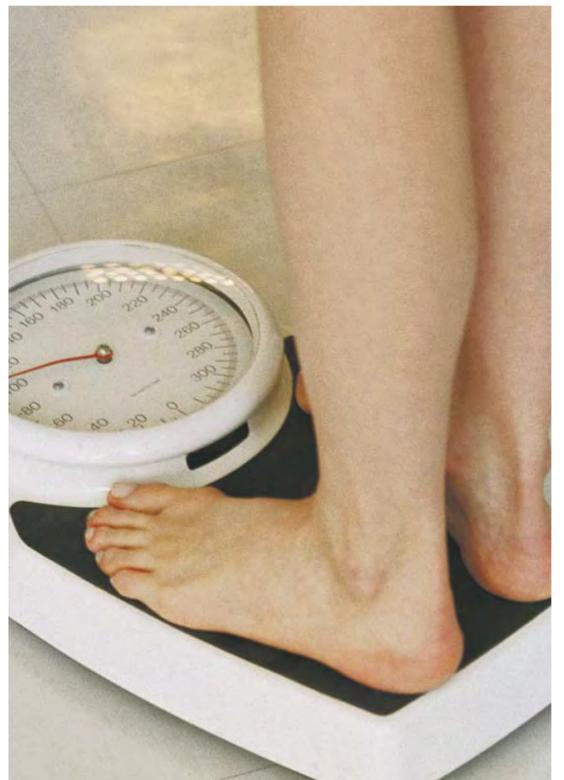
**Rapid Weight Loss.** Slow, steady weight loss is more likely to last than dramatic weight changes. Healthy plans aim for a loss of no more than one-half pound to one pound per week. If you lose weight quickly, you’ll lose muscle, bone and water. You also will be more likely to regain the pounds quickly afterwards.

**Quantities and Limitations.** Ditch diets that allow unlimited quantities of any food, such as grapefruit and cabbage soup. It’s boring to eat the same thing over and over and hard to stick with monotonous plans. Avoid any diet that eliminates or severely restricts entire food groups, such as carbohydrates. Even if you take a multivitamin, you’ll still miss some critical nutrients.

**Specific Food Combinations.** There is no evidence that combining certain foods or eating foods at specific times of day will help with weight loss. Eating the “wrong” combinations of food doesn’t cause them to turn to fat immediately or to produce toxins in your intestines, as some plans claim.

**Rigid Menus.** Life is already complicated enough. Limiting food choices or following rigid meal plans can be an overwhelming, distasteful task. With any new diet, always ask yourself: “Can I eat this way for the rest of my life?” If the answer is no, the plan is not for you.

**No Need to Exercise.** Regular physical activity is essential for good health and healthy weight management. The key to success is to find



**Here’s the bottom line: If a diet or product sounds too good to be true, it probably is.**

physical activities that you enjoy and then to aim for 30 to 60 minutes of activity on most days of the week.

Here’s the bottom line: If a diet or product sounds too good to be true, it probably is. The key to achieving and maintaining a healthy weight isn’t about short-term dietary changes. If you want to maintain a healthy weight, build muscle and lose fat, the best path is a lifelong combination of eating smarter and moving more.

For more information on ways to make realistic lifestyle changes go to American Dietetic Association, [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org).

About the U.S. Army Public Health Command: PHC focuses on promoting health and preventing disease, injury and disability in Soldiers and military retirees, their Families and Army civilian employees. As well, the USAPHC is responsible for effective execution of full-spectrum veterinary services throughout the DOD. The USAPHC was created from the merger of the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine and the U.S. Army Veterinary Command.

# Army announces time critical removal action

Special to the APG News

The U.S. Army announces that a time critical removal action (TCRA) will occur associated with EANS01-A: Unconfined Groundwater (Former Nike Missile Site) (herein referred to as "Nike Site") located within Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG), Maryland. The Record of Decision (ROD) for the Nike Site was issued in September 1996 and is available for review under access number I-6 in the APG administrative record at the Repositories listed below:

**Harford County Public Library  
Aberdeen Branch**

21 Franklin Street  
Aberdeen, MD 21001

**Harford County Public Library  
Edgewood Branch**

2205 Hanson Road  
Edgewood, MD 21040

**Kent County-Washington College  
Miller Library**

Chestertown, MD 21620

The remedy in the ROD selected for the contaminated groundwater included:

- Groundwater extraction and treatment system (GWETS);
- Discharge of treated water to a tributary of the Bush River;
- Long-term groundwater monitoring

to ensure reduction of contaminants to required clean-up levels; and,

- Land-use restrictions prohibiting the use of on-site groundwater.

**Time critical removal action**

The proposed TCRA activities include both in-place and above-ground application of sodium percarbonate as a secondary technology to enhance the primary technology (GWETS). Soil excavation and sodium percarbonate application will be used to assist in treatment of the residual trichloroethene (TCE) contamination within the primary source area at the Nike Site. In addition, in-place applications of sodium percarbonate will be applied to three existing wells to aid in reducing the TCE contaminant concentrations to required state clean-up criteria.

**For more information**

If you have general questions or comments about this notification, contact:

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# Deadline nears for employer Freedom Award

Special to APG News

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, a Department of Defense agency, is encouraging Guardsmen and Reservists to nominate their civilian employers for the 2013 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award before the Jan. 21 deadline.

The Freedom Award is the nation's highest recognition for employers supporting Guard and Reserve members. Employers of every size and industry are eligible to receive the honor. Guard and Reserve members, or a Family member acting on their behalf, may nominate their employers at [www.FreedomAward.mil](http://www.FreedomAward.mil).

"With today's evolving missions of the Reserve component, as we adapt to the current national security policy, America's employers continue to provide steadfast support to the more than one million men and women serving in the National Guard and Reserve at home and abroad. The Freedom Award is your opportunity to honor your employer for their critical support," said James Rebholz, ESGR national chair.

"As a member of the Guard or Reserve who has received outstanding support from your civilian employer, take the time to nominate them for the 2013 Freedom Award," he said.

Any civilian employer who has not previously received the award is eligi-

ble. Service members who have previously nominated their employers are encouraged to do so again. The Department of Defense will recognize nominees, semi-finalists and finalists. The 2013 recipients will be announced in early summer and honored in Washington, D.C. during a ceremony in the fall. Past recipients have met with the president of the United States, secretary of defense and chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

**About ESGR and the Freedom Award:**

The Freedom Award was instituted in 1996 under the auspices of ESGR to recognize exceptional support from the employer community. In the years since, 175 employers have been honored with the award. Established as a DOD agency 40 years ago, ESGR develops and maintains employer support for Guard and Reserve service. ESGR advocates relevant initiatives, recognizes outstanding support, increases awareness of applicable laws, and resolves conflict between service members and employers. Paramount to ESGR's mission is encouraging employment of Guardsmen and Reservists who bring integrity, global perspective and proven leadership to the civilian workforce.

