

Bavarian News

Vol 4. Nr. 11

U.S. Army Garrisons Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, Ansbach, Bamberg, Schweinfurt, and Garmisch

June 4, 2008

BAMBERG
16TH STB TAKES PART IN
LIVE FIRE EXERCISE

■ PAGE 18

GARMISCH
MARSHALL CENTER
HOSTS
COUNTERTERRORISM
CONFERENCE IN ROME

■ PAGE 8

ANSBACH
NEW MEMORIAL PARK
NOW OPEN ON
KATTERBACH

■ PAGE 16

SCHWEINFURT
69TH ADA BRIGADE
CASES COLORS

■ PAGE 20

HOHENFELS
1-4 INFANTRY SOLDIER
AWARDED SILVER STAR

■ PAGE 10

INDEX

■ **Sports:** Run for your life: Duffey recognized for running 1,000 miles
Page 25

■ **Medical:** Having a baby while stationed in Europe doesn't have to be scary
Page 22

■ **What's Happening:** Find out what's going on in your area
Pages 12-13

■ **News:** 2SCR at home, downrange celebrate regiment's birthday
Page 6



Second OIF Soldier to receive posthumous Medal of Honor

by CARRIE MCLEROY
Army News Service

President Bush has announced that Spc. Ross McGinnis of Knox, Pa. was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor in a White House ceremony June 2, two weeks shy of what would have been his 21st birthday.

McGinnis is just the second U.S. Soldier to receive the medal for actions in Operation Iraqi Freedom and a special Web site dedicated to his heroics has been created by the Soldiers Media Center at www.army.mil/medalofhonor/McGinnis. The site includes a profile on the 1st Infantry Division Soldier, battlescape, background on the medal, video news reports and a number of other resources.

Story of a Hero

McGinnis began his transformation from scrawny boy to standout Soldier at 17, enlisting in the Army through the Delayed Entry Program in June 2004. Although not remembered as a troublemaker, McGinnis was not interested in school, and spent his teen years struggling to eke by.

"He put us through our trials, definitely. From little up, he liked to push the limits," his mother, Romayne, said. "You never knew what was going to come out of his mouth or out of his actions."

In high school, McGinnis never made the honor roll or played sports. According to teachers, he made his mark, but in ways that were uniquely Ross.

"He stood out, but just by bits and pieces," said Franki Sheatz, McGinnis's ninth and 11th-grade French teacher at Keystone High School. "When he stood out, a lot of times it was because of his wit, or because he was trying to get away with something. He never did any more or less than a lot of the other kids I had in class, although he was charming in his little way."

His parents and teachers agreed that the catalyst that sparked a change in McGinnis was his decision to join the military.

"He came to us and said he wanted to join the Army, and we accepted that," said McGinnis's father Tom. The way we looked at it was that he had no intention of going to school, and there really aren't very good jobs for a person that doesn't have higher

See SCHWEINFURT Page 24



Graphic courtesy of the Army News Service
Spc. Ross McGinnis was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor this past Monday. He is the second Soldier to receive the medal for actions in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Graf Soldiers honor Normandy sacrifice



Photo by Sgt. Keith M. Anderson

From front, Pfc. Jose Suarez Jr., Pfc. Juan Pinarincon, Spc. Paul Curtis, Pvt. Samuel Blalock, Pvt. Leonard Ybarra, Spc. David Roman, Pvt. Ashleigh Wilkerson, firing party members from the 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, Grafenwoehr stand at parade rest during a Memorial Day observance at the Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial, Normandy, France, May 25. Sgt. Erich Schmitt, firing party non-commissioned officer in charge, stands behind the party. The 18th CSSB, which is deploying to northern Iraq with the 16th SB for a 15-month deployment, also provided an honor platoon and a colors guard for the observance. See Page 6 for the full story.

Garrison hosts amnesty month to certify providers

by ANJANETTE FRANKLIN
USAG Grafenwoehr Family Child Care Director

Did you know that it is against Army Regulations to take care of children in your home for over 10 hours a week?

According to Army Regulations, unauthorized care is prohibited in government owned or leased housing.

Unauthorized care is defined as individuals who are providing care for children in their own home (other than their own children) for more than 10 child care hours a week.

Army policy requires identification of unauthorized child care in home settings and assists parents in finding alternative care within the Child and Youth Services program. During the month of June, U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr is hosting the Family Child Care amnesty program.

The command-supported program permits anyone providing care to children, other than their own or blood relative for more than 10 hours a week in government quarters, an opportunity to register with Child Development Services without penalty from command.

The individual offering the unauthorized care may apply for Family Child Care certification but may not care for children until requirements for FCC Provisional Certification are complete.

Certified FCC providers make the choice of caring for children in a manner most preferred by child care patrons. As a certified provider you are eligible for the following benefits:

- No cost liability insurance
- Utilization of FCC equipment and a resource library
- Reimbursement for all food expenditures
- Marketable credentials and career advancement

advancement

- Limited startup costs
- Ongoing professional training

Provision of child care on an Army installation is a privilege, not a right. The program is to reduce the potential for liability to the U.S. Army for unauthorized care in government owned or leased quarters.

It also reduces the risk of child abuse or neglect to children cared for in these homes.

To provide some flexibility which will reduce the amount of disruption to children and parents, CYS will grant amnesty to the provider and assist parents in finding alternative care within the CYS program until the caregiver becomes certified by FCC.

If you are interested in becoming a Family Child Care provider in the Grafenwoehr, Vilseck, or surrounding areas, call the Grafenwoehr Family Child Care office at DSN 475-2783 or CIV 09641-83-2783.

Avoid fines, be specific

by MARY MARKOS
Bavarian News

Have you ever felt frustrated when the language barrier makes it impossible to get your point across? What about when what you said gets lost in translation?

Such miscommunications can lead to thousands of Euros in fines and a freeze on bank accounts for Community Bank Members throughout Germany.

Grafenwoehr Community Bank Officer and Manager Judith Brown said the problem often starts

See UNPAID Page 25

Garmisch Soldier wins top honors

USAG Garmisch press release

Spc. Marco Garced, U.S. Army Garrison Garmisch, was named as the 2008 Installation Management Command-Europe Soldier of the Year in a ceremony held May 28 in Heidelberg.

Garced will represent IMCOM-Europe at the IMCOM worldwide competition scheduled for next month at Fort A.P. Hill, Va.

Garced took top honors at the three-day competition held at USAG Grafenwoehr in May.

Nine Soldiers from across Germany, Belgium, the

See GARCED Page 8

Q&A

What *tips* do you have for someone *PCS-ing*?



Lori Newbauer
(Vilseck)
"Find out as much about the post as you can. Once you get there, get plugged into volunteering."

Angie Parreno
(Vilseck)
"Keep everything in one folder for the Soldier. For the family members, think about what unaccompanied baggage you will send; it is better to be without here since ACS has the lending closet."



Sgt. Christopher Statkowski
(Vilseck)
"Make sure you have extra copies of your orders. You can never have enough of those."

Pvt. Erick Maldonado
(Grafenwoehr)
"Bring as little with you as you can and prepare to be flexible."



Rebecca Paul
(Vilseck)
"Research and get acquainted with the new post and surrounding area before you PCS."

Janae Roberts
(Vilseck)
"Plan early. Get rid of junk, and try to start months before to clean your quarters. Don't procrastinate."



Sgt. 1st Class Terrance Houser
(Grafenwoehr)
"Get a sponsor so your transition will be smooth."

Sgt. 1st Class Daryl Williams
(Grafenwoehr)
"Find out about the area you're going to. Before you sign a lease, research what the utilities are going to cost."



Take notice of new crosswalks

Summer Safety

With the completion of Memorial Day weekend, we have officially moved into the summer safety season. Extending all the way until Labor Day, Soldiers and their family members are more likely to enjoy the extended daylight hours and experience why this part of the world is so enjoyable.

Unfortunately, enjoying Bavaria exposes personnel to some hazards. For example, studies have determined operating a vehicle while tired (which can happen when it stays daylight until 10 p.m.) is as dangerous as operating a vehicle while drunk.

Also, the consumption of large amounts of alcohol in the hot and sometimes humid conditions of local fests can expose people to dehydration or heat exhaustion.

Finally, as it gets warmer, people will be tempted to explore local streams, rivers, and unguarded ponds to cool off. All of these pose health risks. As the BOSS safety program states, it only takes one second to become a statistic. I encourage all of you to stop and



think first before you become a statistic.

Use your buddy system, ensure you have a designated driver, and enjoy Bavaria safely. You are too important to us to lose to simple and avoidable accidents.

Crosswalks

We recently put three new crosswalks into the Grafenwoehr AAFES/ DECA complex, but many pedestrians are not using them. Apparently it is too difficult to cross through the crosswalk before entering a privately owned vehicle or the stores.

As a review, vehicles *must* stop while pedestrians are in a crosswalk. At the same time, pedestrians must be considerate of POV drivers and use the safety of crosswalks to get across the road. This is a safety concern. Take the time to use the crosswalk to get across the road so we can avoid tragedy.

And on a related note, please use the waste cans in the AAFES/ DECA parking lot for your trash. Dumping trash next to the waste can just causes another Soldier to have to police up after you.

Recent Community Events

In the past two weekends we have had six large entertainment events ranging from the Luau to the Vilseck Fest, as well as a country and western band and a top 40 California cover band concert. I think all that attended

the events enjoyed themselves.

Unfortunately, some of the events were poorly attended. The country and western concert had maybe 80 people attend. The top 40 band probably 50.

The shame is they were both family-friendly, and the top 40 band invited children on stage to play the drums, electric guitars, and sing. We will continue to request entertainment for our community and rotate between Vilseck and Grafenwoehr.

By attending, you establish a reputation for our community which can only increase our opportunities for more entertainment in the future.

In closing, we recently had visits from both the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In their meetings with the community, they discussed various issues and provided us their feedback.

We continue to work these issues among all related partners and will provide solutions in the coming weeks.

And as always, thanks again for making this the best place to live and serve in Europe.

*Col. Brian T. Boyle
Commander, U.S. Army
Garrison Grafenwoehr*

101 Days of Summer campaign kicks off

by **TERRIHELUS**
U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center

The Army reinforces its commitment to "Never Give Safety a Day Off" with the launch of the 101 Critical Days of Summer safety campaign. This safety campaign emphasizes prevention and vigilance during the summer season—a time when Soldiers, their families, and Army civilians are at greater risk.

The Army experiences an increase in accidental fatalities during the summer months. The majority of these accidents occur off-duty—most often during outdoor activities.

"Families have a key role to play in safety. We need to ensure family members are educated, aware and fully involved in the risk management process," said Army Chief of Staff, Gen. George W. Casey Jr.

"The 101 Critical Days of Summer safety campaign provides awareness of potential hazards, and empowers Soldiers, families, and Army civilians with timely information to ensure everyone's well-being during this especially high-risk season."

To achieve this mission, the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center will focus on a different aspect of summer safety each week, using news releases, posters, and public service announcements to help educate and

inform Soldiers, their family members, and Army civilians. Additionally, USACRC has developed an "Off-duty Safety Awareness Presentation" to help identify potential off-duty summer hazards.

"The enemy 'risk' can be defeated, but it takes teamwork," said USACRC Command Sgt. Maj. Tod Glidewell. "That means Soldiers looking out for their battle buddies and family members looking out for their Soldier, as well as each other. This summer, stay alert and aware of the hazards particular to this time of year."

For more information on the 101 Critical Days of Summer safety campaign, visit <https://cra.army.mil>.

Soaring with the Eagle Scouts



Photo by Mary Markos

Connor Chroman, 13, a Life Scout with Boy Scout Troop 261, Grafenwoehr, enlisted the help of 46 volunteers May 10 to transform an orchard in the Bierloh Nature Area into a healthier, safer, and more enjoyable space.

The Grafenwoehr Lord Mayor Helmuth Wächter and Forestmeister Martin Gottsche were impressed when they saw the progress.

"I was not sure all the work he wanted to do could be done, but after three hours, it (was) almost finished," Gottsche said.

Part of an Eagle Scout service project, Chroman said he wanted to do this to benefit both the environment and the community members.

Change of Responsibility



Photo by Mary Markos

Command Sgt. Maj. John Burns, who retired after 29 years of Army service, reflects on his time in Grafenwoehr and the relationships he made while serving during his farewell speech at the May 8 Change of Responsibility. For the complete story, see the June 18 issue of the Bavarian News.

Summer's here! Advertise your baby sitting, dog walking, or grass cutting skills in the classified ads! Log on to www.milcom.de to submit your ad.

Bavarian News

Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, Ansbach, Bamberg, Schweinfurt, and Garmisch

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USAG G Commander
Col. Brian Boyle

USAG G Public Affairs Officer
Kim Gillespie (475-8103)

Bavarian News Editor
Adriane Foss (475-7113)

Assistant Editor
Katie Cowart (475-7775)

Grafenwoehr/Vilseck Correspondent
Mary Markos (475-7113)

Garmisch Correspondent
John Reese (440-3701)

Hohenfels Correspondent
Kristin Bradley (466-4294)

Bamberg Correspondents
Amy Bugala (469-1600)

Schweinfurt Correspondents
(354-1600)

Kimberly Gearhart
Sandra Wilson
Lindsey Cole

Ansbach Correspondents
(467-1600)

Jim Hughes, CI Chief
Ronald Toland

Allied Strike brings Air Force face-to-face with insurgents

Story and photo by MARY MARKOS
Bavarian News

An Army medical helicopter circled the Grafenwoehr training area May 21 after an improvised explosive device left an airmen fighting for his life.

While the evacuation, much like the airmen's wounds, was engineered as part of a training exercise, it offered real-life experience for 37 U.S. Air Force personnel, as well as 25 soldiers from four countries.

Part of Allied Strike, the exercise brought Air Force joint terminal attack controllers face-to-face with insurgents for the first time in Europe and offered a combat environment in which they could develop and practice tactics and techniques used in battle.

U.S. Air Force JTACs are aligned with Army maneuver units and are responsible for commanding close air support in war zones.

"Right now in Iraq and Afghanistan, we have JTACs from the 4th Air Support Operations Group supporting the (1 Armored Division, 2d Stryker Cavalry Regiment, 2-1 Armored Division and 173d Airborne Brigade Combat Team)," said Col. David Hume, 4th Air Support Operations Group Commander.

"Our NATO and Coalition partners have JTACs deployed to (Operation Enduring Freedom) in support of (International Security Assistance Force's) mission as well. All air strikes in Iraq and Afghanistan are controlled by JTACs who coordinate closely with the Army command element and Joint Fires Observers to ensure we hit what we're supposed to on the ground and don't injure any friendly forces near the target," he said.

Modeled after its stateside counterpart Atlantic Strike, the three-day exercise offered a unique experience for participants.

"Our normal training, while adequate for certification and currency, doesn't reach the bar that prepares JTACs for the rigors of coordinating CAS in the middle of a fire-fight with casualties," Hume explained.

"JTACs in Allied Strike had to react to the enemy and defend against the immediate threat; request, coordinate, and control CAS; and prepare a MEDEVAC 9-line for the evacuation of the wounded. All this was real for Allied Strike, not simulated or replicated," he said.

The real-life training brought F16s and fighter aircraft from Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark,



U.S. Air Force joint terminal attack controllers capture an "insurgent" May 21 during training at Grafenwoehr.

and France, as well as U.S. Fighting Falcons from Spangdahlem Air Base in Germany. The air support, Hume said, would not have been possible without two aerial refueling tankers from the U.K. providing gas for the fighters.

New technology linked the JTACs on the ground to the pilots flying overhead.

"This was the first time USAFE (U.S. Air Forces in Europe) JTACs got to use the Tactical Air Control Party Close Air Support System computer with the latest software. TACP CASS allows JTACs to send digital CAS requests to headquarters and then digital information directly to the fighters," Hume said.

"That way, when the jets arrive overhead, they have all but the final bits of information needed to drop bombs quickly and effectively."

Training on such technology is essential for airmen preparing to deploy to Operation Iraqi Freedom or OEF, Hume added. The training also established a foundation to build on.

"This was our first attempt to start realistic JTAC training in Europe," said Hume. "Allied

Strike I was our crawl phase to work out coordination details which will allow us to set the stage for better, expanding training in the future."

V Corps Air Liaison Officer Capt. Bryan Trinkle sees the exercise growing into a huge multi-service, multi-national, semi-annual event.

"Next time (late October) it will be bigger with more detailed scenarios, and all of the original invitees want to return," he said. "In addition, we will invite Army Special Forces and German JTACs. This exercise was three days long, but next time we hope to incorporate night training as well as more actual maneuver forces closely simulating a battle that the JTAC would find himself in in either OIF or OEF."

The end result, he said, "is that the forward air controller and JTAC are more prepared to deploy and bring more bombs on target to the U.S. Army maneuver commander, whether that be 2SCR from Vilseck, or any other Armor, Artillery ... Infantry, or Special Forces unit throughout the world."

Spotlight on Education



Name: Barbara K. Davis

What grade / subject do you teach? Guidance Counselor at Grafenwoehr Middle School

Hometown: I'm an "Army Brat" and attended DoDDS school, but call Columbia, S.C. home

How long have you been a teacher? since 1966

What do you like best about teaching? Listening to our students, helping them come up with solutions to their problems, working with them through conflict resolution, and interacting with them.

What advice can you give students to help them succeed in school? Do the very best that you can! You are on the pathway to your life's goals. Grab hold of learning; it's your foundation and your future.

2/405th AFSB receives Distinguished Unit award

by JENNIFER KING
405th Army Field Support Brigade PAO

The 2/405th Army Field Support Brigade, located in Vilseck, Germany, has been recognized by the U.S. Army Quartermaster General as a Distinguished Unit of the Quartermaster Regiment.

"(C)ongratulations and best wishes for your unit's continued success!" said Brig. Gen. Jesse Cross, the Quartermaster General, in a letter to battalion commander Lt. Col. Jordan Chroman. "Your Soldiers are truly a tribute to our Corps as they perpetuate the *esprit de corps*, camaraderie, tradition and history of our regiment."

The recognition is particularly significant as this is the first time that an AFSB unit has ever been selected for the award.

"Being named a Distinguished Unit of the Quartermaster Regiment is another milestone in validating what this tremendous team has accomplished during the past two years since we activated the battalion," Chroman commented. "As one of the handful of units selected each year, and as the first Army Field Support Battalion to be chosen, we feel very fortunate and consider this a true honor."

In a message sent throughout the brigade, Col. Bobby Ray Pinkston, commander of the 405th AFSB, praised the organization on its accomplishment.

"The selection of the 2nd Battalion as the recipient of this award is a credit to the dedication, commitment and professionalism of the unit," he said. "I commend them for their work and join Brig. Gen. Cross in recognizing their success."

Chroman emphasized that he as a battalion commander was particularly honored by the recognition.

"This team has accomplished the unimaginable, has set the standard for Army sustainment support in U.S. Army Europe, and has provided tremendous operational and logistical assistance," he said. "I couldn't be more proud of the unit's personnel and am thankful to the Quartermaster Regiment for selecting us."

According to the Quartermaster Foundation Web site, the Distinguished Unit of the Quartermaster Regiment Program has recognized units annually since 1993. Units are measured based on their history, longevity, campaign and battle streamers, and unit citations.



Brig. Gen. Jesse R. Cross, the commanding general of the U.S. Army Quartermaster Center and School, presented the Distinguished Unit award to retired Maj. Gen. Terry Juskowiak, who accepted the award on behalf of the 2/405th AFSB, in a presentation at Fort Lee, Va., May 16.

Photo courtesy of the Fort Lee Protocol Team

MEMORIAL DAY VFW honors fallen comrades



Photo by Jim Dicks

This past Memorial Day, Members of VFW Post 9334 (Vilseck) paid homage to Soldiers who sacrificed their lives in the name of freedom. A memorial ceremony was held for John H. Banks III, an Air Force pilot whose plane was shot down during World War II, in Lom, Czech Republic.

Harold Hedges, the incoming VFW commander, delivered a speech honoring this war hero and a wreath was laid to commemorate his act of bravery. City officials and local citizens attended the ceremony and prayers were rendered by the priest of Lom.

Volksfest raises funds for 2SCR return

Story and photo by MARY MARKOS
Bavarian News

The German-American Volksfest held in Vilseck May 16-18 was considered small by fest standards.

With approximately 6,000 visitors however, it is doing something big.

Sponsored by the Kontakt Club Vilseck, the Volksfest raised roughly 3,000 Euro for a welcome home celebration in honor of the 2d Stryker Cavalry Regiment.

The celebration will take place Nov. 25 and is being planned by the city of Vilseck and the Kontakt members.

"We have a very good friendship between the German and American people and we (will) be glad to have all the Soldiers back from the deployment in Iraq," said Vilseck Lord Mayor Hans-Martin Schertl.

Daniel Koenig, Vilseck Kontakt Club president, said the celebration is a show of appreciation for what the Soldiers are doing.

"We are going to do two things," he said. "We're going to have attractions there for the kids... and additional to that, we hope to have something free there... showing our appreciation to the people here for what they did for us down there."

This was the third year the club has sponsored the fest and used funds raised to give back to the Soldiers and the community.

The club of 120 German and 50 American members used money raised at last year's fest to send care packages to Soldiers downrange.

"We sent down care packages one a month," Koenig said. "We have sent down 200 since last year."

Koenig added that Kontakt funds raised at previous Volksfests were used to support local Kinderfests and the Vilseck Christmas tree lighting ceremony.

