

the Post

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NEWSNOTES

Civilian pre-retirement training sessions offered

An instructor from Army Benefits Center will be at Fort Dix to provide civilian pre-retirement training sessions March 19 and 20. Classes will be held in Room 101, Timmermann Conference Center, Bldg. 5441 on Pennsylvania Avenue. Watch for more information on the classes.

E-mail limited to AKO on government computers

The Directorate of Information Management has installed a new network device to track and filter network traffic. The Intrusion Prevention System (IPS) automatically sends out notifications when ever unauthorized traffic is attempting to access the internet. This device gives the post network visibility that it didn't have before. The notifications will result in the any computers with unauthorized software being scrubbed and rebuilt in accordance with AR 25-2. Whoever is logged on at the time will receive a warning letter for the first instance and a suspension of his or her NAE accounts for any other violations.

Please be aware that Gmail, Yahoo mail, AOL, Hotmail and others offer instant messaging services that open when you open the mail system, and that type of instant messaging is prohibited. The Army standard for e-mail and messaging is the Army Knowledge Online system.

Mandatory Suicide Prevention Briefings set

Mandatory Suicide Prevention Briefings for Fort Dix civilian employees will be held March 13 in Timmermann Center. Two sessions will be offered, from 8 a.m. to noon and from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. These sessions will be the last offered to meet this requirement.

Housing construction hits next phase, traffic shifts

Due to construction, streets in the easternmost portion of Falcon Courts North will be blocked off. Starting on March 1, residents will be unable to use East Castle Drive east of Bolling Boulevard. Homes along the east side of Prestwick Road will be affected but, but the street will remain available for the residents on the west side of Prestwick. Residents in this area should use East George Street to Travis Street to enter and exit. For more information, please call Kelly Ledgerwood at the United Communities Construction Office at 609-723-4290, extension 2013.

WEATHER

FRIDAY -- Mostly cloudy, with a high near 51. Mostly cloudy overnight with a low around 39.

SATURDAY -- Mostly cloudy, with a high near 61. A slight chance of showers overnight with a low around 43 degrees.

SUNDAY -- Mostly sunny, with a high near 68. Clouds moving in overnight with a low around 44 degrees.

MONDAY -- Partly sunny, with a high near 59 degrees. Partly cloudy overnight with a low around 37.

TUESDAY -- Partly sunny, with a high near 54. Mostly cloudy overnight with a low around 34 degrees.

WEDNESDAY -- A chance of rain and snow showers, with a high near 50 degrees. Cloudy overnight with a low of 34.

Doors open at 99th

Monk, Bell cut ribbon at Fort Dix

Carolee Nisbet
Editor

With a crisp wind to send the bows flying and a crowd to lend applause, senior leaders from the U.S. Army Reserve cut the ribbon officially opening the 99th Regional Support Command Headquarters in a traditional ceremony at Fort Dix Feb. 28.

Deputy U.S. Army Reserve Commander Maj. Gen. Alan D. Bell joined Maj. Gen. William Monk III, 99th RSC commander, in wielding the scissors and commenting on the use and future of the huge red brick structure.

The RSC, one of five created in 2005 as part of the reorganization of the Army Reserve, will provide administrative and logistical support to all USAR units and commands in the Northeast. It will supervise maintenance support and equipment sites, and will provide facility support to all units in the 13-state region.

Major Gen. Bell, deputy chief, U.S. Army Reserve for Operations, Readiness, Training and Mobilization and deputy commander, US Army Reserve, told the crowd he travels the nation and the world visiting units, some of which are housed in crumbling facilities. "What a tribute this structure is to our Soldiers," he said. "On behalf of Lt. Gen. Jack Stultz, chief, Army Reserve, and commander, US Army Reserve Command, thank you for a job well done."

In addition to the 99th Regional Support Command, the new center will house its subordinate commands, (continued on page 4)



Sgt. Marcie C. Wright; 99th Regional Support Command

THE BIG SNIP -- Maj. Gen. Alan D. Bell, deputy commander, US Army Reserve, and Maj. Gen. William Monk III, commander of the 99th Regional Support Command, scissor through the ribbon during a ceremony marking the official opening of the 99th RSC's new facility February 28 at Fort Dix. The 99th RSC, previously based out of Coraopolis, Pa. is the Army Reserve headquarters overseeing training facilities and resource management for 13 states in the northeast.

Thaxton details Fort Dix changes

Carolee Nisbet
Editor

Fort Dix Commander Col. Ronald Thaxton added information to the menu at the Retiree Council Luncheon Feb. 28 with an update on Joint Basing and other changes on post.

"We are still finalizing the memorandum of agreement (for Joint Basing), and it is not signed yet," Thaxton told the crowd at Club Dix. "We've had several meetings, assemblies, conferences and subconferences to try to get it to work, and we will. We're asking you to serve as ambassadors to help get that word out."

Thaxton noted that parts of the Fort Dix mission will change and parts won't. "There will still be mobilization and training. Fort Dix has mobilized more than 72,000 Soldiers

since September 11, more than any other Army post."

Non-mobilization training also remains at Fort Dix, and the Army will retain the training areas. Installation support activities that are now handled by Fort Dix, such as maintenance, security and Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation activities will become the mission of the Joint Base, under the lead of the Air Force.

Congress gave the Department of Defense a mandate for Joint Basing. Thaxton said, and Fort Dix, McGuire Air Force Base and Naval Air Engineering Station Lakehurst are not the only bases going through the process -- though the Joint Base will be the only one representing three services.

"How to merge is the big question. We don't lose our service heritage. Fort Dix will be Army Support Activity Fort Dix," he said.

Thaxton reviewed the elements that will transfer to the joint base, noting that the Directorate of Protective Services -- police and firefighters -- will be the first to go.

"What have we done with the workforce? We have kept them well informed. We know their fears, but right now the bottom line is that everyone will have a job."

Thaxton added that there will not be a reduction in force as the Army moves to ASA Fort Dix and the Joint Base becomes fully functional.

"Short term, it's going to be painful," he said. "Long term, there will be some goodness -- one button to push for support services, no matter what uniform you are wearing."

The flip side of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission actions that sparked Joint Basing is growth for Fort Dix.

More than 4,000 Sailors, Soldiers, Marines and civilians will migrate to Dix during the next two years, bringing added units, missions and family members to the post.

Some, such as the 99th Regional Support Command, are already moving in; others, including Marine and Marine Aviation units from Trenton and Willow Grove, are slated for arrival in a couple of years as facilities are finished and allocated.

"Service cultures and traditions will continue," Thaxton said. "Service specific organizations will remain and continue to provide support, but there will also be an opportunity for new organizations to emerge supporting the Joint Base."

Retired Maj. Gen. Rocco Negris, former Fort Dix commander and member of the Retiree Council, said Joint Basing will have minimal impact on retirees and the services they receive.

Report to Congress: Army, Air Guard reach full strength

Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill
Special to American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, March 4, 2009 -- The Army National Guard is over strength and the Air National Guard has met its target strength for the first time since 2002, the directors told Congress yesterday.

"This is a new era for us," said Army Lt. Gen. Clyde A. Vaughn, the director of the Army National Guard. "We've never been in this position with this kind of strength. This is the strongest Army Guard we've ever had."

But recruiting and retention success, combined with budget cuts, mean some programs that have improved recruitment are being reduced. For example, many bonuses are being cut.

"I just hope we don't let the air completely out of the tires on recruit-

ing and retention," Vaughn told the lawmakers. "I would ask that you watch that very closely."

Vaughn and Air Force Lt. Gen. Harry M. Wyatt III, director of the Air National Guard, testified before the military personnel subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee at a hearing on recruiting, retention and end strength, three issues that have long been topics of great concern for the services in times of personnel upheaval.

The Air National Guard currently has 106,700 members; the Army Guard has 366,500.

Vaughn said Army Guard recruiting and retention could improve further by reducing "cross-leveling," in which soldiers are brought in from outside units to boost the numbers in deploying units, by cutting the time it takes from swearing in a recruit to having the recruit fully trained, and by further improving the predictability of deployments.

(Army Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill)



Wayne Cook

Standing up Joint Base history

Col. Gina Grosso, commander, 87th Air Base Wing, accepts the guidon from Maj. Gen. Winfield Scott III, commander, 18th Air Force, Scott Air Force Base, Ill., during a ceremony standing up the new Joint Base Wing March 3. Story, more photos, page 3.

French Foreign Legion retains swashbuckling allure



Steve Snyder
Public Affairs Staff

The legion was their fatherland and "March or die" their harsh creed. Cutthroats, renegades and thieves were welcomed among their recruits and weren't required to enlist under their actual names. Since its inception, the French Foreign Legion has ranked among the world's toughest armies. And its traditions, history and military persona have dwarfed the accomplishments of armies less storied if not more bloodied.

Monday, March 9 marks the 178th birthday of France's famed fighting force. It's worth a cheer - and some cognac.

The French Foreign Legion was founded by King Louis Philippe in 1831. It was to be "a legion of foreigners for service outside France" and invariably wound up fighting in the world's worst trouble spots. Legionnaires coming from 140 different nationalities have survived three Republics, one empire, two World Wars, the rise and fall of conscripted armies, the end of the French colonial empire and even France's loss of the legion's birthplace in Algeria.

But through it all, they fought on.

Today the legion has 7,665 men and while it operates around the world, still finds



"THE LEGION IS OUR FATHERLAND" - An honor guard from the French Army's 6th Battalion stands at attention as they await the arrival of the commander of Joint Forces in Saudi Arabia during Operation Desert Shield. The Soldier in front is holding a 5.56 mm FAMAS rifle, equipped with this 1939 bayonet.

most of its action in Africa. Recruits wishing to wear the famous white caps, *kepis blancs*, must endure a traditionally severe training camp where punches and kicks replace sensitivity and martial discipline reigns supreme.

Currently, the 2nd Infantry Regiment (2eme REI of the Legion Etrangere) of the legion is among about 3,000 French troops in Afghanistan. And they fight there.

After being formed in 1831 the first Legionnaires landed in Algeria, the country they would call home for the next 130 years. After a short, con-

fused struggle in Spain in 1835, the legion began building laurels by defeating the Russians in the Crimea and Austrians in Italy. But they gained legendary status in Mexico on April 30, 1863, when 62 of its Soldiers and three officers were besieged by 2,000 Mexican Soldiers at the hacienda of Camerone at Puebla. The Legionnaires fought almost to the last man. When only six of them remained alive without ammunition - they made a bayonet charge which killed three. The Mexican general allowed the remaining three to take the body of their commander, Capitaine Dajon, back to France in an honor guard.

Other acts of heroism and victories followed over the years. Legionnaires re-took Orleans in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 but failed to break the siege of Paris. During the third Republic, Legionnaires greatly aided French colonial expansion by fighting in North Africa (their headquarters was at Sidi-Bel-Abbes in Algeria), Benin, Madagascar, Indochina and Taiwan.

The Legion's 1st Battalion was sent to Tonkin (Vietnam) in the autumn of 1883 prior to the Sino-French War of 1884 to 1885 and distinguished themselves in several campaigns against the Chinese.

They were instrumental in establishing France's colonies in Indochina, including control

over what was to become Vietnam.

In World War I, Legionnaires spilled blood in many of the famous campaigns including Artois, Champagne, Somme, Aisne, and Verdun.

In 1932 the Legion comprised 30,000 men who were stationed in six multi-battalion regiments: the 1st in Algeria and Syria; the 2d, 3d and 4th in Morocco; the 5th in Indochina and the 1st Cavalry in Tunisia and Morocco.

The Legion played a smaller role in World War II, fighting mainly in the Norwegian, Syrian and North African campaigns.