For more information, contact Beth Sherman at 571-372-0705 or email [ESGR-PA@osd.mil](mailto:ESGR-PA@osd.mil).



**Caroline "Gerri" Merkel**  
Director of Religious Education

Meet Caroline "Gerri" Merkel, the director of religious education for the Religious Support Office (RSO). The RSO provides religious education programs for all ages and faith groups within the APG community. Merkel's responsibilities include developing and procuring curriculum, providing theological instruction and providing teacher training for volunteers.

Children's Church and Youth Ministry are some of the programs available to children and teens throughout the year. Other popular events annually include Vacation Bible School and Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University, a bible-based financial class that encourages participants to pay off debt and build wealth.

Merkel said she plans to hold weekend spiritual retreats at the

chapel, and she's looking for feedback from the APG community on what topics interest them.

She is also organizing a "Motivating the Teen Spirit" weekend retreat for teens and their parents to be held at nearby Fort Meade.

Merkel said she enjoys working with people from multi-cultural backgrounds and faiths.

"I spent 20-plus years in Germany working with the military in four different locations," she said. "It offered me opportunities for spiritual growth, broadened my knowledge and perspective in ways that I would never have imagined."

Merkel is located at the main post chapel, 4510 Boothby Hill Avenue, Bldg. 2485 and can be reached at 410-278-2516 or [caroline.j.merkel.civ@mail.mil](mailto:caroline.j.merkel.civ@mail.mil).

How are we doing? E-mail comments and suggestions for the APG News to [adriane.c.foss.civ@mail.mil](mailto:adriane.c.foss.civ@mail.mil)

# MARK YOUR CALENDAR

## SATURDAY

### JAN. 12

#### CYSS ORIENTATION DAY

Parents and teens will learn about the Hired Apprenticeship Program for teens ages 15-18, from 10 to 11 a.m. Parents must attend. Accepting applications for the summer term now. To register, visit Central Registration, Bldg. 2503, from 7:30 to 10:30 a.m. or call 410-278-7479/7571 to schedule an appointment.

## JR GUIDE TRAINING

Eden Mill Nature Center will offer Jr Naturalist Interpretive Guide Training from 2-4 p.m. for ages 11-18. The fee is \$10 for non-members and \$6 for members per date. Participants will get hands-on interpretive guide training. You will learn how to be a Mill docent, Nature Center host and critter care specialist. To pre-register or for more info, call 410-836-3050 or email edenmillnaturecenter@gmail.com.

## TUESDAY

### JAN 15

#### MLK JR OBSERVANCE

Team APG will present the 2013 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. observance at the post theater 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. A professional development forum with panel members is set from 1:30 to 3 p.m. Both events are open to the public.

A bus will be available to shuttle employees from the C4ISR campus to the theater and back from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Pick-up and drop-off is in front of Bldg. 6002.

For information, call 410-436-9786/0320/1023, 443-861-9251/4366, 410-306-2425 or email william.c.craine.mil@mail.mil, ryan.p.cole.mil@mail.mil; howard.j.norcross.mil@mail.mil; david.j.hall.mil@mail.mil; linda.patrick@us.army.mil; tracy.y.marshall.mil@mail.mil.

See Page 1 for the full story.

## BCBS REP VISIT

A Care First Blue Cross Blue Shield representative will visit APG from 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. in Bldg. 314, Room 151E, to discuss claim problems and plan coverage. The rep will be available from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in Bldg E4516 (CDTF). No appointment is necessary. For more information, contact Teri Wright at 410-278-4331 or Teresa.l.wright28.civ@mail.mil.

## WEDNESDAY

### JAN 16

#### QUIT TOBACCO USE

Life-style change management class set noon to 1 p.m. at the APG-North Recreation Center, Room 105. Free to all APG employees: DoD, contractors, active duty, Family members, and retirees. Contact Ann Laughton at ann.laughton@us.army.mil or 410-278-1774 for info.

## THURSDAY

### JAN. 17

#### SAME MEETING

The Society of American Military Engineers Chesapeake Post January 2013 meeting will be at the Wetland Golf Club in Aberdeen at 11:30 a.m. The featured speaker is Dr. James Hartman, Director Regional Environmental & Energy - Northern Office Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations, Energy & Environment. Hartman's presentation is titled, "Overview of the U.S. Army Regional Environmental & Energy Offices." Register at [www.same-chesapeake.org](http://www.same-chesapeake.org). Call 410-638-9699 for information.

## MOAA DINNER

Military officers, retired and active, of every branch and their spouses are invited to attend the Susquehanna Chapter, Military Officer Association of America dinner 6:15 p.m. at The Bayou Restaurant, 927 Pulaski Highway (Route 40) in Havre de Grace, Thursday, Jan. 17.

The guest speaker, Lt. Col. Joseph McClain a cardiothoracic, trauma and general surgeon who served with the 10th Combat Support Hospital in Iraq, will present "Life in the Green Zone – A Surgeon's Experience in Baghdad, Iraq" and offer unique insights into the current state of military medicine and surgery in the combat theater.

RSVP by Jan. 14. For more information and reservations, contact retired Maj. Brian Lantz at 410-939-0648 or e-mail brianlantz6@comcast.net.

## SATURDAY

### JAN. 19

#### ALL ABOUT BEARS

Eden Mill Nature Center will offer

hands- All About Bears activity as part of its Saturday Nature Series from 1-2 p.m. for all ages. The fee is \$5 for non-members and \$3 for members. Participants will get to examine a black bear hide and skull and play a game to learn all about this Maryland mammal. To pre-register or for more info, call 410-836-3050 or email edenmillnaturecenter@gmail.com.

## WEDNESDAY

### JAN 23

#### TOBACCO CESSATION CLASS

Diet & Nutrition While Quitting class set noon to 1 p.m. at the APG-North Recreation Center, Room 105. Free to all APG employees: DoD, contractors, active duty, dependents, and retirees. Contact Ann Laughton at ann.laughton@us.army.mil or 410-278-1774 for info.

## SUNDAY

### JAN. 27

#### GOSPEL TOUR COMING SOON

APG MWR and Army Entertainment presents the 2013 United as ONE Gospel Tour featuring James Fortune, Va Shawn Mitchell, Le' Andria Johnson and Zacardi Cortez, hosted by Shuckey Duckey. Open to the public. Tickets on sale now at APG North and South recreation centers. For more information visit [www.apgmwr.com](http://www.apgmwr.com).

