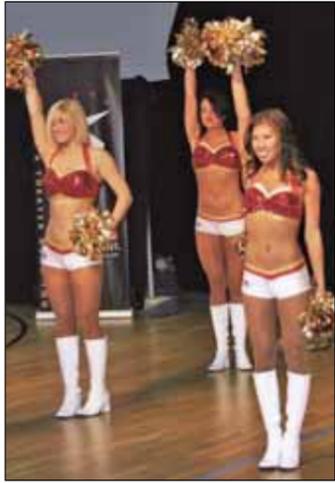


Bavarian News

Vol 4. Nr. 3

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

February 13, 2008



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Troops receive retroactive pay

by JOHN J. KRUZEL
American Forces Press Service

Active duty troops will receive retroactive earnings next month, followed weeks later by a supplemental payday for non-active personnel, a Pentagon official said Jan. 29.

The National Defense Authorization Act signed into law Jan. 28 by President Bush stipulates a 3.5 percent military pay raise.

This hike is 0.5 percent higher than an executive order Bush signed Dec. 28 to

increase pay by 3 percent, which took effect Jan 1.

In mid-February, the Defense Finance and Accounting Service will pay active duty troops the extra 0.5 percent raise earned since the start of 2008.

Non-active members will receive the supplement "a couple weeks later," said Bill Carr, deputy undersecretary for military personnel policy.

Carr said the Pentagon is "delighted" with the act and praised

cooperation by Congress. Disagreement between the president and Congress over non-defense-related earmarks and controversial language about the Iraq war had delayed the bill's enactment.

"I think it's good news for everybody in uniform," Carr said. "This Congress has been terrific in working with us in terms of providing to the troops the things that they need."

Between 2000 and 2007, private-

sector pay increased by 29 percent, while military pay jumped 42 percent during the same time, Carr said. Meanwhile, wages paid to noncommissioned officers, which includes corporals and all grades of sergeant and petty officer, spiked by about 52 percent.

"We've made considerable headway, in terms of increasing the value of military pay, to the point

See **SOLDIERS** Page 25



Taken care of

Micheline Hearth-Holmes and Brenda Barnett, senior spouses of the 2d Stryker Cavalry Regiment, sit beneath the picture of Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher, founders of the Fisher House, during a presentation at the Landstuhl Fisher House Feb. 7. Rear detachment commanders, family readiness support assistants, and senior spouses toured the Fisher House, a C-17 cargo aircraft at Ramstein Air Base, and Landstuhl Regional Medical Center to get a better understanding of what happens to wounded Soldiers on their way back home. Representatives at each stop along the tour reassured attendees that arriving Soldiers would be well taken care of. See the Feb. 27 issue for full coverage of the tour.

Photo by Paula Guzman

Bavarian News named top paper

by NICK D'AMARIO
USAG Grafenwoehr PAO

The U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr has for the second year in a row been named the Installation Management Command-Europe's No. 1 newspaper.

The Bavarian News took first place in the Army's 2007 Keith L. Ware Journalism Competition in the tabloid format category.

See **BAVARIAN NEWS** Page 25

Military wages war on PTSD

This is the third and final article in a three-part series on mTBI and PTSD.

by KIMBERLY GEARHART
Bavarian News

Soldiers returning from a war zone often have difficulty adjusting to life at home. They are easily irritated, react suddenly and unexpectedly to loud noises, or become withdrawn and unwilling to communicate.

For family members, this can be frustrating, but the good news is that

See **ALTERING** Page 25

Troops, families can access free tax filing services

by GERRY J. GILMORE
American Forces Press Service

Rather than paying a tax specialist, service members and their families can obtain free assistance to prepare and file their annual tax returns through a special military program, a Defense Department tax advisor said Jan. 30.

The military's tax assistance program processes

more than 200,000 returns each year, Army Maj. John Johnson, director of the Defense Department's Armed Forces Tax Council, said during an interview with Pentagon Channel and American Forces Press Service reporters.

"It is just one of the benefits military people have," Johnson said of the program. Participants can visit their installation tax center for free assistance in filling out tax returns, he said, or access

the Military OneSource Web site, www.militaryonesource.com.

"You can log on there, online, and also file for free," Johnson said of the Web site. The online tax-filing system on Military OneSource is closed to military retirees, however.

Military members from all service branches sit

See **TROOPS** Page 25

Community reaps reward of spouse club efforts

by ADRIANE FOSS
Editor

The Grafenwoehr and Vilseck community spouses' club presidents have no crystal ball. They can't say for sure what is the winning combination for the success of last year's bazaar.

What they do know is that a half-million dollars spells success.

The net sales for the clubs' Nov. 30-Dec. 2 Crown Jewel bazaar, their biggest and most popular annual fundraiser, totaled \$431,869.

VCSC President Sherrill Isenhower said any combination of factors may have contributed to the bazaar success, including their usual eclectic mix of vendors from throughout Europe, offering everything from reasonably priced, unique furniture and fine porcelain, to tapestries, wines, and cheeses.

Isenhower said in addition to the fact that the bazaar dates fell on a payday weekend and the bazaar offered items in every price range,

this year's spacious layout was a big plus.

"It was easy for customers to see what the vendors had for sale in the (large 2SCR) motor pool, particularly with furniture. Like any showroom, when you have a big open space and you can really walk around and look at items, it makes a difference."

But she doesn't take anything from the committee and volunteer's

See **CROWN** Page 25



Bazaar visitors taste test a variety of cheese during the 2007 bazaar.

Photo by Paula Guzman

Q&A

What is your *opinion* on the *smoking* ban?



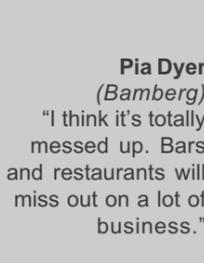
Jennifer Fayson
(Bamberg)
"I think it's great, but I don't smoke."

Sgt. 1st Class Dwayne Showers
(Bamberg)

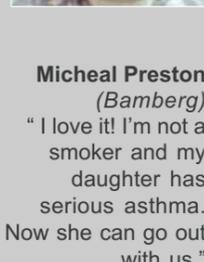
"I guess it's good. I'm trying to quit. Everyone I know is trying to also or doesn't smoke anyways."



Miranda Wright
(Bamberg)
"I'm from Canada and it's the same there. I like it much better because I can actually breathe when I go out."



Pia Dyer
(Bamberg)
"I think it's totally messed up. Bars and restaurants will miss out on a lot of business."



Capt. Daniel Howser
(Bamberg)
"It doesn't bother me at all. Now my clothes won't stink so much."



Micheal Preston
(Bamberg)
"I love it! I'm not a smoker and my daughter has serious asthma. Now she can go out with us."



Britta Vasquez
(Bamberg)
"I was waiting for that day and it is finally here. Now I can go out to restaurants and enjoy myself."

Diversity makes the Army strong

It's hard to believe that January is over. It's been a busy month with single Soldier and family member trips from Schweinfurt to Grafenwoehr and multiple garrison trips to Schweinfurt to make this move as smooth as possible.

Black History Month

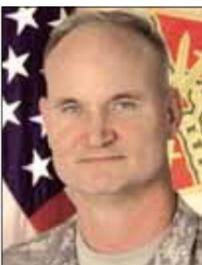
The true strength of our Army, (military, civilian, local national, and family members) is that everyone contributes.

It does not matter your race, creed, or language; everyone contributes to make our organization the envy of countries around the world. Frankly, the military has led the country in recognizing that everyone can and does contribute to our successes.

February is the month that we recognize the contributions of African-American citizens. The theme this month is Carter G. Woodson and the origins of multi-culturalism.

Dr. Carter G. Woodson launched Negro History week in 1926 to bring national attention to the contributions of African-Americans throughout history. He chose the second week of February for this observance because it includes the birthdays of two men who greatly influenced the lives of African-Americans: Frederick Douglass and President Abraham Lincoln.

Of course, since that time the observance has been expanded to include the entire month of February. As we continue to fight this Global War on Terrorism, much of our success will continue to be based on our ability to



understand and appreciate other cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

By embracing cultural differences and recognizing that everyone should be treated with dignity and respect, we can ensure our units are cohesive and ready for any mission and also appreciate the diversity of those people we find ourselves operating with.

The Vilseck High School is sponsoring a celebration from 1-5 p.m. Feb. 23. I encourage everyone to attend and enjoy the festivities.

Bavarian MEDDAC/DENTAC Move

It became apparent at the recent Tactical Commander Community Update that not everyone understood who was moving to our community and, equally importantly, when.

Elements (about 1,600 personnel) of the Dagger Brigade from Schweinfurt will move to Grafenwoehr starting now (we have 100 already here) through early summer.

They will train hard and be ready to deploy again if ordered to do so. The remaining members of the brigade will stay in Schweinfurt.

The approximately 1,600 personnel are the brigade headquarters, signal company, military intelligence company, recon troop, and two task forces: 1-26 Infantry and 1-77 Armor.

As facilities become ready for occupancy and the brigade troops are available, we will move additional forces in. To ensure we do not affect schooling, probably the next big move will occur in summer of 2009, but we may see some folks move during the school year.

Along with the Dagger Brigade movement, we are also receiving the Bavarian MEDDAC and DENTAC commands into our community.

Occupying Bldg. 700 in Vilseck, approximately 150-175 additional personnel will join our community and this will start in early summer. Combining all of this with a

normal 30 percent installation rotation ensures we will remain busy this summer.

Cleaning Up Behind Pets

During the recent Dagger Brigade family visits to Grafenwoehr, we had the opportunity to visit some homes. Unfortunately we had a spell of warm weather and the snow melted.

Embarrassingly I had to keep the family members on the sidewalks to avoid walking through dog messes. As a review, families are responsible for their animals.

We want and encourage taking the animals out for strolls, but family members are responsible for cleaning up after them. Kudos to all of you I see in the neighborhood with your plastic AAFES bags prepared to pick up messes.

To the rest of you, do the right thing. This is particularly important in our living areas as most people have neighbors or share stair wells.

Having pets in housing or, in fact, living in housing is a privilege. My options are limited. If you continue to violate common decency and do not clean up after your pets, I will have to take more drastic actions and consider removing you from quarters.

This past week, our garrison hosted the semi-annual garrison commanders conference. Most of my peers wanted to see where all the money has gone.

Thanks for taking pride in the community and for helping make this community the best place to live and serve in Europe.

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

Contempt cited as the root of all divorce



JACKIE ECKHART
On the Homefront

At first I thought the TV commercial was an ad for a divorce attorney. Turns out it was some kind of tax thing. In the ad, this squirrely-lookin' husband announces to his wife that they are getting audited. The wife bends over him, concerned.

"Really? Well maybe we should see the people who did our taxes," she says. Then she sneers at him. "Oh, that's right. We didn't use people. We used a box. Well, Greg, let's ask the box what we should do now."

The sad little husband doesn't say anything or even look at her while she holds up the box to her ear and mocks him.

"What's it saying?" he titters.
"Nothing. It's a box," she snaps.

I guess the message is supposed to be that if you want to avoid your wife's contempt, you're gonna need real live people working for you.

I'd agree with that. I'd even volunteer to be one of your people. Because I may not know jack about the tax code, but I do know enough to ask this one question: What are you doing pussyfooting around with a wife (or a husband) who shows you that much contempt?

That's right. Contempt. Sneering, mocking, name-calling, eye-rolling, sarcastic, cynical, bitter-tasting contempt. Don't you know that contempt is a very bad sign in a marriage?

It is an especially bad sign for a military marriage in which we have less time to carry out the business of the relationship.

Psychologist John Gottman, a leading research scientist on marriage and family, has long identified contempt, criticism, defensiveness and stonewalling as major predictors of divorce. Even among these four,

contempt is considered the most important indicator that a marriage is in trouble.

And yet I see that contempt displayed by military couples all the time. It isn't just the taxes or the payment on the Navigator that makes the spouse display contempt.

Instead, I most often see that contempt focused at the military member's job. The military as a career and a life is written off as selfish, or as "playing in the sand," or "running around with guns," or worse — "this is what he does to run away from the family."

Ouch! I know that the military life requires so much from all of us, especially during a time of war. It is tempting to dismiss this work with the same contempt that we see from all around us — that attitude that the military is for people who don't know any better or who don't have any other options available to them.

But we must know that adopting that

contempt and expressing it aloud move us closer and closer to divorce.

I forget that sometimes. So lately I've been using those tax commercials in a way they were not intended. Instead of thinking that I ought to get my taxes done by a company with people, I've been making myself notice the ugly contempt that the TV wife displays to her husband. **I see one of those mean commercials and use it as a cue to pounce on my husband and kiss him all over.**

Because I got people. Specifically I've got one person who deigns to do my taxes and protect me and my fellow Americans from dangers all over the world. He gets the job done and wins the respect from me he so richly deserves.

A 19-year military spouse, Jacey Eckhart is a nationally syndicated columnist with CinCHouse.com.



Cartoon by Laura Hurtado, Grafenwoehr Elementary School

Bavarian News

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

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Germany announces new fuel emissions guidelines for cities

by **ARTMCQUEEN**
USAG Heidelberg Public Affairs Office

German cities are beginning to establish environmental protection zones, called Umweltzone, where motor vehicles that do not bear a decal certifying acceptable emission standards will be prohibited from driving.

The cities of Berlin, Hannover and Köln implemented protection zones Jan. 1, and zones will go into effect in Mannheim and Stuttgart March 1. Officials predict a widening of the law in coming years.

"While I don't see an immediate crackdown coming, there will be random checkpoints, similar to our 'Click It or Ticket' program, and drivers need to be prepared," said Lt. Col. Matthew Coulson, U.S. Army Garrison Heidelberg provost marshal.

The new law requires that all privately-owned motor vehicles, including those with U.S. Army Europe license plates, bear an emissions decal on the lower right (passenger) side of their windshields to enter a protection zone. Failure to display a decal in a

protection zone can result in a €40 fine. The law outlines four emissions categories based on manufacturing date:

Category 1: Cars, trucks, vans and motor homes with diesel engines registered before Jan. 1, 1997, and those with gasoline engines registered before Jan. 1, 1993, will be designated as Category 1. These vehicles get no decal, and cannot be driven in a protection zone.

Category 2: Diesel vehicles registered between Jan. 1, 1997, and Dec. 31, 2000, will be designated as Category 2 and will display a red decal. The red decal allows the vehicle to be driven for five years, during which time it must be converted to meet Category 3 or Category 4 emission standards.

Category 3: Vehicles with diesel engines registered from Jan. 1, 2001 to Dec. 31, 2005, will be designated as Category 3 and will display a yellow decal. They are unrestricted.

Category 4: Diesels registered on or after Jan. 1, 2006 and gasoline-engined vehicles registered after Jan. 1, 1993, will be designated as Category 4 and will display a green decal.

Motorcycles, three-wheeled

vehicles, and street-legal, four-wheeled, open-seat vehicles without windshields are exempt from the statute, as are military vehicles – including local transportation motor pool vehicles with government plates, Coulson said. All other vehicles, to include pick-up trucks, will be categorized the same as cars.

Drivers whose vehicles have a lower rating than Category 4 can have their vehicles converted to meet higher standards and get a new emissions decal from an approved repair or inspection facility.

Those repair and testing facilities will be on the German economy.

"Vehicle inspection points will not be offering emissions testing," said Tom Lorenzini, U.S. Army, Europe chief of motor vehicle registration.

"However, since the stickers are based on the date of manufacture, USAREUR motor vehicle inspectors will check to see if the original catalytic converter has been removed, and if so, they will potentially remove the green stickers," Lorenzini said.

USAREUR drivers can get the new decals free of charge at the vehicle

registration offices in their communities right now, Coulson said. Drivers must fill out an AE Form 190-1AA, available online at: <http://rmv.hqsareur.army.mil/forms/190-1aa.pdf>.

"If they fill it out prior to coming in, that will save some time," Coulson said, "and while the first one is free, additional stickers for the same vehicle will cost \$5."

To keep waiting times down, Coulson recommends that those with two or more vehicles get stickers only for the vehicle most likely to travel in an environmental protection zone.

DoD ID card holders who live outside of Germany – and intend to travel within Germany in their POV – need to contact the USAREUR Registry of Motor Vehicles.

The RMV will verify what category of vehicle is owned and then mail out the appropriate sticker.

For more information, call the USAREUR RMV customer service office at DSN 386-7289, CIV 0621-718-7279.

(Additional information from the U.S. Army Europe Registry of Motor Vehicles)

Spotlight on Education



Name:
Lisa Musgrove

What grade / subject do you teach?
Fifth grade at Vilseck Elementary School

Hometown:
Fort Walton Beach, Fla.

How long have you been a teacher?
11 years

What do you like best about teaching?
Personally: June, July, and August.
Professionally: Knowing that I help mold young minds and lives.

What advice can you give students to help them succeed in school?
I try to encourage my students to try doing all of their work in the best way that they can. "You can't can't without can."

GCSC thrift store reopens with new design

by **KATIE COWART**
Assistant editor

The Grafenwoehr Community Spouses' Club thrift store reopened Feb. 2 after closing for renovations.

Roseanna Cintron, the GCSC thrift store liaison, explained that the temporary closure was necessary to install new computer systems, update fixtures, and get a complete inventory of merchandise.

"We have totally reorganized everything," she said. "We painted, cleaned, purged, and gave the whole shop a gigantic face-lift."

The biggest change in the thrift shop, according to Cintron, is that it now accepts furniture for donation and consignment. They have also put together a TV corner to keep children occupied while their parents shop.

"We accept consignments of individual items priced at \$25 and up. This includes large items such as furniture, baby equipment, and large electronics," Cintron said.

She went on to explain that to become a consigner, simply stop by the thrift store and sign up. The consigner then sets the price for the items they wish to sell. The thrift store

keeps 25 percent and the consigners gets 75 percent.

The thrift store accepts donations as well as consignments.

"Consignment means you get a percentage of the sale price, donation means the thrift store is free to sell your items or donate them to other organizations," she said. "Currently, the thrift store donates to the German Red Cross as well as several orphanages in the Czech Republic."

Cintron stressed that the thrift shop is a non-profit organization. The money earned goes directly into community through the GCSC welfare

fund, which pays for things such as college scholarship and community grants.

Currently, the thrift store is running a contest to find a new name. The winner will receive a \$25 AAFES gift certificate. To enter, stop by the thrift store, located in Bldg. 533 on Grafenwoehr, behind the laundromat.

The thrift store is open Tuesday, Thursday, and the first Saturday of the month from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

To get more information on the store, visit the GCSC Web site at www.gcsonline.com or call Cintron at CIV 0171-667-2480.



Photo by Paula J. Guzman

GES parade hits the streets

Third grade Grafenwoehr Elementary teacher Joyce Patz, in full Fasching regalia, leads her class during the school parade Feb. 5. The students paraded on post, participating in Germany's renowned carnival season.



Photo by Franz Zeilmann

Vilseck hosts citizenship ceremony

On Feb. 6, for the first time in Vilseck, the Frankfurt Consulate Staff conducted a citizenship ceremony for 14 applicants from Gambia, Jamaica, El Salvador, Mexico, Liberia, Venezuela, Philippines, Morocco, and Korea. The applicants were Soldiers already voluntarily serving for the U.S. military.

Garrison Commander Brian T. Boyle, whose origin goes back to Irish and German roots, congratulated the new citizens. President George W. Bush said on a video message: "Starting today, America is not only your home, it's your country!"