Units of the Legion helped defend Dien Bien Phu during the first Indochina War following World War II. That battle was lost although Legionnaires fought heroically, parachuting to the base which was then hopelessly surrounded.

The Algerian War of Independence was a notably brutal affair and Legionnaires were in the thick of battles from 1954 to 1962. They fought in famous campaigns like the Battle of Algiers and in various offenses including Operations Oranie and Jumelles. But France ceased the country back to its original inhabitants in 1962 and without much fanfare the Legion left its home base after 130 years.

To the glee of critics and consternation of fans, many claimed the Legion had outlived its usefulness in post-



BEAU GESTE - Arab rebels attack Legionnaires in a scene from the movie "Beau Geste," P. C. Wren's classic adventure tale of three brothers who run away to join the French Foreign Legion. Gary Cooper starred in this 1939 version.



file photo

FORCE DE FRAPPE - France controlled her African colonies in the 19th and 20th centuries largely through the military efforts of legionnaires who lived in isolated outposts looking much like the fort, above.

colonial Africa after 1962. But such proved not the case. The French Foreign Legion became a rapid intervention force, jumping quickly into action during the Suez Crisis of 1956, the Chadian-Libyan wars in 1969-72, 1978-79 and 1983-87; the Congo in May 1978, Rwanda in 1990-94, and the Ivory Coast from 2002 to the present.

During the Gulf War, Legion forces belonging to the French 6th Light Armored Division, took the Al Salman airport with little resistance.

Today, the Legion has seven regiments based on mainland France, one in Corsica, and another two in Africa.

Despite its dwindling numbers, the mystique of the Legion remains as strong as ever. *Beau Geste*, a 1924 adventure story written by Percival Wren, became a best seller and was followed by several movies glorifying a romantic vision of the French Foreign Legion. Few readers ever forgot the *Geste* brothers, who upheld their honor - and the glory of the legion - against Arabs and equally brutal superiors in their own chain of command.

If many boys became enthralled with *Beau Geste*, survivors of the Vietnam War in any of its French or American incarnations, undoubtedly identify more with Jean Larteguy's novel, *The Centurions*, a much more realistic



www.bobhoy.com.stunt3.htm

COLD-COCKED - Guy Stockwell as Beau Geste sends sadistic Sgt. Maj. Dugineau (Tully Savalas) to the bottom of a ditch in 1966's rousing remake of the military classic.

account, albeit just as fascinating, as its illustrious literary predecessor. Larteguy's novel was later made into an excellent film entitled *The Lost Command* (1966), tracing legion battles from Vietnam through Algeria.

And a 1977 film, *March or Die*, also paid homage to the legion's combat traditions.

Today, colonialism has fallen into disrepute. But barbarians still gather at our gates and freedom needs to be defended.

Marche on, mon Legionnaires!



FINAL SALUTE - The First Battalion of the French Foreign Legion presents the colors at its last parade at Sidi Bel Abbes in Algeria on July 13, 1962 as the Legion left the country when Algeria obtained its independence.

Year of the NCO Serving in Army has its own rewards

1st Lt. Antonia Greene
72nd Field Artillery Brigade
Public Affairs

Every person reaches a point in his or her life when change is imminent. For Sgt. Jameka Roberts, that time has arrived. After eight years of service to the United States Army Reserve (USAR), Roberts, a native of Washington D.C., reached her expiration term of service (ETS) on Feb 20. It was a bitter sweet day for her. On one hand, leaving the Army meant a chapter was completed in her life. On the other, a new and unfamiliar world awaited.

Roberts comes from a long line of military service as Soldiers, Airmen and Marines, fill her family tree. When she enlisted in February 2001, Roberts opted for an eight-year United States Army Reserve commitment. Upon graduation from basic training and Advanced Individual Training (AIT) she was assigned to the 9th Tactical Support Center (TSC), a logistics battalion billeted in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and located in Okinawa, Japan. So Roberts immediately left the comfort of her Washington D.C. home and deployed to the other side of the globe, assisting Special Forces operations in Southeast Asia.

"About a month after I finished AIT - 9/11 happened and it changed my whole outlook on things," said Roberts. "It honestly shaped the course of my life."

After a year in the South Pacific, Roberts returned stateside and took full advantage of the USAR educational assistance program. With her GI Bill and tuition assistance, Roberts went to college full time, earning a Bachelors of Arts in Political Science from the University of the District of Columbia in 2006. Attending night school and working full time at George Washington University as an administrative assistant,



BE ALL YOU CAN BE - Sgt. Jameka Roberts, 72nd Field Artillery Brigade, speaks to her friends and coworkers at her farewell luncheon in Browns Mills Feb. 4. After eight years in the Army Reserve, Roberts is leaving to pursue a career in public administration. She is currently working as the Dean's Writer at George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

she managed to earn her degree in three years.

"You can be an academic, a Soldier, a nine to five, and still have time to enjoy other things," said the ambitious Soldier.

As a matter of fact, Roberts excels at physical fitness, constantly exceeding the standard with scores well above the perfect 300 on the Army Physical Fitness Test. She sets the example for Soldiers and claims esprit de corps is, hands down, the best feeling. She models herself after her senior, who is nine months her senior and an officer in the active Army. Both sisters are PT stars and Roberts feels that motivat-

ing others to push themselves is rewarding in and of itself.

"I look up to my sister; she went green to gold, where she was a staff sergeant and now a captain preparing for an upcoming deployment; we have always had a bit of a sibling rivalry, and honestly, she's faster than me, it pushes me to try harder," said Roberts.

In addition to maintaining a healthy and positive Army image, Roberts also worked on two research projects while attending college and her findings were published in several professional magazines and scholar studies.

In 2007, Roberts was again called to active service and completed the last year of her eight year commitment on active duty at Fort Dix. As a logistics specialist assigned to Headquarters Battery, 72nd Field Artillery Brigade, Roberts kept accountability of all brigade assigned equipment, secured and controlled specialized equipment and requested, stored and issued organizational and expendable equipment.

While at Dix, Roberts enrolled in the accelerated masters degree program at Central Michigan University and began earning her Masters in Public Administration. She took on-line classes and attended the satellite campus on McGuire Air Force Base on weekends. Roberts is well on her way to another degree, again taking full advantage of the educational assistance provided to her by the Army.

When asked for advice by other people considering a military career, she doesn't mince words.

"Take time to consider the many benefits available to you in the military, but more importantly, when you put on the uniform, you're actions reflect upon all those who serve and it's important to always act with integrity and uphold the Army

values," said Roberts.

Not only does Roberts demonstrate the qualities inherent of the citizen Soldier, but moreover, she understands the meaning of service. "Volunteering is fundamental to being a Soldier," said Roberts.

Giving, sharing and gaining from other's experiences and lessons learned helps solidify the Army family. When all else fails, Soldiers have each other, a shoulder to lean on and a hand to pull you up when you're down.

Roberts commends the Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP) at Dix for providing quality transition services to Soldiers.

"Everyone transitioning from uniform to the civilian workforce needs to take advantage of the many services provided by ACAP," said Roberts.

The ACAP counselors at Dix helped her with translating her military skills into practical experience to boost her resume. They also provided information on employer referral services and job fairs. Soldiers separating from the military and seeking employment in the civilian sector must know there are people and resources dedicated to making his or her transition a smoother one. ACAP is located at building 5644B Doughboy Loop on Fort Dix and can be reached by calling 562-6532.

"Joining the military, with its many benefits, turned out to be the best decision I've ever made," said Roberts during a luncheon held in her honor Feb 20.

Roberts is currently working full time as the Dean's Writer at George Washington University Law School in Washington, D.C. and recently closed on her first home, utilizing the VA loan provided by the Army. She looks forward to becoming a first-time homeowner, aided by benefits bestowed by the U.S. Army.

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History unfolds at McGuire

Wayne Cook
Public Affairs Staff

Hundreds of Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors, and community members were witness to a momentous occasion as they gathered in Hangar 2201 on McGuire Air Force Base March 3.

Col. Gina Grosso assumed command of the 87th Air Base Wing during a ceremony that also saw the change of command of the 305th Air Mobility Wing.

Maj. Gen. Winfield Scott III, commander, 18th Air Force, Scott Air Force Base, Ill., presided over the ceremonies.

"This is an historic moment," Scott said. "The creation of the 87th ABW out of the heart of the 305th Air Mobility Wing is a benchmark, not only for our command, but also the Department of Defense."

The 87th ABW is comprised of service-related units from the 305th AMW including Civil Engineers, Communications, Security Forces, Services, Contracting, Mission Support, Logistics Readiness, and the Medical related organizations. Service organizations from Fort Dix and Naval Air Engineering Station Lakehurst will soon fall under the oversight of the 87th ABW, making it the first multi-branch, multi-component base in the nation.

Col. Balan Ayyar, out-going commander of the 305th AMW, led the team efforts to bring the joint base to reality but is now moving on in his career to a new assignment in Hawaii.

"Col. Ayyar led McGuire as it took the lead to join with neighboring installations to become the nation's premier joint fighting base," said Scott.

"Out of the complexity of the necessity for joint efforts comes the 87th ABW. Col. Gina Grosso brings a fresh perspective to the mission of the joint base. While we are finding ways to operate more efficiently, now more than ever, we must win today's fight while preparing for the future," he said.

The ceremony was replete with all the tradition and pageantry due the event with the hanging of a giant flag as a backdrop behind the platform, a color guard to present the colors, the playing of Ruffles and Flourishes in honor of the presiding general, a formation of the wing for the reviewing of the troops by the out-going commander, and the passing of the guidons.

Ayyar was awarded the Legion of Merit for meritorious service by Scott and then spoke briefly to the attendees.

"I am honored to have had the opportunity to lead Team McGuire through the beginning of this transformation. For me today, my role is to say thank you," Ayyar said.

Ayyar then relinquished command of the 305th to Scott who then bestowed the honor on Col. Scott Smith, the former vice commander of the wing.

"I have no doubt we will provide world-class installation support. This is an historic opportunity and we are happy to be part of it."

Col. Gina Grosso

"I am honored to be given the opportunity to command the 305th AMW. Col. Ayyar has built a solid foundation on which we will continue to build as we go through this transitional period. I look forward to working side-by-side with Col. Grosso and offering any help we can provide as she stands up the new wing. There is no greater opportunity presented to this commander, nor is there a commander more greatly appreciative of the privilege he's been bestowed nor of the challenges ahead," Smith said.

Scott then presented Grosso with the new guidon of the 87th ABW, signifying the beginning of her new command.

"What a rare opportunity to stand up a unit and a mission from scratch and I'm so excited to lead this effort," Grosso said.

"I think the 305th has done a phenomenal job. They have done all the slogging for us. They've set the foundation for us."

Grosso sees the assumption of command of the 87th as both challenges and opportunities.

"Any time you implement change there will be challenges. Working with my counterparts, building trust and support among each other, we will provide the best support to the joint base. I see opportunities in joining the bases. We have better opportunities by combining our resources to provide better services to our customers," she said.

"I have no doubt we will provide world-class installation support. We will be working with Air Force, Army, Navy, government civilians, and civilian agencies. This is an historic opportunity and we are happy to be part of it," said Grosso.

Grosso is a graduate of Carnegie-Melon University in Pittsburgh. She entered the Air Force in 1986 as a distinguished graduate of the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps. During her career she has held many command positions, the latest as director in the Air Force Colonels Management Office at the Pentagon.

Smith is a graduate of Columbia University and entered the Air Force through the Officer Training School. Besides many varied assignments and commands, Smith is a senior pilot with more than 3,500 flying hours.