## WEDNESDAY

### JAN 30

#### TOBACCO CESSATION CLASS

Stress Management Strategies and Staying Quit class set noon to 1 p.m. at the APG-North Recreation Center, Room 105. Free to all APG employees: DoD, contractors, active duty, dependents, and retirees. Contact Ann Laughton at ann.laughton@us.army.mil or 410-278-1774 for info.

## THURSDAY

### JAN. 31

#### NATURE STORY TIME

Eden Mill Nature Center is proud to offer Nature Story Time at 11 a.m. All are welcome who enjoy children's literature. Join us for a children's story and craft related to a theme about nature. To pre-register or for more info, call 410-836-3050 or email edenmillnaturecenter@gmail.com.

## TUESDAY

### FEB. 5

#### SIGN LANGUAGE CLASS

American Sign Language lunch-time basic and advanced classes run from Feb. 5 through April 30 from 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. in Bldg. E3330-31, Room 270 at APG South (Edgewood). Class is free and uses textbook "A B C, A Basic Course in American Sign Language."

For more information or to register, call BethAnn Cameron, 410-436-7175.

## WEDNESDAYS

### JAN. 9 THRU FEB. 6

#### TOBACCO CESSATION:

Start the New Year with a healthy resolution. Lean how to quit tobacco and stay quit during sessions from noon to 1 p.m. at the APG-North Recreation Center, Room 102. Each week a different topic will be discussed, including: Tobacco cessation strategies and medication support options, life-style change management, diet and nutrition, stress management and staying quit. Free to APG employees: DoD, contractors, active duty, Family members, and retirees. Contact Ann Laughton at ann.laughton@us.army.mil or 410-278-1774 for info.

## SATURDAYS

### CRITTER FEEDINGS

Eden Mill Nature Center will be offering feedings on Saturdays through March at 3 p.m. Open to all ages. Join us in the nature center as we feed our critters. Take a turn feeding one of the turtles or a snake. Space is limited to 10 participants so pre-register early by calling 410-836-3050 or emailing edenmillnaturecenter@gmail.com. Visit [www.edenmill.org](http://www.edenmill.org) for information.

## WEEKDAYS

### THRU - MARCH 31 WINTER HOURS SET FOR EQUIPMENT RESOURCE CENTER

Open Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. in Bldg 2184 410-278-4124.

## THROUGH JANUARY SKI/SNOWBOARD TRIPS

Don't stay inside bored during winter break. Equipment rentals are available through ODR. Participants must be fitted at least one week prior to trip date.

### TRIP DATES

■ Jan. 12: Ski Liberty, 7 a.m.-7 p.m.; ages 7-12 (older siblings are allowed to accompany)

■ Jan. 13: Ski Roundtop, 7 a.m.-7 p.m.; ages 13-18

■ Jan. 19: Ski Whitetail, 7 a.m.-10 p.m.; ages 13-18

■ Jan. 20: Ski Liberty, 7 a.m.-7 p.m.; ages 7-12 (older siblings are allowed to accompany)

■ Jan. 21: Blue Mtn, 7 a.m.-7 p.m.; ages 7-12 (older siblings are allowed to accompany)

■ Jan. 22: Blue Mtn, 7 a.m.-10 p.m.; ages 13-18

■ Jan. 26: Blue Mtn, 7 a.m.-midnight, ages 13-18

### LOCATION:

Blue Mountain Ski Resort, Pa. Bus departs Aberdeen Youth Center at 7 a.m., return times vary.

### COST/LEE

Lift only: \$35. Lesson and Lift: \$63. 1st Time Ski or Board: \$43 (restricted to Beginner Trail/Lift access only).

### ADDITIONAL INFO

Register at the Central Registration Office, Bldg. 2503 Highpoint Road, Rooms 210/211; walk-in registration is from 7:30-10:30 a.m.; or call 410-278-7479/7571 to schedule an appointment.

For information, contact Conor Joyce at conor.j.joyce.naf@mail.mil or 410-278-1399.

## MONDAYS

### APG THEATER GROUP

The APG Theater Group meets Mondays from 6-7:30 p.m. in the APG North recreation center. If you're an actor, singer, dancer, comedian, musician, or interested in becoming part of the stage crew, come out and join in the fun. To sign up, call 410-278-4011/4907 or email APGR-USAG-MWR-LeisureTravel@conus.army.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.

## OPEN MIC AND KARAOKE

Open Mic & Karaoke Night is slated monthly on Thursdays at Ruggles Golf Course from 6 - 9 p.m. as follows: Jan. 10, Feb. 21, and March 21.

Kick off the New Year doing what you love. Sing a cover song or bring your guitar and play an original. Admission is free. Enjoy complimentary bar food and a cash bar with beer and wine. For information, visit [www.APGMWR.com](http://www.APGMWR.com) or call 410-278-4011.

## SATURDAYS

### JAN. 26, FEB. 23,

### MARCH 9

#### SKI TRIPS

Sign up at the Outdoor Recreation, Bldg. 2184 for the ski trip to Roundtop Mountain Resort. Full payments are due at sign-up. Cash or check only. Waiver required. Call 410-278-4124 for information.

## ONGOING

### SHOW YOUR TALENT

Local youth can participate in the 5th Annual Talent Hunt, hosted by the Iota Nu Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

High school performers in classical and contemporary instrumental, classical and contemporary vocal, dramatic interpretation, dance and visual arts compete for first, second and third prizes. The winner will compete in the district competition in Buffalo, NY, in May.

For information, visit [www.questionanu.org](http://www.questionanu.org) or call Mark Thomas at 443-752-4205 or Anthony Dorsey at 443-528-5122.

## COMMUNITY VOICE COMMITTEE

The newly-formed Community Voice Committee needs volunteer members! The CVC meets bi-monthly on the last Monday of the month and

is chaired by Col. Gregory McClinton, APG garrison commander. The committee is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for all APG residents and employees. If you are a Picerne housing resident or a civilian employee working at APG (both Edgewood and Aberdeen area representatives are needed), and would like to be part of this committee, please contact Karen Dern at karen.a.dern4.civ@mail.mil. The next meeting is scheduled for Jan. 28.

## PIANO & GUITAR LESSONS

Each class is a one-on-one, 30-minute session for seven or eight weeks, once a week. Parents choose a time between 3 and 9 p.m. when they register their children. Open to all DOD ID cardholders. To register, visit Central Registration or call 410-278-7479/7571. For information, email lauren.e.kateley.naf@mail.mil or call 410-278-4589.

## SUNDAY BRUNCH

Don't miss it at Sutherland Grille on Sundays, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Cost of \$ 9.95 includes all your favorite breakfast items. Menu includes a "create your own" omelet and waffle station. Lunch items and salad bar also included.

