

Bavarian News



Vol. 4, Nr. 24

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

December 10, 2008

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Flat Wilbur packs up, heads to Iraq with 172nd Infantry Bde

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GO HOME!

Have you visited the U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr homepage lately?

If not, it's time for a visit! The garrison public affairs office, with the help of several on-post agencies, are in the process of updating the Web page to provide Soldiers, family members, and civilians with more "news you can use!"

Useful information includes the post inclement weather plan, school and office closures, contact information, town hall notes, community phone book, and much, much more. Visit www.grafenwoehr.army.mil today!

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For road conditions and the latest community news, visit www.grafenwoehr.army.mil

Programs trying to curb military divorce

by DONNA MILES

American Forces Press Service

Service members and their spouses are flocking to a broad array of programs to help them strengthen their family relationships as the services step up efforts to curb divorce rates.

Military divorce rates rose by .1 percent -- to 3.4 percent -- during fiscal 2008, with 492 more divorces than the previous year, Army Lt. Col Les'

Melnyk, a Pentagon spokesman, reported. Military-wide, 25,750 marriages ended in divorce last year.

The Marine Corps, with 3,077 divorces last year, experienced the biggest increase, from 3.3 percent in fiscal 2007 to 3.7 percent.

The Army rate also increased -- to 3.5 percent -- with 10,200 divorces last year. The Army reported a 3.3 percent rate in fiscal 2007, with 9,134 divorces.

Meanwhile, divorce rates dropped .2 percent last year in the Navy and remained stable in the Air Force.

The Navy reported a 3 percent rate in fiscal 2008, with 5,441 divorces representing a 618 decrease from the previous year's number.

See UNIQUE CHALLENGES Page 20

It's Suessical!

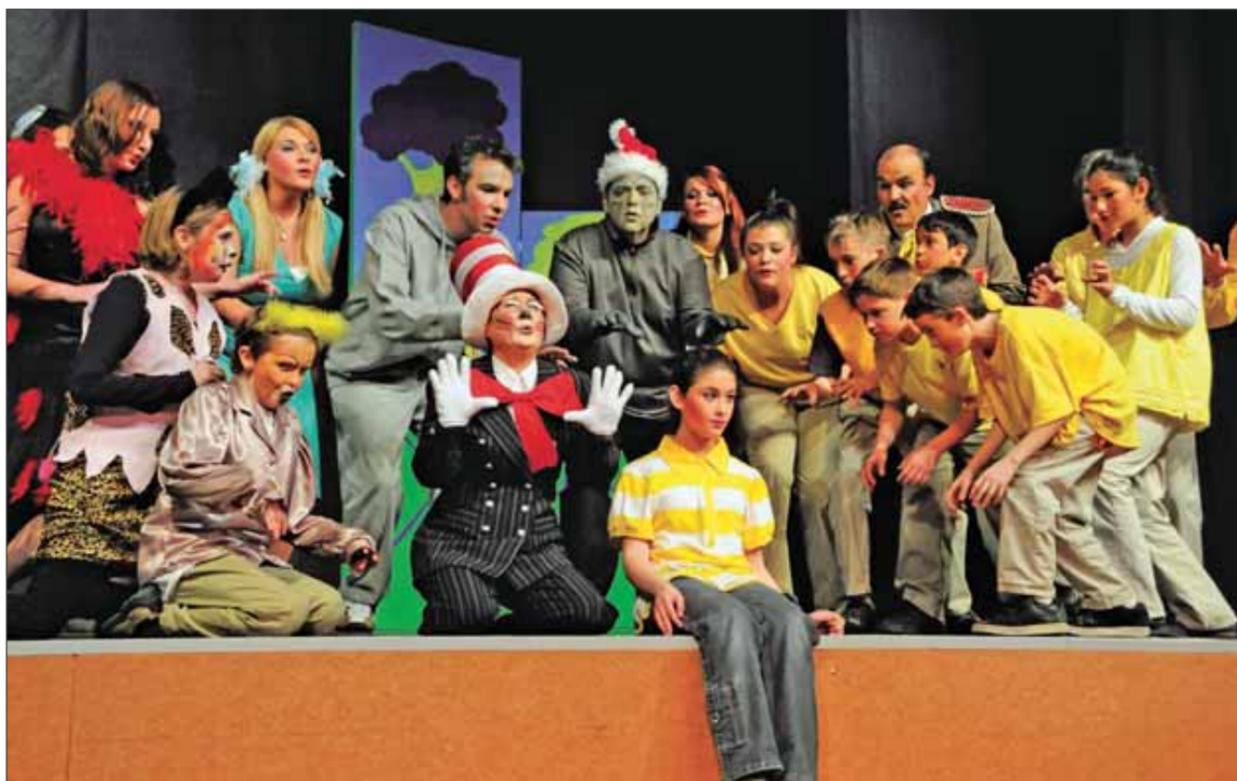


Photo by Mary Markos

The USAG Grafenwoehr Performing Arts Center opened "Suessical the Musical" Dec. 5 under the direction of Joline Powell. Thanks to the Army Family Covenant initiatives, the center and show marks the first complete Morale Welfare and Recreation entertainment program for the garrison. See Page 3 for the full story and show schedule. Suessical is onstage through Dec. 14.

Dec. 31 last day to apply for Soldier Show auditions

Story and photo by TIM HIPPS

FMWRC Public Affairs

Dec. 31 is the deadline to apply for an audition to join the cast and crew of the 2009 U.S. Army Soldier Show.

Army Entertainment Division needs vocalists, dancers, musicians, technicians and specialty acts for the song-and-dance extravaganza that

provides "entertainment for the Soldier, by the Soldier."

Vocalists must submit a DVD or video cassette that exhibits musical styles, vocal range and special talents emphasizing musical variety. A suggested format features a spoken introduction, a minimum of two songs of contrasting styles, and a segment devoted to additional talents, such as

See NOMINATION Page 20



Pfc. Jokia Goshen (right) of Fort Hood, Texas, and Sgt. Kevin Lynum of Fort Carson, Colo., salute while singing Myron Butler's "Stronger" during the 2008 U.S. Army Soldier Show.

New mandatory driving course begins Europe-wide in January

IMCOM-E news release

Installation Management Command-Europe Region Safety Office announced that a new mandatory driving safety course will start in January 2009 for Soldiers stationed in Europe.

The Advanced Driver's Training course will be new to Europe and is designed for Soldiers who are 26 years of age and younger. As a pre-requisite, the Army Traffic Safety Training Program's Intermediate Driver's Course must be completed.

"We created the ATSTP to teach Army warriors to assess driving hazards and to make smart driving decisions,"

said Maj. Gen. John A. Macdonald, deputy commander of IMCOM.

The ADT is designed to "to reinforce good driving practices learned in the IDC and to create a culture of safety," said Patricia Jackson, a safety and occupational health specialist with IMCOM-Europe.

The new course is an additional requirement to the already in place ATSTP. Soldiers will ideally take the new course 12 - 18 months after completing the IDC. The training course consists of a 60 minutes block of instruction, a video presentation and discussion session.

For more information on ATSTP, such as when and where classes are being held, visit the IMCOM-Europe Web site - www.imcom-europe.army.mil - go to left-hand side and click on the "Special Staff", then "Safety Office".

Then go to right-hand side and click on "IMCOM-Europe Training (ATSTP)". You may also directly access the ATSTP program at: http://www.imcom-europe.army.mil/sites/management/so_atstp.asp.

While the schedule is subject to change, every effort will be made to give 30-days' notice before any class is canceled.

Get your face (or unit) on AFN TV

by GEORGE A. SMITH

AFN Europe Operations Manager

You can get your story ideas on AFN TV more often if you use some of my 30-years worth of insider secrets.

In my time with AFN, TBS, Voice of America and two commercial radio stations, I found the callers who convinced the assignments editor to cover their story did so by selling the editor on the story, not the event.

The assignments editor is the gatekeeper primarily responsible for sifting through story ideas to determine what the station can cover that day by factoring in available staff, time, equipment and travel expenses.

Your best chance in getting the assignments editor to cover your story instead of someone else's is by digging deep into your event and finding the "story within a story."

Marathons happen all the time. So instead of merely asking AFN to report on the run, suggest the station tell the story from the angle of the father and son competing, or the recovering cancer victim who has taken up running.

Instead of asking AFN to report on a change of command ceremony, pitch a fresh idea, like reporting on the event through the eyes of the officer's nine-year-old daughter. What does she think and feel?

AFN usually gets requests for covering an event, rather than to tell the story of an interesting person. But the people most interested in seeing a mass casualty exercise, tank gunnery, or high school football game story are participants who want to see themselves on TV.

The problem is the other 340,000 people watching the story see the first few seconds, then flip to another channel or grab a DVD. But, if the story features an interesting person or some fresh angle, viewers are much

See FIND OUT HOW Page 20

Q&A

What is your favorite holiday tradition?

(Responses from Hohenfels personnel)

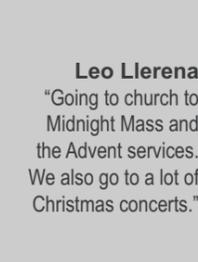


Pfc. Santos Delgado
"I have to eat tamales."

Grace Fernandez
"Cooking for Christmas. I cook Filipino dishes and we invite friends over and exchange gifts."



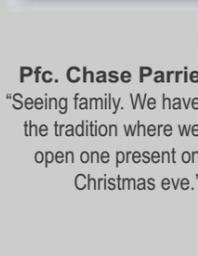
Priscilla Fleischer
"We make an Advent wreath and light one candle each Sunday. When the kids were little we would say a prayer while lighting the candle to remind them Christmas isn't just about the presents."



Leo Llerena
"Going to church to Midnight Mass and the Advent services. We also go to a lot of Christmas concerts."



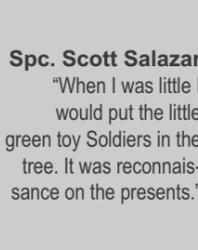
Rebecca Moritz
"Santa Claus cookies. I have this traditional family cookie cutter, and they have to be decorated a specific way, like coconut for the beard and chocolate chips for the eyes."



Pfc. Chase Parrie
"Seeing family. We have the tradition where we open one present on Christmas eve."



Denise Roche
"We put up the tree right after Thanksgiving. I don't wait—I want it up through the whole month of December."



Spc. Scott Salazar
"When I was little I would put the little green toy Soldiers in the tree. It was reconnaissance on the presents."



COMMAND MESSAGE

Limited staff issues resolved by January, back to 'normal'

While the Christmas and New Year are right around the corner, I continue to develop plans for improving services around the garrison.

Grafenwoehr has some of the best facilities in the Army. But resources are not limited to buildings. Our people of the garrison staff, are what take us from good to great.

The majority of our work force are highly competent and motivated Local Nationals and DoD Civilians, and we are completing our U.S. employee job objectives under the new National Security Personnel System (NSPS).

While the objectives are about accomplishing our mission, I've asked each individual to set higher goals in hopes of taking us to the next level.

Again, my mantra "good enough doesn't live in this community," applies to everything—from the cleanliness of the installation to the food at the dining facility, to the service you get while in- or out-processing or even reintegrating.

We are an overseas based expeditionary Army, and the support Soldiers and their Families receive at our garrison is critical to our Soldiers' morale and welfare as they train and deploy.

The relationship between overseas garrison support and our family members is intertwined more closely than many people realize.

Many of our MWR activities are supported by employees who are family members of Soldiers. With the recent return of 2SCR and the upcoming holidays, many families in our community will be taking leave during December through the New Year.

It's a challenge to have one brigade and many separate companies redeploy as the other brigade and enablers deploy (and all so close to the holiday season!), but our community is a close family, and everyone understands the need to help each other.

Many organizations will be operating with a limited staff but with the same commitment to service. Things should be back to "normal" in January, but "normal" for the Army is relative. Normal means Soldiers and family members are transitioning back to installation life, but in many cases this may mean getting ready to PCS.

On the other hand, with

our deploying units, we have the possibility of many family members departing for the States after the first of the year.

Understanding the issues and taking part in discussions is critical to the garrison and its tenants working as a team.

I met with the Senior Spouses Roundtable the day before Thanksgiving. Each tenant unit's senior officer and NCO spouse is invited to attend. So please remember to share your questions or comments with your unit's senior spouses. This is just one of many ways to provide your input to me and the garrison staff.

Please visit our Web site (www.grafenwoehr.mil) and link to the minutes of these meetings to view the issues covered.

Another way is the town hall. We will hold our next town hall on the evening of Dec. 17 at South Camp, Vilseck in the new Multi-Purpose Facility, Bldg. 134 (near the chapel).

I realize the holidays are a busy time of year, but this is not only a great way to get information

and ask questions about what is happening around the installation, and it's also a chance to see many of your friends and neighbors.

I'd also like to congratulate the garrison staff, volunteers, and donors for helping us to exceed our 2008 Combined Federal Campaign goal of \$200,000. At publication time, donations had hit the \$242,438.48 mark, and counting...

I close my final column for 2008 with a safety message for the holidays—please

make safety a priority whether you are traveling or staying home, and always appoint a designated driver if you plan on going out and celebrating.

And I hope each of you will enjoy bringing in the New Year and making 2009 a successful, safe, and productive year for the garrison! Happy Holidays!

*Col. Chris Sorenson
Commander, U.S. Army
Garrison Grafenwoehr*

Many organizations will be operating with a limited staff, but with the same commitment to service.

Commentary: Army modernization necessary, successful, long overdue

Commentary by
Lt. Gen. N. ROSS THOMPSON
Special to Army News Service

If you owned a 1978 Chevy Impala, you'll remember that it was big, powered by a 12-mile-per-gallon V-8 engine. Its advanced safety features were lap seatbelts and drum brakes. It had a push-button radio and - if you were lucky - an 8-track player.

Three decades later, you may be driving a crossover sport utility vehicle powered by a 35-mile-per-gallon hybrid engine and rolling on 20-inch run-flat tires. Its advanced safety features include voice-activated controls, a crash avoidance system, side and rear video cameras, heads-up night vision display, a full suite of airbags and an onboard computer connected to a communications network with GPS technology, satellite radio and OnStar.

Basically, you have a world of information at your fingertips.

Just as the commercial market is transforming to meet personal market demands, the Army is transforming to meet Soldiers' needs in an era of persistent conflict.

These are complex activities and have not escaped skepticism. Recent articles by the press describe just how challenging a task it is to modernize an Army at war. These articles relied heavily on concerns stated in several recent Government Accountability Office reports that depict a fundamentally troubled Army modernization strategy. Some of GAO's concerns are legitimate, and we are learning from them. Many, however, are not.

For example, GAO asserts that our Future Combat Systems, or FCS, software code requirements have tripled since 2003. In reality, real growth in software code has



The Future Combat Systems network is depicted here graphically showing connectivity between different weapons platforms and the Soldiers.

U.S. Army graphic

been very modest, on the order of 5 percent. Additionally, much of the code counted by GAO as new is commercial code already in use in the private sector.

We have several differences with the methodology applied by GAO, which we have communicated to them. It should be noted that many of our most successful Army weapon systems and equipment initially were met with GAO skepticism. For example, in 1979, GAO reported that the M1 Abrams tank, then in development, "Falls short of meeting some of its critical design requirements. The principal problems are in the tank's reliability and durability."

Thirteen years later, after Operation Desert Storm, GAO acknowledged that "Abrams reliability throughout the ground campaign was very good, provided the necessary spare and repair parts were available. Some crews, [in fact], reported that the Abrams tanks were the 'best combat vehicles on the battlefield'."

The Army foresees similar success stories with the vehicles and communications networks being built today through its FCS, Warfighter Information Network-Tactical and Joint Tactical Radio System modernization programs.

See REAL RISK Page 20

Bavarian News

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

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Roswitha Lehner

Zeilaeckerstr. 35 · 92637 Weiden · Telefax 0961-67050-32

Internet: www.milcom.de

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**USAG Grafenwoehr
Commander**
Col. Chris Sorenson

**USAG Grafenwoehr
Public Affairs Officer**
Kim Gillespie (475-8103)

**USAG Grafenwoehr
Command Information Chief**
Nick D'Amario (475-6417)

Bavarian News Editor
Adriane Foss (475-7113)

**Department of the Army
Public Affairs Intern**
Mary Markos (475-8920)

**USAG Garmisch Public Affairs
Officer and Correspondent**
John Reese (440-3701)

Hohenfels Correspondent
Kristin Bradley (466-4294)

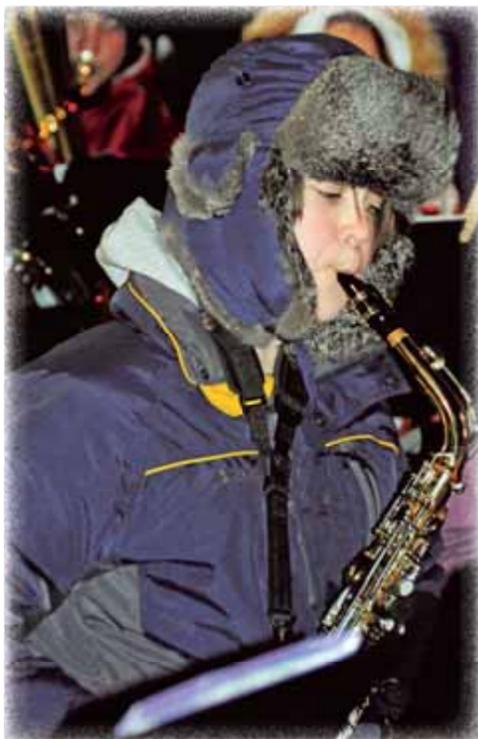
Schweinfurt Correspondents
Emily Athens & Sandra Wilson
(354-1400)

Ansbach Correspondent
Ronald H. Toland Jr (468-1600)

2008 Tree Lighting

U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr members and local community leaders gathered Dec. 2 in Grafenwoehr and Dec. 4 in Vilseck to light the community Christmas trees. During the celebration, the Netzaberg Middle School choir and band, Netzaberg and Vilseck Elementary school choirs, the Vilseck High School, and local boy scouts entertained the crowd in their respective community. Free food and drink was available to the crowd before both St. Nicholas and Santa Caluse arrived to greet the youngsters.

Photos by Mary Markos



Spotlight on Education



Name: Shawn Rodman

What grade and subject do you teach?
7th through 12th grade special education

Hometown: Salt Lake City, Utah

What do you enjoy most about teaching?
It's different every day. I like the kids here; they are different every day. With special ed, I get to do a little bit of everything.

What advice can you give students to help them succeed? Be patient. They want to know what this is for right now. They may not get it right now, but they will. They just need to be patient with their progress.

LOCAL ENTERTAINMENT

PAC brings Dr. Seuss musical to life

Story and photo by MARY MARKOS
USAG Grafenwoehr PAO

Oh the thinks you can think!
The whimsical world of Dr. Seuss came to life last weekend as the U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr Performing Arts Center took to the stage with "Seussical the Musical."
In bright colors and catchy songs, 28 cast members introduced 15 of Theodor Seuss Geisel's, aka Dr. Seuss, characters to the audience.
Narrated by the mischievous Cat (Vicki Partin), from "The Cat in the

Hat," the story centers on Horton the Elephant (J.C. Smith), of "Horton Hears a Who" fame, and Jojo Who (Cody Wilson and Megan Markos), the mayor's son from Whoville.
Through the characters of Gertrude McFuzz (Katie Delibertti); Mazie LaBird (Amber Hendricks and Karisa Lincoln); the Sour Kangaroo (Tara Davis); the first-family (Stephen Connolly and Martina Miller) and the citizens of Whoville (Lucas Markos, Jan Meckley, James Miller, Cierra Miller, Victoria Murchison, and Nathan Wilson); the Grinch

(Paul Crane); creatures of Nool (Emory and Jamie Parr); General Gengis Khan Schmitz (Stephen Thorbrugh); Yertle the Turtle (Sgt. Joseph Delibertti); the Wickersham Brothers (Ryan Parr, Megan Moore, and Laura Meckley); and the Bird Girls (Virgilla Tanner, India Pinkney, and Emily Manzo), the "thinks" of Seuss intertwines the themes of friendship, love, originality, and the importance of every individual.

The cast and crew (Erin Urban, Susan Parr, Jessi Dye, Michelle Moore, Spc. Charles Smith, and Master Sgt. Fred Moore) prepare for a final weekend of performances beginning Friday and Saturday at 7 p.m., and Sunday at 2 p.m. at Vilseck High School.