"All the stuff down there, all the donations, all the food and drinks was from the funds of the Volksfest," he added.

The club was designed to foster German and American relationships.

"Kontakt is an official USAREUR program. It was founded... to bring German and American youth together. Over the years it has changed and now we not only have youth, we have all ages from a couple of years up to 85 years old," Koenig said.

Schertl, who has been a club member for four years, said friendships are built through the organization.

Koenig finds additional benefits for members. "We try to make the stay here as best as we can, as comfortable as we can, and after (members) are a little while in the club, they have this feeling that the club is family," he said.

He added that Americans can benefit from the knowledge and experiences of German members.



Faith Paul, 9, jumps on the bouncy slide May 16 at the German-American Volksfest in Vilseck. Proceeds from the fest will be used to welcome home 2d Stryker Cavalry Regiment Soldiers, like her father, in November.

Enlisting at 40 years old right choice for one spouse

by MARY MARKOS
Bavarian News

At 40 years old, most people are thinking about career progression or retirement. Micaela I. Julia Mastran is not like most people.

On May 12 she joined the U.S. Army.

Born in Nuremberg, Mastran works as a local-national for the Training Support Activity Europe.

She said she made her decision to enlist for her marriage.

Mastran's husband, Sgt. 1st Class Jeremy Mastran is stationed at Fort Knox, Ky.

The couple married last July. In August, Jeremy Mastran was reassigned stateside.

"My goal, of course, is to be with my husband," Micaela Mastran said.

To reach this goal, Mastran researched job opportunities in the Fort Knox area. While she holds a degree in geology, she found her German citizenship limited her prospects.

She turned to the Army, which her husband has served for more than 15 years.

"There are a lot of reasons behind my decision," she said. "I can be with my husband... I can earn citizenship."

Mastran said U.S. citizenship is something that should be earned and respected.

"It is the right way to do this, to serve the country you're going to be with," she said.

Sgt. 1st Class Michael Newlands, Europe Recruiting Detachment, found Mastran's desire to make a change at this stage in her life astonishing.

"It was a surprise to me of somebody of her age coming in and asking me about the Army after having so many years in her career," he said.

Jeremy Mastran was also surprised by his wife's decision.

"Naturally, my husband at first almost had a heart attack when the enlistment option came up," Mastran explained. "Of course the mere thought that his wife could get hurt scares him to death."

For Mastran, however, the opportunity to serve with her husband outweighed the fears associated with joining the service.

"It has so many pros," she said. "Currently, the plan is to go through this together. I would even think it makes me understand that portion more of his life. You spend a lot of time at your job, and even though we have worked together... (on the range), serving together, that is another portion of his life that as a regular family member, you would not really see. It is something that will increase a certain understanding and the bond."

"We can... go through the good and the bad together," she added. "This is a chance of a lifetime."

Mastran said many dual-military couples find the experience strengthens the marriage.

"They understand each other more, they know what their partner has to cope with on a daily basis," she said.

She said she knows, however, that not all dual-military couples are stationed together.

To accommodate dual-military couples, the Army established the Married Army Couples Program in 1983. The program is designed to assist military couples in joint domicile

assignments.

Although the program has limitations, Mastran said the 80 percent of military couples that are stationed together gives her hope.

She said that her experience working closely with the Army has also given her realistic expectations.

"It is not like I'm going in (the Army) completely blindsided. I have wonderful colleagues here, active duty and also ex-military, that are working in the GS system... telling me about the options, consider this, consider that, and of course my husband," she said.

Mastran said her husband's experience helped answer a lot of questions and has helped prepare her for her training.

In July, Mastran will tell her daughters, Rhea, 21, and Shawna, 19, goodbye and travel to the states to spend time with her husband before beginning basic training Aug. 20 in Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. She enlisted as a chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear specialist.

"She will make an excellent Soldier," Newlands said.

Rockin' to the beat

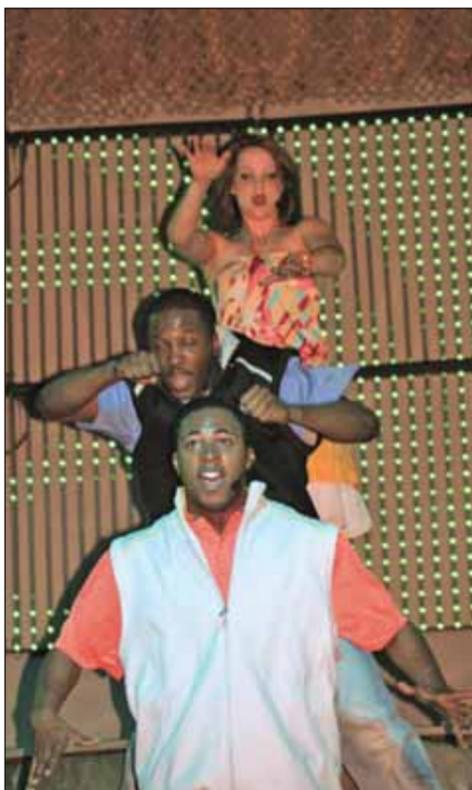


Photo by Mary Markos

Members of the U.S. Army Soldier Show performed May 26 at the Grafenwoehr Tower Theater. The high-energy show, which is produced for the Soldier, by the Soldier, celebrated its 25th anniversary this year.

Take time to prepare properly before PCS-ing



by JUERGENSCHLAGNER
Grafenwoehr, OSJA, JMTC

Summer is upon us, and with it the peak-season for PCS moves. By taking a few simple steps, you can reduce the risk of suffering damage for which the Army claims system cannot compensate you.

Take Pictures Before You Pack

Under the Army claims regulation, a claimant must substantiate that he owned the property for which he files a claim and that the property was actually shipped.

The day before the movers come, servicemembers should either take photographs of or, better still, make a videotape of all their valuable belongings: crystal, china, porcelain figurines, compact-disc collections, stereo components, and anything else of high value. Turn on your television, stereo, and other expensive appliances before taking the photographs to show that the appliances were working immediately before they were packed.

Videotapes and pictures are also helpful in cases of property lost by the carrier. If a box of clothes is lost and you took a picture of the clothes hanging in your closet before you packed, it will be easier to identify what is missing.

Hand carry the photos or videotapes with you when you move. These important documents should never be shipped with your

household goods. In the event that part or all of your shipment is lost, you will still have retained clear proof of ownership.

Keep Receipts

Get in the habit of keeping receipts for all major purchases. Keep receipts along with the videotapes or photographs of your property. Warehouses do burn down, and shipments are sometimes lost; if your receipts are with your shipment, it will be more difficult to substantiate the value of your loss.

If you do not have receipts, police up owner's manuals, warranty cards, or receipts for previous repairs and secure these papers before you move. Such documents may be used to establish that you owned property that was lost or stolen in shipment.

Before your property is packed, prepare an inventory and note serial numbers where available. List the serial numbers for valuable property (e.g., stereo, television, camcorder, computer, bicycle). Likewise make a complete catalogue by artist or title of your cassettes, compact discs, and videotapes.

When the Movers Come

Keep a briefcase with your important papers (orders, passports, airplane tickets), along with any small, easily pilferable items (jewelry, wallets, purses, cash, cameras) in a place not accessible to the movers.

Ensure that the shippers list the serial numbers of all items on the separate inventory they prepare before you sign it. While the packers are not required to list serial numbers, you can write them yourself at the bottom of the mover's inventory in the "remarks/exceptions" block if the movers refuse to do so.

If you are shipping large quantities of compact discs, videocassettes, audiocassettes, or computer games, have the movers list the quantity on their inventory.

Once again, if the packers won't do it, list the quantity yourself in the "remarks/exception" block. Refer to the inventory line number when doing so. For example, "line 52 contains 80 compact discs." Do the same for porcelain figurines, crystal, china, and the like.

Once the movers have packed your household goods, they will present you with their inventory. Review the inventory carefully before you sign it.

The inventory should list every single carton in the shipment. If the movers have exaggerated the amount of pre-existing damage to an item, you should state your disagreement directly on the inventory in the "remarks/exceptions" block directly above your signature.

There's no need for arguing with the movers; simply state your disagreement on the form. When you sign the inventory you are agreeing with the carrier about the nature and condition of the property you entrusted to him.

If your sofa does not appear on the inventory and it comes up missing, you will be required to prove that you shipped it. That can be very difficult to do in the absence of clear evidence.

An Ounce of Prevention

Remember that the Army claims system cannot pay full value for every lost, damaged, or destroyed item, and that there are maximum allowable amounts for various kinds of property.

If you own very expensive things (antique furniture, pianos, jewelry, high-end electronics) or large quantities of a particular kind of item (crystal, stamps, baseball cards, tools), call the claims office as soon as you receive orders to find out how much the Army can pay for such items.

Contact your insurance agent well in advance of your move and buy coverage as needed. If you suffer loss or damage to property that may be compensable by the Army, contact your local claims office promptly.

2SCR birthday celebrates history, family

Story and photo by
MARY MARKOS
Bavarian News

Two sabers were drawn to cut two cakes located in two different countries, separated by more than 2,000 miles, May 23 in celebration of the 2d Stryker Cavalry Regiment's 172nd birthday.

Soldiers from the regiment celebrated at Forward Operating Base Warhorse in the Diyala Province, Iraq, while their family and friends marked the occasion with bouncy castles and games at the Memorial Fitness Center in Vilseck.

The parties celebrated the past and current successes of the regiment—the longest active serving cavalry regiment in the U.S. Army.



Capt. Meghan Underwood, 4th Squadron rear detachment commander, recovers after getting a pie in the face during the Stryker birthday party in Vilseck.

More than 4,500 2SCR troops have deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom since August of last year.

"(The Soldiers) downrange were part of the success, and really the turning point in the fight in Iraq... this regiment... they were the guys that turned Baghdad security around and helped the Iraqi Security Forces to take control of some areas that hadn't been controlled before," explained Lt. Col. Thomas Rickard, 2SCR Rear Detachment Commander.

Iraq provincial elections will be held for the first time this October because of the actions of 2SCR, he added.

"The regiment has made a huge difference in the history of that country," Rickard said.

Spouses of deployed service members have changed the face of the Vilseck community as well through volunteering and a committed bond that has developed throughout the deployment.

Family members have logged more than 12,000 volunteer hours in youth sports and various community programs. They have also rallied around one another, providing support with children, household issues, and have served as an emotional base for each other in the deployment's good times and bad.

"The spouses are sharing information, and they're looking out for each other," Rickard said. "They are really leaning on each other."

Rickard, whose wife is deployed with the regiment, has a three-year-old daughter and understands the challenges and struggles a spouse faces as they contend with children, jobs, and their state side family, as well as worry about their service member.

"I've been on both sides of the deployment, and I think it is harder to

be back here, to be the spouse trying to raise the children... not knowing every day what your spouse is going through," he said.

"Because we're in a small community, and a great community, (the spouses) know we've all go to stick together," said Rickard. "We're all on the same team; we all have to go through this together."

The family readiness groups, on both the regimental and squadron level, hold activities to unite and share information with family members.

For many spouses, the gatherings are a way to relate to one another and share their experiences with others.

A large percentage of the wives, Rickard said, have experienced a deployment before.

"I have some awesome senior spouses, not by rank, but experience," he added.

Those spouses are helping others to cope with the physical and emotion demands of separation, he said.

Chaplain (Maj.) Darin Nielsen, Grafenwoehr and Vilseck Family Life Chaplain, interacted with spouses of deployed service members at chapel sponsored retreats.

"It is amazing how many of (the spouses) are on their third or fourth deployment," he said. "They are pretty seasoned and they pass that along."

Members of the rear detachment are also passing along AIR: action, information, and respect, during the 15-month deployment.

"The information is probably the most critical part for support," Rickard said. "I can give (them) what I know... and promptly; that is key."

Rickard said it is also essential to have compassion and understanding for all spouses of the regiment.

"You have to respect what the spouses are going through; respect that this is not easy; respect that we are in a war-time situation," he said.

A 20-year veteran of the military, Chaplain (Col.) Glenn Woodson respects and finds

inspiration in the spouses of the regiment.

"I continue to be inspired by the examples of ladies who, at least from my perspective have the toughest job... take it one day at a time, one step at a time, and do what they have to do. They just persevere," he said.

The spouses and Soldiers will persevere until the redeployment of the troops, which will begin in November.

A welcome home celebration is being planned by the city of Vilseck and the 2SCR. The celebration is currently scheduled for Nov. 25. At that time, Rickard said, the regiment will also honor the more than 20 Soldiers that died fighting during the deployment.



Fun Facts

■ More than **4,500 troops** have deployed since August 2007

■ 2SCR Soldiers have been deployed an average of **448 days**

■ 2SCR Soldiers have completed **65 percent** of their 15-month tour

■ Approximately **3,000 spouses and family members** await their return home

■ About **70 percent** of deployed troops have returned for rest and recuperation

■ Family members logged over **12,000 volunteer hours** in the in the last year

■ Family members have walked more than **22,000 miles** in the Operation Walk for Freedom

■ Vilseck Elementary School students read over **404,520 minutes** for the school's Read to Iraq and Back challenge

■ More than **40 family members** have received training in the Spouse Battlemind program

■ **200 spouses and family member** will attend family retreats in Garmisch before 2SCR's redeployment

Graf Soldiers honor those that sacrificed all at Normandy

Story and photo by
SGT. KEITH M. ANDERSON
16th SB Public Affairs

Overlooking Omaha Beach, through the central mall of the Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial, the U.S. Army Color Guard of Soldiers from the 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, Grafenwoehr, Germany, carried the colors of the two nations of France and the U.S. to the dais overlooking the reflecting pool.

The mood was somber, and reflective, as the crowds of veterans, officials, holocaust survivors, widows and widowers, and citizens of several nations watched the color guard advance in a slow, ceremonial step in front of the 22-foot-tall statue, "The Spirit of American Youth Rising from the Waves," to begin this Memorial Day observance May 25.

Four U.S. Air Force fighters broke the silence as they flew in a slow, low pass over the statue and the mall, and the French military band from the District of Rennes played *The Marseillaise* and *The Star Spangled Banner*.

"On June 6, 1944, in this now quite inspiring place, many of our countrymen laid their lives down for the liberation of France and Europe," said Rene Huard, master of ceremony, to the assembled crowd.

"The 10,000 white crosses are permanent reminders of the high cost of our freedom. These fallen heroes gave up a family, a career, a future in order for us to enjoy peace and liberty."

Huard, a native French speaker, spoke in slow, punctuated English that conveyed his strong feelings.

"I owe them the life of my own father, Claude Huard, a French resistant liberated from Dachau by the 7th U.S. Army," Huard said.

"May we always keep burning the flame of remembrance to perpetuate the motto of our association: *lest we forget*."

On "D-Day," June 6, 1944, British, Canadian and American forces assaulted Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword beaches on the Normandy coastline in order to liberate France and drive into Nazi Germany in history's greatest amphibious assault.

"The U.S. 4th Infantry Division pushed inland from Utah beach," according to information from the Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial, American Battle

Monuments Commission.

"To the East, on Omaha Beach, the U.S. 1st and 29th Infantry Divisions battled German resistance over a beach bristling with obstacles. To reach the plateau where Normandy American Cemetery stands, troops fought across an open area of up to 200 yards, and attacked up steep bluffs. By day's end, the Americans held fragile control of Omaha Beach."

The observance was meaningful for the 40 logistics Soldiers from Grafenwoehr who were able to participate in the observance in the color guard, honor platoon or firing squad, and were able to honor those Soldiers that have come before and sacrificed all.

"It was definitely an experience, one of those once-in-a-lifetime experiences you'll never get to go through again," said Spc. Eric Rachowicz, equipment calibrator and honor platoon member, 5th Maintenance Company, 18th CSSB.

"Seeing the land they had to come from — the beaches down below, the bluffs above — gives you a greater appreciation of what they did."

Spc. Sean Dykes, cargo transportation specialist and firing team member, 1st Cargo Transfer Company, 18th CSSB, said he competed for a spot on the firing team to honor his great-grandfather, Wilson Dorn, who was in the battle for Normandy.

"I did it to pay tribute to all the fallen Soldiers, and to remember him," Dykes said.

The 30-year-old from Sanford, Fla., said Dorn, whom he called 'pop,' taught him to tie his shoes and how to dive.

"He just got tired of watching me belly-flop into the pool," Dykes said.

Pfc. David Johnson, maintenance support specialist and honor platoon member, 5th Maint. Co., 18th CSSB, said his great-uncle, Logan Young, was a gunner on a Douglas A-20, a three-man attack, light bomber and night-fighter aircraft, which was shot down over Normandy over D-Day.

"The Germans had flooded a lot of the areas in Normandy and the pilot was able to crash land them in a swamp," Johnson said.

"The tail of the plane broke off and they were all shot out of the back of the plane. The French citizens actually hid them in their ovens for several days."

Johnson said the navigator left to look for food but was killed by German Soldiers. On the

tenth day his father and the pilot were rescued by American Soldiers.

The 19-year-old from Anderson, Calif., said he was proud to take part in the observance.

"It was really special to be here and stand on ground that he flew over and may have been hidden in nearby," Johnson said.

For Spc. Kyle Farbman, Army bandsman, 76th Army Band, Mannheim, the opportunity to play "Taps" on the bugle for the observance was very special, but also painful.

The 21-year-old from Janesville, Wis., said his grandfather, Sam Farbman, was an Auschwitz survivor.

Auschwitz was the largest Nazi concentration camp. More than one million people, mostly Jews, died at the camp.

"It was emotional, and painful," Farbman said.

"I wasn't thinking. It's supposed to be autopilot. Go from attention with the bugle to present arms and close my eyes and play."

Farbman said his family was proud of him. "Everybody said 'thank you,' and 'take lots of pictures,'" Farbman said.

Participating in the ceremony gave the logistics Soldiers a first-hand understanding of what it means to serve the nation, said Command Sgt. Maj. Bryan Kroontje, command sergeant major, 18th CSSB.

"It gives them a chance to tread the same ground that our former and fallen Soldiers tread, and gives them a chance to see the hardships and danger they endured for freedom," Kroontje said.

"This is a chance to pay tribute to those that paid the ultimate sacrifice in a very solemn and somber ceremony."

Lt. Gen. Gary D. Speer, commanding general, U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army, said in his address that Normandy is a sacred and appropriate place to recognize Memorial Day.

"Memorial Day is a unique American Holiday to pay tribute to the men and women that have given their lives in the cause of freedom and the defense of our nation," Speer said.

"In recognition you will see that our national flag flies today at half-staff, to express our profound gratitude.

"For 233 years Americans have distinguished themselves on many battlefields, some in places far from American shores.

"This battlefield, this cemetery, is such a

sacred place, and we are justifiably humbled as we stand in this many silent tributes to those that gave the last full measure of devotion, each to his own nation, on this beach and in these fields.

"Every time I come to this place I stand in awe and think what it must have been like on June 6, 1944, when the allied armies joined in battle to reclaim this continent for liberty," Speer said.



Pvt. Samuel Blalock and Pvt. Leonard Ybarra, both firing party members and Soldiers in the 1st Cargo Transfer Company, 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, Grafenwoehr, Germany, stand at parade rest and look out onto the reflective pool and statue "The Spirit of American Youth Rising from the Waves," during a Memorial Day observance at the Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial, Normandy, France, May 25. The unit is currently preparing to deploy.

Roman conference addresses terrorism

by ANNE FUGATE
Marshall Center Public Affairs Office

Because of its frontline position in the fight against terrorism, the military must understand how it can contribute to counteracting the ideologies that continue to fuel violent extremism, Italy's chief of defense staff said in opening remarks at a conference in Rome May 12.

"The fact of the matter is that military operations are one of the most tangible signs of the global effort to counter terrorism," Gen. Vincenzo Camporini said.

The general made his remarks to more than 90 military, counterterrorism, and policy officials from 39 nations attending the conference conducted by the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies and Italy's Center for High Defense Studies. Participants examined the strategic and operational dimensions of military efforts to counter the ideological appeal of terrorism during the three-day conference.

"The military apparatus involved in supporting civilian populations bears the main burden in this struggle. Millions of euros are spent in food, health care, transportation, education, and engineering, along with the core business of producing security," Camporini said. "However, the ideological appeal of terrorism has the capability to distort the signal of our

communication."

He said that the military needs to define a strategy to try to ensure that the message intended is the message received by the local population, so that efforts are not diluted by "those who claim that in reality we are fighting a crusade in the wider environment of a clash of civilization."

The development of a new counterinsurgency approach, which considers the soldier a nation builder as well as a warrior, is an important step in bringing the human approach to the fore, the general said.

"We have sound evidence regarding continuous activity (by extremists) in manipulating youth, minorities, immigrants, and indigent people by exploiting their basic needs," Camporini said. "The human approach is paramount to identify the warning signals of the process climbing from resentment to terrorism. Tolerance, empathy, and respect should be the substance of our rapport with the local population."

In addition to support from national doctrine, the professional development of soldiers is critical to military effectiveness in countering violent extremism, the general said.

"A global challenge requests a global response and our future military leaders should receive the appropriate tools in order to be effective in combating the battle of ideas,"

Camporini said.

Italian Rear Admiral Alberto Cervone, who spoke at the conference about professional military education, said that his nation has not institutionalized countering ideological support for terrorism as it is in U.S. military strategy, but that they are discussing it in educational environments.

"Focusing of this subject in our educational system is important because our courses are not just for military people, but are multidisciplinary and multi-agency," Cervone said. "This is useful to spread this concept and to examine exactly what this ideology is, which not many people are aware of."