Garmisch student excels in singing contest

Story and photo by JOHN REESE
Bavarian News

With a voice like an angel, Kassidee Kane took first place in her age group and second place at the Jugend musiziert (Youths Making Music) competition held in the Wetterstern room of the Garmisch-Partenkirchen Kongress House Jan. 27.

She was the only American and the youngest singer to compete.

"It was fun to sing in front of people," said Kassidee, who performs in several languages. "I was actually very surprised. I thought my friend Oliver Kringle was going to beat me."

The annual event, in its 40th year, had 148 children and teens with vocals or musical instruments. The youngest performer, a 7-year-old, played cello, while the oldest at age 20 played accordion.

"It is like a spelling bee of sorts where you start local and then to county, state, country, etc.," said Trish Kane, Kassidee's mom.

For the competition, Kassidee sang Gershwin's "Summertime" from Porgy and Bess, the Mozart aria "Welche Wonne" in German, and Hayden's "The Mermaid Song," all accompanied by piano.

For her final song she sang the traditional Irish folk song "Danny Boy" without accompaniment, based on a competition requirement.

Four judges, three of them from Munich, Innsbruck and Vienna, awarded her 21 out of a possible 25 points and first place in her age group.

Coincidentally, Kassidee was born

at the German hospital in Garmisch, and as a newborn the local paper published a photo of her in a big yawn, prophesizing that someday she'd be a great singer.

Kassidee's remarkable talent was evident at an early age, said her father, Lt. Col. John Kane, a Marine Corps officer serving at the George C. Marshall Center.

"We noticed that there was something unusual about her voice when she was four," said Kane. "Because I'm in the Marine Corps, we've moved around quite a bit, but we've managed to find good teachers to develop her voice."

Kassidee started taking lessons for vocal when she was 6 years old in Moscow, Russia, while her father served there.

She now studies under Herr Ferdinand Silhanek at the German Musik Schule.

Now 13, the home-schooled 7th grader is no newcomer to performing before audiences.

"She's had experience on stage before. She won first place in a beauty contest in North Carolina when she was 5 (without singing), and she sang a couple songs with an Irish rock band in concert in Moscow when she was 7 after one of the members of the band had heard her sing 'Danny Boy' at a St. Patrick's Day party," said her father.

"Kassidee sings mostly arias and classical music. She sings in several different languages and has had a passion for music since before she could talk!" said her mother. "Of course, as a young lady she enjoys



Kassidee Kane sings George Gershwin's "Summertime" at the Edelweiss Lodge and Resort's baby grand piano in the youth competition held Jan. 27.

more popular music as well!"

The young British vocalist Charlotte Church is one of her influences, said Kassidee. Rebecca St. James and Shania Twain are two other singers from whom she finds

inspiration.

Kassidee's advice to other young singers is to concentrate on their music instead of the audience, and to just be yourself.

"When you're singing on stage,

people don't think about what you look like," said Kassidee, who can be heard every Sunday at the Garmisch Community Chapel. "You've got to have a passion for singing. Singing takes a lot of work, but it's worth it."

Fresh snow blesses ski, snowboarding championships

by JOHN REESE
Bavarian News

Leading up to 2008 U.S. Forces Europe Ski and Snowboard Championships, everything was perfect – except one crucial matter.

Sponsors had provided their support. Outdoor recreation staff members had the event organized. Volunteers had set up the slalom course or arrived as administrators, ski patrols, score-keepers and judges. And 130 military and civilian athletes of all ages from across Europe had arrived in Garmisch to take part in the Feb. 2-3 competition.

The only problem? No snow had fallen for weeks, and on the eve of the event it appeared that it might not even take place.

And then the Bavarian skies opened up, as

snow started falling on the Hausberg ski area just hours before the championships were about to begin. In fact, fresh snow blanketed the upper slopes.

"We've got great weather today. It snowed this morning," said Jeff Farrell, a volunteer from U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr Outdoor Recreation, between posting run times on the first day. "When we came off the lift this morning, there was probably about four to six inches of fresh snow on the ground, which was very, very nice. Last year was a wash, (as) we didn't have any snow ... to get fresh snow for this was spectacular."

The competition began with the giant slalom for the youth category, with skiers ranging from kindergartners to high-school students. Many of the young athletes began skiing not long after

learning to walk, demonstrating advanced technique along with good sportsmanship.

"My first run wasn't very good; I slid out a couple of times," said Mark Brown, 12, of Garmisch. "On my second run I capitalized on my mistakes and had a 10-second better run, which is pretty good."

Brown, who has been skiing since he was a kindergartener except for a break while his family was stationed in the Middle East, placed first in the advanced category for boys aged 10-12.

And when they weren't handling the slopes themselves, the youngsters encouraged family members.

"Good job, mommy!" cheered Madison Farrell, 7, who came down with her family from Wiesbaden, Germany, to compete.

Madison, a skier from age 4, took first place in the girls 6-9 giant slalom category. She further applauded her mother with: "I think it was awesome."

"It was really fast and really fun. I had a blast," responded Wendy Farrell, a little breathless after completing her second run to take first place in the women's civilian masters category.

Nearby, a group from Aviano Air Base, Italy, good-naturedly heckled each other as they made their runs.

"Come on, Jim, you can do it," shouted Dimitrios Xadzitulos to his buddy, Jim Irvine, as Irvine managed to finish his run in the senior's category after crashing.

See GARMISCH Page 24

Somewhere over the rainbow...



Photo by John Reese

A rainbow over arching from one end to the other of Artillery Kaserne in Garmisch lingers following a rainy morning Feb. 7, bringing out office workers and cameras.

Marshall Center gains new security studies fellowship

by ANNE FUGATE
Marshall Center Public Affairs Office

U.S. Army officers can earn senior service school-level credit for the U.S. Fellows Program at the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies here starting in July.

The Army granted an initial one-year accreditation to the security studies fellowship in January, enabling colonels and lieutenant colonels to earn the Military Education Level-1 credit necessary for promotion after completion of the 11-month course.

The international and interagency character of the Marshall Center's program offers a unique opportunity among the Army's MEL-1 fellowships, according to Army Lt. Col. Ted Donnelly, the U.S. associate dean of the Marshall Center's College of International and Security Studies.

"The Marshall Center is the only educational institution at the moment that an Army officer can go to and be fully immersed in a joint, interagency, multinational environment," Donnelly said.

"Other places certainly touch on the knowledge and skills needed to work in this kind of environment, but it is typically in a module here or there, whereas we put [the Fellows] in a thoroughly international environment for a year, with people from up to 106 countries between all our courses."

The fellows participate in three of the center's

resident courses, the Executive Program in Advanced Security Studies, the Program on Terrorism and Security Studies, and the Senior Executive Seminar, which address regional, national and international strategic security issues. They also take two courses at the NATO School in nearby Oberammergau and complete a research project and paper.

The current Army Fellow, Lt. Col. Martin Perryman, is enthusiastic about the Army's recognition of the Fellows program as consistent with Army War College goals.

"It is a win for the Army and the soldier," Perryman said. "For the Army, the officer will no longer have to duplicate the educational experience to earn credit and can get back into the field where we can benefit from his knowledge. For the individual, this is likely the only experience an American officer will have as the minority in a group. It is certainly the only forum where you are not only the minority, but surrounded by such a diverse group of international peers."

The Marshall Center's U.S. Fellows Program was established in 1998, but until now, only the Air Force Fellows have received MEL-1 credit. Donnelly said he is glad that the discrepancy has been corrected.

"We have never had a problem getting high-quality Army Fellows. They have always been top notch, and this is just one more reason for the Army's best officers to come here," Donnelly said.

Godwin earns first green belt in IMCOM-E

Story and photo by KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

When most people hear "green belt" they think of martial arts. Karate or tai kwon do maybe. But when Bridy Godwin earned her Green Belt Certification, the first person to do so from Installation Management Command Europe, she did it working primarily on a computer, not a gym mat.

The Green Belt Certification Godwin earned is a distinction within the Lean Six Sigma business improvement model.

A combination of the Lean Manufacturing and Six Sigma models, its goal is to improve a process within an organization, uncovering where quality improvements, additional efficiencies or cost savings might lie.

"This is really important in today's Army,"

said Godwin, "We like to try to do things better and find all the cost savings we can, so we can apply it in different areas."

To achieve a green belt, Godwin had to attend a Lean Six Sigma course and pass a written exam, as well as complete a project assigned to her with the task of finding cost or manpower savings while streamlining an existing process.

The project took months to complete and Godwin worked on it in addition to her normal work load at the U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels Plans, Analysis, and Integration Office.

Godwin's assignment was to look at the Hohenfels Bowling Center food operations and make sure food items offered on the menu were consistently available to customers, a situation the bowling center had been struggling with.

Together with a team, sponsor, and regional

black belt as a mentor, Godwin found ways to save the bowling center \$32,800 per year. But she was emphatic about acknowledging the help she received from her team.

"I did not, by any stretch of the imagination, accomplish this alone," she said.

She also made it very clear that it was the staff of the bowling center that created the new standing operating procedures and other changes that were implemented.

"A powerful part of Lean Six Sigma is that you get a group of people together and facilitate some discussion," said Godwin. "Being part of that team is a good feeling."

Godwin has been accepted to work on her black belt, the next step up in the Lean Six Sigma certifications, and is waiting to find out what her next project will be.



Bridy Godwin earned IMCOM-E's first Lean Six Sigma green belt certification.

Chiefs cheerleaders bring taste of home to Hohenfels

Story and photo by KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

A team of 16 Kansas City Chiefs cheerleaders performed a two hour show on Feb. 1 with more than 70 musical numbers and 41 costume changes, hoping to bring a bit of home to the Soldiers and their families serving in the Hohenfels community.

The show, made up of completely original choreography separate from their game day routines, was one of eight stops throughout Germany and Belgium on the troupe's 12-day tour. Hundreds of Soldiers, family members, and children filled the post gym for the event.

The show opened with a number set in the 1940s; skits and dances throughout the performance chronicled the military and cultural events of each time period from World War II to the present. Elaine Hart, director of the Kansas City Chiefs cheerleaders, said they did hours of research on the military and cultural history of America.

"We had so much fun going all the way back in American history and seeing what it took us to get to where we are now," said Hart.

More than a quarter of the numbers in the light-hearted, lively performance included participation from audience members, from slow dancing with Soldiers to the slow jazz of the 1940s to bopping with little girls (dressed in their own cheerleading uniforms and star struck by their real-life counterparts) to Elvis and the Beach Boys.

"It's like going to a Broadway show," said Hart.

To come on the tour, each woman had to take



Kansas cheerleaders desperately try to get an autograph in a skit depicting the 1960s "Beatlemania."

twelve days off work and agree to essentially live on a bus for almost two weeks.

"Why not?" said Krystal, a second year cheerleader on her first Armed Forces Entertainment tour. "It's nice for a change for us to give back to the troops. It takes a lot of guts (for Soldiers) to step up to the plate like

that. Without you, we might not have the freedom we have today."

That sentiment is what seems to drive all the women to give their time for these events. They also say that the National Football League, the Chiefs, and all the employers who allow the women this time off from their full-time jobs

completely stand behind the troops and think it's important to let them know it.

Nanette Flynn, assistant director of the program, said that even though the women initially try out for the team for many different reasons, "Once they do this, this is why they come back."

Laura, a fifth season cheerleader on her fourth AFE tour, says she finds it amazing how each post she visits is its own complete community. She also enjoys seeing what Soldiers really do. The night before the Hohenfels show, the team visited a helicopter hangar in Ansbach where soldiers were working overnight on repairs.

"Back home you don't know what goes into the jobs and what makes this all happen," said Laura.

Now that they know a little bit more about how hard the men and women stationed here work, the Kansas City Chiefs cheerleaders said they hope to provide a nice break, a couple hours to relax, and a piece of home to the military service members they are lucky enough to visit.

The cheerleaders don't leave the patriotism behind when they return to the United States. Hart told a particularly touching memory the team had from last year's tour. After a performance in Guantanamo Bay, the Marines there took down a flag that had been flying over Camp Delta for nine months and presented it to the team. One cheerleader took it upon herself to ensure the flag did not touch the ground during the entire return trip. Upon return, the flag flew over Arrowhead Stadium above a proud and grateful stadium of cheerleaders, football players, and fans.

Community provides critical support to hospitalized Soldiers

Story and photo by ANNE M. TORPHY
BMEDDAC Public Affairs Officer

Two soldiers within two months needed some extra help. The entire community of Hohenfels jumped into action to provide that help, and Sgt. 1st Class Troy Thorne, Warrior Transition Unit cadre, really appreciated the community efforts.

In November 2007, a Soldier had been injured in Iraq and sent to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, where doctors decided that the best care he could receive would be at the University Klinikum in Regensburg via life-support on the Novalung.

Developed in Regensburg, this highly specialized device assists with acute lung failure. The Soldier's wife and mother flew to Germany

to be with him. Although Regensburg does not have a U.S. military base, U. S. Army Garrison Hohenfels is approximately 56 km from the Klinikum.

Whenever a wounded warrior comes into a local hospital, patient liaisons Trevor Gillies and Evi Schwenzel immediately notify Thorne, who worked with his wife Dawn Thorne as a team to reach out to the community and help the Soldier.

"If I asked for it, I got it. The community provided transportation, finance, you name it," Thorne said.

Amanda Hoffer, a Hohenfels spouse, welcomed the family to be part of their Thanksgiving meal.

"These family members are living out our worst fear - how can you not help them out?"

she said.

When the Soldier took a turn for the worse that same evening, Thorne called for assistance.

"I had Chap. (Capt.) John Min, the USAG Commander Lt. Col. Gary Bloomberg and his wife, and Hohenfels health clinic commander Lt. Col. Robert Smith right there to the end," Thorne said.

Dawn Thorne also tried to assist with the family's difficult decisions.

"When the wife realized her husband was going to die, we helped prepare her for the next steps," she said.

"U.S. Army Medical Activity Bavaria, Patient Administration, has the casualty assistance ball after hours, and when I called for help on Thanksgiving, they were all over it," Thorne said.

At the beginning of December, when Spc. Michael Hauser was hospitalized at the same Regensburg University Klinikum to utilize the Novalung, the community came together again.

Five of Hauser's family members made their first trip to Europe; and requested to stay on a military installation. Although there was literally "no room at the inn," Hans Motzer of the housing office found a newly-renovated home on post. It was cleaned and furnished within twenty-four hours.

Thorne thanked Christina Love of the Soldier and Family Assistance Center in Hohenfels.

"Without her coordinating all these things while I was with the family, it couldn't have happened," he said.

Sophia Koller found shower and window curtains and other necessary items that aren't normally in stock, and Gabriele Stigler made the checking in and out of housing painless for the family. Both work with housing in Hohenfels.

Nicole Heflin and the rest of the Hohenfels Community Spouses' Club made meals while John Cavanaugh of the directorate of plans, training and mobilization coordinated the

family's authorization to shop at the post commissary and PX.

For spiritual assistance, Chap. (Lt. Col.) Mitchell Wilks spent hours counseling the families, and Sandra Horton from the Yellow Ribbon Room came in on weekends and late nights to provide access to computers and phones. Edward Jones and all the people in TMP Dispatch organized a vehicle for the family on a moment's notice.

Navigating the system can be difficult when under the stress of dealing with an ill family member.

"Gerry Ragle of (the human resources department) let me run roughshod through his department to get anything and everything I needed to support this family," Thorne said.

Sgt. Carly Bader became Thorne's source of information on convalescent leave and Staff Sgt. Angela Eggleston, NCOIC of Wounded Warrior Pay Management Landstuhl, helped the families receive the money they needed long distance while the Hohenfels finance office helped settle travel issues.

Hauser was stabilized and left Germany for Walter Reed Army Medical Center in January. His family recently reported that Hauser has come out of a coma, and is making progress.

Thorne credits Bloomberg and Command Sgt. Maj. Perry Clark for paving the way.

"I can't say enough about the GC and CSM- they have created an environment here that says nothing is out of the question if it is to take care of the families or Soldiers. It was their 'make it happen' attitude that set us up for success. These two are exactly the type of leaders that make serving in the Army a pleasure," he said.

Bloomberg agreed that the garrison did what was best for the Soldiers.

"It was the right thing to do for the Soldiers. Sgt. 1st Class Thorne, as a WTU cadre, bridges the gap between medical and garrison, and ties the two resources together," Bloomberg said.



Command Sgt. Maj. Perry Clark, Sgt. 1st Class Troy Thorne, Dawn Thorne, Christina Love, Hohenfels USAG Commander Lt. Col. Gary Bloomberg, and Amanda Hoffer were part of a community effort to help Soldiers hospitalized in nearby University Klinikum in Regensburg.

Team Dragon deploys to Afghanistan

Story and photo by TROY DARR
USAG Hohenfels Public Affairs Officer

Another company of Hohenfels' opposing forces packed their bags and headed to Afghanistan Jan. 29.

Company D, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment deployed to Afghanistan to support the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force for a projected six months. This is the company's second deployment in support of ISAF.

"I could not be more proud of this great team," said Lt. Col. John Lange, 1st Bn. 4th Inf. Regiment commander, during the company's farewell ceremony Jan. 25. "They are ready, focused, and will set the standard for Task Force Zabul when they assume mission in the coming weeks."

"Over the course of the last five months, the leadership of Delta Company quickly formed, effectively trained, and transformed this armor company into a motorized rifle company capable of decisive mounted and dismounted combat operations," said Lange.

"Their deliberate company level training plan resulted in squads and platoons expert in the fundamental drills and techniques required to take the fight to the enemy and win.

"At the same time, the company

headquarters refined and practiced their operational planning and command and control standing operating procedures to ensure this team has the ability to find, fix, and finish the enemy in the months ahead. The team built a family readiness group and rear detachment fully ready to support and sustain from Hohenfels.

"All these efforts culminated during a grueling Mission Rehearsal Exercise in December that included platoon- and company-level live fire exercises, operations both at Hohenfels and Mittenwald, and integrated their Romanian partners from the 300th Infantry Battalion.

"During this MRE, Dragon faced a determined opposing force, reluctant Afghan civilian role players, and plenty of snow, sleet, rain and mud – all with the confidence, competence and infectious positive attitude expected from the company that 'rules the box.' These warriors and their families are prepared, trained and ready for the mission ahead.

"Team Dragon, I am confident that you are trained and ready for the challenges that lie ahead," said Lange. "You are grounded in the basics, demonstrate the discipline and foster the teamwork required to get the mission done."



Spc. Nathaniel Rea hugs his wife and child, Nadine and Noah, before boarding a bus. Rea deployed to Afghanistan with Co. D, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment.

High school rifle team wins European Championship

First year shooters star in tournament, advance to Eastern Region competition

by KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

The Hohenfels High School Rifle Team won their second consecutive European Championship Jan. 26 in Stuttgart.

The championship win came after an undefeated 5-0 season. Sarah Adams led the team with a tournament high score of 284.

Jessica Walloch, a first year shooter, scored a perfect 100 in the prone position and had a total score of 282. Emily Adams, also a first year shooter, shot an impressive 96 in the standing position, matching Walloch's combined score of 282.

"It's amazing how they [Walloch and Adams] did that. Shooting 280 in a match, let alone the championship, is amazing, especially for a first year shooter," said teammate Sunny Petery.

Katelyn Bronell (275) and Andrew Morton (269) are also first year shooters; only two of the six winning team members were returning shooters.

After the match, "there was lots of screaming on the bus," Petery said. "We called our parents

and said 'We won for the second time!'"