Call 410-278-4794 for reservation; email Richard bond for information: richard.j.bond10.naf@mail.mil

## UFOOD GRILL OFFERS CALL-IN, ONLINE ORDERS AND CATERING

Want healthy fast food? Avoid the wait by calling in orders at the UFood Grill Main Exchange location, 443-345-1542, or the C4ISR, Bldg. 6010 location, 443-345-4663. Orders will be ready for pick-up in 10 minutes or less.

The Bldg. 6010 UFood Grill also offers online ordering. Place an order by visiting [www.ufoodgrill.com](http://www.ufoodgrill.com), select APG, and designate a time for pick-up.

Planning an event? UFood Grill offers lunch box meals, sandwich, cookie, and muffin platters, and will deliver. For more information, call General Manager Abdel Warrad at 617-962-7114.

## 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

## OBEY SPEED LIMITS

APG motorists are urged to obey the speed limit. Drivers should be especially cautious during physical fitness training hours as Soldiers exercise outdoors and conduct PT tests.

## 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.



**MORE  
ONLINE**

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

# ATEC building named for 'grandfather of T&E'

ATEC news release

Military buildings are typically named after persons deceased who have made significant contributions to an organization, but recently John McHugh, Secretary of the Army, granted an exception to that rule.

The U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command headquarters building was dedicated to Walter W. Hollis, a former Deputy Under Secretary of the Army for Operations Research, in a ceremony at the ATEC headquarters Dec. 13. Walter, whose distinguished career spanned more than five decades, is known as the "Grandfather of Test and Evaluation."

Lt. Gen. William G. Troy, director of the Army Staff, addressed the crowd on behalf of Secretary McHugh and Army Chief of Staff Gen. Raymond Odierno.

"The way you have changed the Army for the better will be remembered as long as this building stands," Troy said. "When you think about why we name a building after somebody, it's so all the generations of people who come through here will know about the significant and enduring contribution that person has made."

Troy also reflected on how Hollis fundamentally changed the way the Army does business for the better because he demanded the rigorous testing executed today on systems like the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle, the M1 Abrams, and the Apache helicopter.

ATEC Commanding General Maj. Gen. Genaro Dellarocco echoed Troy's remarks and elaborated on them by reminding the test and evaluation professionals in attendance that Hollis' vision was one of the greatest accomplishments for the Army.

"This is the only organization in the Department of Defense that has all three elements of T&E under one command because of Hollis' vision," Dellarocco said, referring to the vision Hollis championed to bring operational test, developmental test, and evaluation together under one unified command to harness integrated testing.



Photo by Robin Boggs

Walter W. Hollis (right) looks on after ATEC Commander Maj. Gen. Genaro Dellarocco (left) and ATEC Command Sgt. Maj. Allen Fritzsching (center) unveil a plaque bearing Hollis' name and photograph during a building dedication Dec. 13 at ATEC headquarters on APG.

"We're going to take it to a new level. We've created interdependency amongst the operational, developmental and evaluation communities and created a new paradigm for integrated testing and distributed testing, and your vision laid that groundwork," he said.

Following the unveiling of the dedication plaque by Hollis, Dellarocco, and ATEC Command Sgt. Maj. Allen Fritzsching, David Hollis addressed the crowd on his father's behalf. He began his remarks by thanking the Army for recognizing his father's work.

"It's an honor for me to represent the Hollis family," David said. "We only had a vague notion of the work that Dad was doing, but along the way

we caught glimpses of the real meaning of his work through the many ceremonies recognizing his contributions and accomplishments."

Before the dedication event, David asked his father to share his favorite stories with him about his time serving the Warfighter. David said his father reflected briefly and noted he couldn't talk about the best of them, which drew laughter from the large crowd.

"Even so his motivation for public service and devotion to the Army remains vivid in his mind," David shared.

"The safety, well being, and effectiveness of the warfighter always remained his principle motivation."

A motivation David said manifest-

ed itself into determination, inquisitiveness, and a passion for teaching and mentoring new generations of analysts to think, be creative, challenge assumptions, and to do the right thing.

"The Army was his second family," he said. "We are proud to have shared him with you."

In a memorandum approving the exception despite Hollis not meeting the narrow criteria for dedication as a living person, McHugh wrote, "His remarkable career and tireless commitment to providing our Warfighters with the latest and most advanced equipment, Soldier support systems and technology set the standard for excellence in selfless service to country."

# AROUND THE FORCE



## PHC completes health hazard assessment of ballistic underwear

By **CHANEL S. WEAVER**

*U.S. Army Public Health Command*

The Army is one step closer to issuing an updated version of its ballistic underwear after a recent review and approval by the U.S. Army Public Health Command.

Experts in the command's Health Hazard Assessment, or HHA, Program completed an occupational health assessment of the new protective outer garments and undergarments, and provided recommendations on how to minimize any risks.

"We evaluated these items to identify any occupational hazards that could arise from wearing them," said Robert Booze, an industrial hygienist project officer at the U.S. Army Public Health Command, or USAPHC. "Our goal was to mitigate any risks to Soldiers before the protective outer garments and undergarments were distributed to the user."

After a thorough review, the HHA Program approved the protective outer garments and undergarments for military use.

Military work is inherently dangerous, but officials at the USAPHC believe that Soldiers in combat should not be placed at a disadvantage or at unusual risk because their protective clothing is deficient.

Although these undergarments look similar to a set of men's bicycle pants, they are no ordinary underwear.

"They are designed to use protective fabric and withstand injuries to the pelvic region that may result from the blast of an improvised explosive device," said Booze.

From 2003 to 2011, more than 600 Soldiers suffered injuries to the genital region during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Although Soldiers are well protected by body armor on their torso, some injuries to the lower body are so severe that they can cause Soldiers to lose all or part of their genitals. This loss of the reproductive organs can have devastating psychological effects.

The Health Hazard Assessment Program was not the only program within the USAPHC that helped complete the assessment of the pelvic protection system.

Wilfred McCain, senior toxicologist, said the USAPHC Toxicology Portfolio conducted an evaluation of the materials that were used in the underwear to see if they posed any potential risk to the wearer's skin.

"We evaluated the fabric, and did not see any threats to the user," said McCain. "The safety of our Soldiers is a top priority."

The garments must also be comfortable, using breathable fabrics like cotton, according to specifications requested by the Army.

Booze, who once served as an infantry officer in the military, said he feels blessed to perform a job that helps ensure protection of the troops. The HHA Program reviews not just personal protective clothing, but weapons systems, equipment and training devices as well.

"I am grateful that I still have a job that allows me to support our Army in a meaningful way," he said.

Now that the USAPHC health hazard assessment is complete, the Army will conduct several more reviews before the outer garments and undergarments are adopted in the field.

## AER scholarships available for Families of Soldiers

By **DAVID VERGUN**

*Army News Service*

Army Emergency Relief scholarships for the academic year 2013-2014 have recently been made available, for spouses and children of Soldiers, retired Soldiers and reserve-component Soldiers on Title 10 orders. The application deadline is May 1.