Finding common approaches is the only way toward developing a comprehensive and effective international strategy, according to conference academic coordinator and Marshall Center Professor, Dr. Sharyl Cross.

"We have to find common terminology, because even when countries are in complete agreement substantively, if we're not using the right words, that can create division," Cross said. "It's so important to come together and talk about these issues, so we can develop common ground in terms of what we're trying to address and present it in a way that's acceptable for the strongest consensus."

The conference's focus on the military's role

in countering ideological support for terrorism came out of a May 2007 Marshall Center conference held in Ankara, Turkey, which examined how societal conditions enable or prevent terrorist movements from attracting new adherents, according to the conference moderator, retired brigadier general Dr. John Reppert.

"In the previous conference, many of the participants pointed to the military as part of the cause of the problem of misunderstanding, either because of deliberate acts we have taken or lack of sensitivity to the culture and religious beliefs of Muslims that have inadvertently caused tensions to exist and so we need to look at that component that is most frequently and in most direct contact with the people we are concerned about," said Reppert, former dean of the Marshall Center's College of International and Security Studies.

As a result of the recommendations, the conference in Rome included panels and working groups that examined what the military can do to reduce extremism in counterinsurgency conflicts and other combat or peacekeeping situations, including how to work with non-defense agencies and how to communicate their efforts.

A final report on the conference will be released to policy-making and other international organizations, as well as the academic community.

Garced named 2008 IMCOM-E Soldier of the Year

Continued From Page 1

Netherlands, and Italy, won their Soldier and noncommissioned officer command-level of competition before traveling to Grafenwoehr. There, they competed in a battery of tests, to include range fire and land navigation, warrior tasks and combat skills, a written exam, oral board, and foot march.

Day one began with a physical fitness test at the Grafenwoehr fitness center.

Competitors then moved to an M-16 range qualification, followed by an essay and written exam which not only pitted Soldier against Soldier, but Soldiers against themselves and Army standards.

A 12-mile foot march began day two at 4 a.m. The 19-hour-long day of intense competition in land navigation tested the Soldiers' endurance and strength, as well as warrior tasks and drills.

In the final day of the competition, contenders faced IMCOM-E command sergeants major and battled their nerves as they answered a multitude of questions at an oral board.

Sgt. 1st Class John Alam, USAG Grafenwoehr noncommissioned officer in charge of the competition, said that while all the Soldiers were knowledgeable, their level of confidence in their answers was critical at the board.



U.S. Army photo

From left: Installation Management Command-Europe Command Sgt. Maj. John Gaines; Staff Sgt. Edmund Whipple, IMCOM-Europe NCO of the Year; Spc. Marco Garced, Soldier of the Year; Russell Hall, director of IMCOM-Europe.

Saying he was surprised to be named 2008 Soldier of the Year, Garced, a 21-year-old native of White Plains, N.Y., has served as an MP

patrolman at Garmisch for three years and also acts as the community officer for the Drug Abuse Resistance Education program.

To prepare for the worldwide event, Garced, an awardee of the Gold German Forces Badge for Weapons Proficiency, said he will need to become familiar with equipment "that I will be tested on in Virginia but do not normally use on the job, unlike some of the other competitors."

Garced is a familiar figure in the small garrison, and is called upon to assist in events involving youth such as the recent Kinderfest.

The 2008 Noncommissioned Officer of the Year Staff Sgt. Edmund Whipple, USAG-Stuttgart, is also a military policeman. Last year's IMCOM top sergeant was Garmisch military policeman Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Allison, who has been acting Provost Marshal since Maj. Victoria Peters was transferred to Iraq.

Presiding over one of his last functions here before assume responsibility for IMCOM-Northeast, Russell Hall, director of IMCOM-Europe, told the Soldier-competitors and roughly 75 garrison commanders, command sergeants major and other attendees: "Whenever the U.S. military is called upon by our nation, you are the among the very first to answer – and that means for missions downrange or continuing to support those forces and families at home station. I am proud to have served alongside you all these years."

Earthquake! Sending temblors through a city of skyscrapers, Bailey Van Buren uses a pencil tapped on a cardboard box to demonstrate how different building materials are more or less earthquake resistant. The elementary students of Garmisch rocked the world of bullion, sugar, and gelatin cubes as part of a learning round robin exercise during the school's science fair held May 14.



GARRISON SNAPSHOTS

Photos by John Reese



The USAG-Garmisch Safety and Motor Vehicle Safety Days will take place June 16-17. Most of the activities will take place at the Pete Burke Community Center—check the local newsletter for updates. Last fall the safety office worked with the local volunteer fire department to make the motor vehicle training more interesting. This year the Polizei will do a vehicle load safety demonstration June 17.

1-4 Infantry Soldier awarded Silver Star

Story and photo by KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

Not many staff sergeants have their company commander, battalion commander, brigade commander, and commanding general turn up for their birthday.

Not only did Staff Sgt. Matthew Ritenour have some pretty high ranking officers around on his birthday, he was given one heck of a present: a Silver Star.

Ritenour was awarded the nation's third highest award for valor by Brig. Gen. David R. Hogg and Command Sgt. Maj. Darius ZaGara May 27, which also happens to be his birthday, during a ceremony at the Community Activities Center for his actions when his squad came under attack in September 2007 at a forward operating base in Zabul, Afghanistan.

In the early hours of Sept. 4, more than 180 enemy combatants began to attack the FOB using rocket propelled grenades and small arms.

"They had attacked us the night before, it was really weak. It didn't dawn on us until (5 a.m., when the larger attack began) that that was just a preparatory attack," said Capt. Pongpat Piluek, Alpha company commander, during the deployment.

During the fight, three men from Ritenour's squad were wounded, but the squad continued to fight and defend their position.

With only one platoon in charge of the FOB, "each squad is responsible for one third of the entire perimeter. There was no second line of defense," said 1st Lt. Alex Sanchez, Ritenour's platoon leader.

"If they had taken over that position, they would most likely have overrun the FOB," said Spc. Steve Baxter.

While calling orders and leading his Soldiers, Ritenour was struck by a bullet which went through his helmet and hit the top left part of his skull. He was pulled to cover by one of his men and treated by a medic.

Fifteen minutes later he returned to the fight, propped up on his side and calling orders despite being paralyzed on the entire right side of his body. He stayed that way for more than an hour until the enemy began to retreat and he was finally able to be evacuated by helicopter.

"Everything slows down when you hear one of your guys has been shot. I got really emotional when we couldn't go get him right away," said

Piluek, who added that when the action finally began to slow down, "he called on the radio, half joking, and said 'you need to come get me soon because I've been lying like this for a while and I really have to pee.' I got pretty choked up."

"He continued to return and adjust fire, he gave me the impression he wasn't hit badly," said Sanchez.

Though he gave the impression he wasn't, Ritenour was seriously injured. He was taken first to a hospital in Kandahar, then transported to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

After arriving in Kandahar, he was able to call his wife, Nancy, trying not to reveal the severity of his condition.

He told her that he had been shot, revealing where only after she asked. He did not tell her at first about the paralysis.

"I couldn't believe it. I thought it had just brushed his head, then I talked to his first sergeant and he told me what happened," she said.

After arriving at Walter Reed, Ritenour eventually began to regain feeling in his hand, slowly regaining control of his right side. He had to fight for it, but he was able to welcome his company when they returned from deployment at the end of February.

Sanchez said that during his recovery the platoon kept track of Ritenour's progress, communicating with him via webcam.

"It was a big boost to morale when we were talking to him over the camera, seeing him walking around," he said.

Throughout his recovery, Ritenour has been given many different prognoses. When he first arrived at the hospital, he was not positive that he would walk again.

"You don't want to get that thought in your head, but sometimes you can't help it," he said.

Now, not only is he walking again, he is running too.

"It's been a long journey, but he's come a long way from what it could have been," said Nancy, who emphasized how thankful she is for her husband's recovery thus far, though the healing process is still not over.

"It's your second worst nightmare," said Ritenour's mother Kathleen. "He just amazes us. He really doesn't understand the fuss. He thinks everyone would have done what he did, and that he is not a hero."



Staff Sgt. Mathew Ritenour, left, stands beside his daughter Natalie, his wife Nancy, and his mother Kathleen as he is awarded the Silver Star by Brig. Gen. David R. Hogg and Command Sgt. Maj. Darius ZaGara May 27. Ritenour was awarded the Silver Star, the nation's third highest award for valor, for his actions while deployed in Afghanistan with Company A, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry.

While putting up with the attention focused on him, Ritenour was adamant about thanking his family and his fellow Soldiers.

"I want to thank my guys," he said during the ceremony, "my squad and platoon, I am here because of them, because they were able to do their jobs. I didn't defend the FOB on my own by any means."

Though he did not defend the entire FOB by himself, his actions are no less courageous. "You just want to live," Ritenour said about what kept him going after he had been hit.

"We were still hit pretty good. The Taliban doesn't care if I'm hit or not. You have to fight back. To keep fighting and calling for fire was my best way to fight back."

Club makes donation to wounded warriors for final gift

by KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

The Warrior Transition Unit at Hohenfels now has more than \$4,000 extra to spend improving the lives of local wounded Soldiers.

The Leaders of Excellence Club, formerly known as the Sergeant Morales Club Association Hohenfels Chapter, presented a check May 21 to Andrew Snoddy, Hohenfels Family, Morale, Welfare, and Recreation acting director, for use expressly by the WTU.

The donation will empty the Leaders of

Excellence bank account and is the last donation they will make before closing the club for good.

"We're going out with a bang and giving it all to the WTU," said Robert Turner, Leaders of Excellence president.

"This really is an exceptional gift for the Soldiers," said Snoddy. "It came as the result of a community effort, from the community and back to the community, to Soldiers who deserve to be recognized."

"I don't care who you are, if you have been in combat you don't come back the same. Hopefully this will help the Soldiers and their

families. If you're going to go out, this is the way to do it," he said.

Christina Love, Soldier and Family Assistance Center specialist, said there are no concrete plans for the money at this time. She said some of it may go toward special retreats and events for the seven Soldiers and their families currently assigned to the WTU.

Turner, a retired master sergeant who works as a contractor with L3 at Hohenfels, and Sgt. 1st Class Ernest Hudson, the group's treasurer, are the last remaining members of what used to be the Sergeant Morales Club. The club had to

change its name and status when a revision in army regulations made it impossible for the Sergeant Morales Club to remain a private organization.

Turner said the Leaders of Excellence did the majority of their fundraising by running a food booth at the Volksfest. Throughout the year they would use the money they made selling hotdogs to make donations to help the community.

Most recently, they gave money which, through the chaplain's office, helped local families buy food during the winter holidays and donated \$1,500 to the Association of the United States Army.

Dive in!

by KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

Memorial Day has come and gone, and to most, that means summer is finally here. Though the weather remains unpredictable, minds have undoubtedly begun to wander, daydreaming of splashing, sunning, and swimming.

Whether this is your first summer in Bavaria or you know it so well you could give tours, you can never have too many ways to pass the hot summer days.

Below is a sampling of the swimming venues around the Hohenfels area, it is not intended as a comprehensive listing. Only daily ticket prices are listed, check individual venues for additional information on season and family passes. Admittance to most pools ends one hour before closing time.

According to Daniel Voglesong, U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels safety manager, not all swimming locations are officially endorsed by the garrison. He said lakes are typically not recommended for swimming by U.S. Army Europe due to lack of supervision, colder temperatures, and low visibility.

The Grossbissendorf pool at the end of Regenbogen Strasse is authorized but there are no lifeguards so Voglesong warns parents to use extreme caution and closely supervise their children. Parents should pay close attention to children around water no matter where they are,

Hohenfels surrounded by places to make a splash

especially in Germany, as lifeguards are not as numerous as they are in the U.S.

Be sure to check out the Hohenfels pages in the June 18 issue of the Bavarian News for more information about staying safe in the summertime.

Amberg Hockermuehlebad

Kurfuerstensuite Ring 2, 92224 Amberg
opening hours: daily, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

prices: (for the Hockermuehle) 3.50 Euros for adults, 2 Euros for children up to 18; after 5 p.m., 2 Euros for adults and 1 Euro for children.

more information: CIV 09621/603830 or www.kurfuerstenbad-amberg.de

highlights: This large complex has two sections with separate admission fees; the Kurfuerstenbad is indoors, the Hockermuehle is outdoors. The Hockermuehle has a kiddie pool and slide and is surrounded by a large lawn. Next door to the Hoehermuehlebad is one of Amberg's best pizzerias.

Beratzhausen Jura solarbeheizter

Laaberer St. 30, 93176 Beratzhausen
opening hours: 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

prices: 4 Euros for adults, 2 Euros for children 15 and under.

more information: CIV 09493/902121
highlights: This nearby pool offers a water slide, water games, beach volleyball, and much more.

Dietfurt Siebentaler Freibad

Siebentaaler-Freibad, 92345 Dietfurt
opening hours: Tuesday through Sunday 9

a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday 12 p.m. to 8 p.m.

prices: 2.50 Euros for adults, 1 euro for children.

more information: CIV 08464/473 or <http://www.altmuehltal.de/dietfurt/sport/freibad.htm>

highlights: Overlooking the Altmuehltal nature park, this pool has a water slide, kiddie pool, diving platform, volleyball, and other activities.

Neumarkt Freibad

Pastoral 16, 92318 Neumarkt

opening hours: 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Wednesdays until 9 p.m.

prices: 4 Euros for adults, 2 Euros for children more information: CIV 09181/239209 or www.neumarkt4you.de/freibad.html

highlights: This pool has heated changing rooms, four diving boards/platforms, and small and large slides.

Parsberg Freizeitzentrum

Jahnstr. 18, 92331 Parsberg

opening hours: 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

prices: 2.50 Euros for adults, 1.50 Euros for children six to 16; after 5 p.m., 1.50 Euros for adults, .80 Euro for children.

more information: CIV 09492/5338
highlights: This large complex includes a wave pool, mother and child pool, diving pool, and 50 meter pool.

Regensburg Wellenbad

Messerschmitt Strasse 4, 93049 Regensburg
opening hours: 9 a.m. to 10 p.m.

prices: 7 Euros for adults for a full day, 3.80 Euros for children for a full day; 5 Euros for adults and 2.50 Euros for children for three hours.

more information: CIV 0941/601-2944 or www.westbad.de/start.php

highlights: This huge indoor/outdoor waterpark offers, among other things, a sauna, wave pool, kiddie pools, volleyball, slides, and lawn for playing.

Schwandorf Freibad

Schwimmbadstr. 1, 92421 Schwandorf

opening times: 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

prices: 3 Euros for adults, 1.50 Euros for children.
more information: CIV 09431/9442 or 09431/510200 or www.schwandorf.de

highlights: If you get tired of swimming in the salt water pool and kiddie pools, take a break on the football field, basketball court, volleyball court, or playground.

Velburg Naturbadsee Altveldorf

Hinterer Markt 1, 92355 Velburg

opening hours: 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

prices: 1.50 Euros for adults, .50 Euro for children three to 15.

more information: CIV 09182/93020 or www.velburg.de/hp1072/Badsee.htm

highlights: This 10,000 square meter lake, one of the few lakes in USAREUR authorized for swimming, has a huge surrounding lawn, flat shore, children's swimming area and playground, changing areas with hot showers, volleyball, and table tennis.

Asian Pacific festival takes over CAC

Story and photo by KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

It ended the way it began, with Sgt. 1st Class Keone Deries, a tall, strong Soldier with a bright floral patterned fabric wrapped around his waist, blowing into the Pu, a Hawaiian conch shell used in ancient Hawaii to accompany chants and announce the beginning or ending of a celebration.

In between there was dancing, singing, and lots of food as part of the Asian Pacific Heritage celebration, one of the Equal Opportunity Office's most popular events of the year.

The celebration transformed the Community Activities Center May 15 into a tropical festival with tables of traditional Asian and Pacific Island foods and numerous displays representing different regions of Asia and the Pacific Islands.

"My intent was to educate the Hohenfels community of the many cultures that make up the Asian Pacific community. When one thinks of an Asian Pacific observance, he or she thinks of a kalua pig and a fire dance. But API is so much more," said Command Sgt. Maj. Patrick Akuna, one of the event's primary organizers.

To show the diverse range of API cultures, Hohenfels community members personally donated their things for the day to create displays, bringing in everything from portraits of ancestors, posters, photos, and souvenirs to informational maps, boards, and videos.

"We wanted to do it ourselves. We feel it brings more authenticity," said Master Sgt. Justin Lucios, one of the celebration planners, adding that this was the first year members of the community performed the traditional dances and songs instead of bringing in a dance troupe from outside the community.

Lucios said planning for the event began in February. As the celebration drew closer, the



Even the smallest members from the Hohenfels Asian Pacific community participated in the Asian Pacific Heritage Celebration. Young girls and boys learned traditional dances, songs, and chants for the May 15 event.

performers were practicing almost every day.

"We had to learn Samoan and Fiji dances. We had to learn the language for the chants. It all took quite a bit of practice," Lucios said.

Command Sgt. Maj. Iuniasolua T. Savusa, command sergeant major of U.S. Army Europe and Seventh Army, a native Samoan, was invited to be the guest speaker.

"Rarely has a nation been so well served by a people it has so ill treated," he said, referring to

the service of Soldiers in the 100th Infantry Battalion, 442nd Regimental Combat Team during World War II.

His speech focused on both the contributions that those of Asian and Pacific Island descent have made to American society and their intense patriotism, exemplified by the 442nd, a unit formed by volunteers of Japanese descent even after a committee from the Army recommended against sanctioning a unit of Japanese Americans.

Though dubbed "enemy aliens," the young men would not relinquish their desire to fight for their country. A few months later President Franklin D. Roosevelt authorized the combat team which went on to become the most decorated unit in American military history.

Between 1943 and 1945, the Soldiers of the 442nd received seven Presidential Unit Citations and 18,000 individual awards, including 20 Medals of Honor, 48 Distinguished Service Crosses, 560 Silver Stars, 4,000 Bronze Stars, and 9,486 Purple Hearts.

The accomplishments of the 442nd greatly influenced one noteworthy Japanese American: former Chief of Staff of the Army General Eric Shinseki, whose three uncles served in the unit.

Savusa reminded participants that Americans with Asian and Pacific Island backgrounds continue their legacy of patriotism.

"Today, in the Global War on Terrorism, more than 4,000 U.S. service men and women have died in Afghanistan and Iraq, fighting the forces of evil. One region of our country that has borne the highest per capita loss of any state in the union or territory has names like Ioasa, Falaniko, Letufuga, Tuialu'ulu'u, Time, Tia'I, and Vimoto, just to name a few. You see, I can pronounce these names easily, yet they are not easy for me to say because they are from my home, American Samoa," Savusa said.

Though remembering the Asian and Pacific Islanders who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country temporarily brought a solemn air to the celebration, overall the event was energetic and uplifting. The dancing, singing, and interaction between people of all different backgrounds made it hard to believe that such an important segment of the U.S. military and the United States as a whole could ever be classified "enemy aliens."

Without frills, Hohenfels remembers Memorial Day

Story and photo by KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

There was no big parade, no high school marching band, no white-haired veterans proudly wearing their old uniforms, but even without that fanfare, the Soldiers and civilians of Hohenfels did not forget it was Memorial Day, or what that day stands for.

"Some Americans have forgotten the meaning and traditions of this holiday. All too often, Memorial Day for many Americans conjures up thoughts of barbecues, summer vacations, and long weekends.

"It marks the beginning of summer, the end of a school year, and anticipated vacations," said Col. Thomas Vandal in front of a crowd that gathered around the flag poles in front of the Joint Multinational Readiness Center headquarters.

"But, for Soldiers and their families that so willingly accept the burdens of defending freedom throughout the world, Memorial Day is a day unlike any other...Today, we have come here to remember and honor those who have done their duty, who have given their lives for this great nation, who have made the ultimate sacrifice so that our nation might remain free," he said.

Since the Civil War, more than one million veterans have lost their lives fighting for the United States.

"The whole ceremony I was thinking about my experience in Afghanistan when Cpl. Endsley was killed, him being carried to the helicopter,"

said JMRC Soldier of the Year Spc. Seth Verks, who, along with JMRC Noncommissioned Officer of the Year Staff Sgt. Troy Mueller, placed a wreath beneath the flag pole in memory of the service men and women who have lost their lives protecting our nation.

"It was an honor to remember him and all the others who have been killed," Verks said.

The ceremony began with a brief history lesson, reminding those gathered that Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, was first observed on May 30, 1868 when flowers were placed on the graves of Union and Confederate Soldiers in Arlington National Cemetery.

It is now observed in almost every state in the country on the last Monday in May.

After an invocation by Chaplain (Maj.) Michael Wood, the Hohenfels elementary school choir sang the national anthem, returning to sing "The Heart of America" following Vandal's remarks.

Members of the Hohenfels Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops laid flowers at the base of the flag poles, replicating an event that occurred three years after the end of the Civil War when children from the Soldiers' and Sailors' Orphan Home and members of the Grand Army of the Republic made their way through Arlington National Cemetery, placing flowers on both Union and Confederate graves.

After Mueller and Verks presented the wreath, a 21-gun salute was fired, followed by the raising of the flag from half to full mast, and the playing of taps.



From left: Hannah, Victoria, and Addie Lutz, William Hammer, and Patrick Vass lay flowers at the base of the flag pole in front of Bldg. 1 during the post Memorial Day ceremony May 22.



