

Bavarian News

Vol 4. Nr. 1

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

January 16, 2008



SPORTS PAGE

DON'T MISS THE 2008 SKI & SNOWBOARD CHAMPIONSHIP FEB. 2-3 AT GARMISCH. REGISTER ONLINE TODAY!

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HOHENFELS

CDC, SAS PARTNERSHIP OFFERS FAMILY FUN ON FRIDAYS. COME OUT AND ENJOY GAME AND MOVIE NIGHTS

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Dagger Brigade relocating to Grafenwoehr by summer

Story and photo by MARK HEETER
Bavarian News

U.S. Army Europe officials have directed the relocation of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, known as the Dagger Brigade, from Schweinfurt to Grafenwoehr, beginning in early 2008, according to a Jan. 10 USAREUR news release.

"The move will begin this month in order to take advantage of the normal personnel assignment cycle," following the brigade's recent deployment, according to the release.

Meanwhile, the 15th Engineer Battalion and its three companies, originally scheduled to be created in Grafenwoehr, will be established in Schweinfurt during the current fiscal year.

Decision to move

"Following the Dagger Brigade's recent deployment, the USAREUR commanding general, Gen. David McKiernan directed an analysis of relocating the brigade to Grafenwoehr. Upon review, he decided to move the brigade so that those Soldiers would have immediate access to the largest and best training facilities in Europe," according to the release.

"Support for the Global War on Terror

is our number one priority and I believe that relocating the 2/1 ID takes advantage of the absolute best brigade combat team facilities we have anywhere in Europe for this unit to reset, train, and prepare for future missions. This is the right thing to do," McKiernan stated in the release.

Two-phase move

Col. J.B. Burton, Dagger Brigade commander, announced to his Soldiers and families Thursday the units that are scheduled to execute the first of two planned phases.

The brigade headquarters; 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment; 1st Battalion, 77th Armor Regiment; the brigade's separate companies; and select service-and-support elements from the 299th Forward Support Battalion are expected to be in Grafenwoehr by mid-summer.

The remainder of the brigade will relocate to Grafenwoehr as space becomes available over the next two years, according to the release.

"We have begun a very hard look at the requirements at the far end of this movement, to ensure that the capacity is available to base Soldiers and families

See GRAF Page 15



Col. J.B. Burton answers reporters' questions at a press conference at Dagger Brigade Headquarters on Conn Barracks Jan. 9.

"There's a lot of hard work and a lot of hard analysis yet to be done ..."

Brigade Commander
Col. J.B. Burton

NCOA S-4 wins supply excellence award

7th Army JMTC Public Affairs news release

The S-4 shop at the 7th Army Noncommissioned Officers Academy received top honors Jan. 7 as they accepted the U.S. Army Europe's Supply Excellence award.

The Supply Excellence Awards program was designed to promote logistic readiness, command supply discipline and recognize individuals and groups for outstanding performances within their field. The SEA program was conceived in 1984 during the Total Army Worldwide Supply Conference. The Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics tasked the U.S. Army Quartermaster Center and School to assist in researching and development of a program that would increase public awareness of supply excellence and could be used as a management tool for system standardization.

This was the first time the NCO Academy had entered the competition.

Each office undergoes a rigorous inspection process to determine who will be named the best of the

best. In the battalion-level category the NCO Academy was named the best supply office in JMTC then went on to compete and win at the USAREUR level.

From here the S-4 shop will go forward in the competition to compete at the Army-wide level. The winner of the Army-wide competition will be flown to Washington, D.C., to accept the award.

Members of the S-4 staff said this victory was achieved through collaborative effort and hard work by all members in the office.

"I attribute our winning this honor to everybody's willingness to get along and dedication to the job," said Staff Sgt. Gary Welborn the S-4 supply sergeant. "It takes 100 percent attention to what you are doing and knowing your job."

See NCOA Page 15

NCO Academy S-4 Soldiers Staff Sgt. Gary Welborn (left) and Sgt. William Coy discuss upcoming supply requirements.



Photo by Pfc. Jerry Wilson

Plan early for painless pet travel

Story and photo by SANDRA WILSON
Bavarian News

Have you been dreading traveling by plane with your pet, wondering if poor Fido or Socks will make it to your destination without emotional damage?

In truth, traveling "tends to be much more stressful for owners than for pets," said Dr. (Maj.) Michelle Goodnight, veterinarian at the Schweinfurt Vet Clinic on Conn Barracks.

"Animals tend to be really adaptable, and they are really resilient," she said, in order to quell some of the fears of first-time pet-owning travelers.

But to make the trip as comfortable as possible with the least amount of complications, there are detailed steps the owner must take well in advance of the departure.

The first step consists of making sure vaccinations are up-to-date. The rabies vaccine is the most important and must be more than 30 days old, but it also

See PLAN AHEAD Page 15



Dr. (Maj.) Michelle Goodnight (right), veterinarian at the clinic on Conn Barracks, listens to Gin's heartbeat. Owner, Ines Woodbenny, holds and calms the dog during the checkup.

mTBI program helping identify affected troops

by KIMBERLY GEARHART
Bavarian News

The following article is the first in a three-part series.

Mild traumatic brain injury, or mTBI, has been called the signature wound of the war on terror. Identifying and treating that injury has become a priority for Army medical commands the world over.

A pilot mTBI testing program, utilizing Automated Neuropsychological Assessment Metrics, has been developed to identify affected Soldiers. In Schweinfurt, the first ever post-deployment screenings are being conducted as part of the reintegration process for Dagger Soldiers.

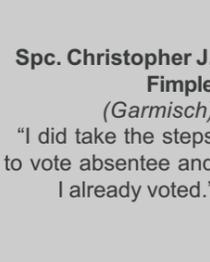
See PILOT Page 15

Q&A

Are you *voting* in this year's *election*?



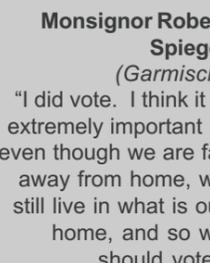
Spc. Elbert Shiver
(Garmisch)
"Yes, I'm going to vote in this year's election. I'm from Florida so I've already sent in my absentee ballot."



Spc. Christopher J. Fimple
(Garmisch)
"I did take the steps to vote absentee and I already voted."



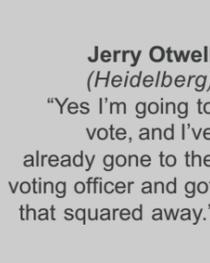
Staff Sgt. Julia Butler
(Vilseck)
"Yes, I did all the paperwork at the post office and sent it in. I haven't received anything back, but I'm ready, willing and able!"



Monsignor Robert Spiegel
(Garmisch)
"I did vote. I think it is extremely important ... even though we are far away from home, we still live in what is our home, and so we should vote."



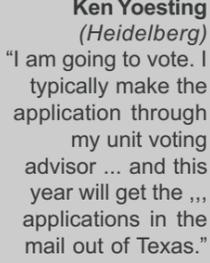
Nick Harrold
(Garmisch)
"Yes, I'm voting. Do you want to know who I'm going to vote for? Straight Republican, that's my ticket!"



Jerry Otwell
(Heidelberg)
"Yes I'm going to vote, and I've already gone to the voting officer and got that squared away."



Susan Ussery
(Garmisch)
"Yes, I have my voter registration from the state of Texas and just renewed it, so I'm ready to go."



Ken Yoesting
(Heidelberg)
"I am going to vote. I typically make the application through my unit voting advisor ... and this year will get the ... applications in the mail out of Texas."



Defense secretary reflects on 2007, sends message to troops

Citing the many gains achieved by the military over the past year, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates thanked America's men and women in uniform for their service in a Dec. 20 holiday message.

The holidays offer a special time to remember our many blessings as Americans — perhaps chief among them are the dedicated Soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines who protect our nation," Gates wrote in his message.

"Since assuming this post a year ago, I have been awed and humbled by our men and women in uniform who are carving for themselves a noble place in American history."

Gates noted that the (2007) year began with the deployment of tens of thousands of additional troops to Iraq in a concerted effort to reduce violence.

Since then, violence has declined sharply and former enemy strongholds are being transformed into communities of hope and possibility, he noted.

"While it is premature to declare victory, we must protect our hard-earned and hard-fought gains and redouble efforts to defend our long-

term interests in this region," he wrote.

Significant progress has also been made this year in Afghanistan, where the United States and its allies have inflicted heavy losses on the Taliban, launched a comprehensive, nationwide reconstruction effort, and strengthened civic institutions, Gates said.

In the past year, the Defense Department also began expanding the Army and Marine Corps to relieve stress on the force, Gates noted.

Mobilization policies have been revamped to provide more stability and predictability for National Guard and Reserve troops, mine-resistant ambush-protected vehicles became the military's highest acquisition priority, and the department has begun to fix the problems with outpatient medical care for wounded troops, he said.

"At home and abroad, I have met with small groups of service men and women — from junior enlisted to field grade officers, from active duty to Guard and Reserve — to hear their questions, concerns, and aspirations unvarnished and uncensored," Gates wrote.

"I am grateful for their candor, their questions — and their advice. These exchanges have

frequently shaped my thinking and influenced my decisions on everything from day-to-day military operations to enhancing the quality of life for servicemembers and their families."

The United States is now in its seventh year of war, and troops and their families are sacrificing much, Gates noted.

"This (past) holiday season, many of those in uniform are on repeat deployments or have had their tours extended," he wrote.

"Many will miss midnight Mass or have already missed Hanukkah's Festival of Lights. Many will not hear the squeals of delight from their children on Christmas morning. Many will sing neither carols nor hymns.

"Instead, they serve halfway around the world to honor a pledge they made to the country they love," Gates said.

"Please keep our troops in your thoughts and may God forever bless them and this wonderful nation we call home."

Dr. Robert M. Gates
United States Defense Secretary

“While it is premature to declare victory, we must protect our hard-earned and hard-fought gains and redouble efforts to defend our long-term interest in this region.”

Mom yearns for adult kids to 'live in her village' despite military moves



JACKIE ECKHART
On the Homefront

rarely made on the Little Miami River. So I do not live in my parent's village.

My mother, who left her own mother to follow an Air Force pilot for 25 years, understands this. But my father, the pilot, does not. He was furious with me when we got orders to Japan several years ago. He could hardly look me in the eye during our last visit before going overseas.

"What is his problem?" I asked my mother. "He doesn't want you to go. You'll be so far away. He will miss the kids. They'll grow up so much while you are over there."

"But we have to go," I said. "He knows that. Didn't he do exactly the same thing to his parents?"

I couldn't understand why my father was angry that we were simply following in his footsteps. I couldn't see why he was surprised. What did he ever do but teach us how to leave home? He set the pattern. And we followed it. Children leave home. Parents stay in the village.

My children already have this idea. Their plans are all about leaving. Which is good. Heaven knows, I want them to leave and take their wet towels with them.

Having my children leave me is not my trouble.

What troubles me is that there aren't any plans on how to get my kids back here after they grow up to be nice people. They've given me no definite commitment. Just that vague promise to grow up in my village — a promise I should have gotten in writing. Even if the kid couldn't write at the time.

I am afraid that with our many moves I, too, am inadvertently teaching my daughter and my sons how to leave me. And worse, how to stay gone. I know that children and parents who live in the same village get to spend all their holidays together without a 10-hour drive between them. I know they exchange favors across the generations. I know they drive each other absolutely berserk. Maybe I'd like that.

So when my children go to sleep tonight, I will creep into their rooms and whisper into the soft curves of their ears, "Stay with us. Stay with us always. Live in our village. Because we like you. And calling four times a day is bound to be mighty expensive for a little old lady like me."

A 19-year military spouse, Jacey Eckhart is a nationally syndicated columnist with CinCHouse.com and the host of "The Jacey Eckhart Show for Military Families."

In the first 24 hours after we got home from Ohio, my mother called on four separate occasions. *Four.*

Mother is usually a rational woman. But first she wanted to make sure we arrived safely. Second, she called to discuss further plans for our summer vacation.

Third, she called to let me know that Toddler Pete left his shoe under her desk. Finally, she called to tell me just one more thing that I should put in a speech I'm giving.

I'm not complaining. Anyone who calls you that much after they just spent four days with you must like you quite a lot.

Those calls tell me that she feels about me the same way that I feel about her — that we both wish we lived in the same village.

Not that Americans actually live in villages. But we have called it that ever since my daughter was a little girl. Kelsey used to say that when she grew up, she was going to live in my village. Maybe next door. Maybe across the street. But definitely In. My. Village.

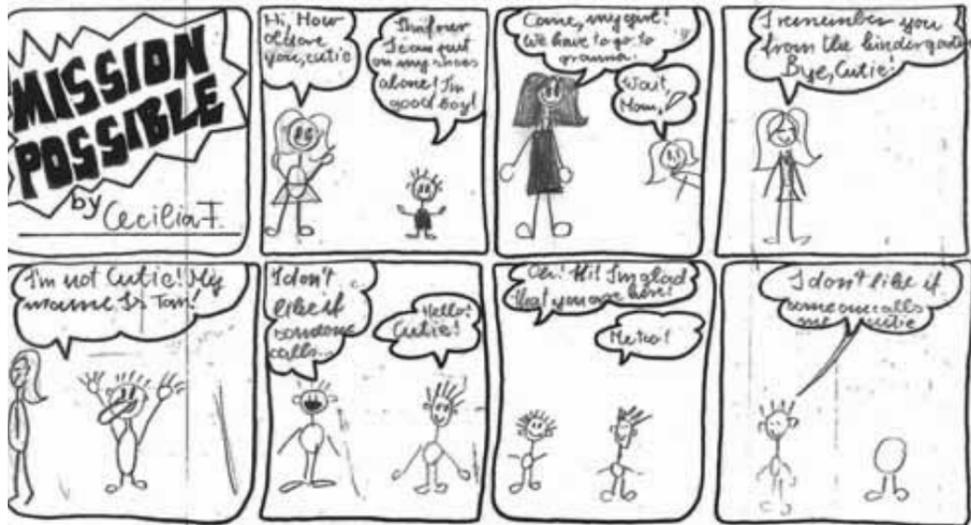
"Like Aunt Mary," Kelsey said. "Not like you. You live too far away from your mother."

I know that. I live too far away from my father, too. Which pierces me with the passing of every mile marker on Interstate 70. It is when I am in their house for more than a day or two that we each glimpse what our lives might have been like if I did not live hundreds of miles away.

I'd be able to meet my grandma for coffee. I'd be able to deposit Pete for an hour or two while I skipped off to write. I could mooch off them for food and use up all their hot water.

And they would kind of like it. Because they think I'm cute. It's a genetic thing.

The problem is that I am crazy in love with this man who requires the presence of an ocean to make his living. Amphibious landings are



Cartoon by Cecilia Fodor
Grafenwoehr Elementary School

Bavarian News

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

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Local students win P2 contest

Special to the Bavarian News

The Pollution Prevention (P2) Program finally has a logo!

Vilseck High School students were invited to participate in an art contest organized by the Environmental Division last month.

The contest aimed at two goals. The first one was to introduce an unconventional approach towards P2 for the younger members of the community.

The second goal was to obtain a logo for the future work of the P2 program. The theme 'P2 improves life at the USAG Grafenwoehr' had to be presented in a poster and a logo.

With the support of teachers Mr. Anglim and Ms. Hasley, 41 students

submitted their art work. All reflected a keen understanding of pollution and its consequences.

The entries were then judged by a six-member jury representing various community groups (Command Group, Public Affairs, Range Control, Vilseck High School, ITAM, and Environmental Division).

The judging criteria included:
 ■ overall impression
 ■ effectiveness in conveying the theme
 ■ artistic merit, and
 ■ recognition value of the logo.

To meet the diversity and number of entries, two categories were set up, grouping grades nine and 10 in one category and grades 11 and 12 into the other.

Seven winners received prizes ranging from \$20 to \$50 in monetary value.

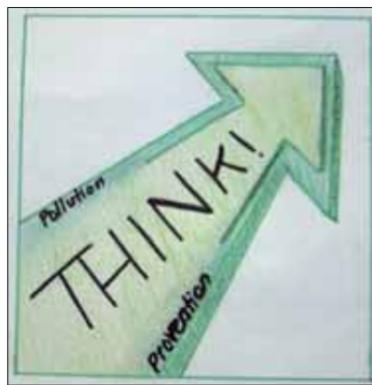
Category 11/12 winners are:

- 1st place: Michelle Morris
- 2nd place: Tamaria Hollis
- 3rd place: Courtney Corder
- 3rd place: Ramon Ramirez

Category 9/10 winners are:

- 1st place: Alyssa Massie (overall winner, see logo at right)
- 2nd place: Paul Linka
- 3rd place: Ivelisse Montanez

For information about the P2 Program, contact:
Barb van der Smissen
 Pollution Prevention Manager,
 DPW,EMO
barb.vandersmissen@eur.army.mil
 DSN 475-6859 / CIV 09641-83-6859



The new Pollution Prevention Program logo, designed by Vilseck High School's Alyssa Massie.

Spotlight on Education



Name: Angela Oliverson

What grade / subject do you teach? Art to all students at Schweinfurt Elementary School

Hometown: Austin, Texas

How long have you been a teacher? 4 years

What do you like best about teaching? I really like sharing my love of art with the kids, and I love teaching them not just about how to make pretty things but what you can do with art. Anyone can be a good artist.

What advice can you give students to help them succeed in school? Try your best. Don't give up. Listen to your teacher when they give you advice or direction because there's a reason.

Scholarships for Military Children application deadline is Feb. 20

by CAROLINE WILLIAMS
 Defense Commissary Agency

Are you digging under the sofa cushions for misplaced change and rolling coins from your money jar to help pay for college tuition?

Given the soaring costs of higher education, you certainly aren't alone. Perhaps a \$1,500 scholarship could help?

Applications for the 2008 Scholarships for Military Children Program must be turned in to a commissary by close of business Feb. 20.

They are available in commissaries worldwide or online through a link at <http://www.commissaries.com> and directly at <http://www.militaryscholar.org>, where they can be filled out on the computer and printed, or printed and filled out by hand. At least one scholarship will be awarded at every commissary location with qualified applicants.

The scholarship program kicked off in 2001 and, according to agency officials, has awarded more than \$5.5 million dollars in scholarships to 3,532 of the best and brightest children of military families.

Retired Marine Lt. Col. Fred Thomas's son Mark earned a

scholarship in 2001. He said he's still paying for his son's undergraduate tuition, but every scholarship helps.

"[This scholarship] was one more piece that allowed my son to attend a top university and excel by not having to work his way through," Thomas explained.

Mark posted a 3.96 grade point average upon graduating from the University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Ind., with a Bachelor of Arts in theology, music and philosophy.

He is presently a Senator Jacob K. Javits Fellow at Boston College, Mass., working on a doctorate of philosophy in religion.

The scholarship program is open to unmarried children under the age of 21 (23 if enrolled in school) of active-duty, Reserve, Guard and retired military personnel. Eligibility will be determined using the Defense

Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System database.

Applicants should ensure that they, as well as their sponsor, are currently enrolled in the DEERS database and that they have a current ID card. All applicants must be U.S. citizens.

The applicant must be planning to attend, or already attending, an accredited college or university full-time in the fall term of 2008.