Wayne Cook

COMMAND STATEMENT -- Maj. Gen. Winfield Scott III, commander, 18th Air Force, Scott Air Force Base, Ill., spoke to the crowd gathered for the Assumption of Command ceremony of the 305th Air Mobility Wing and the 87th Air Base Wing March 3.

POLICE LOG

Police Log is a weekly synopsis of significant police activities developed from reports, complaints, incidents or information received and actions taken, for the week of Feb. 23 - March 1, 2009.

The abbreviation DoD stands for Department of Defense; NAFD means Not Affiliated with Fort Dix (the subject doesn't live or work here); NCIC stands for National Crime Information Center; DWI means Driving While Intoxicated; CDS means Controlled Drug Substance; POV means Privately Owned Vehicle; MAFB stands for McGuire Air Force Base; USAF EC stands for US Air Force Expeditionary Center; AHCC stands for Ambulatory Health Care Clinic (MAFB); VMHBC stands for Virtua Memorial Hospital of Burlington County; CP# stands for Checkpoint Number.

●Police responded to a report of a suspicious person in the Garden Terrace housing area. Investigation revealed a resident had seen an unknown person at the rear door of the residence. A check of the area resulted in negative findings.

●Police responded to a motor vehicle crash on Texas Avenue. Investigation revealed a vehicle, operated by a civilian NAFD, struck a second vehicle from the rear. The impact caused the second vehicle to strike a third vehicle. There were no reported injuries. Vehicles #1 and #2 sustained disabling damage and were towed from the scene. The third vehicle was released to the operator at the scene. The subject was cited for following too closely.

●Police and Fire Department personnel responded to a fire alarm at Bldg. 5911. Investigation revealed the alarm was caused by dust kicked up during sweeping.

●Police responded to a report of larceny of private property at Bldg. 5275. Investigation revealed person(s) unknown had taken property belonging to a Soldier NAFD. Investigation continues.

●Police, Fire Department, and emergency medical personnel responded to a traffic accident at the intersection of Texas and Brody. Investigation revealed a vehicle, operated by a civilian NAFD, struck another vehicle resulting in disabling damage to both vehicles. The victim was transported by ambulance to VMHBC for precautionary evaluation. Both vehicles were towed from the scene.

●Police and Fire Department personnel responded to a fire alarm at Bldg. 5997. Investigation revealed no cause for the alarm.

●While on routine patrol, police discovered a vehicle parked in the intersection of Texas Avenue and Range Road causing traffic to back up. A traffic stop was initiated and investigation revealed the vehicle was uninsured. The operator, a civilian NAFD, was cited and the vehicle towed from the scene.

●Police responded to an incident at Range 39. Investigation revealed a field artillery round had been found by Fort Dix DPW. Further investigation revealed the round to be an EOD training device. EOD responded and removed the ordinance without incident.

●Police and Fire Department personnel responded to a report of an odor of gas at Bldg. 3152. Investigation revealed the gas was probably from an unlit pilot light. A work order was placed and DPW responded to fix the problem.

●While attempting to approach the main gate a truck, operated by a civilian NAFD, was unable to maneuver in the serpentine. Traffic control was established and the truck was turned around and redirected to the commercial vehicle gate.

●Police, Fire Department, and emergency medical personnel responded to a motor vehicle crash at the intersection of Delaware Avenue, and 6th Street. Investigation revealed a vehicle, operated by a civilian NAFD, failed to stop at a stop sign and struck another vehicle. Both vehicles sustained disabling damage and were towed from the scene. The subject complained of neck pains and was transported by ambulance to VMHBC for evaluation and treatment. Investigation continues.

●Police responded to a traffic accident at the intersection of Texas Avenue and Range Road. Investigation revealed a government vehicle, operated by an Airman NAFD, struck another government vehicle from the rear. There were no reported injuries and the vehicles were released to the operators at the scene.

●Police responded to an incident in the Garden Terrace housing area. Investigation revealed a resident, an Airman assigned to McGuire Air Force Base, and his spouse had a verbal argument that did not escalate into violence.

●Police and Fire Department personnel responded to a fire alarm at Bldg. 5602. Investigation revealed the alarm was caused by heat coming from the laundry room.

●Police, Fire Department, and emergency medical personnel responded to a motor vehicle crash at FCI. Investigation revealed a government vehicle, operated by an FCI employee, struck the fence line. The subject complained of head and neck pains and was transported by ambulance to VMHBC for evaluation and treatment. The vehicle sustained disabling damage and was towed from the scene.

●Police and Fire Department personnel responded to a fire alarm at Bldg. 5991. Investigation revealed that dust was cause for the alarm.

●Police and Fire Department personnel responded to a fire alarm at Bldg. 5418. Investigation revealed the alarm was caused by a broken pull station.

●While processing two visitors at the Visitors Center, police discovered the first subject, a civilian NAFD, had a suspended driver's license and the second subject, also a civilian NAFD, had outstanding warrants from Bayonne and Newark. The first subject was cited. The second subject was transported to the police station for processing and transferred to the custody of the Burlington County Jail. The vehicle was towed from the scene.

●There were three expired identification cards confiscated during the period.

●There were 13 Magistrate Court Citations issued for moving violations. DWI incidents remain at three for the year.

Budget to reflect key defense priorities

Donna Miles
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, March 4, 2009 - The 2010 defense budget being finalized by the Obama administration will maintain priorities such as quality-of-life improvements and acquisition reform as it caps other defense spending, the Office of Management and Budget director said yesterday.

Peter R. Orszag told the House Budget Committee the \$533.7 billion defense budget provides funding to increase Army and Marine Corps end strength, provide servicemembers a 2.9 percent pay raise, improve military housing and other defense facilities and

provide better medical treatment for wounded troops.

Meanwhile, the budget will set realistic requirements and incorporate "best practices" to control cost growth and schedule slippage of weapons programs, he said.

Orszag told the committee the White House will leave the details of that plan to Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates, a staunch advocate of acquisition reform.

The budget represents greater growth than the 2.9 percent average following the Cold War, but less than the 7 percent annual growth during the last eight years, Orszag said.

But at a 4 percent over the enacted 2009 budget level, excluding funds authorized in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the 2010 request will be sufficient to maintain a strong Defense Department as it enforces a new acquisition framework, he told the committee.

One source of savings, he said, will be the redeployment of combat brigades from Iraq. Those savings will offset increased costs of sending more troops to Afghanistan.

Under the president's budget, as troop levels decrease, the combined cost of Iraq and Afghanistan operations would decrease by about \$50 billion in 2009 and \$65 billion in 2010, Orszag said. This compares to the 2008 level of \$187 billion, adjusted for inflation.

The president's 2010 budget request also calls for increasing funding for the Veterans Affairs Department by \$25 billion over the next five years, he reported. That request would provide a "dramatic increase" in funding for VA health care and, for the first time since 2003, restore health-care eligibility for non-disabled veterans earning modest incomes.

This initiative will bring more than 500,000 additional veterans into the VA health-care system by 2013, Orszag said. At the same time, he said, it will maintain high-quality and timely care for lower-income and disabled veterans who already rely on VA medical care.

unprecedented levels of educational support to the men and women who have served our country through active military duty.

The new budget will support additional specialty care in such areas as prosthetics, vision and spinal cord injury, aging, and women's health.

New VA Centers of Excellence will focus on improving these critical services.

The proposed fiscal year 2010 budget also addresses the tragic fact of homelessness among Veterans. It expands VA's current services through a collaborative pilot program that is aimed at maintaining stable housing for vulnerable Veterans at risk of homelessness, while providing them with supportive services to help them get back on their feet through job training, preventive care, and other critical services.

Finally, the President's budget request provides the necessary investments to carry VA services to rural communities that are too often unable to access VA care. The President's budget expands VA mental health screening and treatment with a focus on reaching Veterans in rural areas in part through an increase in Vet Centers and mobile health clinics. New outreach funding will help rural Veterans and their families stay informed of these resources and encourage them to pursue needed care.

President requests VA program funding

WASHINGTON - President Obama's first proposed budget for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) expands eligibility for health care to an additional 500,000 deserving Veterans over the next five years, means over the need for continued growth in programs for the combat Veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan, and provides the resources to deliver quality health care for the Nation's 5.5 million Veteran patients.

The 2010 budget request is a significant step toward realizing a vision shared by the President and Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki to transform VA into an organization that is people-centric, results-driven and forward-looking.

"Our success must encompass cost-effectiveness," Shinseki said. "We are stewards of taxpayer dollars, and we will include appropriate metrics to accurately gauge the quality of our care and the effectiveness of our management processes."

If accepted by Congress, the President's budget proposal would increase VA's budget from \$98 billion this fiscal year to \$113 billion for the fiscal year beginning Oct. 1, 2009. This is in addition to the \$1.4 billion provided for VA projects in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

The 2010 budget represents the first step toward increasing funding for VA efforts by \$25 billion over baseline during the next five years. The gradual expansion in health care enrollment that this would support will open hospital and clinic doors to more than 500,000

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For more information call
Denise Horton at 562-4011

Doors open at USAR center—

(continued from page 1)
The 77th Sustainment Brigade, moving from Fort Totten, N.Y.; the 78th Training Brigade (Operations), moving from Edson; the 309th Regiment and the 244th Aviation Brigade, relocating from Fort Sheridan, Ill.

"This facility is the culmination of nearly three years of planning and work," Monk told the crowd of Soldiers and civilians gathered at the new building. "The 175,000-square foot facility is more than just a place for Soldiers to call home. It's an indication of how much the reserve has changed, from a strategic reserve to an operational force."

Monk noted that the reorganization that prompted construction of the new center and expanded role of the 99th were part of Base Realignment and Closure Commission 2005 recommendations.

"The 99th will serve five commands, 46,000 Soldiers and 300 reserve centers," Monk said, "and it is fitting that it be here at Fort Dix. This storied installation has been the premiere training and mobilization site through Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom."

More than 70,000 Soldiers have mobilized through Fort Dix since September 11, more than at any other Army installation.

"Our Soldiers deserve the very best, and this new center represents the very best in facilities," Monk concluded. "The challenge now is to make

the best use of this building and train hard."

Monk, who also serves as the senior mission commander for Fort Dix, graduated from the US Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., in 1976.

In 1982, Monk began his career in the US Army Reserve with the 78th Division, where his key assignments included command of the 2nd Battalion, 309th Regiment (FE) and the 1st Simulation Exercise Group, 1st Brigade.

In 2002, he was selected as the assistant division commander for support, 98th Division (Institutional Training), headquartered in Rochester, New York.

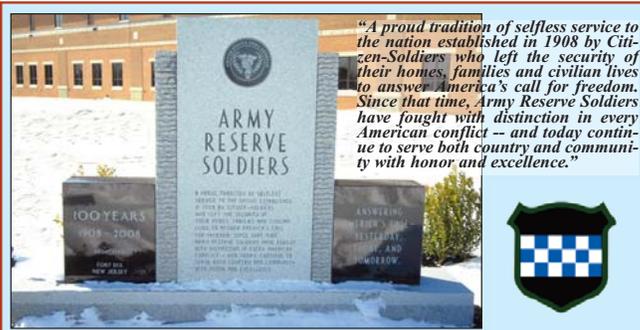
In 2003, he was selected for promotion to brigadier general and was assigned as the commander, 1st Brigade and assistant division commander of the 78th Division. He was promoted to major general Sept. 16, 2006, and took command of the 99th Regional Support Command at Fort Dix.

Chap. (Maj.) Charles Causey presented the invocation and benediction for the ceremony.

Music for the event was provided by Soldiers of the 78th Army Band.

The ceremony was followed by tours of the new 175,000-square foot, \$40 million structure, and a reception.

The 99th Division was first constituted in the National Army in 1918 as Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 99th Division, at Camp Wheeler, Georgia.