Photo by Norbert Wittl

Pilgrimage takes parishioners through Hohenfels training area

A group from the Catholic Parish of Hohenfels made their annual pilgrimage march through the training area from their church in Hohenfels to the Kreuzburg Chapel May 18.

According to Norbert Wittl, U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels Public Affairs specialist who escorted the group, each year the group must seek permission to enter the training area where the chapel is located; this year Lt. Col. Gary Bloomberg granted the request.

Though it sits inside the training area, the chapel itself belongs to the Catholic Church of Germany. A mutual agreement was made in 1996 between the Church and U.S. Army Europe which allows the parishioners to use the chapel each year for their fest, said John Cavanaugh, garrison director of plans, training, mobilization, and security.

Eighteen people marched through the rain from Hohenfels to Kreuzberg, and more than 400 people were in Schmidmuelen to participate in the fest, which was moved indoors due to bad weather.

What's Happening

Grafenwoehr/ Vilseck Briefs

Chapel marriage retreats

The Grafenwoehr Family Life chaplain will be providing marriage retreats at Edelweiss in Garmisch July 27 – 29 and Aug. 8 – 10. These retreats are for Soldiers and their spouses from the Vilseck and Grafenwoehr communities.

The retreats are paid for by Strong Bonds dollars, and provide for children's programs, transportation, lodging, and meals (except for lunches).

The July retreat will not be able to take couples who have children younger than five, and the August retreat will not be able to take couples who have children five through twelve. This is due to heavy volume of retreats and no programs available during these dates.

Sign up will be on a first come – first serve basis, but it is encouraged that if you have attended a marriage retreat within the last year that an opportunity be given to those who haven't. To sign up, contact Chaplain (Maj.) Nielsen at DSN 476-3276.

U.S. Army European Open

The 2008 U.S. Army European Open will be held at the Stuttgart Golf Course in Kornwestheim, Germany, June 20-22. Open to all U.S. ID card holders, active duty, and active Reserve Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard, as well as civilians and family members 18 and over.

Must have a verifiable handicap. Championship awarded to the top three in the Men's Open Division, Men's Senior Division, and Women's Open Division. Open Division participants must possess a current USGA handicap of 36 or better. All players will be flighted by handicap.

Field is limited to maximum of 120 entries with \$40 registration fee paid in advance. Applicants may fax their application to CIV 07141-972 887 or scan their application and e-mail it to tournament manager at gary.groff1@eur.army.mil.

Payment must be received by June 13. For those who wish to mail a check, send to Stuttgart Golf Course, Unit 30137, AE 09046. USAG Stuttgart POC is Gary Groff, Tournament Director, Stuttgart Golf Course at CIV 07141-879151. For more information, and a downloadable entry form, go to <http://www.mwrfirstchoice.com/>.

Is your life affected by someone's drinking?

Al-Anon is an anonymous fellowship of family and friends of alcoholics. The Lois & Company Al-Anon Family Group meets Thursdays at 7 p.m. in Grafenwoehr, Bldg. 206 and Sundays at 12:30 p.m. in Vilseck, Bldg. 322. POC Ann CIV 09662-702-575 or CIV 01511-590-5090.

Mountain biking

Bavaria is an excellent area for mountain biking. Come and join us on our weekly rides. Each Monday evening, we take you to a new trailhead to hone your skills. From single track to hill climbs and descents, rocky terrain to stream crossings, we have something for beginners and advanced riders alike.

Join the group to get in shape, make some friends and enjoy nature. Practice your skills then bike on the BMW bike park trip or the Passau, Germany to Vienna, Austria bike trip.

Meet in Grafenwoehr at 5:30 p.m. or in Vilseck at 6 p.m. Contact your local ODR for more information and locations.

ODR Range 116 open

Range 116 will be open every Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. There is a range fee of \$8 and they usually have 9mm pistols for rent. No special license is necessary to use range guns.

Grafenwoehr and Vilseck Health Clinics new hours

As of June 1, the clinic hours are:
 ■ 6:30 a.m. – 6 p.m. Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday
 ■ 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Thursday
 ■ 6:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. Friday
 ■ 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Training Holidays (scheduled appointments only)
 ■ closed Saturday and Sunday

General election reminder

The November 4 general election is

less than 200 days away. Uniformed and overseas citizens are encouraged to visit www.fvap.gov for information on voting by absentee ballot. Or, for more information on the Army Voting Assistance Program, go to http://www.army.mil/usapa/epubs/pdf/r608_20.pdf.

CTC courses

Central Texas College Vilseck/Grafenwoehr is offering the following three vocational-technical courses in the upcoming Term 5: AUMT 1419 – Automotive Engine Repair (4 credit hours); CDEC 1356 – Emergent Literacy for Early Childhood (3 credit hours); and CJSA 1359 – Police Systems & Practices (3 credit hours). All three classes are classroom-based and lead to an Associate in Applied Science degree.

Classes will be held in Vilseck or Grafenwoehr. Term 5 registration runs through June 6. The term dates are June 9 – August 2. Contact CTC field representative Chuck Sligh at the Vilseck or Grafenwoehr Education Center for more information on these and other educational opportunities at DSN 476-2362 or CIV 09662-83-2362 (Vilseck on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays), DSN 475-6702 or CIV 09641-83-6702 (Grafenwoehr on Mondays and Wednesdays), or by e-mail at vilseck@europe.ctcd.edu.

UMUC course registration

University of Maryland University College Europe announces Term 5 registration through June 6.

Condensed into six weeks to accommodate busy, summertime schedules, the Term 5 program offers students more flexibility while maintaining academic quality. On-site courses begin June 9 and are offered in innovative formats including weekends, weekdays, and hybrids – a format combining on-site with online instruction. Students may obtain a listing of Term 5 undergraduate and graduate courses at www.ed.umuc.edu.

Students can access online courses through UMUC's award winning WebTycho learning platform and earn certificates or associate's, bachelor's or master's degree. A list of DE courses is available online.

Library Kit Kittredge program

The Grafenwoehr and Vilseck Libraries kicked off the Kit Kittredge program May 1, which will run through June 30.

Authorized Army MWR patrons ages 6-16 are invited to visit their post library to check out the Kit Kittredge book display and to learn more about how they can win the trip or a set of Kit Kittredge An American Girl books. They can also enter in the online sweepstakes and get a sneak peak at the movie at www.ArmyMWR.com.

Hohenfels Briefs

Sport Club Lupburg to host annual cycling event Sunday

The Sport Club Lupburg will host its annual cycling day Sunday with eight different courses. The courses offer something for everyone from families to mountain bike riders and racing bike riders.

For information or to register contact the Touristikverband in Parsberg at CIV 09492-905767 or Stiegler Alois at CIV 09492/5799 or alouis@radsport-lupburg.de. Information is also available at www.Radsport-Lupburg.de.

The festival kicks off Friday at 4 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday at 11 a.m. Admission is 2 Euro. Visitors wearing medieval clothing and children smaller than the biggest sword receive free admission. See the Hohenfels Hometown Happenings newsletter for more information.

I Love My Daddy crafts

Just in time for Father's Day, the I Love My Daddy craft session June 11 gives kids ages 3 and up an opportunity to make gifts for good ol' Dad to show how much they love and appreciate them. Stop by the library any time between 2:30-4 p.m. For more information call the library at DSN 466-1740.

2008 U.S. Army Soldier Show

The 2008 U.S. Army Soldier Show's 25th anniversary tour will perform tomorrow at USAG Hohenfels. The show at the Hohenfels Middle/High School is scheduled to open at 7 p.m. for the 90-minute song-and-dance extravaganza and admission is free.

This year's Soldier Show is a high-energy, live musical review showcasing the talents of active duty Soldiers who were selected by audition from through-

out the Army. They are amateur artists who have a passion for music, dance and performing.

For the eighth consecutive year, the Army National Guard is the primary sponsor and partner of the U.S. Army Soldier Show, one of more than 100 programs and services provided to Soldiers and their families by the Army Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command.

Freedom Team Salute is a first-time partner and AT&T returns as a corporate sponsor for the fifth straight year.

Military Council of Catholic Women -June Program

MCCW is holding its June program Friday from 9:30-11:30 a.m. at the Hilltop Chapel Center, Bldg. 6. The program is entitled "About the Schoenstatt Movement."

We will have an opportunity for snacks and fellowship prior to the program. Childcare is provided for up to age 5. Call the Catholic Coordinator at DSN 466-2226 or DSN 466-1570 for more information or e-mail Katie Coulter at kathleen.coulter@us.army.mil.

Parents' Night Out opening

Parents' Night Out services are available Friday from 6-10 p.m. to CYS registered children aged infant to sixth grade. Services include dinner. Costs are \$16 for CDC aged and \$12 for SAS aged children.

Patrons with Deployment Care Cards may use their hours and receive services at no-cost, or pay the reduced \$2 hourly rate. A minimum of 10 children are required for this event.

Make reservations and payments at the CDC Annex, Bldg. 44. Call the CDC Annex for additional information at DSN 466-4041/4042.

Sports physicals Saturday

Sports physicals will be conducted Saturday at the Hohenfels Health Clinic from 8-11 a.m. Bring parent or legal guardian, medical records, yellow shot cards, and eye glasses if needed.

Boys should wear shorts and T-shirt. Girls should wear shorts, T-shirt, and sports bra. This is not for CDC physicals or well baby exams. For more information call DSN 466-2601.

Catholic community "Fiesta"

The Catholic community is hosting a "Fiesta" to welcome new members to their community and celebrate the end of the religious education school year.

The Fiesta will follow Sunday Mass this Sunday at around 11 a.m. at the Chaplain's Youth Activity Center, Bldg. 743 across from the Commissary. You are welcome to join us for Sunday Mass before the event at 9:30 a.m. at the Main Post Chapel, Bldg. 2.

Come by our celebration for information about Catholic programs and opportunities to worship in the Hohenfels community. Activities and games will be available for children. Feel free to bring your favorite Mexican theme dish or dessert.

YS tackle football camp

Youth Sports is hosting a Tackle Football Camp for children ages 7-12 years old. The camp will be held from June 27-29 at the High School football field and is free to youth that enrolled in CYS and have a current sports physical on file.

Enrollment for this event will be held at CLEO's, Bldg. 10A. For more information call Youth Sports at DSN 466-2488/2558/2479.

Medieval fest in Burglengenfeld

Enrollment for this event will be held at CLEO's, Bldg. 10A. For more information call Youth Sports at DSN 466-2488/2558/2479.

Furniture Expo

AAAFES will have a Furniture Expo

June 11-13 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Community Activities Center.

CPR, First Aid class

The next adult, infant, and child CPR and First Aid class is June 12 from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. CPR certification is good for a year, and first aid certification is good for three years. Cost is \$35 per person. Call DSN 466-1760 for more information or stop by Bldg. 335 to reserve your slot and pay for this class.

Wilderness First Aid class

The next Wilderness First Aid class is in Vilseck June 13 (5 p.m. to 8 p.m.), June 14 (9 a.m. to 5 p.m.), and June 15 (8 a.m. to 1 p.m.). Part of the Sunday session may be held outside if the weather permits.

This 16-hour course combines classroom lecture, skills practice, and real-life scenarios to teach detail-oriented response steps and treatment of injuries and illnesses in a delayed-help situation.

Cost is \$90 per person. Call DSN 466-1760 for more information or stop by Bldg. 335 to reserve your slot and pay for this class.

Basic quilting

Even if you have no sewing experience you can learn this classic art with all the modern twists. You will make your first small project while learning the basics of rotary cutting, strip piecing, machine quilting and edge binding.

These skills can then be applied to future projects that the Arts and Crafts Center staff are happy to help with from start to finish. \$10 class fee plus supplies. Purchase and wash your material before coming to class.

You will receive pre-class instructions at time of sign-up. The class is held June 14, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

It's Bunco time

Ladies...indulge yourselves in an evening of fun and friendly chatter. This is the third and final Bunco night June 16 from 6:30-9:30 p.m. at the CAC, Bldg. 40.

Call Nan Barker at DSN 466-2241 to reserve your seat at the Bunco table. No experience necessary to play. Prizes for the night include: a \$75 gift card for Williams-Sonoma/Pottery Barn, a \$50 gift card for igourmet.com, a Jack Daniels cookbook, and a subscription to Saviour Magazine.

This is an adults only event and participants must be 18 or older. All players will be entered into a National Grand Prize drawing for the chance to win a \$4,000 SpaFinder gift card.

Protestant Women of the Chapel summer lunch series

Come one, come all, to our Summer Lunch Series! We'll meet on Tuesdays from 10 a.m.-noon at the Hilltop Chapel Center June 17 to July 29. Join us for "Bible Studies on Demand" featuring a different women's speaker on DVD each week and a great time of fellowship. DVD lessons are independent of each other so feel free to pop-in any time and check us out! If you're new to Hohenfels, consider making PWOC your new "home"! Bring a bag lunch; drinks will be provided. Childcare on-site is free (ages 6 weeks – 5 years), and older children are welcome to join us for the videos. For more information, contact Kathy Wood (kathywood1@hotmail.com).

YS tackle football camp

Youth Sports is hosting a Tackle Football Camp for children ages 7-12 years old. The camp will be held from June 27-29 at the High School football field and is free to youth that enrolled in CYS and have a current sports physical on file.

Enrollment for this event will be held at CLEO's, Bldg. 10A. For more information call Youth Sports at DSN 466-2488/2558/2479.

Garmisch Briefs

Climb the mighty Zugspitze June 7-8

At least once in your life you have to conquer Germany's highest peak. At 2966 meters, it's 2200 meters higher than we are, and 1100 meters above the tree line! It has two glaciers, two major cable cars from two countries and has sheer

cliffs on three sides. It creates at least two rivers, which in turn carved the Partnach and Hoellental gorges. It is truly amazing.

Imagine standing at the historic cross and saying "yeah, I climbed this."

We'll take two days to get there.

Saturday we hike six-eight hours starting at the Partnachklamm through the stunning Reintal valley. We'll stay at the Reintalangerhuetten, guests of Charlie Wehrle, one of the most colorful hut owners in the Alps. Sunday is a shorter-but-steep hike to the Zugspitzplatt glacier, where the ski area is. From there you can call it a day and pass up the scary part with the Gletscher Bahn, or scale the harrowing "Klettersteig" to the cross.

Rating: Moderate to Advanced. Age 16 and up. 15-18 k's long, 2205m vertical. ODR can provide your climbing gear and hiking poles.

Fee: \$160 per person includes overnight stay in a Huetten with breakfast, cable car ride back down, equipment, guide, and adrenaline!

Time: Saturday 8 a.m. - Sunday 5 p.m., from the Burke Center

What to Bring: Euro to cover meals, snacks, and souvenirs, outdoor clothing, sturdy hiking boots.

Climb Munich's Olympic Stadium June 18

Imagine climbing on the Munich Olympic Stadium and watching the sunset over Munich! A fully guided tour will take you through all of the catwalks and rooftops of the stadium. Rappel down at the end, (if you dare)!

Fee: \$70; Departs Burke Center 4 - 10 p.m.

What to Bring: Sturdy shoes, (no sandals) comfortable clothing. Equipment is provided.

Bicycle treasure hunt moved

Bicycle treasure hunt, new date June 15. It is a bike ride that takes you through our beautiful valley.

It's not a race, so anyone with any bike can participate. It is a team event so get four people from your work, softball team, etc. together. It's not a scavenger hunt.

It's a travelling quiz! It's also a great way to get some exercise and get acquainted with our valley.

Fee: \$5 per person, \$15 per team of 4. Lots of prizes!

Second target shooting

Once a month we offer target shooting at our own Kean's Lodge. Come practice your skills July 2 and relax your mind in this quiet, secluded setting. We have competition level air rifles that have the feel of a real target rifle.

Fee: \$5 covers gun rental, pellets, and targets. Wednesday evenings, 5-8 p.m., July 2, Aug. 6, and Sept. 10.

White water rafting July 19

We go to the Inn River in Austria, one of the most popular rivers in Europe. Bring Euros for the grill fest and beverages at the rafting center afterwards.

Fee: \$90, Adults, \$70, Youth (ages 14-17). Includes transportation and all equipment.

Rating: Advanced, (Class 3 rapids), 14 years old and up.

What to Bring: Swim suit, (under the wetsuit), towel, and Euros for food, drink, and merriment.

Time: Saturday 8 a.m. - Sunday 5 p.m. from the Burke Center

Visit King Ludwig's lodge

Did you know that King Ludwig had a hunting lodge overlooking Garmisch?

That every year for 10 years, King Ludwig spent his birthday there?

It's a spectacular hike and the Schachen is really amazing, and a King Ludwig castle tour that not many people get!

Saturday we hike six hours and stay overnight on the eve of his birthday at the Schachen Huetten.

Sunday we'll take a tour of his mountain retreat and hike six hours through some of the most spectacular scenery in the world.

Rating: Moderate, 10 Kilometers, 866m climb. Age 14 and up.

Time: 8 a.m. Saturday to 4 p.m. Sunday

Fee: \$ 125 per person, \$120 children
 What to Bring: Bring Euros to cover meals, snacks & souvenirs.

You will need to furnish your own outdoor clothing, sturdy hiking shoes, and backpack. ODR can provide hiking poles.

What's Happening

Ansbach Briefs

Sign up for July 4 activities

The U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach Family, Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Division invites private organizations and family readiness groups to get involved in this year's Independence Day Fest, July 4 from 1 to 10:45 p.m.

Participating organizations must comply with all regulations governing fundraising activities.

Requests need to be submitted through the Business Operations Division office to the Financial Management Division no later than Monday.

For more information, call CIV 0981-183-336 or e-mail laura.waid@eur.army.mil.

Traffic changes

Due to sewer and road construction, the traffic flow on Bismarck and Katterbach Kaserne has changed.

Bismarck Kaserne:

The by-pass road around Bldg. 5843C and the underpass between the Area Support Team Katterbach, Bldg. 5843 C and Bldg. 5843 D, are closed for construction.

Traffic lights are installed in front of the post-exchange to allow two-way traffic in and out of the Kaserne.

Katterbach:

The main road in front of the Katterbach barracks (Bldg. 5815) is blocked off for construction; traffic is rerouted via the parking lot.

The Katterbach exit gate between the Army Community Service and Bldg. 5815 will be open for outbound traffic only.

Traffic by the dining facility, clinics, 12th Combat Aviation Brigade headquarters, etc. will be rerouted via the main parking lot.

Traffic coming from Bldg. 5817 will be routed right towards the exit gate. Passing of the intersection or left turns are no longer permitted.

Traffic flow will remain in place for approximately eight weeks.

For more information, call DSN 467-3205 or CIV 09802-83-3205.

New road opened

The new highway on Katterbach is now open for public use. The highway starts at Hangar 5, loops around the Kaserne, and ends behind the high school.

Drivers must respect runners by driving no more than 10 miles per hour past troops.

Soldier Show tonight

Come and see the 2008 U.S. Army Soldier Show today at 6:30 p.m. in hangar 2, Bldg. 5806, Katterbach.

The cast and crew will emphasize their working motto of "Entertainment for the Soldier, by the Soldier" in a simulated deployed setting to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the modern U.S. Army Soldier Show.

White water rafting

Outdoor recreation offers a white water rafting and canyoning trip to the Salzach River June 13 to 14.

The trip includes rafting, a BBQ and a 30 foot jump at the Gorge waterfalls. Cost is \$175 and includes transportation, equipment, instructions and one overnight. Bus departs from Katterbach outdoor recreation June 13 at 6 a.m.

For more information, call DSN 467-3225 or CIV 09802-83225.

Sign up now for fall sports

Child and Youth Services fall sports registration is ongoing. Parents with children age 3 to 15 can register for soccer, cheerleading, and football at Central Registration.

For more information call DSN 468-7866 or CIV 0981-183833.

Swim safe this summer

Garrison safety officials recently provided tips on water safety and a list of authorized swimming areas.

Here are some tips from them to help keep you safe while swimming:

- *Swim in authorized areas (supervised by lifeguards)
- *Take swimming instructions from a qualified instructor

*Never swim alone and know where the lifeguards are

*Know and obey posted safety rules

*Don't swim right after eating and when tired

*Do not rely on inflatable objects like rafts or toys to keep afloat

*Don't swim during thunderstorms

*Stay out of water if it feels too cold

*Don't drink and swim

Authorized swimming areas within the garrison are:

*Ansbach AQUELLA (in/outdoor)

*Bechhofen Krummweiher (lake)

*Dinkelsbuehl Woernitzbad

*Feuchtwangen City Pool (in/outdoor)

*Flachslanden City Pool (outdoor)

*Flachslanden Sonnensee (lake)

*Gunzenhausen Freibad (outdoor)

*Gunzenhausen Hallenbad (indoor)

*Gunzenhausen Igelsbachsee (lake)

*Gunzenhausen Altmuehlsee (lake)

*Gunzenhausen Brombachsee (lake)

*Heilsbronn City Pool (outdoor)

*Herrieden City Pool (outdoor)

*Leutershausen City Pool (outdoor)

*Lichtenau City Pool (outdoor)

*Neuendettelsau NOVAMARE (in/outdoor)

*Rothenburg Waldschwimmbad

*Unterschweningen Dennenloher See (lake)

*Weihezell City Pool (outdoor)

*Windsbach City Pool (outdoor)

*Bad Windsheim City Pool (in/outdoor)

*Bad Windsheim Franken Therme (in/outdoor)

*Burgberneim Waldbad (outdoor)

*Colmberg City Pool (outdoor)

*Neustadt/Aisch City Pool (outdoor)

*Obernennsee (lake)

*Uffenheim City Pool (outdoor)

Swimming is only authorized in the above listed lakes on weekends and German holidays when lifeguards are present.