1st Sgt. Bruce Andrews, the team's coach, says there are no divisional distinctions between schools in rifle. At regular season matches and the championship, Hohenfels competes against schools of all sizes and ability levels.

Because of that, "it's little dog versus big dog.

In rifle everyone's afraid of this little dog," Andrews said.

During matches, students can receive a maximum of 100 points for each of the three shooting positions: standing, kneeling, and prone.

In each position, shooters aim for a sheet with 10 targets on it, each one worth a possible 10 points. The targets are not much bigger than a silver dollar and shooters, using rifles worth over \$2,200 each, aim for a dot about the size of the tip of a pen in the middle of each target.

During practice, the students work not just on shooting technique but also ways to deal with the pressure of a big match like the championship.

"They're probably tired of hearing 'relax,'" Andrews said. "If they have practiced the

relaxation techniques they will feel it when they're tensed up."

He credits that training as a factor in their win, saying they were able to stay looser than many of their competitors. That message must have gotten through to Walloch.

"I didn't think about anything. I just thought I usually get 90 on everything and that's good enough for me. Then I just did it," she said about how she shot a perfect score in her very first championship.

Andrews says he has not cancelled a single practice this season or last.

"I'm here to win. Winning is not everything, but I want to train you to be the best you can be. If we don't win, it's not gonna be because we didn't work at it," he said when a student lamented not having cancelled practices.

The championship may have signaled the end of the season for most of the students, but not for all.

Andrews continues to coach Sarah Adams who will be traveling to Fort Benning the week of Feb. 11 to compete in the Eastern Region JROTC Rifle Competition, only the third student from Hohenfels ever to do so.

Sunny Petery and Sarah Adams practice marksmanship.

Courtesy photo



Fasching parade draws thousands in pre-Lenten celebration

Carnival season '08 in full swing

by KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

Each year on the 11th minute of the 11th hour on the 11th day of November the Fasching season begins.

Many towns and cities throughout German-speaking Europe have Fasching parades or parties in the week before Ash Wednesday, a tradition similar to the Mardi Gras celebration in New Orleans many Americans are familiar with. Traditionally, the parties are one last time to let loose and indulge before the fasting of Lent.

For the past 80 years, Dietfurt, a town about 25 miles southwest of Hohenfels, has held a Chinese Fasching on the Thursday before Ash Wednesday. This year, the parade, which fell on Jan. 31, drew more than 10,000 people from throughout the region.

More than 50 groups, from the local kindergarten to a group of young men sitting atop a dunk tank, participated in the parade. A traditional Chinese dragon also marched down the narrow streets of Dietfurt.

All participants, most spectators, and even the mayor dressed in Chinese costume for the festivities. Dietfurt's Fasching is known as one of the best in the area, so much so that Bavarian TV was there broadcasting live all afternoon.

After the hour and a half long parade, residents continued the party for the rest of the afternoon and well into the night.

For more information on Fasching, also known as Carnivale in Italy, check out the Jan. 30 issue of the Bavarian News. It can be found online at www.milcom.de, in the archive, as issue No. 2 in 2008.



Photo by Norbert Wittl

A Chinese dragon bares its teeth during Dietfurt's Fasching parade.

What will health care on economy cost?

ERMC news release

The recent announcement by the U.S. Army Medical Department Activity (Heidelberg MEDDAC) commander Col. Kyle Campbell about changes to services has some folks asking if they have to pay for healthcare on the economy.

Active Duty and Family Members

According to Irene Chatman, chief of Claims and senior health benefits advisor for Heidelberg MEDDAC, active duty and their family members enrolled in TRICARE Overseas Prime are fully covered.

"TRICARE pays 100 percent of all medically necessary services for active duty and family members enrolled in Prime," said Chatman. "This includes private physician services, hospitalization, and emergencies.

"Active duty Soldiers are automatically enrolled in Prime through DEERS, and we refer them to a preferred provider on the economy, the provider sends us the bill," said Chatman.

She explained that preferred providers are doctors or hospitals who have agreed to work with Heidelberg MEDDAC to see military beneficiaries. "They also agree they will not ask our TRICARE Prime patients to pre-pay for services; preferred providers will file claims for our patients," added Chatman.

Families of active duty must enroll at their

local TRICARE Service Centers, which are normally located within clinics or hospitals. When they are referred to preferred providers on the economy, the provider files a claim directly to Wisconsin Physician Service, the company contracted by TRICARE to pay claims.

"It is very important that families enroll in TRICARE Overseas Prime so that they will not have to pay out-of-pocket when they get care on the economy," said Chatman.

Chatman said patients will have to pay out-of-pocket if they request a benefit that is not covered by TRICARE. For example, TRICARE pays for double rooms when a person is hospitalized.

"If you request a private room while you are in a host nation facility you will have to pay the hospital before you are discharged," said Chatman.

Retirees

"What is important about retiree healthcare is whether or not they have other health insurance and if they are over age 65 and signed up for Medicare Part B," said Chatman. Retirees must have Medicare Part B to get TRICARE for Life benefits.

Chatman said that retirees in Europe are only eligible for space-available care.

"Many times we can't see them because they need certain specialties that we don't have," said Chatman. She added that appointments in

Heidelberg MEDDAC for specialty care are limited because active-duty Soldiers have first priority, so most retirees must seek care on the economy. TRICARE Service Centers can assist retirees in locating host nation providers.

"Retirees will often have to pre-pay costs to the provider and seek reimbursement from their insurance company and from TRICARE," said Chatman.

When retirees receive healthcare from host nation providers, they must first file a claim with their other health insurance company. Once that OHI company pays its portion of the claim, retirees then file a claim with TRICARE for the unpaid portion.

Civilians

"Civilians may seek space available care in military treatment facilities, but they or their insurance company must reimburse the MTF for the care they receive," said Chatman. When civilians seek healthcare on the economy, they often must pre-pay and seek reimbursement from their insurance companies. "Unfortunately our TRICARE office is not able to assist them with their claims," added Chatman.

Ambulances

Chatman explained that if you call an ambulance, the call goes to a centrally-located dispatch center. The dispatcher will ask you about the symptoms and the condition of the patient. Depending on the description given,

the dispatcher may send just the ambulance or an ambulance with an emergency physician and take you to the nearest hospital.

Chapman said each person's definition of emergency is different. "We say if your life, limb, or eyesight is in danger; if you have chest pain and trouble breathing; there is a broken bone or severe bleeding; you have a reaction to medication, or the pain is unbearable, call an ambulance."

So who pays for ambulances? TRICARE pays the bills for active duty and their family members. Ambulance companies will bill retirees and civilians, who then must file claims with their health insurance companies and TRICARE.

"We are very focused on making sure our beneficiaries understand what impact, if any, these changes will have on them. For our active duty and their family members, changes are very minor with little to no financial changes.

"For our retirees and civilian members, the changes can result in increased fees if they do not understand their benefit," added Heidelberg MEDDAC's commander, Col. Kyle Campbell.

"Over the next few months, our beneficiaries will see modifications to the hospital services as it continues to evolve towards a health center," said Campbell. "We have a network of outstanding local German health care providers and hospitals. We will continue to refer our patients to these providers with confidence."

Ansbach optician helps Americans find that perfect pair of eyeglasses

Story and photo by ANNE M. TORPHY

BMEDDAC Public Affairs Officer

You've received your prescription for glasses or contacts from your local health clinic – where do you go to get the prescription filled?

Your local AAFES may have a selection of frames to check out for both you and your children. You also have a choice to go on the local economy and visit an optical shop.

In Ansbach, right in the town center, is an optical shop with a rich history called Riedmann. The shop, owned by Hans-Jorg Riedmann, has been in his family since 1865.

It originally was a watch and jewelry store, and is one of the oldest businesses in town. The King of Bavaria was a customer. In 1895, Riedmann's ancestor learned the skills of an optician and expanded to glasses.

The family tradition continues today. Riedmann is a charming and welcoming man, and eager to please his customers. English is spoken.

He has a variety of lenses, including plastic and polycarbonate, with a wide price range. If you have your heart set on a particular frame not in stock, it can be ordered for you.

A regular pair of glasses for adults



Hans-Jorg Riedmann is a fourth-generation optician in Ansbach. His shop speaks English and is ready to serve Americans.

starts at 59 euro, hard coated safety glasses start at 98 euro. Riedmann offers bendable, flexible glasses for children for 29 euro.

If you're having trouble selecting the glasses of your dreams, Riedmann will assist you. Select five to six and you will be videotaped to help you decide on the most flattering frames.

Once you made a choice and given Riedmann your prescription, allow two working days for a regular prescription, and up to five working

days for a special order.

Although Riedmann has a small selection of contact lenses, you may find a wider variety at a Web site such as 1.800Contacts.com.

Visit Riedmann at Uzstrasse 16 in Ansbach. For more information, call CIV 0981-940-29. Remember, TRICARE does not cover cost of frames or lenses.

Most local communities have optical shops; contact your Bavaria health clinic for more information and suggestions.

Flu bug not slowing with warmer weather, vaccine still available

ERMC news release

Laboratory results from Landstuhl Regional Medical Center and electronic medical surveillance of medical records show that the American military community in Europe is not immune from getting the flu.

"While there are few cases at the moment, everyone should be aware that the flu season generally extends through March," said Maj. Scott Newberg, Europe Regional Medical Command's chief of policy and plans for the Force Health Protection office.

He added that, "Now is a good time to head to your local health clinic and get immunized against the flu."

Newberg said that the Army requirement that all Soldiers receive the flu vaccine was successful in Europe, with nearly all Soldiers being vaccinated by Jan. 1, but not all family members and retirees took advantage of the free vaccine.

"The more family members and retirees who get the vaccine, the better our communities will be protected," said Newberg.

The flu virus isn't easily transmitted within a community when the vaccine is protecting the majority of the population, he added.

"If you want protection, the vaccine is the easiest and least painful way," said Newberg.

The Flu Mist, or nasal spray, is still available at military health clinics for those who want to protect themselves and their families.

Newberg said that it is a myth that the flu vaccine gives you the flu. What is true is that the vaccination will either prevent the flu or lessen its severity. Sometimes people avoid the flu vaccine because of a misunderstanding. Perhaps they tried the vaccine once and later became sick.

"It takes about two weeks for your

body to develop antibodies from the vaccine; the antibodies protect you from the flu virus," said Newberg.

During that two-week period, individuals may be exposed to one of many viruses or bacteria that circulate in the wintertime. Other bacteria and viruses may cause some people to associate their illness with their recent vaccination.

The Centers for Disease Control recommends the flu vaccination for certain categories of people who are at a higher risk and would suffer serious consequences if they were to catch the flu virus.

"For instance," Newberg explained, "children from ages 6 months up to age 5 and adults age 50 and older are at higher risk.

"And the CDC also recommends children age 8 and under who have never been vaccinated should have 2 doses four weeks apart. This will improve their antibody response and help them fight off the virus."

This year, Army clinics offered the flu vaccine in a nasal spray in addition to the familiar shot in the arm vaccine. Both types of vaccines are available in most clinics.

Newberg advises that in addition to the flu vaccine, there are other ways to stay healthy.

"Stay healthy and protect yourself against flu and many other wintertime respiratory diseases by following simple precautions," he said.

These include:

- Washing your hands frequently.
- Not touching your mouth, nose, eyes.
- Covering your coughs with your hand or use the crook of your arm.
- Eating healthy.
- Exercising daily.
- Most importantly, do not smoke!

Protect yourself and your community this year - visit your local health clinic to get the flu vaccine.



HEALTHY EMPOWERMENT BY DEMETRIUS WILLIS

Dear Demetrius,

My son has spent time idolizing pictures of teens and men on magazines. He explains "I want to look like that." His younger sister has taken to putting posters up in her room of stars and these collectable cards. Should I allow them to admire these celebrities? Isn't it true that these pictures are touched up?

"Hoeffel Household Reality Check"

Tamaria

Dear Tamaria, The models and media figures

you speak of are many times not unfamiliar with calorie restrictions, fasting, increased exercise, saunas, rubber or plastic workout suits, vomiting, and drugs (like diuretics and laxatives) to get the look wanted for that picture.

Dehydration, zero carb training, and fluid restrictions all contribute to the look of some of these pictures in the media as well.

Technology is an amazing thing because they provide the picture we want to see instead of many times what is reality.

It is important to raise your children with self-esteem and self-confidence. This is the only defense your children will have to social pressures.

Introduce them to physical activity and methods of being fit the right way so they do not fall prey to the methods I mentioned.

Also, investigate these poster figures and what they represent so they are more than a pretty face.

This will allow for them to appreciate these poster figures instead of envying them.

Good luck!

Demetrius

Send your nutrition and fitness questions to usaggnews@EUR.army.mil.

Demetrius is a registered dietician and a certified personal trainer.

Do you have a health-related topic you'd like to see addressed? Write a letter to the editor! Send an e-mail to usaggnews@eur.army.mil with "letter to the editor" in the subject line.

What's Happening

Grafenwoehr/ Vilseck Briefs

Looking for a place to conduct training?

Why not contact your local Joint Multinational Training Command, Digital Training Facility!

All facilities have several air-conditioned classrooms with 16 multimedia computer workstations with Internet access and video teletraining capability.

These classrooms are also ideal for individuals seeking a quiet place to work on-line on self-development courses.

For more information, contact your local DTF manager at the following numbers:

Grafenwoehr DTF - DSN 474-2381 or CIV 09641-454-2381, Location: Bldg 3144 (Camp Normandy)

Vilseck DTF - DSN 476-3758, CIV 09662-83-3758, Location: Bldg 355

Vilseck Elementary School February Events

Tomorrow: PTSA General Meeting
Friday: Professional Development Day (No School; Parents Wanted)

Monday: Presidents' Day Holiday
Feb. 21: Dining at the Ritz
Feb. 22: Community Connection
Feb. 29: Popcorn Friday

Military Personnel Directory changing service hours

Beginning March 3, the Military Personnel Directory, Bldg. 244, Room 202 is changing customer service hours as follows:

■ For S-1 personnel, customer service will be from 8 a.m. until 12 p.m. from Monday to Friday.

■ Closed for Lunch from 12 p.m. until 1 p.m.

■ All other customer will be seen from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m. from Monday to Friday.

For emergencies, call DSN 475-8747/6526 or CIV 09641-83-8747/6526.

Vilseck Elementary School yearbook sales ends Friday

The last day to purchase a Vilseck Elementary School Yearbook is Friday.

The cost per book is \$25. The winning class of the ice cream sundae party will be announced at VES the week after sales end. Contact Katie Northam for further details.

USAREUR's Dempsey to receive fourth star

Army Lt. Gen. Martin E. Dempsey has been nominated for appointment to the rank of general and assignment as commanding general, U.S. Army Europe and Seventh Army, Germany. Dempsey is currently serving as deputy commander, U.S. Central Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Fla.

Support your child's education with Feb. 28 class

Supporting Your Child's Education (Graf): Part of the Army Family Team Building Level I class is set for Feb. 28

This course reinforces the importance of parental involvement in a child's education.

It will also provide an overview of the school liaison officer's role to assist Army families in obtaining a good educational experience for their children, particularly when they are transitioning from school to school.

Pre-registration for AFTB Level I is required. Call CIV 09662-83-2650 to reserve your slot.

2008 Graf/Vilseck Protestant Lent and Easter Schedule

Stations of the Cross:
Fridays in Lent 1800 Vilseck Chapel

HOLY WEEK - ALL SERVICES
Palm Sunday, March 16
9 a.m. Catholic Mass, Graf Chapel
11:30 a.m. Catholic Mass, Vilseck Chapel

9 a.m. Protestant Service, Vilseck Chapel

10:30 a.m. Protestant Service, Graf Chapel

10:30 a.m. Episcopal/Lutheran, Small Vilseck Chapel

Holy Thursday, March 20
6 p.m. Catholic Mass, Graf Chapel

6 p.m. Episcopal/Lutheran, Small Vilseck Chapel

Good Friday, March 21

6 p.m. Protestant Service, Graf Chapel

6 p.m. Catholic Mass, Vilseck Chapel

Noon Episcopal/Lutheran Small Vilseck Chapel

Easter Vigil Service, March 22
7 p.m. Catholic Mass, Graf Chapel

Easter Sunday, March 23
7 a.m. Sunrise Service at Big Mike's (Vilseck)

9 a.m. Catholic Mass, Graf Chapel

11:30 a.m. Catholic Mass, Vilseck Chapel

9 a.m. Protestant Service, Vilseck Chapel

10:30 a.m. Protestant Service, Graf Chapel

10:30 a.m. Episcopal/Lutheran, Small Vilseck Chapel

Apply for scholarships before March 21 deadline

Attention High School Seniors and Community Spouses! Scholarships are available through VCSC for 2008.

Don't wait, submit your application today! Application deadline is March 21.

Notification of award will be May 2008. Applications are available on the VCSC Web site www.vcsinfo.com, at the Education Center, Bldg 223, VSK and the Thrift Store on Rose Barracks.

Questions can be addressed to Micheline Hearth-Holmes at m.hearthholmes@us.army.mil.

Prepare students for "Real World" with workshops

Parent to Parent has teamed up with the Real World to provide a series of workshops on preparing your middle and high school student for the future.

The workshop Creating a Student Portfolio with the Real World will take place 4-6 p.m. at Vilseck High School Feb. 24.

Come build a portfolio that showcases your child's achievements and learn about other topics to prepare your student for high school and beyond.

Early Explorations opens world of science to toddlers

Early Explorations - Science: A SKIES Workshop While You Wait is open to the public and set for Feb. 26 from 9:30-10 a.m. in the Vilseck Dance Studio, Bldg 221.

It's never too early to start exploring the world with your children. Learn ways to introduce your toddler and preschooler to science concepts they will see in school. In these workshops we will discover ways to open the world around us through learning.

Keep your Soldier involved with child's education

Learn how parents with school-aged kids can keep their deployed Soldier involved in their child's education while they are gone during a Feb. 27 class titled "Staying Involved in Education During Deployment."

This is an important way of keeping children and their deployed parent connected that has added benefits for their education. This is one of a four-part deployment series.

The class will take place at 10 a.m. in the Vilseck CYS conference room, Bldg. 224. Free child care is available by calling CIV 09662-83-2760 today!

Improve your child's school move with Smooth Sailing

The Smooth Sailing - Successful School Transitioning: Part of the ACS Smooth Moves class takes place Feb. 29.

Whether it is your child's first transition or just another of many, there is much you can do to make it easier for you, your child and the new school. We will offer helpful ideas, tools and resources that can help your family as they anticipate a move or adjust to a new community.

For more information or to register for Smooth Moves, call ACS at CIV 09662-83-2650. For more information about this or other available workshops from the MCEC Parent to Parent Team, contact us at CIV 0175-648-2777 or GrafVilseckParent2Parent@yahoo.com.

CTC offering EMT-B refresher courses in March

Central Texas College is offering an EMT-B refresher course on two consecutive weekends -- March 8-9 and March 15-16 at Coleman Barracks in Mannheim, Germany.

It is a 32-contact hour course, and students receive two college credits.

For more information or to enroll contact your CTC field representative or email emt@europe.ctcd.edu.

The computer testing that may be required is also available through CTC. E-mail testing@europe.ctcd.edu.

U.S. Army Traffic Safety Program seeking teachers

Do you like to teach? Are you comfortable speaking in front of groups and leading student-centered discussions? Do you have an interest in being part of a program that helps Soldiers make good decisions that will save their lives in their privately-owned and government-owned vehicles?