Contractors add personal touch to new 99th RSC headquarters

Ryan Morton
Public Affairs Staff

"A proud tradition of selfless service to the nation established in 1908 by citizen-Soldiers who left the security of their homes, families and civilian lives to answer America's call for freedom. Since that time, Army Reserve Soldiers have fought with distinction in every American conflict and today continue to serve both country and community with honor and excellence."

When people enter the newly constructed headquarters for the 99th Regional Support Command (RSC), they will see a granite monument with those words etched into the stone. This monument was donated by the building contracting outfit that constructed the facility, C Pyramid Enterprises Inc., from Washington Township.

"With a building of this magnitude, we felt that having a monument like this would add more prestige and style, and at the same time give us the opportunity to show our respect and appreciation for the service the Army reservists give to our

country," said C Pyramid Enterprises Inc. project manager Wayne Craddock.

Showing that respect and appreciation for military personnel is nothing new for Craddock as he and his brother, Mark, who run C Pyramid Enterprises Inc. have contracted on Fort Dix and other Department of Defense projects for more than 35 years.

Wayne and Mark suggested this monument idea to Maj. Gen. William Monk, 99th RSC Commander, and his staff, and then worked to get it in place.

"I saw in Timmermann Center that they dedicated rooms to fallen Soldiers and was really impressed with the idea and wanted to do something to that effect," said Mark.

Mark and Wayne first gained their respect for the Army reserves and the military as whole from their father, who was a Merchant Marine and World War II veteran.

"We lost our Dad a couple of years ago, actually during the time we were wrapping up the contract to start building the 99th building and really wanted to make sure we did something special to honor him and the military," said Mark. "We're very happy to build this facility and donate this monument makes us feel really good."



A NEW BEGINNING -- The contract was awarded to C Pyramid Enterprises Inc., from Washington Township, for construction on the 99th Regional Support Command (RSC) in August of 2006 with construction kicking off in early 2007. Above, bulldozers clear brush and debris to make way for the 175,000 square foot facility. Right, cranes place steel beams for the construction of the roof panels. The headquarters facility will serve five commands, 46,000 Soldiers, and 300 reserve centers. It will also provide administrative and logistical support to all United States Army Reserve commands in the Northeast and supervise maintenance support and equipment sites.



Photos by Ryan Morton



BRICK BY BRICK -- Further along in the development, the bricks of the 99th RSC are laid in place building the facade of the facility. Right, what the facility looks like today after all the hard work. This headquarters will provide support to the whole 13-state region the 99th RSC represents within its command.



Lisa Evans

NEIGHBORHOOD

THE CORNER

Wings, women highlight comedy night at Club

Tickets are still available for the Women's All Star Comedy Night held at Club Dix on March 13. The show will feature an all-female lineup of comedians including: Gina Brillon, Carole Montgomery, Kerri Louise and Leighann Lord. Tickets are \$10 per person. Doors open at 7 p.m. and the show begins at 8 p.m. Due to mature themes, audience members must be 18-years old and over. Prior to the show, at 7:30 p.m., there will be a Wing Bowl. The person who can eat 60 wings the fastest, or eat the most in 10 minutes, will win \$100. Tickets may be purchased at Club Dix or at Family, Morale, Welfare, and Recreation headquarters. For more information call 562-6772.

Volunteer Tax Center open for business

The Fort Dix Installation Legal Office Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program is now open and stands ready to assist eligible clients with preparation of their income tax returns. Active duty personnel, reservists on active duty orders for at least 30 days, military retirees, and their dependent family members are eligible for free tax assistance to include preparation of federal and state returns and electronic filing. The VITA tax site is located on Fort Dix in Building 5506, Room 105 and is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Preparation of federal and state tax returns will be by appointment only. Eligible clients should call 562-3976 to schedule an appointment.

Thomas Edison offering Spring courses at Dix

Thomas Edison State College will be offering classes on Fort Dix and McGuire Air Force Base in April. For more information call Michael Sheridan, military education counselor for Thomas Edison State College at McGuire Air Force Base at 723-1592 or Ivette Zapata-Small, guidance counselor, at Fort Dix at 562-5001.

Children's art therapy sessions offered

Army Community Service will be hosting Art Therapy sessions for children who are experiencing separation anxiety because of relocation, extensive TDY's, deployment, divorce, or the death of a loved one. A professional Art Therapist will conduct the sessions using art activities as assessment tools to understand the children's concerns and issues that usually cannot be expressed verbally. Parents will also have the opportunity to improve their communication skills using this methodology.

Sessions will run for six consecutive weeks every Wednesday starting March 11 and end April 15. Two sessions will be offered each Wednesday; the first session is from 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm for children 4 to 8 years old; and the second session will run from 5:30pm to 6:30 pm for children 9 to 13 years old. Children will attend the first four sessions alone; parents and children will attend the last two sessions. Family members from all military branches are invited to attend the Art Therapy sessions. Registration in advance is required because of limited space. For more information and registration call Amada Espinoza or Patricia Toler at 562-5767.

Army Community Services hosting home buying seminar

The Camden County Board of Realtors is sponsoring a Home Buying Seminar at Army Community Services on March 18 from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm. If you are considering buying a home you will be facing with many decisions. Come to our free Home Buying Seminar get answers to your questions and to acquire skills and information so you can achieve the dream of home ownership. Please contact Amada M. Espinoza or Patricia Toler at 562-2767 for more information and registration. Registration in advance is required.

Mulligan's restaurant now open for season

Mulligan's restaurant at Fountain Green Golf Course is now open. Lunch is served Monday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and breakfast and Lunch weekends and holidays from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Chapel honors prominent men

Wayne Cook
Public Affairs Staff

Area residents gathered in the Main Chapel Feb. 27 to remember and honor two men who were pillars of the community and the chapel.

Members of Fort Dix, veterans' service organizations, the chapel congregations, family members, and many others took time to remember retired Chap. (Maj.) Leon Bell, Jr., and retired Command Sgt. Maj. David Deas.

The occasion was the unveiling of plaques for each man that will hang in the front foyer of the Main Chapel honoring their service both in the chapel and throughout the community.

Bell and Deas passed away within weeks of each other in the fall of 2006.

Chap. (Col.) Larry Biederman, installation chaplain, said, "We struggled to find a way to honor these two great men who would have said, 'not me.' We are creating today, a wall of remembrance. Today we remember Chaplain Bell and Deacon Deas for their wonderful work here."

Bell was fondly remembered by his close friend, retired Col. George Waters.

"Chaplain Bell was a man of all seasons who lifted people up. He served as the chaplain - as the kind, devoted shepherd of our chapel Gospel Congregation. I recall when Chaplain Bell was working with the New Jersey Militia and he was at Ground Zero. There was this distinct satisfaction that he felt to be able to serve others in such a manner,"

Waters recalled. "Chaplain Bell's life of service left its mark as he helped carve out the landscape of our community," said Waters.

Bell was born in Jersey City in 1942, the eldest of 16 children. He earned his Master of Divinity degree in biblical studies and counseling from Eastern Theological Seminary. During the Vietnam War, Bell volunteered to join the Chaplains' Corps. Thus began a military career that spanned 20 years and took him to locations such as Korea, West Germany, Greece, and multiple stations stateside.

While stationed in Korea, Bell met and married his wife, Song Cha, a widow of a mother with two children. Bell adopted her sons; Dong Won, who later served as a U.S. Marine and Dong Su, who became a U.S. Sailor.

Bell finished off his career stationed at Fort Dix where he was known as the voice behind the Daily Devotional Message, a popular radio broadcast during the early 1990s.

Upon his retirement Bell changed suits and took on the role of the contract Gospel pastor at the Main Chapel.

After Sept. 11, Bell joined the New Jersey Naval Militia and traveled to New York City and throughout the state consoling those in need.

In his later years, he served as a chaplain at Virta Memorial Hospital in Mount Holly and was active in local governments.

Bell died Sept. 27, 2006. Six days later his friend and fellow stalwart, Deas, died at the age of 80-years-old.

"We struggled to find a way to honor these two great men who would have said, 'not me.' We are creating today, a wall of remembrance. Today we remember Chap. (Col.) Larry Biederman, installation chaplain



Wayne Cook

REMEMBERED -- Chap. (Col.) Larry Biederman, installation chaplain, and Eloise Deas, unveil a plaque honoring her late husband, retired Command Sgt. Maj. David Deas, during a service held at the Main Chapel Feb. 27. Deas, who passed away in 2006, served as a deacon in the chapel protestant congregation for many years. The plaque will hang in the front foyer of the Main Chapel.

Deacon Deas, as he was known, was born in Columbia, South Carolina in 1926. When he turned 18-years-old he joined the Army, beginning a 26 year career in which he reached the rank of command sergeant major. His final posting was Command Sergeant Major of the 5th Battalion, 2nd Basic Training Brigade, at Fort Dix.

In 1947, during his tour of duty in Korea, Deas took leave in New York City and met his future wife, Eloise Moore. After a whirlwind courtship they were married in her hometown of Fort Smith, Ark. They celebrated 59 years of wedded bliss together in 2006. Deas and his wife have four sons and a daughter-in-law, David and Jeannine of Winslow, Maine, Kevin of Trenton, Lance of Newport News, Va. and Reginald. They also have a surrogate daughter, Elizabeth Brown, and four grandchildren. (continued on page 9)

Black Americans lauded at lunch

Ryan Morton
Public Affairs Staff



Ryan Morton

HONORING ACCOMPLISHMENTS - Col. Larry Boyd, deputy commander for mobilization, presents the Ultimate Weapon plaque to Black History Luncheon guest speaker, Command Sgt. Maj. Sylvia Laughtin, at Club Dix, Feb. 26.

Adams. During "God is Good," the whole audience joined in, singing and clapping their hands to the beat throughout the performance.

After the songs, Col. Larry Boyd, Fort Dix deputy commander for mobilization, introduced the guest speaker, Command Sgt. Maj. Sylvia P. Laughtin. Laughtin, is currently serving as the post Command Sergeant Major for U.S. Army Garrison, on Fort Hamilton, N.Y.

Laughtin is a longtime Soldier. She enlisted in the U.S. Army's Adjutant General Corps in 1984. Throughout her time in uniform she has served tours-of-duty in several countries such as Germany, Korea, and the Marshall Islands, and across the United States.

Her presentation to the audience was animated and she spoke with much conviction and passion. She talked about how much black history is closely entwined with American history as a whole.

"We are a kaleidoscope. There are many significant and beautiful colors. The fiber of America is based on a history of each and every one of us," said Laughtin.

After her speech she received a thunderous applause and a ceremonial plaque of Fort Dix's Ultimate Weapon statue from Boyd. (The author may be reached at ryan.morton@us.army.mil)

Food, families celebrated at Unity Potluck

A bountiful spread of meats, vegetables and salads were followed by colorful cupcakes and plenty of other sweets at the Unity Potluck Dinner at School Aged Services, Feb. 19. Jennifer Parker, program assistant, left, dishes some macaroni and cheese onto Alyssa Shelton's plate, while Shelton's sister Kaylah, right, tops her plate off with miniature pigs in a blanket. The annual feast brings the children who attend School Aged Services and their families together for an evening of scrumptious nibbles and quality family time.



Jennifer Chupko

Membership thrives for veterans' organizations

Wayne Cook
Public Affairs Staff

Veterans' service organizations (VSOs) membership drives are in full gear as more and more military members return from service in the Global War on Terrorism. The VSOs were established during the past 100 years to provide a place where veterans can find aid in learning what benefits are available to him or her from the government and other agencies. They also double as social locations for maintaining a sense of camaraderie developed during time in the service.