The "thinks" and quirky character of Seuss, however, were not the only cause for applause when the curtain closed.

The musical marked the dawn of the Morale Welfare and Recreation theatre program in Grafenwoehr, which debuted Sept. 11, and the introduction of Joline Powell, the center and Seussical director, to the community.

Powell, who has more than 18 years of experience in all aspects of theatrical production, said her hopes and expectations for the Grafenwoehr theatre program are high after working with such a talented group of actors.

"The cast has been phenomenal. I've never seen such a group of people pull together to make things happen," Powell said.

Powell said she estimates more than 400 volunteer hours were spent building the set, making the costumes, and other production elements by the cast and crew.

"Seussical is special in that we were not only building the show, but we were building everything that had to go around it in order to make it happen," she added.

The musical is the first of many productions Powell has planned for the community.

With the theater's permanent home in Grafenwoehr next to the dining facility, Powell said her hope for the program reaches beyond theatre to a "revolving door" of diverse entertainment, music and voice lessons, theatrical workshops, dinner theatre, and cultural exchange programs that bridge the gap between the American and host-nation communities.

Powell said renovations have been planned for the Performing Arts Center to include sound-proof rooms to house music and vocal lessons, a dance studio, a wood working shop, and a separate costume and scenery area.

The building, much like the program, Powell said, will expand not only up, but out, to accommodate a variety of programs.

"What I'm trying to do with our programming is make sure that there is something for everyone... We need to have a lot of diversity," she said.

Powell said she planned the next production, "The Shadow Box," with the intention to bring something completely different than Seuss to the

audience.
The "heavy drama" revolves around three cancer patients and the message of living life to the fullest. Having lost a father to cancer in July, Powell said the play is deeply personal.

Auditions for "The Shadow Box" will be held Jan. 5-7, but Powell said production has already begun on the set and props.

A comedy, "Ms. Nelson is Missing!" is also being planned with auditions expected the first week of February.

Powell added that the Performing Arts Center is always in need of volunteers to help produce quality programs.

And quality, not awards, she said is her goal with all productions.

All too often, Powell admitted, many directors will focus their program around the possibility of winning performance and productions awards.

She said that won't happen here.

"We want to make sure every production that we do is the same for an audience member every single night of the run, and the level of quality that we do for a show that just so happens to enter into an awards competition is the same level of quality that (the audience) is going to get when we perform something small. We're always striving for that quality," she said.

For more information on the Grafenwoehr Performing Arts Center, or to volunteer, call Powell at DSN 475-6426, CIV 09641-83-6426, or e-mail joline.powell@eur.army.mil.



The Cat (Vicki Partin) helps Gertrude McFuzz (Katie Delibertti) impress Horton the Elephant (J.C. Smith) in the musical adaptation of more than 15 Dr. Seuss characters.

Vilseck mayor, city reach out to Stryker troops, forge *strong relationship* with Soldiers and families. *2SCR* unit, town begin relationship with unit's arrival and watched it steadily *grow stronger* during a 15-month deployment. Despite *hardships*, *cultural differences*, and distance, they find themselves ...

Stryking a bond



Photo by Jodi Ward

Soldiers from U.S. Army Europe's 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment march through downtown Vilseck, Germany as part of the town's welcoming festivities for the unit in September 2006. The parade was the first of many events the "Dragoons" and their German neighbors have shared since the unit's arrival.

by DAVE MELANCON
USAREUR Public Affairs

Vilseck Mayor Hans-Martin Schertl has attended many ceremonies and community events during the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment's 15-month deployment to Iraq.

During the U.S. Army Europe regiment's memorial service and welcome home ceremony on Rose Barracks Nov. 25, the buergermeister joined Family members and fellow Soldiers to welcome the regiment and remember the 26 "Dragoon" Soldiers

killed in action.

"U.S. Soldiers have been here since 1945. We have always had great relations between the military community and the German community," he said. "There is always contact, and always good contacts."

Starting with the regiment's arrival in 2006, when the "Dragoons" marched through Vilseck on foot, horseback and their Stryker combat vehicles, the town and the unit have shared events as well as day-to-day life.

"Many people from Vilseck and around the area work on the posts in

Vilseck and Grafenwoehr," Schertl said. "Many American Soldiers live in German houses. So there are many contacts between the Germans and Americans."

U.S. Soldiers have married Germans, and some Americans remain in the community after retiring from the Army, he added.

"The 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment has enjoyed a great relationship with the citizens of Vilseck, Schlicht, Sorghof, Amberg, and many other towns in the area," said Lt. Col. Thomas Rickard, 2nd SCR Rear Detachment

commander. "Our regiment has enjoyed serving in Germany for about 50 of the last 60 years and has long-established relationships with many towns in Bavaria."

Rickard said the regiment and its Soldiers appreciate the German community's hospitality and support. He also called the community's Kontakt Club the best in Germany.

The regiment works closely with community leaders and officials and has strong personal and professional bonds with the German army's Panzerbrigade 12, he said.

"The 2nd SCR looks forward to reconnecting with the community in safe and enjoyable events," Rickard said.

The bonds between the unit and its neighbors remained strong while the regiment was deployed.

Many families attended the town's medieval fest in September.

Others took part in the community volksfest sponsored by the German-American Kontakt Club or helped the club send holiday "care packages" to the deployed Stryker Soldiers, or joined in Christmas and Fasching (pre-Lenten Carnival) celebrations, or used the town's recreational facilities.

Schertl said he likes to see 2nd SCR Soldiers and families participating in those activities.

"At local events -- and there are a lot of them almost every weekend -- spouses and children participated in them and they felt like part of the German community," Schertl said. "It's like we're one community. They are always invited and they always attend."

In turn, the regiment frequently invites members of the community to its events, Rickard said.

Schertl said he does not expect any problems with the influx of returning Soldiers.

He said he trusts the unit's reintegration process, and U.S. and German community leaders work together to find solutions to potential problems before they arise.

As they complete their reintegration and return to their normal garrison routines, Soldiers will once again be seen throughout the community, Schertl said.

"The public picture of Vilseck will change. Soldiers belong in Vilseck," he said. "To see them on our streets and in our shops it is the Vilseck picture we all know, and the Vilseck picture we like to see."



Courtesy photo

Vilseck (Germany) Mayor Hans-Martin Schertl has been a strong supporter of the U.S. Army presence in his city. "Soldiers belong in Vilseck," said Schertl.

Events welcome 2SCR home, honor its fallen Soldiers

Story and photo by DAVE MELANCON
USAREUR Public Affairs

The U.S. Army's oldest continuously serving cavalry regiment completed another chapter in its history during memorial and welcome home ceremonies here Nov. 25.

Fellow "Dragoons," friends, families and members of the U.S. Army Garrison and neighboring Vilseck communities packed into the Rose Barracks Memorial Fitness Center for two events. First was a memorial service to remember the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment's fallen Soldiers, followed later in the day by a ceremony to uncasing the regiment's colors and officially mark its return home.

The memorial service paid tribute to the 25 Soldiers who died in action during the regiment's recently completed 15-month deployment to Iraq.

"We pray that the sacrifice of our comrades will be an instrument of peace," said regiment Chaplain (Maj.) Samuel Lee during the service's opening prayer. "And that we who are present may dedicate our energies -- individually and collectively -- to live out our nation's creed: one nation under God, with liberty and justice for all."

Col. John S. John S. RisCassi, the regiment's 74th commanding officer, said the fallen Soldiers are examples of every "Dragoon" trooper past and present who has answered the nation's call to duty and paid the ultimate price defending America's Constitution.

"Perhaps their strongest legacy is their

selflessness. They traveled to a foreign desert to provide peace and security to those most in need," RisCassi said. "Their example will inspire our own service to our country and will equally inspire generations to come."

The memory of the fallen Soldiers, he continued, will be "forever enshrined in our hearts and their names will echo through the ranks of our regiment as sacred examples that will endow each of us with the courage to live our lives in their memory."

Following RisCassi's eulogy and a photo presentation honoring the Soldiers, Lee called on those attending to celebrate the Soldiers' lives, to remember their service and to look forward

to the future.

"We must go through the storm and overcome the evil and our fears," he said. "Not just for ourselves, but for future generations."

During the afternoon uncasing ceremony, the regiment and its guests honored 23 wounded "Dragoons," some attending the ceremony from hospitals in the United States, as they assisted their leaders unfurl their units' colors.

"I know all the 'Dragoons' are glad to be back in the Vilseck community after successful deployment," RisCassi. "Your service and performance over the course of our deployment has been nothing less than remarkable."

The regiment earned a reputation for success

throughout Iraq, he said, as it brought security and stability that will enable the people of Iraq to prosper and develop a democracy.

The unit's missions included hard-won fights against insurgent forces and distributing humanitarian aid to the Iraqi people, the colonel added.

He credited the regiment with smashing Al-Qaida forces in Baghdad, suppressing an uprising in Sadr City and destroying a suicide bomber network in Diyala province.

"You left a lasting and indelible mark across Iraq," RisCassi said. "In doing so, you have earned the respect of every witness to your achievements."

The commander thanked the U.S. and German communities for their support during the deployment, then saluted the families of the regiment.

"Most important of all, the 'Dragoons' before you would like to thank our Family members who endured hardships and challenges as daunting as anything we experienced in Iraq," RisCassi said. "Your love and devotion allowed us to focus on the fight."

Calling the 2nd SCR's performance in Iraq unprecedented, V Corps Commander Lt. Gen. Kenneth Hunzeker praised the unit for its rapid deployment and successful completion of its varied assignments in Iraq.

"It was nothing short of the most brilliant performance of duty by a regiment during war," he said. "You should not only know that, but you should also be proud of it. You made a difference. You created change."



2SCR Soldiers salute during the regiment's colors uncasing ceremony at Vilseck's Memorial Fitness Center Nov. 25. Earlier the same day the regiment conducted a memorial service to honor its Soldiers who died during the unit's recently completed deployment in Iraq.

Fog light misconception uncool, hazardous

by MIKE SCHWARTZ

USAG Grafenwoehr Safety Director

A common perception: Cars look cool with fog lights on!

Many motorists today drive with their fog lights on all the time because they think it looks cool. It may look cool in some people's opinion, but it's certainly not clever.

It is illegal to drive with fog lights on other than in conditions of fog or falling snow. In Germany, the law states that fog lights (Nebelscheinwerfer) are never to be used unless visibility is down to 50 meters or less.

It is easy to measure 50 meters by observing the white road markers along the road. Also the speed limit under these circumstances is 50 kph (31 mph) or less.

The fine for noncompliance is relatively modest, but the purpose of the legislation is to prevent unnecessary light pollution on the roadways as well

as to enhance safety.

Apart from the legal issues, many would argue that the use of additional lighting can only increase their safety as a driver, this is a flawed notion for many reasons;

Front Fog Lights

■ Due to their construction many simply cannot be aligned correctly, even those that can be rarely are. Incorrectly aligned lights often dazzle oncoming drivers.

■ They are designed to have a short, wide spread of light. This increases the amount of visible light for a short distance in front of the vehicle, causing the driver's pupils to constrict and greatly reduces your ability to see further ahead this sudden blindness could leave you unable to spot impending hazards further down the road.

■ On a wet or icy road fog lights will reflect on the surface due to their

proximity to the road surface, thus worsening the effects mentioned above.

Rear Fog Lights

■ Cause glare to drivers behind.

■ Cause the attention of following drivers to be drawn towards the lights decreasing their perception of other areas and hazards around them. Single lights are often worse than pairs of lights in this regard which draws the drivers' attention to one focal point.

■ Can mask the action of your brake lights, increasing the risk of you being hit from the rear.

For those of who insist the lights in their bumpers etc are not fog, but driving lights, this may put things straight; for your sake and others around you. There are other ways to legally make your car look cool and not impose danger upon your neighbor.



Photo by Sgt. Stephen Morgan

Under German law, fog lights are only permitted during fog or falling snow when visibility is 50 meters or less.

Hugh Hardin receives the "Commander's Award For Civilian Service" from USAG Grafenwoehr Commander Col. Nils "Chris" Sorenson Nov. 17. Hardin worked was the garrison's chief of Logistics, Plans and Operations Division from March 2004 to June 2008. In July, he became the Vilseck assistant manager. Hardin leaves Vilseck to serve as the deputy garrison commander in Natick, Connecticut.

Photo by Jim Federline



The Blotter Report

The Provost Marshal's Office reports that from Nov. 4-Dec. 1, the following major offenses occurred in the Grafenwoehr/Vilseck and Garmisch areas:

Grafenwoehr area:

28 Assaults (4 Aggravated/24 Consummated by Battery)
9 Controlled Substance Violations
2 Damages to Government Property
11 Damages to Private Property
13 Disorderly Conduct/Public Drunkenness
10 Alcohol Related Driving Offenses
21 Larcenies (5 Govt Property/6 of Private Funds/5 of Private Property/5 of AAFES Property)
38 Traffic Related Accidents, 18 On Post/20 Off Post (8 Fleeing the Scene)

Garmisch area:

1 Larceny of Govt Property
1 Larceny of Private Property
2 Assaults (1 Consummated by Battery/1 Simple Assault)
12 Traffic Related Accidents- 8 On Post/4 Off Post (2 Fleeing the Scene)
Hohenfels area:
1 Aggravated Assault
2 Disorderly Conduct/Public Drunkenness
1 Larceny of Private Property
1 Damage to Govt Property
2 Damage to Private Property
1 Wrongful Use of a Controlled Substance
21 Traffic Related Accidents- 7 On Post/ 14 Off Post

RETIREE CORNER

Do you know what steps to take in case of a death overseas?

by DAVE STEWART

Graf Retiree Council president

Many military retirees took advantage of the services offered by several agencies at the recent Retirement Appreciation Day held at U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr.

Many attendees were able to update their finance records and receive other important information.

But regrettably many haven't updated their personal data, which should be under constant review to limit the problems associated on the sad occasion of a retiree's passing, which is the theme of this retiree column.

Many are not aware of the steps to take when reporting the death of an American citizen living in Germany as a resident. American retirees living permanently in Germany have a residency permit stamped in their passport if they are not covered by the Status of Forces Agreement. This establishes one as an "ordinary resident" of Germany.

I've extracted some important information provided by the American Consulate and encourage retirees to save it in a space where you keep important documents, better yet, if you don't have an emergency information kit, its time to start one.

First and Very Important

In the case of a U.S. Army military retiree death contact the Retirement Services Office at the garrison and they will assist in matters related to the retiree or a surviving spouse.

This office will appoint a Casualty

Assistance Officer who will visit the next of kin to assist with funeral/burial information and of course assist with the steps to take as related to outstanding benefits.

According to the U.S. Consulate, Special Consular Services Officer, when an American citizen residing in Germany passes away, the German authorities will immediately seek to ascertain whether the next of kin is also a German resident.

If the next of kin resides in Germany, the German authorities will inform that person of the death and offer their assistance.

The German authorities will also seek to locate other family members and or close friends living in Germany to inform them of the death.

If the deceased next-of-kin lives in the United States and there are no relatives or friends in Germany who agree to notify the next of kin, the German authorities will contact the Consulate and pass along all relevant information.

The Consulate will, in turn, contact the next of kin at the earliest possible time to notify him/her of the death and offer information about making arrangements for the disposition of the deceased's remains.

German probate courts are responsible for overseeing the disposition of any estate and/or personal effects of deceased American citizens who were residents of Germany.

Transportation of Remains to U.S.

There is a major misconception that the U.S. Government and Department of Veterans Affairs will provide remains transportation at no cost. This is not true and in the death of a retired service member it's important to remember that

if the remains are to be buried in the United States, the next of kin is responsible for funeral and transportation expenses. This can be very expensive. Should you decide to have the remains returned to the U.S. for burial, the costs will be greater due to the additional cost of airfreight and embalming.

The total cost for preparation and air shipment of remains to the United States is approximately EUR 4,900. The cost for cremation and air shipment of ashes is approximately EUR 3,800. In any case German law requires disposition of remains within 96 hours of death. It's prudent to have disposition instructions arranged ahead of time.

For the next of kin

When reporting a death to the Consular Special Services Office, (Contact information number provided below), please tell them the deceased person's name, date and place of birth, passport number, last known residence and the date, place and circumstances of death. If known, please also provide the official with the name, address, and telephone number(s) of the next of kin and/or any relatives. It's also helpful to know whether you and/or any family members have been in contact with German police authorities.

Report of Death of an American Citizen Abroad Form

In order to assist with legal matters that may arise as a result of the death, the Consulate Special Services Office will forward to the next of kin or designated person up to 20 copies of the Report of Death of an American Citizen Abroad.

This document is in English and is normally based upon the German death certificate.

It can generally be used in U.S. courts to help settle estate matters.

I have provided only sketchy information here; however more detailed facts are available by contacting the Special Consular Services Office at the U.S. Consulate that handles the area where you live:

For those residing in the Berlin area the Berlin Consulate's phone number is CIV 0308329233.

For those residing in Bavaria the Munich Consulate's phone number is CIV 0892888575.

(No visa related information available at these numbers)

Web sites:

<http://germany.usembassy.gov/acs/munichacs.html>

<http://germany.usembassy.gov/acs/berlinacs.html>

For more information on this issue, contact or visit the U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr Retirement Services Officer (RSO) John Currie. He is located in Bldg. 244 on main post and can be reached at CIV 09641-83-8539.

If you know of a retiree in your area that can't get to Grafenwoehr please mail or take this article to them. We must support each other.

On behalf of the RSO and the Retiree Counsel, I wish all retirees and their surviving spouses a wonderful holiday.

1st Quarter Honor Roll Students

Schweinfurt Elementary School

"A" Honor Roll

Sydney Bryant
Patricia Cook
Benjamin Finch
Faith Flynn
Kamylla Heinbaugh
Joslyn Medina
Katelyn O'Rourke
Katelyn Palmer
Nina Romine
Orlando Tagaloguin
Jalynn Williams

Hannah Baker
Anna Ceballos
Axel Delgado
Isabelle Guevara
Jarib Harris
Geoffrey Hite
Vanessa Jackson
Mitchell Justesen
Sharon Kim
Katya Lewis
Oliver Lupa
Aolani Mayo

Mariana Mesa
Heather Miska
Morgen Shreve
Ty Spencer
Morgan Stockdill

"A-B" Honor Roll

Lauren Beltran
Declan Hurley
Mia Johnson-Gonzales
Godson Ike
Scout Knotts

Steven Kukowski
Emily Lindner
Larry Lyons
Gino Mendoza
Sandrina Murphy
Justice Newsome
Natalia Ocasio
Kylee Rabe
Nickolas Schulz
Jesse Sharpe
Samuel Solomon
Jessica Stacy

Clajanique Thames
Elizabeth Van Valkenburg
Joyce Vizcarrondo
Corwin Archield
Cameron Bennett
Jahmal Boozer
Justin Bulanadi
Teresa Burns
Jordan Crutchfield
Jada Daley
Quan Dasalla
Donavon DeLoach

Aleeya Harris
Dylan Hopson
Marissa Ixtlahuac
Molly Kintner
Jeremy Kukowski
Melissa Mella
Sarah Naillon
Zachary Nevard
Brittany Patrick
Michelle Quinteros
Johan Rau
Patrick Stark

Ethan Stemmerding
Melina Stone
Celene Sweeney
Paige Updike
Joselyn Van Gundy
Alexandra Villanueva
Alicia West
Kasey West
Frederick Wheeler
Alexandra Whitmore
Keyjana Williamson
Justin Woods

Hohenfels High School

"A" Honor Roll
Alicia Moczynski
Nina Wollersberger
Meggie Rodman
Emily Mittag
Casey Leon
Chauncey Eaddy
Katelyn Bronell
Courtney Borg

"A-B" Honor Roll
Ian Sellers
Victoria Nelson
Johnnie Mesch
Ovidiu Martin
John Leon
Stephanie Larumbe
Frank Karafa
Loisann DeLass

Bryce Cooper
Kelsey Cochran
Jazmine Calhoun
Rene Bourgeois
Rachel Borg
Eric Wollersberger
Jessica Walloch
Jacqueline Stone
Shaniece Ruiz

Angela Reinick
Sarai Orozco
Julia Nwoga
Juan Morales
Lana Hollis
Darian Eldred
AndreaMae Einwaechter
Xavier Davis
Emily Adams

Jane Weber
Kayla Rausch
Samantha Oberlin
Ashley Marsh
Jamilah Lambert
Kimberly Howard
Aaron Helbling
Anastashia Garcia
Joshua Cooper

Melissa Caples
MacKenzie Bryant
Sarah Adams
John Aber
Christine Reyes
Marisa Warren
Alexis Treadwell
Kayla Starnes
Samantha Smith

Codruta Martin
Caitlin Lehfeld
Alissa Grantham
Corey Ezra
Michael Dongus
Sabrina Collins
Laura Brunnelson
Sydney Barker
Caio Araujo Roper

Hohenfels Middle School

"A" Honor Roll
Mary Adgie
Caroline Bourgeois
Marina Brown
Stephanie Fernandez
Charlotte Hammer
Stephen Welch

"A-B" Honor Roll
Anna Gruber
Hunter Massey
Allison Moczynski
Alexis Perryman
Lauren Powell

Charles Preysler
Emerlyn Rivera
Loraine Roberts
Robert Ryan
Kristin Stribbling
Katelyn Turgeon

Selina Chestnut
Tyrae Curry
Tarique Hunter
Bryce Hysom
Erin Redden
James Sablan

Lukas Sammler
Emmanuel Soliz
Anna Volk
Ralph Williams
Kaylee-Noel Brennan
Angelyn Fryer
Ashleigh Glynn

Tashia Golson
Alexander Larumbe
Nicholas Randolph
Brittany Stolicki
Zachary Wood
Laquishia Wright
Cleia Dominguez

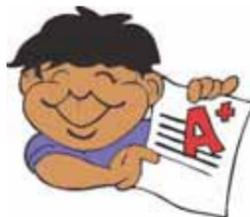
Andrea Grantham
Cheyanne Higgins
Harley Hunt
Anthony Johnson
Shaina Ruiz
Kathleen Salerno
Stephen Schafer

Garmisch Middle School

"A" Honor Roll
James Adaryukov
Mark Brown
Khalil Simon

"A-B" Honor Roll
Salem Almosadder
Michael Beans
Kaleigh Byrne
Tess Laub
Daniel Lonkhurst

Timothy Predmore
Tess Chaffin
Calvin McGrail
Alex Denikiewicz
Nicole Ney
Chantel Wynn



Editor's note: Xavier Calip, a fifth grader at Netzaberg Middle School, also made the Honor Roll list for the 1st Quarter. Calip's name did not run with the NMS Honor Roll List in the Nov. 26 issue due to a reporting error. The Schweinfurt middle and high school lists will run in the Jan. 14 issue.