Students at community or junior colleges must be enrolled in a program of studies designed to transfer directly into a four-year program.

"Applications must be in the store by close of business Feb. 20," said Edna Hoogewind, DeCA's scholarship program liaison, "either by hand or mail." If you are not hand-delivering your application, Hoogewind recommends using a

“ This scholarship was one more piece that allowed my son to attend a top university and excel by not having to work his way through. ”

Lt. Col. (ret.) Fred Thomas
 Son attended Notre Dame

Golfing, bowling discounts offered to Soldiers, families impacted by extended deployments

IMCOM-E news release

Soldiers who have served on or are serving on extended deployments – 15 months or longer – and their families are eligible for discounts at Installation Management Command-Europe bowling centers and golf courses.

The offer, which started Jan. 1, provides eligible participants a \$10 discount on daily green fees or golf

lessons, along with a \$1-per-game bowling reduction.

"We are providing this service as a social outlet, to relieve stress during this time of high operational tempo, especially for those members who served downrange longer than a year," said Blanche Ostrosky of IMCOM-Europe's Morale, Welfare and Recreation Division.

Soldiers can take advantage of the offer for up to 30 days of their return,

while the discounts run through Sept. 30, 2008, for family members, as their sponsors may not be returning for several months.

To ensure the program is available to the largest number of patrons possible, the bowling discount is limited to three games at any one time.

However, the discount has been extended to include bowling leagues and tournaments held specifically for

returning troops or family members whose Soldier is still deployed.

"If the league runs six or eight weeks, the Soldier's eligibility will be extended past the established month deadline," Ostrosky said.

She added that eligible patrons are encouraged to carry documentation to verify their eligibility for the discount in the event is requested from MWR staff, such as a copy of orders, travel claim, or other documentation.



HEALTHY EMPOWERMENT BY DEMETRIUS WILLIS

Dear Demetrius,
 My husband and I get vegetables in on a daily basis and have tried to instill the importance of eating them in our children.

However, since starting school my son has begun to say "vegetables are gross." I think he is getting this from his classmates.

What recommendations do you

have for "sneaking" vegetables into his food?

"Willing to do What it Takes"
 Nadia

Dear Nadia,
 I understand where you are coming from. Many of us can remember when we ourselves refused vegetables. I personally

remember falling asleep at the table when told I couldn't move until I cleaned my plate.

To answer your questions I could provide you with tips like offering raw veggies with seasoning and a little dip, adding peas to favorites like mac'n cheese, adding fresh spinach to lasagna, meatloaf and sandwiches. Try the rule that they have to take two bites. Make veggie figures that they can eat. I could also recommend books on how to puree veggies and make some of your favorite dishes.

However, I think you're already on the right path by instilling the importance of eating vegetables in your children. Allow your children

to understand the benefits of what they are eating. Help them focus on what they do health-wise, and not just how they taste. Do not allow vegetables to be a battleground.

Finally, another solution is to allow kids to have their own small garden, where they can grow simple veggies and eat them.
 Good Luck!

Demetrius

Send your nutrition and fitness questions to usagnews@EUR.army.mil. Demetrius is a registered dietician and a certified personal trainer.

Contest asks Soldiers to define a 'buddy,' deadline set Feb. 15

U.S. Army Europe news release

The United Service Organizations and the U.S. Army Europe and V Corps safety offices want to know how Soldiers define a "buddy," and they're planning to award prizes to those who can best describe the characteristics of a comrade.

USO is the primary sponsor of a contest that asks V Corps and USAREUR Soldiers to submit a list of five characteristics of a buddy.

A panel of USAREUR experts will judge the entries and award prizes for the best submissions.

The content of submissions may also be used in educational and promotional safety products.

Prizes for the contest include a \$500 U.S. savings bond; a two-night stay for two at the Edelweiss Lodge and Resort; two prepaid cell phones; a bus trip for two to Paris, and a 50 Euro Kathe Wohlfahrt gift certificate.

Entries may be submitted from Jan. 15 to Feb. 15.

Winners will be announced and prizes awarded by March 7.

Entries may be submitted via e-mail to G1SAFTAC1@eur.army.mil or hand-carried to Building 13, Room 407 on Campbell Barracks in Heidelberg.

For more information, call 370-5658/5673 or 06221-57-5658/5673.

Ensure your vote counts: Register now!

by DAVE MELANCON
USAG Heidelberg Public Affairs

The 2008 election year officially kicked off Jan. 3 with the Iowa caucus, while New Hampshire's presidential primary took place Jan. 8. Other states' primaries, many with bumped-up voting dates, follow right behind the Granite State.

And Election Day, Nov. 4, is less than a year away. So there is no time like the present to register to vote, according to voting assistance officers from Installation Management Command-Europe and U.S. Army Europe.

Especially as this year, "we are electing a president and a vice-president," said Donald Wade, IMCOM-Europe's senior voting assistance officer. "Voting becomes very

important."

Indeed, unit and garrison voting assistance officers are handing out voter registration cards "a lot earlier than in prior years," said Maj. Harry Turasz, USAREUR's chief voting assistance officer.

Throughout the command, Turasz and other voting assistance officers are helping Soldiers, family members, Department of Defense civilian employees, retirees and contractors in registering to vote.

They can also identify a voter's county of record back home and will assist with filling out the Federal Postcard Application. Plus they can help other U.S. citizens, who are not associated with the military, register as well.

While their process varies, all 50 states and U.S. territories recognize and accept the postcard

application – U.S. Government Printing Office Standard Form 76 – which can be obtained from a VAO or downloaded from the FVAP Web site.

After completing an FPCA, voters need to forward it to their county election officers, Turasz noted, as "the FPCA registers the individual and requests an absentee ballot."

However, voters still should check with their state's secretary of state or director of elections for state-specific laws and guidance.

Once the application is filled out, it can be mailed postage free, and in some cases, faxed or e-mailed to the voter's state, county or other election officials. But every state is different when it comes to registration procedures and deadlines for getting the federal post card registration to a county registrar, Turasz said, adding that links to the states' registrars can be

found on the FVAP's Web site.

To ensure people find the right person to assist them, lists of trained garrison VAOs are continuously updated and maintained by garrison directorates of human resources, along with military telephone operators keeping updated lists and telephone numbers of unit VAOs.

Additionally, voting information and VAO contact information can be found at www.per.hqusareur.army.mil.

"We should remember recent elections, where absentee ballots played a significant role in deciding the outcome," Wade said. "If we failed to vote, we allowed others to make the decision for us."

For more information, contact your local voting assistance officer.

JMTC members graduate Marshall Center's advanced security program, make history

Marshall Center Public Affairs Office

Members of the Joint Multinational Training Command were among the graduates of the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies' Program in Advanced Security Studies for the first time, at the graduation ceremony for PASS class 07-7 which took place at the Marshall Center Dec. 7.

Helena D'Amario, Chief, Distributed Learning Branch, Combined Arms Training Center and Lt. Col. John Koch, Director of Operations, Joint Multinational Simulation Center, were part of the 160-member class that spanned 12 weeks and included civilian government officials and military officers from 36 countries throughout Europe, Asia, and North America.

"This was a lifetime experience, an international experience for me," D'Amario said. "I graduated from Army War College last summer and this course ended up being a capstone to that because I was able to get the

international perspective on security issues."

Class 07-7 was the third PASS class for the year for the U.S.-German defense and security studies institute. The core curriculum of the Marshall Center's flagship course is a six-week survey of topics including global security trends and perspectives, armed conflict, terrorism, soft security threats such as crime and corruption, national security strategy, and international security cooperation.

Following the six core modules, participants choose three electives from a list of more than 35, including NATO: A Strategic and Operational Overview, Defense Transformation: The Military Response to the Information Age, and Homeland Security: Securing the State Against Terrorism.

Discussing these topics in an international forum is one of the greatest benefits of attending the PASS course for U.S. military members, according to Koch.

"The opportunity to meet and talk with diplomatic, ministerial, interagency and military members of over 30 different countries - to exchange ideas, thoughts and viewpoints on a number of relevant and sensitive topics - was an invaluable experience," Koch said. "We continued discussions from class in the evenings, and I was amazed that so many different opinions exist on American policies. Hopefully, I have had a positive impact on some of my colleagues' opinions."

More than 6,000 participants from 106 countries have graduated from resident programs since the Center's dedication in 1993. The ranks of alumni include prime ministers, ministers of defense, foreign affairs and internal affairs; members of parliament, ambassadors, and other military and civilian members of government.

Speaking at the Dec. 7 ceremony, the Honorable Powell A. Moore, Representative of the Secretary of Defense to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, noted that the newest Marshall Center alumni are now in a stronger position to influence how their nation's institutions deal with current and emerging security challenges.

"In some ways the threats of the 21st century are more complicated, more diverse, and require even more thought and persistence to address than ever before," Moore said. "Today's challenges include the threat of transnational terrorism, Islamic

"In some ways the threats of the 21st century are more complicated, more diverse, and require even more thought and persistence to address than ever before."

Honorable Powell A. Moore
Representative of the SecDef to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe



Photo by Nick D'Amario

(From left) Lt. Col. John Koch, Honorable Powell A. Moore, Helena D'Amario, Dr. John P. Rose (Director, Marshall Center), and Maj. James Pugh (U.S. Southern European Task Force). Koch, D'Amario, and Pugh are USAREUR's first-ever grads from the Marshall Center.

extremism, drug trafficking, human trafficking, weak borders and the specter of ungoverned spaces and even failed states. These challenges are on your doorstep, but, as a George C. Marshall Center graduate, you have the historical and contemporary perspective, as well as the intellectual tools, to provide leadership as your nation meets its challenges."

Koch said he is taking away from his time at the Marshall Center a greater appreciation of the contributions of international

organizations such as the UN, EU and NATO to global security, as well as a greater appreciation of the viewpoints of coalition, partnership, and allied militaries and ministries.

"I am looking forward to applying the principles and ideas I've learned here at the Marshall Center to the development of USAREUR Joint Exercise Program scenarios and events," Koch said. "I hope to utilize the contacts I've made here to enhance our programs at the Joint Multinational Simulations Center."

Local VFW members brings holiday joy to Czech orphans

by NICK D'AMARIO
USAG Grafenwoehr Public Affairs

Vilseck and Grafenwoehr community members ensured the holidays were memorable and joyous for hundreds of Czech orphans by providing presents as part of an annual holiday initiative started by the VFW here in 1991.

Two staunch long-time VFW members, James Dicks and Hal Hedges, organized this year's program and ensured the gifts made it to two children's homes in the city of Most, Czech Republic. Gifts included stuffed animals, dolls, toys, clothing and games.

Hedges recalls his first visit to the Most orphans, numbering around 40 in 1991: "The children were a real scraggly bunch whose living conditions, by our standards, were horrible."

Though living conditions have improved significantly since then, the special joy that the VFW and community's goodwill provides is just important now as it was then.

In 1991, then-county commissioner Pavel Weiss worked with Hedges to coordinate the first event, and has attended this and other VFW events in the Czech Republic since then.

Petr Severa, Regional Chief of Health and Social Affairs, thanked Dicks, Hedges and the other participating VFW members for their enormous support following the gift-giving event at the Most children's clinic.

Dicks also recognized Czech national Frank Ringes as an honorary VFW member for his years of selfless service and support to the VFW.

The VFW motto of "We honor our dead through the living" was clearly exemplified with the love and generosity displayed by the VFW for Most's less fortunate children.



Area VFW members have traveled to Most, Czech Republic, every year since 1991 to present donated gifts, play Santa, and bring holiday joy at the orphanages. (At left) A VFW member in Santa suit hands out the gifts as (far left) a child plays with a new toy. (Above) Orphanage staff help the children unwrap and play with the toys.

Garmisch tops CFC '07 contributions list

Story and photo by JOHN REESE
Bavarian News

The small Alpine community with a big heart gave generously to the 2007 Combined Federal Campaign, raising the bar and setting a new record high with an overall contribution of a whopping \$85,801.46.

In the categories of participation, average gift, and per capita, U.S. Army Garrison Garmisch rated the highest Army garrison in Europe, said Constance T. Baker Director, CFC-Overseas, European Command & Central Command.

"Project officer Ms. Ailien Patail was an absolute joy to work with and is in no small part responsible for this success," said Baker.

"We met our ultimate goal of 100 percent contact rate and according to the CFC Web management statistics, our total represents an overall employee participation rate of 72 percent, an average contribution of \$414.50, and a per-capita contribution of \$300.01," said Patail, one of two Community Area Project Officers for the Garmisch area.

Patail's co-CAPO was Joe Friday-blunt in his assessment of the CFC drive.

"The Garmisch military community is good and generous," said Mike Stuebinger, Force Protection Officer.

Stuebinger was also responsible for maintaining the fundraising "thermometer." Early in the campaign, the level of donations compelled him to totally revise the sign with higher numbers than in previous years. By the drive's conclusion, the mercury in the thermometer was over the top again.

Patail and Stuebinger thanked the community and attributed the increase in donations to their many hard-working volunteers, saying that due

to everyone's efforts and the tremendous generosity of the Marshall Center, the NATO School, the Garmisch Elementary/Middle School, and the USAG-Garmisch personnel, this year's fundraiser was an outstanding success.



Despite the freezing temperatures, the mercury busts out of the Combined Federal Campaign thermometer with record-setting generosity.

Don't miss out!



Now it's easy to keep up on current events locally and throughout Bavaria with the arrival of five newspaper stands, courtesy of the USAG-Garmisch Directorate of Public Works. You can pick up your copy of the award winning Bavarian News at the community mail room, commissary, Post Exchange, Pete Burke Center, and in the headquarters building (Bldg. 203) downstairs across from the ID card section. Copies are also available at the Morale, Recreation and Welfare office in Bldg. 250 and the Mueller Fitness Center. Get yours today!

Photo by John Reese

IMCOM NCO of year advances yet another stripe

Story and photo by JOHN REESE
Bavarian News

With his parents, wife, and the garrison community in attendance, Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Allison, U.S. Army Garrison Garmisch Military Police, was promoted from staff sergeant in a Jan. 7 ceremony at the headquarters building.

Allison, who enlisted in November 1997 as an infantryman, has served five tours away from his family in Argentina, Kosovo, Israel, Iraq, and Afghanistan. He represented the Installation Management Command Department of the Army in the Army-wide competition for the 2007 Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year after taking USAG-Stuttgart and IMCOM-Europe.

That he rose so high in the boards speaks volumes about Allison as a Soldier, said Sgt. Maj. Grant Jones, Headquarters, U.S. Army Europe Office of the Provost Marshal.

"That's not happenstance, that's somebody whose dedicated to what they're doing," said Jones, "not just studying. It really requires that you embody the NCO Creed."

Jones presented Allison with a wall plaque of the NCO Creed, encouraging him to put it up wherever he served, be it an office or tent, not for his own benefit but for that of the younger Soldiers who will look up to him as a role model.

"I think USAG-Garmisch is lucky to have him," said Garmisch Provost Marshal VickyLynne Peters, Allison's commanding officer. "Sgt. 1st Class Allison has the unique ability to blend both family lives with his wife Tarany and their son and daughter, Joseph and Emily, and taking care of the Soldiers, which is what we need in this community where we're so small."

Allison thanked the Soldiers in attendance under his command for their support and some of whom traveled from across Germany to attend the career landmark. He singled out 1st Sgt. Riki Hawk, 92nd Military Police, as a mentor. Hawk and Allison served three years together in the 92nd MP and it was Hawk who pinned Allison with his new rank insignia.

Allison especially thanked his wife for being such a big inspiration to him during his years of service. He said she made the decision for him to reenlist.

"She actually did everything for me. All I did was work and she ensured that everything else was taken care of," said Allison.

"He's a true leader. He got promoted. Instead of resting on yesterday's laurels, he's asking for the next one. That's just reflective of the kind of the caliber of NCO he is," said Jones.

Knowing full well the hardships he'll face, Allison hopes to go back downrange to provide leadership to younger troops. He said he reclassified to the MP Corps in 1999 due to them being one of the most deployed forces.

"I want to go back to a line unit and deploy as a platoon sergeant," said Allison.

"Garmisch is great," said Allison, who arrived here in 2006. "Everything is great, to include location, scenery, people, and not having to worry about your kids walking to school, or worrying about locking the doors."

Allison's decorations include the Bronze Star, the Army Commendation Medal with seven oak leaf clusters, the Army Achievement Medal with oak leaf cluster, the Army Parachute Badge, and the Combat Action Badge.



Moments after his promotion, IMCOM-Army NCO of the Year Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Allison, USAG-Garmisch Military Police, gets a plaque with the NCO Creed and a personal word of encouragement from Sgt. Maj. Grant Jones, Headquarters, USAREUR Office of the Provost Marshal. Jones said Allison embodies the creed.

Retiring employees honored for 66 years of service



When two retiring employees have a combined length of 66 years of service, their colleagues pull out all of the stops for their last day on the Army payroll.

With USAG-Garmisch Manager Karin H. Santos and Andy Verrall, PAIO looking on, Russ Stokes, DPW, surprises Roland Modes and Karl Hlerl (left), local national employees, with mention of them in the previous issue of the Bavarian News.

Both were feted Dec. 14 with honors and gifts at a hearty traditional Bavarian luncheon of stuffed pork roast, red cabbage and potato dumplings served up in the loft above the garrison shops where they worked since about the time Stokes was three years old.

Photo by John Reese

Puerto Rican unit provides Torgau support

Story and photos by GARRY BARROWS
Bavarian News

The original mission for the 210th Regional Support Group, based in Aguadilla, Puerto Rico, was to provide installation management and life support for approximately 250 Soldiers including 93 Russian soldiers taking part in the Torgau training exercises from Nov. 28 through Dec. 16 in the Hohenfels Training Area.

Torgau 2007 is a bi-lateral exercise with U.S. and Russian soldiers conducting integrated company-level tactical training and division staff-level training based on stability, security, transition and reconstruction mission scenarios.

That was about to change.

As 210th RSG Commander Col. Hector Lopez laid out the capabilities of his personnel during a command-level briefing, Joint Multinational Readiness Center Commander Col. Thomas S. Vandal decided to modify the group's mission.

Suddenly, the mission was to provide life support for 750 soldiers from 16 different nations taking part in three separate missions including Operational Mentor and Liaison Team training, a training and mentoring program for Afghan troops in how they go about their daily business progressively developing the Afghan National Army so that in the future it will be able to conduct training and operations on its own.

Counter Improvised Explosive Device training was the third level of training taking place.

"I felt really proud that (Col. Vandal) had the confidence to see we were capable of the increased responsibilities," said Lt. Col. Cosme Torres, 210th RSG executive officer. "And once we had analyzed the (new) mission and the resources we brought, I was happy he accepted our plan."

Lopez said the mission planning began 60 days before arriving at Hohenfels with the 34 Soldiers in the unit concentrating on learning key Russian phrases and researching the most efficient way to support them including the posting of written notices in their language. The commander was not bothered by the change in his mission due to his trust and confidence in his unit, he said.

"I had a training objective for this mission," Lopez said, "which was to synchronize and execute a highly complex mission that would force us (as a unit) to work together and step up to meet a realistic challenge."