The Maj. Gen. James Ursano Scholarships are for unmarried children under the age of 23.

"Scholarship awards for children are based on financial need, grade point average and leadership and activity roles -- like sports, scouting and student council -- held over the last four years," said Tammy LaCroix, AER Scholarship Program manager. "A student could qualify under one, two or all three of the criteria."

The Spouse Education Assistance

Program Scholarships are based solely on financial need, LaCroix said.

Applicants of both scholarships must be pursuing their first undergraduate degree at an accredited college or university. All applicants must maintain a GPA of 2.0 on a GPA scale of 4.0.

Transcripts need to be included in applications, along with a "Free Application for Federal Student Aid" form and report. Children who have not attended college should submit their high school transcripts instead.

Scholarship funds can be used for tuition, fees, books, supplies and room and board.

This year there has been a change in the application procedure.

"Instead of mailing, emailing or faxing the forms, transcripts and other paperwork, all submissions must be submitted online," LaCroix said.

The new procedure should make the process more efficient and will eliminate problems like forms get-

ting lost in the mail, she added.

According to LaCroix, 5,218 applications were received for the Maj. Gen. James Ursano Scholarship for the 2012-2013 academic year. Of those, 2,614 scholarships were awarded, with an average award of \$2,550. For the same academic year, more than 2,200 applications were received for the Spouse Education Assistance Program, with 757 scholarships being awarded. The average award was \$3,205.

AER is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to providing financial assistance to Soldiers, active and retired, and their families. Since its incorporation in 1942, AER has provided around \$1.4 billion to more than 3.4 million Soldiers, families and retirees.

Forms and instructions for both scholarships can be found at <http://www.aerhq.org/dnn563/EducationalAssistance.aspx>.

To request more information, applicants can call 866-878-6378 or e-mail [scholarships@aerhq.org](mailto:scholarships@aerhq.org).

Anyone interested in making donations to AER can visit its website at [aerhq.org](http://www.aerhq.org) for instructions.

### DID YOU KNOW?

**More than 2,200 applications were received for the Spouse Education Assistance Program, with 757 scholarships being awarded. The average award was \$3,205.**

## IMCOM strives to better prepare Soldiers, Families

*IMCOM Public Affairs*

The U.S. Army Installation Management Command is committed to assisting Soldiers and Families transition smoothly into civilian employment and America's communities.

In response to the president's and U.S. Army's emphasis on a career-ready military, IMCOM is highlighting job fairs, expanding its transition services and keenly focusing on identifying employment opportunities within the command, as well as business and industry.

"Our Soldiers deserve the best we can offer them, including the best opportunities for the future," said Lt. Gen. Mike Ferriter, IMCOM commanding general.

"We're making sure Soldiers can't slip through the cracks," Ferriter said. "We will do everything we can to help prepare them for civilian life as thoroughly as we equip them for battle. We owe that to our veterans in exchange for their life of service and sacrifice to this nation."

All transitioning Soldiers, from those retiring to first-term enlistees, have a wealth of opportunities at their fingertips thanks in large part to the Veterans Opportunity to Work Act, which Congress approved in October 2011. The VOW Act is the driving force behind the completely revamped transition program, according to Kenric Echols, chief of military personnel, IMCOM G1.

"Changes went into effect on Nov. 21," Echols said. "But we're already getting lots of phone calls and inquiries about the new transition program. The intent is to better prepare transitioning Soldiers and their families and get them in touch with potential employers, hopefully resulting in job offers."

That's good news for Soldiers, the Army and the nation, according to Ferriter.

What does the new program look like? Soldiers transitioning this fiscal year will receive mandatory pre-separation counseling that includes in-depth discussion of veterans benefits, financial planning, civilian employment readiness training, and a heavy emphasis on individualized transition plans over a longer time period.

Transitioning Soldiers can also expect more individual attention and counseling on resume writing and practice interviews. And depending on a Soldier's preference, the program will include a detailed workshop focusing on one of three areas -- education, technical skills or small business ownership. Spouses are highly encouraged to participate in the five-day transition program as well, according to Echols.

"They can attend all sessions or some, and we have resources to help them in their search for employment as well," he said.

IMCOM has already found that engaged and educated spouses are a key enabler to a successful transition



Cannoneer photo

**In response to the president's and U.S. Army's emphasis on a career-ready military, U.S. Army Installation Management Command is highlighting job fairs, expanding its transition services and keenly focusing on identifying employment opportunities within the command, as well as business and industry. Here, a spouse peruses literature at the Military Spouse Business Alliance Hiring Fair and Career Forum at the Graham Resiliency Training Campus at Fort Sill, Okla., Nov. 1, 2012. About 30 employers ranging from Northrop Grumman to Walmart to Great Plains Technology Center to Comanche County Memorial Hospital had recruiting booths at the job fair.**

from military service.

Job fairs are also a critical part of the process. Echols emphasized that they provide a meeting place for military members and employers to connect, provide valuable networking opportunities, and give Soldiers better insight into the pay available within the private and public sectors. Garrisons around the globe are now required to host a minimum of two employment events, such as community job fairs, each fiscal year.

Many garrisons are exceeding that goal by partnering with other agencies such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, which has a proven track record for connecting businesses to talented Soldiers.

"We are also expanding the use of job fairs, allowing Soldiers to engage potential employers remotely, even from overseas," he said.

Soldiers can sign up for a virtual career fair program at <https://www.acap.army.mil/>. A listing and details on all the IMCOM job fairs is available at <http://www.imcom.army.mil/Organization/G1Personnel/ACAP/JobFairMap.aspx>.

Federal employment is another great avenue available to Soldiers. It's estimated that as much as 60 percent of the federal civilian workforce will be retiring in the next decade. This opens a wide variety of federal jobs, and few people will be more qualified to fill those positions than today's Soldiers.

Those who have served in combat, have been decorated for valor, or have combat related injuries or disabilities, may find entry into federal service easier due to veterans' preferences and streamlined hiring practices.

The Army relies heavily on Army civilians every day. Army civilians write contracts, deliver goods, man-

age networks, and provide support functions that would otherwise present distractions to training and wartime operations.

Civilians man the training ranges, run the finance offices and in some cases cook the meals and manage the personnel actions. From the sound of reveille to when a Soldier turns out the lights in the barracks at the end of the day, Soldiers are supported by their civilian counterparts.

"There's not much difference in how you feel about your job and how you conduct business in and out of uniform," said retired Command Sgt. Maj. Willie Wilson, who today runs the Army's World Class Athlete Program for the IMCOM. "And in most Army civilian positions, you're still taking care of Soldiers and their Families."

"I'm glad that's still part of my job description," he added.