School officials encourage parents, students to nominate teachers for presidential award

by SAMANTHA L. QUIGLEY
Armed Forces Press Service

Department of Defense Education Activity officials are encouraging parents, students, school administrators and others to nominate worthy science and mathematics teachers for a prestigious presidential award.

Michael Kestner, branch chief for mathematics for DoDEA headquarters, said the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Testing began in 1983 and recognizes educators for their dedication to

teaching math and science at the 7th- to 12th-grade level.

The award is open to teachers from all 50 states and four jurisdictions, including DoDEA, who have been teaching science or math for at least five years.

"It's the presidential award, so it's a prestigious award," Kestner said.

"It puts [recipients] in a network of other master teachers across the country, so they create a network of master teachers who can share ideas and bring them back to their own schools."

Kestner said DoDEA teachers may have a bit of an edge because of their circumstances.

"We have teachers all around the world, so they're picking up techniques and experiences from the cultures they're in as well as things that are happening in this country," he said. "That's one advantage that we have."

Teachers are notified of their nominations and must then complete an application process that requires videotaping a lesson and then critiquing it. DoDEA teachers will get help with

that, Kestner said.

"We try to support them going through the application process, to get their application complete," he said. "It is a process that takes some time."

In addition to recognition, recipients-potentially 108 of them-receive a trip for two to Washington, a citation signed by the president and a \$10,000 award from the National Science Foundation. The monetary award is theirs to do with as they see fit, Kestner said, but he predicted that most would put at least a portion of it

back into their schools.

The National Science Foundation will select the final winners from nominees who go forward from their jurisdiction.

Recipients also have the opportunity to attend recognition events and professional development programs during their trip to the nation's capital.

DoDEA officials ask that nominations be submitted before Jan. 8. Forms are available on the awards program's Web site, <http://www.paemst.org>.

Math Matters



Courtesy photo

Fifth-grader Cassandra Martinez discusses her "Graphing Data Using Excel and Pixie" presentation with Sally Friedrich, her teacher, Nov. 18 at Grafenwoehr Elementary School. The presentation is part of the Bavarian District initiative to place an emphasis on math instruction in school. Students had to formulate a question, collect data, and prepare a graph using Microsoft Excel. Final products were published on the school's Intranet site using the Tech4Learning software "Pixie."

VHS Winter Sports Schedules 08-09

(As of 26 November, 2008)

Date	Boys' Basketball	Girls' Basketball	Wrestling	Rifle
5 Dec. Fri.	K-town (@ Vilseck)	K-town (@Vilseck)		
6 Dec. Sat.	K-town (@Vilseck)	K-town (@Vilseck)	at Ansbach	at Hohenfels
12 Dec. Fri.	at Bamberg	at Bamberg		
13 Dec. Sat.	Bamberg (@ Graf Gym)	Bamberg (@ Graf Gym)	at Hohenfels	Vilseck
9 Jan. Fri.	Open	Open		
10 Jan. Sat.	Open	Open	at Heidelberg	at Bamberg
16 Jan. Fri.	at BFA	at BFA		
17 Jan. Sat.	at BFA	at BFA	Vilseck	at Ansbach
23 Jan. Fri.	Hohenfels (@ Vilseck)	Hohenfels (@ Vilseck)		
24 Jan. Sat.	at Hohenfels	at Hohenfels	at Patch	at Hohenfels
30 Jan. Fri.	at Patch	at Patch		
31 Jan. Sat.	at Patch	at Patch	Vilseck	Finals @ Vilseck
6 Feb. Fri.	at Ansbach	at Ansbach		
7 Feb. Sat.	Ansbach (@ Vilseck)	Ansbach (@ Vilseck)	Sectionals at Aviano	
13 Feb. Fri.	Heidelberg (@ Vilseck)	Heidelberg (@ Vilseck)	Europeans in Wiesbaden	
14 Feb. Sat.	Heidelberg (@ Vilseck)	Heidelberg (@ Vilseck)	Europeans in Wiesbaden	
18-20 Feb.	Europeans @ Mannheim	Europeans @ Mannheim		
*Friday: JV Girls @ 1600/JV Boys @1730	Varsity Girls @1900/Varsity @ 2030	Matches begins @1000	Home matches begin @ 0900	
*Saturday: JV Girls @1000/JV Boys @ 1130	Varsity Girls @1300/Varsity @ 1430			

For up-to-date school closure information, visit www.grafenwoehr.army.mil.

CDC earns national accreditation

Garmisch Public Affairs Office

The Child Development Center located on Artillery Kaserne is one of the first early childhood programs to earn re-accreditation from

the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) under their new, more stringent standards. The NAEYC is the nation's leading organization of early childhood professionals.

"We're proud to have earned the mark of quality from NAEYC, and to be recognized for our commitment to reaching the highest professional standards," said Suayn Moise, Garmisch CDC director. "NAEYC accreditation lets families in our community know that children in our program are getting the best care and early learning experiences possible.

To earn NAEYC accreditation in the new system, the Garmisch CDC went through an extensive self-study process, measuring the program and its services against the ten new NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and more than 400 related Accreditation Criteria. The program received NAEYC accreditation after an on-site visit by NAEYC assessors to ensure that the program meets each of the ten NAEYC program standards. NAEYC-accredited programs are also subject to unannounced visits during their accreditation, which lasts for five years.

Garrison manager Karin H. Santos stopped by to present her congratulations and the first of the new garrison coins to each of the CDC staff.

"We care about the children of our community," said Santos. "This early accreditation is an important moment, demonstrating the garrison's commitment to Families."

In the 20 years since NAEYC accreditation was established, it has become a widely recognized sign of high-quality early childhood education. More than 11,000 programs, serving one million young children, are currently ac-

credited by NAEYC – approximately 8 percent of all preschools and other early childhood programs.

"The new NAEYC accreditation system raises the bar for preschools, child care centers and other early childhood programs," said Mark Ginsberg, Ph.D., executive director of NAEYC. "Garmisch's NAEYC accreditation is a sign that they are a leader in a national effort to invest in high-quality early childhood education, and to help give all children a better start."

The NAEYC accreditation system has set voluntary professional standards for programs for young children since 1985. As of September 2006, the association's revised program standards and criteria have introduced a new level of quality, accountability, and service for parents and children in child care programs. The new standards reflect the latest research and best practices in early childhood education and development. NAEYC is committed to utilizing the newest studies and analysis on positive child outcomes to ensure young children continue receiving the highest-quality care and education possible.

The NAEYC accreditation system was created in 1985 to set professional standards for early childhood education, and to help families identify high-quality preschools, child care centers and other early education programs. To earn NAEYC accreditation, a program must meet each of the ten NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards. Programs are accredited by NAEYC for a five-year period.



Photo by John Reese

Ellen Harris (center), CYS director, and Suayn Moise (right), CDC director, receive USAG Garmisch coins from garrison manager Karin H. Santos (left) Dec. 3.

Tire confusion leads to dangerous conditions, fines

Story and photo by
JOHN REESE
Garmisch PAO

On the topic of winter driving in Germany and Austria, there's been some confusion about winter tires and local laws.

Being at the base of the Alps, one of the first things military and civilian personnel assigned to Garmisch learn at the onset of winter is that they'll need a second set of tires to swap out for their personal vehicles.

But what type of special winter tires, if any, are required by German and Austrian laws?

There are two kinds of symbols on winter tires; a snowflake representing "snow" tires, and "M+S," meaning the tires are designed to work in mud and snow.

The confusion comes with the ambiguity of laws enacted in the past few years. It doesn't specifically mandate the use of a certain type of winter tire, only that the tire be designed for the type of weather conditions expected to be encountered.

The German law states that tires must be "suitable to the weather." This means snow, ice, and freezing conditions on the roads like black ice, a thin coating of ice that's hard to detect before you're sliding on it.

Black ice is especially present on bridges, usually preceded by a warning sign.

Austrian laws are more specific. Like German law, the tires must have the snowflake or M+S mark,

and must have at least 4 millimeters of tread pattern, but the Austrians require winter tires to be used from November 1 to April 15. In some places snow chains are required on the drive tires. To avoid unnecessary damage to the roads, snow chains should only to be used where posted or at the direction of the Austrian police. Heavy snow or ices are a common occurrence on the high mountain roads of Austria. Winter tires are to be used in all winter conditions, and just driving with chains on fair weather tires isn't acceptable. Signs advising motorists to use their chains should be posted.

In both countries, all four tires should match, meaning you can't get by with just swapping out the drive tires.

Practically speaking, the Polizei don't go around checking your tires, but if you're the cause of an accident and a "Stau," (traffic jam) stalling the flow of traffic, you can expect a ticket for €20 for not having the correct tires and another €40 for causing the jam.

In Austria, the fines can range between €35 to a painful €5000 for non-compliance!

"Drivers who obstruct or endanger traffic due to summer tires will definitely be ticketed," warns Andreas Tuerk, Garmisch Safety Officer.

Additionally, insurance companies may deny coverage to motorists driving with summer tires on wintry roads, added Tuerk.

Some auto insurance companies will deny or invalidate claims, making the driver liable for part or all of

damage or injury, if an accident occurs without winter tires. This isn't automatic; two popular providers of auto insurance for U.S. personnel in Europe haven't made an issue of tires except when driving on summer tires where signs are posted for winter tires or chains.

"In the case of a traffic accident in adverse winter conditions, police can assign blame to a motorist without snow tires, regardless of who actually caused the accident," Tuerk warned.

Tires specifically designed for snow will function better than the multi-purpose ones, but the most important thing is to have a good set of tires with at least 1.6 millimeters of tread pattern. For best safety, however, tires with a tread pattern of less than 4 millimeters should be replaced. Tires can be inspected for safety at the Garmisch Auto Crafts Shop, your auto dealer, most tire shops, or road service providers such as ADAC, the German equivalent of the American Automobile Association. AAFES Car Care Centers also provide free safety checks and sell winter tires.

Garmisch doesn't have a Car Care Center, but the AAFES gas station sells winter tires and will order them for your car if not in stock, and Auto Crafts can install them with an appointment and a small fee. If you plan to purchase and install winter tires from AAFES at a larger kaserne, it is wise to call ahead to insure they have the correct size, especially if your car has after-market rims.

"Basically, your car must be



Photo illustration by Sgt. Stephen Morgan

The "M+S" and snowflake symbols specify what conditions winter tires are designed for.

equipped with the right tires depending on the road conditions," said Ivano Novarini, Directorate of Logistics.

Novarini is responsible for the garrison's vehicle fleet and a veteran of many an Alpine winter. He goes by a tip he picked up years ago from ADAC.

"If the temperature drops constantly below 7 centigrade, the use of

winter tires is a lot safer even on dry roads or rain because of their special mixture which guarantees better grip in low temperatures," advises Novarini. "I go by 'it's getting cold, let's put winter tires on.'"

If you're still unclear on the type of tires you need, contact the garrison Safety Office or speak to the knowledgeable folks at Vehicle Registration.

Oh Tannenbaum, oh Tannenbaum

A brass quartet of Edelweiss soldiers from the Bundeswehr's Gebirgsmusikkorps, who share Artillery Kaserne with USAG Garmisch, warmed up the crowd outside waiting for the tree to be illuminated.

Photo by John Reese



Photo by John Reese

The Garmisch Elementary-Middle School Choir perform at the garrison tree lighting ceremony at the Pete Burke Community Center Dec. 1.

Native American groups attempting to revive lost culture during celebrations

by KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

Drum beats filled the large room, echoing off the walls with a pounding that resonated deep in each spectator's chest.

Soon a high-pitched, mournful wail joined the rhythm.

The spectators grew quiet, watching with furrowed brows as the lone singer performed this art form observed by few and mastered by fewer.

Lindbergh Namingha performed this song, a prayer to bring water for crops, on his doe-skin drum Nov. 19 at the Community Activities Center during the U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels National American Indian Heritage Month celebration.

Namingha, a Hopi, was just one of the performers during the celebration which featured displays and food sampling of Native American specialties like fry bread, carne adobado, roasted corn, and baked pumpkin.

Spc. Kalie Tsisquaya Usdi Jones, a Hohenfels Soldier whose mother is

Cherokee and father is German, performed the lively inter-tribal dance, while Sandra Muller Namingha performed a more solemn women's traditional dance.

According to Equal Opportunity advisor Master Sgt. Christopher Mulvihill, Jones and her husband, Spc. DJ Jones, both Soldiers stationed at Hohenfels, were instrumental in planning the celebration that brought together many community organizations, along with the Naminghas (who are no longer in the military), to celebrate this diverse culture.

"Bringing Native American culture to people over here is important to me because I think, and I believe, that too much of our culture got lost," said Namingha, herself the daughter of a German mother and an American father who comes from the Blackfoot tribe in the Sweetgrass Hills of Montana.

Jones nodded in agreement.

"The Cherokee language is starting to die out," she said of the language she learned from her great-

grandmother.

She said she tries to get involved with Native American groups, especially dance troupes, wherever she lives.

Namingha said he wishes more Native Americans in the Army would get involved with their heritage.

"Lots of people say they are part Native American. They should call the EEO and get involved in things like this, even if they don't look like it. And you don't have to sing or dance, you can help with displays or other things," he said, adding, "don't only just say you are (Native American) in the month of November."

After inviting audience members to join in, Spc. Kalie Tsisquaya Usdi Jones performs an inter-tribal dance at the National American Indian Heritage Month celebration Nov. 19.

Photo by Master Sgt. Christopher Mulvihill



Child abuse prevention program empowers students

by KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

For many parents, hearing that their first-grader's school or day care is teaching them a program aimed at preventing childhood physical and sexual abuse may not necessarily be good news.

Parents may have concerns about how explicit the material will be or that learning about abuse will make their children fearful of the world around them.

Sherryll Kraizer, creator of the Safe Child program, couldn't agree more.

"I one-hundred percent agree with parent's concerns with other programs. They say, 'this is sexual abuse, this is what happens, and oh, by the way, it will probably happen with someone you love and trust.' I wouldn't want anyone to say that to my kids either."

That's one reason why Kraizer, an instructional specialist with the Denver Public Schools who has a PhD. in education with a specialization in youth at risk, developed the Safe Child program for the prevention of child abuse.

Last month, after being invited by the Family Advocacy Program at U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels Army Community Service, she came to Germany on a whirl-wind two-day trip aimed solely at bringing the program to the children and parents of Hohenfels.

The hope, said FAP specialist Michael Isom, is to work with the schools and Child, Youth, and School Services to use Safe Child to supplement existing programs.

"This is another piece of the puzzle of services we need to provide the community," said Isom.

Kraizer said when she began developing the program in the 80's she found that other abuse prevention programs increased the levels of fear and anxiety in 25 percent of children.

"For me, that was just unacceptable," she said, referencing the Hippocratic oath for physicians that states, "first, do no harm."

For her, the same principal should hold true in education.

She also embraced her father's adage that 'prevention is a lot less painful than treatment.'

So she started work on a program that would empower children that would not only make them less susceptible to abuse, but increase their self-esteem and communication skills along the way.

"For me, it's fun to find a way to address some of our worst social problems in a way that empowers kids," said Kraizer, whose program is now taught in countries across the globe.

The word "empowerment" can sound like a buzzword with little real substance, but for Kraizer, it truly is the bedrock of her program, and the basis for her entire worldview and outlook on parenting.

Hearing her talk about what childhood ought to be brings back memories of a time when mothers shooed their children out of the house with instructions to "go out and play and be back by dark," worrying little about the possibility of them being abducted, or at least not showing it if they did.

Kraizer believes that in general we as a society have become too nervous, as a result continually shortening the leash we hold on our children until they are so tethered to home they are unable to achieve the ultimate purpose of childhood: to grow and mature.

"The more fearful we become, the smaller our world gets. It sends the signal (to children) that they can't handle it.

"It deprives them of the richness of life and of independence, which is the whole point of

growing up," she said.

Still, bad things do happen, and children are abused every day.

The hard part, said Kraizer, is finding a way to teach children the tools they need to protect themselves and get themselves help if something does happen, without making them timid and scared.

Her Safe Child program, for children from kindergarten to third grade, focuses on helping children find and own their voice, teaching

them that their bodies are their own and how to effectively express their emotions, like when something is happening that makes them uncomfortable.

She said she has found that this helps with other issues such as bullying, significantly cutting down on behavior problems in the classroom once children are able to speak up for themselves to both peers and adults.

She said the program seeks to achieve these results by using role-play techniques.

Children practice how to speak up when they are uncomfortable, both in the moment, and later when

they tell their parents or another trusted adult how they feel.

She compares teaching children to speak up for themselves with learning how to ride a bike.

"When you were taught how to ride a bike, if you had read a book about it and watched a video about it, but never actually done it, when it came time to get on the bike you probably

couldn't do it, at least not a first," she said.

So she advocates role playing situations so children know without thinking what to do if something begins to make them uneasy.

"The military trains and trains so when you're in a stressful situation it's not your brain that moves your feet, it's your training," she said.

"That's the same thing Safe Child aims to do: build muscle memory."

The program also includes components for parents and teachers to help kids make the most out of their new-found confidence.

Kraizer said it helps parents know what to look for, and teaches parents and children how to communicate.

She said because the way a child communicates anxiety may not always be the same way an adult would, the program offers tips for parents and teachers so they know what to listen and watch for.

Because abuse often happens inside the home, Kraizer said when parents find themselves, often in times of high stress, approaching or crossing boundaries they have set they should seek help immediately.

The high stress environment that can sometimes accompany military life is one reason Kraizer and the FAP think the Safe Child program could be so helpful here.

"This just supports what the military is trying to do, which is give parents ways to ask for help," she said.

"Raising kids is supposed to have some fun in it, not just be anxiety and pressure all the time," she said.

Kraizer conducted a workshop at Hohenfels to teach specialists how to train teachers to present the program, though she stressed that the modules are heavily scripted and easy to follow.

Isom said when an implementation timeline is set the FAP will continue to assist with its execution.

For more information on the principles and structure of the Safe Child program, visit www.safechild.org.