According to Bill Sloan, assistant director of membership and internal affairs of the American Legion National Headquarters, "We are as strong as we have ever been since the mid-seventies. There has been a definite uptick in recruitment since the beginning of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). The younger veterans are establishing posts with their own face on it. They are more family friendly. The largest growing group is still the Vietnam-era service members as they are hitting retirement age now and

are experiencing greater growth rates than most areas, while Texas is experiencing the biggest growth rate with posts like Fort Hood and Fort Bliss there," said Matt Claussen, director of membership, Veterans of Foreign Wars National Headquarters.

One of the local VFW Posts, Post 10065 in Pemberton, which meets at the Browns Mills post on Junction Road, has been having a bit of success with its membership drives.

"We are seeing an influx of young veterans joining today. We have our drives and they are signing up. The VFW has a lot to offer to our veterans and our chapter makes sure they know that help is available. The older members are starting to pass away and we are trying to make sure the new veterans have an organization to help them. We are also seeing a growth in our Vietnam-era veterans," said retired Army 1st Sgt. Joe Tamayo, a 22-year veteran who is not a stranger to VSOs, as he is also a member of the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Buffalo Soldiers, Vietnam Veterans' Association, Fort Dix Retired Council, and a past post and district commander for the VFW.

"We have been experiencing a large growth with the younger veterans. We just had a service member who recently returned from Iraq request information on starting up an AMVETS Post," Taylor said. The Veterans of Foreign Wars organization experienced a marked increase since the beginning of OEF and OIF. "We have seen a growth in both Vietnam-era veterans and in the younger veterans. Currently 13 percent of the more than 850,000 veterans who have served in OEF/OIF have joined the VFW. We have more than 90,000 new members and are experiencing a 42 percent annual retention rate. Fifty-two percent of last year's new members were under 40 years old. The South and California

post is made up of mainly World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam-era veterans. The Base Exchange/Post Exchange, on McGuire Air Force Base, regularly hosts VSO recruiting representatives near the main entrance. For

more information on VSOs and how they can help you check out the information at the BX/PX or go online to the specific VSO's Web site. (Comments about this article may be sent to the author at wayne.a.cook@us.army.mil.)



Wayne Cook

RECRUITING DRIVE -- Members of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 10065, in Pemberton, manned a recruitment table at the Base Exchange/Post Exchange on McGuire Air Force Base Feb. 13. Veterans' Service Organizations frequently set up membership recruitment tables outside the BX/PX. Representing the VFW are from left, Henry Barr, Jeremiah Carter, and Joe Tamayo.

Macellari said the Pemberton post is made up of mainly World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam-era veterans. The Base Exchange/Post Exchange, on McGuire Air Force Base, regularly hosts VSO recruiting representatives near the main entrance. For

more information on VSOs and how they can help you check out the information at the BX/PX or go online to the specific VSO's Web site. (Comments about this article may be sent to the author at wayne.a.cook@us.army.mil.)

Dixan looking forward to 'magic' retirement

Steve Snyder
Public Affairs Staff

Still another budget analyst is leaving the fold at Fort Dix's Resource Management Office when Hank Strasser retires at the end of this month, severing over 35 years of federal service.

And like all the other recent departures, Strasser will be missed.

"I've worked with Hank off and on since the early 90s when the first BRAC (Base Realignments and Closings) hit and we lost our TRADOC mission," informs Diane Robinson, Strasser's co-worker.

Robinson recalls that "He always had a lot of great stories to tell about his past with the Park Service and while working for a big financial group in San Francisco."

"He was always ready to entertain all with a magic trick or two," Robinson says. "One time the DRM group went out on a cruise down the Delaware out of Philadelphia and Hank performed magic tricks. We all roared!"

"I know Hank has always had a love of music and I believe he actually produced a few records in his younger days. I think he and his son may get into some type of music in his retirement years."

"His wife is into quilting and I believe they will be



Steve Snyder

**Hank Strasser
budget analyst
Resource Management Office**

doing some travel to various quilt shows, etc. Hank's wife still works, therefore Hank will have a lot more kitchen time to spend cooking" or whatever.

Diane thinks "he'll lead a full and active life in his retirement years!"

"I always told him that I would beat him out the door for retirement, because for the past couple years he has been talking about retirings and never really did anything about it. "I hope that he will have the

health and happiness that all should have in retirement," Robinson adds.

"I'm looking forward to retirement," Strasser says. "I view it as a shifting of gears into another cycle of life. I'll have more time to read about, practice and perform magic, which is now just a hobby," informs Strasser. He's a past president of the Society of American Magicians and has been active in many other organizations devoted to the magical arts.

The Post even did a long feature on Hank and his "part-time avocation as a magician and psychic entertainer" in the Jan. 9, 1998 issue. Post feature writer Charlie Germain noted Strasser's "fascination

with magic started when he was about eight years of age when he recalls using an old shower curtain and his father's 'opera hat' to try out his feats of magic on neighboring friends in his back yard."

Strasser was quoted in the article admitting "My main interest is now in the area of psychic entertainment, more than stage magic, which is the performed by David Copperfield.

Their allied but separate fields, Strasser explained, the psychic variety dealing with mentalism and psychological nature, with only a minimum props and with an emphasis on bringing out psychic powers that some possess.

But magic isn't the only activity up Strasser's sleeve when planning for retirement. He's into music, too.

"I also have a small home recording studio and I've been looking forward to getting back to creating music," he says. I also plan to do "voice overs," commercials and music for video. My son [Christopher] is a very good musician and adept at using... software" readily available on the Internet and elsewhere.

"So it's time to let the creative juices flow," in Hank's view.

Henry Strasser was born Jan. 13, 1939 in Newark but grew up in Montclair. The son of a surgeon and school teacher, Hank graduated from Montclair High School in June 1957 after lettering in football and tennis. He played on the grid eleven that won the state championship two out of three years, finishing with a 26-0-1 log for those years.

After attending Tusculum

College (oldest college in the state) in Greenville, Tenn. for three years, theological dissatisfactions led Strasser to San Francisco where he picked up a B.A. in economics in 1963.

After high school Strasser worked extensively as a park ranger, spending summers working at locations as diverse as the State of Liberty in New York's harbor and parks in baby brother of grand illusions as performed by David Copperfield.

With the military draft board breathing down his neck, Hank joined the Air Force in 1963, completing basic training at Lackland AFB in Texas before spending 1963-65 at McGuire AFB.

He served as commissary officer at McGuire (technically called a special services officer) before serving in the same capacity at Oslo, Norway.

Retiring from the military after one tour, Strasser settled in famous Marin County in the San Francisco area where he worked in various brokerage firms from about 1968 until 1977.

"I loved California," he says.

And Strasser gained a measure of immortality there, also.

He says the lead character in the 1980 movie *Serial*, played by the deliciously deadpanned Martin Mull, was based upon himself and another gentleman. The film was packaged from a novel by Cyra McFadden, who just happened to live around the corner from Hank.

Her series of articles detailed an ordinary guy's struggle to maintain life and sanity in a relentlessly trendy, radically chic society where deviant sex, strange drugs, endless psycho babble, wood-sided houses, hot tubs and mass neurosis held sway.

That was Marin County in the 1970s and Strasser admits to digging its ambience. But he had to return to New Jersey to take care of his cancer-stricken mother. When she died he was ensconced in the Garden State, working at Fort Dix and living in idyllic Chesterfield.

C'est la vie and all the best to a Dixan who never let any grass grow under his feet.

ALSTARZ sports

Goodyear

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HONORS AND AWARDS



HAVING A BLAST -- Class 04-09 graduates the Fort Dix Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear Defense School March 3. Graduating are: Sgt. Joshua Kennedy, Sgt. Robert Card, Pfc. Ryan Caramanica, Spc. Jonathan Dick, Staff Sgt. David Hurd, Spc. Daniel Boyle, 1st Lt. John Reid, 2nd Lt. Evan Washburn, 2nd Lt. Trey Vasey, Spc. Khuyen Nguyen, Staff Sgt. Douglas Isbell, 1st Lt. Rosario Carbone, Spc. Richard LaCoste, Pvt. Mathew Watrous, Spc. Brendan Powers, 1st Lt. Rebecca Bort, Sgt. Amilcar Linaresmontalvo, 2nd Lt. Eric Hapner, Spc. Charles Price, Sgt. Ralph Jones, and Sgt. James Riley.

Ryan Morton



BON VOYAGE -- Soldiers of the 145th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, Oklahoma Army National Guard, pose with the Adjutant General of Oklahoma, Maj. Gen. Myles Deering, during the unit's farewell ceremony at Bravo Company Chapel, Feb. 27. Deering visited Fort Dix to send off the 145th and wish the unit well on its upcoming mission. The unit has spent the last few weeks training at Fort Dix, and is scheduled to deploy in support of Multi-National Division North operations in Iraq.

1st Lt. Antonia Greene



RECOGNITION -- Newly promoted Sgt. Camilo O. Hernandez, 72nd Field Artillery Brigade, receives the Army Commendation Medal for his exceptional service to the brigade from Sgt. 1st Class Stephen Rubeck, Feb. 26. Hernandez received the award for increasing the training section's ability to support mobilizing units across the brigade.



courtesy photo

Heeding the call

Fort Dix Mobilization Sgt. Maj. Anthony Young stands by his eldest son, Anthony B. Young, at a swearing-in ceremony at the Military Entrance Processing Station on post March 4. Anthony, age 20, graduated from Cheltenham High School in Pennsylvania in 2006. He will take Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training at Fort Benning, Ga.



Wayne Cook

THE WRITE STUFF -- Maj. Michael Eckart, commander, and 1st Sgt. Roger Crabtree, 145th Public Information Detachment, Oklahoma National Guard, hold their unit's Yellow Banner during a ceremony at B Company Feb. 27. The unit hails from Oklahoma City and is headed for Iraq.

Read the Post!

Rita's Water Ice

Tri State

Burl Co

The Real

Women's History Month Celebration March 2009



Schedule of Events

10 Mar 11:30 ~ Green Art Exhibit (Kickoff!) @ Ft Dix Arts & Crafts Center

11 Mar 11:00 ~ Eco-Friendly Products Demonstration @ McGuire Chapel
Lunch Provided (call MSgt Janet Grier to register 609-754-3565)

13 Mar 8pm ~ Women's All Star Comedy Night @ Ft Dix Club
(Sponsored by Ft Dix MWR, tickets \$10 pp; Mature Theme)

25 Mar 11:00 ~ Annual Luncheon Awards Ceremony @ McGuire Club
(Tickets \$12 pp)

11 Mar Women of the Year Nominations Due by 4:00 pm
(Contact maryjane.flammer@mcguire.af.mil)

MILITARY MATTERS

Sunshine State MPs battle cold, snow

Lisa Evans
Public Affairs Staff

Florida's heat and sand is a long way from the freezing weather and snow the 810th Military Police Company from Tampa encountered at Fort Dix Feb. 25. But a change in weather combined with the training they received simply showed the Soldiers they could pull together whatever the situation.

Commander Capt. Calvin L. Graham, Jr. said, "I want them to be scared going overseas because it builds situational awareness and keeps them on their guard." The weather may not have scared them, but the training has offered an insight into what they will face as they prepare for a three-pronged mission in Iraq.

The 810th MPs will primarily train Iraqi police in a police transition training mission, but they will also perform convoy security and counterinsurgency missions.

Graham said he wants his Soldiers to follow a three-pronged creed for this trad-

type mission: take care of the mission, take care of the Soldiers, and stay alive. More than anything, Graham said, he wants no casualties on this mission. His Soldiers agree.

"We need to work on force protection, look around, keep an eye on everybody," said Pvt. Sean Penton when the trainers with the 2nd Field Artillery Brigade, Fort Dix, asked his squad what they needed to work most on after a mobilization readiness exercise.