"I had no worries about the expanded mission, or the short notice," he said, "because of what my Soldiers bring to the table as a reserve component. Our Soldiers are also lawyers, investigators, emergency center managers. Seventeen of the 34 in our RSG have master's degrees. We have a special and unique



Combined coalition forces storm their objective under the cover of smoke during the Torgau 2007 training exercises, conducted Nov. 26 - Dec. 16.

combination; we are warriors and (civilian) professionals."

Lopez said when military training and civilian experience comes together, the reserve component becomes a force multiplier that enables "improved customer service, a more highly proficient and flexible Soldier."

The 210th RSG was ready. There were 750 soldiers with logistical needs to be met.

Dining facilities, sleeping quarters, office buildings, bathroom and shower facilities, a laundromat, an exercise gym, a shoppette, a phone center and a first aid station had to be coordinated with precision to provide complete logistical support to the soldiers from 16 nations.

There were inspections, force protection aspects, morale and welfare activities, outside contracted providers, and a myriad of other requirements that needed attention, coordination, and completion.

"What we were doing on this mission is similar to what this garrison does to support the Hohenfels post," said Maj. Luis Pomales, the Operations Officer.

"It is truly our responsibility to get those who are training prepared for their mission," Lopez said. "The JMRC was relieved from these responsibilities which enabled them to dedicate their resources totally into the outstanding training they provide to our coalition partners."

One additional area of concentration for the 210th RSG was cultural.

"Here in this multinational atmosphere, one has to be culturally aware, have a broader sense of what's needed," Lopez said. "We strongly believe the Russians are and will remain our allies. We want to prove to the Russians that we will support them, now and in the future. (These are opportunities) to establish a foundation of trust and confidence that will strengthen our relationship."

Lopez went on to say there were many Army skills that the 210th RSG wanted to demonstrate to the Russians and others while here in Hohenfels, especially the scope of responsibilities of the noncommissioned officers in the planning and execution of missions. The NCO Creed was translated into Russian as a part of an exchange of information.

While working directly with Russian personnel, the RSG was in a position to share some of their strengths in a very positive and candid manner.

Lopez said a Russian lieutenant colonel and a U.S. Soldier were injured during training and

were hospitalized in Parsberg.

"The Russian lieutenant colonel was grateful that I took the time to visit him," Lopez said, speaking of his visit to the hospital and their discussion of his view of command responsibility in visiting the U.S. Soldier.

"All of our Soldiers are taken care of," Lopez told him. "That kind of demonstration is a major part of our mission."

The group's two-week mission is the primary training regimen for the Army Reserve unit this year.

"The 210th RSG is primarily composed of Soldiers of Puerto Rican ancestry who are proud to represent their Commonwealth, but even prouder to represent the United States Army," said Maj. Lee Perkins, the unit's Human Resources Officer.

As the mission responsibilities have become a fine-tuned operation, unit members have had an opportunity to experience a little of the German culture by visiting the Nuremberg Christmas Market.

"It was a great experience," said Sgt. Luis Barreto-Nieves. "It was beautiful to look down on the city from the castle."

Spc. Jomar Fuentes said he enjoyed the handicrafts available at the market and explained it was very different from markets he was familiar with in Puerto Rico.

"It was remarkable to see all the natural things, not just things made of plastic," Fuentes said, noting he thought the Gluhwein tasted like hot grape juice.

Sgt. Jose Perez, who had previously been to Hohenfels for training, saw a deeper aspect to the historical market.

"One thing I like about the people of Germany is that they go a lot by tradition," Perez said. "They enjoy it. They have their history inside. It's important."



Russian soldiers participating in the Torgau 2007 exercises enjoy an evening meal. The 210th Regional Support Group had to adapt to new responsibilities such as the management of a dining facility.

CDC, SAS partnership fosters family fun on Fridays

by KRISTIN JACOBS-SCHMID
and BARBARA TENNANT
Special to the Bavarian News

The Hohenfels Child Development Center and School Age Services have combined their creative efforts to form a new program to foster positive family relationships for the children and families in their programs.

Under the new program called CDC/SAS Family Fun Friday Nights, a special evening will be scheduled every two months that focuses on family interaction.

The first event was held Dec. 21 with a focus

on child safety.

McGruff the Crime Dog was the special guest for the evening, and he gave out safety kits to the children.

In addition, the evening featured arts and crafts, games, and other activity stations that promoted safety awareness.

The following is a schedule of upcoming CDC/SAS Family Fun Friday Nights:

Feb. 22: Game Night

So many games... so little time. The evening offers games and activities for all ages so every family has the opportunity to enjoy the experience of interacting in an educational and

entertaining way.

April 18: Drive-In Movie

This will be a salute to the good old days. The children will be introduced to the concept of a drive-in movie theater. The children will construct cars and drive them to the theater for a feature film.

June 20: Family Picnic

Sitting together for a family meal is a great experience. This family activity will initiate many venues to help establish this important routine at home.

This new partnership allows the families of USAG Hohenfels a seamless system to spend

time together even when their children are enrolled in different CYS programs.

For more information, contact Barbara Tennant at DSN 466-4707 or Kristin Jacobs-Schmid at DSN 466-2822.

Look for the Bavarian
News online at
www.milcom.de

Handsome Devil tours U.S. bases in Europe

Story and photo by JOANNE LOVE

Special to the Bavarian News

Even though the Armed Forces Entertainment band Handsome Devil was leaving for Kosovo the following morning, the band from Los Angeles was not detracted from rocking the crowd at The Zone in Hohenfels Dec. 29.

It may have been cold outside, and it may have been a long weekend, but the Soldiers and community members in attendance received a warm and fun-filled two hour performance.

"This opportunity to play for our troops in Europe is a defining moment for the band," said Lead Singer Danny Walker in an Armed Forces Entertainment press release.

"We get to take Handsome Devil to Europe for the first time with the purpose of lifting the spirits of our brothers and sisters, and we're going to some locations we otherwise would never get to see," said Walker. "We are so pumped up for this, and we are going to rock them so hard!"

For those patrons who were looking to hear good, old-time rock and roll, Handsome Devil met the expectations with classics like Devil in You, Makin' Money, Bring it On and the ever popular The Devil Went Down to Georgia.

Formed in 1999, Handsome Devil (Danny Walker, Billie Stevens, Keith Morgan, and Brian Wedmore) hit the clubs in Southern California,

performing with relentless conviction, according to the press release. Influenced by the Beatles, the Clash, AC/DC, and the Ramones, Handsome Devil ultimately focused on having an original style and sound.

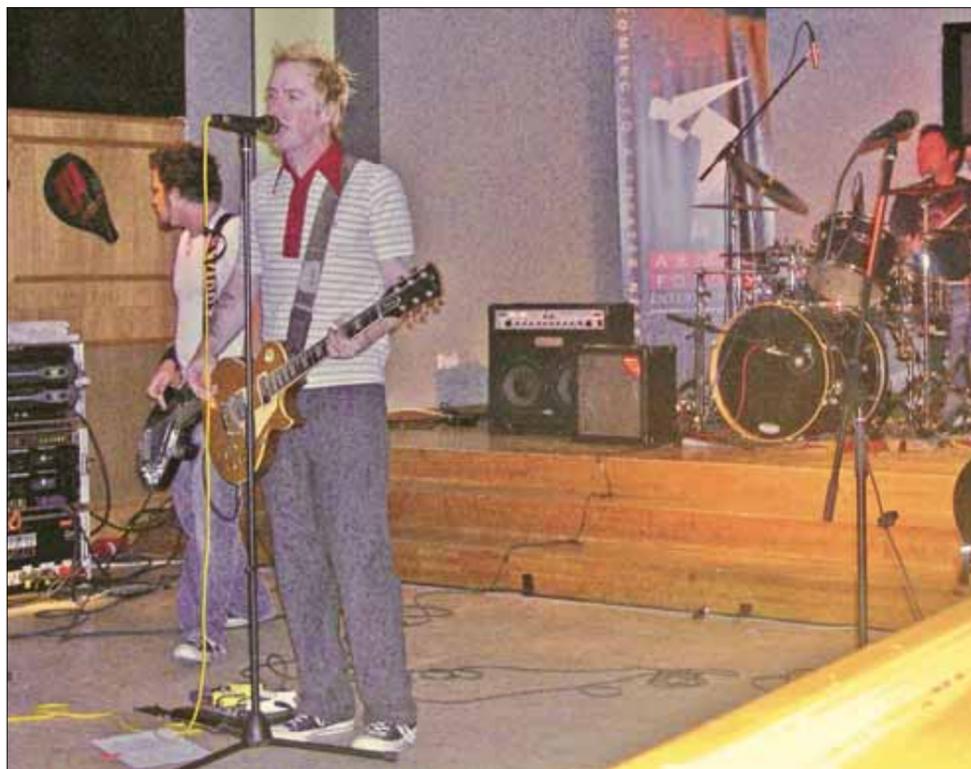
In January 2001, after cutting some demos and touring regionally, Handsome Devil signed a major label deal with RCA Records. Their debut album, Love and Kisses from the Underground (2001), featured the modern rock radio single and MTV video Makin' Money.

Handsome Devil further developed their unique brand of no-nonsense rock with their sophomore effort, releasing Knock Yourself Out (2003), which spawned the single/video Hello Somebody and the Handsome Devil-style cover of Bette Davis Eyes.

Both Handsome Devil albums garnered critical acclaim and approval of fans worldwide, according to the press release.

Supporting their releases with six national tours (with the Used, Hoobastank, Lost Prophets, Social Distortion, and MXPX to name a few), the Vans Warped Tour, a boatload of radio shows, and a live television performance on The Late Show with Craig Kilborn, Handsome Devil has become a lean, mean, touring machine, exhibiting a ferocious live show, a strong work ethic, and a humble appreciation of their fans.

Handsome Devil performed for U.S. troops stationed in Germany, Kosovo, Bosnia, and Norway Dec. 26 to Jan. 13.



Armed Forces Entertainment band Handsome Devil rocked The Zone Dec. 29.

JMTC hosts New Year's reception, reflects on 2007

Story and photo by Troy Darr

USAG Hohenfels PAO

The Joint Multinational Readiness Center hosted a New Year's reception at the Community Activities Center in Hohenfels Jan. 7 with host nation partners to reflect on the past year and to look forward to the challenges ahead in the coming year.

During opening remarks Col. Thomas S. Vandal, JMRC commander, reflected on his unit's accomplishments last year.

"The JMRC completed a very busy and successful year in 2007 due largely to the efforts of everyone in this room, Soldiers, civilians and family members alike," said Vandal.

"We supported the U.S. Army's surge this past spring and summer with the mission to prepare units deploying around the world in support of the Global War on Terror.

"This included preparing the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade to Iraq, the 173rd Airborne Brigade to Afghanistan, the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment to OIF (Operation Iraqi Freedom), and the 2nd Brigade, 1st AD, for their pending deployment to Iraq.

"We also continued to provide the U.S. Army's only training venue to prepare U.S. forces for peace keeping operations in Kosovo.

"We prepared and deployed two companies from our own 1-4 Infantry Battalion to the Zabul Province in Afghanistan where they continue to operate under a Romanian infantry battalion.

"If this wasn't enough, the JMRC trained over 1,000 NATO soldiers from 18 different nations as part of the observation, mentoring and liaison teams to support the international security mission in Afghanistan.



Rosemarie Smith receives a small coin from a chimney sweep during the JMRC New Year's reception at the CAC. In Germany, a chimney sweep traditionally hands over a lucky penny to bring luck to its owner throughout the New Year.

"We also trained other coalition units here and in places such as Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, and the Georgia Republic for their deployments in support of the war on terror.

"All of this was accomplished while we continued the transformation to the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, adding a suite of new training capabilities to include new MOUT sites, and IED (Improvised Explosive Device) defeat training academy, and integrated the Grafenfels training complex into our new

training construct.

"I am proud to say that through our collective efforts, Soldiers and units deploying to Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq were trained, ready, and prepared for their missions.

"For 2008 our training requirements will accelerate at Hohenfels and in expeditionary locations as we continue to prepare U.S. and NATO units for deployment.

During his remarks Vandal related his plans for the coming year.

"We will continue to transform the operations group into a dual-missioned combat training center," said Vandal.

"In the spring we will train the 18th Engineer Brigade, the 16th Sustainment Brigade for OIF as well as a reserve component brigade for Kosovo.

"This summer, we will again prepare the Dagger Brigade for their pending deployment to OIF and will conduct an American, British, Canadian, Australian exercise here in September.

"Clearly, there will be no let up in our transformation to 'the Army's Center of Excellence for Coalition Training,' nor in the continuation of making the JMRC a flexible, adaptive, transforming combat training center."

Vandal also recognized the efforts of everyone involved in his unit's success.

"I am absolutely confident in our ability to accomplish our crucial training mission here at the Hohenfels Training Area and in other training locations around the globe because of the dedicated men and women who make up our talented team," said Vandal. "It is truly a team effort because it includes our Soldiers, civilian work force, both U.S. and German, contractors, family members, and the great community that supports our efforts.

"I am especially grateful to our German hosts and friends for their support and friendship for our Soldiers and their families.

"We would like to thank the members of our local communities for providing a safe and secure environment for our Soldiers and their families to work and live.

"It takes all of us to make the team successful and I thank every one of you for your contribution," he said.

Community collects canned food for orphanage

Story and photo by TROY DARR

USAG Hohenfels PAO

The Joint Multinational Readiness Center and U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels organized an unusual canned food drive Dec. 19.

Approximately 500 members of the Hohenfels community jogged through the Keltenwall and Nainhof military housing areas picking up about 1,000 donated canned goods set out along the curb by residents of the two housing areas.

The purpose of the JMRC Holly Jolly Physical Training Run was to gather food to donate to the St. Joseph's Orphanage in Parsberg.

"I'm very impressed," said Klaus Kornprobst, orphanage director. "The Americans called a couple of days ago and asked if we would be interested and today (Dec. 20) the food arrives."

Although the orphanage does not plan to use the donated food for the regular meal program, Kornprobst said the children can use it when they go on field trips or when they go camping.

"We have several programs to help out Soldiers and their families during the holidays, so we decided to look for a way to help out our neighbors," said Command Sgt. Maj. Perry

Clark, USAG Hohenfels command sergeant major. "This is just one of the many programs we do for the community."

Kornprobst said he hopes the orphanage can develop a closer relationship with the U.S. Army.

"We are very open for the children to have contact with people in the community, especially our American neighbors," he said.

John Cavanaugh, the USAG Hohenfels chief of operations, said the garrison staff is considering venues for other activities involving the orphanage.

"I hope in the future we can invite the children to school sporting events or to the German American fest," he said.

As the Soldiers who delivered the canned goods were preparing to leave the orphanage, Josef Bauer, Parsberg mayor said, "In the name of the citizens of Parsberg I would like to say we are very thankful for the contributions. It shows the close relationship shared between Germany and America."

Staff Sgt. Matthew Miller (left) and John Cavanaugh move a box of canned goods into the St. Joseph's Orphanage in Parsberg.



Do you have a question, comment, or concern you'd like to see discussed? Do you have a compliment or complaint? 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

Vilseck Clinic has new hours

The Vilseck Health Clinic's new operating hours are as follows:

- Monday-Wednesday: 6:30 a.m.-6 p.m.
- Thursday: 1-6 p.m.
- Friday: 6:30 a.m.-3 p.m.
- Saturday: 9 a.m.-noon (Urgent Care Only)
- Closed all training holidays and federal holidays.

Active Duty Sick Call

- Monday-Wednesday, Fridays 6:30-7 a.m.
- Thursdays 1 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Beneficiary Appointments by Phone Only

New Phone Appointment System:
DSN 476-2882/2804/2936 or CIV 09662-83-XXXX.

Air Travel Update

The U.S. Department of Transportation has announced new safety rules relating to the storage of rechargeable Lithium batteries when flying to, from and within the USA.

The new restrictions, effective from Jan. 1, 2008, dictate that loose lithium cells may not be packed in checked baggage under any circumstances - batteries installed in equipment are unaffected.

Carry-on baggage may contain up to two loose batteries but only if there is no possibility of short-circuit; containing them individually within simple plastic bags or their original packaging is sufficient to prevent this and will satisfy inspectors

Don't miss Vilseck's largest Fasching party Saturday

The 20th Anniversary of the "60er Fasching" celebration will be held in Vilseck Jan. 19. If you are going to attend one Fasching event in 2008, this is the party that you can't miss. Fasching costumes are welcome, but not required.

Superb live entertainment is provided by two of the best internationally acclaimed cover bands P&8 and Generation X, who will keep the party rocking all night long with the absolute best top 100 Rock and Pop Music.

Location: Ratz-Fatz-Halle in Vilseck, close to the railway station. Directions and signs will be posted near Rose Barracks and throughout the Vilseck area to lead you to the hall, which is just off of 2166 near the underpass.

Entry fee is 10€ in advance and 12€ at the door. A complimentary shuttle bus service is provided by the fan club. Routes are listed on the Web at www.loewen-vilseck.de. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. Music starts at 9 p.m.

Graf Thrift Store accepting consignment furniture

The Grafenwoehr Community & Spouses Club Thrift Store in Grafenwoehr is now accepting furniture and/or any individual item valued over \$25 for consignment.

Call CIV 09641 454 085 to set up an appointment to start an account and to deliver your large items to the Thrift Store.

EFMP screening set at Grafenwoehr Health Clinic

Starting Jan. 8, the Grafenwoehr Health Clinic will offer EMFP screenings with a registered nurse on Tuesdays from 1-4 p.m. and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to noon. Call DSN 475-7152 or CIV 09641-83-1750 to make your appointment.

Graf Optometry Clinic appointments available

Grafenwoehr Optometry Clinic is open and appointments are available for all Grafenwoehr beneficiaries. Call CIV 09641-83-7251/8393 or DSN 475-7152/8393 to make your appointments.

You must be enrolled at Grafenwoehr Health Clinic in order to make appointments. Vilseck enrollees must continue to use services at Vilseck Optometry.

Professionals needed for CYS SKIES Unlimited

CYS SKIES Unlimited (School of Knowledge, Inspiration, Exploration, and Skills) is seeking certified professionals who would like to put their skills to work and dedicate their time and

knowledge to making a difference in a child's life.

Instructors are needed for Music (Piano, Vocal, and Guitar), Foreign Language (German and Spanish), Gymnastics, Tennis, Swimming, and Academic Tutoring. Please call DSN 476-3376 or CIV 09662-83-3376 for more information.

New Customs office

There is a new Customs customer service office in Grafenwoehr located in Bldg. 244, Room 240. Operation Hours will be as follows:

- * Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m. - noon / 1 - 4 p.m.
- * Friday, 8 a.m. - noon and 1 - 3 p.m.

For more information, call DSN 475-7249 or CIV 09641-837249 at Grafenwoehr, or call the Vilseck Office at DSN 475-2105 or CIV 09662-832105.

Missouri allowing absentees to ballot by e-mail, fax

Missouri Secretary of State Robin Carnahan has declared that voters who are in federal service and are eligible to receive hostile fire, imminent danger pay, or are in a location designated as a combat zone by the IRS (see www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=108331,00.html), may return their voted ballots by fax or email. This declaration applies only for the Feb. 5, 2008 Presidential Preference Primary election. Under Missouri election law, a person in Federal service includes:

(a) Members of the armed forces of the United States, while in active service, and their spouses and dependents;

(b) Active members of the merchant marine of the United States and their spouses and dependents;

(c) Civilian employees of the United States government working outside the boundaries of the United States, and their spouses and dependents;

(d) Active members of religious or welfare organizations assisting servicemen, and their spouses and dependents;

(e) Persons who have been honorably discharged from the armed forces or who have terminated their service or employment in any group mentioned in this section within sixty days of an election, and their spouses and dependents.