"The more fearful we become, the smaller our world gets. It sends the signal (to children) that they can't handle it. It deprives them of the richness of life and of independence, which is the whole point of growing up."

Sherryll Kraizer

Safe Child program creator

ACS welcomes new division chief, holistic approach

by KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

Brandi Stauber has been appointed the new division chief for Army Community Service at U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels.

Stauber, who has served as the Family Advocacy Program Manager for ACS since her arrival in Hohenfels in 2005, says she is passionate about all the programs ACS offers because she believes they offer a holistic approach to meeting people's needs.

"Now more than ever with the (Army Family) Covenant funds and the positions that have become available with it, we are capable of meet-



"We want to make sure all of our clients are having their needs assessed individually. That is an accreditation standard we are already doing, but I want us to take it to the next level."

ing the needs of Soldiers and families and can do it with superior service," she said.

Within her first year in the position, Stauber says she wants to use the superior 98 out of 100 rating ACS achieved during their most recent ac-

creditation as a base to raise the bar even higher for the ACS customer experience.

"We want to make sure all of our clients are having their needs assessed individually. That is an accreditation standard we are already doing, but I

want us to take it to the next level," she said.

Family, Morale, Welfare, and Recreation director Stacey Downing said she is enthusiastic about Stauber's appointment.

"Ms. Stauber brings a tremendous

amount of personal caring, a sincerity that is refreshing and most welcome during our continual times of transition while our Army remains at war. She's personable and has a reputation for being a highly effective professional," she said.

"Under her direction, our ACS will remain committed to excellence by providing the highest quality services to our community."

Stauber is a licensed clinical social worker with a master's degree in social work.

She has previously held ACS positions at USAG Schweinfurt and Fort Sill, Okla. Stauber is available at ACS, Bldg. 10, DSN 466-4860.

Ham questions Rear D commanders on successes, challenges they face

by KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

Gen. Carter F. Ham, commanding general of U.S. Army, Europe and Seventh Army visited U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels Nov. 24 to meet with garrison and operations group leaders and tour post facilities.

Ham met with rear detachment commanders at the hilltop chapel center to find out what challenges and successes they are facing.

"You have to put your best and brightest in the rear detachment business," he said, stressing how important rear detachments are to the mission of taking care of Soldiers and families.

The rear detachment commanders, along with the commanders and command sergeants major from the garrison, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, and the Joint Multinational Readiness Center discussed the unique challenges presented by the exceptional rotation and deployment schedules of Hohenfels units.

This is not an installation that has one big unit deployed for 15 months then home for 15 months, where most of the community is going through the same things at the same time, said Col. Charles Preysler, JMRC commander.

Because of that, agencies like Army Community Service and Family Readiness Groups require special

support to meet the needs of the community, he said.

Throughout the meeting, the focus stayed on taking care of Soldiers and families, shifting from just the rear detachments to other aspects of Army life.

The leaders discussed leave schedules, with Brig. Gen. David Hogg, commanding general of the 7th Army Joint Multinational Training Command, saying he hopes to provide Soldiers at JMRC with a set two week block leave in the summer and one in the winter, "because they deserve the break."

Ham asked unit leaders how well they have been able to take care of their wounded warriors and how of-

ten Soldiers need to be moved into a Warrior Transition Unit.

"We must acknowledge that the source of the wound is not as important as the nature of the wound," he said, reminding the commanders that Soldiers should be taken care of to the best of the Army's ability, whether the injury was sustained in combat or elsewhere.

After meeting with rear detachment commanders, Ham toured WTU and Soldier and Family Assistance Center facilities, Army Community Service, and was briefed on numerous Family, Morale, Welfare, and Recreation initiatives the garrison is implementing to create an even higher quality of life for all members of the community.



Gen. Carter F. Ham, U.S. Army, Europe and Seventh Army.

Day long fight results in Bronze Star with Valor

Story and photo by
KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

Sgt. Jamie Rubio received a Bronze Star Medal with Valor during a ceremony Nov. 24 for his actions while deployed as a team leader with Company D, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment in Zabul, Afghanistan.

Rubio's platoon was on patrol in the southern end of the Chalikor Valley in the Argendab district during the early morning hours of June 15, 2008, when they came under fire by anti-coalition forces.

"I knew something was going to happen. We'd never been in that far" he said, recalling that they received fire about an hour into their patrol.

When the patrol was first engaged Rubio was gunning for the embedded transition team.

As his vehicle drove into the attack and his turret was hit with fire, he maintained his position and continued to return fire to the enemy.

"My truck was going down, they took out two tires and the entire windshield was gone."

When Rubio's .50 caliber machine gun finally went down, he dismounted and began transferring ammunition from his vehicle to the platoon leader's gunner, Cpl. David Kuhn, allowing him to continue suppressing and destroying enemy personnel and positions.

During the heaviest parts of the fight, Rubio's platoon leader, 1st Lt. Philip Swintek, lost communications with the operational detachment team leader.

Rubio volunteered to run with Swintek 200 meters through open terrain toward the team leader's position so Swintek could establish face to face communications.

While running, Rubio returned fire, covering

the PLs movement.

Once they arrived at the team leader's position, Rubio began assisting another team member with a 60 millimeter mortar tube.

Though constant and accurate enemy contact forced them to low crawl while they fired, they continued to fire the tube until they ran out of ammunition.

When the mortar ran out of ammunition, Rubio low crawled to Swintek's position to see if he could be of further assistance.



With his wife and son beside him, Sgt. Jamie Rubio (center) receives a Bronze Star with Valor from Col. Charles Presysler, JMRC commander, Nov. 24.

As Swintek was returning enemy fire with his M4, Rubio shouted for him to take cover. Swintek could not hear his calls, so Rubio reached up pulled him to the ground.

Minutes later, small arms fire flew directly where Swintek had been standing. Rubio had saved his life.

After Swintek and the team leader decided on a course of action, Rubio once again ran with him the 200 meters back to their position.

When they arrived Rubio noticed that Kuhn's

ammunition can had been knocked loose by an enemy round, and was trying to simultaneously hold his ammunition and fire his .50 caliber machine gun.

With rounds hitting inches from his body, Rubio climbed onto the hood of the vehicle and held the ammunition for Kuhn and was eventually able to fix the can.

Kuhn's fire forced the enemy to break contact as he engaged and destroyed numerous combatants.

"It was a long day," said Rubio. "We got into it in the morning before the sun came up and at the end of the day after the fire fight, the sun was going down and we were almost out of fuel and ammo."

When asked how he kept his cool and kept himself going all that time, Rubio just shrugged his shoulders.

Like most Soldiers, he can't explain what allowed him to press on.

"I can't believe I lasted that long," he said, recalling how exhausting the day was. "It was training. As soon as the adrenaline stopped you can feel it in your body, but everybody just knew what to do."

Before presenting him with his award, Col. Charles Preysler, Joint Multinational Readiness Center commander, agreed that training is key to every Soldier's survival.

"Some of these actions you may be called upon to do in the future," Preysler said to the Soldiers gathered for the awards ceremony. "This is why we focus so hard on training."

Rubio said everyone in the unit did what they were supposed to do, that despite the complications, a lot went right that day.

"We were all just glad no one got hurt," said Rubio. "The trucks were all messed up, but you can always replace a truck."

Shoppers air concerns, question management policies

by KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

Shoppers who arrived outside the U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels Post Exchange early Sunday morning expecting to shop received an unpleasant surprise.

According to officials, the garrison received several Interactive Customer Evaluation complaints when the PX opened at 11 a.m. on Nov. 30, though advertisements had stated it would open at 8 a.m.

At the public Army Air Force Exchange Service and Defense Commissary Agency council meeting on Dec. 1, Matt Mennona, who oversees AAFES locations in Bavaria, said the hours in the AAFES holiday flyer were community specific, and the 8 a.m. Sunday opening time did not apply to Hohenfels.

"I am the one who didn't open early on Sunday. If it would have made sense, I would have," he said, adding that few people took advantage of the early Saturday opening. The store made less than \$300 in sales in the first three hours that day.

Mennona also addressed an issue that occurred with advertised free AAFES gift cards.

Some customers believed there would be gift cards handed out to the first 100 customers on Friday, Nov. 28 and were unhappy when less than 50 were distributed.

"I did authorize Rebecca (Spencer, Hohen-

fels PX manager) to give out gift cards to show AAFES does care about its customers. But this store was not on the list to receive 100," said Mennona.

In response to questions from community members during the meeting, Mennona asked people to understand that AAFES is a business.

One audience member said she felt Hohenfels is punished for being a small community by having a smaller PX with less selection than other facilities, like Grafenwoehr.

"I feel AAFES should be across the board," she said.

Mennona noted that Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation gets 70 percent of its funding from AAFES, therefore if he ran a "shoddy operation" and did not effectively manage his resources it would be the community that would ultimately suffer.

Those in attendance also brought up issues they were having with customer service at the PX, including problems with the shuttle service between the Grafenwoehr and Hohenfels stores.

Mennona said if a customer from Hohenfels requests an item from Grafenwoehr and it is in stock there, it should be shipped via the shuttle service.

Spencer said if a customer has trouble with this, or is receiving inferior service, they should have her paged directly via the customer service counter and she will help in any way she can.

Some patrons reported having problems with the new fuel card system, including being unable to purchase fuel due to an incorrect license number on their card.

Mennona acknowledged that there have been glitches in implementing the new system and asked customers to "please be patient with us as we try to work these issues as best we can."

One attendee made a suggestion that TKS adhere to a predetermined break schedule so customers know when the office will be closed, instead of finding out when they arrive. Mennona promised to look into the suggestion.

After a question about bad produce, Jamie Segarra, commissary manager, said any customers that find they have bought bad produce can easily return it.

"Any issues like that, no problem; we will exchange it or give you a refund. We'll take it, you don't even have to have a receipt," he said.

In response to suggestions made at previous AAFES/DeCA council meetings, Mennona reported that he ordered and plans to receive additional maternity items for Spring/Summer '09.

He also increased the order for children's clothing (girls, boys, and infants and toddlers) and workout clothing in larger sizes.

James Einwaechter, USAG Hohenfels Department of Public Works chief, briefed the council on the transformation of Bldg. 9 into a new Pextra complex.

Vehicle inspection will relocate to another

location and the current Pextra on Warrior Hill will move into Bldg. 9, along with the bookstore currently located in the main PX, Military Clothing and Sales, Sixt car rental, and AAFES dry cleaning.

An increased outdoor living and gardening center and a drive through ATM will also be added as part of the garrison's goal to create a Hohenfels main street with one stop shopping.

Einwaechter said a contract has been awarded and DPW plans to open the facility by September 2009.

To close the meeting, both AAFES and DeCA announced upcoming events and hours.

A Sony representative will be in the store Friday.

On Dec. 20 the store will open one hour early at 10 a.m. for children's shopping, with pictures with Santa from 12 to 2 p.m.

Segarra announced that starting Dec. 1 the commissary will close one hour later on Tuesdays at 7 p.m. and open one hour later on Saturdays at 10 a.m.

He said the later hours on Tuesday were in response to a concern raised at a previous council meeting that Soldiers have trouble getting to the commissary on weekdays before it closes at 6 p.m.

The AAFES/DeCA council is held once every quarter. The next meeting will be in March and will be announced in the Hometown Happenings and daily newsbriefs.

What's Happening

Grafenwoehr/Vilseck Briefs

"Seussical the Musical"

The USAG Grafenwoehr FMWR Performing Arts Program will perform "Seussical the Musical" for all ID cardholders this weekend.

The event takes place in the Vilseck High School Multi-Purpose Room and is appropriate for all ages. For more info, call DSN 475-6426. The show starts at 7 p.m. on Friday and Saturday and 2 p.m. on Sunday.

Pancake breakfast

The VHS JROTC will hold a pancake breakfast Saturday from 5 a.m.-12 p.m. in the VHS multi-purpose room.

Walk 4 Freedom

Walk 4 Freedom assessments take place tomorrow 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Graf Physical Fitness Center.

Walk 4 Freedom is a wellness program in which you "walk" the equivalent distance from Grafenwoehr/Vilseck to Iraq, approximately 2000 miles, within the 11 month program.

Martial Arts Exhibition

Child, Youth and School Services present a Martial Arts Exhibition by students Saturday.

Join the crowd at the Netzaberg Youth Center, Bldg. 9080, from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. For information, call DSN 475-9394, CIV 09641-83-9394.

New Bus Schedules

DOL has improved the community bus services in the Vilseck and Grafenwoehr communities.

New schedules are also published on the USAG Grafenwoehr Intranet. Just click "Bus Schedules" under "Services" on the right side of the title page.

Teen Camp

The Netzaberg Youth Center will host a winter morning camp for teens Dec. 22 through Jan. 2. Camps run from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. and are open to 6-8th grade youth registered with the CYSS Youth Center.

Cost is \$40 per week including lunch. For information, call DSN 475-9393, CIV 90641-83-9393.

Tropical Island Trip

Sign up for the 19-21 December trip to Berlin Tropical Islands.

There are limited seats available, and spots fill fast! Call DSN 475-8822, CIV 09641-83-8822.

GCSC Jingle Bell Bingo

The Grafenwoehr GCSC will host Bingo Dec. 16 from 5:30pm - 8pm. in Bldg. 508. Members and member's guests welcome. \$10 for dinner at the door. Bingo cards \$1 for 1 or \$5 for 6. RSVP by Friday to gcsmembership@yahoo.com.

Christmas Bunco

Enjoy food, fun and prizes Dec. 18 as the dice start to roll at 6 p.m. Pre-register as spots fill fast. Call the Langenbruck Center, DSN 476-2360, to register.

Childcare is available for parents who need it. For information, call DSN 476-2760, CIV 09662-83-2760.

Pajama Party

Join the Graf library staff Dec. 19 in your PJs for an evening of holiday stories, songs, crafts and treats. The party runs from 6-8 p.m.

Christkindlmarkt

The library is heading to Nuremberg to experience the German Weihnachten (Christmas) culture Dec. 22.

The Lebkuchen Factory, a Christmas market, and the gummi bear store are on the itinerary. Seat reservations must be made with ITR no later than 19 Dec.

Hollywood Handshake Tour

Stop by the Grafenwoehr PX Dec. 21 from 2-4 p.m. to meet celebs such as comedian Dennis Farina (Law & Order) and others from Days of Our Lives, NYPD Blue and Saving Grace.

Graf VFW

VFW Post 10692 in Grafenwoehr hosts an Open House each Wednesday at 6 p.m. Business meetings held on the second Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. For information, call 0160-91423858 or 0160-95877025.

Grafenwoehr PWOC

Grafenwoehr Protestant Women of the Chapel invites you to join them for a Christmas Coffee House Dec. 18 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. in the Graf Chapel Annex.

Child care is available. For more information, contact Graf PWOC at pwoc_graf@yahoo.com.

Grafenwoehr Health Clinic

The Grafenwoehr and Vilseck Health Clinics' hours of operations will be affected for the following holidays.

For information, call the Grafenwoehr front desk at 475-8398/7152.

24 December: Christmas Eve-open 6:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

25-26 December: Christmas-closed

31 December: New Year's Eve-open 6:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

1 January: New Year-closed

Vilseck Health Clinic

If you've been holding off going to the Vilseck Health Clinic due to limited appointments during the redeployment of troops, wait no longer.

To make an appointment at the Vilseck Health Clinic, call DSN 476-2936/2804 or Civilian 09662-83-2936/2804.

Stripes Gamer

Stars and Stripes released its latest Stripes GAMER on December 6.

This issue ran down the best game

picks of the year and features the results of the "Top 10 Must Play First Person Shooter Games" promotion.

A PDF version of the printed publication will be online at www.stripesgamer.com.

Military Moms Needed

Stars and Stripes will soon launch a site where MILMoms (and Dads) can exchange information about raising families while being in the military and stationed overseas.

Stars and Stripes is currently looking for a few dedicated Moms who could help monitor and provide resources to users of the site.

Interested individuals are encouraged to contact Stars and Stripes at <http://ww2.stripes.com/moms.php>.

Nurse Advice Line

Get self-care advice to help you or your family member feel better now. From a landline: 0800-825-1600 from a cell phone: 00800-4759-2330.

Hohenfels Briefs

One-Day Ski Trips

Enjoy a quick winter getaway to the Bavarian Alps for only € 30. The Winklmoosalm mountain community in Reit im Winkl, Germany offers alpine skiing, cross-country skiing, hiking in the snow and much more.

Trips are scheduled for December 20, 23, and 27; January 3, 10, 24, and 31; February 7 and 21; March 7, 21, 24, and 28; April 4 and 18.

The € 30 includes transportation only. ODR equipment rental for the day is \$15 for adults, if needed. For more information or to reserve your seat, contact Outdoor Recreation at DSN: 466-2060.

Youth Center Nurnberg Trip

Take a trip to the world famous Christmas market Dec. 19, 3-9 p.m. The only cost is the Euro for train transportation.

Slots are limited so sign-up by Dec. 17. Open to youth in grades 7-12 that are enrolled through the CYSS Central Registration.

For more information, contact the Youth Center at DSN: 466-4492.

Hollywood Handshake Tour

Armed Forces Entertainment presents the Hollywood Handshake Tour featuring Dennis Farina, Amy Danielson, James Reynolds, Bill Brochtrup, Ramon Deocampo, and Lissa Layng.

Meet and greet the stars of critically-acclaimed theater productions, films and some of your favorite television shows such as Law and Order, Days of Our Lives, NYPD Blue and Saving Grace.

The stars will hit Hohenfels on Dec. 19, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the 1-4 Warrior Sports Cafe and 2-4 p.m. in the AAFES PX Lobby.

Holiday Bingo at the CAC

Join the fun starting at 6:30 p.m. Dec. 19. Bingo packets are \$25 sold before 3 p.m. on Friday and \$30 sold at the door. There will also be a surprise Santa giveaway.

Wood Shop Safety

Learn to safely use the machinery in the wood shop Dec. 20. There is a \$10 class fee and no pre-registration is required. Wear closed toe shoes and appropriate clothing. The class will be held from 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. in the Wood Shop.

Lane 17's Birthday Club

Celebrate your birthday with the monthly Birthday Club at Lane 17 Dec. 20. The Birthday Club customer bowls for free on the designated Saturday of the month for the Birthday Club. The customer can also bring three friends along to bowl for just \$1 per game plus shoe rental. To reserve your lane, call DSN 466-1740.

Skiing/Snowboarding Trip

CYSS registered Youth in grades 7-12 are invited to pack up the gear and hit the slopes of Garmisch on Jan. 2. This trip will depart Hohenfels at 3 a.m. and return at approximately 11:30 p.m. Cost is \$65 and includes ski rental, lift pass and transportation.

Meals are not included and ski instructor is not included. Additional funds should be brought for food.

A ski fitting for the trip will be held at Outdoor Recreation on Dec. 31. For more information, contact the Youth Center at DSN: 466-4492/3646.

Framing

Learn how to measure and mat your pictures as well as how to cut and put together frames Jan. 3. \$30 class fee includes supplies to frame a 5"x7" picture. Please pre-register and pay at least 3 days before class. 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

Auditions for "Grease"

The Hohenfels Box Seat Theatre will be holding open auditions Jan. 8 to the entire community for the show "Grease". Auditions will be held on Thursday January 8 from 3-8 p.m. at the High School Great Hall.

Auditions will involve reading sections of the script, a 1 minute cappella vocal selection and learn a 45 second dance routine. The performances of Grease will be held at the Hohenfels Middle/High School Great Hall on Friday and Saturday March 27 and 28.

The production will be the USAG Hohenfels entry into the 2009 IMCOM

Entertainment Tops in Plays competition.

All members of the community are invited to attend and volunteer to participate in all aspects of the production including stage crew, set construction, technical assistance, house management, and any backstage crews i.e. costumes, makeup, props.

Basic Quilting

Join us for a quilting class Jan. 10 from 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m.. You will receive pre-class instructions at time of sign-up. Please pre-register and pay the \$10 fee at least 3 days before class.

Deployed Spouses Retreat

The Chaplain Family Life Center will be holding a Deployed Spouses Retreat in Garmisch, Germany Jan. 10-12.

If your spouse is deployed or you know of a spouse of a deployed Soldier, call DSN 466-3473 for more information or to make reservations.

January Book Club

The Hohenfels Book Club will not meet in December but will resume in January.

The Hohenfels Book Club book for January will be "Pillars of the Earth" by Ken Follett.