During the after action review, Soldiers identified problems they had run into, and then further identified those that were mistakes and those that were not within their control.

Communications, all agreed, were vital to the mission and for taking care of one another. But knowing the people of Iraq seemed to be the one thing all of the Soldiers agreed would help them most.

Staff Sgt. William Moore said, "The civilians on the battlefield (COBs) play civilians with us and it has never been down range, I won't be shell-shocked interacting with

the Iraqi Police. It has given me an idea what to expect."

Overall, the 810th came through their mobilization readiness exercises with high marks. The Soldiers made mistakes but were able to identify and correct them in the next scenario.

Moore said, "The training is very real. We're dealing with Soldiers that have been in Iraq and came back. The trainers here teach us a different way of doing things -- as in never cross your legs when speaking with them and never shake with your left hand."

This is valuable training the Soldiers of the 810th MPs can add to the combat and life-saving skills they already have. Graham said that each Soldier should have pride for what he or she has accomplished. This is a unit that had been broken up and reassembled which is demoralizing to a company. Graham said, but the Soldiers have pulled together and created a company that is tight with loyalty and trust and ready to do the job.

(Comments about this article may be sent to the writer at lisa.kay.evans@us.army.mil.)



Lisa Evans

MAN DOWN -- Sgt. Kenneth Sealy drops to check on Staff Sgt. William Moore, as sniper fire erupts during a mobilization readiness exercise held on Fort Dix. Moore's simulated injuries caused Sealy to take charge of the training exercise. Sealy, Moore and the rest of the 810th MPs hail from Florida.

Financial relief available for military families

Jennifer Chupko
Public Affairs Staff

Army Emergency Relief (AER) is an emergency financial assistance organization and is committed to "Helping the Army Take Care of Its Own." It provides financial safety to active duty Soldiers, reserve components on continuous active duty for a period in excess of 30 days, retirees, and family members. The organization is a safety net to aid families and help avoid hitting rock bottom.

The organization does not receive any money from the government and is supported by donations, repayment of interest-free loans and investment income. The assistance is available for those who have a valid emergency need and the timeliness can be as soon as same day. With the economy affecting so many military families, AER is taking the commitment of providing relief to those in crisis, despite the rising number of financial emergencies.

"We are here to help families," said Bobby Brown, Personal

Finance Management/AER officer. "We provide assistance to all branches of the military on Fort Dix."

AER is a private, nonprofit organization with a mission to lend a hand for the welfare of military members with loans and scholarships and the organization set a new record for financial assistance in 2008. Monetary help increased 12 percent in 2008 and 66,000 cases were handled for unexpected financial stress.

"Fort Dix gave \$888,000 last year," said Brown. "Assistance is interest-free and based on need. Emergencies such as food, rent or utilities, emergency transportation or vehicle repair, funeral expenses, medical or dental expenses all qualify as crisis situations and AER is here to serve military families in their time of need."

"Fort Dix's Army Emergency Relief has dispersed \$46,000 so far in 2009," said Brown. "We are here to support and not to say no."

AER scholarships for undergraduate level education are also available based on need. Scholarships include the Maj. Gen. James Ursano Scholarship Program for dependent children, the Overseas Spouse Education Assistance Program for spouses of

active duty Soldiers assigned and living in Overseas Commands, and the Stateside Spouse Education Assistance Program. Full details and requirements for these scholarships are on the AER website. In addition to the U.S., there are other AER international locations.

Bobby Brown said "Contact the Fort Dix Army Emergency Relief at 562-4245, any time."

More information can be found by calling AER Headquarters toll-free at 866-878-6378 or log onto www.aerhq.org.

(Comments about this article may be sent to the writer at jennifer.a.chupko@us.army.mil.)

Soldiers stay active to fight stress

Sp. Kevin Holden
American Forces Press Service

BAGHDAD, March 3 -- Deployment is never easy, especially a 15-month deployment in which Soldiers face the possibility of missing the same holiday twice away from their loved ones.

This has been the reality for Soldiers from the 1st Armored Division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team, who have served in Multinational Division Baghdad since April in the brigade's third deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom since 2003.

"Almost 11 months into their deployment, 'Iron Brigade' Soldiers continue their work in Iraq despite the hardships of being away from family, friends, loved ones and the comforts of home."

"Deployment to a combat zone, working seven days a week for 15 months, can be a [tiring] assignment [for] anyone, no matter what their job

is," said Army Spc. Mathew Fischer, a Soldier from the 47th Forward Support Battalion based on Camp Striker, near Baghdad. Fischer is a special electronics device repairer, a job that consists of repairing night-vision systems, computers and global positioning equipment. His job requires him to work long hours.

"I received my first assignment orders in the Army for Baumholder, Germany, at the end of advanced individual training, and have been keeping in touch with family and friends using the Internet and telephones since I arrived in Germany," he said. "Continuing to communicate with family using the Internet has been a great way for me to relieve stress while being deployed in Iraq."

However, unlike Fischer, many combat support Soldiers are not able to perform their assigned jobs while deployed. Many Iron Brigade Soldiers who were once fuelers, cooks or mechanics now find them-

selves serving as gunners on supply convoys or in other new jobs to meet mission requirements.

"For many Soldiers, this often leads them to positions that require them to quickly adapt to a new job and learn different skills.

"Going to ranges and learning to use an M-240B machine gun to qualify from the turret of [a mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicle] was challenging," said Army Spc. James Ott, a mechanic from the 4th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery. "The only weapons I fired prior to deployment were my M-4 rifle and an M-249 [squad assault weapon]. The most difficult thing is not getting complacent after multiple missions and staying focused."

Any deployment working in a stressful environment can affect an individual's work performance. To make it through, Soldiers have come to terms on how to deal with deployment stress through different activities and programs, and finding what works for them.

"I release my Soldiers to ... exercise in the gym and go running when job orders are completed," said Army Staff Sgt. Marcus Hooks, who serves with the maintenance support team of 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment. Hooks has served in the Army for 12 years as a track vehicle repairer, and has been on multiple deployments. He supervises his team and ensures the Soldiers have enough time away from work without affecting unit needs.

"Giving my Soldiers time away from the motor pool helps morale and keeps them physically fit," Hooks said. "As a mechanic, there are no regular duty hours, and our job depends on the workload."

Besides working out, another source available to Soldiers dealing with stress is their unit chaplain. They can seek advice and receive assistance with personal issues outside their chain of command.

"Soldiers are grateful, and have a sense that someone is

taking interest in their concerns and working to resolve their issues," said Army Chaplain (Capt.) Charles Lahmon, the chaplain for the brigade's 47th Forward Support Battalion. The chaplain also acts as a resource for leaders to seek advice on how to take care of Soldiers who may not want to seek outside assistance.

"[Noncommissioned officers] have asked for guidance from me to help their Soldiers with personal issues," Lahmon said.

The Army also provides medical officers and staff who specialize in mental health to help to diagnose Soldiers with symptoms of depression and give medical treatment.

Army Capt. Michelle Kline, a mental health officer with 47th FSB, provides initial counseling for Soldiers seeking assistance.

"The medical staff provides an environment to deal with the stress of deployment for all Soldiers," she said. "The medical care received is confidential and available for walk-in appointments."

The Iron Brigade leadership is taking a proactive approach to combat stress, using preventive measures and encouraging early intervention through a wide variety of available assistance.

"We make monthly visits to all command observation posts where our Soldiers are located," Kline said. "These regularly scheduled visits allow Soldiers to receive mental health assistance regardless of the area of Iraq in which they serve."

"Part of our mission is to bring mental health to the Soldiers in order to keep the mission going and also to provide the Soldiers the support they need," Kline said. "In order to provide Soldiers the best and most available care that we can, we go to them."

Leaders regularly remind Soldiers that seeking medical assistance from a mental health care provider is not a career ender. Seeking help early is the best way to avoid long-term problems, Kline noted.

New legislation may give spouse equal rights

Nurit Anderson
Installation Legal Office

Ask any military spouse and he or she will tell you the stress associated with moving every two to three years is overwhelming. Finding a new home, packing and unpacking household goods, enrolling children in new schools, finding new doctors, making new friends, and finding employment are just a few of the many issues military families face when moving.

In an effort to alleviate some of the burdens associated with relocation, the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) permits service members to maintain their home of residence regardless of where the military moves them. This allows continuity with regard to where they live, maintain a driver's license, and pay property and income taxes.

Unfortunately, the SCRA does not extend these same protections to military spouses, who, like their

active duty spouses, simply go where the military tells them to go.

As a result, with each move, military spouses, in addition to all the other stressors associated with moving, must determine whether to obtain a new driver's license, where to register their cars, where they can vote, and where they must pay taxes. In order to eliminate this inequity, a bill to amend the SCRA to expand the residence rules to military spouses has been introduced and is currently being considered by the House Committee on Veterans Affairs.

Similar legislation was introduced last year and passed the House of Representatives but never came up for a vote in the Senate. Hopefully, this legislation, known as the Military Spouse Residency Relief Act (H.R. 1182), will become law this year and will make life just a little bit simpler for military spouses.

Call the Installation Legal Office at 562-3043 with any questions about the SCRA.

Army Community Service (ACS)

562-2767

Bldg. 5201, on the corner of 8th Street and Maryland Avenue

Hours of Operation:

Monday through Friday, 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**A Department of the Army Accredited Soldier and Family Service Organization*
Looking for information and assistance? ACS is here to serve you. ACS serves all military branches of service, DoD civilian personnel and retirees. The ACS Center is accessible to individuals with disabilities.

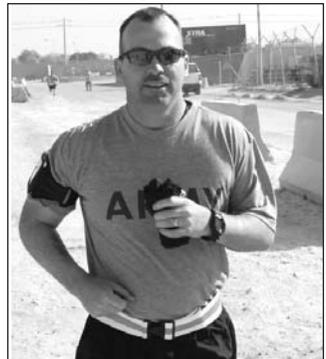
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Sp. Kevin Holden

SOUND MIND, SOUND BODY -- Staff Sgt. Marcus Hooks goes running on Camp Striker, Iraq, to keep physically fit and relieve stress while on his scheduled 15-month deployment.

Chapel honors men

(continued from page 5)
After Deas retired from the Army the family stayed in Browns Mills and was active in the Main Chapel. He served as deacon of the Protestant congregation and the Protestant Religious Education Coordinator.
Deas led the adult Bible Studies program twice a week and was active in both the Protestant and Gospel services as a reader, choir member and soloist.
A longtime member of the Christian Men of the Chapel, he served as the coordinator for the Vacation Bible School program and Walk Thru the Bible seminars.
"Deacon Deas personified

life as a Soldier and a Christian gentleman. I can also say he was my dear friend," said Roosevelt Scott, lay leader of the Protestant congregation.
The Combined Choir closed the service with a beautiful rendition of Amazing Grace and then those in attendance adjourned to the fellowship hall to enjoy a meal and each other's company.
The service stirred up different emotions with attending family members.
"I thought the service was wonderful. It was really classy. They were two very deserving men," said David Deas, son of Deacon Deas.
His mother was very touched by the show of honor,

respect, and affection show to both men.
"I am very humbled by today's ceremony. The idea that these two military men were remembered in such a way for their service touches me deeply," said Eloise Deas.
Bell's wife was overcome by emotion while watching her husband being honored.
"I'm very sad because I miss him very much. I am very blessed by the service today," said Song Cha Bell.
The hanging of the plaques in the foyer of the chapel brings a tradition of recognizing the outstanding dedication and service shown by members of the chapel community for posterity.