ATSTP is looking for retired military personnel and civilians to become part-time instructors that teach *Army Traffic Safety Training Program Driver's Courses* in Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Germany.

Qualifications:

■ One year of college and/or post high school education

■ two to three years experience as a training instructor or related duties

Lead & general instructors must possess valid credentials, such as:

■ Army ITC

■ "H" Additional Skill Identifier

■ National Safety Council Defensive Driving Instructor

Lead instructors must have at least five years supervisory working experience as a trainer in one or more of the following areas:

■ Military

■ Law Enforcement

■ Justice

■ Emergency Care

■ Driver Education

■ Driver Training

■ Driver Testing

■ Driving School Administrator

All instructors must be computer literate and familiar with Microsoft Excel.

If interested, submit resume to Dana Steward at jmcom-europe.atstp@eur.army.mil

Good Friday
March 21, 5 p.m. Catholic Good Friday Service, MPC

March 21, 6 p.m. Protestant Good Friday Communion Service, NC

Easter
March 22, 5 p.m. Holy Saturday Mass, MPC

March 23, Easter Services at regular times

March 23, 6 p.m. Combined Community Easter Program

Free tax assistance offered

The Hohenfels Tax Center has begun scheduling appointments.

The Tax Center, located in the Hohenfels Legal Center, Bldg. 313, will be open throughout the tax season, Monday through Friday (except federal holidays).

Call DSN 466-2836 to schedule an appointment.

The Zone game room to close Friday

The game room in The Zone will be closed Friday.

Please cash out all your remaining cards no later than that date. The management apologizes for any inconvenience this may cause.

Submit a community worker, recognize local deeds during History Month

Help the Hohenfels community recognize the contributions of local women during Women's History Month.

Do you know a woman in our community who has made a positive impact? Submit her name and achievement by Friday to Master Sgt. Chris

Mulvihill, the equal opportunity advisor, at DSN 466-4102 or chris.mulvihill@eur.army.mil.

New volunteer orientation scheduled Feb. 20

The next new volunteer orientation is Feb. 20 at 10 a.m.

Call to sign up for the hour-long orientation if you want to become a Red Cross volunteer.

For more information on these or other Red Cross programs or services, call DSN 466-1760 or stop by the office in Bldg. 335 (back side of the Service Credit Union building).

Youth Sports coaches needed for baseball, softball seasons

Youth Sports is in need of Baseball and Softball coaches for our upcoming spring season.

All training and certification is provided by Youth Sports including CPR/ First Aid and NYSCA.

Parent coaches receive discounts for children participating in sport in which they are coaching. Coaches are needed by Feb. 29.

For more information contact Carmela Feltz at DSN 466-2558 or Rachel Hartman at DSN 466-2488 or via e-mail.

Today last day to register for Saturday bus trip to Berlin

Saturday: Berlin is a city rich in museums, art galleries, restaurants and shopping malls scattered among years of history and intrigue.

Berlin has weathered through turmoil and prosperity, both leaving their mark. Visit the major sites including the Brandenburg Gate, the Berlin Wall memorial site, Checkpoint Charlie, and much more.

Contact the CAC at DSN 466-2670 for more information or to reserve your seats. Register by today.

Various subject matter experts, advisors needed

A series of tournaments are being developed and the Community Activities Center is in need of tournament directors, subject matter experts or advisors for the following community tournaments: 8 Ball Pool, Ping Pong, Spades, Dominoes, Euchre, Hearts, Cribbage, Pinochle, Bridge, Texas Hold-Em, Dungeons and Dragons, Monopoly, Risk, X-Box, and WII.

Any other non-sports tournaments you would like to see established are also welcomed.

If you can lend assistance in establishing the tournament rules and regulations or would like to run one of the tournaments, call Joanne at DSN 466-2340.

Stress management class scheduled tomorrow

The Hohenfels Army Substance Abuse Program is offering an excellent stress management class tomorrow.

The class will be held at Bldg. 359 from 9-11 a.m.

Seats are limited so make your reservation today.

The class is open to all military and civilian personnel as well as family members. For more information, call Sabine Hebert at DSN 466-1710.

Halo 3 Tournament hosted by KONTAKT Saturday

Saturday: Join the KONTAKT Club Saturday at 1 p.m. in Bldg. 743 (across from the Commissary) for our Halo 3

Tournament.

Battle Rifles/No Shields with double elimination. Registration is \$10 or 4 man team for \$30 with an optional second buy in (one time only).

Bring your team or play single player. Bring your own controllers if you wish and/or television with Xbox 360.

The KONTAKT Club will sell refreshments in the Lounge area. Prizes include AAFES Gift Cards.

Garmisch Briefs

2008 Garmisch Lent and Easter Service Schedule

Palm Sunday, 16 Mar
9 a.m. Catholic Mass
10:45 a.m. Protestant Service

Holy Thursday Mass, March 20
9 a.m. Garmisch Chapel

Catholic Good Friday Service, March 21
3 p.m. Garmisch Chapel

Protestant Good Friday Communion Service, March 21
6 p.m. Garmisch Chapel

Holy Saturday Mass, March 22
4:30 p.m. Garmisch Chapel

Easter Sunday, March 23
7:30 a.m. Protestant Sunrise Service
9 a.m. Catholic Mass

Winterfest Biathlon slated

What can be better than cross country skiing, winter atmosphere, refreshments and targets?

Get extra workout points for you Fitness Challenge team. The second annual "Garmisch-Guns" biathlon will be held this year at the Sports field.

The course will be a half-kilometer loop, for *Classic* style skiing. We will use target quality air rifles at the shooting station, in the standing position at 10 meters.

Entry is free! You can hire X-C Ski gear from us for ½ the regular price for only \$5.

Feb. 22, 7 p.m. Come between noon and 6:30 p.m. if you need equipment.

Alpine sledding - the 'other' winter sport - now offered

This is not your average neighborhood slip and slide.

We cruise the whole mountain on lighted runs, adrenaline surging through your veins!

You'll want to eat, drink and be merry at the beautiful Gasthaus, so let ODR do the driving.

March 5 - Hausberg
March 18 - Ehrwald
Departs the Burke Center at 1800 Hrs.

\$ 10 includes transportation and your own "Mini Bob"*. Lift pass not included (€ 14).

*(Mini Bob - probably the most fun you can have on a sled with a handle).

Club Beyond open to youth

Club Beyond is free. All youth (7th-12th grade) are welcome anytime.

If you have any questions about these upcoming events or Club Beyond Hohenfels call Chris Howard at DSN 466-4793 or CIV 0151-1494-3311 or e-mail christopher.s.howard@eur.army.mil.

CYS registration free

Registration for Middle School/Teen Services is free.

Pick up registration forms at the MS/Teen facility, temporarily located in the Community Activities Center, Bldg. 40, or register at CLEOS.

The Grafenwoehr Gospel Service

Worship Service Title: Gospel Christian Fellowship (GCF)



✓ First service is Easter Sunday, 23 Mar, 1 PM
✓ at the Graf Chapel. All are invited to attend and experience the blessing!

✓ Bring your talents and gifts for service unto the Lord. Teachers, Choir Directors, Musicians, Worship Leader, Singers and more needed.

✓ **Organizational meeting, THU, 14 Feb, 6 PM** (Location TBD). Are you in the Graf community for such a time as this?

✓ Contact Jameswflaming@yahoo.com for details.



What's Happening

Ansbach Briefs

Passport prices increase

Passport Services at the U.S. Consulate in Frankfurt reports that passport prices increased Feb. 1 from \$67 to \$75.

Feb. 1 also marked when people are to start using the new application forms for passports. The new forms are available online at <http://www.travel.state.gov> and in limited supplies at the consulate.

Hearts Apart set Thursdays at Fellowship Hall

USAG Ansbach Army Community Service and the Family Life Chaplain host Hearts Apart Thursday from 9:30-11 a.m. at the Katterbach Chapel Fellowship Hall. The new program is an open monthly education and information forum to support military families.

The topic of the first Hearts Apart is "The Secrets of a Successful Long Distance Relationship."

Call ACS at DSN 467-2553 or CIV 09802-83-2553 or the family life chaplain at DSN 467-2235 or CIV 09802-83-2235 for more information.

PTSD, mTBI briefing, slated

An informational briefing and discussion, question and answers session on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and mild Traumatic Brain Injury takes place Tuesday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Katterbach Theater and Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Illesheim Theater. Everyone is invited.

Furniture expo scheduled

Army and Air Force Exchange Service hosts a furniture expo Wednesday-Friday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Hangar 2 on Katterbach Kaserne.

The three-day sale will feature a hangar full of AAFES furniture offerings complete with home delivery and major purchase plans—just ask sales associates at the event for details.

'Me, Me, Me!' women's health day planned Feb. 21

The Ansbach Spouses and Civilians Club hosts a women's health day titled "Me, Me, Me!" Feb. 21 from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Katterbach Fitness Center.

Organizer Angie Rodesky says the event is designed to help female spouses deal with stress, help them stay healthy and find healthy foods while dealing with the deployment of their loved ones.

Heather Stoner will be on hand to talk about and give demonstrations on the muscle pump and Pilates classes she teaches. Samantha Lupo will give information and demonstrations on her massage therapy program, and information on women's health topics, such as breast cancer, will be available.

The event costs \$7 and includes health food, comfort food goodie bags, and raffle and door prizes.

For more on the event, call Rodesky at CIV 0171-489-0912.

Don't miss Bibleman Feb. 23

USAG Ansbach Chaplain's Office hosts Bibleman and the Powersource Adventure Feb. 23 at 2 p.m. at the Katterbach Theater.

Tickets to the free event can be picked up at the Katterbach or Illesheim chapels. People who would like to help the day of the event should contact the chapel nearest them.

For more, call Amber Christensen at CIV 09841-685-880 or Mindy Mass at CIV 09841-689-895 in Illesheim, or Destiny Sanchez at CIV 09802-957-308 or Macie Macklin at CIV 0981-183-797 in Katterbach.

ACAP job opening

There is a full-time Army Career and Alumni Program counselor vacancy in the Katterbach ACAP office. The counselor provides comprehensive transition assistance to service members and spouses leaving active duty. Requirements include: two years of counseling and/or training experience, a master's Degree in the human resources, counseling, Education or related fields, and strong administrative skills.

E-mail a cover letter and resume to Travis Reynolds at: travis.reynolds1@eur.army.mil or call DSN 353-8871 for more information.

Ursano scholarships available

Army Emergency Relief offers free money for college through the Maj. Gen. James Ursano Scholarship Fund to dependent children, stepchildren or legally adopted children of Soldiers on active duty, retired or deceased while on active duty or retired.

The scholarship funds may be used to help with tuition, fees, books, supplies, and school room and board either on or off campus.

Applications are available at <http://www.aerhq.org> and are due by March 1.

AAFES fuel cards on the way

Installation Management Command-Europe unveiled a Web site to keep service members, civilian employees and family members updated on the upcoming transition to the AAFES Fuel Ration Card that will come into use in July.

Just point your browser to <http://www.imcom-europe.army.mil/sites/news/fuelcard.asp> to access a variety of resources to help you understand the new program and use of the card.

Under the new system, registered drivers will be supplied with a fuel ration card similar to a bank debit card to which customers will apply a cash balance. The card will be phased in at garrisons in Germany from July to November, while the current coupon system is phased out.

Toastmasters Int'l meeting

Ansbach Toastmasters International meets the first and third Wednesday of every month from 6-7 p.m. at the ACS classroom on Katterbach.

Toastmasters is a way for people to beef up their resumes, enhance their leadership and communication skills, and become the speakers and leaders they want to be, said Nicole Stickney, a member of the club.

Stickney said guests are always welcome at the meetings, which she described as "dynamic and fun."

"We are looking for new members to join our recently-organized group," she said. "Whether you're a professional, student, stay-at-home parent or retiree, Toastmasters is the best way to improve your communication skills in a supportive environment."

Send an e-mail to ansbachtm@yahoo.com or visit <http://www.geocities.com/ansbachtm> for information.

Plan now for ACAP events

The Ansbach Army Career and Alumni Program hosts a Veterans Affairs benefits briefing Feb. 28, a pre-retirement briefing March 11 and a Transition Assistance Program job search workshop March 11-13.

For information, call DSN 467-3312 or CIV 09802-83-3312 or send an e-mail to acap.ansbach@serco-na.com.

Youth sports registration

USAG Ansbach Child and Youth Services holds spring sports registration now through Feb. 29 for developmental T-ball (ages 3-5), Pee-Wee T-ball (ages 6-7), coach-pitch baseball (ages 8-9), bantam baseball and softball (ages 10-12), junior baseball and softball (ages 13-15), senior baseball (ages 16-18) and spring bowling (ages 6-15).

Age cutoff date is June 15 and youth will be places in their proper age group according to their playing age.

A 10 percent multiple child discount will be given, and deployment and coaching discounts may also be available. Participants must have a current CYS health assessment at the time of sports registration. Call DSN 467-2533 or CIV 09802-83-2533 on Katterbach, or DSN 467-4880 or CIV 09841-83-4880 at Storck Barracks.

Autism support group

The USAG Ansbach Autism Support Group meets Wednesday and March 19 from noon to 1 p.m. on Katterbach and Feb. 21 and March 20 on Storck Barracks. Call DSN 467-2516 or CIV 09802-83-2516 on Katterbach, or DSN 467-4752 or CIV 09841-83-4752 at Storck Barracks for information.

Preschool drama time

The Terrace Playhouse offers preschool drama time Thursdays from 10-11 a.m. The class is a parent and child interactive and directed playtime that is open to children ages 5 and up. It gives parents and children an opportunity to explore their creativity together.

The playhouse is located in Bleidorn Housing Area. For more, call DSN 468-7636 or CIV 0981-183-636.

Bamberg Briefs

Make your voice heard during AFAP conference

Do you have concerns with the quality-of-life services or support provided by the U.S. Army? Send in your issues today for the 2008 Army Family Action Plan conference Feb. 27-29. Forms can be downloaded from the Bamberg website and e-mailed directly to the AFAP program manager, or placed in drop boxes located around post. Issues can be submitted now through Feb. 20. To request a form via e-mail send a message to BambergAFAP@eur.army.mil.

Call Mary Thompson at DSN 469-7777 for information.

Donate music and movies to deployed Soldiers

The Bamberg Community Library is collecting music and movies to send downrange to deployed units. Check your collections and drop audio books, movie DVDs and audio CDs at the front desk. For more information contact the library at CIV 0951-300-1740.

"Hidden Faces" on display

Stop by the Community Activity Center to view the newest oil and acrylic works by artist Randy Jones. Jones' exhibit, "The Hidden Faces," will be on display now through April 16. Call DSN 469-8659 for information.

Dealing with Deployment?

No matter what stage of deployment your family is in, ACS can help.

Attend Battleminds for Families Tuesday from 10 to 11:30 a.m. and learn strategies for coping during deployment.

The Children and Deployment training class Feb. 26 will help parents recognize and address behavioral changes and manage expectations. The course will be held from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Free child care is available. Please pre-register. Call CIV 0951-300-7777.

Bamberg Tax office now open

The Bamberg Tax Office located in Bldg. 7000 is now open Mon. through Wed. from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Thur. from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sat., during February only, from 9 to 11 a.m. Taxes are prepared at no cost for all military I.D. card holders. Don't delay! Please call to make an appointment to file your return. Call the tax office at DSN 469-8261/8262 or CIV 0951-300-8261/8262 for more information.

HHC 391st CSSB deployment ceremony

A deployment ceremony will be held at the Bamberg Basics Building for HHC 391st Combat Service Support Battalion Thur. Feb. 28 at 3 p.m. Come out and support our Soldiers and Families. For more information call the 16th Sustainment Brigade, Public Affairs Office at DSN 469-8506.

JROTC Drill Team needs sponsors

The Bamberg High School JROTC Drill Team is looking for units to sponsor their members. The group is also in need of dress blue uniforms (used or new). Please contact Sgt. 1st Class Young at DSN 469-8605 or via e-mail at prince.young@eu.dodea.edu.

College Success Seminar slated for March

Do you want to save thousands of dollars in college costs, hundreds of hours of research and eliminate the stress concerning the college process?

Attend the JROTC College Success Seminar Tue. March 4, 6 p.m. at the Bamberg High School multi-purpose room featuring Terry Wilfong, College Success Expert, Author and President of the College Options Foundation.

Wilfong is one of the nation's leading experts on college financing and admissions. His work has received accolades from USA today, Wall Street review, U.S. Department of Education and others.

He has provided seminars to hundreds of thousands of parents. For reservations call DSN 469-8605 or CIV 0951-300-8605 or e-mail madonna.roberts@eu.dodea.edu.

Schweinfurt Briefs

ACS offering free computer classes in February

Do you need to learn more computer skills? Or do you know the basics of Microsoft applications but want to learn more advanced techniques? Army Community Service is offering free computer classes.

Classes from Tuesday to Feb. 22 are held at Finney Fitness Center's digital training facility, Conn Barracks. Classes from Feb. 25-28 are held in Ledward, Bldg. 206, third floor computer lab. Classes run from 8 a.m. to 12:50 p.m. and a certificate of completion will be issued at the end of each class.

For more information, or to sign up, call ACS at DSN 354-6933 or CIV 09721-96-6933.

■ Tuesday – Computer basics and Windows XP

- Feb. 20 – Basic Microsoft Word I
- Feb. 21 – Basic Microsoft Word II
- Feb. 22 – Basic web design
- Feb. 25 – Basic Microsoft Excel I
- Feb. 26 – Basic Microsoft Excel II
- Feb. 27 – Microsoft PowerPoint
- Feb. 28 – Microsoft Access

Single Soldier events slated

Participate in Better Opportunity for Single Soldiers events throughout the winter. All instruction, materials, and games are provided free of charge.

Call the new BOSS telephone number DSN 353-8476 or CIV 0170-725-6464 for more information.

■ Bowling (drill a customized ball), Kessler Bowling Alley, tomorrow at 8 p.m.

■ Ski and snowboarding class, Italy, Friday-Monday.

■ Paintball, Conn paintball field, Feb. 23 from 2 to 4 p.m.

■ Safety restraint, Conn Auto Skills Center, Feb. 27 from 6 to 9 p.m.

Make friends, learn area during monthly 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 Leighton's next Lunch Bunch Jan. 27 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Schweinfurt's Lunch Bunch takes place Jan. 28 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sign up for the carpool or call to get directions to the restaurant. In Schweinfurt, call DSN 354-6933 or CIV 09721-96-6933.

In Wuerzburg, call DSN 350-7103 or CIV 0931-889-7103. Experience a little of the German culture with an English-speaking guide to help you translate the menu. Children are welcome! Bring euro

for lunch.

Shop at Easter markets

Interested in seeing what German Easter markets have to offer? Travel with USAG Schweinfurt Crafts Studio on Sundays in February and March to shop for crafts and supplies.

Free transportation is provided and leaves from the studio at 8 a.m. and returns at 6 p.m. Kloster Eberbach will be visited on Sunday and Domikaner Kloster on Feb. 24.

Flea market stops are planned. Bring euro for entry fees, shopping, and eating. Call after 1 p.m. Weds-Sat at DSN 354-6903 or CIV 09721-96-6903.

Bulk trash picked-up set

In support of the mass PCSing taking place during the month of February, there will be extra bulk trash pick-ups in the Schweinfurt area government housing and government leased housing. The pick-up dates are Tuesday and Feb. 26. Call DSN 354-6201 or CIV 0162-270-9403.