The meeting for the January book will be held on Jan. 26 at 5 p.m. in the library. For more information call the library at DSN 466-1740.

Extreme Bowling

Bowl Your Brains Out every Saturday with an Extreme Bowling twist every Saturday from 8 p.m. to close. Bowl as many games as you want for just \$10 for adults and \$7 for children ages 12 and under.

Bowl Your Brains Out

Bowl Your Brains Out every Monday at Lane 17 every Monday from 5-9 p.m. Bowl as many games as you want for just \$7 for adults and \$5 for children ages 12 and under. Shoe rental included.

Story Time

During the upcoming holiday season, Preschool Story Time and Lapsit Stories will meet each Tuesday in December except Dec. 23 and 30, but will resume on Jan. 6.

Children ages 3-5 and their parents are invited to participate in the story and craft time at 10 a.m. and story time at 11 a.m. for toddlers ages 1-3 called Lapsit Stories.

This is a shorter time geared to the attention span and interests of toddlers, including finger plays and songs. For information call DSN 466-1740.

GRAFENWOEHR / VILSECK HOLIDAY SERVICES

- 15 Dec "Christmas Treasures" Handbell Concert *Vilseck Chapel @1830* (Protestant)
 - 24 Dec Christmas Eve Mass, *Vilseck Chapel @1600* (Catholic)
 - 24 Dec Christmas Eve Service followed by Christmas Cookie Fellowship, *Vilseck Chapel @1830* (Protestant)
 - 24 Dec Christmas Eve Service *Graf Chapel @ 1800* (Protestant)
 - 24 Dec Christmas Eve Mass, *Graf Chapel @ 2000* (Catholic)
 - 31 Dec Watch Night Service (Netzaberg Pentacostal Service) *Graf Chapel @ 2200*
 - 1 Jan New Years Eve Mass *Graf Chapel @ 1100* (Catholic)
- For more information, visit www.grafenwoehr.army.mil/sites/support/religious.asp.

HOHENFELS HOLIDAY SERVICES

- 14 Dec @1030 Blessing of the Vehicles (prior to traveling) outside Hilltop Chapel Center
 - 14 Dec@1800 Community Christmas Program Nainhof Chapel
 - 24 Dec @1800 Combined Protestant Christmas Eve Service, Nainhof Chapel
 - 24 Dec @ 1900 Catholic Christmas Vigil Service & Pageant, Main Post Chapel
 - 25 Dec @ 1100 All nations church of God New years Eve watch night Service, Hilltop Chapel Center
 - 26 Dec to 02 Jan 09, Pilgrimage to Rome
 - 31 Dec @ 2200 All Nations Church of God New Years Eve Watch Night Service, Hilltop Chapel Center
 - 31 Dec @ 1700 Catholic New Years Day Vigil Mass, (Feast of Mary), Main Post Chapel
 - 08 Jan @ 0930 MCCW Epiphany Program, Hilltop Chapel Center
- For more information call Hohenfels Chapel at DSN 466-1570.

GARMISCH HOLIDAY SERVICES

- 13 Dec @1800 Garmisch Community Holiday Music Celebration
 - 17 Dec @ 1100 Garmisch Chapel community Lunch in the Pete Burke Community Center
 - 21 Dec @1045 a.m. Protestant Christmas Service
 - 24 Dec@ 1630 Children's Christmas Mass
 - 25 Dec Christmas Mass @0900
 - 31 Dec@1630 New Years Eve Mass
- For information call the Garmisch Chapel at DSN 440-2819.

Army Traffic Safety Training Program Advanced Driver Course (ADC)

For Soldiers under 26 years of age



Available at
a Garrison
near you
beginning
January
2009

Recommended
12-18
months
after
attending
IDC training



Go to www.imcom-europe.army.mil/sites/management/so_atstp.asp for dates, locations and times.

What's Happening

Ansbach Briefs

Job fair

Ansbach Army Community Service hosts a job fair Friday from 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Ansbach Middle/High School media center.

The fair features representatives from places like civilian personnel, non-appropriated funds employment, Army Career and Alumni Program, commissary, Army and Air Force Exchange Service, the Franconian Inn, contracting, Department of Defense Dependents Schools, and other local employers and recruiters.

The representatives will provide information on employment opportunities and conduct interviews.

For more, call the Katterbach ACS at DSN 467-2883, CIV 09802-83-2883, or the Storck Barracks ACS at DSN 467-4555, CIV 09841-83-4555.

Clinic hours

The Katterbach Health Clinic is now open Thursdays from 7:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and closed in the afternoon for training. For more, call DSN 467-3398, CIV 09802-83-3398.

Road closure

The airfield bypass road on Katterbach is now closed Mondays-Fridays (except for holidays) from 6:30-7:30 a.m. to allow units to conduct physical training.

Military police officials warn people not to try to move the barricades and drive on the road during that time.

For more, call DSN 468-1580, CIV 0981-183-1580.

Christmas Treasures

The Katterbach Chapel will host Christmas Treasures Thursday at 6 p.m. where hand bell soloist Kathie Fink will perform in the chapel.

For more on the event, call DSN 467-3082, CIV 09802-83-3082.

Veterans benefits briefing

The Army Career and Alumni Program hosts veterans administration benefits briefings Jan. 9 from 8 a.m. to noon and 1-3 p.m.

ACAP officials said the briefings are an excellent way to get information on benefits for Soldiers and Families.

The afternoon briefing features a Disabled Transition Assistance briefing that specifically covers VA disability claims.

For more information or to reserve a spot at the briefings, call ACAP at DSN 467-3312, CIV 09802-83-3312.

School survey

The Department of Defense Educa-

tion activity seeks information from its primary stakeholders—parents of students.

Parents of students in grades four to 12 can be a part of the improvement process by taking part in the customer service satisfaction survey.

Go to the DODEA/DODDS web site at www.dodea.edu to access the survey or go directly to the survey at <https://webapps.dodea.edu.CSS0809/>.

The survey is designed to allow parents to help identify areas in the schools that need improvement.

Traffic fines

German traffic fines will go up in 2009, especially for speeders and tailgaters, said the German automobile club ADAC.

Fines for running red lights and driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol will increase significantly.

The penalty for staying in the left lane of the autobahn when the right lane is free will double from €40 to €80, ADAC reported in its magazine for November.

The ADAC stated German highway police have a large fleet of fast unmarked vehicles with video cameras discretely mounted front and back to follow and film reckless drivers and speeders.

When an offender has been identified, they will flash their blue lights, overtake the vehicle waving a red and white signal disk and escort the offending vehicle to the nearest parking area.

A folding electronic display is often installed in the back window of these police cars and will show the words, "Stopp, Polizei" or "Polizei Folgen" when the police want you to follow them.

The ADAC article said around 21,000 accidents with injuries occur on German autobahns each year.

The main causes are following too close (more than 4,000) and driving too fast (about 7,000). Alcohol is involved in around 700 of those accidents.

Collection of local debts

People who owed money to or were owed money by Sgt. 1st Class Gregory Rodriguez or Sgt. Errol James, both of the 527th Military Police Company in Ansbach, should contact 2nd Lt. Waskar Juarez at DSN 468-7670 or CIV 0981-183-670.

A list of such accounts will be given to Rodriguez' and James' legal representatives.

Katterbach Thrift Shop

Don't forget the ASCC Thrift Store for your bargain needs or when you're looking to pass along items you no longer need.

The Thrift Shop's hours of operation are Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., and Thursdays from noon to

6 p.m. Consignments hours are Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 11 a.m.-1:15 p.m. and Thursdays from 2:30-5:15 p.m.

An after-hours donation box is available outside the Thrift Shop for your convenience, but please do not leave large items there—they may not make it into the Thrift Shop staff's hands.

For more information, call the Thrift Shop at DSN 467-2534, CIV 9802-83-2534 or email the staff at katterbach-thriftshop@yahoo.com.

Schweinfurt Briefs

Donate Blood

Armed Services Blood Program needs your blood. Come to the blood drive and donate Tuesday at Kessler Fitness Center between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.

To find out if you qualify to donate, go to <https://www.militarylifeforce.com/> and click on "Eligibility" or "Can I donate?" to find the list of conditions.

Play spades

Spice up your holiday season with a game of cards. Sign up by Dec. 23 to play in the Ledward Library's spades card tournament on Dec. 28 from noon to 6 p.m. Call DSN 354-1740, CIV 09721-96-1740.

Candlelight service

Come to the Ledward Chapel Christmas eve for a candlelight service beginning at 6:30 p.m. Enjoy the performance of a children's play and an adult choir. For information, call DSN 354-1370, CIV 09721-96-1370.

Racquetball tourney

Play in Finney Fitness Center's racquetball tournament Dec. 20 at the gym.

Registration begins at 9 a.m. and games begin at 10 a.m. For details call DSN 353-8234, CIV 09721-96-8234.

Ski/snowboard in Austria

Outdoor Recreation invites you on a ski/snowboard trip to Flachau, Austria Jan. 16-19. Cost is \$299 and children under 4 years of age are free.

The trip includes transportation, three overnights with breakfast and dinner, free equipment rental, and free snowboard lessons. Lift ticket is not included. Sign up before Jan. 9 by calling DSN 353-8080, CIV 09721-96-8080.

Community theatre

Audition for the community theater musical, "School House Rock!" at the Abrams Center across the street from Ledward Barracks.

Auditions take place Tuesday and Dec. 17 starting at 6 p.m. Rehearsal begins Jan. 5 and performance dates will be March 6-8 and March 13-15.

Volunteers are also needed to play guitar or drums, for stage managing, lighting/sound, hair/makeup, costume design, and construction. For information, call DSN 354-6225, CIV 0162-296-2776.

Christmas market

Join Better Opportunities for Single Solders on a trip to the Bad Wimpfen Christmas market Dec. 20.

Transportation is 30 euro. The bus leaves from Finney Fitness Center on Conn Barracks at 8 a.m. For information call DSN 353-8476, CIV 09721-96-8476. Sign-up deadline is Monday.

Travel to Prague

Join Better Opportunities for Single Solders on a trip to Prague Jan. 17 and 18. For more information, call DSN 353-8476, CIV 09721-96-8476. Sign-up deadline is Jan. 2.

Dodge ball tourney

Friday is the last day to sign up for the dodgeball tournament at Finney Fitness Center Dec. 18.

The format is double elimination and games run from 2 to 4 p.m. Tournament is open to all teams in the community (men, women, or mixed). Late registration is possible on the day of the tournament between noon and 1 p.m. Call DSN 353-8234, CIV 09721-96-8234.

Holiday gift for kids

Bring your kids to the library between Dec. 20 and 24 to check out their favorite story books, and they will receive a little present from the library

elves. For information, call DSN 354-1740, CIV 09721-96-1740.

Mail rooms open

The Consolidated Mail Rooms on Conn and Ledward Barracks are open on Saturdays through Dec. 27. Pick up mail or packages from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Hours during the week remain the same.

Saving & Investing 101

Do you want to learn the basics of how to invest your money? Come to Army Community Service's class, "Saving & Investing 101" Dec. 17 from 9-10 a.m. at ACS. Learn how to save and make your money grow. For information call DSN 354-6933, CIV 09721-96-6933.

Adult book club

The community is invited to attend the adult book club at Ledward Library. The next meeting is tomorrow at 5:15 p.m. to discuss the book, "The Yiddish Policeman's Union" by Michael Chabon.

Coffee, tea, and treats will be served. For information, call DSN 354-1740, CIV 09721-96-1740.

Newcomers orientation

Are you new to the Schweinfurt community? If so, then the five-day Schweinfurt Newcomers Awareness Program is the fit for you from Jan. 5 to 9.

Free childcare is available the entire week. Get acquainted with the military community as well as the German town of Schweinfurt. For information or to sign up, call DSN 354-6933, CIV 09721-96-6933.

Bulk trash

Bulk trash is scheduled to be picked up from Askren Manor, Yorktown Village, and government-leased housing Dec. 16 and Jan. 7. For information, call DSN 354-6201, CIV 0162-270-9403.

Sign up for a night off

Sign up now for the next Parent's Night Out event Dec. 19 from 6:30-11:30 p.m. Deadline to sign up is Friday. The cost is \$16 for children in School Age Services or the Child Development Center.

The program includes one meal and is available for children ages 6 weeks to fifth-grade. Children must be registered with CYS and also have current immunizations. For information, call central registration at DSN 354-6517, CIV 09721-96-6414.

Socialize at the Lunch Bunch

Do you want to get out of the house, make a few new friends, and learn where good restaurants are around town?

The Army Community Service monthly Lunch Bunch is the perfect fit. Join Schweinfurt's Lunch Bunch Dec. 11 from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. to enjoy a visit from St. Nikolaus. Sign up for the carpool or call to get directions to the restaurant at DSN 354-6933 or CIV 09721-96-6933.

Tips on birth and babies

Come to ACS's two-part series, "Birth-n-Babies" at Ledward ACS tomorrow and Friday, 1-4 p.m.

Learn the latest about what is available for labor and delivery, how to handle complications, and what to do the first night home with your new baby. For information call DSN 354-6933, CIV 09721-96-6933.

Learn to control anger

Come to ACS's three-part series on anger management at Ledward ACS building 242 starting Dec. 30 from 3-5 p.m. to find out ways to deal with and control your anger. To sign up, call ACS at DSN 354-6933, CIV 09721-96-6933.

Open mic night Wednesdays

Every Wednesday night, above Finney Fitness Center, Ramon's will host an open mic night for anyone interested starting at 6 p.m.

ADD and ADHD support

Speak with others living with Attention Deficit Disorder and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Dec. 29 from 10 a.m. to noon and expand your current support network. Class is held at ACS. For information, call DSN 354-6933, CIV 09721-96-6933.

Deployment support group

The ACS Deployment Group meets Wednesday from 10 a.m. to noon at ACS. This support group is open to all Soldiers and spouses who want to share thoughts, exchange coping strategies, voice concerns, ask questions, and get feedback. For information, call DSN 354-6933, CIV 09721-96-6933.

Daddy basic training

Army Community Service offers Daddy Basic Training for new or expecting fathers Dec. 19 from 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. For information call DSN 354-6933, CIV 09721-96-6933.

Night ski

Sign up for night skiing in Wasserkuppe, Rhoen in January.

Trips will every Thursday from 5 p.m. to approximately 11 p.m. Cost is \$25 which includes transportation and equipment rental or \$15 without rental.

To sign up, call DSN 353-8080, CIV 09721-96-8080.

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Happy Holidays

The Bavarian News staff wishes a happy and healthy holiday season to all our readers.

CHRISTMAS MARKETS 2008

Courtesy of USAREUR & 7th Army PAO

Amberg Weihnachtsmarkt

27 Nov – 23 Dec 08
Monday – Saturday, 10 am – 8 pm
Sunday, 1 – 8 pm

Sales, food, and beverage booths will be set-up at the Marktplatz.
Ride in the X-mas carriage: Wed, Fri – Sun, 1 – 5 pm

Ansbach Weihnachtsmarkt

28 Nov – 23 Dec 08
Monday-Thursday, 11 am – 7.30 pm, Saturday, 10am – 8:30 pm
Friday + Sunday, 10 am – 7.30 pm

Sales, food, and beverage booths will be set-up at Martin-Luther-Platz and Johann-Sebastian-Bach-Platz.

Bamberg Weihnachtsmarkt

27 Nov – 23 Dec 08
Monday – Saturday, 9 am – 8 pm,
Sunday 11 am – 8 pm

Approx. 50 sales, food, and beverage booths will be set-up at the Maxplatz.

Medieval Christmas Market at the Domplatz
6 – 14 Dec 08, 11 am – 8 pm
Visit www.bamberg.info.

Bayreuth Christkindlesmarkt

28 Nov – 23 Dec 08
Monday – Saturday, 10 am – 7.30 pm,
Sunday 11 am – 7.30 pm

Sales, food, and beverage booths will be set-up in front of Spintlarkirche.
Dresden 574th Dresdner Striezelmarkt 1434 – 2008
27 Nov – 24 Dec 08
27 Nov 08, 4 – 8 pm

Sunday – Thursday 10 am – 8 pm
Friday – Saturday 10 am – 9 pm,
Christmas Eve, 10 am – 2 pm

Dresden is the home of Germany's most famous Christmas cake "Dresdner Stollen". Another highlight is the 14-meter high Christmas-Pyramid, which is listed in the Guinness Book of Records and is set-up in the market square. If you haven't visited the eastern part of Germany, this is a great opportunity to do so!

München Christkindlmarkt

28 Nov – 24 Dec 08
Monday – Friday, 10 am – 8.30 pm
Saturday, 9 am – 8.30 pm

Sunday, 10 am – 7.30 pm, Christmas Eve 10 am – 2 pm
At Marienhof, you can see a remarkable crib with almost lifesize figures. At the "Prunkhof" (courtyard) of the "Rathaus", you can see an old Bavarian crib. In Dulci Jubilo – Christmas carols are performed daily at 5.30 pm from the city hall balcony. Children, ages 6 - 12 can make (free of charge) Christmas ornaments from 1 to 21 Dec, daily at 2.30 – 4 pm and 4.30 – 6 pm at the "Himmelswerkstatt" inside city hall. There are lots of small but special Christmas markets throughout the city. Go on an adventure tour and find the markets in Schwabing, at the "Chinesischer Turm," at the "Münchner Freiheit," at Haidhausen, or at Pasing. Visit www.christkindlmarkt-marienplatz.de.

Nürnberg Christkindlesmarkt

28 Nov – 24 Dec 08
Opening day, 9.30 am – 10 pm
Monday – Thursday, 9.30 am – 8 pm
Friday – Saturday, 9.30 am – 10 pm
Sunday, 10.30 am – 8 pm
Christmas Eve, 9:30 am – 2 pm

This very traditional and well-known Christmas market has been taking place since 1628. Take a stroll through the streets and alleys of the old city with its Christmas decorations, where oases of tranquility can be found in such places as the craftsmen's courtyard or Jacob's market. Visit www.christkindlesmarkt.de.

Regensburg Christkindlmarkt

an der Donau 27 Nov – 23 Dec 08
10 am – 8 pm, daily

One of the nicest Christmas markets in Germany. Visit www.christkindlmarkt-regensburg.de.

Rothenburg ob Alt-Rothener Weihnachts – Reiterlesmarkt

der Tauber 28 Nov – 23 Dec 08
Monday – Thursday, 11 am – 7 pm
Friday, 11 am – 8 pm

Saturday, 10:30 am – 8 pm; Sunday, 10.30 am – 7.00 pm
The Christmas market is held beneath the twin towers and the illuminated windows of St.-Jacobs-Church. This three dimensional picture brings to life the tranquil and sociable world of the period of romanticism. Visit www.rothenburg.de.

Schweinfurt Weihnachtsmarkt

27 Nov – 22 Dec 08
Monday – Wednesday, 10 am – 7 pm,
Thursday – Saturday, 10 am – 8 pm,
Sunday, 11 am – 8 pm

Sales, food, and beverage booths will be set-up at the historical market square in front of city hall. Visit www.weihnachtsmarkt-sw.de.

Weiden Weihnachtsmarkt

28 Nov – 23 Dec 08
Monday - Friday, 10 am – 8 pm
Saturday, 9 am – 8 pm
Sunday, 11 am – 8 pm

A variety of retail, food, and beverage booths will be set up at Oberer Markt in front of the old city hall.

'Tis the season... Shopping, culture collide at local Christmas markets

by MARTINA BIAS

Special to the Bavarian News

The weeks before Christmas are typically the time for shopping and eating.

Our German friends enjoy these activities as well, but they do it in a little different format from our traditional mall experience.

A special time

The "Adventszeit" (advent season) is the time when many villages, towns and cities hold their annual Christmas markets.

According to local tradition, they can be called Weihnachtsmarkt, Christkindlesmarkt, Christkindelmarkt, Christkindmarkt or Adventmarkt.

The original reason these markets were held is that they were supposed to give people a chance to stock up on supplies for the winter at the beginning of the cold season.

Nowadays, the Weihnachtsmarkt is a fun way to experience German Christmas traditions, buy Christmas presents and decorations, as well as enjoy special food and drinks.

What to expect

A typical Christmas market features a varied assortment of booths (often run by local stores), and is usually located in a historic place or centralized location (mostly the center of town).

The special atmosphere of the Christmas markets comes from the beautiful lighting of the booths that really has a wonderful glow when it gets dark.

If you are really lucky, you might experience a dusting of real snow to put you in the Christmas spirit.