Wayne Cook

Law grants remains to veteran's groups

Wayne Woolley
New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

The disturbing news reports from around the country began trickling in a few years ago and Roman P. Nidzwiedz, a decorated Vietnam veteran from Evesham, couldn't stop thinking about them.
Listening to the news, he learned that the cremated remains of veterans had been discovered languishing on shelves in funeral homes, hospitals and prisons, unclaimed and unburied for years. More than 100 at a mental hospital in Oregon. Another 25 at a nursing home in Nevada. Scattered reports of smaller numbers from funeral homes across the country.

The likelihood that at least a few veterans' cremains remained in limbo in New Jersey spurred Nidzwiedz and several fellow members of Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 899 in Bordentown to action. They began calling state legislators, ultimately finding allies in Assemblyman Jack Conners (D-Burlington), chairman of the Assembly Veterans and Military Affairs Committee and Senator Jeff

Van Drew (D-Cape May/Cumberland/Atlantic).
The three-year effort paid off on Feb. 4 when Gov. Jon Corzine signed A2613/S1579, a law that gives veterans' organizations the right to receive unclaimed cremains of veterans in order arrange for a proper military burial at sea or on land at the Brigadier General William C. Doyle Memorial Cemetery in Burlington County.

The governor signed the bill into law at the cemetery in a conference room filled with more than two dozen veterans.
"Every veteran who served and defended our nation deserves the dignity of a proper burial," Corzine said. "This law ensures that all veterans are honored with the respect and dignity owed them by the State of New Jersey and the United States."

In addition to the Vietnam Veterans of America and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, other veterans' organizations that supported the legislation include the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, American Veterans, Catholic War Veterans, Jewish War Veterans and the Marine Corps League. A group of volunteers from these organizations and

other veterans' groups will serve on the New Jersey Mission of Honor Cremains Committee, which will coordinate the transfer of the cremains.

In cases where the cremains are to be buried at the Doyle Veterans Cemetery, the state Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMAVA) will play a key role in ensuring that the cremains are, in fact, that of a veteran, said Col. (Ret.) Stephen G. Abel, the Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs.

Abel said DMAVA will work with veterans' groups to ensure that all documents related to the military service record of the deceased are in order, as is required for interment in the Doyle Cemetery, the busiest state-operated veterans' cemetery in the United States.

The first interment — the remains of a World War II vet who died more than two decades ago and then remained at a funeral home in Bergen County — will be at the Doyle cemetery in April.

Nidzwiedz will be there. He did not know that man when he was alive. It doesn't matter. "He who shed blood on the battlefield is my brother," Nidzwiedz said. "Always."



Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMVA/PA

NEVER FORGOTTEN — Roman P. Nidzwiedz, Assemblyman Jack Conners and Senator Jeff Van Drew, along with veterans group representatives watch as Governor Jon S. Corzine, seated, signs into law A2613/S1579 granting veteran organizations the right to receive unclaimed veterans cremains and ensure that they receive a proper military burial on Feb. 4.

Fight Germs and Stay Healthy

If you have a cold or flu:

- ▶ Avoid close contact when possible
- ▶ Germs are transmitted by sneezing, coughing and even while speaking

Cover your cough or sneeze

- ▶ Use a tissue or your sleeve to cover your mouth and nose while coughing or sneezing
- ▶ Throw used tissue in the trash

Wash your hands often

- ▶ Always wash your hands before eating and after using the latrine
- ▶ Wash hands for at least 15-20 seconds with warm, soapy water or alcohol-based gel

Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth

- ▶ Germs are often spread when people touch something contaminated with germs (for example, other people's hands or smudged surfaces) and then touch their own eyes, nose or mouth

FOND MEMORIES — Retired Col. George Waters shares fond memories of Chap. (Maj.) Leon Bell, Jr. with those in attendance at a dedication ceremony at the Fort Dix Main Chapel Feb. 27. He recalled a strong, kind and devoted man who found deep and sincere satisfaction in serving others. A plaque in honor of Bell will hang in the front foyer of the Main Chapel.

Chaplains' Corner

Chap. (Col.) Wayne Kirk
Fort Dix Deputy Garrison Chaplain

*"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; (Isaiah 43: 2).
And when you pass through the rivers, they shall not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; The flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the LORD, your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior."*
Isaiah 43: 2-3

I wish to share today some thoughts on the spiritual dimension of suicide.
As you probably are aware, the U.S. Army has announced record suicide rates among our soldiers last year and a spike in possible suicides rates this new year. The Army said 24 true in a number of ways. Certainly, our Lord soldiers are believed to have committed suicide in January alone — six times as many as killed themselves in January 2008. The Army said it already has confirmed seven suicides, with 17 additional cases pending that it believes investigators will confirm as suicides for January 2009.

The Army did not identify a specific reason for the increase, but officials said 15-month deployments to war zones played a role. These deployments, which have allowed for little time away from the battlefield, have contributed to post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, alcohol abuse and family problems. The most common factors in suicides were financial, personal and legal problems, as well as job-related difficulties, officials said. All of these issues can result in depression, the leading cause for suicide.

But, there is a spiritual dimension to all of this which can often be overlooked and, to clearly Ask, "are you thinking of taking your life?" If those entrusted to us give any indication they are at risk then; Calmly control the situation removing the threat to their life; and Escort your friend to where they can get help for example, the chain of command, a chaplain, a behavioral health professional, or a primary care provider. It's simple, remember ACE-Ask, Calmly control the situation, Escort.

In the Army we call this being a "battle buddy;" In the church we simply call it showing love.
Job wished that he had never been born.
"After this opened Job his mouth, and cursed his day. And Job spake, and said, Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived" (Job 3:1-13).

Recognizing that depression and a sense of hopelessness comes to everyone in this life is important for it can help us learn to take away the stigma that often goes with this topic where individuals, and especially soldiers, resist talking honestly about their depression.
King David, himself a great soldier in the Old Testament (and the writer of the Psalms) declared:

"When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long...my strength was sapped" (Psalm 32: 3).

But when he confessed his inner thoughts and needs to the Lord, he found wholeness.
"When I was in deep distress, and my heart was troubled, I called to the Lord, and he answered me. He brought me out of my den, and he enlarged my pathway. He has not despised my prayer, nor has he despised my cry for help. He has answered me in his righteousness, and he has saved me from all my troubles. He has not allowed my enemies to triumph over me. He has delivered me from the hand of all who hate me. He has not allowed my enemies to triumph over me. He has delivered me from the hand of all who hate me. He has not allowed my enemies to triumph over me. He has delivered me from the hand of all who hate me." (Psalm 139: 7-8).

"We are never alone!" In Hebrews we learn: "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5).
God has not left us no matter how bad things may seem. Indeed, the prophet Isaiah

speaks the word of the Lord when he declares:
"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned" (Isaiah 43: 2).

Notice that the Lord tells his people, Israel, that adversity, problems, and the "storms" of life will certainly come to them! For he never says "if you pass through the waters" nor "if you pass through the fire" nor even "if you walk through the fire." The storms of life are never a matter of "if" but of "when" and indeed depression is such a storm that comes to us all.

But the wonderful news of the scriptures is that when we go through such storms God is with us! We are never alone! I think this is true in a number of ways. Certainly, our Lord is with each of us as we go through the ups and downs of life. But also, he uses each of us to be a presence and comfort to others who are going through life's storms. Paul writes:
"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of all compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those who are in trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God" (II Corinthians 1: 3-4).

In other words, we who have gone through the storms of depression (and even suicidal thoughts) at some point in our lives, only to have emerged by His grace, are now as well as job-related difficulties, officials said. All of these issues can result in depression, the leading cause for suicide.
offer them the same hope and comfort that we received from Him. We are admonished to look for the signs of depression in others; to clearly Ask, "are you thinking of taking your life?" If those entrusted to us give any indication they are at risk then; Calmly control the situation removing the threat to their life; and Escort your friend to where they can get help for example, the chain of command, a chaplain, a behavioral health professional, or a primary care provider. It's simple, remember ACE-Ask, Calmly control the situation, Escort.

In the Army we call this being a "battle buddy;" In the church we simply call it showing love.

You are not an accident no matter the circumstances surrounding your birth. "Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture" (Psalm 100:3). God created you. "For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth whereof thou hast made me. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!" (Psalm 139:13-17). God knew you even before you were born.

Other great men of the Bible struggled with suicidal thoughts. Elijah the prophet scriptures teach us that God is with us always: "Where can I go from your presence? If I go to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there" (Psalm 139: 7-8).
"We are never alone!" In Hebrews we learn: "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5).
God has not left us no matter how bad things may seem. Indeed, the prophet Isaiah

SPORTS

Skiing trips up Soldiers

Jennifer Chupko
Public Affairs Staff

Four Soldiers from the Fort Dix Noncommissioned Officer Academy (NCOA) took a day trip to Bear Creek Mountain Ski Resort to learn how to ski and snowboard through the Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation (FMWR) Outdoor Recreation program, Feb. 28.

Staff Sgt. Jennifer Wright

and Sgt. 1st Class Mary Russell

tried their skills at snowboard,

while Sgt. 1st Class Kimberly Mercado

and Staff Sgt. Ronald McRae learned

how to ski. They tested their

balance and braved the cold

weather on snowy Bear Creek

Mountain.

Prior to taking on the slopes

for the first time, all four Soldiers went through the beginner's ski lessons.

The group was split into two groups- skiers and snowboarders.

"I had a great time," said Mercado. "Next time, hopefully, it will be the whole NCO Academy."

They arrived with ambition and left with some bruises, but everyone came back from the trip in one piece and with a smile.

"I had a great time even though it was a bit painful at times," said Russell. "Unfortunately, the only thing I picked up was me off the ground too many times to count!"

More experienced skiers offered assistance to help

ensure a safe trip. They helped

the new skiers make it down the mountain safely.

"I'm not able to count how many times I fell, so I don't think I really picked up the technique for snowboarding," said Wright. "We didn't even get past the bunny slope, so I didn't get the chance to get on the actual ski lift."

"It was a good team-building opportunity to do something with other academy members that I don't normally get to interact with on a daily basis," said Russell.

"I loved the experience. That was the first time I was ever on skis," said McRae. "It didn't take me that long to pick up the technique, after falling four or five times."

"I enjoyed skiing," said Mercado. "I'm making plans

to go on another trip because it was such a great experience."

"I went with the members of the academy for stress relief," said McRae. "I will be going again within the next month to stay overnight."

FMWR has three more ski trips planned through Outdoor Recreation.

On March 7 and 21 they visit Blue Mountain and March 14 they will take a trip to Bear Creek. Skiing, snowboarding and tubing are offered.

For additional information about future ski trips, visit Outdoor Recreation or call 562-6667.

(The author may be reached for questions or comments at jennifer.a.chupko@us.army.mil.)



Jennifer Chupko

DOWNHILL FROM HERE -- Sgt. 1st Class Mary Russell is learning how to snowboard during a beginner's class on the Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation Bear Creek Mountain trip with other Non-Commissioned Officer Academy Soldiers.



Golf grounds guru packs it in

John Huda guards his cake at a reception at Mulligan's Restaurant honoring his 35 years as superintendent of the grounds at Fort Dix's premier Fountain Green Golf Course. John started working at Fort Dix in 1974 and has maintained a standard of excellence at the course which has impressed one and all over the years. He also attended elementary school on Fort Dix when it was located on the ground of the old Tilton Hospital. "It's been very enjoyable working here and playing golf here," John said, in a speech recounting his life and times on Fort Dix. According to Hank Strasser, a budget analyst at the Resource Management Office who's also retiring, "John loved it here. He lived on the course." John promises to keep in touch and keep swinging!

photo by Steve Snyder

Sports Shorts

Griffith Field House

Saturday & Sunday
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Monday - Friday
6 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Energize with Combat Fitness Challenge

Maximize the benefits of standard physical fitness training at the Griffith Field House.