Missouri does not allow UOCAVA citizens to receive their blank absentee ballot by fax or email. The absentee ballot must be mailed to the citizen. Absentee ballots for the Presidential Preference Primary will be available by December 24, 2007.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:
State specific information on your precinct, candidates, elections, and voting is available at the Missouri Secretary of State website, www.sos.mo.gov/.

The FVAP can be contacted via 1-800-438-8683. Citizens may reach the FVAP toll-free from 67 countries using the toll-free numbers listed on the FVAP Web site: www.fvap.gov. Questions regarding the above may also be referred to the Director, Federal Voting Assistance Program, Department of Defense, 1155 Defense Pentagon, vote@fvap.ncr.gov and on the World Wide Web at www.fvap.gov.

Credit Union observing Martin Luther King Jr. Day

All Service Credit Union branch offices will be closed Monday in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. All Service Credit Union branch offices will resume normal hours of operation on Tuesday.

Service Credit Union would like to remind its members that Internet banking, ATMs and the 24 hour Contact Center are all available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

ID Cards section upgrading to RAPIDS Version 7

For installation and upgrade to the RAPIDS Version 7 the Next Generation Common Access Cards (NG-CAC) The Grafenwoehr DEERS/ID Cards & Passport Office was closed Jan. 14-15. The Vilseck DEERS/ID Cards Office will also close today and tomorrow for installation and upgrade to the RAPIDS Version 7.

With the implementation of RAPIDS 7.2, RAPIDS users are required to verify and capture the CAC recipient's identity source documents before issuing them an ID card. Two ID documents must be captured, and one must be a valid state or federal government-issued picture identification.

Please review the list of acceptable documentation for all eligible members of the DoD, family members, and certain federal agencies:

- Passport
- USAREUR drivers license
- States side drivers license
- Birth certificate
- Social Security card
- Neutralization certificate
- Fuehrerschein
- Personal Ausweis
- Green dard

NOTE: Please also be aware that this new software upgrade requires more processing time. Customers should plan on spending a minimum of 20 minutes per CAC ID card.

Hohenfels Briefs

Free tax assistance offered

The Hohenfels Tax Center will open Tuesday and began scheduling appointments yesterday. 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.

Six-week belly dancing class kicks off Tuesday

Start with a healthy aerobic workout. Add the fun of dancing. Spice things up with exotic music, the twirl of silk, and the rhythmic clapping of finger cymbals. Top it off with a path to rediscovering one's feminine nature and creative spirit, and you have Belly Dancing for Fitness.

Come out and learn the basic movements and one beginner's routine. A six-week session begins Jan. 22. Classes will be held on Tuesdays 11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. and Thursdays 6-7 p.m. at the Post Gym Aerobics Room.

Six classes are \$20 and 12 classes are \$35. There must be a minimum of eight participants registered by Monday for the class to take place. For more information, contact Sports and Fitness at DSN 466-2868/2493.

Patron Opportunity Week slated through Friday

The library hosts Patron Opportunity Week for information on upcoming workshops, classes, events, and activities, with patrons able to give the library their opinion on what they want

or don't want. There will also be a "Why I Love My Library" contest and a special Story Time. Call the library at DSN 466-1740 for more details.

CAC bus trip to historic Rothenburg set Saurday

If you have never been to Rothenburg, you don't want to miss this trip. If you have been to Rothenburg, then maybe it's time to return. This beautiful walled city is a "do not miss" destination. Bring your camera and enjoy an afternoon meandering down the alleys, enjoying a coffee in one of the cafes or touring one of the museums. You can also check out the historic church and town hall or do some shopping in the many nice shops that the town has to offer. Sign up at the CAC.

FRG Special Care Team Training offered tomorrow

This workshop provides the training necessary to become a successful Family Readiness Group leader. Care Team Training will teach leaders the steps that are taken during a notification process.

The care team volunteers will learn the roles and responsibilities that must take place before, during, and after a casualty has occurred.

This special five-hour workshop will begin at 8 a.m. in the DOL Conference Room, Bldg 315.

Call ACS at DSN 466-4860 for more information.

MLK Jr. birthday celebration set Jan. 22:

The Hohenfels Community Celebrates Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday with a luncheon at the garrison Dining Facility 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Events include a performance by the Hohenfels Elementary School Choir and Carla Nwoga. Vignettes highlighting King's life and vision will also be

presented. For more information call DSN 466-4102.

Math, Science, Technology Night seeks participants

The MST Night will be held March 5 from 4-6 p.m. at Hohenfels Middle/High School. The entire community is invited to attend.

Displays, demonstrations, experiments, models, collections are just some of the things that make the evening such a success.

If you or your organization would like to participate, contact Martha A. McIntyre at martha.mcintyre@eu.dodea.edu before Saturday.

Valentine's Day Rose Sale set through Friday

American Red Cross is taking orders for fine Capodimonte porcelain roses from Italy, which will arrive just in time for Valentine's Day.

The roses are red, and both buds and open roses may be ordered. They will be available for pick-up in the Red Cross office on Feb. 13.

This is a fundraiser to support our local volunteer program. For more information, call DSN 466-1760 or stop by the office in Bldg. 335 (back side of Service Credit Union).

Counseling available

Counseling is available for individuals, couples or families on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Family Life Center, Bldg. 743, across from the commissary.

Appointments can be made to see Chaplain (Maj.) Darin Nielsen by calling DSN 476-3276 or counselor intern Beth FitzGerald by calling DSN 466-1570 or DSN 466-4795.

All counseling is confidential and is available for Soldiers, spouses, civilians and family members.

VOTING ASSISTANCE OFFICERS

(as of 4 Jan 08)

GRAFENWOEHR:

Sieglinde Schedl (Installation Voting Assistance Officer)	HHC USAG Graf
SGT Kristie L. Kyser-DeJESUS	HHC USAG Graf
SGT Katie MARTIN (not trained)	AAFES Graf
Phil Romanowski	POSTAL
CHACE, Robert	POSTAL
STEPHENS, Clarence	111 th Postal Co
Jose GUEVREA	CMR 411
Michael PRICE	A Co, 2d MI Bn
CW2 Jason CINTRON	USAG Graf, DPW
Darius PRATT	12 th Chemical Co
1LT Bryan H. Roy-Smith	12 th Chemical Co
1LT Christina HUMMEL	212 th MP Co
2LT Matthew MARTINEZ	212 th MP Co
2LT Shonette JONES	212 th MP Co
2LT Jessica JOHNSON	18 th CSB
2LT Sarah S. NOYES	255 th Med Det (PM)
CPT Paul F. Speering	3747 th MFTB-E
SSG Valery PFIFFNER (Reserves)	
Dedrick CARR	USAHC Vilseck
Ruth PEPITO	USAHC Vilseck
SGT Alan D. BUCHHOLZ	USAC Grafenwoehr
CPT Richard S. WILT	¼ INF Bn
CPT Brandon M. GAGE	561 st Med Co
SFC Steven M. CORMIER	69 th Sign Bn
SFC Troy S. HARDY	709 th MP Bn
SSG Fernando A. BATISTA	709 th MP Bn
Michael McGONIGAL	615 th MP Co
2LT Matthew J. SONGE	615 th MP Co
SFC Santiago GALLARDO	72d Med Det (VS)
CPT Justing BINGHAM	Dental Vilseck
1LT Johseph WALKER	2SCR, RD
1LT Pauline HARRIS	2SCR, RD
CPT Shawn D. GIACOBBE	2SCR, FS
CPT Angelique MITCHELL	2BN, 405 th AFSB
SGT Kim Hurst	41 st TRANS

JMTC / JMRC

CW3 Koo YOO
SFC Sebastian ROJAS
SFC Paul GARRETT
SSG Eliezer ORELLANO
CPT William R. DUNCAN
Danny R. THOMSEN
CPT Kevin P. EMORE
SSG Anthony RIDLEY
MAJ Mark HUNTANAR
MSG Chrisanna GARCIA

GARMISCH

Steven DENMAN
Alonzo EDWARDS (not trained)
Jessica ROBERSON (not trained)

HOHENFELS

Shedrick KNGIHT

USAG Hohenfels, DHR

Vilseck High School
"Real World... What are you doing?"
SUNDAY January 27TH

Workshop Topics:	Portfolio Development	Interpreting
Financial Aid	FAFSA How to tips	PSAT Scores
Workshop Times:		POC:
4:00 - 4:45 p.m. Session 1		Tina.Villella@
5:00 - 5:45 p.m. Session 2		eu.dodea.edu
		09641-83-
		2773/2551
•Free to all High School Students and Parents		(civ)
•Grades 9-12 are Welcome!		476-
•Location: Vilseck High School, Bldg 1801		2773/2551
• Sign In at the Main Entrance		(DSN)

What's Happening

Ansbach Briefs

Register to vote today!

The Army's Voting Assistance Program aims to ensure that Soldiers, their families, and civilians overseas can exercise their right to vote.

The USAG Ansbach Voting Assistance Program officers are Mohammad Alkadri and Scott Hamilton.

Absentee ballots can be applied for by filling out the federal postcard application (Standard Form 76). The form is available at the garrison command group or can be downloaded at <http://www.fvap.com>.

The Web site also features an automated federal postcard application.

Filling out the form not only registers voters for an absentee ballot, but it also registers them to vote in federal, state and local elections.

For more, call Alkadri at DSN 468-7730 or CIV 0981-183-730.

Make your voice heard

USAG Ansbach hosts its Army Family Action Plan conference Feb. 12 and 13. The plan offers community members a chance to make their voices heard by allowing them to make suggestions on things to improve.

Idea forms and the gold boxes to put them in will be available throughout the community, including commissaries, bowling allies, health clinics, libraries, Yellow Ribbon rooms and on the garrison Web site.

All ideas will be addressed and most will be worked at the local level to ensure approved improvements take place.

For more on AFAP and how you can be active in improving things at USAG Ansbach or within the Army, call Katie Server at CIV 09802-83-2370 or send an e-mail to Katie.server@us.army.mil.

PWOC events offered

The Protestant Women of the Chapel kicks off the new year with several events:

- * Family night—pot luck dinner and a family-friendly movie Saturday from 5-8 p.m. at the Katterbach Chapel Fellowship Hall. The event is open to all, just bring your favorite dish and the PWOC supplies the movie and fellowship.

- * Spring kick off—PWOC kicks off its spring study session Tuesday from 9:30 a.m. to noon with six new studies and guest speaker Shirley Avant-Ferguson from Living Water Ministries Church.

For more, send an e-mail to Jenny Abbott at wjabbott@gmail.com or call CIV 09802-95-3117.

ACAP events slated

The Army Career and Alumni Program hosts a couple of upcoming events: Veterans Administration benefit briefing Jan. 23 and a federal application seminar Feb. 4.

Individual pre-separation counseling is by appointment only. Soldiers and their family members who are one year from a possible separation or two years from possible retirement may start ACAP.

For more information or to sign up for an event, call DSN 467-3312 or CIV 09802-83-3312.

Understanding your car with Automotive Skills classes

The USAG Ansbach Automotive Skills centers on Barton Barracks and Storck Barracks can help people learn about their cars, and give them the skills and mental tools to accomplish the seemingly impossible.

The centers offer classes on cars, schedule the classes to fit almost any schedule, offer classes for family readiness groups and other groups of people, offer individual instruction and promise to teach people what they want to learn, and not what they want to teach—all at no cost.

For more on what the centers have to offer, call the Barton center at DSN 468-7662 or CIV 0981-183-662 and the Storck Center at DSN 467-4608 or CIV 09841-83-4608.

Hook into Wi-Fi

USAG Ansbach Morale, Welfare and Recreation offers Wi-Fi connections at the Von Steuben community center, and the Katterbach and Storck Barracks bowling centers.

People can hook up their laptops and wireless devices in the centers for various rate charges: \$3.50 hourly, \$9.50 daily, \$24.50 weekly and \$39 monthly.

This service is also available at other installations in Germany and stateside.

No idle time!

The garrison's environmental staff reminds community members that allowing their car to idle on and off post is prohibited by national law.

By not allowing your car to idle, you help protect the environment from harmful emissions of carbon monoxide, oxides of nitrogen and other volatile organic compounds.

For more on how you can be a responsible environmental steward, call the staff at DSN 467-3423 or CIV 09802-83-3423.

Hit the slopes with ODR

Outdoor recreation offers many weekend and one-day ski trips this winter:

- * Saturday to Monday weekend trip to Kaprun

- * Jan. 26 day trip to Garmisch
- * Feb. 2 day trip to Feldberg
- * Feb. 9 day trip to Gross Arber
- * Feb. 16-19 weekend trip to Sölden
- * Feb. 23 day trip to Feldberg

Outdoor recreation also has ski and snowboard equipment available.

For times, costs and more info, call DSN 467-3225 or CIV 09802-83-3225.

Massage therapy offered

The Katterbach Fitness Center offers massage therapy by appointment from noon to 8 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays.

People can choose from Swedish, deep tissue and prenatal massages. Swedish massages cost \$30 for 30 minutes and \$50 for 60 minutes. Deep tissue massages cost \$30 for 30 minutes and \$60 for 60 minutes. Prenatal massages cost \$50 for 60 minutes.

For more or to schedule an appointment, call DSN 467-2771 or CIV 09802-83-2771.

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.

Looking for a place to conduct training?

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

The facility has several air-conditioned classrooms with 16 multi-media 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: Illesheim DTF – DSN 467-4373 – Commercial 09841-83-4373 – Location: Bldg 6541, Storck Barracks, Illesheim.

Bamberg Briefs

Temporary closure of gate 3

Gate 3 (main gate) will be closed Mon. Jan. 21 from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. for the installation of an additional inspection tent.

Gate 6, the Freedom Fitness Facility gate, will be used for in and out bound traffic during the closure.

Post shuttle has new schedule

The Warner Barracks shuttle bus is now running on a new schedule.

The new schedule can be found at www.bamberg.army.mil under the "Bamberg Services" menu.

Let your voice be heard

The Presidential election is right around the corner. Many citizens are eligible to vote in the Primaries in their home states, but you can't vote if you don't register!

Call DSN 469-8071 to find out what

you must do in order to vote in your district, or e-mail charles.schnepfe@eur.army.mil.

PWOC spring session today

The Bamberg Protestant Women of the Chapel will kick-off spring study sessions today at the chapel 9-11 a.m.

Six new book studies await anyone looking for fellowship, friendship, and fun.

PWOC is open to women of all denominations. Free childcare is provided. Call DSN 469-8142.

Play BSCC bingo today

Win big at the Bamberg Spouses' and Civilians' Club Italian Ceramics from Nove bingo night on tonight. Win prizes from a fine selection of Tiffany & Co. ceramics and more.

Doors open at 6 p.m. Games start at 6:30. in the BHS multi-purpose room. \$8 or \$15 packets available, including playing cards and raffle tickets.

Call info line 24/7 for weather, road conditions

Find out the current weather and road conditions for the Bamberg area by calling DSN 469-8373.

The recorded weather line information is updated every 12 hours or as conditions change and also includes a 48 hour forecast.

This service is made available by the Bamberg Emergency Operations Center.

CMR oversized mail pick-up

The CMR oversized package pick up is now located at the Transportation Motor Pool, Bldg. 7102.

Customers will receive a notification slip with instructions in their mailbox and can pick-up oversized parcels from 1 to 2 p.m. or by appointment by calling DSN 469-8710.

Oversized packages include items such as footlockers, car parts, bikes, or large toys.

Looking for a place to conduct training?

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

The facility has several air-conditioned classrooms with 16 multi-media 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: Bamberg DTF – DSN 469-8118 – Commercial 0951-300-8118 – Location: Bldg 7055, Warner Barracks, Bamberg.

Schweinfurt Briefs

Don't miss the Winter Fest

There's fun in store for the whole family at MWR's second annual Winter Fest at Finney Gym Jan. 25 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Entertainment will include jugglers, magicians, fire breathers, the Kansas City Cheerleaders, and a performance by Kojak. A variety of child and adult attractions including clowns, balloon art, velcro wall and bungee run will also be available.

B.O.S.S. events slated

Join Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers for classes, trips, and events this winter as part of the "I can do it" Success Series and "Meet and Greet" program.

- Drill a customized ball then enjoy free bowling at Kessler Bowling Center tomorrow beginning at 8 p.m.

- Warm up at the Tropical Feeling party at Conn Keller Bar Friday beginning at 5 p.m.

- Enjoy a game or two of paintball at the Conn paintball field Saturday beginning 2 p.m.

- Learn brake repair skills at the Auto Skills Center on Conn Barracks Jan. 24 at 6 p.m.

- Enjoy a free concert event featuring Kojak and take enrichment classes at the Finney Fitness Center on Conn Barracks Jan. 25 beginning at 3 p.m.

- Create your own stein (ceramics) at the Ledward Craft Studio Jan. 30 at 6 p.m.

For more information on these events, call DSN 354-6270 or CIV 0170-725-6464.

Leighton Parents Night Out offering free child care

Sign up begins Friday for Leighton CYS Parent's Night Out Jan. 26.

CYS will provide free child care for registered children ages 6 weeks to fifth grade.

To reserve a spot, call DSN 350-7762 or CIV 0931-889-7762.

Dagger memorial dedication

Come to the Dagger memorial dedication to honor our fallen Soldiers at the Dagger Rose Garden on Conn Barracks Jan. 23.

Ceremony begins at 10:30 a.m. The community is invited to attend.

Enrichment for 1-91 deployed community

Come to Army Community Services' class "Don't sweat the deployment stuff" in the Ledward Yellow Ribbon Room.

The Jan. 22 class from 6-8 p.m. is geared toward adults involved with the 1-91 deployment.

The Jan. 24 class from 5-7 p.m. is for kids to interact and ask questions about the deployment.

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

Estate claim for Capt. Boris

Anyone having claims on or obligations to the estate of Capt. David Boris of 1-91 CAV should contact the following summary court martial officer: 1st Lt. Richard Darroux at DSN 469-7796.

Free computer classes

Learn to be computer savvy by attending free computer classes offered by Army Community Service at the Schweinfurt digital training center in Finney Gym.

Classes include:

- Advanced Word on Tuesday,
- Advanced Excel on Jan. 23,
- Power Point Jan. 24, and
- Access Jan. 25.

All classes run from 8 a.m. to 12:50 p.m. For each class, participants will receive a certificate of completion.

To sign up, call DSN 354-6933 or CIV 09721-96-6933.

Smooth move seminar scheduled Jan. 24

Leaving the community? Army Community Service wants to help "smooth" your transition.

Attend a seminar at Leighton ACS on Jan. 24 from 9 a.m. to noon to get tips on packing, shipping, moving with pets and more.

For additional information, call DSN 350-7103 or CIV 0931-889-7103.

Spouses club luncheon, talent show slated Jan. 23

Join the Schweinfurt Community Spouses Club for a luncheon and talent show at Brauhaus am Markt restaurant in Schweinfurt at 11:30 a.m. Jan. 23.