Sign up for a night off

Do you need a break? Sign-ups begin Friday for Child and Youth Services' next Parent's Night Out in Schweinfurt which will take place Feb. 22 from 6:30 p.m. to 11 p.m.

The program includes one meal and is open to children 6 weeks old to fifth-grade. Children must be registered with CYS and also have current immunizations. Call for more information at DSN 354-6517 or CIV 09721-96-6414.

Estate claims

Anyone having claims on or obligations to the estate of Pfc. David Webb of 1st Battalion 18th Infantry Regiment should contact the following summary court martial officer: 2nd Lt. Adam Seybert at DSN 353-8951 or CIV 09721-96-8951.

Learn to manage debt

Are you in debt and don't know how to get out? Do you need expert advice and tips on staying out of debt? Come to ACS's "Seven steps to getting out of debt" class at Schweinfurt ACS Feb. 26 from 9-10 a.m. For more information, or to sign up, call DSN 354-6933 or CIV 09721-96-6933.

Take action during annual AFAP conference Feb. 26-28

The Army Family Action Plan conference is at the Conn Club from Feb. 26 to 28, 8:15 a.m. to 2 p.m. Fifty to 75 volunteers are needed to be a part of the committees to talk about issues in the Schweinfurt area that need resolution. Lunch and child care are provided to volunteers.

There are 25 submission boxes located throughout the community with issue forms attached. Submit issues through Feb. 22. Call DSN 354-6933 or CIV 09721-96-6933.



Photo by Senior Airman Justin Weaver, Aviano Public Affairs

The 58.36 meter high Leaning Tower of Pisa was completed in 1173 and started leaning shortly afterwards. It is surrounded by the old wall city, the Baptistery and Cathedral in the Piazza dei Miracoli. The Tower is also where Italian Scientist Galileo tested to see if heavier objects would fall faster than lighter objects.

Camp Darby: Europe's southern destination of choice

by JOYCE COSTELLO
USAG Livorno Public Affairs

With warm weather and clear skies in the forecast, Camp Darby is an ideal place to spend President's Day weekend tomorrow through Monday. Memorable vacations are made easy at Camp Darby with help from Information, tours and Recreation.

Ask the residents what they love about living at the post on the coast and many will tell you it's just like the movie "Under the Tuscan Sun". Nestled in the heart of Tuscany on the Italian coast line, Camp Darby is minutes away from world renowned Leaning Tower of Pisa and an hour away from Florence, home to the Renaissance movement.



Photos by Ryan Haraschak, AFN Vicenza
The fierce figurehead is on the bow of a ship at the Expo Port. This ship was used in the Roman Polanski movie "Pirates." It is next to the Galata maritime museum. You can board it and walk on the decks for a small fee, but it is not functional ship and is unable to sail on the open sea.

President's Day weekend is the perfect time to visit Tuscany because you can avoid the normal tourist rush. Families can spend their days enjoying the Leaning Tower of Pisa, Michelangelo's David or amusement parks and have a relaxing evening in Sea Pine Lodge's affordable rooms with all the American style amenities.

Start the weekend off Thursday night with an evening meal at local Agriturismo "Zara". Located in the quiet countryside just outside of Pisa in a rustic villa, you can dine like one of the great lords of eras gone past.

Spend Friday at Cinque Terre, a remote piece of the Italian Riviera consisting of five villages connected by trails that hug the coastline. There are no museums in sight, just sky, sea, and some great hiking.

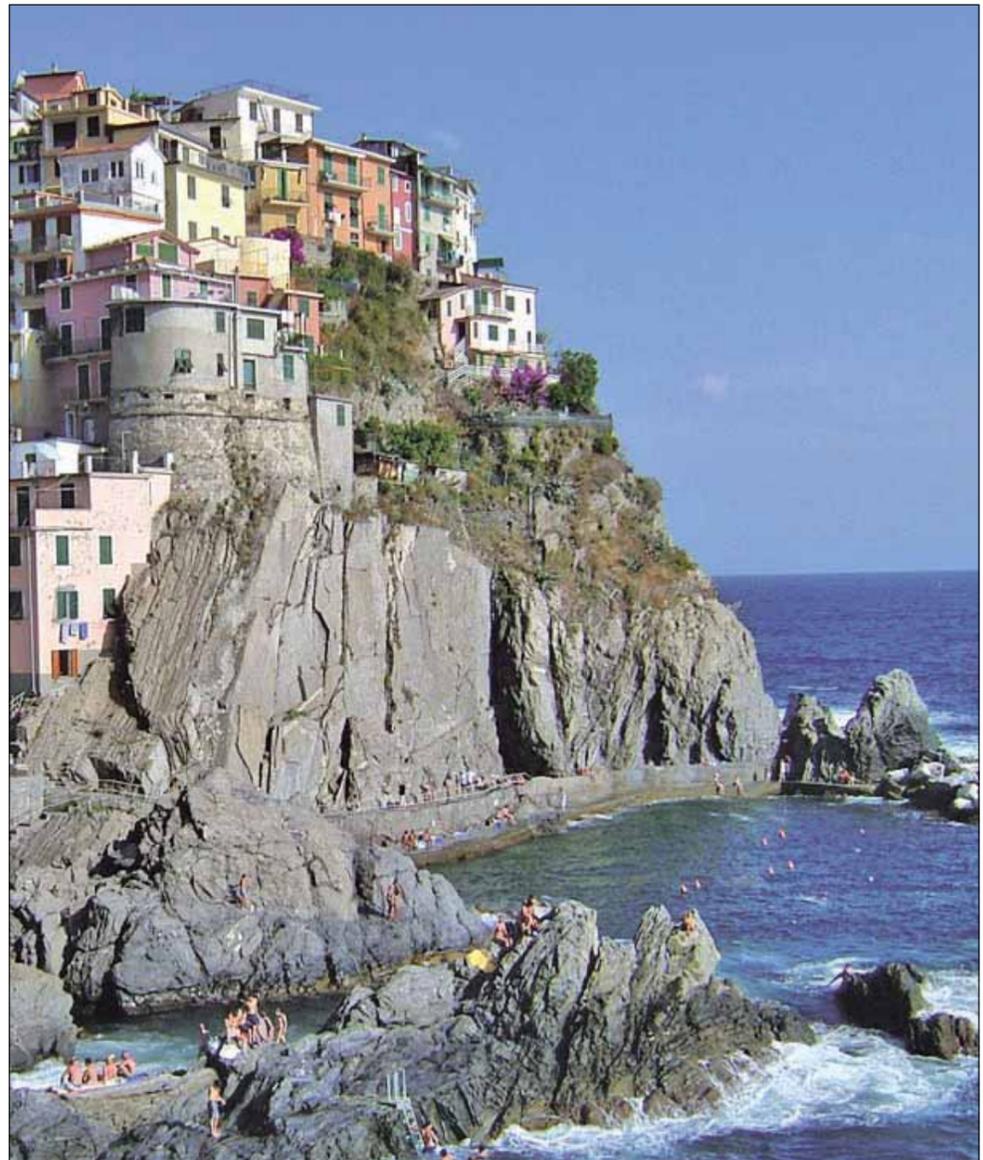
You can hike the entire trail in about four hours, but give yourself five to enjoy the incredible view and explore the villages. You can always skip a leg of the hike by taking the train or ferry to the different villages. Don't forget to wear comfortable, sturdy walking shoes or hiking boots.

Want to enjoy teaching your children something fun and educational at the same time? Visit the City of Children museum in Genoa Saturday. The museum specializes in play, science and technology for kids of all ages. Kids 2-3 can enjoy climbing through the city maze, kids 3-5 can practice their architectural skills on a mock construction site, and kids 6-14 can host their very own TV show.

Perhaps exploring Florence is more your style. Spend Saturday in Florence visiting the Uffizi Museum, the Accademia Gallery, shopping in the outdoor market or along the Ponte Vecchio, or just enjoy the scenery of this magnificent city.

All of these trips can be booked with ITR in Livorno by calling DSN 633-7589 or e-mail itr-livorno@eur.army.mil. Easily accessible by air, land and rail, Camp Darby is your affordable European southern destination of choice.

Can't get there on such short notice? That's not a problem! ITR can help you book a trip to see the Italian coast any time during the year. Call the ITR office in Grafenwoehr at DSN 475-7402 or Vilseck at DSN 476-2360.



Cinque Terre is a collection of five villages on the Italian Riviera connected by hiking trails, a train and ferry. For the best sunset view, take the Azzurro footpath from town four, Vernazza, to town five, Monterosso. This is one of the most challenging hikes. You will pass through vineyards on your right and the sea to your left. Make sure to time your hike so you arrive in town before dusk.

Check out Sea Pines' winter savings

by BILL CARPENTER
FMWR Marketing

The Sea Pines Recreational Facilities located on Camp Darby offers a total of 39 new and recently renovated rooms. Our deluxe and standard rooms possess a rustic Tuscan charm. During the winter, prices for standard rooms begin at \$50 and deluxe room start at \$60.

Staying at Sea Pines Recreational Facility is even more economical now. They are offering a "Stay three nights or more and your first night is free" special.

Or, if you can only stay two nights, you can take 20 percent off your stay. For information about the Sea Pines or reservations call DSN 633-7225 or CIV 00 39 050 54 7225 or e-mail lodging@eur.army.mil.

How to get there

By Air- Check out low cost airlines that fly into Pisa (PSA) www.pisa-airport.com

By Rail- Why waste a day of travel when you can catch an overnight train from Munich to Pisa. www.trentitalia.com

By Car- From Germany go through Switzerland or Austria to enter Italy. Camp Darby is located off the A11/A12 Autostrade, exit Pisa Centro. The Web site www.autostrade.it will show you routes, current traffic and construction, and can tell you how much the tolls will cost.

Is there a travel destination that you would like to know more about? Let us know! E-mail suggestions for travel articles to usaggnews@eur.army.mil with "Travel Feature Suggestion" in the subject line, then keep an eye on the travel section. Your idea might be our next featured destination!

Bunch Fitness Center gets \$775,000 facelift

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

Once a World War II aircraft hangar, the Bunch Fitness Center is in the process of getting a \$775,000 facelift resulting in a family- and handicap-friendly center for fitness.

During an open house Jan. 31 to show off progress on the three-phase renovations, Casey Malloy, chief of business and recreation for U. S. Army Garrison Ansbach Morale, Welfare, and Recreation, who also headed up and designed the improvement project, pointed to finished improvements and told about the things to come.

"The commander gave us money for the project and told us to invest it in making improvements for the Illesheim fitness center," Malloy said. "The facility was outdated, old, and needed this much deserved facelift—especially with Soldiers returning from deployment. We want to give them a better and improved facility to return to."

A performance by the Kansas City Chiefs cheerleaders, courtesy of Armed Forces Entertainment, helped bring some pompoms and circumstance to the open house, and helped draw a crowd to check out the improvements made during the recent completion of Phase II of the three-phase plan, Malloy said.

"The first phase started last August where we procured and relocated all the equipment from the non-enduring bases in Giebelstadt and Kitzingen—we were first in line for that equipment," he said. "We began the actual renovations in July and they ended in December."

The Phase II renovations included new lighting, painting with the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade's colors, improved ventilation, and the repair of roof leaks and water damage in the ceiling.

"We also had a large basketball court, but we really were not using the full court, while at the same time we recognized that the cardio area was too small, contained, and crowded," Malloy

added. "So we divided the basketball court in half to provide an enlarged cardio area—relocating all that equipment on the other side of the court to make the best use of the space available.

"It includes a retractable partition for more ventilation and other needs in case we have a larger event like a welcome home ceremony, if necessary."

During the tour, Malloy explained that the building structure was not the only improvement.

"The highlight of the renovation is the purchase of 26 Nautilus Nitro® Plus machines," he said. "This is state-of-the-art equipment—the new standard now—and we were able to obtain it with a bulk buy at the IMCOM level."

Malloy added that the equipment alone cost a couple hundred thousand dollars while the price tag on the whole renovation is about \$700,000.

But Malloy said the spotlight should shine on one of the special pieces of stand-alone equipment—the Freedom Trainer.

"It is wheelchair accessible and users can execute 26 different types of exercises on it," he said. "It is a multi-purpose machine geared to help wounded warriors—it covers all exercises on one machine."

Malloy showed off other improvements like additional water fountains, seven wide-screen televisions that work with the new Cardio Theater—a wireless entertainment system for personal screen viewing where users can plug in their headphones to listen and watch television.

He also mentioned there are free fitness classes, a massage therapy program, and a child-friendly fitness training room with a secure environment with a television and DVD player where parents can work-out while keeping watch on their children.

"But supervision will be the parents' responsibility with rules they need to follow," Malloy said. "This is what the Army is going



Lynsey Justice receives a free massage from Samantha Lupo, massage therapist, while a member of Illesheim's Black and Blue rugby team talks about the team in front of its information booth at the Bunch Fitness Center's open house Jan. 31 at Storck Barracks.

toward to fulfill the need for family-friendly fitness areas."

Phase III, which will last about 120 days,

begins in April and includes new flooring on one side of the cardio section of the gym and a spinning room for indoor cycling and more.

Construction challenges now result in big payoffs later on

by JIM HUGHES
Bavarian News

While construction to replace aging sewer and water lines are causing some traffic challenges at Storck Barracks, the payoff will be big towards the end of the year, said the Illesheim Area Support Team manager.

Not only will the construction put in the new lines to help with rainwater runoff, prevent flooding, and keep quality drinking water flowing for the community, but the garrison is taking advantage of the project to get new roads, safer traffic flow, new sidewalks, and a pedestrian-friendly zone near the post exchange, said Kevin Smith.

"The work is improving the sub infrastructure of the installation," Smith said. "But when that work is completed, the contractors will be putting

in new asphalt, so we took advantage of the situation to ensure a four-for-one deal and made plans for the other improvements."

He said the new asphalt will help with roads that are showing some wear, the widening of some roads to make for a safer traffic flow, wider sidewalks, and a walking zone—akin to those found in German towns and cities—near the thrift shop and PX area where community members can walk safely and also sit, meet, and enjoy the atmosphere.

Smith thanked the directorate of public works and the garrison commander, Lt. Col Tammy S. McKenna, for getting the resources and planning to create "a wonderful end-state for the installation."

While the construction is creating some traffic challenges for community members, Smith said that an agreement with the contractor calls for there to be two ways around the construction areas.

"Just allow for your trips on the installation to take some extra time," he said. "We ask everyone to be patient while the works goes on, and they have been, and realize the benefits that this work brings."

The construction also gives Storck Barracks a first its community members may not want—the first traffic light.

"It's a construction traffic light, but it is the only one I can recall in the time I've been here," Smith laughingly said. "And it is on a 28-second change cycle, although it may seem like 10 minutes at times."

Smith also encouraged community members to pay attention to changing traffic patterns, follow the traffic laws and watch their speed.

He and the AST staff have been advising community members about the construction and traffic flow changes, and even offering navigational tips for avoiding the worst areas, through e-mail and road signs.

People who want to receive the AST e-mails or who have questions about the best routes or about the project, should call DSN 467-4515 or CIV 9841-83-4515.

The contract calls for all work to be complete by the end of the year. Right now, work is going on mainly near the post exchange, or "center of town" area, Smith said, but once those lines are replaced, a temporary road surface will be put in and the work will move to the southwest of the installation.

No water or power outages are scheduled during the construction period, Smith added.

Illesheim, Katterbach locales among Ansbach's new MWR-created Wi-Fi services, hotspots

by RONALD H. TOLAND JR.
Bavarian News

Advertisements, flyers and banners around the community proclaim the news that "hotspots" and local "Wi-Fi" services are available in the community.

So, what is Wi-Fi?

A favorite online information bank—Wikipedia—defines it as, "A wireless technology brand owned by the Wi-Fi Alliance—a consortium of separate and independent companies agreeing to a set of common interoperable products, based a family of IEEE 802.11 standards, intended to improve the interoperability of wireless local area network products, based on these standards—certified products via a set of established test procedures to establish interoperability."

Uh-huh.

Basically, it boils down to being a wireless computer network based on a family of related technical specifications, standards and various wireless networking protocols (collectively known as Wi-Fi) for high-speed networking across wireless LANs.

This method improves wireless products by everything working in concert.

Some common applications for Wi-Fi include Internet and VoIP phone access, gaming and network connectivity for consumer electronics such as televisions, DVD players, and digital cameras.

Casey Malloy, chief of business and recreation for U. S. Army Garrison Ansbach Morale, Welfare, and Recreation, said Army communities are working to keep up with the times and changing technology.

"The Army has transformed so quickly in the last few years, MWR has to keep up as well—along with the technology—to meet Soldiers' needs," Malloy said.

"The younger ones are more technology driven—video games, lots of time on the computer, using personal networking sites—they are very computer focused and MWR recognizes that. Wi-Fi helps fill this gap through a set up with AirPath via the Army Recreation Machine Program."

Malloy said the service is popular and widespread in the U.S. Soldiers with account accessibility in the States who PCS'd to Europe used to not have the ability to use their accounts over here. Now they do.

"All they have to do is be in one of our facilities that has this service," he said.

"They fire up their computer and can then access the same program—just like in the U.S. with AirPath—via that service's screen. They can pay by hourly, daily, weekly or monthly fees—just like a wireless network in a home."

"We just use a much stronger antenna signal that will reach a wider radius and accept more computers," said Malloy.

"The advantage of this service for Soldiers is that some restrictions—like accessing MySpace and other similar sites which are restricted on the military network—are removed."

Malloy said that "hotspots" are located at the Illesheim Bowling Center, Katterbach Bowling Center and The Underground club in the Von Steuben Community Center.

As long as users are in those buildings, they should be able to access the service without difficulty, he said.

"MWR wants to transform along with the Army and be up to the standards and technology that Soldiers expect," Malloy said.

For more information on USAG Ansbach Wi-Fi, call one of the "hotspot" centers above or send an e-mail to USAG Ansbach MWR at ans-mwr@eur.army.mil.



Photo by Rohrtec Baumgartner

Construction contractors work to replace aging sewer and water lines at Storck Barracks in Illesheim. While the construction is creating some traffic challenges at the installation, the payoff will be big once work is complete, according to garrison officials.

Get on the mailing list for Ansbach's electronic newsletter. Just e-mail jim.k.hughes@eur.army.mil or rabia.nombamba@eur.army.mil.

Historical artist visits deployed Soldiers, gathers ideas for commemorative print

Story and photo by Sgt. BRANDON LITTLE
Task Force XII Public Affairs Office

For hundreds of years, paintings have immortalized different aspects of war; from the ferocity of combat to the bond formed between Soldiers who live and die together.

The process of immortalizing the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade's impact on the future of aviation began with a visit from James Dietz Jan. 13.

Dietz, a world-famous military and aviation artist, decided to visit 12th CAB Soldiers and Taji and Logistics Support Area Anaconda to begin developing an outline for a 12th CAB commemorative print.

"A picture speaks louder than words," said Dietz, a historical artist. "My job is to (understand a unit's history) and translate it into picture form."

His detailed images have graced the walls of numerous offices and conference rooms throughout the Army.

"It's amazing and gratifying to me to see how many places my work turns up," he said. "The Army, in spite of being a large organization, is actually like a small family—so the chances of someone owning something you've done, or having seen it, are higher than I'd expect."

Before his vision can begin to take shape on canvas, Dietz says, he must arrange all the pieces into a scene in real life.