All other lakes, canals, and sand pits are off limits to U.S. Army personnel and family members.

For more safety tips, call DSN 468-1670 or CIV 09802-83-1670.

Get ready for Subway

AAFES is getting ready to bring Subway to Illesheim and close the American Eatery permanently.

Anthony's Pizza remains open to serve customers in the food court.

For more information, call the Illesheim area support team at DSN 467-4515 or CIV 09841-83-4515.

Wiggles and Giggles

Army Community Service's Wiggles and Giggles Playgroup and parent support group meets Thursdays from 10-11:30 a.m. at the Von Steuben Community Recreation Center.

ACS welcomes parents with children between the ages of 0 and 3 to bring their children for a fun time playing and making new friends.

For more on the group, call DSN 467-2516 or CIV 09802-83-2516.

Knitting know-how

Cobbled Corner Crafts offers its beginning knitting class Sundays from 2-4 p.m. at its shop on Barton Barracks. Cost is \$10.

For more information, call Cobbled Corner Crafts at DSN 468-7627 or CIV 0981-183-627.

Pet exercise program

The USAG Ansbach Veterinary Clinic offers a pet wellness program that includes nutritional guidance, ideas for increasing physical activity and monthly weigh-ins to track pets' progress.

The clinic also offers weekly walks Thursdays from noon to 1 p.m.

For more information, call the clinic at DSN 467-3179 or CIV 09802-83-3179.

Car inspections

The automotive skills centers on Barton Barracks in Ansbach and on Storck Barracks in Illesheim, offer free 10-point safety inspections on cars.

The free checks and inspections cover all of the systems, belts, lights, tires, brakes and glass for serviceability and safety.

For more information, call the Barton Auto Skills Center at DSN 468-7662 or CIV 0981-183-662, or the Storck center at DSN 467-4608 or CIV 09841-83-4608.

Bamberg Briefs

ACAP workshop

The Army Career and Alumni Program is offering a 2.5-day DOL job assistance workshop for separating and retiring Soldiers June 10-12 at Preston Hall from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (final day ends at 12:30 p.m.).

All participants must complete pre-separation counseling prior to enrolling in this course. Please call your Bamberg ACAP Office for more information at DSN 469-8925.

Veterans Administration

V.A. Disability Transition Assistance Program will hold a disability transition briefing June 19 from 1 to 3 p.m. at Preston Hall. A representative from the Department of Veterans Affairs will discuss the Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Program.

This is an opportunity for transitioning Soldiers who are considering filing a disability claim with the V.A. to find out about program procedures.

For more information or to register call ACAP at DSN 469-8925 or CIV 0951-300-8925 or register online at <https://www.acapexpress.army.mil>.

Childcare provider certification

People living in base housing, or in leased property, and caring for other people's child or children for more than 10 hours per week must be certified by CYS.

Uncertified childcare providers need to sign up for training by June 30 in order to take advantage of a one-time amnesty by the Army. For more information, contact CYS at DSN 469-8035 or CIV 0951-300-8035.

CYS Summer Camps

Summer camps will begin June 16 and will run through Aug. 23. CYS is catering programs to approx. 1,800 children at USAG Bamberg. The following camps will be offered.

- SKIES Unlimited Golf Camps
- School Age Services Summer Camps
- Middle School Teen Program and Sports and Fitness Summer Camps

For more information, call CYS Central Registration at DSN 469-8660 or CIV 0951-300-8660.

Clinic Pharmacy closure

The Bamberg Health Clinic pharmacy will be closed June 13 for training.

Win Prizes with Kit Kittredge

Calling all American Girls! Visit your post MWR library during May and June and learn how you can win a great "Kit Kittredge An American Girls" prize as well as an all-expense paid shopping spree to an American Girl store!

Program is open to children ages 6-16. You can also log on to www.AmericanGirl.com/movie for details and a chance to win the grand prize valued over \$1,000! Watch a trailer of the movie at <http://www.americangirl.com/movie>.

Dental Clinic services limited

Family member dental services will be limited to exams and cleanings beginning Aug. 1 due to reintegration. For more information, contact the Dental Clinic at DSN 469-1720 or CIV 0951-300-1720.

Schweinfurt Briefs

Unit challenge runs until July

The Army Family Team Building Unit Challenge has begun and you and your family can participate to bring your unit to victory.

By taking AFTB classes, not only will Soldiers receive promotion points and gain knowledge, but it will also give points to the battalion for the competition. The challenge runs until July 4, and the winner will be announced at the Fourth of July celebration.

Soldiers, spouses, and children may participate. For more information, call Army Community Service at DSN 354-6933 or CIV 09721-96-6933 or e-mail jennifer.litchfield@eur.army.mil.

Holocaust talk back

The USAG Schweinfurt Community Theater will present "And Then They Came For Me," a production recalling one of the darkest periods of world

history: World War II and the Holocaust.

The production is being held at the Abrams center and will run Thursday, Friday, and Saturday night at 7 p.m. Cost is \$10 for adults and \$7 for students K-12. After the play, Holocaust Survivor Eva Schloss will speak about her experiences, some of which are dramatized during the play.

Bulk trash picked up

Bulk trash is scheduled to be picked up from Askren Manor, Yorktown Village, government-leased housing Tuesday.

Please put bulk items out prior to 7 a.m. on day of pick-up but no earlier than the day before. Bulk trash is only those items too large to transport in your vehicle.

For more information, call SORT coordinator Brad Posey at DSN 354-6201 or CIV 0162-270-9403.

Saturday respite care available

Do you need a break from the kids to run errands or just relax at home? Sign up now for Child and Youth Services' Super Saturday Respite Care June 14.

Children ages 6 weeks to fifth-grade will be cared for from 9:30 to 2:30 p.m. School Age Services costs \$12 and the Child Development Center costs \$16. The program includes one meal.

Children must be registered with CYS and also have current immunizations. Reservation deadline is Friday.

Call CYS central registration for more information at DSN 354-6517 or CIV 09721-96-6414.

Community Update Forums

The next community update forums are scheduled for next week.

Tuesday's forum will be held in the Schweinfurt Elementary School at 6 p.m., and Wednesday's forum will be held in the Leighton Community Activities Center, also at 6 p.m.

The forums are open to the community, and are an opportunity for community members to ask questions and get answers directly from garrison command and agency directors.

Wuerzburg schools close

The Department of Defense Dependent Schools will hold a closure ceremony Friday at 2 p.m. at Wuerzburg High School on Leighton Barracks. The community is invited to attend as the schools close, ending a long history of American education in Wuerzburg.

Golf tournament

Morale, Welfare, and Recreation division will host a golf tournament at Loffelsterz Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Call DSN 353-8234 or CIV 09721-96-8234 to register.

Paintball tournament

Schweinfurt's Better Opportunities

for Single Soldiers program, the best B.O.S.S. in Europe, will host a paintball tournament Sunday at noon on the Conn Barracks paintball field.

Cost is \$45 for field, equipment, air, and 1,000 balls. Register in person at the Finney Recreation Center or call DSN 353-8476 or CIV 09721-96-8476.

Army birthday celebration

The garrison will celebrate the Army Birthday two days early this year June 12 at 4:30 p.m. in the Andrus Gardens on Ledward Barracks.

The community is invited to attend as we celebrate the Army, honor the flag, and kick off the long first weekend of post-school summer.

Tax center closing

Friday is the last day of service at the Schweinfurt Tax Center located in Bldg. 30 on Conn Barracks. Services are offered from 9 a.m. to noon and from 1 to 5 p.m. through Friday.

Clients are accepted on a walk-in basis, but center personnel recommend calling ahead to avoid long waits. The number for the center is DSN 353-8992 or CIV 09721-96-8992.

Free paintball

Tomorrow begins a summer full of free Thursdays at the Conn paintball field. For more information, call Schweinfurt Outdoor Recreation at DSN 353-8080 or CIV 09721-96-8080.

Wuerzburg medical records moved to Schweinfurt clinic

As of May 30, all medical records kept in the Wuerzburg Health Clinic will be relocated to the Schweinfurt Health Clinic.

This records move is due to the eventual closure of Wuerzburg Leighton Barracks Aug. 1. All personnel that work in Wuerzburg fall under the U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt, and will receive their records during their outprocessing in Schweinfurt.

Wuerzburg Health Clinic will continue to provide partial services, such as CMAs and printing electronic copies of records, until June 12.

Questions, please contact Staff Sgt. Jeffery Johnson at 350-7797.

Learn to deal with the media

Living in a deployed community can often mean frequent contact with members of the media.

Come let the folks at Army Community Service teach you how to deal with the media. Two classes will be offered.

The first will be held June 12 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Yellow Ribbon Room on Ledward Barracks.

The second class, also in the Ledward YRR, will be June 19 from 5 to 6:30 p.m.

For more information, or to register, call DSN 354-6933 or CIV 09721-96-6933.

Munich

Tour the capital city of Bavaria



The Karlsplatz, at the entrance of the pedestrian area downtown leading into the popular Marianplatz, is just minutes from the main train station, or Hauptbahnhof.



The Hof Gardens, located behind the Residenz palace, is a beautiful public park where street musicians play and the public is allowed to stroll like royalty.



The view of the Frauenkirche sets the skyline of the city. The Gothic church, located in the pedestrian zone downtown, is well worth taking some time to visit.



One of the best ways to see Munich is to just wander the streets and get lost in the culture. Hidden treasures, like the Palace of Justice, can be found around virtually every corner of the city.

Story and photos by KATIE COWART
Assistant Editor

Living in Bavaria provides easy travel to quite a few of Europe's "must-see" cities. Munich is one of these.

Germany's third largest city and the capital of the German Federal State of Bavaria was first mentioned in writing in 1158, and became an official city, complete with fortification, in 1175. There was settlement in the Munich area during Roman times, however, so it is possible the city is even older.

Munich is located near the Alps, so visitors are advised to bring an umbrella and a jacket, no matter what season, because the weather can change rapidly and unexpectedly.

There are many historically important and artistically attractive sites around the city, an excellent vacation destination, or due to its close proximity, an opportunity for many day trips.

One of the most well-known sites in Munich is the **Frauenkirche**, located in the city center. It serves as the cathedral for the Archdiocese of Munich and Freising.

Construction started on the Frauenkirche in 1468, taking 20 years to complete.

The towers were added later on, in the 16th century. Though Munich underwent extensive bombing in World War II, the two towers survived, making them more than 500 years old. Standing at 99 meters high, they serve as the marker for building height limitations. No building within the Munich city limits can be taller than the towers.

The city center is called the **Marienplatz**, named for the Mariensaeule, or Marien column, which is the center column of the city hall building.

The city hall, in German called the **Rathaus**, is worth a visit as well. The **Glockenspiel**, or clock, located in the front of the Rathaus puts on a show at designated times. The Glockenspiel show is not every hour, so check the posted times out front of the Rathaus, and be sure to get to the courtyard early to enjoy the show!

An information desk for tours and attractions around Munich is also in the Rathaus, so if you don't know where to start, this would be a good place to get ideas or more information about a city tour.

Also located in the basement of the Rathaus is the **Ratskeller**, which in my opinion is one of the best restaurants Munich has to offer. The menu offers traditional German cuisine and excellent service. There is even a small "pub" area to take an afternoon break and sip a Weissbier, or white beer, that Munich is known for.

Near the Marienplatz is the **Peterskirche**, which is the oldest church in the inner city. It was built before 1158 by an early settlement of monks.

Other churches of interest in Munich include Michaelskirche, which is the largest Renaissance church north of the

Alps, and the Theatinerkirche, whose dome dominates the Odeonplatz. The Theatinerkirche was built in the Italianate high baroque style, which greatly influenced southern Germany baroque.

Also near the Marienplatz is one of the most famous breweries in Munich, the **Hofbraeuhaus**. Operated since 1589, it has hosted quite a bit of German history, including providing a place for Hitler to speak and the second largest tent in Oktoberfest, which Munich is probably most well-known for.

Oktoberfest, which is a two week festival beginning in September and ending the first Sunday in October, was first held Oct. 12, 1810, to celebrate the wedding of the crown prince Ludwig to Princess Therese von Sachsen-Hildburghausen.

Another popular attraction in the downtown area is the **Residenz palace**. Began in 1385, it now serves as one of Europe's most significant museums of interior decoration. Even the entrance doors are meticulously sculpted, making it well worth a visit.

Next door to the Residenz is the **Nationaltheater**, where several of Richard Wagner's operas premiered for Ludwig II of Bavaria. There are many other theaters in Munich that showcase the value the city places on the arts. You will probably also stumble upon street performers as well, which can be worth taking a break from walking to enjoy the wide variety of music they play.

Also of interest, though quite a walk from the main downtown area, is the **English Gardens**, one of the largest urban public parks in the world. If you are taking an extended vacation to Munich and are looking to get away from the city noise to relax, this is the place to do it. Don't be surprised if you see nude sunbathers on the vast lawns in the park. There are even four beer gardens located within the English Gardens.

You may also want to visit the **Hofgarten**. The Hofgarten is near the Residenz, and boasts of being the city's oldest park. It has the Dome of the State Chancellery located in the center of the garden.

Other draws include Munich's many museums, one of the most prominent being the **Deutsches Museum**, which displays the first TV from 1930. Germany's first exhibition of electricity was also held in Munich.

Munich has the strongest economy of any German city. The citizens enjoy a high quality of life and a low crime rate. There is also a very extensive public transportation system, which includes Germany's largest S-bahn. The city also has the second largest airport in Germany, the Franz Josef Strauss International, so flying in or out of the city is no problem.

Munich is also very conveniently located. The concentration camp Dachau is only a little way outside the city.

For soccer fans, the World Cup has been held in Munich twice, once in 1974, the second time in 2006. The 1972 Summer Olympics were also held there.



The massive statues of lions, the symbol of Bavaria, and other Bavarian history greats, can be found in the Odeonplatz, located between the old Rathaus and the Residenz.



The royal Residenz palace, found in the heart of Munich near the pedestrian zone, was mostly destroyed during World War II, but is being restored as it originally was built.



The English Gardens is one of the largest urban public parks in the world. Take a few minutes out of the busy schedule of sight-seeing and unwind in the surprising quiet of the gardens.

Memorial Park opens on Katterbach

12th CAB dedicates new park over Memorial Day weekend

Story and photo by
RONALD H. TOLAND JR.
Bavarian News

The 12th Combat Aviation Brigade's newly constructed Memorial Park was dedicated as part of the Memorial Day ceremony May 22, honoring veterans and fallen comrades.

Located adjacent to the headquarters building on Katterbach Kaserne, the park encompasses two memorial monuments, a bell and a globe with a black hawk perched atop and a UH1 helicopter of the Berlin Aviation Detachment mounted on a pedestal.

The completion of the park was perfect timing.

"We did not think it would be finished in the timely manner as it did. The weather cooperated; the contractors rushed to complete it. It just timed out that way for the Memorial Day weekend," said Chief Warrant Officer four Ted Tomczyk, of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 12 Combat Aviation Brigade, who headed the project.

The first step was to locate an area

for the park, and Tomczyk was tasked to do so and got the project off the ground.

"Before there was only a gazebo and grilling area there, but once we found and decided on the location, we sought the help of the Department of Public Works to design it," explained Tomczyk.

As the name indicates, Memorial Park is set up in honor of the sacrifices Soldiers have paid.

"We wanted to make it a solemn place. Both the memorials came down from Giebelstadt in remembrance of those Soldiers lost in Iraq and Afghanistan," he said.

"Never forget those that gave the ultimate sacrifice to protect our freedoms and the interests of democracy in the rest of the world."

Norberto Millet, Veteran of Foreign Wars Service Officer, echoed those same sentiments.

"This park serves as a way for all of us to always remember and honor the sacrifices veterans and Soldiers, past and present, have paid. That is what it is all about—keeping them in our memory and our hearts, and taking care of the people," he said.



From left, Lt. Col. Guy Zero, 12th CAB Rear Detachment Commander, and USAG Ansbach Command Sgt. Maj. James Esters, along with veterans Larry Bodily and Paul Parent of VFW Post 9342 and Shawn Davis of David Chavez, Post 1982, American Legion, lay wreaths on the lawn of the 12th CAB's Memorial Park in honor of the park's dedication and to pay tribute to fallen warriors May 22.

Deployed spouses get much needed break with retreat

by **RABIA NOMBAMBA**
Bavarian News

Deployments place a strain on families that the Ansbach military community tries to ease. In response, the U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach's Family Life Center offers deployed spouses retreats as part of its family support program.

"We try to equip and assist spouses in establishing essential support systems; acquiring training, spiritual fitness, and essential information; and gain valuable tools and coping skills to cultivate and maintain body, spirit, family readiness, and wellness through the deployment cycle.

"It is a holistic community approach that at times involves many different agencies within the Ansbach community..." said Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Juan Crockett, family life chaplain at the Family Life Center.

The off-site retreats are all-inclusive and offer workshops, outdoor and teambuilding activities,

social support and networking, as well as programs for children, and free time for spouses.

"We're trying to enhance and promote their (participants) wellness, providing tools and coping skills but also some personal free time. Child care is available during sessions but also after, if that's what they want," said Chaplain (Col.) Gregg Drew of the Illesheim chapel.

Humor is often used as a communication approach.

"Laughing relaxes and people open up easier. Once at ease, it is so much easier for them to talk about their worries and concerns. They often don't know us prior to the retreat and need to feel comfortable with the person they talk to," added Drew.

The center's concept appears effective. "It was absolutely wonderful. The sessions on laughing your way to a better marriage were helpful in more ways than I can explain.

"It was awesome. It was very nice to be able to have a day on Saturday. I work full

time, so down time is something that I do not have. It was great..." posted Jaime Caulder, whose husband is currently deployed with 412th Aviation Support Battalion, on the interactive customer service bulletin board after attending a recent retreat.

"It was a break that I so dearly needed. This is our first deployment and I thought I was prepared for it and wasn't. I was given some really helpful tools to use when he comes home for (rest and recuperation leave) and after.

"My daughter and I have been practicing. It seems funny now but we are ironing out the wrinkles. It is good to know that there are people, like myself, going through the same issues and want to talk about it.

"I connected with some ladies who are sincere about their mission and want to be that other voice at the other end. My daughter enjoyed herself and needed a break also.

"It was wonderful to go to a place not only for the lessons but to also see God's works. I

highly recommend it to those who just need to take a deep-breathe," posted another attendee.

Currently, the Ansbach military community offers single Soldier retreats, marriage retreats, and deployed spouses' retreats.

As units rotate in and out of deployments, the different retreats rotate as well.

"We recently had another deployed spouses retreat, but of course, the focus will change to couple retreats once the troops are coming back.

"We have one battalion left here (in Illesheim) that is getting ready to deploy. Once they deploy we start all over again (with deployed spouses' retreats)," said Drew.

From Oct. 2007 to today, the Family Life Center has offered a total of nine retreats. Retreats are held at different sites with different classes each time.

For more information on the center's offerings or to sign up for the next retreat, call the chapel at DSN 467-2785 or CIV 09802-832-785.

Preferred provider network ensures best medical care in Europe

Story and photo by **RONALD H. TOLAND JR.**
Bavarian News

Soldiers and family members may be surprised to find themselves visiting local physicians instead of American doctors during their stay overseas.

Health clinics in Europe coordinate with their host nation partners to ensure that full-service health care is available as part of the physician provider network.

"Health care in Bavaria is one part of the overall transformation process in Europe and has recently changed from being hospital-centered to a clinic-centric model," said Anne Torphy, U.S. Army Medical Activity, Bavaria Public Affairs Officer.

According to Torphy, BMEDDAC consists of eight health clinics supporting 40,000 Soldiers and family members where routine care is handled.

If you need to see a specialist such as an orthopedic surgeon or obstetrician, patients are referred to local providers; a move that can be disquieting for some patients, as some base clinics report patients are not always initially comfortable with outside referrals.

Helga Kryczka, patient liaison at the Katterbach Health Clinic, said that patient liaisons are there to bridge the gap between the clinics and the local providers.

"We are the link between the American doctors and German doctors. We translate and explain the difference in German and American care and try to make the process easy for our patients," said Kryczka at a PPN dinner May 8,



Capt. Daniel Jereza, medical director at the Katterbach Health Clinic, listens and discusses health care and administrative processes with a local provider at a preferred provider network dinner held May 8 in Ansbach.

hosted by the Katterbach Health Clinic.

"We try to avoid problems for them and later coordinate follow up care with a translated medical report for the patient, which is scanned into their records," she continued.

There are many highly qualified local doctors, all of whom are screened and periodically reviewed by medical officials, like Maj. Christopher Christon, Katterbach Health Clinic Commander, who provide excellent health care

to Soldiers and families.

"All of the providers that we refer our patients to have their credentials periodically reviewed and screened just as in the U.S. to ensure that they meet our high standards and requirements," said Christon.

According to Christon, the paperwork he sees every year contains verifiable information. "I see their certifications, diploma's...like a credentials packet," he said.

"I have toured the local hospitals and clinics, met the staff, observed, and have seen what they have, which is mostly state of the art equipment—they are pretty much up to standard and comparable to what we have in Landstuhl (and the U.S.)," he continued.

Christon said that overall, the network is a success.

"We have a wonderful relationship with hundreds of highly trained German medical personnel supporting our Ansbach family—they are highly qualified and experienced providers, with many belonging to international medical associations and several that have attended medical schools in the U.S.," he said.