Lunch is 10 Euro. Please RSVP to scsersvp@gmail.com.

Enjoy the monthly Lunch Bunch with ACS Jan. 24

Enjoy a budget and family-oriented lunch on the economy.

Join Army Community Service for the monthly lunch bunch at Hornpfad on Johann-Sebastian-Bach Str. 2, Schweinfurt on Jan. 24.

Meet at Ledward ACS to car pool at 11 a.m. For more information, call DSN 354-6933 or CIV 09721-96-6933.

Free four-week German class begins Jan. 23

Learn basic German communication skills in a free four-week course at Ledward Army Community Service. Class begins Jan. 23 and will be held every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

To sign up, call DSN 354-6933 or CIV 09721-96-6933.

Don't miss ODR ski and snowboard trip

Sign up now for Outdoor Recreation's ski and snowboard trips to Salzburgerland, Austria Friday to Monday or to Dolomites, Italy Feb. 15-18.

The price is \$269 per adult per trip and includes transportation, three overnights, three breakfasts, ski or snowboard rental, and lessons. Ski lift ticket is not included.

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

Daddy Basic Training

Learn parenting skills in a highly entertaining and interactive hands-on class offered at Ledward Army Community Service Jan. 25 from 5:30-8:30 p.m. For more information, call DSN 354-6933 or CIV 09721-96-6933.

Meet Curious George at Ledward Shoppette

Curious George will be visiting the Ledward Shoppette for story time and a kids' coloring contest.

Coloring contest submissions must be entered before Friday to be judged. Age categories are 2 and under, 3 to 4 years old, 5 to 7 years old, and older.

Story time with Curious George will be Friday, Saturday, and Monday from 12:30 p.m. to 1 p.m.

Photos with Curious George will be at the photo shop from 11 a.m. to noon Friday and Saturday. Photo sizes 5x7 or four wallets are \$5.

Communication class offered for couples slated Jan. 29

Attend a couple's communication class at Ledward Army Community Service on Jan. 29 from 2-4 p.m. Develop trust and friendship with the one you love by learning better communication and conflict resolution skills. To sign up, call DSN 354-6933 or CIV 09721-96-6933.

AFTB II classes answers your Army questions

Attend Army Family Team Building classes to get answers to your Army questions and grow in knowledge and skills at the Ledward Education Center Monday through Thursday from 8:45 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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

Shake it up with Salsa dancing lessons Jan. 30

Learn some moves and shake it up on the dance floor! Schweinfurt Army Community Service is offering salsa dancing lessons as part of a "Couples can do it" series.

Class will be held at the Abrams Entertainment Center in Schweinfurt Jan. 30 from 6 – 8 p.m.

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

ODR fishing license class scheduled Jan. 25-27

A fishing license class will be offered at Outdoor Recreation Jan. 25-27.

Class starts Friday evening and concludes Sunday afternoon.

For more information or to sign up, call DSN 353-8080 or CIV 09721-96-8080.

Looking for a place to conduct training?

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

The facility has several air-conditioned classrooms with 16 multi-media 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: Schweinfurt DTF – DSN 353-8564 – Commercial 09721-96-8564 – Location: Bldg 64, 2nd floor, Conn Barracks, Schweinfurt.

Chess board making class

Craft a chess board by attending an instructional class Wednesdays from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Wood 'N' Frame Shop in Schweinfurt.

The cost is \$50 for three sessions, including materials and instructions. To sign up, call DSN 354-6304 or CIV 09721-96-6304.

Scrapbook your memories for free with ACS

Join Army Community Service for scrapbooking on Tuesday at the Arts and Crafts Studio on Ledward Barracks starting at 1 p.m.

All materials and instruction is provided free of charge as part of the "I Can Do It" Success Series.

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

Pilot program helping ID mTBI

Continued From Page 1

“The screening is intended to take pre-deployment measurements for a baseline, then retest after the deployment to measure for differences,” said Lt. Col. Daniel Duecker, Schweinfurt Health Clinic commander.

In the case of the Soldiers of the Dagger Brigade, however, no baseline reading was taken prior to their deployment. As such, Col. Mary Lopez, project officer in charge of the testing project, was unsure what kind of results, if any, her team would uncover.

Lopez added that the range of results considered normal is broad, and of all the pre-screenings performed, “we’ve not found anyone that legitimately fell below the norms.” This is why having a baseline for comparison is more precise, as it allows us to compare the Soldier’s performance to his or her own norms.

What they found in testing Schweinfurt Soldiers, however, surprised Lopez and her team.

Thanks to key questions imbedded in the ANAM tests, Lopez and her team were able to identify Soldiers at risk for mTBI and recommend follow-up through the Schweinfurt Health

Clinic.

The key factors in a case of mTBI include an injury event—such as a blow to the head—which causes an alteration of consciousness. This “alteration” can be losing consciousness, seeing stars or simply being temporarily disoriented.

“Compared to those who reported no injury, we found significant differences in reaction time, concentration, and short term memory” in Soldiers reporting at-risk incidents, Lopez explained.

Results from the first groups to complete mTBI screening were provided to the local medical command.

“Col. Lopez’s team was able to... let the providers here know what they can expect to see in Schweinfurt, so that we can channel our resources in the best way to help these Soldiers,” said Col. Theresa Schneider, Bavaria MEDDAC commander.

Once the pilot program is fully tested, Lopez hopes to push it out to medical facilities in theater, where Soldiers can be tested and their recovery tracked by the doctors downrange.

“Soldiers (with mTBI), like football players on the field, look



Photo by Kimberly Gearhart

Col. Mary Lopez, project officer in charge of the mTBI testing project, and Robert Robinson, one of the IT managers helping launch testing, review equipment used to screen Soldiers for mTBI.

physically normal, but they’re different. Their reaction time is off, concentration is off, and in a war-time environment, that’s very dangerous,” Lopez said. With the ANAM tool, doctors will be able to monitor recovery in such a way as to insure Soldiers are not returned to the fight until their recovery is complete.

“It is a treatable condition. They do recover and improve,” Lopez said, noting that patience, time, and understanding are keys to coping with and treating mTBI.

If Soldiers or their Families have concerns or notice signs, contact the Schweinfurt Health Clinic for additional assistance.

Graf gets Dagger Brigade, Schweinfurt receives engineers

Continued From Page 1

associated with this move,” Burton said during a press conference at his headquarters Thursday, noting that the unit has not yet completed the formal and final analysis, down to the individual and family, of who will move and when.

“We’re pretty comfortable with this initial move. But I’ll tell you, there’s a lot of hard work and a lot of hard analysis yet to be done so we can attend to every Soldier and family on an individual basis,” Burton said.

The plan calls for evaluating the normally scheduled personnel moves, directing some Soldiers, when possible, inbound from the United States straight to Grafenwoehr, all the while treating all the Soldiers and families with dignity and respect, Burton said.

“We want to make sure that we are not disenfranchising anyone unnecessarily,” he said.

While looking ahead to the Dagger Brigade’s future home, Burton noted the importance that Schweinfurt and its training facilities have played in the unit’s history.

“I think Schweinfurt is a tremendous community. It has provided this brigade outstanding support. The citizens of Schweinfurt, the local training facilities, have been outstanding in preparing this brigade combat team for its missions extremely successfully,” he said. “I have tremendous confidence in what Schweinfurt delivers to the United States military,” adding that the local training area is “absolutely perfectly suited for a combat engineer battalion,” such as the one headed for Schweinfurt.

The garrison staffs at both ends of the transition are already working to fully support McKiernan’s directive.

“We will do everything we can to make the transition as transparent as possible for the Soldiers and families of the Dagger Brigade,” said Lt. Col. Anthony Haager, U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt commander.

Plan ahead, take steps to ensure smooth pet moves

Continued From Page 1

cannot be expired. There are one-year and three-year rabies vaccines, and it’s a good idea to find out when your pet’s vaccination expires. If traveling to Hawaii, Japan, or England, there are additional vaccination requirements which a call to the vet clinic can clarify. Having your pet’s vaccinations up-to-date will avoid the possibility of the animal being quarantined at your destination.

Additionally, a health certificate must be issued within ten days of your departure. Goodnight recommends calling the clinic to schedule an appointment once the date of flight is known. This certificate validates that your pet is healthy enough to fly.

German veterinary clinics can also do the check-up, but they often don’t have the correct form needed for travel outside of the European Union. Goodnight suggests touching base with the military vet clinic to make sure all required forms are completed.

Having multiple copies of the health certificate and rabies vaccination to fasten to the carrier and to carry with you during your travels is vital.

The second step involves contacting the specific airline on which you will be traveling.

The airline should be able to tell you if your pet carrier can be considered a carry-on to be stowed under the seat or if the animal must be checked in as excess baggage. Other requirements should also be explained, like the need for absorbent bedding and when to feed and water the pet before departure.

“Not everyone who answers the phone has the correct information,” Goodnight said, adding that she had to call an airline several times before she got the information she needed.

The third step includes a variety of ways to make your pet comfortable during their travels.

Goodnight suggests putting a favorite toy as well as an unwashed shirt with the owner’s scent on it into the traveling container to give the animal

a sense of security. She also recommends using the traveling container on a regular basis at home.

“Don’t only bring the kennel out when something stressful is going to happen,” she said, explaining how the animals need to think of it as a non-threatening place to go.

Bringing food as a carry-on is encouraged. It’s also important to make sure that the food your pet eats is available for sale at your destination. You don’t want to have to change their diet abruptly, because it will disturb their digestive tract.

If your animal is on any medication, be sure to have at least a month’s supply so that you can have time to settle into your new location before having to find a clinic to refill it.

If all three steps are covered, pet and owner can rest assured that their travels will go smoothly and should any other questions remain, “the vet is your biggest resource. We help people PCS (everyday). If we don’t have the answer, we have the resources to find the answer,” Goodnight said.



MILITARY CHILD EDUCATION COALITION™
CALL FOR THE ARTS:

The Art of Being a Military Child





ARTWORK • FILM • WRITING

Open to all military-connected children, kindergarten through high school.

ARTWORK:
Selected submissions in the visual arts will be featured in art exhibits at the Military Child Education Coalition™ 10th Annual Conference. Art may also appear in the conference program, annual calendar, the MCEC™ On the Move® magazine, or other MCEC™ publications.

FILM:
Selected film entries will be considered for the “Real Military” Youth Film and Video Festival at the Military Child Education Coalition™ 10th Annual Conference.

WRITING: POETRY AND SHORT STORIES
Selected poetry will be published in the Military Child Education Coalition™ 10th Annual Conference program, the MCEC™ On the Move® magazine, annual calendar or other MCEC™ publications.

Suggested Topics:

- Parents
- The cultures you’ve experienced
- Family
- Helping your community
- Military lifestyle
- Transitions/changes
- The life lessons you’ve learned
- Your wishes, hopes, and dreams
- All the people you’ve met

Deadline:
All submissions are due no later than March 3, 2008.

Mail submissions to:
Military Child Education Coalition
105 East FM 2410, Suite D
Harbor Heights, TX 76548

If you have any questions regarding the Call for the Arts, please contact the MCEC™ at (254) 953-1923.



MCEC™ - The Art of Being a Military Child
ARTWORK
WRITING: POETRY OR SHORT STORY

Deadline for entries: March 3, 2008

CALL FOR ARTWORK & POETRY/SHORT STORIES

The MCEC™ is looking for children’s artwork, poems, and short stories. Selected submissions in the visual arts will be featured in art exhibits at the Military Child Education Coalition™ 2008 Annual Conference. Selected art, poetry, and essays may also appear in the conference program, annual calendar, the MCEC™ On the Move® magazine, or other MCEC™ publications.

To ensure the child and school receives proper recognition, make sure all the guidelines are met. The entries will be jury selected. Entries will not be returned.

General Entry Guidelines:

- All submissions must be related to being a military child.
- Only original artwork and poetry will be accepted. **Please do not submit any work that is copied from a book, the Web, or clipart.**
- Children grades Pre-K through 12th may submit entries.
- We will not accept submissions that are e-mailed or on disk. All work must be in its original form.
- All work must have a permission form signed by the parent, and be attached to the submission.
- Use only the forms provided by the MCEC™.
- All work must be clearly labeled on the back with the following information:

1. Child’s full name	3. School address (including city and state/country)
2. Grade	4. Contact phone number
3. Teacher’s name	5. Contact e-mail address
4. School	

Entry Guidelines for Artwork:

- All submissions must be 8.5” x 11” or smaller.
- Submissions may be in the medium of your choice.
- Color or black and white submissions are accepted.
- Please use BRIGHT COLORS or DARK, BOLD designs.

Entry Guidelines for Poetry and Short Stories:

- Poetry must not be more than one page (8.5” x 11”) long.
- Short stories must be 500 WORDS OR LESS.
- Please do not include people’s last names in poetry or short story submissions.
- Please title your submission, or give it the name “Untitled.”

Deadline: All submissions must be received by March 3, 2008.

Mail submissions to:
Military Child Education Coalition
105 East FM 2410, Suite D
Harbor Heights, TX 76548

NCOA wins top honors

Continued From Page 1

According to Welborn, the S-4 is more like a tight knit family than coworkers. In the summer they can often be found having a barbeque during their lunch hour. Members also spend some of their off-hours together getting to know each other.

“We look at this office as a whole,” said Sgt. William Coy the NCOA armor “Nothing falls through the cracks around because if someone is not here we know someone can pick up the ball and run with it. Communication and teamwork were key players in our office winning this award.”

The NCO Academy S-4 shop provides support for more than 4,000 Soldiers a year. The office supplies linens, cleaning supplies, weapons and a variety of materials for students and instructors alike to better enhance the learning process.

The results of the Army-level competition are scheduled to be released in April or May.

The Bavarian News staff would like to thank all of the community members who helped us improve our coverage in 2007 by calling in great story ideas and submitting articles and photos for your events! THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO!

Commander discusses CAB deployment

Task Force XII: all well despite mission change, intense

by JIM HUGHES
Bavarian News

Six months into their deployment to Iraq, the commander of the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade and Task Force XII says the community's Soldiers are doing fine and have lots to be proud of thanks to their hard work and sacrifices.

Col. Timothy J. Edens took time to conduct a phone interview Jan. 7 to share his thoughts on the deployment, and Soldiers' work on the ground and in the not-so-friendly skies of Iraq.

Edens began by saying there are three major things he's most proud of during the first part of the deployment.

"First and foremost, we've gone through six months of combat operations without the loss of a Soldier through accidents or mishaps," he said. "Second, even after intense preparations for deployment, through deployment and then intense combat operations, we led U.S. Army, Europe in retention. This is extraordinary given the task at hand and the work we ask Soldiers to do every day."

He said the reasons behind the retention rate are USAREUR is a great place to serve and that "from the commanding general to me to our commanders on down to the front line supervisors, we're dedicated to

showing the Soldiers we care about them and their families."

Third on his list is how well the Soldiers pulled off a major shift in mission that saw parts of the CAB peel off in mid December to go to Camp Taji to support the flying mission in and around Baghdad.

Edens, the Task Force XII commander, part of the 412th Aviation Support Battalion and the 3-158th Aviation Regiment all moved to Taji to join a Fort Hood, Texas, unit as the aviation task force for Multi-National Division-Baghdad.

"I'm extremely proud of our Soldiers—their professionalism and dedication are remarkable," he said. "The split is just another indicator of how flexible our Soldiers and leadership are."

He said the new mission is different from what had been the norm.

"Instead of flying all over Iraq, we're focused more on operations surrounding Baghdad. It's a difference in scope more than what we are doing—that hasn't changed."

The unit has flown 9,540 missions, with 1,600 of those being attack

missions, 85 air assaults. The unit also has moved more than 84,000 passengers, Edens said.

And while all that work has directly contributed to increasing security and stability in Iraq, the colonel understands that many Ansbach prayers and thoughts are on the safety and well-being of the community's Soldiers.

"It is combat, and you can only be so safe in combat," he said. "But everything we do is briefed, rehearsed and there is a great amount of leadership involvement in everything we do. There are definite improvements in the security in Iraq compared to when we first got here."

The Soldiers are expected to start rotating back in the September-October timeframe, and are in the midst of completing their rest and recuperation leave times.

"Things are always changing, but these are the timeframes we're working with," Edens said. "The R&R rotations are going very well—we're having great success in getting Soldiers to their families and then getting them back to continue the mission."

"The R&R program is essential to carrying on operations here—without it, we'd have many more problems," he added. "Leadership understands it is important and has made it a priority—it is essential to effective combat operations."

While the breaks will come in handy in keeping Soldiers motivated, Edens said everyone is still on guard against complacency.

"We talk to our Soldiers every day about the serious work they do and the significant mission we have," he said. "Our Soldiers are far-sighted and they see the inherent goodness in what we're doing to help Iraqis become independent, self-sufficient nation that takes care of its people."

"I also go out into their workplaces and remind them that their buddy to the left and their buddy to the right of them are a primary—if not the primary—motivation they should have to do things right and safely. It is essential in getting everyone home. Our Soldiers care about each other, and they are turned on and alert every day."

And for the families, it is a similar message.

"I remind them that we all volunteered for this job. Their Soldiers are dedicated to the mission and they should be proud of them," he added. "This is a marathon—hang in there! The Soldiers are doing a fantastic job. We keep the lines of communication open and we care deeply for the whole brigade—the families sacrifice every day so Soldiers can do their jobs."

Edens concluded by thanking the people in the community for all they do to support the Soldiers.

"Families should be extremely proud of what our Soldiers have accomplished—they put mission first and have asked you to sacrifice for a cause that is worth it," he said. "Eventually the world will recognize that the U.S. is here for the right reasons. The Soldiers are doing a great job, they're doing well, they miss you and they look forward to returning home later this year."

"We have outstanding families and community back home—we couldn't do our mission as well or at all without the great support of the garrison, the families and the community. I couldn't be prouder of everyone involved."

“ There are definite improvements in the security in Iraq compared to when we first got here. ”

“ Our Soldiers care about each other, and they are turned on and alert every day. ”

U.S. college interns help alleviate child care need

Story and photo by
RONALD H. TOLAND JR
Bavarian News

Ten college students from the United States joined forces with U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach Child and Youth Services to help meet an increased need for child care providers as part of an internship program—Camp Adventure—through their colleges.

Arriving here Dec. 20, the interns will be in community child care centers and youth services facilities until Jan. 19, benefitting themselves and the community, said Heather Lammers, Katterbach Child Development Center director and the interns' supervisor.

Lammers said the need for child care in the community has substantially increased because of the deployment.

"Our staff is primarily made up of spouses and when their Soldiers returned for Rest and Recuperation leave—which began at the end of December 2007 and is effective through the end of June—they took leave to be with them," Lammers said.

"We were projecting out and determined that we were going to need additional help in order to make sure we maintain our ratios, have coverage at the center and continue to maintain a quality program," she said.

Lammers and the CYS staff worked with Installation Management Command-Europe for a solution to the problem.

"Hiring new staff was not going to solve it and we did not want to find ourselves in the same situation shuffling staff around," she said. "So my supervisor worked with them to come up with what we have now with the interns."