"The easiest way to say it without being overly descriptive is that you create a scene from a movie," Dietz said.

"It's as if you set up a scene that is the most



James Dietz (center), an award-winning military and aviation artist, explains to two 12th Combat Aviation Brigade Soldiers where he wants them to be positioned for his photograph. Dietz will later use the photograph, and others he has taken, to begin production of the 12th CAB commemorative print.

important part of many other scenes, and you set that one up, and have the people you're working with cooperating with that vision."

One of those cooperating was Spc. Justin

Duh, an aircraft maintainer in Company B, 412th Aviation Support Battalion, and model for the print.

"He had me helping a Soldier onto a UH-60

Black Hawk—showing us getting ready to go out on a mission," the Honolulu, Hawaii native said. "He does a very good job showing the Soldiers in action and the hard work we do out here."

Another model, Sgt. Brett Babin, a UH-60 Black Hawk maintainer in Company A, 3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment added, "This print is a good way to show all of the great things we have been doing on this deployment." Dietz took dozens of photographs at Taji and Anaconda to develop an idea of how the print should be designed.

"After a long discussion, outlining the pros and cons, the general consensus was to go with a flight line scene that involved a more personal look at the troopers who fly in these aircraft and the support personnel who make it possible for these operations to take place," he said.

"I'm definitely going to get a print because we're all part of one big team and that's a good thing to remember," Babin said.

After taking enough photographs to have a solid grasp on how to begin his art project, Dietz thanked everyone for their help and participated in a group picture for his own personal memories.

"My wife once asked me if coming to Iraq made a difference in the painting, instead of having someone else shoot pictures and try to make them fit; whether it made the paintings intrinsically deeper that I was here," Dietz said.

"I have to say of course it does. And if it helps with the end result, then the unit who brings me here is better for it, too."

Community gets school back on track after fire

by JIM HUGHES
Bavarian News

Life is pretty much back to normal at Rainbow Elementary School on Barton Barracks following an early-morning fire in the gymnasium and kitchen roof Jan. 24, reports the school's principal.

Thanks to what Principal Chuck Callahan defined as a "great community," students, teachers, and staff were back where they needed to be doing what they needed to be doing Jan. 28.

Callahan credited everyone from Lt. Col. Tammy S. McKenna, garrison commander, to the directorate of public works, to garrison and surrounding community firefighters, to the leaders in the Department of Defense Dependent Schools Bavaria District Headquarters, to parents of students and more in making the best of the situation.

"I just want to thank everyone who helped us through this," Callahan said. "The support we received was incredible. To get the students back into classes where they belong and get things back to normal so quickly is a testament to this great community and the positive attitude at Rainbow."

Although the gymnasium/multi-purpose room/kitchen was knocked out of service for about two weeks, Army and Air Force Exchange

Service provided sack lunches and physical education went on outside and in the music room to keep life normal at the school, Callahan said.

In the immediate aftermath of the fire, school and garrison officials were unsure of the extent of the damage and quickly developed plans for holding classes in alternate locations.

Those plans were unnecessary as a same-day inspection revealed the fire damage was contained to the roof and water damage to the kitchen and multi-purpose room—the rest of the school was perfectly safe and Jan. 25 was a scheduled no-school day anyway, McKenna said.

"We were very fortunate that the fire broke out at a time when the school was unoccupied," McKenna said. "We are also very fortunate to have such great people working and living in this community. Our firefighters from the garrison teamed up perfectly with emergency responders from five surrounding communities to respond immediately, get the situation under control and minimize the damage."

"DODDS and garrison officials immediately went to work to get the students back in school, where they need to be, and did so with great success—classes resumed the following Monday," she continued. "The great calm and effective response by the entire community to come together and recover from this incident is testament to the wonderful people we have

living and working at USAG Ansbach, and our outstanding relationship with our host nation neighbors."

The garrison fire department was assisted by the City of Ansbach, Herrieden, Neuendettelsau, Diethofen, and Brodswinden fire departments, said Stefan Groetschel, garrison fire chief, who defined the firefighting response in this case to be a total success.

"We were able to contain the fire much better this time because of the ladder truck we purchased shortly after the first fire at the school in 2000," he said. "The realistic training we get at our simulation trainer also prepares us to effectively handle real-world fires."

He said the outstanding relationship the garrison fire department enjoys with all surrounding fire departments also helps during times of crises—on a two-way street.

"We help them and they help us—there is great cooperation," Groetschel said.

No damage estimate is available yet and the cause of the fire is still under investigation.

USAG Ansbach and City of Herrieden firefighters respond to a Jan. 24 fire at Rainbow Elementary School on Barton Barracks.

Photo by Ronald H. Toland Jr.



Leikam wins spelling bee, readies himself for European level

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

An Illesheim Elementary School fourth grader out-spelled 35 fellow students to earn first place in the Scripps National Spelling Bee local-level competition Jan. 29.

Parker Leikam, 10, expertly handled all words and outdueled the strong competition to earn top speller honors, and also a trophy and two books to help him ready himself for the European level competition.

Competing in the bee for the third time in his young academic career and finishing in third place last year gave Leikam a strong feeling that he might win this year.

"My mom and I studied the last word the night before—making jokes about it—so that helped me remember it," Parker said. "I studied a whole lot—every day. My mom would give me the word and I would spell it out on my board or out-loud, depending if



Illesheim Elementary School Principal Margaret Deatherage; Kristen Leikam, spelling bee organizer; Parker Leikam, first place winner; Parker's father, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Chuck Leikam; second place winner Alexxys Montalvo; and Alexxys' mother, Monica, after the local level of the Scripps National Spelling Bee at Storck Barracks.

I was 100 percent sure or not. I was nervous the whole time because I knew I had some tough competition to beat."

Parker's father, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Chuck Leikam, said his son worked hard to ensure the win.

"Even though it was mostly mom, we worked during dinner—as a group—he and I would have a spell-off," the proud dad said. "I am a good speller and a real stickler on spelling."

Kristen Leikam, Parker's mother,

added that the studying began back in October.

"We started with a couple of hours a night, and as any good parent, I support my kids," she said. "My third grader also threw his heart and soul into the bee and I told him I would back him 100 percent, too."

Mom also coordinated the spelling bee at the school.

"Last year's event was put together very quickly and I wanted the kids to have more time and resources to better prepare them for this year's event," she said. "I have been clocking between 20 and 30 hours a week into making sure this will be the best competition possible. If I get to help other kids along their paths in life, too, then that makes it all the sweeter for me!"

Melissa Richardson, educational technologist at the school and center judge for the bee, said spelling is important for children.

"This is an opportunity to show that, especially for those that do not spell well," she said. "It may motivate

them to study their spelling words."

The school's principal, Margaret Deatherage said spelling bees help in other areas of academics, as well.

"There are nearly 2,000 words to be quizzed from—building vocabulary skills—and it is great for fundamental skills like comprehension, reading, and writing," she said. "The words for the bee are sectioned by word origin—languages—English being the language that accepts every other language, which separates everything, so the kids learn world culture at the same time."

Second and third place honors went to Alexxys Montalvo and Bryan Schmidt respectively.

For the next level, Parker heads off to Ramstein to compete in the European Regional Spelling Bee March 15. The winner there travels to the U.S. to compete in the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C.

The second-place speller will fill in at the regional level if for any reason the first-place speller cannot attend.

Renovated JFK Multiplex opening in March

Story and photo by AMY L. BUGALA
Bavarian News

The renovated Bamberg JFK Gym is scheduled to open in March under a new name, the JFK Multiplex. The new multi-purpose program facility will transform the sports, fitness, and recreation experience in Bamberg for children and youth of all ages.

"This will be a multi-purpose facility and not just a traditional gym – it's more than a gym," said Liwliwa Markey, Bamberg Child and Youth Services coordinator.

In less than a year, the Morale, Welfare and Recreation facility underwent a \$1.3 million renovation to replace the entire roofing system and remodel the interior to meet the requirements of a certified Child and Youth Services facility.

"It's pretty spectacular that we are looking at the grand opening of this facility in less than nine months since construction began," said Darrell Clay, Bamberg Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation director.

The interior modifications created a dynamic new space that will house two key CYS programs under one roof; Sports and Fitness and the Teen Program according to Markey.

"This is one of the few facilities within Europe that can enhance the entire CYS organization by offering children and youth, fitness and health under one roof. Kids finally have a chance to play and have fun!" said Connie Larson, Installation Management Command-Europe, CYS Youth Sports and Fitness specialist.

The 20,000 square foot facility is separated into five main recreational areas; a basketball court, an interactive cardio room, weight conditioning area, climbing wall and teen zone.

There is one full-size basketball court that can be divided in two half-size courts allowing for simultaneous practices for a variety of additional activities such as volleyball, soccer, and cheerleading, said Markey.

The facility can seat approximately 280 spectators, making it ideal for hosting tournaments at any level.

"Basketball is a very popular team sport for youth in Bamberg...we made a conscious decision to maximize the space to accommodate more teams during the season," she said.

Children will find a fun alternative to team sports in the interactive cardio room or the



A massive 30-foot high climbing wall takes center stage at the new facility.

weight conditioning room. A mix of "exergaming" equipment combines video gaming and exercise, to make getting fit, fun.

"Age appropriate equipment is offered at the facility," said Markey, "and has been chosen and tailored not just for a child's age and size but for their capabilities and interest."

Another exciting addition to the YS Sports and Fitness program is the 30-foot high climbing wall surface. Climbing is expected to be one of the most popular new instructional classes that will be offered.

"The facility was built for the primary users, children and youth," said Clay, "but on a space

available basis we do foresee other groups in the community utilizing some of the areas such as the climbing wall."

And, it's not just about sports.

The opening of the Teen Zone will have a big impact on the middle school and teen programs which are both currently housed at the Oasis building.

The new Multiplex Teen Zone, for ninth through twelfth graders, boasts a movie theater capable of seating 10, snack bar, multi-media entertainment chair, three laptop computer stations, a pool table and the benefit of a separate entrance at the back. Youth Services program

director, Rizza Asuncion, surveyed the teens and worked with them to develop their new space.

"The sports and activities that (the teens) want are going to be the things we will be providing at the JFK Multiplex," Markey explained. "Each age group will now have their own center."

The "Plex" is a few weeks from being complete and once open is expected to enhance all MWR programs in Bamberg in terms of fitness said Markey.

The community can look forward to the grand opening event in March.

Project Sweet Dreams gives children something to hold

Story and photo by
AMY L. BUGALA
Bavarian News

A Bamberg Child and Youth Services program is giving children and their deployed parents something to hold on to this Valentine's Day... each other.

"Project Sweet Dreams" gives children the opportunity to make and send a personalized pillow to their parent downrange and to receive one in return. Project coordinator Kim Kozel, CYS School Liaison Officer, is hoping the exchange will help lessen the distance that is felt between a child and their deployed parent, especially at bedtime.

Kozel and the School Ages Services staff helped the children

make the pillows by creating transfers of their photos and artwork and ironing them onto pillowcases. The message on the pillow says: "Someone in Bamberg loves you!" Tucked into each individually wrapped package is a tin of sweet treats and a note requesting a picture of the child's parent.

The Valentine's Day packages mark the first phase of the program according to Claire Aljunaibi, School Age Services director. Approximately 50 pillows have already been mailed downrange. "The program will come full circle when the child receives a pillow with their parent's photo on it," Aljunaibi said.

The project helps ease a child's mind during a long separation because a pillow is something tangible to a

child. It gives children something to hold and to hug, explained Aljunaibi.

Prior to mailing, the children grabbed their pillows and wrapped their arms around them, getting in as many hugs as possible before packing them away.

"We're going to send these downrange to your dads," Kozel said to the children.

"Or moms, Miss Kim!" replied Winnie Tataw.

This 7-year-old had a lot to say about her pillow, which, much to her delight, is on its way to Afghanistan, to her mom, Sgt. Glory Tataw, 173rd Brigade Support Battalion.

Kozel explained how the idea of organizing the project in Bamberg came to her last fall. Having never personally experienced a deployment, she admits she can't imagine what a Soldier must feel while being separated from their child for so long. After sending her daughter off to her first semester of college, she understood, and her thoughts turned to the Soldiers downrange.

She says for parents the pillows are a nice way to collect your thoughts before going to bed, to leave the day behind, and focus on what is away from you. She knows Soldiers must have a whole lot more to worry about and a longer separation from their child but now relates by calling her experience "my educational deployment." She is grateful she is able to see her daughter at the end of every college semester.

The first picture from a parent downrange just recently arrived. Kozel quickly created pillows for Sgt. 1st Class Alfredo Woods, equal opportunity advisor, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team and presented them to his 7-year-old twin sons, Kamron and Kareem Woods. The message on the matching pillows says: "Someone in Afghanistan loves you."



Winnie Tataw sends a pillow to her mom in Afghanistan.



Photo by 2nd Lt. Monika Comeaux

Sgt. Glory Tataw, 173rd Brigade Support Battalion receives a big hug from home along with the pillow made by her daughter Winnie.

After presenting the pillows to the twins, she explained to the other children that more would be arriving soon.

Kozel looks forward to receiving the pictures and helping create "sweet dreams" for all the children.

"It gives me a sense of doing something that's very, very small when the (Soldiers) are doing

something so big for us," she said.

"Project Sweet Dreams" is an ongoing program sponsored by U. S. Army Garrison Bamberg Child and Youth Services in support of the deployed Soldiers and their families at Warner Barracks. For more information, contact Kim Kozel at DSN 469-7891 or e-mail kimberly.kozel@eur.army.mil.

TSC commander urges families to stay in Europe during Soldier deployments

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. ADAM V. SHAW
16th SB Public Affairs

Brig. Gen. Scott West, commander, 21st Theater Sustainment Command, Kaiserslautern, Germany, met with 16th Sustainment Brigade family readiness group leaders, family readiness support assistants, and senior leader spouses at Warner Barracks in Bamberg, Jan. 24.

"The visit lays the groundwork for the upcoming deployment and shows the senior leaders' commitment to the spouses," said Eric Jones, FRSA, 16th SB.

FRG leaders from the 18th Combat Service Sustainment Battalion, 16th SB, Grafenwoehr, also spoke with general, via video teleconference.

"Anytime that you can bring the family leaders from all over the brigade together, it builds cohesiveness, not just with each other, but with senior leadership," Jones said.

Brig. Gen. West started the FRG meeting by referring to an Armed Forces Network TV spot that features Gen. David D. McKiernan, commander, U.S. Army Europe, and the motto "Strength of the families, strength of the Army."

"Truer words have never been spoken," said West. "I couldn't be a Soldier if my family didn't support me."

West also expressed the importance of getting family members to stay at their home station and addressed the concerns of families that plan to return to the U.S. when Soldiers deploy to Iraq, through a process the Army calls "early return of dependents," or EROD.

"I know that it's tough to be out here alone, but I encourage family members to stay in Europe," said West. "Even if they chose to leave, it is still our responsibility to the families to keep them informed and support them no matter where they

are."

The general, who has served in the Army for 32 years and married his wife Patti the day he joined, said family care is a top priority. West and his wife have two daughters.

"When the Soldiers deploy, so do the families," said West as he addressed the family leaders. "We do a great job of taking care of the Soldiers while they are deployed. We need to make sure the families are also getting taken care of. You have every right to hold us accountable. Don't hesitate to ask."

The hour-long question-and-answer session reassured FRG leaders that the Army takes its commitment to Soldiers' families seriously.

"It's important for family members to see that there is this umbrella that can take care of them and address concerns and issues," said Sebrina Pitts, spouse of Col. Martin Pitts, commander, 16th SB. "If the family is healthy, everything works itself out."



Brig. Gen. Scott West, commander, 21st TSC, Kaiserslautern, Germany, speaks with 16th SB FRG leaders, FRSAs, and senior leader spouses at Warner Barracks Jan. 24, and via video teleconference to 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, Grafenwoehr.

Nangarhar JPCC blazes trail in emergency services

by Sgt. 1st Class JACOB CALDWELL
173rd ABCT Public Affairs

Every week the Nangarhar law enforcement representatives and Task Force Raptor Soldiers meet at the Joint Provincial Coordination Center in Jalalabad here to exchange information and discuss what they can do to better serve the citizens of the province.

The JPCC is a model in eastern Afghanistan for synchronizing the efforts of the U.S. forces, Afghan National Police, Afghan Border Police, Afghan National Army and emergency fire and medical services.

While the successes of the JPCC are numerous, the highest profile program thus far has been the implementation of a 9-1-1 type emergency number; a service Americans take for granted. The 1-0-0 number in Jalalabad has virtually the same services offering quick access to emergency responders 24-hours a day.

"They dial three numbers and they can talk to the ANP," said Army 1st Lt. Jeff Reed, JPCC officer-in-charge, assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 173rd Special Troops Battalion.

"If they need to talk to anybody, if

there is anything going on, from this center they can dispatch fire trucks... ambulances, police patrols, or they can just ask questions," said Reed.

The JPCC averages 25-50 calls on the 1-0-0 number on a normal day. Some days that number surpasses 100. For now, the majority of the calls are to check and see if the number actually works. It does.

ANP respond to an average of 10 percent of the emergency calls – those that provide actionable information.

The program is yet another step forward in the progress of Afghanistan according to Army Lt. Col. Jeffrey

Milhorn, 173rd Special Troops Battalion and TF Raptor commander.

"Generally, the people are now securing themselves," said Milhorn. "They now have a communications network established that they can tie back to the JPCC immediately and get a relatively rapid response."

As with any new program, there have been obstacles that had to be overcome, according to Army Staff Sgt. Michael Roth, JPCC noncommissioned officer-in-charge.

"The initial problems were dealing with the different phone carriers, Roshan, AWCC, etc. Now they have

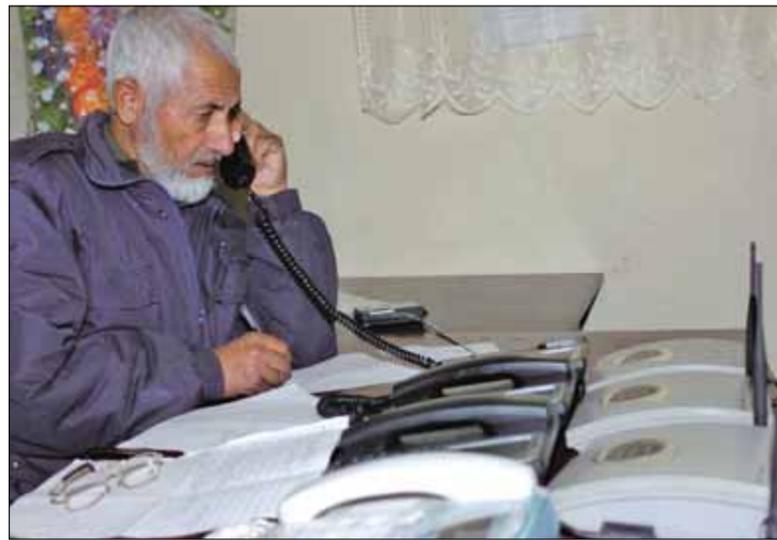
lines for everybody regardless of whatever phone carrier the people are using," said Roth, assigned to HHC, 173rd STB. "They can call in and make contact."

There are also some minor annoyances to overcome according to ANP Maj. Abdul Gadim.

"People crank call because the number is free, many calls are not emergencies," said Gadim.

Overall, Gadim is impressed with the success of the program.

"It's fantastic! It's great. If there's a problem we can jump on it and help the people," he said.