"I am very happy with the program; most providers go above and beyond for us and adapt to patient feedback. They also speak and have some brochures and signs in English for our patients."

For more in depth coverage on medical care in Europe, read the article in the December 2007 "Welcome Edition" of the Bavarian News at: <http://www.rlehner.de/milcom/bn/welcome.html>.

Ansbach firefighters ready to respond

Story and photo by
RONALD H. TOLAND JR.
Bavarian News

The U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach fire department took the lead in ensuring that firefighters in the Installation Management Command Europe footprint are well trained and ready to respond.

As of 2007, due to the local fire department's initiative, the Ansbach-Illsheim community owns the only Army firefighting academy in Europe.

The complete planning, execution, and training development, which was built from the ground up, was accomplished by USAG Ansbach fire chief Stefan Groetschel and training officer Alexander Gernhard.

"My chief came up with the idea in 1998, but I was responsible for putting it into action," said Gernhard, who developed most of the planning.

"This has been in planning since I got here in '98 and was a firefighter in Katterbach as the fire prevention officer. At that time there was nothing here, no training, no facility, no program, just grass," said Gerhard during a training simulation at the training center site at Urlas.

The facility development project, basically boiled down to funding approval for a firefighting training system.

FFTS safely generates flames, heat, and reduced visibility during residential or aviation fire fighting training scenarios. Cockpit fires and overheated batteries, for example, can be simulated by the system.

According to Groetschel, the system utilizes propane instead of jet propellant fuel for life fire training purposes to comply with environment protection requirements.

"Congress has provided the funding (for the FFTS) so we can comply with our training requirements. There is no other way to perform live fire training (and comply with environment protection requirements) such as burning a stack of pallets or tires," explained Groetschel.

Wanting to keep the local



Firefighters of the Katterbach fire department illustrate extinguishing an oil spill fire at the firefighting academy May 6. The Ansbach-Illsheim community owns the only Army firefighting academy in Europe.

firefighters, as well as those from all over installations in Europe, on the edge of training, the garrison's fire department volunteered to host and run the facility.

"We just volunteered for the location when they were looking for one," said Groetschel.

"We have the only location in Europe because we volunteered for it and it is cost effective since we can

rotate classes through one facility rather than maintain multiple centers across the European region.

"We need to keep our fighters trained with the best training, equipment, and facilities possible—all the practical knowledge and skills to do their job, train it, be as realistic as possible, do it safe, and with the right steps in case of a real fire. We have to be ready to respond," he said.

Gernhard further explained that having the facility increases the fire fighters' response time.

"Some new (civilian) firefighters have never been trained in a facility like this and have never even seen a fire before we are ready to respond," he said.

The firefighter's readiness to respond was also attested by Col. Michael Prendergast, U.S. Army Europe provost marshal, during a visit

of the facility May 6.

"This is an outstanding achievement of the fire training center," said Prendergast, recognizing the fire department by presenting a plaque and coins to the staff.

"I could not have asked for a better team," said Prendergast.

"I am proud of them. They really have a world class operation and the training is amazing."

New Lord Mayor visits kaserne



Photo by Ronald H. Toland Jr.

Lt. Col. Tammy S. McKenna, Commander, U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach, points out available beverages to Ansbach's new Lord Mayor Carda Seidel at the Katterbach dining facility.

Ansbach's newly elected Lord Mayor visited Katterbach Kaserne May 21. Part of the visit was a windshield tour through Katterbach Kaserne and lunch at the dining facility to provide the new mayor with a better idea on how members of the Ansbach military community live and work.

During a briefing of 12th Combat Aviation Brigade and garrison officials, Mayor Seidel assured that she is looking forward to continuing the city's good relations with the Ansbach military community.

Have an opinion? Tell us about it!
Submit letters to the editor at
usaggnews@eur.army.mil.

Student to Student Advanced Spanish students take their learning to elementary school students

Story and photo by
RONALD H. TOLAND JR.
Bavarian News

Ansbach High School's advanced Spanish students have been teaching Spanish to first-graders at Ansbach Elementary School, once every two weeks during the school year.

Eva Flagg, Ansbach High School Spanish teacher, coordinated the sessions with first-grade teacher Patricia Wilson.

"Everyone loves this program and it's the third year we have been doing this. Every time we meet it is a different project, games, and reading activities," Flagg explained.

"This year, most of my advanced students have been reading stories to the elementary students in Spanish. The stories are bilingual, so they can also tell the story in English," she continued.

The concept behind the program is that students teaching students benefits both elementary as well as high school students.

"It is a wonderful opportunity for my advanced students to see Spanish from the other perspective. You really know something when you can teach it. It really keeps my kids engaged with the subject and feels good to see the high school students teaching first-graders on specific projects," said Flagg.

According to Flagg, the program serves as a fun way to teach the elementary students the essential fundamentals of other languages and

cultures.

"It starts to develop a relationship between the young students and a foreign language. That way, they are not as intimidated when they get to high school and foreign language classes," stated Flagg.

Wilson, however, sees it from a cultural perspective.

"I have Spanish kids in my class and I want them to be aware of their culture, sample it, and be able to share it with others. It also keeps with our social studies standards of learning about and respecting different types of cultures. The kids are really open to learning it," said Wilson.

The project was a learning

experience for Raul Bracero, one of the advanced Spanish students.

"It is great to be able to teach traditions, culture, and the language as a group, but the most effective tool for the kids is learning the words to music. They learn fast and like it the most," said Bracero.

As a special ending to the year's sessions, the children learned the "Chicken Dance" in Spanish.

The students learned the words and signs, rehearsed it, and followed up at the last meeting to see how well they had learned it.

"They were able to perform it at the talent show at the elementary school with Ms. Wilson," said Flagg.



Eva Flagg's advanced Spanish students teach the "Chicken Dance" in Spanish to elementary school students as part of a joint learning effort between the high school and elementary school.

Soldiers complete convoy live fire exercise

Story and photo by Sgt. KEITH M. ANDERSON
16th SB Public Affairs

Deploying logistics Soldiers — some of them fresh out of advanced individual training — from the 16th Special Troops Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, Bamberg, were put to a final test before their upcoming deployment to northern Iraq in a culminating convoy live fire exercise at Range 305 in Grafenwoehr May 13.

“The purpose of the convoy live fire exercise here was to prepare our Soldiers for the dangers and situations they’ll face in Iraq, in a secure and safe environment,” said Capt. Charles Ausman, operations and training officer-in-charge, 16th STB, and range officer-in-charge. “It’s a capstone to the training we’ve been doing for the last month.”

During training events in April and May Soldiers rehearsed individual, squad, and platoon-level tasks; mounted convoy training; and weapons ranges.

At the convoy live fire, Soldiers learned the capabilities and requirements for each position in a convoy, such as the responsibilities the driver and the gunner have, and how to react to small arms fire, ambushes, disabled vehicles, calling for medical evacuation, reporting unexploded ordnance on the roadway and other tasks units in Iraq have to be able to do every time they leave the wire.

But the most important part of the training was learning to communicate and work as a team.

“You have to pay attention to what’s going on around you and communicate it,” said Lt. Col. Christopher Chun, commander, 16th STB, to the Soldiers going through the convoy training.

He stressed that every member of the convoy



Logistics Soldiers from the 16th Special Troops Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade were put to a final test before their upcoming deployment to northern Iraq in a culminating convoy live fire exercise at Range 305 in Grafenwoehr May 13.

team is important, and critical to the success of the convoy operation.

Pfc. Roody Mamourette, all-wheel vehicle mechanic, HHC, 16th STB, was proud of his contribution to the convoy.

“I was the first one to spot unexploded ordnance,” Mamourette said. “When we got there we had no choice but to push forward.”

The 25-year-old from Boston, Mass., originally from Haiti, who has two brothers and a sister in Haiti and two sisters in Boston, said he didn’t want to be a gunner at first.

“When I first got to the unit they told me I was going to carry a M249,” Mamourette said. “I said ‘oh no’ because I thought a gunner was a dangerous position.”

“But that’s what I did today, making sure to keep my head low, clear my sector and look for improvised explosive devices, and now I feel more confident.”

Mamourette, who has been in the unit for about a month, said he was ready to deploy.

“It’s the main reason why I joined,” Mamourette said. “I want to make a difference; I want to do my part.”

For another new Soldier, Pvt. Stephanie Parks, quartermaster and chemical equipment repairer, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 16th STB, the training was essential.

“I’m training to go downrange so I don’t die, so I can keep myself and my team members protected while we’re in Iraq,” Parks said.

The 19-year-old from Covington, Tenn., who arrived at the unit March 4 from AIT at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. She said she learned a lot from the training, and that it was exciting.

“I learned how to call in a casualty report over the radio, and many other things,” Parks said. “The training was an adrenaline rush.”

Parks, who has six brothers and sisters, said the Army is a family affair. Her brothers Justin Parks and Anthony Cothrane are both active-duty combat medics, and her brother Joshua Cothrane is a water treatment specialist in the Army Reserves. Her father, Sgt. Louis Parks, is in the Tennessee National Guard.

“I want to defend my country and make my dad proud,” Parks said.

The 16th Special Troops Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, will deploy to northern Iraq for 15 months to provide logistical support to U.S., coalition, and Iraqi security forces in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom VIII.

Gauntlet transfers authority to 793rd MP Spartans

by Staff Sgt. MICHEL SAURET
3rd Infantry Division PAO

Soldiers from the 720th Military Police Battalion transferred authority over to the 793rd Military Police Battalion during a ceremony held May 14 on Camp Stryker, Iraq.

For the 720th MP Bn., known as the Gauntlet, out of Fort Hood, Texas, this was its third deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. They responded on a short notice to deploy March 2007 in support of a police transition team mission in the Multi-National Division – Center area of operation.

In their place now, the 793rd MP Bn., known as the Spartans, from Bamberg, Germany, will continue the same mission. This includes training Iraqi Police in detainee operations, searching techniques, weapon marksmanship, police investigations and equipment accountability.

During his speech, Lt. Col. Frank Y. Rangel, 720th MP Bn. Commander, described arriving to Camp Stryker. His military policemen arrived here

with no vehicles, buildings without doors and windows, and a communications cell that still needed to be set in motion.

“But we had one secret weapon which would ensure success in overcoming our many challenges,” Rangel said. “That is, we had Soldiers.”

Rangel spoke with pride of those MP Soldiers willing to work harder for the benefit of their unit’s success.

“These Soldiers compiled a record of achievement and success that boggles the mind,” he said. “Day in and day out they mounted their rides to work at the Iraqi Police stations, secured the venues for their principals, or turned a wrench or fixed a radio ... all the while the threat of an IED or indirect fire loomed just a moment away.”

Throughout this mission, the 720th MP Bn. travelled nearly 1.8 million miles on some of the most dangerous roads, in the most dangerous neighborhoods in the world to develop a police force capable and worthy of the Iraqi people,

said Col. Mark Spindler, 18th MP Brigade commander.

The 720th was assigned to the 18th MP Bde. while deployed to Iraq under the operational control of the 3rd Infantry Division in MND-C.

“This battalion was a surge unit ... that, without exaggeration, broke the enemy’s back and momentum, and gave back to the government of Iraq the chance to regain control,” Spindler said.

For the 793rd MP Bn., their transition process into Camp Stryker was much different since they had Gauntlet Soldiers to learn from, benefitting from the infrastructure set in place before their arrival.

“We fully intend to take all the progress that’s been made over the past 15 months by the 720th MP Battalion and begin building on that,” said Lt. Col. Michael Blahovec, 793rd MP Bn. Commander.

“Fortunately we got to spend the better part of the last three weeks working with their staff and leadership and getting out to see all of the units they support.”

During the ceremony, Rangel and Command Sgt. Maj. Jerry A. Craig cased the 720th MP Bn. Colors to symbolize their relief. Their unit will redeploy back to Fort Hood, Texas.

Following them, Blahovec and Command Sgt. Maj. Eric Hodges moved forward and uncased the 793rd MP Bn. Colors to complete the transfer of authority.

Blahovec said he looks forward to working in various support and command and control relationships with the 3rd Infantry Division units; from brigade combat team level to company level.

He said his main goal for this deployment is to get things going with the Iraqi people, eventually with the goal of turning things over to IP and give their people a safe and secure environment.

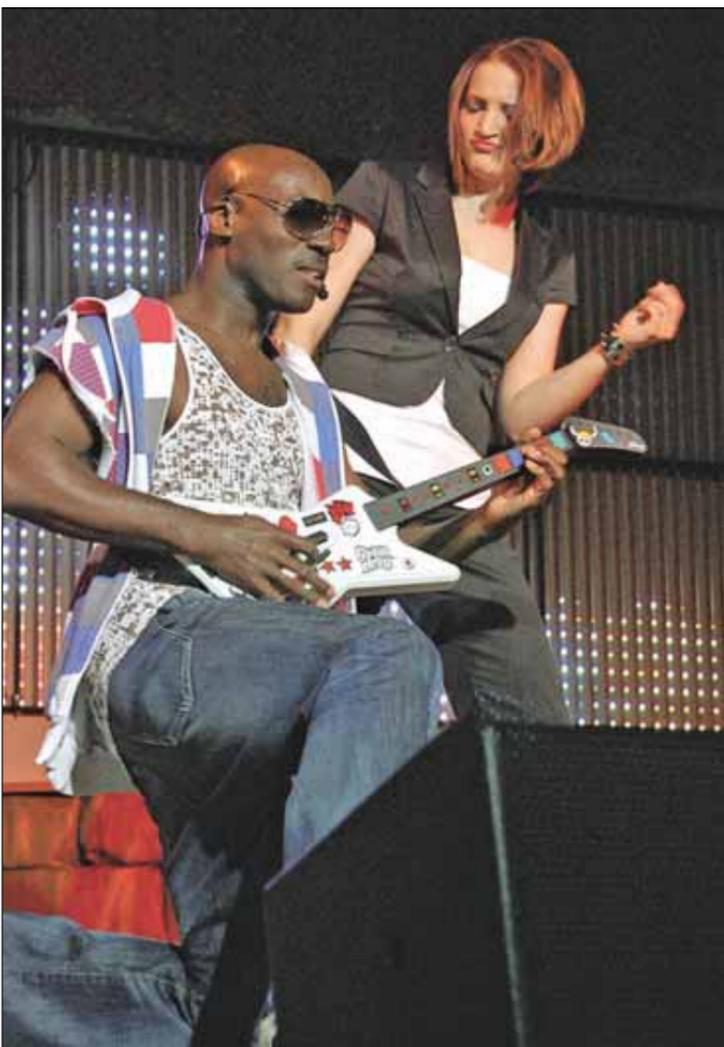
The 793rd MP Bn. has been deployed once before to Iraq in support of OIF during 2004 and 2005.

“We wish you Godspeed and safety as you assume the fight,” Rangel said to his unit’s replacement.

GUITAR HERO

Close to 500 community members came out to see the Soldier Show in May at the Basics building. The show included rap, R ‘n’ B, 1940s swing, and country music as well as lots of dancing.

Photo by Trecia A. Wilson



Commander responds to ICE comment on traffic

ICE Comment

Col. Rosenberg, I like all the traffic pattern changes. I think they all make sense and have really assisted the traffic flow on post.

However, what are you doing to the main gate? It takes forever to get on in the morning, you can hardly drive the bigger SUV’s around the bollards, and where do you park to sign people off post? How confusing and a huge mess.

You were doing so well sir till you designed this flop.

Anonymous

Garrison commander’s response

I really appreciate the feedback from the community in terms of garrison management. In reference to an ICE comment I received last week, it is good to hear that the traffic pattern changes are well-received.

Now to address the two concerns mentioned in that comment. Getting on post in the morning will always be crowded if everyone tries to get on at the same time.

Unfortunately, no one can predict the traffic delay. One recommendation is to come in a little earlier to avoid the traffic and not have to wait in line.

As for the bollards, I understand you have to go slow to maneuver around them and it is as difficult in government and military vehicles as it is in a SUV.

Please remember, we are not trying to make it

difficult for you! We are trying to make it difficult for anyone who does not have our best interest in mind.

As you maneuver around the bollards, keep in mind that these force protection measures are in place for your safety; they are designed to slow someone trying to get in so that we have time to raise the denial barrier.

Now to the last concern which addresses parking for people signing out visitors. I did not address this point in the article we did on traffic changes at gate 3.

However, sign-out parking is available. There are five or six parking spaces along Zollner Strasse adjacent to the Warner Club. These parking spaces are for patrons who need to sign out visitors. It is the best we could do with the space available and the overall layout of the area.

Unfortunately, there was not a name to respond to so I have chosen to respond publicly. It is very important to me to hear what you have to say. Please continue to provide feedback.

You can either come to my open door, Monday’s starting at 4 p.m., or you can send an ICE comment card and you’ll be sure to get a response; though it is easier to get you that response when you provide a name and contact information.

Lt. Col. Gary A. Rosenberg
Commander, U.S. Army
Garrison Bamberg

V Corps 69th ADA Brigade cases Colors

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. JOHN QUEEN
69th ADA BDE Public Affairs

After more than half a century of service with the United States Army in Europe, the 69th Air Defense Artillery Brigade cased its Colors May 13 formally bidding "auf wiedersehen" to its longtime home in Germany.

The brigade will be unfurling its Colors in the heart of "Cav Country" Aug. 15, at its new home in Fort Hood, Texas.

The 69th ADA Brigade was constituted May 17, 1918 as part of the Coastal Artillery Corps and served briefly in France during World War I. It was called to arms again during World War II and saw action in the Pacific Theater.

After World War II the unit remained inactive for nearly ten years, however, as the Cold War began to escalate the 69th was called back into service – this time as an Anti-Aircraft Artillery Group.

The group was activated in 1955 at Gerszewski Barracks in Knielingen near Karlsruhe. It was deactivated two years later only to be reactivated again in 1960 at Emery Barracks in Wuerzburg.

There it was given the designation Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 69th Artillery Group. It became one of four artillery groups under the operational command of the 32nd ADA Brigade and the first to field the HAWK missile system. These four artillery groups provided integrated air defense for the central European region

In 1990, the 69th ADA Brigade, along



Flames erupt from the muzzle of a 105 mm howitzer as the 529th Military Police Company's Honor Guard render honors during the 69th Air Defense Artillery Brigade's Colors casing and departure ceremony on Leighton barrack in Wuerzburg.

with elements of the 32nd Army Air Defense Command, deployed a task force of more than 1,000 Soldiers to Southwest Asia in support of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

They served as the dedicated high and medium altitude air defense asset of the VII United States Army Corps.

This task force deployed four Patriot firing batteries and two HAWK batteries.

At the conclusion of ground combat operations they were moved forward on the battlefield to provide integrated coverage against both hostile aircraft and ballistic missiles.

September 1, 1991, the 69th ADA

Brigade was reassigned as the air defense brigade for V Corps.

This reassignment brought the unit a new mission. Instead of providing air defense coverage from fixed locations, it was now responsible for the coverage of highly-mobile Corps assets.

During this time the brigade

operated two of the Army's most lethal air defense systems: Patriot and Stinger.

In the early 90's the 69th ADA Brigade's moved its headquarters to Giebelstadt Army Airfield, then as the Army began restructuring it was moved back to Wuerzburg at Leighton Barracks in 2006.

The Colors casing ceremony not only signified the brigade leaving Germany, it was also an opportunity for the Army to say goodbye to Wuerzburg.

"This ceremony is very bittersweet for me personally," said Lt. Gen. Kenneth Hunzeker, the V Corps commander and guest speaker at the event. "It marks one of the final formal ceremonies here on Leighton Barracks as we get ready to shut the gates on this kaserne and close the final chapter in the U.S. Army's stay in Wuerzburg."

Hunzeker, who once commanded the 1st Infantry Division from Leighton Barracks, added that the ceremony also gave the Army an opportunity to say farewell to the local German community that supported it for six decades.

"We have come to know and love the German culture, expressions, folklore, and people," he said.

Wuerzburg has been host to the Army since its capture by the 12th Armor and 42nd Infantry Divisions in the final weeks of World War II and has been home to the 1st, 3rd, and 10th Infantry Divisions, the 69th Air Defense Artillery Brigade, an Army hospital, and various other American military units.

RESET program to standardize redeployment services

IMCOM Europe press release

Riding the wave of momentum established since the Army Family Covenant was announced in October 2007, Installation Management Command-Europe and U.S. Army Garrisons Vicenza, Schweinfurt, and Bamberg recently initiated a groundbreaking effort to ensure Soldiers and their families receive consistent excellence in the delivery of redeployment services and programs following an extended wartime deployment.

Seizing on this summer's planned redeployment of the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team from Afghanistan, representatives met in Schweinfurt May 5-7 to develop a standard model, for possible future Army/garrison-wide implementation, to afford 173rd warriors and families spread among the three garrisons in

two different countries with maximum equity and accessibility to redeployment related programs and services regardless of the community to which they return.

RESET, one of Four Army Imperatives, and the basis for the pilot program, will establish a balanced process following an extended deployment that systematically restores deployed units to a level of personnel and equipment readiness that permits the resumption of training for future missions.

"In addition to fixing and replacing and upgrading our equipment and training for future missions, we also have to revitalize our Soldiers and families by providing them the time and opportunity to recover from the cumulative effects of sustained operations," said Army Chief of Staff Gen. George Casey when he announced his Four Imperatives in

October 2007.