Bringing in help from outside the military community also has its plusses—including the interns not bringing with them the traditional stresses of Army families, like dealing with deployments, Lammers said.

"They also bring in a new level of excitement, enthusiasm, and ideas—which is infectious and it affects the other staff members as well," she said.

Lammers added that the center will continue to utilize interns throughout the deployment until they can ensure full coverage for the community.

Covering community child care needs is important, but interns also benefit greatly from the program, although what they're doing for Army Families is not lost on them, said Rachel Butera, a student from The University of Northern Iowa.

Originally an education major, Butera changed to social work and now is a recent graduate working in the CDC.

"University of Northern Iowa is the Headquarters of Camp Adventure and that's why we are here," she said of the program originally founded at the University of Oregon in 1985 by Dr. Christopher R. Edginton. "Camp Adventure is a non-profit organization that works primarily via contracts with the Department of Defense providing year-round internship programs for students with all majors."

"This is our call of duty," Butera said. "We are here because our services are needed in these facilities—there is a shortage of CDC staff and I know I am helping out those in need."

"We are not serving in the military, but we are helping military families by providing child care—which is rewarding in itself—in addition



Rachel Butera, intern from University of Northern Iowa, consoles Justin Britton and Major Roundtree during playtime at the Katterbach Child Development Center, where she works with 3 to 5 year olds. After this internship, she plans to begin a job in the social work field with delinquent children in a day treatment program, and then later begin work on her masters in social work.

to working with the kids and seeing them develop," she added. "I have family in the service, too, so I understand and can relate to all of it—having people gone, deployed, etc."

Rachel Gonzales, a junior at The University of Toledo in Ohio, who also just switched majors—from social work to recreation and leisure studies—works with Butera at the Katterbach CDC.

"I found Camp Adventure by accident actually at a job fair at my school two years ago.

This is my third time out in the program and my second time here in Germany," she said. "I wanted to be here for the kids. After my first summer, I realized the great impact that they made on me and I on them."

"I really see the results I have had on the kids. It makes me happy. In addition, to see the parents happy, it's amazing! They have to be strong in this environment with their spouses absent, which means I have to be strong as a provider," Gonzales said. "Leaving the kids is the hardest part."



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Troops introduced to Iraqi Air Force

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

You might be surprised to know that American Soldiers and Iraqi Soldiers have a lot in common. Besides the obvious fact that they both love their countries and volunteered to defend them, many of them have a love for aviation.

Soldiers from Task Force XII got a chance to learn this and more about soldiers in the Iraqi Air Force when they exchanged aviation stories during Iraqi Partnership Day in December.

"The main goal of this day is to continue to improve the relationship between the U.S. and Iraqi military," said Col. Timothy J. Edens, the commander of Task Force XII and an AH-64 Apache pilot. "It's important for us, as aviators, to have a strong relationship with our Iraqi counterparts."

The relationship between these coalition aviation forces began with 1st Air Cavalry Brigade and grew over the course of their deployment.

It has been a privilege to participate in this partnership day and continue to improve this special relationship with such a skilled group of soldiers, said 1st ACB commander, Col. Dan Shanahan.

The partnership day began with a visit to the

Taji Wing, Air Force area of operation. This is where the Iraqi Air Force lives, trains and works.

"I would personally like to express my thanks to the U.S. military for all the help they have provided," said Gen. Sati, commander of the Taji Wing, Air Force. "Through our military relations, we have successfully achieved the targeted goals for the Iraqi Air Force."

During the tour, Sati, who is also a pilot, gave Edens and Shanahan a tour of the inside of a Mi-17 and a few other Iraq aircraft.

"It's a great honor for me to have Gen. Sati and his soldiers take the time to give us a tour of their facilities," said Edens. "I'm confident that (our) pilots will learn as much from them as they will from us."

"I'm an old crew chief and I think it's outstanding how much they take pride in their jobs," said Task Force XII Command Sgt. Maj. H Lee Kennedy. "I'd fly with these guys any day."

After the tour, several Iraqi Air Force personnel were invited to Command Sgt. Maj. Cook Dining Facility for a dinner with the leadership from Task Force XII and 1st ACB.

"These guys are just a wonderful group of soldiers, and I think they're very eloquent and total professionals," said Kennedy. "I'm proud to know that we will get the opportunity to work with such a wonderful bunch of guys."

During the dinner, Shanahan was presented



Col. Timothy J. Edens, the commander of Task Force XII and an AH-64 Apache pilot, talks with members of the Iraqi Air Force about different flight experiences during an Iraqi Partnership Day in December. Members of the Iraqi Air Force also joined Soldiers from Task Force XII for dinner at Command Sgt. Maj. Cook Dining Facility.

Force protection exercise keeps Soldiers on their toes



Spc. David Leopold, a fuel handler from Company E, 3rd Battalion 158th Aviation Regiment, stands guard outside a tactical operations center during a base force protection exercise in December. Leopold is one of several Soldiers in Task Force XII who rarely leave the base, but stands ready in case of an attack.

Story and photo by
Sgt. 1st Class CHRIS SEATON
Task Force XII Public Affairs Office

Spc. David Leopold sat in the break room of the brigade air defense operations center. A fuel handler for Company E, 3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, Leopold is used to working hard.

For the past few days, he'd been doing just that while manning a guard tower on his forward operating base just outside Baghdad.

It's part of the job for Soldiers of all military occupational specialties while stationed in Iraq. For days at a time, they leave their flight lines, motor pools and offices to gear up and watch a fence line.

On the inside of the fence is the Iraq they know—sand bag-covered container housing units, dining facilities, rocks and mud. On the other side, an Iraqi city bustles with street vendors, children playing soccer and an ever-increasing flurry of activity signaling new life in a war-torn country.

For many, like Leopold, watching the city from a tower is as close as they'll get to life outside the FOB.

Sitting in the break room, he and others were watching a movie between

shifts when a voice broke over the radio with a single code word that instantly told the Soldiers, "We are under attack!"

Leopold sprang to life. His body reacted before his mind could process the next steps, and before he knew it he was standing in full body armor waiting for instructions. He was sent to guard an important tactical operations center.

"When an attack happens, everybody (on tower guard duty) not manning the tower is sent to areas on base to guard sensitive property," said Leopold, a native of Lawton, Okla. "There's no set time limit for how fast we have to be in place, we just move as quickly as we can to secure the area."

This one was just an exercise. The base was still secure, and all was well at Camp Taji, but training like this is important for a lot of reasons, say those who participated.

"It's a good reminder that we're still in a combat zone," said Leopold. "The war doesn't stop on an FOB just

because we put up a fence. Anything can happen."

"The attack exercise simulates what would happen if the base were

“It's a good reminder that we're still in a combat zone.”

Spc. David Leopold
Co. E, 3rd Bn., 158th Avn. Regt.

overrun," said San Antonio, Texas, native Sgt. 1st Class Shon Skinner, the Task Force XII force protection non-commissioned officer. "In an aviation unit, we've got a pretty important task of protecting this airfield."

During the exercise, organizers watch to see how people will react. They have goals for what should happen if a base is attacked and the exercise lets them see what actually happens.

"We put a lot of emphasis on getting it right, and I put a lot of stress on Soldiers," said Skinner. "We have to see what happens, and what their attitudes are when we start inducing stress."

Statistics in the global war on

terrorism say the chances of a forward operating base being attacked by anything beyond the occasional mortar or indirect fire are low.

And Taji's brigade combat team Soldiers, who regularly patrol the streets of Baghdad, tell stories and bring back photos of reconciliation and improved security.

But insurgents in Iraq have tried the coordinated attacks on other bases. So far, none have succeeded—and practicing the attack drill helps keep it that way.

"Personally, I don't see (an attack on Taji) happening, but it's comforting to know we have a plan," said Task Force XII network systems operator, Spc. Bryan Coffey, who hails from Anderson, S.C. "It could definitely save lives by getting us into place if something did happen."

"We are ready (for something to happen), and we'll always be ready," said Skinner. "If not, we'll continue to train until we are."

For Leopold, the message was clear. Whether or not he's seen it in his six months of pumping fuel in Iraq, the war that his hard work supports outside the fence is very real.

"I guess anything can happen inside or outside," he said. "We're going to be ready for either one."

Task Force becomes prototype for Army's plug-and-play aviation units

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

In theory, any UH-60 Black Hawk crew can get into any Black Hawk, cleared for duty, and fly it because both the crew and the aircraft are built and held to the same standard throughout the Army.

This type of plug-and-play strategy is being applied to aviation units as the Army continues to transform into a more mobile fighting force.

Task Force Storm is one of the first aviation battalions to plug a borrowed flight company into their operations to replace a company that's been given another mission.

"We're almost like a prototype," said Task Force Storm Command Sgt. Maj. Chad Cuomo. "The Army has been doing (plug and play) for a long time in combat arms units, but this is fairly new to aviation."

Although the plug and play strategy might be fresh to many aviation units, this isn't the first time

this Task Force XII battalion has incorporated another company into its operations.

"In Germany, we had an AH-64 Apache company and a CH-47 Chinook company attached to us during our mission readiness exercise," said Cuomo, a career crew chief and native of Troy, N.Y. "And at Logistics Support Area Anaconda, we had Company B, 5th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, a Chinook company, attached to us for operational support."

The decision was made to leave Company B 5-158th and Company B, 3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment at LSA Anaconda, to help support operations, and make Stetson Troop, 4th Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment the newest addition to the task force.

Stetson Troop, the only Black Hawk flight company from Fort Hood, Texas' 4/3 ACR, is still working to figure out its role in Task Force Storm, said 1st Lt. Delvin Goode, the executive officer for Stetson Troop.

"Making adjustments is just part of the Army," said Goode, a Black Hawk pilot from Fort Walton, Fla. "We're still going through our relief in place, but we are eager to help any way we can to do the mission."

This flight company, along with 3-158th's Company A and Company C, will rotate through the battalion's three mission sets.

"One will do air assaults, one will take care of the air mission requests and one will do VIP support," said Cuomo. "It's a positive aspect, to me, because that will give all the aviation people experience in doing the different missions."

Staff Sgt. Eric Holmes, the battalion standardization instructor, was sent down to help train and progress some of their inexperienced crew chiefs and door-gunners, he said.

"Pilots have always been taught the same across the board, but crew chiefs were put on the back burner," said Holmes, a native of California. "Now, with the Army getting more involved with crew chief and door-

gunner training, their standards are the same as ours."

"Stetson Troop is fully capable of doing whatever is asked of them," said

Holmes. "I'm positive they'll blend right in (with our operations) and the only difference between us will be that they have on another unit patch."



Pfc. Patrick McDaniel, a crew chief in Stetson Troop, works on the rotor of a UH-60 Black hawk. Stetson Troop, a flight company from 4th Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, is the newest addition to Task Force Storm.

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Warrior transition unit helping Soldiers heal

by ANNE M. TORPHY
BMEDDAC Public Affairs Officer

The United States Army has initiated a new way of helping injured soldiers through the creation of the Warrior Transition Unit. Soldiers are able to focus on their medical issues, and receive priority health appointments, along with assistance in other areas.

Three categories

In Europe, there are three categories of injured Soldiers eligible for the Warrior Transition Unit: Soldiers that require a Medical Evaluation Board; Soldiers who require complex medical care for longer than six months and unable to contribute to the mission; and Reserve Soldiers on Active Duty Medical Extension status.

Once accepted into the WTU, Soldiers focus on the mission to heal so that they may either return to their current MOS; re-class into another MOS that suits their permanent profile; or reenter the civilian world.

Positive feedback

Sgt. Timothy Conley, who has seen seven deployments in 18 years, is

typical in stating that the WTU and cadre have been excellent.

"The cadre makes sure you get to your appointment, and they're knowledgeable about physicals, which help you determine your choices," said Conley. "All my issues that got pushed to the side were expedited. Now I'm getting all my medical issues taken care of, then I can move on with my career."

Sgt. Ronald Leon agrees. "I'm able to focus on my healing," said Leon. "My old unit was very supportive, but I wanted to work and I couldn't."

Leon is taking computer classes and is planning to return to Puerto Rico as a minister.

Hand selected for service

1st Sgt. Paul Ninelist has deployed five times in his 22 years of service, including during the first Gulf War, and was hand selected for the WTU cadre by Brig. Gen. Michael S. Tucker, Assistant Surgeon General for Warrior Care and Transition.

Ninelist is committed to the education of his Soldiers during their time in his unit, regardless of their goals for WTU.

"The Army provides free classes for Soldiers; and they only have to pay for books," he said. "If Soldiers choose to stay in the Army, education helps them with promotions; if they get out, they have a chance for a better job."

Resume services, career fairs

Ninelist also likes to encourage Soldiers to take advantage of the resume services and career fairs provided by the Army.

The camaraderie among the WTU cadre is unmistakable. They are a dedicated and veteran group; and many have served the majority of their careers in a combat arms military occupational specialty, or MOS, such as infantry or tanker. They take this new challenge very seriously and are using their past training to execute their mission – support the Wounded Warriors. This includes dealing with transportation to appointments, handling administrative paperwork, dealing with barracks/housing arrangements, and overseeing job assignments for Soldiers.

Giving back

1st Sgt. Ron Quinn, Schweinfurt WTU cadre, is adamant in stating,

"Whatever it takes, we're going to do it. They were fighting for our families; and now we need to help them heal. We wear two hats; with one we have a big heart; with the other, we're big on discipline."

Discipline is a key component of the daily routine. Soldiers must be present for 6:30 a.m. to do physical training within their profile.

A formation occurs later in the morning so that the cadre knows each soldier's schedule for the day, be it appointments or part-time work assignments. Soldiers usually are responsible to attend one more formation in the afternoon as well.

Still professionals

Soldiers are still expected to behave professionally, regardless of injury, according to Col. Theresa M. Schneider, commander of BMEDDAC and Bavaria WTU. At a recent WTU gathering in Schweinfurt, she reminded them that they all must follow three rules—No. 1. Take care of yourself as a patient and heal; No. 2. Take care of each other; and No. 3. Live by the army values.

A common theme reiterated by all is that the WTU is evolving based on

feedback by Soldiers, cadre and the services who support them.

Coordinating care

Due to the serious nature of many WTU soldiers' injuries, many have regular appointments at Landstuhl Hospital that require overnight accommodations.

Sgt. Kennedy, WTU Schweinfurt cadre, says that WTU Landstuhl has worked hand-in-hand with him to ensure that Soldiers have some sort of place to stay, including barracks rooms, when necessary.

The WTU footprint

The Warrior Transition Unit Bavaria is the largest in Europe; with over 120 Soldiers in five locations: Bamberg, Hohenfels, Illesheim/Katterbach, Schweinfurt, and Vilseck/Grafenwoehr. The footprint covers 27,241 square miles.

If a Soldier should be reassigned to a WTU, unit commanders must submit a DA Form 4187 and a commander's letter of justification to the local Warrior Transition Unit Commander.

For more information about the Warrior Transition Unit, visit www.healthcare.hqsareur.army.mil/.

PTSD: *When in doubt about emotional feelings of redeployment, seek medical attention*

Story and photo by CHUCK ROBERTS
Landstuhl Regional Medical Center Public Affairs

Persistent chest pain, difficulty breathing and high fever are symptoms that normally prompt people to seek medical help.

Anger, apathy, irritability and insomnia can also be symptoms alerting Soldiers they may need medical treatment, said Dr. (Lt. Col.) Gary Southwell, an Army psychologist at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center.

For Soldiers redeploying from downrange, such symptoms can often be normal reactions to abnormal situations encountered in Afghanistan or Iraq. When Soldiers find themselves struggling to cope, Southwell encourages seeking help.

"Just look at it as a checkup," Southwell said. "If you're feeling odd, it doesn't hurt just to get checked out. Just come on in and say, 'This is what I'm going through,' and we can help sort it out."

When they do seek medical help, Soldiers often learn they are experiencing normal symptoms and are going through a normal recovery. For those requiring more extensive help, Southwell there are a variety of avenues for treatment, such as anger management classes, and individual or group therapy. In some cases, a physical problem may be discovered during a behavioral health examination, Southwell said.

Thanks in part to increased awareness and strong backing from the Army chief of staff and leadership down the chain, more Soldiers view seeking such help as a normal and positive thing,

Southwell said.

"People now feel like it's an acceptable condition just like any other medical condition," Southwell said. "It's one of the hazards of war, and problems such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder need to be evaluated and treated just like any other medical condition."

However, some remain reluctant to seek help for reasons such as fear of being seen as weak, or concerns that coming forward may be a career killer in regards to security clearances. Behavioral health is part of the security clearance coordination, but Southwell said anyone's record of seeking treatment is viewed as a positive indicator.

Seeking help is the key, Southwell stresses, because "if you seek help, you get better." In order to help Soldiers better recognize their need for help, the military has established a Post Deployment Health Reassessment given to Soldiers six months after returning from deployment.

The PDHR has proven a beneficial tool, Southwell said, because it helps identify problems that may arise months after taking a similar assessment immediately following redeployment while still experiencing the euphoria of coming home.

In some cases, however, a Soldier may need the help of family or friends to help identify possible symptoms of PTSD or Traumatic Brain Injury and to suggest they seek help. That can be true especially with chronic PTSD when a Soldier is more likely to internalize his or her problems and become emotionally distant,



Screening for traumatic brain injury is a routine part of patient care at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center. The screenings seek the potential effects of incidents that occurred while deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq.

Southwell said.

"We know for sure there are still a lot of Soldiers who are not coming forward, who have not been identified, and some who have been misidentified," Southwell said.

Although early detection is more advantageous, lengthy delays in seeking treatment are still overcome. About one year ago, Southwell began treating a Soldier who felt he had PTSD from Operation Iraqi Freedom and

was concerned he was scarred for life. However, a year later he is almost completely recovered and is expected to make a full recovery, and all the while being able to remain on the job.

But if treatment is never sought, the pain can continue forever, Southwell said.

"The door is open for people to get help. If you feel you are having problems and need someone to talk to, please let someone know and seek help," Southwell said.

CSM Althea Green Dixon becomes top NCO for U.S. Army MEDDAC

by JERRY HARBEN
U.S. Army Medical Command

Command Sgt. Maj. Althea Green Dixon became the top noncommissioned officer of U.S. Army Medical Command during a

ceremony Dec. 13 at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

Dixon previously served as the command sergeant major of North Atlantic Regional Medical Command and Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

She also has held the same position at the Medical Research and Materiel Command and Fort Detrick, Md., and at the Southeast Regional Medical Command and Eisenhower Army Medical Center at Fort Gordon, Ga.

Medical Command is one of 11 direct reporting units in the Army. It includes some 27,000 military personnel and 28,000 civilian employees providing medical, dental and veterinary service at fixed facilities in the United States and Europe.

Lt. Gen. Eric B. Schoomaker, who earlier in the day assumed command of Medical Command, passed Dixon the NCO sword representing her position. Schoomaker then recounted how he has come to rely on Dixon as they served four previous assignments together.

Dixon said despite the changes in the Army, two basic NCO responsibilities remain the same - accomplishment of mission and welfare of Soldiers.

"Our Army has changed much over the last 30 years since I was a private, but two basic responsibilities of a noncommissioned officer have not changed ... accomplishment of my mission and the welfare of my Soldiers," Dixon said. "What has also not changed is how noncommissioned officers make this happen. We make this happen by sticking to the basics, we make this happen by enforcing standards, we make this happen by holding people accountable."