The Combat Fitness Training Challenge, every Monday and Wednesday from 6:30 a.m. - 7:30 a.m. is an intense military-style group workout given by certified Griffith Field House personal trainers and Army master fitness trainers.

The class includes running, military-style calisthenics and drill exercises, cardio

kickboxing and more. Call (609)562-4888 for more information.

Aquatics offers scuba classes

The Aquatics Center is currently hosting diving certification classes. For more information call (609)562-2808

Hip Hop Class comes to Griffith

Hip Hop Fitness Class - every Thursday, in March. Noon to 1 p.m.

Sign up for joint forces racquetball tourney

Come out and compete in the 2009 Joint Forces Racquetball Tournament March 14-15.

Participation is free with trophies going to the first and second place finishers in each division. All entries must be submitted by 5 p.m. on March 12.

For more information call the McGuire Air Force Base Fitness Center at (609)754-6085 or Fort Dix's Griffith Field House at (609)562-3961.

Downhill skiing and snowboarding with Outdoor Rec.

Hit the slopes with Outdoor Recreation when they go to Bear Creek March 14. Beginners to experts welcome to try their skills on the bunny slopes or the diamond trails. Skiing, snowboarding and tubing available. Call today to reserve your seat at (609)562-6667. Visit our page on www.dixmwr.com for details.

Announcements

Chapel Services

**Fort Dix
562-2020**
Sunday Services

Traditional
9 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Catholic
10:15 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.

Gospel
11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sunday School
10 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.

CCD
9:15 a.m. to 10 a.m.

**Chapel 5 - Bldg. 5950
Church Street**
Traditional Service
6:30 p.m.

COL - Chaplain's tent
Hour of Power Protestant
8 a.m. to 9 a.m.

Catholic
8 a.m. to 9 a.m.

Mormon
8 a.m. to 9 a.m.

Jewish
8 a.m. to 9 a.m.

Islamic Prayer Room
Open 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Monday through Friday
Room 24

McGuire
754-4673
Sunday Services

Contemporary
9:45 a.m. Chapel 2

Gospel
11:15 a.m. Chapel 1

Religious Activities

Christian Men of the Chapel
Prayer Breakfast -
Fourth Saturday of each
month
9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

**Christian Women of the
Chapel** -
Meets every Tuesday
9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
at the Fort Dix Main Chapel
and the
fourth Tuesday at
Buttonwood Hospital.

Fort Dix Main Chapel
Gospel Service
Joy Night Concert and
34th Gospel Anniversary

**The Joy of the Lord is
Our Strength**

*"For this day is holy unto our
Lord, neither be ye sorry; for
the joy of the Lord is your
strength." Nehemiah 8:10 (KJV)*
Concert: Saturday, March 7,
from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Gospel Anniversary: Sunday,
March 8 at 11:30 a.m.
A special dinner will be
served following the Church
Anniversary service.
Come join us on this special
occasion.
Fort Dix Main Chapel
562-2020

Arts & Crafts

Bldg. 6039 562-5691
Registration Hours:

Tuesday
9 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Wednesday and Thursday
Noon to 5 p.m. and
6 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.

Friday
11 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Saturday
9 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

**Women's History Month
Exhibit** - Featuring the work
of painter Sharon Shaw and
potter Umeko Bennett in the
gallery through the month of
March. Both women are multi-
year winners of the All Army
Arts & Crafts Contest.

Quilts for Kids - March 14
Immerse yourself in fabric,
friends, food and fun. Join
other Quilts for Kids groups
in a weekend of quilting at the
Courtyard by Marriott in
Langhorne, Pa. Reserve your
place now. Fabulous price.
Seating is limited! Teddy
bears welcome.

March Specials - Wear "Irish
Green" anytime you stop in to
Arts & Crafts the entire month
of March and receive 15 per-
cent off all Fine Art and
Scrapbooking supplies. Our
annual "March Mosaic Mad-
ness" is on. Take 20 percent
off all mosaics through the
month. It's easy to learn and
you can make great gifts or
enhance your home décor.

Arts and Crafts Classes

Kids Mixed Media Art Class
(Ages 6 & up) March 7-28
Saturdays 2 p.m.-3:30 p.m. (4
week course) fee: \$30
Kids can explore their creative
sides while making a variety
of great art projects. Students
will enjoy four weeks of
imaginative fun while utilizing
paint and much more.

Kids Pottery Class (Ages 6-
9) March 7-28 (4 weeks)
fee \$30
Saturdays 10:30 a.m. to noon
Classes cover hand-building
(pinching, coiling and slab
building) as well as basic
wheel throwing skills. Stu-
dents will be shown basic
techniques that will lead to
their own creative solutions.
Clay, glazes and firings are
provided. Pre-registration
required.

Tween Pottery Class (Ages
10-13) March 7-28 (4 weeks)
fee \$30
Saturdays 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Classes cover hand-building
(pinching, coiling and slab
building) as well as basic
wheel throwing skills. Stu-
dents will be shown basic
techniques that will lead to
their own creative solutions.
Clay, glazes and firings are
provided. Pre-registration
required.

**The Child
Development Center**
Bldg. 5523 562-4702

ACS

562-2767
Bldg. 5201 Maryland Avenue

Calendar of Events

Tuesday, March 10
**Hearts Apart- Positive Affect
of Deployment**
10 a.m.
ACS

**Compassion Fatigue Work-
shop Part 1 of 2**
2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
SFAC

Wednesday, March 11
**Plastic Surgery: Repairing
Your Credit and Starting
Fresh**
9 a.m. to noon
ACS

Thursday, March 12
**Individual Education Plan
Training for Parents of Chil-
dren with Special Needs**
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Fort Dix Child Development
Center

Healthy Eating Habits
11 a.m. to noon
SFAC

Friends of Fort Dix
Contact:
Bonnie Reed at 499-3969 or
Patricia Keffler at 893-7074 or
fordixspousesclub@com-
cast.net.

Griffith Field House
Bldg. 6053 562-4888
Monday, Wednesday, Friday

Combat Fitness Challenge
Military Only
6:30 a.m. to 7:30 a.m.

Monday
Mind & Body Yoga
Noon to 12:45 p.m.

Total Toning
5:15 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.

Gut Buster!
6:15 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Tuesday
Retirees in Motion
9 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Spin-It!
Noon to 12:45 p.m.

Intro to Fitness
5:15 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.

Wednesday
Turbo Kick
Noon to 12:45 p.m.

Circuit Training
5:15 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.

Thursday
Kick Boxing Interval
Noon to 12:45 p.m.

Pilates Fusion
5:15 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.

Turbo Kick
6:15 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Friday
Spin-It!
Noon to 12:45 p.m.

Step Fusion
5:15 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.

Cardio Muscle
9 a.m. to 10 a.m.

FMWR presents

CLUB DIX 723-3272
Club Dix Hours of Operation

Java Café
Monday through Friday
7 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Smokehouse Restaurant
Lunch Served
Tuesday through Friday
11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Saturday through Monday
Closed

Blue Room
Wednesday
5 p.m. to 10 p.m.
Thursday through Saturday
6 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Sunday through Tuesday
Closed

Computer Lab
Monday and Tuesday
7 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Wednesday through Friday
7 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Saturday
Noon to 10 p.m.

Sunday
10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**Outdoor Equipment
Rental Center**
Monday through Friday
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Events Calendar
Texas Hold'em/Bunco Night
March 6 at Club Dix - 7 p.m.

Texas Hold'em \$24 at the
door.

Bunco is \$7 at the door and
anyone over 18 is welcome.
Themes are *Indulgence Night*,
Gourmet Night and *Entertain-
ment Night*. Prizes will include
gift cards from: Williams-
Sonoma, iGourmet.com,
SpaFinder.com, Bath & Body
Works, Best Buy and Barnes &
Noble.

There will be smaller prizes for
early registrants and drawings
between games.

On *Entertainment Night*, lucky
winners will take home an 8-
gigabyte iPod Nano or an MP3
player.
Call 562-5355 for more infor-
mation.

**Women's Comedy Show at
Club Dix** - March 13
Get your tickets now. Includes
Fort Dix's first "Wing Eating
Competition."
Contact Bob Vogt at 562-6772

MWR Warehouse Sale
March 17 and 18
Furniture, Air Conditioning
Units and more. Watch for
details!

**Fountain Green
Golf Course**

FGGC News and Events
Mulligan's Restaurant
Now open

The Golf Course remains
open for play - Conditions
permitting.

Youth Center

562-5061
Bldg. 1279 Locust Street

Hours of Operation
Monday through Friday
2 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Saturday
1 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Sunday CLOSED

Administrative Hours
Tuesday through Friday
Noon to 6 p.m.

Monday - Friday
2:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Computer Lab
4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Saturday, March 7
Midnight Basketball
Teens and guests ONLY
7 p.m. to midnight

Tuesday, March 10
Triple Play
3:45 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Wednesday, March 11
Fashion Design
3:45 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Shutterbugs
4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Thursday, March 12
Cosmetology
3:45 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Friday, March 13
Torch Club
4 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Teens and Hot Topics
5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Saturday, March 14
Volleyball Game
4 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Fort Dix
Thrift Shop
723-2683

Hours of operation
Tuesday and Thursday
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

1st and 3rd Saturdays
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

1st Wednesday
3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Easter and Spring are just
around the corner and the
Thrift Shop is taking consign-
ments of Easter items and
Spring clothing. (No shorts,
capris, sleeveless or halter
tops and no swimsuits.)

Children's clothing of all
sorts is always needed.

**Winter clothing not accept-
ed at this time.**

Home items consigned earn
you cash.

**Paid cashier position coming
up soon-**

Volunteers needed -
Volunteers are always wel-
come. If you or anyone you
know is interested in volun-
teering, call Sylvia at the
Thrift Shop.

United Communities

**St. Patrick's Day
Guess How Many**

Stop by the leasing
office and Guess how many
green M&M's are in the jar.
Your guess just may
be the winner!

Coloring Contest
St. Patrick's Day Col-
oring Books will be available
for pick up at the UC Leasing
Office. Coloring books are
due back to the leasing office
by Tuesday, March 17.

Lifeguards needed!
UC is currently looking for
lifeguards for the pool on
McGuire. Call Progressive
Pool Management for more
information at 1-888-766-
POOL.

Need a computer?
Stop by the UC Leasing
Office and use the internet
café. This service is free to all
residents of United Communi-
ties.

Self Help Office Information
Saturday, March 21 will be
the last day the United Com-
munities Self Help Office will
be open on Saturdays. The
office will continue to be open
from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday
through Friday and closed on
Sundays.

Residential Refuse
Collection

Monday and Tuesday
Green waste

Tuesday
Fort Dix Areas
201, 502; 1200s, 1500s, 1600s

Wednesday
McGuire AFB
4000s Except 4013 - 4027
4200s Except 4252 - 4260

Friday
McGuire AFB
4013 - 4027; 4252 - 4260
4300s, 4400s and 4500s

Bulk trash is picked up on
regular trash day.

**Grove Park and Holly Crest
Trash Disposal Plan:**
The permanent trash com-
pactor will be located at the
end of 8th Street near New
Jersey Ave.

**Residents of Falcon Courts
East:**
The enclosure for the com-
pactor in Parcel D (2700 area)
is now accessible. The new
enclosure is located near the
intersection of Mitchell Street
and North Lindbergh Avenue.

March Recycling Days:
Thursday, March 12 and 26

Recycling Memo:
If you require a second recy-
cling container, you may
obtain one at the United Com-
munities Self Help Office.

Please call ahead so that we
can have your bin addressed
and ready for pick up. You can
reach the Self Help Office at
724-0550.