Some of the German Christmas specialties you can find at the Christkindlesmarkt are: Lebkuchen

and Spekulatius (spice cookies), Christstollen (German yeast fruit bread), and roasted nuts.

Keeping warm

To warm you up from the inside, you'll find some Gluehwein (literally: glow wine – hot spiced red wine), and the beer lovers can frequently find a special seasonal brew called "Weihnachtsbock."

Most regions have their own specialties.

Our family enjoys going to the Bayreuth Weihnachtsmarkt and eat a warm "Dampfnudel."

This is a warm yeast dumpling sprinkled with cinnamon sugar and served with warm vanilla sauce.

At the Amberg Christkindelmarkt we discovered a little old lady that sold a local specialty called "Kuechle."

This treat looks like a UFO. It is made from yeast dough and then deep-fried. Sprinkle with some powdered sugar at home and enjoy with a hot beverage!

Many Bavarian localities will sell "Heisse Maroni." This is the equivalent of the American roasted chestnut.

While this is apparently very popular, our family found it to be an acquired taste.

A shopper's paradise

Once you have satisfied your stomach, take the time and stroll between the booths selling the traditional Christmas decorations like glass balls, straw stars, and wooden creations.

Don't forget to admire the beautiful nativity scenes, Nutcrackers, wooden Christmas pyramids with candles and Raeucherfiguren (smoke figurines).

These traditional wooden men (and by now also women) feature a bottom compartment to insert the smoke stick

and then the smoke will usually drift out of the mouth of the character.

Many cities have a day on which "Nikolaus" (the German Santa Claus), or "das Christkind" (literally: The Christ Child – the German gift bringer on Christmas Eve) will visit the Weihnachtsmarkt and hand out small presents to kids.

The Nuernberg market

When tourists think of a German Christmas market, they immediately picture the world famous one located in Nuernberg.

It is one of the oldest in Germany and boasts over 150 booths. If you are able to visit it on a weekday, I highly recommend that you do that.

Unless, that is, you relish the experience of feeling like a sardine in a can, which is what you will encounter if you attempt to see it on a weekend.

Another famous Bavarian Christkindlmarkt is the one located on the Marienplatz in Munich.

If you are traveling, you can also find these markets in Austria, Switzerland, and Northern Italy.

Local markets

Locally, you can find many smaller markets in towns like Grafenwoehr, Weiden, Vilseck, Amberg and Hohenfels.

Some of these are only open one day or over a certain weekend. Check your local papers and billboards for more info.

Many local clubs, charities, Kindergartens and churches also hold Christmas markets.

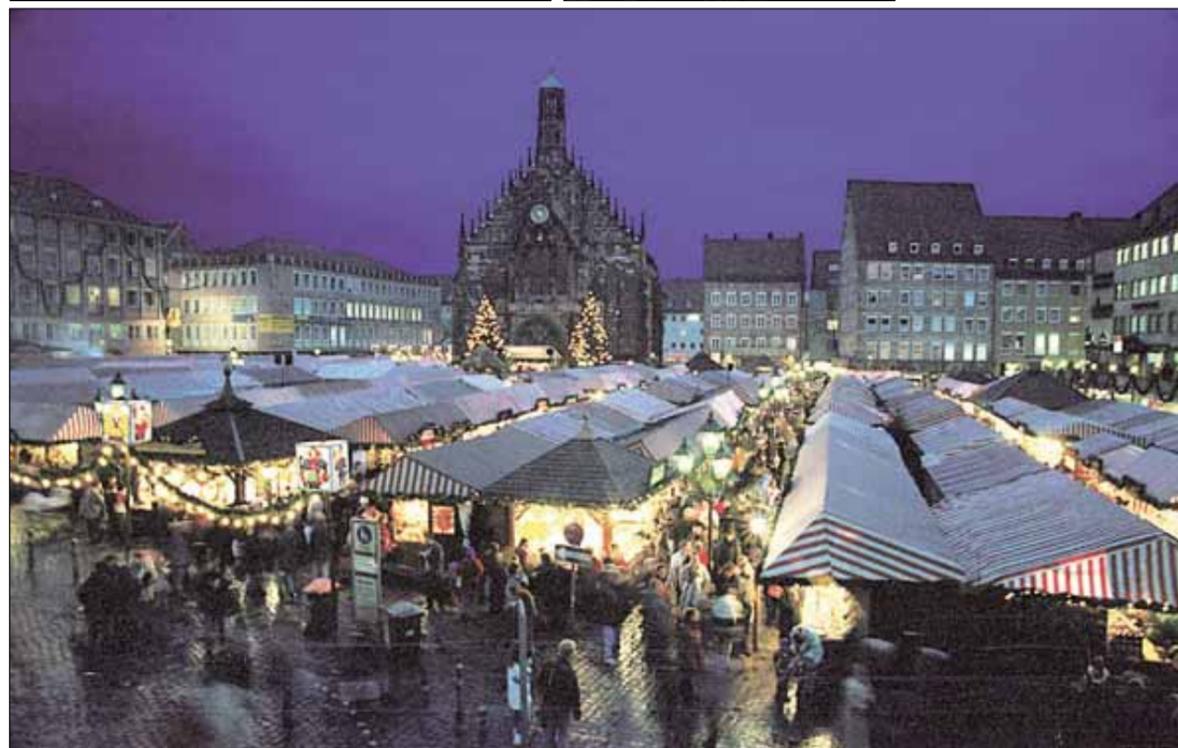
These are mostly open one afternoon and feature crafts and home baked goodies.

These markets are a great way to enjoy a Sunday afternoon and join the Germans for a cup of coffee and some sweet Christmas treats.



Christmas markets offer unique gift, food, and drink items. The Nuernberg market (below) is visited by tourists from around the world.

Photos by Paula Guzman



Got glasses on your Christmas list?



by Capt. KYLE SMITH
Katterbach Optometry

Santa Claus is often shown wearing a pair of reading glasses pushed down to the end of his nose.

Poor bespectacled Saint Nick is unable to make his list – or check it twice – without his trusty reading glasses.

Reading problems are frequently the cause of a trip to the eye doctor. People tell me “My arms are just too

short, I can’t hold the book out far enough!” I had one patient who would read the paper every morning – by putting it on the ground! That, my friends, is a man in denial; he needs a pair of reading glasses!

Presbyopia is the term that describes the natural loss of focusing ability as a person -- collects birthdays. You see, there is a lens inside the eye that allows us to change our focus from far away to up close. As this lens continues to grow (it grows your entire life), it also

begins to harden, making it harder to change focus. Eventually, usually between age 40 and 50, the focusing ability is not adequate for normal activities.

Reading glasses are the simple fix – they do this focusing for you. Some people can use the “over-the-counter” reading glasses that you find in the bookstore or drug store, others will need a prescription pair of reading glasses.

I am often asked if there is anything

– a surgery or eye exercises or voodoo – that can be done to reverse presbyopia. This short answer is: No. The long answer is: Maybe in the future. There are some interesting surgeries being done now that show great promise, but at this time they are not widely available, and we expect big improvements in the coming years.

For the time being – a pair of reading glasses will have to do. Maybe you can add reading glasses to your Christmas list.

Beneficiaries notified about loss of laptop containing medical information

Precautionary measures taken despite low risk of compromised data

BMEDDAC news release

Notification letters have been mailed as a precaution to U.S. Army Medical Activity Bavaria beneficiaries, and beneficiaries from other regional medical commands (RMCs) in the United States, advising them a lost laptop may have contained some of their personal information. Officials believe there is a low risk of compromised personal or medical information.

The laptop was in a backpack that disappeared Oct. 4 at the Nurnberg main train station.

The incident was reported immediately to U.S. military and German authorities and, though a search and subsequent investigations were launched, the laptop has not been recovered.

Though the names, Social Security numbers and health information of 26 beneficiaries have been confirmed to be on medical documents stored

on the laptop, letters were sent to 6,000 other beneficiaries whose personal information may have been on clinic lists or reports on the missing computer.

Connection to a U.S. government network, a secure Common Access Card, and a password are required to access the computer.

Encryption software, which makes stored files unreadable by unauthorized users, is installed on the computer.

As a precaution, however, the

notification letters were mailed Nov. 24 to advise beneficiaries to keep an eye on their personal finances.

They were provided information about government Web sites that provide free credit reports, along with other contact numbers and resources.

Schneider said a beneficiary hotline and e-mail address have been established for those who received letters.

The e-mail address is BMEDDAC.Privacy@amedd.army.mil The

hotline is DSN 314-476-4627, or commercially 09662-83-4627 from within Germany / (49) 9662-83-4627 outside of Germany, between 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Central European Time or 1 a.m. to 3 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.

“The Army and our organization take this loss very seriously, and are reviewing current policies and practices to preclude a similar occurrence in the future,” said Col. Theresa Schneider, BMEDDAC commander.

Follow strategies for healthy holiday season

by Capt. JULIE C. RYLANDER

BMEDDAC Chief, Nutrition Care Division

The holidays are upon us and here come the goodies!

It seems as it’s almost expected for us to over indulge during the holidays and then make New Year’s resolutions that commit us to improving our health. Seems a bit contradictory, huh?

Don’t just commit to being healthy for 46 weeks of the year while permitting yourself to holiday indulgences for 6 weeks; enter the holidays with an attitude that you don’t need to deprive yourself of special holiday foods – but you don’t need to eat huge portions to enjoy them either!

When it comes to enjoying special foods, keep it to just the holiday.

Parties and celebrations present a healthy eating challenge with ample opportunities to indulge and overeat. Here are some strategies to achieve balance and moderation in your eating habits:

1. Don’t starve. Saving up calories during the day to indulge a little at the main meal is okay; however, don’t starve all day in order to splurge later.

Prevent overindulgence by eating lighter meals during the day and have a healthy snack, such as a piece of fruit or veggies, to curb your appetite before the main meal.

2. Have a plan and choose wisely. At a party buffet, browse the choices before you start filling up your plate to determine which

foods you will indulge and which you can skip without feeling deprived.

Instead of nibbling throughout the event, fill up a small plate and eat in a location away from the food tables.

3. Pace, don’t race. Focus on enjoying the foods you’ve selected and savor them! Eating quickly easily leads to getting second helpings.

Socialize with friends and family, putting the emphasis on the people with whom you are spending the holidays instead of the food.

4. Limit alcohol. Mixed drinks may contain up to five hundred empty calories. Plus, alcohol tends to increase your appetite, feeding the temptation to overeat.

If you drink, choose light wines and beers and use non-alcoholic mixers such as water or diet soda. Limit your intake to one (women) or two (men) drinks per day. Also, watch out for other high calorie holiday beverages: fruit punch, eggnog, and sodas.

5. Be a good example. If you are the host, offer your guests healthy options. Tasty choices include: veggies with lowfat dip, fresh fruit bites, whole grain crackers with lowfat cheeses, carved roast turkey, and stir-fry veggies.

Delicious desserts include fresh fruit, angel food cake, and lowfat pudding and mousse.

6. Get active. Turn up the holiday tunes and get moving to burn extra calories. Rather than retreating to the couch after a large meal, gather a group and take a walk, enjoying outdoor holiday decorations and lights.

This also gets you away from the view and smells of food that might otherwise encourage more eating.

Choosing Wisely

Remember, there are no “good” or “bad” foods; it’s only our eating habits that are good, bad, or a little of both.

Taking a look at the Food Guide Pyramid; you’ll see that grain products, vegetables, fruits, low-fat dairy products, lean meats, fish, poultry, and dry beans all have a place and will encourage a positive holiday spirit by providing constant, stable energy; repairing and restoring the body; and assisting with stress management and preventing mood swings.

What matters most is the total amount and types of foods you eat over several days.

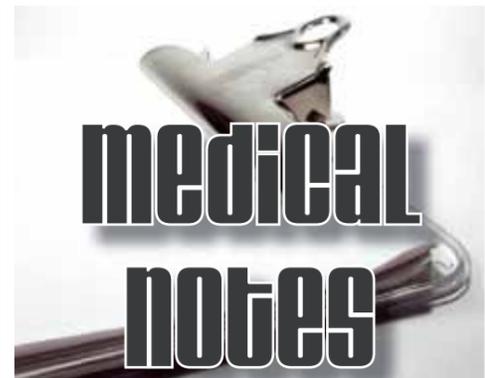
The Pyramid shows we should choose more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains which are packed with vitamins, minerals, and fiber.

At the same time, we should limit our intake of high-sugar and high-fat foods. Excess weight gain during the holidays often comes from eating too much of the foods that the Pyramid tells us to limit.

Remind yourself daily why you want to be healthy. Enjoy the holidays without regret.

With strategy, foresight, and a plan of action, you’ll come through in good health for the coming year, able to focus on continuing to improve your health rather than undoing the bad habits and effects of overindulgence.

Happy and Healthy Holidays!



The wait is over!

If you’ve been holding off going to the Vilseck Health Clinic due to limited appointments during the redeployment of troops, wait no longer!

Vilseck Health Clinic has more appointments available.

Lt. Col. Elizabeth Hersch, Vilseck Health Clinic Commander, said, “Our thanks to the community for their patience during the redeployment of our troops and we look forward to helping everyone with their health care needs.”

To make an appointment, call DSN 476-2936/2804 or Civilian 09662-83-2936/2804.

Call in to live medical show Dec. 22

Medical staff will be guests on the AFN live morning radio show Dec. 22 from 8-10 a.m. and available to talk about the flu and what to do to prevent you and your family from becoming sick from the flu virus and other illnesses.

Guests will include Lt. Col.(Dr.) Elizabeth Hersch, Vilseck Health Clinic Commander; Dr. Renata Lukezic, pediatrician; Capt.(Dr.) Ferguson, Vilseck Health Clinic; and Capt.(Dr.) Sarah Niles, Chief, BMEDDAC Preventive Medicine.

Call DSN 476-3176 or CIV 09662-83-8176 during the live show.

For Grafenwoehr and Vilseck, tune into AM 1107. For other communities, visit <http://bavaria.afneurope.net/> to find your station.

Become a cessation instructor

The Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine-Europe will conduct an eight-hour Tobacco Cessation training from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Jan. 8.

The training will take place at the USAG Ansbach in the meeting room at the Katterbach Dining Facility. All workshop materials are free of charge. Participants will receive continuing education units/credits for the course. Upon completion, the participant will be certified as an American Lung Association Tobacco Cessation Instructor. Attire for the workshop is civilian clothes. Call Karen Lewis at DSN 468-7863 or e-mail Karen.A.Lewis@eur.army.mil.

Wounded Soldiers’ top advocate to serve as assistant surgeon general, leading warrior care, transition effort

One of the Army’s top advocates for the care and treatment of its ill and wounded soldiers and their families now will serve as assistant surgeon general for warrior care and transition.

The Army has assigned Brig. Gen. Michael S. Tucker, who has been deputy commander of the Army’s North Atlantic Regional Medical Command as well as director of the Army Medical Action Plan, to lead the service’s warrior care and transition effort.

Tucker, a two-time combat veteran, has been known by the media as a “bureaucracy buster,” and was charged with transforming wounded warrior care in March following news reports a month earlier about substandard living conditions and procedural obstacles for wounded soldiers at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

“As a leader of soldiers, I am humbled by this responsibility and the implications it will have on the force for years to come,” said Tucker, a

35-year Army career veteran. “What we do today to transform the military health care system and respond to the needs of our soldiers and their families – at a time in their lives when they need us most – will shape the force for years to come. Anything other than a complete transformation of the system is unacceptable.”

Tucker and his staff have spearheaded efforts to create warrior transition units to give better leadership and supervision to soldiers recovering from wounds, to improve their housing and other service facilities and to establish centers to provide administrative and social-work services for soldiers’ and families.

According to Maj. Gen. Gale S. Pollock, Acting, The Surgeon General, Soldiers who are recovering from injuries or illnesses in our hospitals, or who are leaving the Army for civilian life or to receive care from the Department of Veterans Affairs, have earned the very best service and support we can provide.



Brig. Gen. Michael S. Tucker

Find out how to get AFN coverage

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more likely to keep watching.

Making a story interesting is, of course, primarily an AFN reporter's job. And some reporters tell stories better than others.

But the point I'm making is if you sell AFN on an interesting story idea, they are far more likely to show up to cover it than if you just call up and say "we're having a fun run...can you send a team?"

AFN will usually respond to a request like the one asking for fun run coverage by saying the station will promote the event in advance with radio and TV messages, but won't send someone to do a TV news story because it's more important to get people to sign up to participate in the run.

AFN will get people to sign up by running short messages on radio and TV several weeks in advance of the event.

Another tip to help convince the AFN

assignments editor to send a team is to ensure the story has visual and audio appeal.

Flying planes and firing tanks grab your attention far better than a teacher lecturing in an artificially lit room or a "talking head" echoing in an auditorium from behind a podium.

If your story has limited visual appeal, still ask for coverage.

The station could do a radio news story on it, or short 15-20 second TV story.

And, even if the story idea is a two-hour snoozer seminar on the health merits of yoga versus a stationary bike, it could get on the air courtesy of a slow news day.

Slow news days are a major cause of viewers slipping into deep 90-second naps during the AFN Evening Report. Your story can get on the air courtesy of the slow news day if you request coverage weeks or even months in advance.

AFN stations sometimes have to turn down a late-arriving interesting story request because the station needed to plan for coverage and

committed to report on another story idea that was sent in a month in advance.

One of the best ways to lock in coverage is to convince your commander of the importance of the story. AFN Europe's mission is to provide command information and entertainment to the American military community.

If a commander says the story is important, that carries a lot of weight with AFN.

AFN Europe will do its best to get that story on the air, even if it means asking another station, or the network headquarters to cover it. While having a commander vouch for the importance of your story helps, your story will be more interesting if the story does not focus on the commander.

Everyone watching AFN knows the commander feels his event, program or Soldiers are the best. But hearing the commander's low-ranking subordinates or family members speak from the heart about what they learned or what they feel about the event is far more credible

and interesting to audience.

One really good technique to lock in an AFN team for coverage is to explain that the reporter can get several stories in the same area in a short period of time. Some AFN reporters have to travel 90 minutes to cover a story. It's far more tempting to cover the story across the street.

But, if you set up several stories in the same area, you just helped the assignments editor work more efficiently, so congratulations, your coverage priority just moved up the list!

So there you have it -- a bunch of secrets on how you can lock in AFN TV story coverage. Come up with an interesting story within a story with visual and audio appeal, request coverage in advance, get your commander's backing, focus on low-ranking people and come up with several story ideas for the shoot.

My only worry is if these hints get out to too many people; stations are going to call me and say, "hey, you gave them the ideas, grab a camera and come down here to help out!"

Unique challenges face military families

continued from Page 1

The Air Force reported a 3.5 percent divorce rate in both fiscal 2007 and 2008, but the actual number of divorces dropped by 618 -- to 7,032.

Comparing these statistics to civilian divorce rates is difficult, officials said, but most sources agree that about 50 percent of first marriages end in divorce in the United States. The highest incidence of civilian divorces is within the 20- to 29-year-old population, which also makes up the largest percentage of the military.

Recognizing the hardships military life often imposes -- and the challenges it can place on family relationships -- the military services are working

to buck societal trends through a full range of outreach programs. The programs are offered through the services' family support, chaplain and mental health counseling networks and range from support groups for spouses of deployed troops to weekend retreats for military couples.

The Army program, the largest, aims to build resiliency in Soldiers -- 58 percent of them married -- and the families who stand by them, Lt. Col. George Wright, an Army spokesman, told American Forces Press Service.

The programs focus on communication, intimacy and conflict management, which research shows increases marriage satisfaction and reduces marital challenges.

"Military families have to adjust to more transitions than the typical family," Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Carleton Birch, from the Army's Chief of Chaplains Office, said. "These programs strengthen the bonds that build resiliency in Army families."

The centerpiece of the Army program is "Strong Bonds," a program initiated by commanders and led by chaplains that helps Soldiers and their families build strong relationships. Strong Bonds has four parts: a general couples program, programs tailored for couples preparing for or returning from deployments, and programs for families and single Soldiers.

Much of the training is provided in a retreat-style format so Soldiers

and their families can get away from their daily routines "to focus on their important relationships," Wright said.

Participation in the program has doubled every year since the program started five years ago, Birch reported. So far, more than 60,000 couples have participated in the training.

The National Institutes of Health, which recently completed the first year of a five-year study evaluating the program's effectiveness in building family resiliency, found "encouraging early results," Birch said.