Earlier in her career, Dixon served at Medical Department Activity Alaska, Letterman Army Medical Center, 7th Medical Command, 36th Medical Battalion, 68th Medical Group, 30th Medical Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, and the 25th Infantry Division.

While assigned to the 30th Medical Brigade, she deployed to Bosnia as part of the Implementation Force, and served as the brigade operations sergeant major during Operation Joint Endeavor.

Dixon received the General Ralph E. Haines Award for Outstanding

Student Research when she graduated from the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy. She also has completed the Combat Medical Specialist Course; Ear, Nose and Throat Specialist Course; Battle Staff NCO Course; Joint Deployment Officer Course; and all levels of the NCO Education System.

Other professional achievements include her selection as the 1983 Health Services Command (now U.S. Army Medical Command) Soldier of the Year and membership in both the Sergeant Morales and the Sergeant Audie Murphy Clubs. Dixon holds a Master of Science degree, and is a member of the American College of Healthcare Executives.

She is also a member of the Order of Military Medical Merit. Her awards and decorations include the Expert Field Medical Badge, the Legion of Merit, seven awards of the Meritorious Service Medal, four awards of the Army Commendation Medal, four awards of the Army Achievement Medal, the NATO Medal and numerous service medals.



AFAP seeks 'Big Army' issues in Bamberg

by AMY BUGALA
Bavarian News

Army Family Action Plan program manager, Mary Thompson needs community participation and "big Army" thinking to help make this year's AFAP conference a success.

"We want to see issues that reflect the bigger picture, not just what the garrison can do today," said Thompson.

Annually, the AFAP conference provides a voice for Soldiers and families to address local quality of life issues that affect the total Army Family.

Issues are submitted, prioritized and discussed in small working groups made up of both military and civilian community members during the three-day conference.

Thompson wants the community to think big when submitting issues for the conference this year.

"AFAP is the place where change starts," said Thompson. "Take a look around our community and make note of the services, support, processes or policies that affect you and your family's daily life and then ask - what can we do to make the Army better?" she said. "Simply put, start in your own backyard and then go beyond it."

"It's not enough to say something is a

problem. We want to know why and we want your recommendations for solving it," she said.

According to Thompson, approximately 40 issues were worked during the Bamberg conference last year. Of those, nine moved up to the IMCOM level.

The issues remaining were worked locally until they were resolved resulting in ongoing quality of life improvements to the community such as the Tots in Tow program.

The key to making a difference is to submit and she hopes to see more issues from the community this year.

Submitting issues isn't the only way to participate. Community member participation in the resolution making process is what makes AFAP different from other forums that are available year-round such as town halls or the Interactive Customer Evaluation system.

Last year approximately 50 members of the community, both military and civilian, served as delegates, facilitators and recorders moderating the focus group discussions and tracking the issues raised. Thompson says anyone can volunteer and hopes to get a better cross-section of the community represented this year, particularly retirees.

"It was an enlightening experience," said Sgt. 1st Class Curtis Freeman, who served as a

delegate and at the local and US Army Europe level conferences last year.

"I was surprised to see how many issues were bigger than just the Soldier," he said.

Freeman has lived in Army communities for over 17 years and chose to participate because he wanted to make a difference.

"If you want to have a voice, then volunteer," Freeman stated.

"We continually strive to get better representation of the military community here," Thompson said.

She tells anyone who is interested in participating in the conference to be proactive. All active duty Soldiers, reservists, retirees, DOD civilians, teachers, spouses, and teens are invited to participate.

"If you are interested, raise your hand to volunteer and raise your voice," she said.

To submit an issue or register as a volunteer, visit www.bamberg.army.mil/sites/services/afap.asp.

Forms can be filled out electronically and e-mailed directly to the AFAP program manager, or placed in drop boxes located at the AAFES mini-mall, the CMR, the Dental Clinic, Army Community Service or the Community Activity Center. Issues can be submitted now through Feb. 20.

The annual AFAP conference will be held Feb. 27 - 29 from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Warner Club, Bamberg.

For information, contact Mary Thompson, AFAP program manager at Army Community Service by calling DSN 469-7777 or e-mail BambergAFAP@eur.army.mil.



AFAP drop boxes are located throughout the installation.

Real Results

AFAP's history speaks for itself with 101 changes to legislation, 145 policies revised or established, and 162 programs or services improved.

- Tots in Tow program now available at the Freedom Fitness Facility
- The post shuttle bus
- Addition of oversized washers at the launderette
- Relocation of trash receptacles to improve safety in housing area
- Servicemember's Group Life Insurance increased from \$50,000 to \$200,000
- Authorization and implementation of Thrift Savings Plan
- Allowing Soldiers to request tour stabilization if they have a graduating High School senior
- Successful programs like Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers (BOSS) and Army Family Team Building (AFTB) were born out of issues submitted to AFAP conferences.

ACS ensures quality service to community with accreditation

by AMY BUGALA
Bavarian News

The US Army Garrison Bamberg Army Community Service was recommended by the Department of the Army to receive accreditation with commendation, following an inspection held Dec. 3 - 7.

The Department of the Army accreditation process recognizes ACS centers for having a high level of performance, integrity, and quality which ensures the same level of community service and support for all Soldiers, civilians, retirees and Families regardless of location.

The Bamberg ACS was last accredited in 2004, but the certification was received without commendation explains Owen Fulsome, ACS program operations specialist.

The 2004 accreditation was awarded after a 90-day deferment which allowed ACS to correct some deficiencies and meet the standards. "The improvements made at ACS since the last inspection met the 225 accreditation standards and the Bamberg ACS center passed on the first try," he stated.

"The staff worked very hard together as a team over the past two years to prepare for this, and we are happy with the outcome," he added.

To meet the accreditation standards the staff put in a lot of work behind the scenes like revisiting standard operating procedures and process improvements. Fulsome says those changes do make a positive impact on the daily services provided to the ACS customers here.

For example a notable improvement was made to the

Information and Referrals program while going through the accreditation process.

"We now have processes in place to ensure timely maintenance of our resource files which had fallen out of date over the past few years," Fulsome said. The updated resource file contains valuable information for newcomers such as a list of off-post health care providers, local and community phone books, maps of the city and directions to stores and shops.

Other improvements were made to standardize lesson plans and briefings to make certain there are no variations or breaks in service.

"Substitute program instructors now have the tools to fill-in and teach courses when a staff instructor may not be available," said Fulsome.

Out of the four ACS centers inspected in Europe during the 2007

calendar year, the Bamberg ACS is the only center to earn accreditation with commendation, reported an Installation Management Command, Europe inspection team member.

The team noted that it was the highly motivated staff and exceptional leadership that stood out in Bamberg, as well as the key relationships built with outside agencies such as the Family Advocacy Program and Exceptional Family Member Program.

ACS director, Arthur Jones, faced many challenges during the process including close to 100 percent staff turnover since he began in 2005.

"Because 98 percent of the staff at the ACS is new, we put our emphasis on training and then cross-training everyone," said Jones. "I was given the authority to build a professional team and that's what we

did, together."

Jones says the accreditation results reflect the teamwork and cohesion of his diverse staff.

"We have over 40 dedicated professionals and volunteers working to provide the 17 programs and services for this community," she said. "I am proud of the ACS staff for their accomplishment and humbled to be the director of such an outstanding group of people."

The Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command will formally present the ACS staff with the certification in the next few weeks.

For more information about ACS programs scheduled in January, download a copy of the USAG Bamberg Morale, Welfare and Recreation guide at www.bamberg.army.mil or call ACS at DSN 469-7777.



Photo by James Fredrick

America's day starts where?

"Guam of course!" answered Joshua Russell (middle), before being handed the Bamberg Middle School Geography Bee title Jan. 9. Russell will go on to compete against other Department of Defense Dependant Schools-Europe winners for the chance to compete in the national competition in Washington, D.C.

Tax Time

Bamberg Tax Center aiding families during filing season

Bamberg Legal Assistance Office release

Following closely on the heels of the holidays is another joyous season for all working Americans to look forward to - or maybe dread - it's the tax filing season.

The Bamberg Tax Center is preparing and advises taxpayers to do the same by reviewing their Federal Withholdings.

According to Gary Jones, Legal Assistance Attorney, Bamberg Legal Assistance Office, now is the perfect time for taxpayers to adjust how much money is withheld from their pay for federal income taxes (FICA in the deductions column of the LES).

"Many taxpayers receive large tax refunds simply because more money is withheld from their pay for federal taxes than they will owe," Jones stated.

Jones explains that many taxpayers with children never adjust their withholding to compensate for the

Child Tax Credit (you get two withholding exemptions for each qualifying child).

These taxpayers receive large tax refunds but at the cost of a smaller monthly paycheck.

In addition, income tax refunds can be intercepted for back child support, government debts, and other reasons, even if the debts are disputed.

"The IRS does not pay taxpayers interest on refunds," said Jones, underscoring the fact that it just doesn't make financial sense to have too much money withheld from your paycheck.

To calculate the correct number of withholding exemptions, download form W-4 and Publication 15 from www.irs.gov.

Complete lines A-G on Form W-4 to calculate the number of your withholding exemptions.

Next, use the tables in Publication 15 to see approximately how much

should be withheld to meet your tax obligation (Soldiers should use the monthly payroll period tables even if they receive a midmonth paycheck).

"This is real easy for families with only one working spouse and whose income comes only from military wages," he explained.

After calculating the correct number of withholding exemptions, go to MyPay to adjust the amount withheld by clicking on "Federal Withholding" under the heading "Taxes" and following the instructions.

If monthly expenses are larger than your check, adjusting your federal income tax withholding could help.

For more information, consult your tax preparer or visit the Legal Assistance Office in Bldg. 7000, room 302. The Bamberg Tax Center will open the latter part of January and, will offer free tax preparation service. Opening days and operating hours will be announced.

General visits Task Force Knight Soldiers

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

Brig. Gen. Scott West, commander, 21st Theater Sustainment Command, visited 16th Sustainment Brigade Soldiers at Schweinfurt Jan. 7 to assess the transition of vehicles and equipment from the left-behind-equipment hub back to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division.

About 20 sustainment Soldiers from the 16th SB, Bamberg, took over responsibility for vehicle and equipment maintenance and turn-in for the 2nd BCT, 1st ID, after the combat brigade deployed to Iraq. The 2nd BCT deployed to Baghdad and locations in central Iraq from August 2006 to November 2007.

Soldiers from the 317th Maintenance Company and the 240th Quartermaster Company, assumed control of the forward maintenance site in Schweinfurt May 21 as Task Force Knight.

"The task force took control in Schweinfurt and together with DS2 (Defense Support Services) streamlined the maintenance operation," said Dennis Meehan, ULLS-G clerk, DS2.

The task force oversaw maintenance on more than 750 vehicles at Conn Barracks, and 380 vehicles at Ledward Barracks, Schweinfurt, and turned in excess

parts and equipment valued at more than \$2.8 million, as well as managing over 150 civilians and four two-week rotations of National Guard units.

"It's a collective task down here," said Staff Sgt. Billy Feezor, TF Knight senior tracked vehicle mechanic, 317th Maint. Co. "Everyone has to work together."

For Staff Sgt. Ferdinand Perez, task force supply turn-in non-commissioned officer in charge, 240th QM Co., inventorying and cleaning up the motor pools was a daunting task.

"Basically all these motor pools have parts they don't use," Perez said. "After we inventoried everything, we turned in the parts

they don't need. We cleaned out the areas. This is the largest turn-in procedure I've done in my Army career."

Repairing the vehicles and equipment wasn't an easy job, either.

"The equipment was in a poor state," Meehan said. "A high percentage was not

mission-capable."

Task force Soldiers have worked long weeks and have had to work through some holidays to get the vehicles and equipment up to standards before the hand-over to 2nd BCT, 1st ID, scheduled to begin in late January 2008, said Sgt. 1st Class Winston Gasu, task force non-commissioned officer in charge, 317th Maint. Co.

"Our guys did a lot," Gasu said. "We are the spearhead of everything that is going on. Every day of the week when you come here, we are here," Gasu said.

But task force Soldiers were positive about the nine-month temporary duty assignment.

"Everybody accepted the mission and took it to heart," Gasu said. "I have not heard any complaints. What is actually on the operations order — we went past that."

The experience was valuable for Staff Sgt. Timothy Shaltry, non-commissioned officer in charge of three of the 1st ID motor pools, 317th Maint. Co.

"I've learned quite a bit about motor sergeant and shop foreman duties," said Shaltry. "This has taught me the paperwork, besides turning a wrench, involved in running a motor pool."

The general reiterated his belief that maintenance is central war preparedness during his visit.

"The notion of bringing in a vehicle for maintenance and not sending it out fully mission capable is foreign to me," West said.

The general toured several motor pools and quizzed Soldiers and leaders on the status of various vehicles and equipment, and thanked task force Soldiers for their work.

"It is critical that we enforce standards and that was what the task force was here to do," West said.



Staff Sgt. Robert Sain, Task Force Knight 2nd BCT, 1st ID, motorpool, discusses quality assurance issues with Brig. Gen. Scott West, commander, 21st Theater Sustainment Command, as Chief Warrant Shawn Legg, 317th Maint. Co, listens in, at Conn Barracks, Schweinfurt Jan. 7.

Water Dogs keep it flowing at Jalalabad Airfield

Story and photo by
Spc. GREGORY ARGENTIERI
173rd ABCT Public Affairs

The small four-man team of water purification specialists assigned to Company A, 173rd Brigade Support Battalion (Airborne) is responsible for producing more than 40,000 gallons of water every day to ensure the health and well-being of service members, contractors, and civilians living at Jalalabad Airfield, Afghanistan.

The mission

The main mission of the "Water Dogs" is the creation of on average 32,500 gallons of non-potable water daily for personal hygiene, sinks and showers, basic sanitation, toilets and urinals, laundry service — plus construction and aircraft maintenance.

Not to mention another 9,000 gallons of potable water for use by the dining facility to clean and prepare food, purified water for a local coffee shop and clean water for a new restaurant.

Creature comforts

"We provide Soldiers with the

water they need to enjoy many of the creature comforts they have back in the rear while they're in this deployed environment, and a lot of those creature comforts are taken for granted when you're on a [forward operating base] like Fenty or Bagram where it's a well established area," said 1st Lt. Nathan C. Miatech, 24, from Plymouth, Minn., a platoon leader assigned to Company A, 173rd BSB.

"A lot of the Soldiers forward appreciate what my Water Dogs do

"The water from the well is coming from out on the economy; it can get you really, really sick."

Pfc. Christopher M. Bullard

Co. A, 173rd BSB

because they don't have a whole lot of non-potable and potable water," Miatech said. "They have to

grab a couple of water bottles and do field hygiene, scrubbing down their essential areas, and that's about all they can do."

Going to the source

The primary water sources on the FOB are two locally constructed wells approximately 140 feet deep. Two submersible pumps bring raw water up to the surface at a rate of 114

gallons per minute and into 3,000-gallon storage bags called 'onion skins,' because they look like onions when they're full of water, as well as into a 42,000-gallon brick and mortar storage container specifically for non potable water.

Dirty and dangerous

The raw water coming from the well is dirty and dangerous.

"The water from the well is coming from out on the economy; it can get you really, really sick," said Pfc. Christopher M. Bullard, 20, from Purcell, Okla., assigned to Company A, 173rd BSB. "I think we're doing a great job out here keeping everybody safe; making sure no one is getting sick from the water."

From the onion skins, the raw water is turned in to clean potable water with the help of one of the two new \$1.2 million, 3,000-gallon-per-hour Reverse Osmosis Water Purification Units installed in September that push all the contaminants out of the water. Previously, the Water Dogs were limited by two 600 gph ROWPUs, and from May through September, the Water Dogs had to work day and night to keep up with the water demand on the FOB.

Once the purified water leaves the ROWPU, it flows into two large round white 5,000-gallon sealed tanks until it's piped to the dining facility or



Water Dog Pfc. Christopher M. Bullard, 20, from Purcell, Okla., assigned to Company A, 173rd Brigade Support Battalion, performs one of his three daily water-quality tests in a shower tent Dec. 28 at FOB Fenty in eastern Afghanistan.

coffee shop. There are currently two ROWPUs and two 5,000-gallon sealed potable storage tanks at Fenty, and 10 more 5,000-gallon storage tanks are scheduled to be delivered and in place before spring.

Making progress

"Were going to have 120,000 gallons of potable water storage on the FOB, and in the near future, before the 173rd leaves, you will be taking a shower in potable water. (You) won't have to worry about the signs that say, 'non-potable water, do not drink or brush your teeth,'" said Sgt. 1st Class Sean L. Carter, 29, Jacksonville, Fla., platoon sergeant assigned to Company A. "The water you will be showering with is going to be cleaner than the bottle water you drink everyday."

The biggest challenge the Water Dogs have on Fenty is limited personnel. There are only four Water Dogs, including Carter.

Dedication

"My Water Dogs are dedicated, they have yet to complain, 'hey, we need time off,' they come in seven days a week and work from morning until night ensuring there is no water shortage on the FOB," Carter said.

Ensuring there is a proper balance of chlorine in the water is also very important.

"Water is a key factor for cooks over at the dining facility, and too much chlorine in the water will brown

their vegetables," Carter said.

"We go around three times a day, where ever there's running water from any of the pipelines, to check to ensure the water is properly chlorinated — not too much and not too little. Too much chlorine can cause skin irritation and cause you to break out in a rash or even hives," he explained.

The demand for water has increased as the overall 173rd footprint has expanded.

Increasing demand

"Our water team is doing a heck of a job. It was hard to keep up with water production, but it has gotten a little easier since we have the two new ROWPUs," said Bullard.

"We still have a lot of work to do as far as improving the site. My NCOs have done a great job helping me learn more about my job since I've been out here," he said.

Weather will also pose a challenge for the Water Dogs as the water runs through the system slower as the temperature drops.

"Sometimes it brings our production up and sometimes it brings our production down," said Sgt. Edward D. Haynes, 27, from Fort Pierce, Fla., section sergeant assigned to Company A.

Water purification specialists' biggest contribution will be making life better for everybody regardless of the challenges.

16th Sustainment Brigade commander Col. Martin Pitts, presents a second Army Commendation medal to Sgt. Guillermo Balderaz, power generator equipment repair technician, 317th Maintenance Co., at the Bamberg Reel Time Theater Dec. 20. Balderaz was recognized as the Warrior Leader of the Quarter and of the Year.

Courtesy photo



Deployment-related benefits still offered

by MARK HEETER
Bavarian News

U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt Child and Youth Services, under the mandate of the Army Family Covenant, continues to offer deployment-related benefits to families of 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Soldiers currently in Afghanistan.

"We just want the 1-91 folks that we're still her to support them through the Army Family Covenant. We have programs in place," said Michael Payne, CYS coordinator.

The Schweinfurt community became acquainted with the 15:12 and Blue Star programs beginning in August 2007, when the Army began funneling money and resources toward communities and families affected by deployments.

"All of that is now the Army Family Covenant. The 15:12 was the quick wins solution, quickly implemented to take care of a problem that they saw, before they sat down and spelled this out in the Army Family Covenant,"

Payne said explaining some of the benefits for deployed Soldiers' families.