The skill sets and training Soldiers receive during active duty, whether they serve for four years or 20, directly translate to the Army civilian workforce. Making the switch from uniformed to civilian service is easier than ever before and IMCOM's Transition Services Programs are working to ensure Soldiers and their families are educated on how to cross-walk the Military Occupational Specialties to requirements of civilian positions.

"I'm certain that in the coming decades our Soldiers will give this country as much as they have in the past 10 years of war," Ferriter said. "While it's important to do all we can to support them no matter what path they choose after separating or retiring, we're also positioning the Army of 2020 to retain their knowledge, skills, enthusiasm, patriotism and willingness to serve."

# Learning STEM benefits country

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Children in FLL are challenged to use their creativity to design a solution, or modify an existing solution, to solve a real-world problem.

During the opening ceremony ATEC Commander Maj. Gen. Genaro Dellarocco commended the students for their enthusiasm, perseverance and teamwork.

“What you are doing today—learning about technology—is something that our Army is looking for. We need mathematicians, scientists, logicians, the whole nine yards,” Dellarocco said. “There are many ways to serve our country. Part of what you are doing today is serving our country by learning about science, technology engineering and math.”

After the opening ceremony, teams presented a research project to judges. Every September FLL releases a real-world scientific challenge. This year’s challenge was to find ways to improve the quality of life for senior citizens.

In the afternoon, teams were tasked to perform 15 missions in 2.5 minutes on a themed playing field using an autonomous robot built by computer-aided design.

“The main goal today is for the children to have fun, get them interested in STEM,” said Christina Bryant, ATEC recruitment and outreach program coordinator. “There is no negativity, only positive reinforcement. They all worked really hard on their projects.”

FLL Manor View Brainiacs team Coach Lacey Wallace of Anne Arundel County said their team spent a significant amount of time researching problems that senior citizens encounter on a daily basis. The team then decided to create a product that will help senior citizens combat vertigo.

“FLL teaches students inquiry and problem solving skills,” Wallace said. “Coaches are learning along with the children. There are not always direct



Photo by Rachel Ponder

Teams practice on robot match tables during the FIRST LEGO League Challenge qualifying rounds held at ATEC headquarters Jan. 5. Sixteen teams competed during the event, which was organized by ATEC, Team APG, and University of Maryland Baltimore County.

answers to problems. FLL teaches the value of persevering to find an answer.”

Bethany Jackson, a fifth grader from the Robotics Engineers team, said she enjoyed hearing feedback from the judges. Her team came up with the idea of a “Flexi-Reader,” a magnifying device that helps low vision seniors read.

“I liked expressing myself and shar-

ing our ideas with the judges,” she said. “It was really cool getting opinions from scientists and engineers.”

The event also included displays and demonstrations from the U.S. Army Research Laboratory, Edgewood Chemical Biological Center, and Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

For more information about FLL, visit [www.firstlegoleague.org](http://www.firstlegoleague.org).

## Awards

- Overall Champion Award - Robotic Engineers
- Project Award - Gatorbots 2
- Robot Design Award - Robo Squad
- Core Values Award - Dragonbots
- Judges Award - Gatorbots 1
- Robot Performance Award - Robo Squad

# Pick up free tickets at Fort Meade

Continued from Page 1

wide. Troops and service members can register online at <http://usometrotickets.eventbrite.com/> to receive e-mail updates on ticket availability. Participants request the tickets they wish to receive, but should keep in mind that availability varies with each event and depends on the number of tickets donated by sponsors. In most cases, ticket recipients are selected based on a raffle.

Although APG does not have a USO center, Soldiers and military Family members can collect tickets at any USO-Metro location. The newly renovated USO center at Fort George G.

Meade, Md., located between Washington and Baltimore, is the closest military base with a USO center.

Queen Waddell, the coordinator for the Fort Meade USO Center, said occasionally tickets are available at only one location, but that is not normally the case.

“USO-Metro does a good job of spreading the wealth, so that all locations regularly receive tickets,” Waddell said.

APG’s Lt. Col. Kathy Moses, of the U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command, knows that firsthand, after recently receiving Military Bowl tickets through TicketLine.

“I think the USO really adds to the quality of life for Soldiers and their Families,” said Moses, and I hope more people from the APG community can take advantage of what they have to offer.

USO’s Waddell also noted that individuals can donate tickets they can’t use to the USO-Metro Ticket Program.

Waddell urged local military Families to visit the Fort Meade USO to take advantage of the many other services they offer, including free WiFi, a media room with the latest gaming systems, center-hosted social events like barbecues, movie nights, and a

commissary-stocked food pantry for Families in need.

“This is a place where military and their Family members can connect with other military Families,” she said. “It’s worth the trip; we are never more than a phone call or an e-mail away for support.”

The Fort Meade USO Center is open daily from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. For information, call 410-305-0660, e-mail [queen@usometro.org](mailto:queen@usometro.org) or visit [www.usometro.org](http://www.usometro.org), and click on “locations” then “Fort Meade.”

To receive updates about USO-Metro events, “like” USO-Metro on Facebook.

# Gospel concert tickets on sale now

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p.m. This event is open to the public.

Tickets are on sale now and available for purchase by walk-in or phone charge only at the APG MWR ticket offices in the APG North (Aberdeen) recreation center, Bldg. 3326, 410-278-4011; or the APG South (Edgewood) recreation center, Bldg. E4140, 410-436-2713.

All seating is reserved. Advanced tickets can be purchased with military ID card (active duty/retiree/government civilian/government contractor/Family members) for \$20; advanced tickets for non-ID card holders is \$25; day-of-show price is \$25 for all.

There are a limited number of free tickets for active duty military. For more information, visit [www.apgmwr.com](http://www.apgmwr.com).

## James Fortune & FIYA

James Fortune & FIYA’s highly anticipated debut CD “You Survived” was released in September 2004. Fortune was honored at the 19th Annual ASCAP Rhythm and Soul Music Awards for his hit single “You Survived” off the same album. The song also peaked as the #2 most played Gospel song in the country. Fortune received a 2006 ASCAP Writers Award and his FIYA singers have been nominated four years in a row for the Texas Gospel Youth & Young Adult Choir of the Year. FIYA has opened for artists such as Kim Burrell, Stevie Wonder, Albertini



na Walker and many others.

Fortune hails from Texas where he is the choir director at Higher Dimension Church in SW Houston. Membership has grown from 29 members in 1999 to more than 12,000 with 10 operative lead ministries and a host of sub-ministries that cater to the needs of children, youth, men, women, couples and singles.