Meanwhile, an attendee gave a full-fledged endorsement of the program's value after attending a recent Strong Bonds session at Fort Sam Houston,

Texas.

"This is the first time since getting back from Iraq in April where I have felt that I am capable as well as confident enough to lead my family in a loving and caring environment," he said. "The tools that I have learned will serve us a lifetime. This should be mandatory training for all married couples."

While praising the benefits these programs offer families, officials said they recognize that strong marital and family relationships make better Soldiers. It also has an important impact on a Soldier's decision to reenlist, Birch said. Quoting other Army leaders, he said, "The Army recruits Soldiers, but it retains families."

Nomination deadline approaching for Soldier Show

continued from Page 1

dance or instrumental ability. Musicians must also submit an audio CD.

Dancers must submit a DVD or video cassette that exhibits different styles of dance. A spoken introduction, followed by at least two performance numbers illustrating various techniques, is required. Both solo and partner-accompanied dances are acceptable. Be sure to include additional talents, particularly vocals.

Vocalists who play musical instruments are ideal candidates for the Soldier Show, which will consider instrumentalists who can sing. Such candidates are not required to have musician as their military occupational specialty, but they should be proficient in reading basic lead sheets or chord charts. Musicians' audition videos must include a recording of a solo performance, which can be supplemented by a recording with an ensemble or band.

Singing ability is desired but not required,

and additional talents will be evaluated in conjunction with proficiency on the primary instrument, including singing, playing of multiple instruments and dancing -- which should be revealed in the video.

The Army Entertainment Division's panel of judges will select Soldier-musicians for live auditions based on the videos and application packets.

Technicians are needed for audio, video, lighting, costuming and stage technology. Performers and technicians with experience in theatre leadership, team building, and mechanical or electrical aptitude also will be considered for positions such as stage manager. They must be available from February 1 through November 30. Technicians must submit a resume that illustrates experience in sound, lighting, construction, carpentry or stage management. Photographs of past work are encouraged. Performers should also list their technical experience, if applicable.

Drivers also are needed to help keep the U.S. Army Soldier Show on the road. Freightliner trucks and a commercial bus are used to transport the cast, crew and equipment around the country. Active duty, Reserve and National Guard Soldiers with a valid Class A driver's license are preferred, but applicants with any valid driver's license are eligible for training.

Application instructions and a letter of release sample are available on the Internet at ArmyMWR.com by clicking on Recreation & Leisure, Entertainment, and then U.S. Army Soldier Show.

If sending your nomination via the U.S. Postal Service, mail your packet to: United States Army Soldier Show, Attn: 2009 Selection Committee, P.O. Box 439, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060. Via other carriers: United States Army Soldier Show, Attn: 2009 Selection Committee, 6091 Sharon Lane, Bldg. 1434, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060.

All nominees must have a minimum of 90 days time in service remaining after completion

of the tour in November 2009, and be deployable worldwide. Soldiers selected for the 2009 U.S. Army Soldier Show must have a change of duty or change of rater evaluation report completed prior to leaving their units.

Review of video auditions and technicians is scheduled for mid-January and finalists will be notified through their respective regional headquarters by the Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command's U.S. Army Entertainment Division by Jan. 23. Temporary duty orders will be issued and costs paid by FMWRC for Soldiers to travel to Fort Belvoir for final auditions.

Those selected for the show will be attached to FMWRC through November 30, and the others will return to their units.

For artistic and technical inquiries, contact Tim Higdon at (703) 806-3698, DSN 656-3698 or timothy.b.higdon@us.army.mil. For military information, contact 1st Sgt. Cynthia Moody at (703) 806-4937 or DSN 656-4937.

Real risk lies in Army not keeping pace with world change

continued from Page 2

To deal with the exponential pace of computer and software advances in recent years, the Army has adopted a phased approach to program development that is commonplace in the commercial world. We develop and deliver software in stages, or increments. In this manner, we identify and resolve problems, and integrate the latest technologies into the force without disrupting our entire modernization effort.

Many of the alleged problems cited by the commercial media are directly attributable to this approach. We do not adopt rigid, five- or 10-year plans to which we

dogmatically adhere without regard to the lessons we are learning.

Instead, we continuously refine and adapt our efforts to address new requirements to keep ahead of the ruthless, thinking, adaptive enemies we face. Thus the Army has embarked upon the most ambitious and most comprehensive modernization effort since World War II.

Despite the skeptical views and the challenges we face, we are modernizing successfully. Today, we are providing new, robust communications capabilities - to connect our Soldiers, our leaders, and the systems which support and protect them in unprecedented ways.

Today's fielded capabilities offer a glimpse of what we will achieve in the future through the power of a modern, redundant network. Our need for comprehensive modernization became apparent at the outset of operations in Iraq. Addressing the Association of the U.S. Army Oct. 10, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said, "By one count, investment in Army equipment and other essentials was underfunded by more than \$50 billion before we invaded Iraq."

This condition created extraordinary challenges for communications. Gen. William "Scott" Wallace, now the commanding general of the Army's Training and Doctrine Command,

who led the Fifth U.S. Corps into Baghdad in 2003, said, "When we attacked into Iraq in 2003, we were burdened with a legacy communications system designed for a fight in Central Europe. There was a digital divide that existed between operational and tactical headquarters."

Wallace's current assessment reflects the progress we are making: "Bandwidth and the resultant connectivity are [now] being pushed to the lowest tactical level - exactly where it needs to be in the decentralized operations taking place today."

Development risk exists in any venture that seeks to move beyond the status quo; it must be actively

managed and mitigated to the maximum extent possible. The real risk lies not with a modernization effort that is both comprehensive and ambitious. Rather, the real risk lies with a failure to realize that the world has changed and that our Army must change accordingly.

This article was originally published May 14, 2008, on the Army News Service Web site.

Lt. Gen. N. Ross Thompson is the military deputy to the acting assistant secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology.

He also serves as the director of acquisition career management for the U.S. Army

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s.m.a.r.t. GIRLS

Local youth group gets real-life education during retreat

by RONALD H. TOLAND JR

Bavarian News

Ansbach's Smart Girls just got a little smarter.

The girls attended a three-day annual SMART Girls retreat in Garmisch Nov. 7-9. SMART (Skills Mastery And Resistance Training) Girls, derived from the Boys and Girls Clubs of America, is a leadership development program that promotes health, fitness, prevention/education and self-esteem enhancement for girls between ages 8 to 17.

The program is designed to encourage healthy attitudes and lifestyles that will enable early adolescent girls to develop to their full potential.

Ansbach's Smart Girls group attended the convention to meet with similar groups from throughout military installations in Europe to learn, interact, and share, said Vincent Allen, U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach youth services director.

Smart Girls like Dayana Hess, 11, and Desiree Irvin, 12, said they learned a lot from the trip.

"It provided us different sessions on Internet safety—spamming, unsafe online socializing, and discussions with strangers, and also media influence and sessions about our feelings," Irvin said.

Hess said she liked the Pilates and Healthy Me classes, but the most important sessions for her age group were Internet safety and media influence.

"There were positive and negative influences for girls our age presented to us," she said, adding that examples were given about dressing appropriately and showing positive influences in the media versus negative influences.

Both girls said the point of the trip for them was to learn about themselves, interact and have contact with other girls from other garrisons to share ideas.

"We really got an education on topics we did not know about—like hygiene, Internet safety, teamwork, communication, and conflict resolution or problem solving," said



Courtesy photo

Teen girls from Ansbach, Heidelberg, Mannheim, Kaiserslautern, Baumholder, Ramstein, Wiesbaden, and Garmisch learn yoga and Pilates during the "Healthy Me" session at the Garmisch gym.

Hess.

"These retreats not only teach the girls on positive growth and development, it also allows them to network with other teen girls from all over Germany," said Cristina Salvador, functional technology specialist at the Ansbach Child, Youth and School Services.

"Our goal is to have an annual European SMART Girls Conference, inviting all the teens in other garrisons

throughout Europe."

"These girls need role models," said Deana House, local adult advisor for Ansbach SMART Girls.

She says the trip is crucial for girls at this age and that the point of the trip is for them to learn about adolescence via the provided sessions.

"If they are not going to talk to their parents, then I want them to talk to me about their problems," said House.

"They need that adult friend or

'big sister' to help them through their problems, but not be disciplinary—just talk to them about why they shouldn't do something, not just that they shouldn't."

And Salvador added that the program promotes growth in the girls.

"SMART Girls is important because it teaches girls important skills during the growth and development stages," she said.

"It keeps them active as volunteers in the community, providing community service when there are special events hosted in the garrison. The SMART Girls program represents positive female leadership roles and as mentors to younger girls in the community."

If you would like to sign your girl up or need more information about the SMART Girls program, contact House or Allen at the teen center at DSN 467-2588 or CIV 09802-83-2588.

Ansbach students to cheer in London's New Year's Day parade

by RONALD H. TOLAND JR

Bavarian News

Two of Ansbach's varsity cheerleaders - sophomore Danielle Martin and junior Tiffani Bunch - will participate in the 2009 London New Year's Day Parade by virtue of earning All-Star status at a cheerleading camp earlier this year.

This also marks the first time anyone from the community is taking part in the parade and representing the garrison to the world on television.

Although only two are participating in this year's parade, six Ansbach cheerleaders qualified and were selected as All Stars.

Cheerleaders who qualified but are unable to participate in the parade are junior Tiffany Heard, senior Shuvon Timothy, and sophomores Frankie Barrale and Brianna Newby.

"Our coach felt like we had it in us," said Martin. "And since I was selected and never got an offer to do something like this before, I wanted to take advantage of the opportunity."

"Cheerleading, for me, is fun, to be in front of a crowd, and I like getting the fans involved," she said.

Bunch, who has been cheering since ninth grade, agrees.

Not to be missed!

"This is a once-in a-lifetime opportunity," said Bunch. "I'll never be able to do anything like this again—spend Christmas in London and perform for 3,000 people, doing what I love to do. It is a lot of fun."

Both explained that dedication to the sport is important and challenging, but it's not everything. Grades are also imperative.

"We have to have good grades to be on the team...period," said Bunch. "But for us, that has not been much of a problem."

The girls said they are still kind a bit stunned by this fantastic turn of events, but want to thank their parents, coaches, the school, and their friends for supporting them and helping to make it possible.

Challenges

Challenges, however, still face the two who will participate in the London parade as they prepare for the big day—continuing to learn their routine and financial backing.

Because the trip is not school-sponsored, costs are out-of-pocket for the Ansbach students.

"To take part in the parade, it costs about \$1,800 each," said Coach Mike Jimerson, Ansbach Middle/High School cheerleading coach and athletic director.

Bunch, who also made it last year, but was unable to go, said she was determined to go this year.

"I put it in my head last year that I was going to go this year, and I have never looked back," she said.

Jimerson is glad to see the cheerleaders take advantage of the opportunity.

"It is a great experience," he said. "It has taken me all over the world. And so, for them, they realize cheerleading opens up doors—they can travel, see the sights, and show off all their

hard work and dedication."

The girls had the opportunity to do just that this summer when they were selected as All Stars.

According to Veronica Martin, 12th Combat Aviation Brigade, Family Readiness Support assistant, a big supporter of the cheerleaders and Danielle's mother, said a cheer camp is conducted every Labor Day weekend at Kaiserslautern High School with the Universal Cheerleaders Association.

She said UCA staff members come from the United States and administer the camp for all of the Department of Defense Dependent Education cheerleaders in Europe.

"They learn cheers, dance routines, and it's loud and fun," said Martin. "It's equivalent to similar cheer camps in the States, just on a smaller scale."

The numbers say it all

She said about 200 cheerleaders participate in the Kaiserslautern camp, some schools on an annual basis, and added at this year's cheer camp, the six of eight total varsity cheerleaders, tried out and made the All Stars.

But being selected took more than a shake of the pom-poms.

"It takes years of practice," said Jimerson. "To be selected, they have to be on their best behavior at the camp, perform their best and work hard. Only the best are chosen to be UCA All Stars—they are fantastic athletes."

Parents, like Martin, know this firsthand. "My husband and I came from track and field

backgrounds, so cheerleading is all new to us, but we always support her in anything she wants to do," Martin said.

Martin added that Danielle always liked cheerleading, but never did it before high school—last year when she made junior varsity for the fall season and then made varsity for the winter competition season.

Taking it further

"Because cheerleading encompasses all the things she enjoys—dancing, entertaining and the athleticism—she hopes to continue into college," said Martin.

Martin said she and her husband always ensure Danielle is able to attend any camp that is held so she can improve on her skills.

"Plus, she has a good time with it," she said. "We do stress for her to do her best and to not give up and work hard. She motivates herself because once she sets her mind to achieve something, she does all it takes to make it happen; trying out for All Stars at cheer camp was something she was hoping to get a chance to do and was thrilled when she made it."

"I think that knowing there is an opportunity to represent, not only yourself, but your school and community in such a large event, also helps to motivate the cheerleaders to do their best and work hard," she said.

Martin said that they are proud of Danielle and all that she has accomplished, and are thrilled that she will be in the parade.

"We plan to go to London so we can see the parade for ourselves," she said.

Ansbach's non-recycling residents chunking money down the drain

Waste disposal tab hits \$2.1 M in fiscal 2007 with 5,000 tons of solid waste

by RONALD H. TOLAND JR
Bavarian News

Some residents are throwing the garrison's money away!

This is money, said garrison officials, that could be spent on garrison improvements and programs.

U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach spent more than \$2.1 million in waste disposal in fiscal year 2008, according to Jutta Seefried, Separate or Recycle Trash coordinator for Ansbach's Environmental Management Division.

The garrison generated over 5,000 tons of solid waste from

its installations—family housing, administrative buildings, and community facilities—and spent this cost on disposal alone.

"Compared to last year, the waste amount decreased because of the deployed Soldiers," Seefried said. "While the total waste amount varies with the number of residents at a time, the numbers still show a low recycling rate at the garrison."

She then made a comparison of U.S. household behaviors versus local ones.

A typical German household recycles about 75 percent of its generated waste—plastic, metal, glass and paper—that by law must be separated from household trash. In contrast, a typical American household here only recycles about 46 percent—not exactly in line with the law here, said Seefried.

"Everybody has to follow the German waste law, including Americans on and off post," she said. "Some people even bring their trash on post, which is prohibited and adds to the garrison's costs for waste disposal."

Too many recyclables end up in the residual waste instead of being disposed in the correct containers, she said.

That increased trash traffic (revealed during a recent opinion poll on Katterbach) concerns the coordinator.

The results of the poll showed that "almost every second customer at the recycling centers comes from off post to dispose of trash on post," said Seefried. "The cost for solid waste is included in people's rent off post. So, if residents bring their waste on post, the garrison pays twice."

Although she expects an increase in generated recyclables this year because of more Soldiers being home, she would like to see it kept to a minimum.

"Every newcomer receives a SORT package from the housing division that explains how to dispose of waste for off-post and on-post residents properly," Seefried added.

And the solution is not that hard, said Christian Loos, core compliance manager for the garrison.

"Pre-sorting at home is the key,"



Plastic, metal, glass, and paper are required by law to be separated from household trash in Germany.

A typical German household recycles about 75 percent of its generated waste. In contrast, a typical American household here only recycles about 46 percent.

said Loos. "If residents set-up small recycling bins in their kitchens to help separate recyclables, this would simplify the process. And if everyone put recyclables in the correct containers, it would save the garrison

a significant amount of dollars each year."

For recycling help or to get more information on recycling, contact Seefried at DSN 467-3403 or CIV 09802-83-3403.

Light up your holidays - the right way!

Local garrison officials offer holiday fire safety tips, sound advice

by RONALD H. TOLAND JR
Bavarian News

Taking a few easy precautions can help make sure the holidays stay full of good cheer and joy rather than loss and tragedy, said local fire prevention officials.

Some quick tips from Sabine Searles, fire prevention inspector for USAG Ansbach: be extra safe with flames, lights, and appliances during the holiday season; and extinguish all fires, candles, tree lights and kitchen appliances, and double check them again before going to sleep or leaving home.

These tips are good for people who live on post and off.

"The majority of fires within the garrison start in the kitchen," said. "Unattended cooking is still the most common cause of fire, followed by candles—even if they're in glass, the glass sometimes does not withstand the heat and breaks."

However, heat, from cooking and flames,

is not the only risk—heat from electricity is an additional risk, Searles said.

Electrical fires are right behind those elements—with the use of old and worn equipment, she added.

"During inspections we constantly find electrical cables that have been taped, triple plugs connected into each other to function as an extension cord and damaged electrical cables often hidden under rugs," she said.

In addition to these findings, Searles said that they also find old transformers in use where the electrical capacity exceeds recommended use, causing overheating, and coffee makers people forget to turn off.

"There are a lot of reasons for these three common types of fires. We can integrate a lot of safety in the design of buildings, but it is the occupants that can make it unsafe," she said.

Another place to take caution with is Christmas trees, she said. Dried up trees are hazards—it's best to spend a little more money to buy fresh-cut trees and keep them in a water basin.

"Any retail water additives advertising a fresh tree for a longer time period usually do not keep the promise," she said. "Look out for a fresh tree, cut the trunk once more before setting it up inside, use plenty water, place it away from heat sources and combustibles, keep the room cool—turn down the heat—and discard the tree once it gets too dry."

As far as electrical tree lights, Searles offered up additional holiday safety tips.

"Light strands need to be in proper condition, never place any real candles near a tree, always make sure that lights are not unattended and turn off the lights once you leave the house or go to sleep."

Searles brought up another holiday safety tip for everyone—one that is good year round.

"Please do not tamper with or disconnect smoke detectors," she said. "Those are life savers! Do not ignore fire alarms—evacuate at all times even if you find out later on that it was just a false alarm. False alarms do happen and sometimes it becomes a habit for building

occupants to not leave the buildings thinking it is just another false alarm. That can have tragic consequences."

When she asks families why they do not evacuate, the answer often is "it is the second alarm this week," or "it is the middle of the night and it is raining and cold outside."

While the holidays are about cheer, goodwill and the nature of the season, safety needs to be in the forefront, she said.

"Take a few extra moments of time and pay special attention to make sure yourself, loved ones and neighbors are safe—not just during the holidays, but make it your personal task every day," said Searles. "The use of common sense and five extra minutes of time to check if everything is safe and unplugged will save a life full of regret."

If you have access to the garrison portal, Searles noted that two holiday fire safety videos are available for online viewing. People can address fire safety questions to her at DSN 467-2822 or CIV 09802-95-8632.

Energy conservation saves dollars for other programs

by RONALD H. TOLAND JR
Bavarian News

Saving energy saves valuable dollars.

And in light of current world economic instabilities, the bottom line is "being responsible and cutting down on energy saves valuable resources that can be applied elsewhere, in addition to being good for the environment and the right thing to do, said directorate of public works officials.

And it is easy, according to Regina Kranz, utility engineer and energy manager for the garrison's directorate of public works.

"Our environment benefits if everybody starts saving energy at the same time," said Kranz.

DPW has gone so far as designating the reduction of energy consumption as the most significant environmental aspect for the garrison to target for improvement—for now and the future.

Kranz wants everyone to know that taking a few simple no-cost energy conservation measures—like an internal energy audit—can really pay off.

"Conducting small energy audits within our homes, like turning down the heat, turning off unneeded lights and appliances and closing doors to unused rooms, not only positively impacts our environment but also has positive economical impacts too," she said.

She said that a home energy audit is often the first step in making homes more energy efficient. It can help people assess how much energy their home uses and evaluate what measures they can implement to improve efficiency.

Kranz said that energy affects every aspect of our lives.

"It gives us light and heat, and provides us with transportation fuel and more," she said. "However, we need to think about the security of

our energy sources and about the environmental impact of energy produced from fossil fuels.

"A clean energy future means intelligent use of energy—don't just stand by," she said. Your energy actions will make a difference! Even the smallest contribution goes a long way in making our garrison energy secure."

For more information, contact Kranz at DSN 467-2998 or CIV 09802-83-2998.