"The families of those who are deployed will continue to get the benefit of that Blue Star card," said Pamela Rio, CYS outreach services director.

Elimination of fees for up to four SKIES classes and two team or individual sports per child, as well as the 20 percent reduction of regularly scheduled care fees, are some of the benefits that continue for 1-91 CAV families.

Another popular benefit is the 16 hours of free respite care per month, which parents must use in four-hour blocks at the Child Development Center or three-hour blocks at the School Age Services.

"And the reason we do that is because of staffing. In order to staff those rooms efficiently, we have to do it for a longer period of time,"

Payne said.

"If we're going to staff a room, it's easier to do if we know how many kids we're going to have in a longer period of time," Payne said, noting that the four-hour requirement is an Army-wide directive.

For the family who schedules for other than four-hour blocks, Payne suggests two alternatives. Either they can pay a half-price hourly care fee – another Army Family Covenant benefit – or they can split the four-hour block with another family. The latter requires coordination with the center staff.

Out of consideration for other parents, people should cancel their reservations if they no longer require to hourly care, Rio said.

"It's very important to cancel because if a child doesn't show, well, is that child late? Then

it goes empty when someone who really needs it could have gotten the care. So it's just a little consideration," she said.

Free child care support for one monthly family readiness group meeting is also still available to the 1-91 CAV, Rio said.

"They might not know it is still there for them," she said.

Another development from local implementation of the Army Family Covenant included the elimination of the annual fee for CYS registration for all children – whether the sponsor is deployed or not, according to Dawn White, Child and Youth systems technician and administrator.

Additionally, Super Saturdays went to once a month, while parents must now pay a \$15 fee for the monthly parents' night out.

"So we still provide one free service per month, and the other one, if you choose to use it, there's a fee with that... We didn't take anything away; we actually gave them an extra," White said, adding that Blue Star card holders can apply the card in lieu of the \$15 fee.



White



Rio

German physician helps Americans get needed care

Story and photo by
KIMBERLY GEARHART
Bavarian News

Living in a foreign country can be rewarding, but it does have its challenges as well.

Although you can stop by the PX and pick up American diapers for your newborn, for example, actually giving birth to that bundle of joy will require the help of a German doctor.

Medical facilities in the USAG Schweinfurt include primary care, laboratory testing, occupational therapy, and even a pediatric specialist, but for obstetric services, the clinic depends on the help of local doctors like Dr. Sabine Vogel.

"Our patients speak very highly of Dr. Vogel," said Lt. Col. Daniel Duecker, Schweinfurt clinic commander, noting that American patients are often nervous and uncomfortable visiting German doctors.

"They need not be afraid," Vogel said. "They can ask me anything, and my staff and I, we all speak English."

Part of the fear patients have results from cultural differences in treatment standards, something Vogel understands and tries to minimize through compromise and education.

Americans' modesty, for an example, is something Vogel has had to account for in her practice.

"We've bought towels for our American patients to use" as drapes during exams, Vogel said, pointing out that Germans do not use the gowns and robes common to American examination rooms.

On the other hand, some cultural differences are more comforting than frightening. German doctors use exam chairs that resemble those used in a dentist's office, rather than the hard, flat table and stirrups that equip American gynecologists' offices.

Vogel, who has been working with American patients since she was a

resident at Leopoldina, has been operating her own practice since 2000. Her office is near St. Josef's hospital, where most deliveries are performed.

This proximity allows Vogel to handle regular patients as well as quickly respond to mothers delivering at the hospital.

High-risk babies are cared for in Leopoldina hospital. Often, this can mean that the baby and its mother are separated, as the mother would stay for her care in St. Josef's.

"Mothers and babies should stay together," Vogel said. She makes the conscious choice to send high-risk births, such as pre-terms, to Leopoldina for delivery, so that mother and baby are not separated for their individual care.

Vogel also handles gynecological issues other than those related to pregnancy and childbirth and is just one of the many German physicians that supplement the care options



Dr. Sabine Vogel, center, and her staff are among the many German practitioners offering care to American patients.

available through the Schweinfurt Health Clinic.

Patients referred for care outside of the clinic should visit the referral desk on the first floor of the clinic to

arrange an appointment, rather than directly contacting a physician.

For more information, stop by the clinic or call DSN 354-6835 or CIV 09721-96-6835.

German physicians in the Schweinfurt area

Dr. Sabine Vogel
Am Zeughaus 9-13
Schweinfurt
Tel: 09721-53-37-33

Dr. Walter Stolz
Frederich-Stein-Str. 9
Schweinfurt
Tel: 09721-18-67-77

Dr. Jochen Stadlbauer
Hadergasse 40
Schweinfurt
Tel: 09721-1-63-93

Dr. Stefan Schwind
Zehntstrasse 4
Schweinfurt
Tel: 09721-2-29-80

Prof. Dr. Michael Weigl
Leopoldina Krankenhaus
Gustav-Adolf-Str. 6-8
Schweinfurt
Tel: 09721-72-02-132

Dr. Hartmuth Heigoldt
St. Elisabeth Krankenhaus
Kissingener Str. 150
Bad Kissingen
Tel: 0971-80-53-48

Bannamon signs off for last time in Wuerzburg

Story and photo by
Sgt. JONATHAN McDONALD
AFN Franconia

For nearly 14 years, Jacques Bannamon entertained AFN Franconia audiences by keeping them up to date on celebrity news, spinning the latest hits, and of course keeping tabs on AFN's own Chicken Man.

Bannamon signed off for the last time at AFN Franconia in December, but his military service continues.

Bannamon's career in broadcasting began in 1970 when he was drafted, but didn't end with his retirement from active duty at AFN Berlin in 1990. In 1994 Bannamon answered the call to start something big in Wuerzburg.

Nuremberg had just closed, Bamberg was building up, and Schweinfurt was becoming a training area, so it was decided that the area needed its very own AFN station.

"My best memory in Wuerzburg was that first week, when they spelled out the mission, I thought, how am I going to get this done?" Bannamon said. A radio station already existed in the area, broadcasting on a long wire, but Bannamon's job was to take it to the next level and add television to the mix.

That first year, AFN Wuerzburg swept the Army's broadcast awards, and set the standards for Army broadcasting for years to come. Bannamon's original graphics for Wuerzburg were adopted Army and AFN-wide.

In 1996, when 3rd Infantry Division left Wuerzburg and was replaced by 1st Infantry Division, Bannamon was there to report. He noted that they literally lowered the flag as 3rd ID and raised it the next morning as 1st ID.

The radio station changed as well, becoming Big Red Radio, and as the Big Red One morphed and changed, so did AFN Wuerzburg, doubling



Jacques Bannamon signed off for the last time last week after 14 years in Wuerzburg.

in size to carry a full 16-man team.

Over the years, Bannamon mentored Army broadcasters who have gone on to share Jacques' gems of wisdom. AFN Wuerzburg's first station commander went on to be the AFN Europe First Sergeant and Sergeant Major. Others have gone on to teach at the Defense Information School, become drill sergeants, and even work at the Army's new Soldier's Media Center.

"I'm going to pack my duffle bag for the

last time and fortunately for me, I'm going to get to see some of those soldiers again," Bannamon said. His new job at Soldier's Radio and Television in Washington, D.C., will afford him that opportunity.

For his last broadcast, Bannamon reverted to the original AFN Wuerzburg sign off: "Remember, no matter what you do or who you do it with, you can't fall off the floor. AFN Wuerzburg, AFN Franconia...goodnight."

AFN Franconia moves to Vilseck

USAG Schweinfurt PAO news release

Big changes are in the works with Armed Forces Network radio and television starting Feb. 4 for viewers and listeners in Franconia.

AFN in Grafenwoehr/Vilseck and Hohenfels has expanded its coverage to include news stories and messages from USAG Schweinfurt, Ansbach, and Bamberg.

Former AFN Franconia viewers can tune the television to AFN Atlantic Prime, channel 11 or 17 with a decoder, to watch what will now be called the "AFN Bavaria" report each weekday at 6:23 p.m. and 10:23 p.m. Listen to AFN Bavaria radio news throughout the day for Franconia news on both AFN the Eagle and the Power Network.

With the new move and name also comes cutting edge digital video technology to replace the old, malfunctioning equipment at Wuerzburg's station. The new equipment will enable local television spots and news stories to be aired once again after nearly a year of them being missing from the airwaves.

Along with an increase in local coverage on television, new voices will be heard over AFN Bavaria radio. Deejay shows will broadcast from Rose Barracks in Vilseck. Meet Spc. Nathan Jones, the new morning host from 6-10 a.m., who hopes to entertain during the morning commute. He plays the same AFN the Eagle music mix full of contemporary hits and classic songs previously heard on AFN Franconia.

To request publicity, go to <http://bavaria.afneurope.net/> and click on the "request publicity" link.

Locals hope to capture NuRave market share

Army, music veterans form DINKA! DINKA!, hoping to 'hit it big' with musical talent

by **ROGER TEEL**
Special to the Bavarian News

Two USAG Schweinfurt civilian employees are working hard to catch a toe-hold in the highly competitive disco music market.

Brian Lindsay and Peter Roy call themselves DINKA! DINKA! Roy's 2-year-old daughter came up with the name, and they are aiming at what is called the NuRave music market, "a combination of everything," Lindsay said.

Lindsay is a former 1-26th Infantry Soldier who now works as a laborer at the Leighton Community Manager's Office.

Roy is a former 9th Engineer Soldier who currently manages the Schweinfurt Clothing Sales Store. They met several years ago at the store when an idle conversation turned to music.

"We had a lot in common, and Peter had his own studio," Lindsay said.

But they didn't click at that time. Lindsay had recently separated from

the Army and was plying his deejaying skills at clubs throughout Europe.

"Mostly small gigs," he said, "but through a friend I landed a date at Wuerzburg's Airport, one of Germany's premier discos."

Skill and a huge house following earned Lindsay a degree of fame. He now has a "residency" (regular play date each month) there, proudly adding that he is the only American to ever have one.

Roy has been composing music for nearly 18 years, everything from pop rock to heavy metal, he said.

"What we're doing now is way different for me. My background is in film soundtracks and acoustic music," he said. He's been to the Cannes Film Festival twice, having scored two movies. Roy also released a music CD called "The Peter Roy Project."

Lindsay and Roy reconnected about a year ago via email. Roy was looking for someone with Lindsay's deejaying and electronic production skills.

"Deejaying and producing sets me apart," Lindsay said. "I don't get into

one genre, per se. I recently played a three-hour set at the Airport of 80s rock, and people just loved it."

"Doing (DINKA! DINKA!) with Brian makes life easy. I guess you could say I have an ear for music, and Brian shows me how it blends together. It's an interesting combination," said Roy.

The two are experimenting, Lindsay said, noting there are more than 300 genres of music.

"We're pushing the business side and practicing our live act— looking to get into some festivals soon," they both said.

Their music is posted on Myspace.com, and a current production called "U Set Me" has been downloaded by more than a 1,000 people, mostly deejays, from the Web sites.

"It's cool to know people as far away as China are playing one of our songs."

Check out the DINKA! DINKA! sound at www.myspace.com/dinkadinka.



Courtesy of Adowa Records

Peter Roy and Brian Lindsay are DINKA! DINKA! The electronic duo hope listeners will download their tunes from their MySpace Web sites.

Conn family reconnects with ancestor, history



Erin Brand looks at a painting of her third cousin, 2nd Lt. Orville B. Conn Jr. after whom Conn Barracks is named.

Story and photo by **KIMBERLY GEARHART**
Bavarian News

Joan Margaret Conn was six years old when her oldest brother, Orville, left Burlington, Iowa, to join the Army.

World War II was raging when "Junior," as he was known, earned his commission and became 2nd Lt. Orville B. Conn Jr., assigned to the 6th Cavalry Group as a member of a mechanized reconnaissance troop.

On Aug. 10, 1944, 2nd Lt. Conn was killed in action, fighting in Normandy, France. His body was interred in France, and now rests in the Brittany American Cemetery and Memorial.

Three years later, Dec. 22, 1947, the U.S.

Army honored Conn, the first WWII casualty for the 6th Cavalry Group, by renaming the newly acquired Schweinfurt Airfield as "Conn Barracks."

Sixty years later, Joan's daughter Cassandra Williams found herself heading to Germany.

“ Mom said she'd always wanted to see Conn Barracks, which was named after Junior. ”

Cassandra Williams
Conn family member

"My cousin Erin (Brand) asked me to be godmother to her new baby, Hedda," Williams said.

When she told her mother she was coming to Germany, Joan mentioned her brother.

"Mom said she'd always wanted to

see Conn Barracks, which was named after Junior. She would so very much like to come." Joan's desire gave Williams the idea of traveling to Schweinfurt and seeing the installation named after the uncle she never met.

Standing in the shadow of a painting of 2nd Lt. Conn which hangs in the Conn Community Club, Williams reflected on her family's history.

After Conn's death, the family fractured, and within two years both of his parents had passed away, leaving Joan in the care of her other siblings.

Brand, who resides in Germany with her husband and was until last year a Soldier herself, described Conn as "a shining knight" in the eyes of her aunt Joan, who lamented that she could not make the trip with Williams.

With any luck, however, Conn's baby sister will make the journey to Normandy, France, this summer and visit Conn's final resting place.

"We're trying to convince her that she can do both, see his grave and his namesake [Conn Barracks] during her trip," Brand said.

"It's only been recently that we've all been coming back together and looking into the history of our family and trying to understand the importance of what [2nd Lt. Conn] did for the country and for our family," Williams said.

Put your worries on ICE with a little feedback

by **MARK HEETER**
Bavarian News

"We're looking for all kinds of customer comments," said Britta Steinhanses, from the USAG Schweinfurt plans, analysis and integration office

Grading performance

Whether positive, negative, or in-the-middle, feedback and customer comments are an important way for the garrison to evaluate its performance, she said.

"If you're having an issue and never bring it up, we have no chance to fix it. Also, everyone appreciates a pat on the back if they did a good job providing the service," Steinhanses said.

The Interactive Customer Evaluation, or ICE, a Web-based customer feedback tool, is available at www.schweinfurt.army.mil Customer comment cards and feedback cards at the community update forums are two additional opportunities to provide feedback.

"If you are expecting a response, check the request response button (on the Web) or provide the contact information (on the card)," Steinhanses said.

The missing link

This is the critical but frequently missing link in the communication chain, said David Coldwell, USAG Schweinfurt community recreation

division sports and fitness officer. Coldwell received more than 700 comments from customers last fiscal year, many related to the fitness centers, which fall under his operational control.

"If they put their name and email on it, we can answer them back. I want to provide an answer back to the customer. That way, the customer knows why we do what we do," he said.

"It's a good system to recognize customer needs, and it's a good way for us to see what their requesting," he said.

According to Coldwell, the customer feedback mechanisms allow managers to respond to the customers' concerns or "if not, we can come back with a good reason why we can't accommodate the request."

What's missing

In addition to providing customers an outlet for performance feedback, the comment cards and ICE system also offer managers a chance to see what might be missing.

The acquisition of a certain type of fitness equipment came directly from a request that a customer made through a comment card, according to Coldwell.

"It was something we didn't know they wanted," he said.

Customers just have to ask. "Your voice will be heard," Steinhanses said.

Task Force Guardian cases its colors during Jan. 7 ceremony

Story and photo by **MARK HEETER**
Bavarian News

Task Force Guardian, which spent nearly two years in its supporting role as the Dagger Brigade Combat Team's rear detachment, cased its colors in a ceremony at the Finney Recreation Center Jan. 7.

Col. J.B. Burton, Dagger brigade commander, presided over the ceremony, during which Lt. Col. Robert Whittle and 1st Sgt. David Morgan, TFG commander and sergeant major, respectively, retired



Lt. Col. Robert Whittle and 1st Sgt. David Morgan case the Task Force Guardian colors Jan. 7.

the unit colors.

"From its very inception, this was not going to be your father's rear detachment," Burton said in his remarks.

"These Soldiers were hand picked by their company and battalion commanders," Burton said, looking out over the formation gathered for the last time, behind their Delta company guidons. "They have performed magnificently."

Prior to the ceremony, Burton awarded Meritorious Service Medals to Whittle and Morgan for their service. He also inducted Whittle into

the Order of St. Maurice and presented both Soldiers mounted V42 combat knives, drawing an analogy between the unit and the knife – not flashy but efficiently designed for a specific purpose.

"We can all be exceptionally proud of all they have done and all they represent," Burton said, counting off the list of TFG's accomplishments.

Before turning over the podium to Whittle, Burton declared that, in his 24 years of active service, "one of the best decisions I have ever made was posting Bob" to lead Guardian.

Whittle recognized his Soldiers for all their contributions since the Dagger Brigade began preparations for the deployment it completed in December.

"These Soldiers volunteered as coaches and scouting leaders," he said, also recognizing the family readiness groups and other support sources that came from throughout the brigade.

Whittle also thanked Morgan. "It is my hope that someday you will be my sergeant major again," he said.

He finished by addressing the Soldiers and the crowd gathered in the fitness center.

"It has been an honor to serve and to serve with each and every one of you," Whittle said, before he and Morgan cased the colors and ordered them retired.

Don't miss the action!

Are you an ice hockey fan? Blue Devils offer live action in Weiden



There is an ice hockey sports club in Weiden, called the "Blue Devils." The team plays in the "Oberliga," only two leagues below the professional German National Hockey League-DEL (Deutsche Eishockey Liga).

The players do not only come from Germany, but from countries all over the world, including the Czech Republic, Canada, and Finland. The team's trainer is Alex Stein, a professional Canadian ice hockey coach.

The public is invited to enjoy live ice-hockey at the Weiden Hockey Stadium at Raiffeisenstrasse (next to the Indoor Swimming Pool -WTW-Weidener Thermen Welt).

The games are usually held on Fridays evenings at 8 p.m. or on Sundays at 6:30 p.m., occasionally on Tuesdays at 8 p.m. The schedule can be obtained at the club's Web site - www.evweiden.de under the link "Blue Devils-Spielplan."

Entry costs €10 (standing) and €15 for a seat. Children receive discounts. For detailed information about the team, visit www.bluedevilsfan.de.

The next games are scheduled on Sunday at 6:30 p.m. and Jan. 25 at 8 p.m.

Youngsters of all age groups are always welcome to join the various Blue Devils youth teams.

Courtesy photo

Players from around the world make up the Blue Devils in Weiden. The team plays in the Oberliga, only two leagues below the professional league. Visit www.evweiden.de for the game schedule or more information.



Feb. 2-3, 2008

Kreuzwankl hill on the Hausberg located in Garmisch, Germany
Open to all ski levels.
Register on www.mwr-europe.com or www.grafenwoehr.army.mil starting Jan. 1, closes Jan. 30, 2008.

Co-hosted by USAG Grafenwoehr and USAG Garmisch
Open to US ID Cardholders.
Helmet required.
Private ski insurance recommended.

2008 Ski & Snowboard Championship set Feb. 2-3

Competitors may register online at www.mwr-europe.com or www.grafenwoehr.army.mil. Check the Web for updates. Open to all ski levels. Helmets are required, and ski insurance is recommended. The event is co-hosted by USAG Grafenwoehr and USAG Garmisch.

2006 event photos by Drew Benson



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