U.S. Army Photos by Spc. Gregory Argentieri

Afghan National Police Maj. Abdul Gadim, of the ANP's Criminal Investigative Department, fields an emergency call Jan. 24 from the 1-0-0 number at the Nangarhar JPCC in Jalalabad. After fielding the call, emergency responders are dispatched if needed.



The Nangarhar JPCC is co-located with the Nangarhar Police Headquarters. Task Force Bayonet Soldiers, Afghan National Army Soldiers, Afghan Border Policemen, and the Fire Department also have representatives on site in order to quickly and effectively respond to emergencies in Nangarhar Province.

Nurse Advice Line saving time, providing patients reassurance

U.S. Army Health Clinic Bamberg news release

During the first week of February, the U.S. Army Health Clinic Bamberg closed walk-in triage services and implemented the Telephone Appointment System also known as the Bamberg Nurse Advice Line.

This change was done to provide better and timely services to all beneficiaries of the Bamberg military community.

The Telephone Appointment System directs you to the most appropriate care provider, whether it is a Bamberg Health Clinic primary care provider, the Bamberg Klinikum, or possibly a health improvement program, such as the Bamberg Behavioral Health Services.

The new system provides an experienced, knowledgeable resource to turn to first, allowing patients to make informed decisions about their healthcare needs and become better health services consumers.

The value of providing the Telephone Appointment System or Bamberg Nurse Advice Line is the ability to identify participants at the first sign of a health concern.

This empowers individuals to take charge of their own health and promotes a healthier, happier environment.

How does the new system work?

Customers can call the Bamberg appointment lines at DSN 469-1750 / 7977 / 7772 or CIV 0951-300-1750 / 7977 / 7772 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. to speak to an appointment clerk.

If the clerk is unable to make an appointment within TRICARE's Access to Care Standards the customer's information will be provided to a Nurse Advice Line Representative.

Within 30 minutes, a Registered Nurse will call and provide a viable solution for the patient's health and wellness concerns.

What are the advantages of the new system?

The new system saves you time.

- No more walking into the clinic and waiting for hours to see the triage nurse.

- No driving to the health clinic if you do not have to.

- No long waits standing in line or Hospital emergency rooms.

- No exposing yourself or your children to different illnesses.

- No need to find child care for other children.

- Customer's can receive quality healthcare advice and support without leaving their home.

The new system provides reassurance

- Customers will receive appropriate and timely care when they truly need it. Studies have shown that patients utilizing the Nurse Advice Line reported more confidence in treating their health problems and reduced reliance on

emergency rooms for non-emergencies.

- Often, after talking with a Nurse on the phone, patients feel reassured they can handle the situation. But, if it is something more serious, the Bamberg Nurse Advice Line Representative will direct patients to the right place for care.

- Patients will be sent to the appropriate care venue, rather than going to the emergency room for an illness that could be handled by a routine doctor's visit the following day or even with advice from the nurse.

- By calling the Bamberg Nurse Advice Line, patients can gain a sense of empowerment and find that they can do something to take care of their illness.

TRICARE's Access Standards

- Acute/Urgent Care – 24hrs
- Routine Care – 7days
- Well – 30 days
- Specialty Care – 30 days

Dagger Brigade memorializes fallen Soldiers, civilians in stone

Story and photo by MARK HEETER
Bavarian News

One hundred and nine names etched in stone memorialized the 109 Soldiers of the Dagger Brigade Combat Team who died in Iraq in Operation Iraqi Freedom 06-08. A solemn ceremony held Jan. 23 on Conn Barracks dedicated the memorial, modeled on barriers used for security downrange, to the memory of the fallen.

Col. J.B. Burton, brigade commander, noted that the memorial, comprising the names of 59 Schweinfurt-based Soldiers, and 50 Soldiers whose units were part of the Dagger Brigade in Iraq, was a gift of the Dagger Guardian Association, "a group of dedicated Soldiers, former Soldiers, families, and friends, who found a way to finance this tremendous tribute through the generous donations of people across the world."

Burton explained the design of the monument to the hundreds of people gathered for the ceremony.

"This design is fitting as it formally represents a change in the tactics necessary to win," in today's battlefield, Burton said.

"This design and the names inscribed upon it represent a change in an approach to this war, while reminding us of the true cost of victory," he said.

The fallen Soldiers and civilians are remembered on the memorial:

Pfc. Edwin A. Andino II	Pfc. Daniel J. Allman II
Sgt. Lucas White	Spc. Ross A. McGinnis
Pfc. Theodore M. West	Spc. Aaron L. Preston
Sgt. John T. Bubeck	Sgt. Milton A. Gist Jr.
Sgt. Corey J. Aultz	Pfc. Alberto Garcia Jr.
Akeel H. Salah Al-Ahabi	Spc. Sean K. McDonald
Spc. Marico Guerrero	Sgt. William W. Bushnell
Sgt. Mario K. Deleon	Staff Sgt. Christopher S. Kiernan
Pfc. Larry I. Guyton	Spc. Joseph A. Gilmore
Spc. David W. Behrle	Spc. Markryan Caguioa
Aziz Abdalsahib	Staff Sgt. Juan F. Campos
Spc. Chadwick Domino	Staff Sgt. Michael A. Bechert
Ri'ad Riad (Rudy) Tawfeeq	Spc. Anthony D. Hebert
Spc. Daniel J. Agami	Pfc. Jonathan M. Rossi
Spc. Raymond N. Spencer Jr.	
Sgt. Jason L. Merrill	



DonElla Thomas touches a name on the Dagger OIF 06-08 Memorial during a dedication ceremony on Conn Barracks Jan. 23.

Pfc. Eric M. Kavanagh	Gilmore III
Pfc. Jang Ho Kim	Spc. Donald M. Young
Spc. Jordan W. Hess	Spc. Kevin A. Gilbertson
Pfc. Andrew H. Nelson	Staff Sgt. Yance T. Gray
Sgt. Robert B. Thrasher	Spc. Steven R. Elrod
Pfc. William N. Davis	Spc. Christian M. Neff
Cpt. Anthony Palermo	Spc. Daniel E. Gomez
Spc. John D. Flores	Hussain Jasem Kaghem
Staff Sgt. Virgil C. Martinez	Spc. Alun R. Howells
Spc. Travis F. Haslip	Staff Sgt. Gregory Riverasantiago
Spc. Clinton C. Blodgett	Sgt. Michael C. Hardegree
Cpl. Romel Catalan	Spc. Ari D. Brownweeks
Pfc. David J. Bentz III	Spc. Zachary R. Clouser
Spc. Thomas Leemhuis	Spc. Christopher Neiberger
Sgt. 1st Class Raymond R. Buchan	Sgt. Edward L. Brooks
Sgt. 1st Class Luis E. Gutierrez-Rosales	
Spc. Richard M.	

Sgt. Nicholas J. Patterson	Maj. Sid W. Brookshire
Sgt. Omar L. Mora	Sgt. Alphonso J. Montenegro
Spc. Brandon T. Thorsen	Staff Sgt. Michael L. Ruoff Jr.
Staff Sgt. Joe A. Narvaez	Staff Sgt. Garth D. Sizemore
Cpl. Eric G. Palacios-Rivera	Col. Thomas H. Felts
Staff Sgt. Kristofer R. Ciraso	Spc. Nicholas P. Steinbacher
Sgt. Lawrence J. Carter	Pfc. William R. Newgard
Pfc. Chad E. Marsh	Pfc. Louis G. Kim
Sgt. Ed Santini	Sgt. John E. Allen
Spc. Ryan S. Dallam	Pfc. Damian Lopez-Rodriguez
Staff Sgt. Felix G. Gonzalez-Iraheta	Sgt. Andrew R. Weiss
Spc. Nicholas S. Hartge	Sgt. 1st Class Scott J. Brown
Sgt. Jean P. Medlin	Staff Sgt. Christopher Moore
Sgt. Bacilio E. Cuellar	Spc. James E. Lundin
Sgt. Shawn E. Dressler	

Community remembers Vanguard Soldier

by KIMBERLY GEARHART
Bavarian News

The Schweinfurt community gathered at the Ledward Chapel Jan. 31 to honor the memory of Pfc. David Webb, who passed away the morning of Jan. 27 at Leopoldina Hospital. Webb, whose cause of death is under investigation, was a member of Company A maintenance section, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment.

Webb joined the Vanguards in Iraq in July; his first assignment as a Soldier put him in the middle of Baghdad.



"He was a Soldier that volunteered ... during a time of war," said Lt. Col. Steven Miska, battalion commander for 1st Bn, 18th IN. "He stepped forward willingly ... to protect the ones he loved."

Maj. Andrew Lyman, company commander, recalled Webb as a hard worker, much like the rest of the maintenance section to which he was assigned.

"I think those guys put in more work in a week than I did all year," Lyman said. That hard work and dedication kept the Vanguards rolling and completing missions on to the end of their deployment.

Webb survived his combat deployment and returned to Schweinfurt with his fellow Soldiers. His death, "coupled on the heels of horrendous combat losses" is painful and hard to understand, said Miska.

But, however he died, Miska added, Webb volunteered, lived, and died as a member of an elite fighting force.

"He was a Vanguard, a Warrior of the finest caliber."

Webb is survived by his father, Stephen W. Webb.

Winter Fest Fun



Photo by Kimberly Gearhart

Schweinfurt turned out in force for the 2nd Annual Winter Fest on Conn Barracks Jan. 25. The all-day event included games for adults like Spc. David Zuback of B Company, 299th Forward Support Battalion, as well as bouncy castles, a mini merry-go-round, and crafts for the kids. The Kansas City Chiefs Cheerleaders mingled and put on a show and community agencies such as the Army Substance Abuse Program gave out goodies as well as information.

Deputy GC insources to stave off RIF, offers 44 new positions

Story and photo by MARK HEETER
Bavarian News

The dictionary just got a new word. And dozens of Schweinfurt employees just got a new lease on their jobs.

With a stroke of his pen in his office Jan. 17, U. S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt Commander Lt. Col. Anthony Haager signed 44 contracts to move jobs from contractors back into the hands of garrison employees.

"It's a paradigm shift," Haager said of the idea of using "in-sourcing" to avert a reduction in force forced termination. The affected employees faced the possibility of losing their jobs later this year.

"If you look up in-sourcing in the dictionary, it (isn't) there. Seriously," Haager said.

"It not only stopped a train wreck; it built a better train," said Justin Mitchell, deputy garrison commander.

In the USAG Schweinfurt, outsourcing and contracting work is primarily a dynamic in the Directorate of Public Works, whose director, Tim Snyder, came up with the idea and presented it to his bosses.

"It was a DPW initiative," Snyder said. Resource management and civilian personnel directors were quickly brought into the process to build the initiative, according to Haager.

"We briefed Mr. (Russell) Hall (the IMCOM-Europe region director). He approved the concept and said, 'Make it a Lean Six Sigma project,'" Snyder



Lt. Col. Anthony Haager, USAG Schweinfurt commander, signs one of 44 employment offers, as Justin Mitchell, deputy commander, looks on.

said. The scheduled closure of Leighton Barracks was set to cause the displacement of 76 workers. Many of those employees would have had rights to jobs in Schweinfurt, because as a general rule, they have more social points used in determining the priority in a RIF, according to Snyder. "It would have been mainly Schweinfurt workers," he said.

The funding for contractors has now been diverted to the garrison payroll, allowing the DPW to maintain its experienced in-house

workforce, according to the Lean Six Sigma project briefing. The move has also saved the government nearly \$2 million in what would have become severance payments.

"It's a win for the garrison. It's a win for our workforce, and it's a win for our communities," Haager said, adding that the timing of the decision – just after the announcement of the Dagger Brigade move to Grafenwoehr – was just right for his workers' morale.

"This comes at a prime opportunity time," he said.

2008 AFAP looking for volunteers, issues

by **MIRANDA MCLEAN**
Bavarian News

Army Community Service has announced that the annual Army Family Action Plan Conference will take place Feb. 26-28 at the Conn Club.

AFAP was developed by Army spouses who wanted to see changes happen in their community. Every year, members of Army communities submit issues on a local level. Issues include problems that need to be solved or changes people would like to see made.

After issues have been collected, a volunteer delegation comes together at the conference to discuss and resolve them. Since its inception in

1984, AFAP has addressed more than 600 issues and made changes not only in individual communities but Army- and Department of Defense-wide.

"It's kind of like a self-check for the community—like what are we doing right, what do we need improvements on. (AFAP) is a way for spouses and Soldiers and civilians to feel like they have input in the community. We had 113 issues come in last year (and) every single one of them has been addressed. People can see that their input is coming full circle," said Jennifer Litchfield, ACS AFAP program manager.

In order for issues to be resolved, however, community members must make their concerns

known.

"If it's not said, no one's really going to do anything about it – no one's going to know it's an issue," Litchfield explained.

There are 25 submission boxes located throughout the community with issue forms attached, making them an easy one-stop drop. The community is encouraged to submit issues for this year's conference until Feb. 22.

Besides issue submission, the other key ingredient to AFAP is volunteers. ACS is looking for people to fill a variety of positions including delegates to work on a team to resolve issues, general volunteers, and support staff of facilitators, recorder/transcribers, and issue support.

"We're aiming for between 50 -75

(volunteers) this year. Lunch is included and childcare is provided for volunteer staff," said Litchfield.

Volunteers have an opportunity to take part in the action by working with others to create solutions and witness firsthand AFAP success.

"I have been a facilitator several times...and it's an incredible process. You take issues from the community on the first day and get to see the group come together and come up with a solution... and it really works," said Michelle Mitchell, a veteran AFAP volunteer.

Be a part of change - submit an issue, volunteer, or find out more about AFAP, by calling ACS at DSN 354-6933 or CIV 09721-96-6933.

SES mascot deploys with unit



Photo by Bob Voce

Capt. John Opladen of 1st Squadron, 91st (Airborne) Cavalry, holds up Flat Schweinella (remember Flat Stanley?) while the students sing the mascot theme song in the Schweinfurt Elementary School assembly Jan. 30.

Flat Schweinella, the school's female mascot, was officially handed over to 1-91 Cavalry during the assembly to join the deployed Soldiers in Afghanistan. She is the "wife" of Flat Wilbur who recently returned from the Iraq deployment with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team.

Having these mascots deploy with the Soldiers has strengthened the partnership between the school and the Schweinfurt military community, according to Kathlyn Hofmann, SES public affairs.

Retirees get check-ups, information at health fair

Story and photo by **KIMBERLY GEARHART**

Bavarian News

Retirees and their family members who use the Wuerzburg Health and Dental Clinic for care know that the upcoming closure of Leighton Barracks means they'll have to change their habits and find new facilities for care.

The Retiree Health Fair Jan. 26 gave affected individuals a chance to catch up on their shots, get some free dental work, and develop a plan for post-closure care.

Approximately sixty retirees and dependents visited the clinic Jan. 26, where, in addition to flu and pneumonia vaccines, retirees received assistance in planning their future health care in Europe.

"The attitude here is so positive. It makes us feel special, and we're treated with dignity and respect," praised Bill Davis, a retiree who lives in Schweinfurt.

Davis and his wife Dolores were especially pleased with the opportunity to speak with the clinic's dental practitioners. Retirees in Europe are not currently able to partake in the retiree dental program offered stateside.

"We're flying to Chicago to visit family, and were going to have work done there," Dolores said.

Care offered at the health fair enabled the Davis' to save some time and money.

Although the Wuerzburg clinic will continue to treat retiree patients, the early educational push allows both patients and caregivers to prepare for the upcoming change and ensure a smooth and effective transition of care for retirees stationed in Bavaria, according to Maj. Ilse Alumbaugh, medical director for the clinic on Leighton Barracks.

The Wuerzburg Health Clinic can be reached at DSN 350-7787 or CIV 0931-889-7787 for appointments; DSN 350-7393 or CIV 0931-889-7393 for TRICARE information.



Retiree Bill Davis views dental X-rays with a doctor during the Wuerzburg Health Clinic Retiree Health Fair Jan. 26.

Whitcomb wins SMS spelling bee

Story and photo by **SANDRA WILSON**

Bavarian News

Schweinfurt Middle School students, parents, and teachers gathered in the school gym Jan. 30 for the annual spelling bee competition.

A total of fifteen students, five from each grade level, stationed themselves in their seats in front of the audience.

Students were given a few rounds of practice before the program began, then Darlene Edgar, reading and English as a Second Language teacher, opened the competition with a welcome.

In the judges seats were two representatives of the 9th Engineers: Maj. Chad Ramskugler and 1st Lt. Thierry Ngoufan. Sara Doughty and Elizabeth Cable, both new members of the community and leaders in the youth ministry of Club Beyond, were also asked to judge.

Contestants spelled their words into the microphone one-by-one, as Ellie Ramskugler, former community director of the Schweinfurt Club Beyond, pronounced each word off a designated list. It wasn't long until only two correct spellers were left: eighth-graders Austin Eubanks and

Ryan Whitcomb.

Whitcomb took first place after correctly spelling "circuit," followed by the winning word, "glacier."

All students were given the option to study from the extensive word list well beforehand. When asked how much he studied, Whitcomb said with a big smile, "Not at all."

"It's not genes, it's the environment. He's been reading since he was a little kid," said the student's father, Command Sgt. Maj. Keith Whitcomb.

Austin Eubanks was declared the alternate to compete if Whitcomb is unable to attend the next competition slated in Ramstein.



Austin Eubanks (right) spells a word during the Schweinfurt Middle School spelling bee Jan. 30, while Ryan Whitcomb anticipates his turn.

Remembering the fallen



Photo by Kimberly Gearhart

Maj. Donald Johnson pays his respects at Pfc. David Webb's memorial ceremony Jan. 31. See Page 22 for the full story.

Hitting *the* Slopes

Garmisch hosts ski, snowboard tourney

Continued From Page 4

"I ate it and did a 360, but my skis stayed on," said Irvine. "I got back on the course and finished it off. It was a long drive, but we had to put in a good show for Aviano."

Colby Fuller, the youngest member of the Aviano trio, took the men's military open snowboarding gold.

"Its fun as hell, much more fun than skiing," said Fuller, a 10-year snowboarding veteran.

Jan Denikiewicz, who took second in the civilian-classic-advanced category for men over 50, found the runs invigorating.

"Its soft snow, so it's a little ratty with ice underneath - pretty challenging," said Denikiewicz. "In our (senior citizen) category, it's really good to be alive."

The gold for the civilian classic snowboarding for men over 50 was Vernon Hodges, 56, a Garmisch local who won as the Hausberg became shrouded in mist.

"The first run was a minute and 15 seconds. The second run was done in the fog, so it was about 2:22," said Hodges. "I was pretty satisfied; I liked it."

The skies were robin blue the following day - the sun glistening on a fresh coat of snow - as the skiers got in their final runs to wrap up their championships, which, just days earlier, looked iffy.

"The (last-minute) snowfall ... basically saved the event," said Wolfgang Schultes, director of USAG Grafenwoehr Outdoor Recreation.

"The skiing God was on our side and we definitely appreciate the snow."

Overall final results were:

Snowboard

Giant slalom

Youth

· Boys 6-9—1, Samuel Groenheim 2 minutes, 41.31 seconds.

· Boys 13-17—1, Tanner Czapiewski 2:17.24.

· Girls 13-17—1, Chelsea Smithback 2:30.32.

Men

· Military open—1, Colby Fuller 1:52.02.

· Military senior (30-39)—1, Wyeth Anderson 2:08.21.