## Le’ Andria Johnson

Johnson is a Grammy Award-winning Gospel singer-songwriter from Orlando, Fla. and winner of the third season of Sunday Best, a singing competition on TV’s BET hosted by Gospel legend Kirk Franklin. Her song “I Shall Leap Into My Destiny” entered the Billboard Gospel charts at #1. Her first album, “The Awakening of Le’Andria Johnson,” released in 2011, debuted at # 1 on the U.S. Billboard Gospel Albums, # 3 on the U.S. Billboard Independent Albums and #24 on the Billboard 200. The album’s second release in February 2012 included seven new songs and earned her a 2012 Grammy Award for Best Gospel/Contemporary Christian Music Performance. She is the first Sunday Best contestant to receive a Grammy Award.

A native of Orlando, Fla., Johnson was born into a musical family and was singing in her father’s church by the time she was 2-years-old.

With the success of her first EP,



Johnson became the first Sunday Best winner to release two more projects. She released a self-titled, Christmas EP in November 2011, and a second project, “The Evolution of Le’Andria Johnson,” in February 2012.

In addition to her second EP, a 14 song album, “The Evolution of Le’Andria Johnson Deluxe Edition,” also was released the same month.

Her top-selling singles include “Jesus” and “It’s Gonna Be Alright.”

## VaShawn Mitchell

Six-time Stellar Award winner and Grammy Award-nominated recording artist VaShawn Mitchell soared to the top of the charts after the release of his mega-hit single “Nobody Greater” from his award-winning album “Triumphant.”

In 2011, Mitchell received 11 Stellar Award nominations, the most received by a single artist that year. Billboard magazine declared “Nobody Greater” the #1 most played Gospel song of 2011 and Mitchell was named Billboard’s #1 Gospel Radio Artist of 2011. Mitchell also received two Grammy and two GMA Dove Award nominations for the album and the song. His latest work, “Created 4” contains 11 songs, all of which he wrote or co-wrote. A native of Harvey, Ill., a suburb of Chicago, Mitchell recently was honored by his hometown when they named the street where he grew up “VaShawn Mitchell Street.” His top-



selling hits include “My Worship is For Real” and “Trouble Don’t Last.”

## Zacardi Cortez

Cortez began his career singing with his family, The Cortez Singers, in his native Houston, Texas, but is best known for his strong vocals with James Fortune’s FIYA singers. His solo album “Zacardi Cortez: The Introduction” debuted in May 2012. The single “I Believe,” featuring Cortez, Shawn McLemore and James Fortune & FIYA, remained #1 on Billboard’s Hot Gospel Songs chart for 14 weeks. You Tube videos of “The Blood” have racked up more than one million views and made the song one of Cortez’s most requested. When not recording he tours with Fortune and Gospel music guru Earnest Pugh.



## Shuckey Ducky

Shuckey Ducky is the stage name of comedian Cecil Armstrong, a native of Dallas, Texas. He has appeared on “Def Comedy Jam” and as the ringmaster of UniverSoul Circus. He is known for his catchphrase, “Shucky Ducky, quack, quack,” which he describes as meaning disappointment or excitement.



# APG South celebrates quarter-century of giving

ECBC newsletter

For the 25th consecutive year, the U.S. Army Edgewood Chemical Biological Center hosted the closing ceremony of Aberdeen Proving Ground South's Food, Toy and Gift Drive at Berger Auditorium Dec. 13.

Focusing on the needs of less fortunate military and civilian community members during the holiday season, ECBC and partnering organizations held their annual drive from Oct. 31 – Dec. 7. Employees across Edgewood contributed to this year's drive with cheerful generosity, filling 55 boxes with food items and 45 boxes with toys.

As in previous years, the drive culminated in a closing ceremony, where ECBC and partnering APG South organizations turned collected items over to designated local charity representatives.

Mason Dixon Community Services, an organization that provides emergency food and energy assistance to low-income residents in Harford County, received APG South's food donations. The toy donations were handed over to the Edgewood Shar-

**It is important that we take the time out to help people who are less fortunate and to show our appreciation to service members who bravely protect our nation's freedom.**

**Joseph Wienand**  
ECBC Technical Director

ing Table, a non-profit coalition of churches that reaches out to citizens in need, and Extreme Family Outreach, an organization that provides after school and summer programs for elementary and middle school youth in Edgewood, Joppatowne, and Havre de Grace.

In an effort to fulfill more wishes and needs throughout the holiday season, APG North employees sponsored children's wish lists submitted by 19 military Families from the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Chemical Defense and the 22nd Chemical Battalion, the 20th Support Command through Army Communi-

ty Services.

"The 25th anniversary of our Food, Toy and Gift Drive marks a special milestone for the Edgewood Area and its local community," said Mary Doak, ECBC Community and Educational Outreach Program manager. "We are honored that the director of Harford County's Office of Economic Development Jim Richardson joined us in proclaiming this charitable and historical event."

ECBC Technical Director Joseph Wienand shared welcome remarks and thanked senior leaders for their participation and support during the ceremony.

"Especially during this the time of the year, it is important that we stop and take the time out of our busy schedules to help people who are less fortunate than ourselves and to show our appreciation to our service members who bravely protect our nation's freedom," he said. "And, I'm delighted to see that thanks to employees and senior leaders across the Edgewood Area this drive continues to expand and succeed after twenty-five years."

Maj. Gen. Leslie Smith from the 20th Support Command, gave the keynote speech during the event and cited the Army Civilian Creed, commending Edgewood employees for the time and effort they dedicated to the initiative.

Participating organizations included the ECBC; members of the Department of Emergency Services; the Joint Program Executive Office for Chemical and Biological Defense; the Program Executive Office, Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives; the U.S. Army Chemical Materials Activity; and USAMRICD.

## 2013 housing, subsistence allowance rates

By **CLAUDETTE ROULO**

American Forces Press Service

On Jan. 1, 2013, service members saw an average increase of about \$60 in their 2013 basic allowance for housing, Cheryl Anne Woehr, the BAH program manager, said last month.

Overall, rates went up an average of 3.8 percent, Woehr said. Rate increases were spread throughout the country.

"There wasn't any particular one region that was a big winner or a big loser this year," she said.

Service members in New York City will receive the largest increase this year -- 14.7 percent on average -- followed closely by Altus Air Force Base, Okla., which will see a 14.1 percent average increase.

Rates for BAH are set through annual reviews of market rents, utility costs and renter's insurance rates, Woehr said.

"We measure those in each location for various types of housing," she said.

The BAH program office surveys property managers to determine current rental rates in each duty location. Housing types considered include apartments, town homes and duplexes, as well as single-family rental units of various bedroom sizes. Utility information is derived from the American Community Survey, conducted annually by the Census Bureau, and renter's insurance information comes from area insurance companies, she said.

"We want to make sure [service] members are able to afford adequate and appropriate housing within a reasonable distance of their duty station," Woehr said.