Installation Management Command's purpose under the RESET initiative is to ensure Soldier and family programs, as well as installation facilities and ranges, support the implementation of Army Force Generation, the structured progression of increased unit readiness over time resulting in recurring periods of availability of trained, ready, and cohesive units. The RESET pilot focus is on the unit; accelerating the reconstitution of the force, increasing unit readiness, and improving preparation for deployment for subsequent deploying units.

Garrison and IMCOM-Europe representatives from a diverse cross section of functional areas, from public works to MWR and public affairs, brainstormed key tasks and developed integrated approaches that will be captured in a model that participants

are hopeful will be a benchmark for any RESET operations involving any unit and any garrison. Their work was augmented by key enablers representing the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team's rear party, and European Regional Medical Center.

"Today's Army Family is dramatically affected by operational tempo, and we're excited that the lessons of this pilot ensure the needs and concerns of all audiences impacted by the 15-month redeployment cycle are foundational planning factors in the RESET process. Through this groundbreaking work, we're able to assure the redeploying unit that IMCOM-Europe and garrison support structure is fully cocked and ready to deliver a consistent level of excellence of support regardless of where a unit is in the RESET process," said JoAnn Chambers, IMCOM-Europe chief of

staff.

Issues discussed ranged from creature comforts like bagged lunches for Soldiers disembarking from flights out of theater, and synchronizing the implementation of the seven-day Soldier reintegration program to a unit's particular needs, to consolidated marketing efforts to educate affected audiences, including host nation communities, on the Army's priorities during the RESET process.

Participants laid the ground work for a plan that will eventually nest within the Department of the Army's RESET model, provide additional accountability through the development of standardized guidance and resources for garrisons to accomplish reintegration tasks, and clearly articulate standards to ensure the same quality level of service at all garrisons.

German providers get a peek inside health clinic operation

by KIMBERLYGEARHART
Bavarian News

Ensuring that Americans receiving care in host nation facilities know what to expect, are comfortable, and are well-treated is a priority for military health clinics in Europe.

The flip side of that, ensuring host nation providers are knowledgeable and comfortable with their American counterparts and the expectations of their American patients, is also very important.

The Schweinfurt Health Clinic staff hosted a barbeque and clinic tour May 9 for approximately 75 host nation providers, many of whom had never been inside the American medical facility.

"Getting them inside the clinic helps them understand our capabilities," explained Lt. Col. Daniel Duecker, clinic commander.

Providers were taken through the clinic after hours for a brief overview of services offered.

Although the clinic has the capacity to handle a large number of appointments per day, "we're an ambulatory clinic. That's why (host nation providers) are so important," said Sgt. 1st

Class Tyron Sutton, patient advocate at the Schweinfurt Health Clinic. Ambulatory clinics do not have the capability to provide in-patient care.

Dr. Sabine Vogel, one of the host nation providers who handles obstetrics of American patients, said that the tour was the most exciting part of the event.

"I want to see the clinic, see what the patients who come to me have available to them here," she said.

Guests were also introduced to incoming clinic commander Lt. Col. Patrick Denman, who officially took command in a ceremony on Ledward Barracks May 16.

"The timing of the event worked out perfectly to introduce Denman," Duecker said.

Although Denman had no official role during the event, Duecker made sure to make introductions and familiarize the German providers with the new command.

"Having a personal relationship with our providers is so important. If you don't have that, you can't pick up the phone and say 'hey, I've got a problem, can you help me fix it?'" Duecker said.

Vacation Bible School looking for volunteers, kicks off July 21

by MARK HEETER
USAG Schweinfurt CI Chief

Ahoy, mates!

Vacation Bible School, sponsored by the U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt Religious Services Office, is on the horizon and set to sail July 21-25.

Voyagers and volunteers on this year's journey should not be fooled by this year's nautical VBS theme: "Calling all heroes: The pirates who don't do anything."

There will be lots of doing.

An earnest search for captains, shipmates, and first mates – sailor speak for "volunteers" – is underway, according to Patricia Wiedemer, VBS director.

"We're quite reliant on adults who have experience with children," she said, quickly adding that such experience is not required.

In fact, according to David Kessler, USAG Schweinfurt religious education director, anyone in middle school or older is eligible to volunteer for VBS, held for children 4 to 10 years old.

"They'll get the opportunity to make lifelong, eternal impact on the lives of these children," Kessler said, noting that at least 70 to 80 volunteers will be needed to plan, organize, and execute the VBS.

"We can always use more," he said. "There is an opportunity for anybody who loves kids to join in."

Children, broken into small groups, will spend the mornings taking part in Bible theater, island games, and a new science lab program that shows the crossroads where science and faith actually come together, according to Wiedemer.

"Each group is like a little family unit," she said, adding that kids from different age groups will comprise the groups – led by those captains.

Further training will likely be available in early July and again just prior to the VBS, according to Wiedemer, giving those unable to attend today plenty of time to join the crew.

For more information, call the chapel at DSN 354-1570 or CIV 09721-96-1570.

Submit your story request or idea to mail.sft.pao@eur.army.mil.

Afghan operation deals blow to insurgents

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. BRANDON AIRD
173rd ABCT Public Affairs

Soldiers from 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment (Airborne) and Legion Company, 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment (Airborne), teamed up with the Afghan National Army and the Afghan Border Police to conduct Operation Mountain Highway II in eastern Nuristan province, Afghanistan recently.

Operation Mountain Highway II started April 22 when Soldiers from International Security Assistance Force and the ANA simultaneously air-assaulted at night onto three mountains above Gowerdesh Bridge.

Afghan and American Soldiers created Observation Posts Mace, Hatchet and Brick, which enabled the ABP and ANA to drive up from the south and seize the Gowerdesh Bridge April 26.

"It was very in deft synchronized air-assault to get everybody in," said Army Capt. John Williams, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment (Airborne). "Over four months of planning was put into this operation."

During the four-month planning phase, ABP were retrained on weapons, vehicle searches, first aid and reacting to contact, said Army Capt. Kafi Gwira, an ABP embedded tactical trainer from Chicago. The ABP were also issued new uniforms, weapons, ammunition and equipment for the operation.

"We got them ready to seize the bridge for good this time," said Gwira. "The ABP will now maintain a presence at the bridge at all times."

The ANA built three local observation posts

near the bridge during the first few days of the operation, which were handed over to the ABP a few days later.

"The reason why this bridge is so critical is that its one of the last ones left for insurgents to use," said Williams. "If they can't use the Gowerdesh Bridge, this severely limits their capabilities in this area."

According to Williams the bridge is part of a route used by insurgents to travel from Pakistan into the interior of Afghanistan.

Last summer, insurgents drove off the ABP and destroyed their security check point. The Gowerdesh Bridge has been a key altercation point between insurgents and Afghan forces over the last year. Numerous fire fights between ISAF and insurgents have occurred near the bridge.

"They need strong positions, which is why we provided the engineers to build the bunker positions at the bridge," said Williams. "They also needed local OP's, which we're building near the bridge. So now, we can see all the area around us. The enemy can't come here unimpeded like they have been."

ISAF will continue to operate two of three larger observation posts to support the ABP, but once the bunkers and fighting positions are built the ABP will take over operations at Gowerdesh Bridge.

According to Williams, Operation Mountain Highway II is an ongoing operation, but it's already considered a great success.

"Since we have secured this bridge, we can now bring development to this region," said Williams. "We can fix the road and bring economic and government development here. The insurgents have lost the upper hand in this area."



Army Capt. John Williams (left), commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment (Airborne), observes the hill top while Army Staff Sgt. William Randall, HHT, directs Army Sgt. Shawn Seymour, a M-240B machine gun operator in HHT, during Operation Mountain Highway II April 27 in Nuristan province, Afghanistan.

Ready, aim, FIRE!



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Timmons

Dandy Flemming, a family member with Anvil Troop, 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry, takes aim on the Schweinfurt paintball course during the Cav Ladies' Spur Ride in May.

Flemming was one of 40 family members with the CAV and the 172nd Brigade reconnaissance team to participate in the event, during which they tried their hands at military skills, such as grenade throwing, drill and ceremony, and applying camouflage paint, among other activities.

The CAV spouses are preparing for their Soldiers' return from their 15-month deployment to Afghanistan, expected sometime this summer.

Middle school celebrates Asian Pacific Heritage

Story and photo by LINDSEY COLE
Bavarian News

May is Asian Pacific Heritage Month, a time to celebrate the cultures of Japan, China, Philippines, Korea, Vietnam, and many other Asian cultures in which you may be associated.

The Schweinfurt Middle School put on a performance May 16 that celebrated the different ways of life and individuality of many Asian countries.

This year's celebration, the fourth at SMS, presented the theme: "Pursuing excellence through leadership diversity, harmony gateway to success."

"It is my sincere hope that as we celebrate... each and every one of us will reflect on our multiple heritages and cherish our inherent diversity and appreciate unity that binds us together as Americans," said Lily Bagtas, long-time coordinator of the event and the school nurse.

Every year the event celebrates the different Asian cultures and helps students, parents, and faculty be enlightened. This year also focused on people of Asian descent who have made great contributions to our nation, such as Noro Yamasaki a Seattle architect who designed the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center.

"For 30 years they stood as a testament to American ingenuity and prosperity," Bagtas said.

The audience was entertained by many different dances from Hawaii and Korea and a performance of a Chinese dragon dance and was invited to participate in a traditional Philippine bamboo stick dance. There was also a guest speaker Chaplain Kim Sang, music by the eighth-grade band, songs by SMS chorus and Bo Young & Co., and a fashion show.

Although this is Bagtas' final year at SMS, acting principal Wilma Holt hopes that the tradition of the Asian Pacific celebration will continue, and added that Bagtas will be missed.



Students perform the traditional Philippine bamboo stick dance at Schweinfurt Middle School May 16.

Local Boy Scouts remember Memorial Day at Normandy

Story and photo by SANDRA WILSON
Bavarian News

Forty-five Schweinfurt Boy Scouts and their family members joined nearly 3,500 other participants from all around Europe at the April Boy Scouts Spring Camporee in Normandy.

Saturday began with a two-hour service project to clean up the sands of Normandy, resulting in the collection of numerous piles of garbage.

Afterwards, an opening ceremony took place at St. Laurent next to the 1st Infantry Division monument to honor veterans, followed by a boat tour of the D-Day landing sites. The evening was ignited with a bonfire, and scouts received their earned awards and badges.

On Sunday, the Camporee was closed with a wreath-laying ceremony and memorial service at the American cemetery followed by a private gravesite ceremony for the Scouts and their families.

"It was so inspiring to see these young men and their families participating in such a solemn but memorable experience," said Joe Bautista, scoutmaster of Schweinfurt's Troop 55.

The opening and closing ceremonies for the Camporee were attended by French dignitaries, a three-star navy general, veterans, and scouts from France and the United States.

In addition, an unexpected visit by a U.S. Army veteran of D-Day gave the opportunity for scouts to meet a hero of the war.



Boy Scout Jacob Bautista lays a carnation in the Normandy American Cemetery in honor of a Soldier from Missouri who died during D-Day.

Pregnant women receive top care in Germany

by Lt. Col. HENRY SPRING

BMEDDAC Deputy Commander, Clinical Services

Pregnant women in the U.S. military community living in the Bavaria footprint must see a German obstetrician/gynecologist for their pre-natal care and give birth in a German hospital.

U.S. Army Medical Activity Bavaria has recently changed from a hospital-centric to a clinic-centric model, and is working to ensure that patients are comfortable with their care on the German economy.

One way to prepare for the initial meeting is to bring a birth plan. Many interactive forms are available online at various pregnancy Web sites, such as www.pregnancyandbaby.com. Use the plan as a way to discuss your expectations with your doctor.

Your local health clinic will refer a pregnant patient to a doctor who speaks English, understands the cultural differences, and will be able to explain those differences to the patient. Patient records will be sent to the local health clinic and translated in about two weeks. In the case of an emergency situation, translation of records will be expedited, said Helga Schmidt, a patient liaison for the Katterbach Health Clinic.

If the patient does not feel that the doctor is communicating in a clear manner, or records are not being translated, it is very important to get the patient liaison involved, Schmidt said.

The patient liaison will be able to work with your current doctor or find another that the patient is more comfortable with for the term of the pregnancy and beyond.

German health care is different, not less advanced. In fact, the patients may like some of the differences. Women sit on a comfortable chair that curves and tilts to ensure better examinations, explained Dr. Bernd Hornbacher,



Photo by Anne Torphy

One of the birthing rooms at Ansbach Klinikum provides a variety of choices for the mother-to-be. Soothing music and colors, aromatherapy, and the help of a midwife are all part of the experience.

chief of obstetrics/gynecology for the Ansbach Klinikum.

A vaginal ultrasound is done regularly, giving excellent images and a second monitor is often available for the patient to view the results, said Hornbacher.

Staff Sgt. Vaijun Changvazquez and his wife Crystal were initially apprehensive about seeing a German doctor for delivery of their first child. They changed their minds after the first

appointment with Dr. Hans Urmlich.

"His English was great! We had appointments once a month. Every time we had an appointment, he would do an ultrasound. This made us feel at ease, as we saw our new baby every time we visited," said Changvazquez.

Giving birth in Germany will not be a completely similar experience to the United States, but the patient must keep up the lines of communication with their doctor. Spinal

anesthesia and cesarean sections are always available for expectant mothers, but other options include natural birth standing up, with a birth chair, or even underwater, said Hornbacher.

Crystal gave birth to a baby boy named Brandon this past January in a tub filled with warm water, assisted by midwife Beatriz Wagner and Dr. Urmlich. Changvazquez was initially concerned about his wife delivering in a hospital outside of the military community.

"It was great. My wife says that the only way we have another baby is if we come back to Germany or if Frau Wagner delivers in the States," he said.

No more than two family members are allowed in the birthing room so that the medical team, which includes midwives, can work efficiently, said Hornbacher.

Once mothers have given birth, they are allowed three to four days in the hospital, much longer than the one day recovery period in the United States. If the patient would like a private room, there is a charge of approximately \$50 per day, said Schmidt.

Expectant mothers and their family may also have concerns about emergency situations that could occur. Dr. Sabine Vogel, an obstetrician/gynecologist based in Schweinfurt, works with many military families and closely monitors each pregnancy. If she suspects there may be complications, Dr. Vogel sends the mother to Leopoldina, a hospital that specializes in high-risk pregnancies.

Ansbach Klinikum opened a brand-new pediatric ward Feb. 15 with state-of-the-art equipment that can accommodate pre-term babies beginning at 33 weeks.

Giving birth in Germany is unique; but with some due diligence and frank discussions, it can be a good journey for everyone.

Clinic commander answers your questions on services

by Lt. Col. TELITA CROSLAND

Grafenwoehr Health Clinic Commander

Q. I heard that Graf Clinic would have new summer hours – is that correct?

A. The new schedule is permanent. As of June 1, the hours will be 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday; 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Thursday; and 6:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Friday. On training holidays, scheduled appointments will be 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. We will be closed on Saturday and Sunday.

Q. I know that the health clinic sees Soldiers and their family members on a priority basis, but I'm not really sure what that means.

A. Soldiers and family members are considered TRICARE Prime. When you need routine care at the Graf Health Clinic, such as a well visit, expect a waiting period of around two to three weeks to be seen by a provider. We also have a limited number of same-day appointments for Soldiers and family members who need acute care. If those same-day acute care appointments are not available, we will refer to the physician provider network (Eschenbach ER). As a TRICARE Prime patient, you will have access to top-notch

German physicians. The TRICARE access standard for well appointments is four weeks. We will do our best to stay within standard.

Q. Why does it take so long to get a well-visit appointment right now?

A. Summer turnover (PCS and deployments) will impact access for a short period. We should be good by the end of August or beginning of September as our new staff arrives.

Q. What is the difference between routine care and acute care?

A. Routine care is a medical condition that does not require treatment within a day or two, or appointments like well visits. Acute care is medically necessary treatment that is required for illness or injury that would not result in further disability or death if not treated immediately – but treatment should not be put off. The illness or injury does require professional attention, and should be treated within 24-48 hours to avoid development of complications or continued suffering. Conditions that should receive urgent care include: sprains, scrapes, earaches, severe headaches, rising fever, persistent vomiting, or diarrhea – conditions that are serious but are

not life threatening. For acute care issues, contact your health care for a same-day appointment.

Q. Why I am sent to be seen by a German doctor? Isn't there an American physician available for my needs?

A. The U.S. Army Medical Activity in Bavaria is clinic-based. That means we rely on our excellent German specialists and hospitals for emergency and specialty care. Whether you're new to the Army or not, seeking health care in a foreign country can seem intimidating. Many doctors are members of international associations and have attended training in England or the United States. All providers are screened and periodically reviewed by medical officials, the same as they are in the U.S.

Q. Should I go the Graf or Vilseck Clinic if I am having an emergency?

A. No! The health clinic does not have its own emergency room, nor is it open 24 hours a day. In the case of an emergency, USAMEDDAC Bavaria suggests that you go to the nearest hospital. Call a toll-free number before you go: (0800) 350 3104. An emergency is a sudden and unexpected medical condition,

or the worsening of a condition which poses a threat to life, limb, or sight and requires immediate treatment; or a sudden, extremely painful condition that requires immediate treatment to alleviate suffering. Conditions that require emergency care include: loss of consciousness, shortness of breath, chest pain, uncontrolled bleeding, drug overdose, suicide attempt, poisoning, acute psychosis, and unexpected weakness, to name a few.

Q. How do I fill a prescription that was written by my German doctor?

A. When you or a family member is seen by a German doctor on the local economy, you will need to get the prescription filled at a German pharmacy (Apotheke) or have your doctor follow the U.S. standard format for prescriptions. Directions are available at the health clinic pharmacy. This policy is in place for reasons of safety, as doses and names of medications are different on the economy. You will need to pay for your prescription, and then fill out a form for reimbursement with TRICARE. Reimbursement usually takes four to six weeks. If you have questions about the medication, please don't hesitate to contact your pharmacy at the local U.S. health clinic.

BMEDDAC, BDENTAC make the move to Vilseck

by ANNE M. TORPHY

BMEDDAC PAO

The headquarters for both the U.S. Army Medical Activity Bavaria and U.S. Army Dental Activity Bavaria will share a new home late this summer as they complete the move from Wuerzburg Leighton Barracks to Vilseck Rose Barracks.

For most Soldiers and family members, the move will be transparent and will not affect the delivery of quality medical and dental care at the clinic level.

The BMEDDAC and BDENTAC headquarters will be housed together in Bldg. 700 at Vilseck Rose Barracks. Move in is scheduled for early August 2008. Approximately 120 employees and their family members will make Vilseck and the surrounding area their home.

The Bavaria MEDDAC Headquarters staff is commanded by Col. Theresa M. Schneider. She is supported by the deputy commanders and their personnel that oversee clinic services, nursing, the Warrior Transition Unit, and administrative functions of BMEDDAC.

The footprint of BMEDDAC currently

consists of eight health clinics supporting 40,000 patients and the five locations of the Warrior Transition Units with approximately 200 Soldiers.

The health clinics are located in Bamberg, Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, Illesheim, Katterbach, Schweinfurt, Vilseck, and Wuerzburg.

The Bavaria DENTAC Headquarters is commanded by Col. John W. Etzenbach.

He and his executive officer and troop commander, 1st Lt. Aaron Roberts and 1st Sgt. Mark Eavey, support the 240 dental officers, NCOs and junior enlisted Soldiers, NSPS civilians, host national personnel, and contract dentists and hygienists who provide care to the 17,500 Soldiers stationed in Bavaria and their family members.

Clinics are located in Bamberg, Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, Illesheim, Katterbach, Schweinfurt, Vilseck, and Wuerzburg.

The headquarters staff provides administrative and logistic support to personnel in the clinics so that they can take care of the daily mission of Soldier readiness and patient care for other eligible beneficiaries.

The health clinic and dental clinic in Wuerzburg will shut their doors around July 30 with the closure of Leighton Barracks.

WTU Soldiers honored for service

Story and photo by ANNE M. TORPHY

BMEDDAC PAO

Three Warrior Transition Unit Soldiers received the Army Commendation Medal, one with Valor, and a Purple Heart during a ceremony at the May 14 WTU Commanders' Gathering in the Vilseck Chapel on Rose Barracks.

Lt. Col. Thomas Rickard, the Rear Detachment commander for 2d Stryker Cavalry Regiment, made the presentation to the Soldiers.

Rickard stated that on September 11, 2007, the three Soldiers saved the lives of many Soldiers during a combat operation in Iraq against

Al Qaeda.

The three Soldiers helped Eagle Company, 2nd Squadron Cougars, 2SCR to gain fire superiority against armed enemy insurgents during the battle in Iraq.

All three Soldiers said that they like to think that any one of the WTU Soldiers would have done the same thing.

Pfc. Joshua I. Vierra received the Army Commendation Medal for Valor and a Purple Heart. Spc. Gilberto O. Guiling received the Army Commendation Medal and a Purple Heart. Spc. Bradley P. White received the Army Commendation Medal and a Purple Heart.



Lt. Col. Thomas Rickard presented three Purple Hearts and other awards to Spc. Bradley White, far left, Spc. Gilberto Guiling, and Pfc. Joshua Vierra.

Schweinfurt Soldier awarded Medal of Honor

Continued From Page 1

education. The Army was an opportunity for him to be able to get the kind of education that he wanted."

The younger McGinnis had aspirations of one day becoming an automotive technician. The Army, in his eyes, was a means to that end - a place where he could serve his country as an infantryman, but receive an off-duty education that would prepare him for a future career.

Once McGinnis made the decision to join the Army, that became his focus.