5 Energy-saving points to help your family secure a clean energy future:

- 1 CHOOSE ENERGY STAR: Look for the "ENERGY STAR" label when shopping for new appliances; they show the most energy efficient product, save money and protect the environment
- 2 MAKE THE SWITCH TO CFL's (Compact Fluorescent Lamps): These lamps can be used to reduce energy use and power demand by over 70%, compared to classic ones
- 3 SET BACK THERMOSTATS: at night
- 4 TURN OFF: Lights and TVs, computer monitors, printers, etc., when not in use or during unoccupied periods of time, and at night when not controlled by a clock
- 5 SLAY THE ENERGY VAMPIRE: Turn off your power strips or unplug electronics. Power strips can turn off several appliances with the flip of one switch. Your electronics – computer, TV, VCR, phone chargers, etc – use energy even when turned off. Stand-by may use up to 20 percent of the energy used during normal operation. (Information courtesy of Regina Kranz)

Mascot deployment comforts kids

Flat Wilbur pulling tour in Iraq with 172nd Infantry Brigade, helps connect waiting children during year-long separation

by EMILY ATHENS
Bavarian News

As the 172nd Infantry Brigade (Separate) deploys, so does Wilbur, the Schweinfurt Elementary School's mascot.

A few years ago, a flat version of Wilbur the Pig was created so the mascot could travel, train, and deploy with the Soldiers.

For elementary school students, this serves as a means to understand what their parent is doing when they answer the call to duty.

"This gives them a sense of connectedness."

Lt. Col. Steven Hite, 1st Battalion, 77th Field Artillery Regiment commander, packs Flat Wilbur, the Schweinfurt Elementary School mascot, into a rucksack.

They're connected to whatever parent that goes," said Wilma Holt, elementary school principal, explaining that the school takes an extra interest in the support for the children while parents are away.

Wilbur's farewell ceremony Nov. 21 included a few words from Lt. Col. Steven Hite, 1st Battalion, 77th Field Artillery Regiment commander. The students participated in singing the Wilbur song and then bid a final farewell when Wilbur was carried away in a rucksack.

Students will follow the adventures of Wilbur throughout the deployment with pictures and videos sent to the elementary school from the Soldiers.

A blog is also available to computer-savvy children for posting questions about their parent's deployment. All these things are done in hopes to provide extra assurance to those missing their mom or dad, according to Holt.

"The kids like that because they don't know necessarily where their parent is specifically, but Wilbur's there where they are. It makes them feel more comfortable because this is not a good time. School wide, we do everything we can to make sure their lives are a little happier, safer," Holt said.

The children also were comforted in knowing that Wilbur is prepared for his challenges downrange. Having followed the Soldiers to Grafenwoehr this summer, Wilbur received training in all areas of combat.

"We're honored to take Wilbur downrange to Iraq with us. He's been doing a lot of things this summer," Hite said. "He's ready, he's trained, and he's certified to go to Iraq and accomplish his mission down there," he said.

Children yelled their goodbyes excited to see him off, but anticipating his return.

"Auf wiedersehen, Wilbur!"



Courtesy photo

SMS celebrates Native American heritage

Story and photo by
SANDRA WILSON
Bavarian News

Twirling colorful shawls, telling legends, talking in code, and dancing all played a part of the Native American Heritage celebration at Schweinfurt Middle School Nov. 14.

"It's exciting to share the culture with the kids, and I'm honored to be a part," said Lynn Clark, organizer of the school-wide assembly and the crafter of the regalia worn by the performers.

The celebration began with a Round, or Friendship, Dance for which the audience was asked to participate.

"Historically, this dance has been going on for hundreds of years," said seventh-grader Harley McPherson to the on-lookers. "(It) is one of the few in which non-natives are invited to participate."

Once the audience returned to their seats, Brianna Dana, eighth-grade, shared the legend of the crow bringing daylight to the Inuit peoples in the north.

"The people never forgot it was Crow who brought them the gift of daylight, and they take care never to hurt him—in case he decides to take it back," Dana said.

Four students then took the stage and performed a shawl dance representing the struggle Native American women had in finding their place in the dance



(From left) Kaitlyn Floyd, Terrilyn Brand, Brandi McPherson, and Paige Dasalla perform the Fancy Shawl Dance at the SMS assembly Nov. 14.

arena in the 1960s.

"The fancy shawl dance was a revolutionary breakthrough for the younger women who longed for a more stylistic approach to traditional dance," said Kaitlyn Floyd, seventh-grade.

Native American contributions to history were shared with spotlights on individual people. Select tribes

were also recognized for their code-talking for the U.S. military in World Wars I and II. Their primary job in serving was to transmit secret tactical messages over military telephone or radio networks.

"Their service was very valuable since codes and ciphers can be broken, but languages must be studied for a long time before being understood,"

Harley said.

The final dance told the story of the special medicine dress that legend taught would heal.

"It is common for a dress to have several hundred jingles," said eighth-grader Amara Dasalla, explaining how the dresses' jingles were made out of cone-shaped tin snuff lids.

In conclusion, the tradition of gift-

giving was described and gifts were given to honored guests.

"In most other societies, it is the exact opposite, in that, the honored one is the person who expects the gifts from the guests," said Brandi McPherson, sixth-grade. "Native people believe that what is given always comes back to the giver in one way or another in another form of good."

Baby care class set for dads-to-be, veteran fathers

How many times a day does a newborn eat?
What is colic?
What are baby blues?

Story and photo by SANDRA WILSON
Bavarian News

How long should you let your newborn cry at night before attending to him or her? How many times a day does a newborn eat? What are baby blues?

As a soon-to-be father, do you know the answers to these questions?

Army Community Service has just the class for dads-to-be and even men that are already fathers with another little one on the way.

Daddy Basic Training offers information and hands-on practice for dads wanting to know how to be the best father to the new baby in the house.

"It's a neat class, because it's more based for the dads," said Sara Huey who attended the class with her husband. The Hueys are expecting their first child in December.

"From the very beginning that she announces that she's pregnant, he can be involved in the process," said Lew Lewis, an ACS male role model in the class.

"I had a lot of questions. I came in to see what I can do to help her out at night," said Pfc. Daniel

Huey of 1st Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, "I'm learning a lot."

The three hour class consists of videos and hands-on instruction. Participants test their previous knowledge through a short quiz then learn how to swaddle an infant and practice proper bathing techniques.

"We want to provide education and support to the Soldiers so that they feel comfortable going in to that father role ... and their spouse will feel more comfortable, too," said Katie Sixta, registered nurse and ACS parent support home visitor.

A father's role from the very beginning is of great importance, said Sixta. The mother is the only one that can breastfeed the baby, but the father can do everything else.

"His contribution to taking care of the baby can reduce the amount of stress that's placed

upon her in particular. Also it gives him more identification with his own child and also allows him to have a better sense of well-being in the relationship ... with his wife and baby," Lewis said.

The next Daddy Basic Training will be held at Ledward ACS Dec. 19 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. To sign up, call DSN 354-6933 or CIV 09721-96-6933.



Sara Huey (left) watches her husband, Daniel, swaddle a baby in the ACS class Daddy Basic Training. The next class is set for Dec. 19 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

I had a lot of questions. I came in to see what I can do to help her out at night. I'm learning a lot.

Pfc. Daniel Huey
1st Bn., 2nd Inf. Regt.

Patient liaisons there for *YOU!*

Story and photo by **MARK HEETER**
Schweinfurt CI Chief

Every patient, every day. That, according to Ursula Holstein, is the goal she shares with her fellow patient liaisons while they are out and about in the more than 17 hospitals they generally serve.

"We try to keep everybody happy," Holstein said.

Patient liaisons, who are based in the Schweinfurt Health Clinic, wear many hats and offer many services to American patients served in German hospitals for everything from births and bruises to contusions and Caesareans.

"It is a very interesting job," said Ude Lahr, another of the five patient liaisons on staff at the Schweinfurt Health Clinic.

While the liaisons travel from facility to facility assisting Soldiers, families, and civilians, they take turns working a full-day shift at the most widely used facility in the Schweinfurt area.

"At Leopoldina, we actually have a patient liaison that is there seven days a week during regular business hours, dedicated to the

beneficiary population," said Lt. Col. Patrick Denman, commander of the Schweinfurt Health Clinic.

"They also rotate around to the other facilities," Denman said. The liaisons' travels carry them from Fulda down to Wuerzburg, and beyond, when Americans find themselves in the care of German doctors.

One of the liaisons' main functions is helping patients understand and become comfortable with the sometimes significantly different procedures between American and German hospitals, according to Denman.

"Health care on the economy is vastly different than what you would get in the United States," Denman said, though he quickly noted patients need not be concerned about the quality of care they receive here.

"The health care is state-of-the-art. And we are very fortunate to have in Schweinfurt a teaching institution, Leopoldina, that can meet every one of our needs," he said.

While the patient liaisons are not doctors or nurses and can not direct any medical treatment or procedure, they are there to help patients and enjoy working with different patients and



Holstein



Patient liaisons Sylvia Hellmann (left) and Ursula Holstein work at their desk in the information area near the main entrance to Leopoldina Hospital. The Schweinfurt Health Clinic has five patient liaisons on staff to help make your stay in German treatment facilities a little easier. In this issue, meet Holstein and Hellmann. Holstein has been a patient liaison in Schweinfurt for more than 27 years. Hellmann has been a patient liaison for 14 years and an employee of the Army for more than 26 years.

medical staff, several said.

"That's what I like most about the job," said Stefanie Winter, who has been with the staff since May.

Visit www.schweinfurt.army.mil and click on "Schweinfurt Host Nation Hospital Info" for a handbook about health care in German facilities.

Scouts take advantage of 'the future of the Army'

Mobile training teams, distance learning beneficial for NCOs

Story and photo by **MARK HEETER**
Schweinfurt CI Chief

As the Army looks to the future and ways to improve efficiencies, two popular tools are the mobile training team and distance learning.

Schweinfurt has been home for the last few weeks to an MTT from Fort Knox, Ky., and a distance learning

module for cavalry scouts with the 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment, who are completing their Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course, or BNCOC.

"It's basically the academic portions of the course," said Sgt. 1st Class Joel Killian, the senior BNCOC instructor for scouts at Fort Knox and lead member of the MTT here now.

The instruction for MTTs teaching BNCOC phase one is condensed from 33 days down to 15 days of classroom instruction, which makes for an information-packed course, Killian said.

"They get overwhelmed with some information," he said.

While the larger Army benefits by saving the massive costs associated with bringing in Soldiers from around

the world, the "big-time" beneficiaries are Soldiers, Killian said.

"They have family time. They get to see their families every night. And, I mean, that's one huge benefit," he said.

Single and married Soldiers, alike, have the added benefit of being close to their unit every day.

"My barracks are only right up the street, and if I have to go back to the unit for anything I can, so I'm not completely separated," said Staff Sgt. Richard Schulze, who was a student in BNCOC phase one, which was completed at the Digital Training Facility on the second floor of the Finney Recreation Center.

Phase one, non-military-occupational-skill-specific instruction in leadership skills, was coming

through the DTF from the sergeants major academy in Fort Bliss, Texas, and facilitated here by two NCOs with the 1st Sqdn, 91st CAV.

"We facilitate the class. There's an instructor on the screen that teaches from Fort Bliss," said Staff Sgt. Sherman Jones, a phase one instructor.

"If they have any issues, we're going to be right there for them. . . It's not going to be some stranger, some instructor that doesn't know them," Jones said.

Staff Sgt. Jack Freiburger, the other phase one instructor, believed some Soldiers might feel disconnected through distance learning, but part of his job was to keep them motivated and active.

And "state-of-the-art" equipment

makes distance learning appealing here in Schweinfurt, said Regina Sheptock, manager of the DTF.

"It's almost as if you have the teacher in the room, with this kind of technology. . . the technology is there," she said.

The traditional method of teaching and learning, face-to-face, meets advancing technology and distance learning here.

"It's just what the Army used to do. But now we're transitioning to this, and this is the norm," Jones said.

Killian, wrapping up his fifth MTT this year, agreed.

"This is the future of the Army, and Army at war. The MTT is an excellent way for the schoolhouse to make sure we maximize the amount of Soldiers being taught," he said.



Freiburger



Killian



Jones



Sheptock



Schulze

h o l i d a y f u n



Photo by Sandra Wilson

(From left) DeAndrea Holmes, eighth-grader Robert Sirleaf, and 11th-grader Cortez Lindsay perform a mime during the Nov. 15 Thanksgiving dinner, sponsored by Schweinfurt Club Beyond, the Teen Center, and chapel. Six turkeys fed nearly 75 people at the event which also included entertainment by the teens.

Make and send your holiday video to Iraq, United States

by **SANDRA WILSON**
Bavarian News

Christmas is nearing and you may have a Soldier on the way to Iraq or perhaps you are just missing your stateside relatives. Planning to mail a care package or special gift to your loved ones can help cast away holiday blues.

Army Community Service (ACS) has the perfect gift for your Soldier or relatives this holiday season, and it can be sent through the mail or via e-mail. By creating a family video through a program offered by ACS, families can send a special and personal message directly to Iraq or the states.

"There's no particular script. It's just what the individual wants to say to their loved one," said Kelly Johnson, administrative technician for the Ledward Yellow Ribbon Room (YRR), where the recordings will take place Monday and Dec. 22.

The YRR, next to the consolidated mail room, provides all the equipment needed to complete the video. Johnson will be on hand to assist with all aspects of the recording.

"The goal of this project is to help families

learn how to leverage technology to stay connected to their families far away," said Patricia Lamson, mobilization and deployment specialist at ACS.

Families can be creative in how they communicate by what they wear and what they talk about in their message.

"You're limited by your own imagination," Johnson said. The discs hold up to five short videos or the emailing option offers almost unlimited recording space.

Whether patrons choose to record a timeless message that the Soldier can watch again and again throughout the deployment, or whether the disc contains several short messages covering birthdays, holidays, and other special events, the gift is sure to be a treasure to whoever receives it.

For Soldiers downrange, it may be the one thing that brightens their day.

"I think it's the most important thing, to know that you're loved. . . (the Soldier) can put that CD back in and say, 'Hey, I know that my family's thinking of me and they love me,'" Johnson said.

To sign up, call CIV 09721-96-6933.

Cougar

Dynasty

Ansbach rolls to 6th title in seven years

Story and photos by
JIM HUGHES

Ansbach CI Chief

The facts: six championships in seven years, a 54-4 record since 2001, six undefeated seasons, and a current 24-game win streak (streak started immediately after the team set the Department of Defense Dependent Schools record of 28 straight wins in 2005—a streak broken only by two losses that year to Hohenfels).

Ansbach Cougar football equals dynasty.

On top of their ascent to dynasty status, Ansbach Cougar players also enjoyed what can only be described as a perfect season in 2008—topped off with a 50-13 win over Wiesbaden in the Division II championship game in November.

The team ripped through all of the Division II competition, averaging 52 points a game while giving up only 6 per contest. The Cougars also had seven players named to the All-Europe squad, including two who made it on offense and defense—more than any other team in DoDDS football, said Coach Marcus George.

Better than great

“Having a run for a year or two is great, being in the championship game seven years in a row and winning six of them is phenomenal. No one in DoDDS has done it before,” George said. “In Division I where you have Ramstein and Heidelberg who are just so much bigger than everyone else, they just dominate, but at our level, where we have parity, it hasn’t been done.”

With the standards and expectations so high at Ansbach, George said many thought the team would do well at the start of 2008 and probably attain their annual target—the championship.

But there were question marks. The team lost a lot of 2007’s key players to graduation, and the coach was concerned about his starting quarterback, Dominic Barrale, who was taking over from John Willis-Morris, the team’s quarterback the past three years.

“Having a linebacker like Barrale come in as QB, I thought that same mentality on defense was not going to work on offense,” George said. “I told him he wasn’t as fast as John, not as big, his arm wasn’t as strong, and his fundamentals weren’t as good. I told him that if I can find another QB, he’s playing linebacker.”

Bigger, faster, stronger

“He took that as a challenge, worked out like a lunatic and I got a different person back,” said George. “He was bigger, faster, stronger, more fundamentally sound and went from a 35-yard arm to a 65-yard arm—and more of a student of the game. He’s probably one of the best quarterbacks we’ve ever had here.”

For his part, Barrale said he was happy to step up and take over the offense.

“At first I was really nervous and

made a couple of bad decisions,” Barrale said. “But I learned from it, limited my mistakes, and learned to relax in the pocket more—be coolheaded. When there is pressure, just step up and make a good pass. Don’t question yourself; just do what you need to do.”

While Barrale’s play was stellar (he was All Europe, after all), he aimed almost all the praise at his teammates.

“The offensive line was great. They gave me plenty of time to throw the ball. I think we had the best offensive line in Europe,” he said. “We had great receivers—Carter (Gunn), Jordon (Shack), Shaun (Francis). Everyone—they caught the ball really well and we all functioned well as a team.”

The coach said that on the player side, Barrale’s improvement, the dominant line play, and the breakout of

Jordan Shack—the team’s top running back, were the biggest factors.

Trickle down effect

“A lot of other kids, because of those guys, improved their games dramatically, too,” George said. “Kids like Shaun Francis and Tim Abel, who was in the Wiesbaden backfield (during the championship game) so much they probably thought he was on their team. Kevin Stadler, Carter Gunn, all of our kids—they believe. You have to believe. Expect success. If you expect it, and do the things to prepare and be successful, you can do just about anything. That was the signature of the team this year.”

One of those believers, T.J. Dignan, said the three-peat means a lot to him.

“I was on the 2005 team that lost and I’m really happy about getting the three-peat this time,” said the All-

Europe lineman. “It’s Ansbach and everybody expects a lot of from us. I wouldn’t say it was easy. We had our moments. Some games were hard-hitting in the first half and then in the second half we put it away.”

Dominant is how fellow All-Europe lineman Abel described the line play.

“There were some situations where people were bigger than us, but we relied on our skills we learned in practice to get done what we needed to do,” he said. “I expect to be with the team next year and I think we can pull off another championship. We have a lot of good people coming back.”

And that, really, is the key to Ansbach’s success, said Francis, a standout receiver and defensive back.

In their footsteps

“We’ll have some big losses,” he said of the team’s losing some 32 of 44 ballplayers due to graduation and a big PCS rotation. “But we have people that will step up, we’ll hit the weight room, get better and fill the shoes of the seniors.”

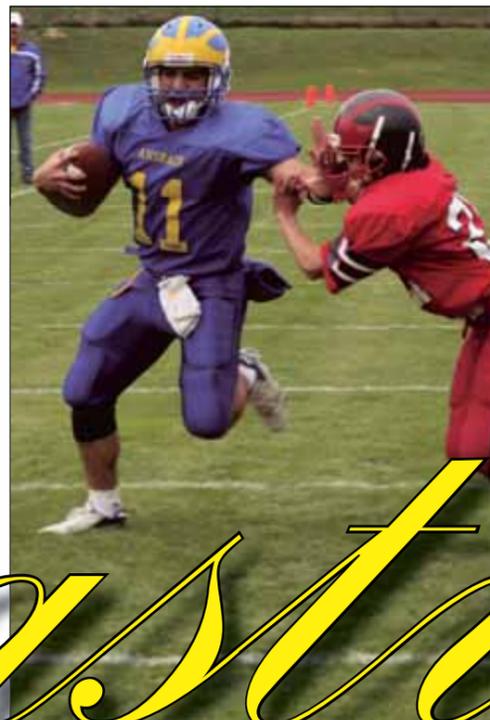
George elaborated on that concept by saying continuity is the critical ingredient in Ansbach’s dominant run through DODDS football.

“The bottom line is if you bring folks back within a program that provides a structure, standards and expectations, it makes all the difference,” he said, adding that a supportive school administration, community, and parents add to continuity.

“Our secret is not having great athletes move in,” explained George. “It is having students stay here long enough for us to develop them within our system and way of doing things that allows to us be successful.”

“The strength of the team next year will be the kids who come back who know how we do things,” he said. “Although we will lose a lot of people, we will have eight or nine people coming back who know what we expect.”

What do they expect?
A four-peat. It’s Ansbach.



Ansbach Cougar All-Europe quarterback Dominic Barrale straight-arms an opponent during the Cougars game vs. Aviano during the 2008 season.



Ansbach Cougar football team captains T.J. Dignan, Kevin Stadler and Dominic Barrale just prior to a coin toss during a 2008 game at Katterbach.



Carter Gunn goes airborne for a few extra yards against the Patch Panthers during the 2008 season.

COUGAR ALL-EUROPE PLAYERS

Name	Year	Position recognized for
Dominic Barrale	junior	quarterback and linebacker
Jordon Shack	junior	running back
Carter Gunn	junior	receiver
T.J. Dignan	senior	offensive line
Kevin Stadler	senior	offensive line and linebacker
Tim Abel	junior	defensive line
Jeff Brice	senior	defensive line