About one million service members receive BAH, she said, which is paid to service members in the U.S. who live

off base or in privatized base housing. The allowance is designed to cover the total housing cost for the median rental housing type for the service member's pay grade, Woehr said.

Service members who reside outside the U.S. receive an overseas housing allowance, which is not affected by changes to BAH, she said.

BAH varies between pay grades because, by law, it is also determined in part by assessing the housing of civilians in similar pay brackets, Woehr said.

"We look at what civilians in a typical income range typically live in ... and we price that type of housing for equivalently paid military personnel," she said.

About 21 percent of BAH localities saw a net decrease, but service members already receiving a higher allowance at those locations will continue to receive it, Woehr said.

"We recognize that they've already made housing decisions based on that amount," she said. "It's only members newly reporting that will receive the new lower rates."

Department of Defense officials also announced the new basic allowance for subsistence, or BAS, rates for military members. The new rates will take effect Jan. 1, 2013. Enlisted service members will receive \$352.27 a month, up from \$348.44 per month this year. Officers will receive \$242.60 a month, up from \$239.96 in 2012.

Annual adjustments to BAS -- a monthly, nontaxable cash payment intended to be used to buy food -- are linked to changes in food prices as measured by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The index rose by 1.1 percent between the beginning of October 2011 and the end of September 2012, forming the basis for the increased BAS rates.

## MLK daylong events set

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director of Human Resources Policy, Department of the Army, G1, will be the keynote speaker and retired 1st Sgt. Derick Maull, Joint Project Manager Guardian, will present a rendition of King's "I Have a Dream" speech.

A narrative on the life of Dr. King will be presented by Sgt. 1st Class Stephanie Brown, 20th Support Command.

A 44-passenger bus will be available to shuttle employees from the C4ISR campus to the post theater and back from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The pick-up and drop-off point will be in front of Bldg. 6002.

The celebration continues in the afternoon, 1:30 to 3 p.m., with a professional development forum centered on the theme: "Remember! Celebrate! Act! The Struggle Then ... And Now!"

During this segment, panel members will introduce themselves, offer brief biographies, summarize the challenges they've faced during their careers and then field questions from the audience. This event is open to the public.

Panel members include Maj. Gen. Leslie C. Smith, commander of the 20th Support Command (CBRNE); David Jimenez, director of the U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command's Army Evaluation Center; retired Lt. Gen. Arthur J. Gregg whose career spanned 31 years and included combat tours in Korea and Vietnam; retired Maj. Gen. Robert L. Nabors, senior Vice President for EDS U.S. Government Solutions and the father of Rob Nabors, head of the White House legislative affairs office; and Tiffany Evans, a training

coordinator specialist with Headquarters, U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command.

Master Sgt. William Craine, 20th Spt. Cmd. Equal Opportunity/SHARP program manager, said organizers wanted to get away from the standard program format in hopes of enhancing the experience for attendees. Presenting an interactive event featuring people who lived through or were impacted by MLK-era civil rights initiatives might just be the ticket.

"We didn't want to short-change the idea of the MLK celebration, we wanted to add to it," he said, noting that all panel members are professional development speakers. He said each speaker will give a five- to 10-minute presentation on their careers and their struggles and then take questions from the audience.

"This [format] is more per-

sonal and provides a stronger impact," Craine said. "It sends the message that the struggle [for civil rights] has been real and it applies to people in general. Even Tiffany -- the youngest member of the panel -- has relevant input from a current perspective.

"We invite the APG community to come meet face-to-face with military personnel who served during the Civil Rights era and learn how it impacted them."

For more information, contact Craine at 410-436-9786, william.c.craine.mil@mail.mil; Sgt. 1st Class Ryan Cole, 410-436-0320, ryan.p.cole.mil@mail.mil; Sgt. 1st Class Howard Norcross, ATEC, 443-861-9251; Sgt. 1st Class David Hall, RDECOM, 410-306-2425; Linda Patrick, USAPHC, 410-436-1023; or Tracy Marshall, CECOM/Installation EO, 443-861-4366.

## Employees urged to check pay statements carefully

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reflected in their January paychecks.

Active duty military personnel will see pay adjustments in their January mid-month paycheck and will be reflected on the January leave and earnings statement.

DOD civilians will see social security withholding changes reflected in paychecks based on the pay period ending December 29, 2012, for pay dates beginning in January.

DFAS stresses that all personnel should review pay statements carefully.

## Active Army population drops 10,000

Continued from Page 1

to take money from the U.S. Treasury and hand it over to the Department of Defense, in order to pay for what is spelled out in the Authorization Act.

### Sequestration?

Still facing lawmakers, the Department of Defense, and the Army, however, is the threat of sequestration, which could now happen in March. Were sequestration to occur, it could change the amount of money the services receive, despite what kind of spending is authorized in the NDAA 2013.

That possibility has the Department of Defense planning for a future that could be different from what is spelled out in the NDAA.

"We're entering a phase of, of serious planning," said George Little, Department of Defense spokesman, earlier this week. "We don't want sequester to go into effect. This is bad for everyone, again, not just for the

Department of Defense. But we are in a period of fiscal turmoil, to say the least, and we need to get beyond this."

### Big picture

The NDAA 2013 doesn't just spell out how the Army is authorized to spend money during fiscal year 2013, it also spells out some other changes for how the services conduct business.

For the active Army, the end strength drops to 552,100 Soldiers by Sept 30, 2013, a decrease of nearly 10,000 Soldiers in the active-duty force. For the Reserve components of the Army, the authorized end strength remains the same as last year, with the Army National Guard at 358,200 and the Army Reserve at 205,000.

One section of the act calls for establishment of special victim capabilities within the military departments to respond to "allegations of certain special victim offenses."

According to the law, service secretaries must establish "special victim capabilities" that can investigate and prosecute child abuse, domestic violence and sexual offenses. Those capabilities must also include support for victims of those offenses. Initial capability must be available within a year of the law's signing.

### Sexual assault & abortions

Another section of the law requires the Department of Defense to provide sexual assault prevention and response training modules for new or prospective commanders. Training will include, among other things, how to foster a command climate that doesn't tolerate sexual assault, and one that encourages victims to report assault.

Another section of the law expands how DoD funds can be used for providing abortions. The current law

reads: "Funds available to the Department of Defense may not be used to perform abortions except where the life of the mother would be endangered if the fetus were carried to term." The NDAA 2013 adds the following to that section of law: "or in a case in which the pregnancy is the result of an act of rape or incest."

Within the NDAA, the Congress also calls on the Army to conduct a study of the Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness Program and the Army's capability to reduce high-risk and self-destructive behavior among Soldiers.

A report on the study must be submitted to Congress by Oct. 31, 2014, and must include trends in high-risk or self-destructive behavior as well as measurements of the effectiveness of the Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness Program training efforts to enhance resilience.