· Civilian open—1, Jason Brook 2:11.06; 2, Mathiew Childress 2:44.95.

· Civilian advanced open—1, Barry Main 1:53.44.

· Civilian advanced masters (40-49)—1, Daniel Henry 2:20.11.

· Civilian classic (50 and older)—1, Vernon Hodges 2:22.92.

Women

· Military open—1, Catherine Betts 2:30.33; 2, Marina Arias 2:49.08.

· Civilian open—1, Kenna Brock 2:44.73.

Slalom

Youth

· Boys 6-9—1, Groenheim 57.91 seconds.

· Boys 10-12—1, Felix Motem 47.61.

· Boys 13-17—1, Czapiewski 51.40.

· Boys 13-17 advanced—1, Julian Young 46.16.

· Girls 13-17 advanced—1, C. Smithback 1:02.49.

Men

· Military open—1, Ryan Niziolek 49.08.

· Military senior—1, Anderson 44.53.

· Civilian open—1, Karl Hoeh 1:12.84.

Women

· Military open—1, Betts, 1 minute, 0.98 seconds.

Skiing

Slalom

Youth

· Girls 6-9—1, Sabrina Cantu 1 minute, 9.18 seconds; 2, Katherine Gortner 1:08.98; 3, Sarah Schwartz 1:17.78.

· Girls 6-9 advanced—1, Rose Ellis 59.99; 2, Madison Farrell 1:19.80.

· Boys 6-9—1, Justin Baker 1:09.35; 2, Eric Biegeleisen 1:05.42; 3, Matteo Clement 1:09.14.

· Boys 6-9 advanced—1, Jordan Farrell 1:06.40.

· Girls 10-12—1, Sara Anderson 1:09.31; 2, Larla Halsey 1:13.67; 3, Cyera Sanchez 1:17.36.

· Boys 10-12—1, Alberto Cantu 59.87; 2, Bradley Baker 1:04.32; 3, Logan Lakos 1:07.29.

· Boys 10-12 advanced—1, Mark Brown; 2, Laurel Moten 56.95; 3, Patrick Farrell 1:00.14.

· Girls 13-17—1, Anna Wanisch 56.54; 2, Katharina Doyle 58.73.

· Girls 13-17 advanced—1, Ania Denikiewicz 48.89; 2, Brianna Brown 50.28; 3, C. Smithback 56.87.

· Boys 13-17—1, Matthew Roberts 1:01.56; 2, Marcus Lakos 1:04.49; 3, Alexys Morales 1:07.09.

· Boys 13-17 advanced—1, Alex Denikiewicz 46.46; 2, Sebby Smithback 46.73; 3, Louis Baker 47.98.

Men

· Military seniors advanced (30-39)—1, Wyeth Anderson 52.96; 2, Peter Gortner 53.40; 3, Scott Chelidona 53.93.

· Civilian seniors advanced—1, Gardner Willgoose 45.85.

· Military masters (40-49)—1, Troy Lundquist 59.76; 2, Robert Doyle 1:02.25; 3, Richard Roberts 1:04.64.

· Military masters advanced—1, Michael Farrell 50.96; 2, Pete Donnelly 53.96.

· Civilian masters (40-49)—1, David Goddard 56.46; 2, Gerry Biegeliesen 1:01.38; 3, Mark Clement 1:01.74.

· Civilian masters advanced—1, Corbynn Abramson 45.38; 2, Larry Baker 49.94; 3, Jack Smithback 54.55.

· Civilian classic advanced (50 and older)—1, Leigh Plowman 48.04; 2, Jan Denkwitz 55.61; 3, Jim Goodwin 1:12.33.

Women

· Civilian open—1, Claudia Koch 1:07.33.

· Civilian seniors (30-39)—1, Debra Weeks 1:17.88.

· Civilian seniors advanced—1, Christa Ellis 51.43; 2, Undine Potterson 1:01.43.

· Civilian masters (40-49)—1, Jodeen Brown



Photo by John Reese

Dimitrios Xadzitulos tears down the hill to make up for a rocky start at the 2008 U.S. Forces Europe Ski and Snowboard Championships.

1:08.75.

· Civilian masters advanced—1, Wendy Farrell 57.03; 2, Ewa Denikiewicz 57.06; 3, Mary Mitchell 59.46.

Giant slalom

Youth

· Girls 6-9 —1, Schwartz 2 minutes, 37.62 seconds; 2, Gortner 2:44.77; 3, Madison Czelusta 2:45.73.

· Girls 6-9 advanced—1, M. Farrell 2:23.55.

· Boys' 6-9 years—1, M. Clement 2:02.82; 2, E. Biegeleisen 2:05.82; 3, Miles Simpson 2:18.58.

· Boys 6-9 advanced—1, J. Farrell 2:07.81.

· Girls 10-12—1, Anna Kyle 2:20.39; 2, Anderson 2:21.68; 3, Halsey 2:23.38.

· Boys 10-12—1, Cantu 1:48.21; 2, L. Lakos 2:00.66; 3, B. Baker, 2:11.28.

· Boys 10-12 advanced—1, M. Brown 1:48.55; 2, P. Farrell 1:50.39.

· Girls 13-17—1, K. Doyle 1:43.81; 2, Wenisch 1:47.78; 3, Erin Riley 1:48.32.

· Girls 13-17 advanced—1, Kristin Ellis 1:30.95; 2, C. Smithback 1:42.43.

· Boys 13-17—1, Tyler Brown 1:41.55; 2, Philip Rhodes 1:48.78; 3, Ma. Lakos 1:57.93.

· Boys 13-17 advanced—1, Baker 1:28.19; 2, S. Smithback 1:28.71; 3, A. Denikiewicz 1:29.05.

Men

· Civilian open—1, Kyle Helvey 2:01.75; 2, K. Hoeh 2:22.59; 3, Zachary Hoeh 2:53.05.

· Civilian open advanced—1, Adam Johnson 1:28.71.

· Military seniors (30-39)—1, Mark Rieker 1:46.23; 2, Daniel Malatesta 1:50.12; 3, Dennis

Schmidt 2:52.47.

· Military seniors advanced—1, Chelidona 1:39.35; 2, Gortner 1:40.19; 3, W. Anderson 1:40.25.

· Civilian seniors (30-39)—1, Keith Kiesner 1:40.63.

· Civilian seniors advanced—1, Willgoose 1:25.21; 2, David McKendree 2:22.70.

· Military masters (40-49)—1, Lundquist 1:44.66; 2, Mi. Lakos 1:52.32; 3, R. Doyle 1:53.41.

· Military masters advanced—1, Mark Marchant 1:31.54; 2, M. Farrell 1:41.52; 3, Pete Donnelly 1:44.61.

· Civilian masters (30-34)—1, Scott Saack 1:42.80; 2, G. Biegeleisen 1:50.00; 3, M. Clement 1:55.05.

· Civilian masters advanced—1, Abramson 1:26.14; 2, La. Baker 1:31.00; 3, J. Smithback 1:36.42.

· Civilian classic (50 and older)—1, Thomas Gill 1:01.22.

· Civilian classic advanced—1, Plowman 1:30.98; 2, J. Denkwitz 1:40.46; 3, Goodwin 2:05.93.

Women

· Civilian open advanced—1, Sabrina Biauweit 1:38.49.

· Civilian seniors (30-39)—1, Jutta Anderson 1:48.85.

· Civilian seniors advanced—1, Potterson 1:55.03.

· Civilian masters (40-49)—1, Brown 2:00.03.

· Civilian masters advanced—1, W. Farrell 1:47.87; 2, Mitchell 1:51.47.

CYS wrestling meet attracts youth from throughout Europe



Chin up!

Lucas Markos, 9, disappointed after a lost match (at left), receives a pep talk (at right) from dad 1st Sgt. Pete Markos of Grafenwoehr during a meet at the Hill Top Gym in Vilseck Jan. 26.

Photos by Paula Guzman



Bavarian News named No. 1

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Individual first place wins were also awarded to the Bavarian News editor Adriane Foss for the best news and sports articles. Another first place win was awarded to the newspaper for its annual Welcome to Bavaria edition, produced by assistant editor Katie Cowart.

Also recognized were the U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach command information chief Jim Hughes for second place in the sports article category; Ansbach public affairs specialist Ronald H. Toland Jr. for third place (tie) in the features category; and third place to U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt for the Schweinfurt Dispatch in the Web-based publication category.

First place awardees will be forwarded to the Department of the Army Public Affairs for consideration in the Army-wide competition.

"We're very excited to compete at the Army-wide level," said Foss. "This is a confirmation of the hard work that we put into producing each issue of the newspaper.

"But it's not just for us," she said. "This is a win for the community members in our footprint. We want them to take pride in their newspaper, to know that they've got a quality product that they can pick up every other week.

"And we want them to interact more with the newspaper staff—let us know what they want to read about, write letters to the editor, inform us of events going on in the community," said Foss.

The Keith L. Ware competition recognizes the journalistic excellence of Army military and civilian journalists. The competition is named in memory of Maj. Gen. Keith L.

Ware, a former Army chief of public affairs. Ware received the Medal of Honor in World War II and was killed while commanding the 1st Infantry Division in Vietnam in 1968.

"Winning anything in the Keith L. Ware competition is like getting a vote of confidence that we are doing a good job and getting good information out there," said Cowart.

"We, as a staff, work so hard to find out what's going on in the community and what's important to everyone who reads the paper, even when that means working odd hours to cover events," she said.

"My favorite part of putting out the paper is the feedback from our readers, or when someone asks for a copy of the new issue just as I'm placing it in the (delivery) bins," said Cowart. "It's nice to know that readers are anxious for the next issue, or when they tell you they have a favorite section. It's always great to get suggestions on what the reader wants to see in a following issue, too, because it keeps us on track and in tune to what we need to be doing.

"I think that the Bavarian News does make a positive impact on the community by increasing awareness in general and educating people," she said. "We do our best to get good, informative articles in each issue that are pertinent to what the majority of the community is going through, such as deployment or housing issues. But, we also want to make sure we get that entertainment factor in there, too."

The 2008 KLV winners are:
Moss-Holland Civilian Journalist of the Year

1st Place: Susan Huseman - USAG Stuttgart
2nd Place: Art McQueen - USAG Heidelberg

Tabloid-Format Newspaper

1st Place: Bavarian News - USAG Grafenwoehr
2nd Place: Herald Union - USAG Wiesbaden
3rd Place: Herald Post - USAG Heidelberg

Magazine-Format Publication

1st Place: Benelux Edge - USAG Benelux

News Article

1st Place: Adriane Foss - USAG Grafenwoehr
2nd Place: Karl Weisel - USAG Wiesbaden
3rd Place: Dave Melancon - USAG Heidelberg

Feature Article

1st Place: Kelli Bland - USAG Heidelberg
2nd Place: Chrystal Smith - USAG Wiesbaden
3rd Place (tie): Art McQueen - USAG Heidelberg; Ronald Toland - USAG Ansbach

Commentary

1st Place: Susan Huseman - USAG Stuttgart
2nd Place: Art McQueen - USAG Heidelberg

Sports Article

1st Place: Adriane Foss - USAG Grafenwoehr
2nd Place: Jim Hughes - USAG Ansbach
3rd Place: Karl Weisel - USAG Wiesbaden

Story Series

1st Place: Susan Huseman - USAG Stuttgart
2nd Place: Brandon Beach - USAG Stuttgart

Single/Stand-Alone Photograph

1st Place: Brandon Beach - USAG

Stuttgart

2nd Place: Juan Meléndez - USAG Heidelberg
3rd Place: Dave Melancon - USAG Heidelberg

Photojournalism

1st Place: Art McQueen - USAG Heidelberg
2nd Place: Gary Kieffer - USAG Vicenza
3rd Place: Laura Kreider - USAG Vicenza

Art/Graphics in Support of a Publication

1st Place: Art McQueen - USAG Heidelberg

Contribution by Stringer (Writer)

1st Place: Amy Buehning-Sturm - USAG Darmstadt
2nd Place: Ute Wolf - USAG Hessen
3rd Place: Carole Mann - USAG Wiesbaden

Contribution by Stringer (Photographer)

1st Place: Gene Knudsen - USAG Heidelberg
2nd Place: Jennifer Stewart - USAG Vicenza
3rd Place: Sgt. First Class Brad Polensky - USAG Vicenza

Special Achievement in Print Media

1st Place: Bavarian News - USAG Grafenwoehr
2nd Place: The Citizen - USAG Stuttgart

Web-based Publication

1st Place: Herald Post - USAG Heidelberg
2nd Place: Herald Union - USAG Wiesbaden
3rd Place: Schweinfurt Dispatch - USAG Schweinfurt

Soldiers to receive retroactive pay this month

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where we're now frankly in about the 70th or 80th percentile of similarly educated American earners," Carr said.

He noted that the most recent raise, by virtue of exceeding the current inflation rate, will increase servicemember recipients' purchasing power.

Pentagon Press Secretary Geoff Morrell said the retroactive payments ensure "that our forces are compensated commensurate to their service and sacrifice." In a news conference at the Pentagon Jan. 29, Morrell noted that troops will benefit in various ways by provisions codified in the act.

"It lets us resume offering bonuses to new recruits and re-enlisting troops," he said. The act also includes funding to improve health care and benefits for wounded troops and veterans.

The bill became law just a week before the next budget cycle begins as Bush sends his fiscal 2009 request to Capitol Hill.

That budget proposal, along with a request for \$70 billion in emergency war spending, was delivered to Congress Feb. 3.

Altering thought patterns may aid PTSD sufferers

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most of the time, the situation improves with time.

If it doesn't, then it may be time to seek professional help.

People who experience a frightening, traumatic event—such as many do during war—often react with heightened levels of arousal and fear. Memories of the event are painful, and may trigger a fear response similar to that caused by the original event.

"It's normal" and adaptive to experience these heightened fear responses, said social work care manager Rick Thompson. "But most people, over a period of time, usually around three months, get back to normal."

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, or PTSD, occurs when a person gets "stuck" in the grip of that fear. The cause, though not completely

understood, appears to be both neurobiological—a result of chemical reactions in the brain—and also related to the way the patient thinks.

The chemical aspect of the disorder may be treatable with medications, but the thought processes that foster and perpetuate the disorder are often difficult to change.

"A Soldier thinking that their symptoms are related to weakness: That's the kind of belief that isn't going to be helpful, and tends to keep you stuck," Thompson said.

PTSD symptoms and some minor Traumatic Brain Injury (mTBI) symptoms overlap, and tests designed to uncover one, such as the Automated Neurobiological Assessment Metrics for mTBI, often pick up on Soldiers suffering from the other, according to Lt. Col. Daniel Duecker, Schweinfurt health clinic commander.

To further complicate matters, many psychological disorders, such as PTSD or major depression, have overlapping symptoms, and making the correct diagnosis becomes complicated.

"With PTSD, you have to have some sort of scary event history, and there has to be some sort of re-experiencing symptoms," Thompson said.

This re-experiencing most often occurs as intrusive memories.

"With some people it's flashbacks, but it's not all that common. With a lot of people, it's nightmares ... That symptom category is something that does not happen with mTBI or depression," Thompson explained.

Seeking treatment for PTSD has been somewhat stigmatized over the years, but the military community is changing. Programs such as Battlemind Training have been worked into

reintegration schedules, and screening for PTSD is conducted as well.

"The Battlemind program helps reframe the types of training and thinking that were required for Soldier survivability in a war zone" in a way that will help the Soldier cope with life outside of the war zone, Thompson explained.

For example, in a war zone, emotional suppression may be necessary in dangerous situations.

Continuing to deny expression can be maladaptive once outside of the war zone, causing the Soldier to become detached or seem uncaring.

This can lead to problems in coping, and exacerbate any existing post-traumatic reactions. Altering those thought patterns is one step toward avoiding or healing PTSD.

The Schweinfurt Mental Health Clinic can be reached by calling CIV 09721-96-6231.

Troops eligible for free online tax filing

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on the Pentagon's tax council that coordinated the program, Johnson explained.

Free tax-filing assistance services are open to active-duty and reserve component service members, as well as family members and military retirees, Johnson said.

Participants should bring their military-issued identification cards, W-2 Wage and Earnings statements, and any other forms or documents required for tax filing, Johnson said.

People who believe they may be eligible for tax refunds also should bring their bank account numbers if they'd like the refund direct-deposited into a specific account, Johnson pointed out.

More complicated tax-preparation work involving itemizing of returns for added tax deductions also can be processed for free, although these returns normally require more documentation, he said.

Military members receive many tax benefits, Johnson pointed out. For example, all allowances, including housing, meals, family separation, and

others, are tax-exempt, he said, as is all military pay for enlisted military members deployed in overseas combat zones.

Officers deployed in combat zones, he added, can exclude about \$7,000 of their monthly pay for federal taxes.

Service members deployed to combat zones have six months to file their taxes after departing the area, Johnson noted.

Another tax-related benefit for servicemembers deployed to overseas combat zones is the Savings Deposit Program, Johnson said. Under SDP, eligible service members can contribute up to \$10,000 into their savings accounts while they're deployed and earn a government-guaranteed 10-percent return on their money, he explained.

"You're not going to beat that," Johnson said of the SDP program.

People with questions about the military's tax filing assistance program can visit the Military OneSource Web site or their installation tax center, he said.

Crown Jewel Bazaar nets \$.5M in sales, spouses clubs to split \$72K

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efforts. She said both groups worked very hard to pull together the massive logistical undertaking that results in each year's bazaar.

Grafenwoehr's president, Michelle McLaughlin, seconded that sentiment. She said coordinating the bazaar is practically year-round work, beginning in the spring, and takes hundreds of volunteer hours.

McLaughlin said this year's event ran smoothly because club members—many of whom had just arrived at the start of last year's bazaar—understood their roles better this year, which was only the second time the Grafenwoehr and Vilseck clubs held a joint bazaar.

McLaughlin also said increased income during deployments usually play a role in increased sales.

Although the event netted \$431,869, most of which was vendor sales, the club will split \$72,346 in profits—still a significant increase

from last year's club profits of \$44,000 (\$22,000 going to each club).

Profits from the bazaar will be funneled back into the community in the form of college scholarships and other club-approved donations.

Isenhower said the clubs have earmarked \$35,000 in scholarships for high school students and VCSC set aside another \$5,000 for eligible military spouses who are pursuing graduate or undergraduate degrees.

Other groups that have received donations include the schools, libraries, Parent Teacher School Association, and Boy and Girl Scouts, said McLaughlin.

"We've purchased wrestling, basketball, cheerleading, volleyball, football, and Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps uniforms, supported Parent-2-Parent workshops, helped pay for JROTC balls ..." she said.

"We're here to support the community, help the community grow stronger," said Isenhower. "That was our theme this year—Growing

Stronger. And I believe we've done that with the increased bazaar sales."

Isenhower and McLaughlin agreed that while the charitable donations are one of the clubs' main focuses, the social aspects are not lacking.

"We have a bowling group, dining-out group, Lunch Bunch, scrapbooking, bunco, and an outdoor adventure group," said Isenhower. "These are ways we have for people to get to know one another and share common interests.

McLaughlin called the club a sisterhood and encouraged community members to join.

"It's an excellent way to meet people, build new relationships, and network. And membership is half off the usual \$20 through May."

For more information on joining the spouses club, contact Isenhower in Vilseck at CIV 09662-416818 or vcscmail1@yahoo.com or McLaughlin in Grafenwoehr at gcscmembership@yahoo.com or heath_and_michelle@yahoo.com.