"The different conversations I had with Ross sometimes were over academics and encouraging him to do his best and that he had goals in mind," Vicky Walters, Keystone High's principal said. "We were encouraging him to complete those goals...He indicated he would do what it took to get the job done."

He would finish high school so he could join the Army.

His parents shared concerns about their son enlisting during a time of war, but knew if he stayed in Knox, his odds of making something of himself were limited.

"He had just as much chance at home of ending up dead as he did in Iraq at that point," Tom said. "When young men get out of school and they don't have an education, it's a dangerous life for them for several years. Something could happen at home as quick as it could over there. I knew that in the Army he was going to have a serious discipline. He was going to be trained, and that would help him stay on the right path."

McGinnis left his rural Pennsylvania town for basic training at Fort Benning, Ga., within days of graduating from Keystone High School, just before his 18th birthday. During the first stage of training, McGinnis's parents received a phone call from him.

"He said the first week was boring, a lot of, 'Hurry up and wait,'" Romaine said. In subsequent calls, he conveyed his increasing enthusiasm.

"He really liked the physical part of the training. Ross wasn't one to push a pencil. He wanted to be actively involved," she said. "He was really excited about the weapons training. While in Boy Scouts, they went to a shooting range once and he really liked that, so it didn't surprise me when he said he wanted to go with the gunner position."

According to reports from fellow Soldiers, McGinnis's interest in weapons was crafted into a skill set that would serve him well in his position as a .50-caliber machine gunner.

Soldier Among Civilians

McGinnis finished basic and then infantry training in Georgia and headed home to Knox on leave before reporting to his first assignment in Germany. The changes in him were evident, and shocking to some.

"He looked so much taller. He wasn't. I think it was the uniform really," Romaine said. "But it was, 'Yes, ma'am,' and, 'No, ma'am.'" And I was like, 'Who is this kid?' He had a lot of respect, not that Ross ever disrespected us, but there was definitely that attitude that the Army had bred into him already in that short amount of time."

Tom echoed his wife's feelings about the new Soldier.

"When he came home on leave and he was around civilians, he felt uneasy because other people seemed to be sloppy and lazy as compared to what it was like in the military. He was definitely different and thought differently after he'd gone through the training. It was surprising, because I don't know if I ever knew anyone like that before, especially my own son. He had learned and grown quite a bit."

His former teachers saw maturity in him that didn't exist before he became a Soldier.

"He has been described as a 100 percent guy or a zero percent guy," Erik Sundling, Ross's 12th-grade English teacher, said when he talked about the effort McGinnis put forth if he was interested in something, and the lack thereof when he wasn't. "He came back in uniform and he was the 100 percent Ross. He was very proud to wear the uniform."

When his family learned that McGinnis's first assignment would be to a Germany-based infantry regiment scheduled for an Iraq deployment, they worried but wished him well.

"I told him, 'Be safe. Think before you act.' Any parent would say that to their child, I'm sure. We thought he was coming back," Romaine said.

Soldier's Soldier

McGinnis arrived in Schweinfurt, Germany, in November 2005 and reported to 1st Platoon, C Company, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment with an influx of Soldiers as the company was preparing for its upcoming mission to Iraq. According to retired Staff Sgt. Ian Newland, he immediately became an instrumental part of the team.

"His personality and humor made him stand out. He was the comedian out of everybody," Newland, a squad leader with 1st Platoon at the



Photo courtesy of the Army News Service

Spc. Ross McGinnis served with 1st Platoon, C Company, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment based out of Schweinfurt.

time, said. "You could be having the worst day in the field, or the worst day in the rear 'D', and Ross would come in a room and everybody would be laughing within three minutes."

Ross was known as the funny guy with an infectious smile from the day he joined the unit, Newland said. "I have this image of him, even today. We were in Germany and he was up on a .50-cal gunning. We had been doing a convoy for probably around eight hours. I was in the vehicle behind him and he turned around and smiled at my gunner. His teeth were just covered in dirt from being up on the gun, but he's just still smiling ear to ear. That right there was just him."

His gifts extended beyond platoon funny man according to his leaders, who said he was also a top-notch Soldier.

"I had four platoons, roughly 190 Soldiers in my command. There were certain Soldiers that would stand out. McGinnis was definitely one of those Soldiers," said Maj. Michael Baka, commander of C Company from June 2005 to March 2007. "He was one of the top members of his platoon. His platoon sergeant handpicked him to serve as the machine gunner on his Humvee, which speaks highly of his performance." McGinnis excelled in weaponry, marksmanship and physical training as well.

He was also a born leader, Newland said, who knew how to read and react to different Soldiers in a variety of situations.

"People responded to him, and he knew how to respond to people's personalities and characters. That is one of the hardest traits to build as a leader, to be able to adapt, per Soldier. He had that naturally."

Adamiyah

The first unit from the battalion on the ground, C Co. arrived in Iraq Aug. 4, 2006 following a week of training in Kuwait. Combat Outpost Apache in Adamiyah, a northeast section of Baghdad steeped in sectarian violence, was to be their home. The area had lacked a U.S. presence for eight months.

"There were a lot of kidnappings, killings, and a lot of enemy activity in our sector," Baka said. Insurgent attacks, sniper fire, grenade contact and improvised explosive devices were all part of daily life in Adamiyah.

In October, just two months into the deployment, C Co. had already lost two of its Soldiers; Staff Sgt. Garth Sizemore to a sniper's bullet, and Sgt. Willsun Mock in an improvised explosive device explosion. In November, after Saddam Hussein was found guilty of crimes against humanity, the battalion fought a five-hour battle against enemy insurgents who attacked the outpost.

By December, the men of 1/26 were battle hardened, but McGinnis had a way of taking the focus off the tragedies.

"He was constantly motivating and positive all the time, and that really helped the platoon out a lot. He was key in our platoon because of that," Newland said. "Right after we lost Sgt. Sizemore, we were all really shocked - it really hit home. And then Sgt. Mock - we were getting pretty depressed. But Ross, he knew how to take our attention off of that - all of us - from senior leaders to your private Joe. He knew how to respond."

That Fateful Day

Dec. 4, 2006, 1st Plt. was gearing up to patrol the streets of Adamiyah and deliver a 250-kilowatt generator to provide increased electricity to the area. Insurgents had been lobbing grenades at vehicles on patrols, and in response the platoon had honed its reaction skills

through a series of training scenarios Newland likened to fire drills. He had experienced such an incident nine days earlier on patrol, but the grenade turned out to be a dud.

As they rolled out of Apache's gates, the men in the six-vehicle patrol felt up to their mission, despite ever-present dangers, as they did each time they patrolled Adamiyah's streets, Baka said.

"We had only just left the gate. We were moving deliberately down the streets, and had just taken a left-hand turn on a main road just south of Abu Hanifah mosque," he said.

Baka's was the fourth vehicle in the order of movement. The platoon sergeant's vehicle was the last, as is typical for a standard patrol, and McGinnis manned its machine gun.

According to official statements from Sgt. Lyle Buehler (the driver), Sgt. 1st Class Cedric Thomas (platoon sergeant and truck commander), Spc. Sean Lawson (medic), and Newland, McGinnis sat in the gunner strap, .50-cal at the ready, facing backward to ensure rear security. Buehler and Thomas rode in the front of the vehicle, and Newland and Lawson in the back.

As the sixth vehicle made the left turn, Baka heard a loud explosion. His initial thought was that a grenade had exploded outside his own up-armored Humvee. Baka's machine gunner got on the intercom and said, "Sir, it looks like our last vehicle got hit." All four of the Humvee's doors had been blown off. Baka ordered his vehicle and the one behind it to turn around.

"Once I saw the vehicle I knew right away that we had a hand grenade that had entered the vehicle, and that we had a large number of casualties," he said.

Baka got a new driver for the crippled but still running Humvee, and they headed back to Apache. He said he knew the Soldiers had sustained injuries, but did not know to what extent until arriving at the outpost. He didn't know that McGinnis was dead, or that he died a hero.

Thomas pulled Baka aside within minutes of arriving at Apache and said, "Sir, McGinnis saved our lives today." Then he told the story that would support that statement.

An insurgent on a nearby rooftop threw a grenade at McGinnis's vehicle. He unsuccessfully attempted to deflect the grenade, and it entered the vehicle behind him. McGinnis quickly announced, "Grenade!"

According to official accounts by survivors, McGinnis stood up and was preparing to jump out of the vehicle.

"That is what the machine gunner is supposed to do," Baka said. "He's supposed to announce the grenade, give a fair amount of time for people in the vehicle to react, and then he's supposed to save himself. No one would have blamed him if he did that, because that is what he was trained to do."

This time, the 19-year-old Soldier would not heed his training.

The other Soldiers asked, "Where?" McGinnis's response - "It's in the truck!"

McGinnis saw the grenade sitting on the radio mount behind him and realized the others weren't aware of its location. They were combat-locked in the Humvee and would not have time to escape. As he gave his response, he pushed the gunner strap out from under him and laid his back on top of the grenade. It detonated, killing him instantly.

Buehler and Thomas received minor shrapnel injuries, and Lawson suffered a perforated eardrum and concussion. Newland received

more of the blast and was severely wounded, but would survive.

"The driver and truck commander I am certain would have been killed if that blast had taken full effect," Baka said.

Newland, who was medically retired because of his injuries, was able to protect himself because of McGinnis's warning.

"He put his arm over his face, which I think saved his life, because a piece of shrapnel hit him in the arm. Another hit him in the chin and some in his legs. But he's alive today," Baka added.

Within 24 hours of McGinnis's sacrifice, Baka gathered statements from the survivors and wrote the recommendation for his Medal of Honor. He received the Silver Star, the third-highest award for valor, as an interim award.

Magnitude of his Sacrifice

"The first time it became full magnitude for me was when we were loading his body onto the helicopter for the hero flight - that's standard," Baka said.

The unit held a small, informal ceremony and Baka led them in a prayer, as there was no chaplain at the combat outpost. As the helicopter flew away, they saluted the young man who laid down his life so the men he loved and served with could live.

"We have hero flights for every Soldier, and every Soldier that gives his life's a hero. But McGinnis, in my mind, is the definition of hero," Baka said. "From this day forward if anyone ever asks me to define the word hero, I would simply tell them the story of Spc. Ross McGinnis and the actions he took that day to save four of his brothers."

For the men who survived, each breath they take serves as a reminder of McGinnis's courageous sacrifice.

"By all means I should have died that day. He gave me a life that he can't have now," Newland said. "There isn't a single day or hour that goes by that I don't take in everything. The smell of my daughter's hair, the smile my son gives me out of nowhere, the soft touch of my wife's hand just driving in the car. Normally those are things people might take for granted. I'm able to appreciate and have these things all over again, every day, every hour, because of what Ross did."

Regular Guy Who did an Extraordinary Thing

Tom McGinnis is still adjusting to the fact that his son, who he described as average, often to the point of being an underachiever, is receiving the Medal of Honor.

"I never pictured what a Medal of Honor winner is supposed to look like, but I guess I would think of somebody like a John Wayne character in the movies, where the guy is macho and tough and fear is nothing," Tom said. "But of course, that's not anywhere close to what my son, Ross, was like. Although he had very little fear in him, he wasn't a tough, macho type of person. He was just like you and me."

For those outside the Army closest to McGinnis, he was a regular guy who came through for his friends when it mattered.

Remembering Ross McGinnis

For his brothers in arms, the best way to remember McGinnis is to tell the story of what he did for them Dec. 4, 2006, and to live their lives every day with purpose and meaning.

"I think for me to thank him, is to do everything I can to live my life to the fullest," Newland said. "Because if he can have courage like that, if he can give up his 19-year-old life, then I can live the rest of my life, however long it is, to every day's fullest."

The family McGinnis left behind still wrestles with his hero status and the wounds that haven't had a chance to heal. Tom and Romaine said the constant focus on their son and what he did honors his memory, but keeps already raw emotions on the surface.

"It's been good, because people want to keep his memory alive, and people do things to show you that it really meant a lot to them," Tom said. "But at the same time, it doesn't give us a chance to just drop it for a while...it keeps that wound fresh. It's painful, but eventually once everything dies down, then I think that the healing process will start."

The McGinnis's remember their son as an average kid who made mistakes but found purpose and direction as he became a young man, just like many other kids out of high school. For them, it is difficult to think of Ross as the larger-than-life character others may see him as because of his sacrifice.

"I've had people ask me if I'd like a book or a movie written about him, and I say, 'No.' They would have to write so much into this to make it readable or viewable that Ross wouldn't even be in there. It wouldn't be him," Tom said. "It would be somebody else, because his life was dull, boring, and nothing to write about. He was just an ordinary person who, when it came time, did the right thing, and that's the most important thing to remember about him."

Run for Your Life

Duffey completes 1,000-mile running goal

Story and photo by
MARY MARKOS
Bavarian News

A journey of 1,000 miles starts with a single step, or run that is. Lt. Col. Brad Duffey, Senior Reserve Component Advisor Joint Multination Training Command, began that journey more than two years ago and ended in December when he became one of only three U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr members to run 1,000 miles since 2003.

Duffey is a participant of the Grafenwoehr Fitness Center Run for Your Life Program.

The program, he said, helped to keep him motivated.

"There are times where you never see the end of the line... but you know that every little bit adds up. Eventually, you're going to get there," said Duffey.

The program awards certificates signed by the garrison commander and milestone patches when participants run 50, and then 100 mile increments.

"It's a personal goal for oneself," said Ken Durham, Director, Grafenwoehr physical fitness center. "You're running for something... just trying to keep motivated."

Like Duffey, 90 percent of the gym's 62 program members are active duty military and are required to run and exercise for physical training.

The 1,000 mile mark served as an additional goal for Duffey, who hopes

to run the distance equivalent from Los Angeles to Jacksonville, Fla.

"I continued it even after getting the 1,000 mile patch," he said. "Right now I have a grand total of about 1,140 miles... I'm about 30 miles outside of Abilene, Texas."

While the idea of running across the U.S. was born during Duffey's assignment to the 416th Theater Engineer Command in Illinois, he views the program as an advantage for Soldiers.

"If you're an NCO and you're not turning in your miles logs, it's kinda foolish," he said. "You can get credit for your (noncommissioned officer evaluation report). Granted, a 50 mile patch may not. But, the higher you go, maybe (your rater) will allow an excellent bullet for a 1,000 mile accomplishment coupled with a good score on the physical fitness test."

Duffey also views the program as a means of self-improvement.

"I went from literally 15 minutes, 15 seconds, on my PT test to 14:48," he said. "You can't go from 15:15 one day to 14:30 the next, you've got to run. To be better on the physical fitness test and the run, you've got to run, and you've got to run long distance."

Duffey improved his time and reached the 1,000 mile mark by running an average of three-and-a-half miles a day.

He views it as a required part of his military training.

"Just as someone would study in their career to go from captain to

major, or staff sergeant to sergeant first class, you have to take the component of physical fitness and say 'hey, it is my responsibility and I have to do it.' It is no different than firing weapons...it is individual training, but none the less, training," he said.

Durham has logged over 500 miles himself. He said it is training military members should receive credit for.

"It is something one can do on their own time... something for themselves, and get recognized for it. There is nothing better than getting something for your work," he said.

To be eligible for the free program, Soldiers, family members, and civilians need to complete an application at the Grafenwoehr or Vilseck fitness centers.

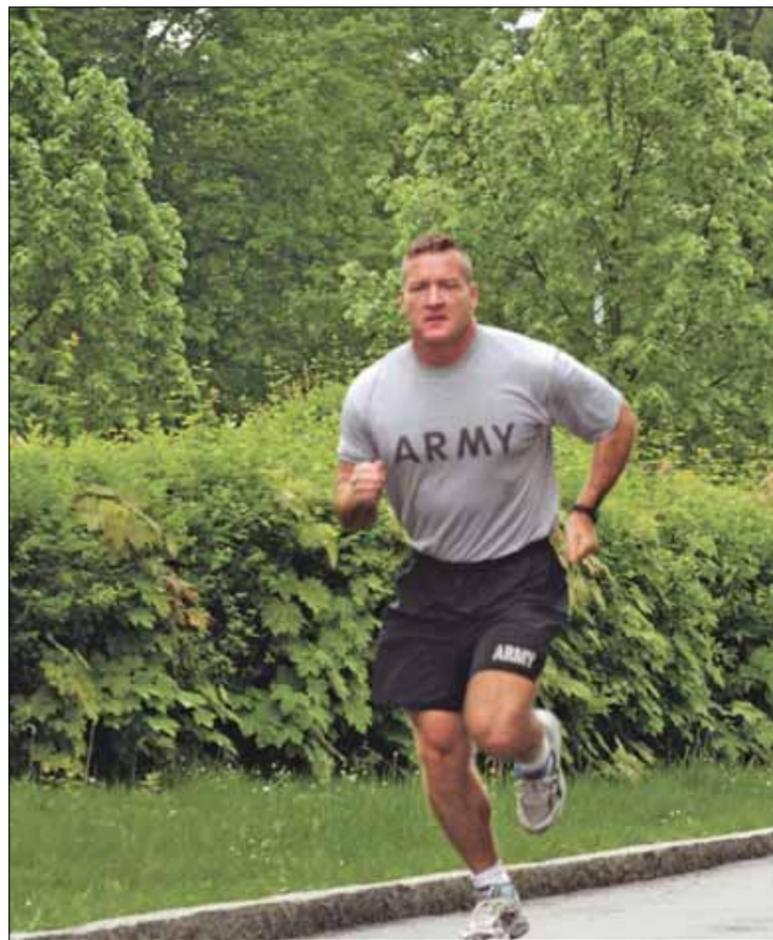
Participants log the miles they run or acquire on the elliptical machine, treadmill, or bicycle.

They turn in their running log to at the gym at 50, and then 100 mile increments.

"It's an honor system... If they want to cheat, they cheat themselves and it's on them," Durham said.

Duffey said individuals are also cheating themselves if they don't exercise.

"There is really no excuse not to do physical fitness... the gym has everything you need. The bottom line is, they are pushing physical fitness as a goal and it helps in lowering your blood pressure down and getting a good resting heart rate. It definitely is a good stress alleviator."



Lt. Col. Brad Duffey became one of three members of Grafenwoehr Fitness Center's Run for Your Life program by logging 1,000 miles.

Swing, batter batter!



Photo by John Reese

The girls of the American Community School of Hillingdon, England, (in blue) slug it out with the Munich International School on the first day of the International Schools Softball Tournament Girls Championships hosted by USAG Garmisch. Girls from Austria, Belgium, England, Germany, France, Israel, and Switzerland participated in the tourney at Kozlowski Field in the Breitenau Housing Area on Artillery Kaserne May 29-31. St. John's International School, Belgium, took first place, American School of Paris took second, and American School of Israel took third.

Martial arts classes available



Courtesy photo

Students from Master Olden's Tang Soo Do Class Madeline Olden, Eli Self, Elizabeth Davis, and Madison Hoecker demonstrate kicks. Tang Soo Do and Korean sword classes are available through Vilseck Youth services.

Unpaid phone bills can follow Soldiers through collection agencies

Continued From Page 1

when Soldiers are preparing to move back to the U.S.

"When the Soldier clears with the local telephone companies, they ask for... their last bill," she said.

"The last bill to the Germans is the last bill that they sent to the house. If the bills are sent out on the 25th and the Soldier goes to clear on the 10th, what (the phones company does) then, is they give the Soldier the normal bill they sent on the 25th. That doesn't mean it's the final bill. They'll have another bill... that comes after their normal schedule bill is sent. That is what the Soldier has to ask for."

The miscommunication often

results in a bill that is not paid when the Soldier leaves Germany.

German companies, much like those in the U.S., can send the bill to a collection agency. The process can eventually lead to having one's bank account frozen, and automatic teller and Visa cards cancelled.

John Matlock, Grafenwoehr's Acting Chief of Legal Services, explained.

"German creditors can easily apply for a payment order from the local court. If the U.S. debtor does not then pay the debt, a bailiff can lawfully enter the person's dwelling (including on-post quarters and barracks rooms) to seize personal property for sale to satisfy the debt. There is even legal

authority for the Germans to prevent someone from leaving the country (this includes Soldiers on military orders) until he has paid his debts."

"In recent years," Brown said, "we have been receiving a lot of garnishments from the German courts. As soon as we get the notification, we have to freeze the accounts."

While only three accounts have been "frozen" in the last year in Grafenwoehr, Brown sees a larger problem in other communities.

The bottom line, she said, is to ensure a miscommunication does not lead to financial problems.

"I suggest first of all, that they go with somebody who speaks German to make sure, and secondly, they do

specify very well that they want the final bill because they are leaving," said Brown.

"Generally they tell them that they'll be sending them a bill in ten days time, but (the Soldiers) are usually gone. So what I suggest they do is they provide a power of attorney to a friend for those few days so that they pay their bill, or they keep an arrangement with us. We can keep accounts open for 90 days when someone PCSs. If they leave us a written request to pay final phone bill we'll do it for them."

The issue can arise with all phone companies and local bills.

Brown said she has seen unpaid bills follow Soldier back to the U.S.

"The local companies here are going through the credit companies in the states," she added. "The bills follow you... there is no such thing as closing the door, packing your household goods and leaving. When you owe money to anyone, it is going to haunt you."

"The obvious message," Matlock said, "is to pay one's debts on time."

To ensure a smooth transition to the U.S., Brown said Community Bank members need to provide a correct stateside telephone number and address when they move.

Communication, she said, is essential to ensure bank members are informed if there is a problem with their account or local bills.