

Bavarian News

Vol. 5, Nr. 10

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

May 20, 2009

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Defense minister describes German's role in Afghan war as crucial

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Military Archbishop visits community to welcome members into faith

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OLYMPIANS

More than 800 athletes from throughout Europe gathered May 6 at the U.S. Army Garrison Kaiserslautern's 26th Special Olympics Spring Games at the German Police Academy in Enkenbach-Alsenborn. Aside from athletes, more than 1,500 German and American military, as well as civilians and family members volunteered. USAG Grafenwoehr students brought home six medals and 51 ribbons from the games.



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View community photos at www.flickr.com/photos/usaggrafenwoehr.

CHANGES

USAREUR announces FY2010 transformation actions

USAREUR Press Release

The U.S. Army Europe announced its Fiscal Year 2010 force structure changes May 15 which will convert, inactivate and relocate numerous units stationed in Germany and Italy to support Army transformation and the Department of Defense's overall Global Defense Posture and to increase strategic responsiveness in overseas contingency operations.

USAREUR continues to support overseas contingency operations while simultaneously transforming units and consolidating into our enduring main operating bases.

Many of the actions will complete the consolidation of the 172d Infantry Brigade from Schweinfurt to Grafenwoehr begun in 2008.

172d Infantry Brigade actions:

The following units relocate from Schweinfurt to Grafenwoehr:

- 1st Battalion, 2d Infantry Regiment
- 9th Engineer Battalion
- 1st Battalion, 77th Field Artillery Regiment

- 172d Forward Support Battalion

Combat Support and Combat Service Support actions:

The following units relocate:

- 21st Theater Sustainment Command actions:
- 18th Combat Service Support Battalion in Grafenwoehr relocates to Schweinfurt
- 23rd Ordnance Company in Grafenwoehr relocates to Schweinfurt
- 574th Supply Company in Grafenwoehr relocates to Schweinfurt
- 5th Maintenance Company in Grafenwoehr relocates to Schweinfurt
- 1st Cargo Transportation Company in Grafenwoehr relocates to Kaiserslautern or Schweinfurt

30th Medical Command actions:

- HHC, 421st Medical Battalion in Wiesbaden relocates to Schweinfurt
- 71st Preventive Medicine Detachment in Grafenwoehr relocates to Schweinfurt
- 557th Ground Ambulance Company in Wiesbaden relocates to Schweinfurt and converts

Chemical unit actions:

- 12th Chemical Company in Grafenwoehr relocates to Schweinfurt
- 503rd Chemical Detachment in Grafenwoehr relocates to Schweinfurt

The following unit activates:

- The 56th Quartermaster Company (Aerial Delivery) will activate in Aviano, Italy.

The following units inactivate:

- 561st Medical (Dental) Company, Grafenwoehr.
- 464th Medical (Dental) Company, Landstuhl.

The following units return to CONUS:

- 41st Transportation Company in Grafenwoehr.
- The 497th Movement Control Team in Livorno
- 486th MCT in Kaiserslautern.

Military Police unit actions:

- HHC 793rd Military Police Battalion in Bamberg
 - 212th Military Police Company in Wiesbaden
- In Germany, as a result of these unit actions, there will be an overall decrease of approximately 1368 (547

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Zeroing In

IMCOM-E's best Soldiers go head-to-head in annual competition

by MELISSA WOLFF
Assistant Editor



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood

Staff Sgt. Isaac Ayala, Noncommissioned Officer of the Year competitor, marks his shot group while zeroing his weapon during the 2009 competition held at U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr May 10-13.

"This experience is going to test you mentally, physically, and if you believe in a higher power, spiritually. That's what this competition is designed to do," Command Sgt. Maj. Tracey E. Anbiya, Installation Management Command-Europe region command sergeant major, said to a group of 13 gathered Soldiers and Noncommissioned Officers from installations across Europe.

"But regardless of whether you win or lose, you stand shoulders above your peers because you competed," Anbiya said.

These Soldiers and NCOs were gathered May 10 in Grafenwoehr, Germany to compete for the title of IMCOM-E's 2009 Soldier of the Year and NCO of the Year.

At the welcome barbecue, participants discussed their expectations and goals for the event.

Soldier of the Year competitor Spc. Travis Kennedy, U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden, said, "I hope to find a lot out about myself and what it takes to push myself past the limit and actually win a competition like this ...

"How I look at it is I need to do the best that I can do. If somebody prepared more than me then they deserve to win."

See COMPETITION Page 25

Camp Liberty shooting claims life of two Grafenwoehr-based Soldiers

Staff report

The Department of Defense released the names of two 3rd Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment, 172nd Infantry Brigade Soldiers last week who were killed May 11 when a fellow Soldier opened fire at a combat stress clinic on Camp Liberty, Iraq.

The Soldiers, Staff Sgt. Christian Enrique Bueno-Galdos, 25, and Spc. Michael Edwards Yates Jr., 19, were both of Headquarters, Headquarters Company.

A memorial service will be held tomorrow at 1:30 p.m. at the Grafenwoehr chapel. The public is invited to attend.

SAVING MONEY

Officials consider energy saving ideas

by ANGELICA MEDINA
Special to the Bavarian News

Col. Chris Sorenson and Command Sgt. Maj. William Berrios called upon U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr members, March 18th, to submit their cost-and energy-saving ideas to the garrison.

They hoped to encourage public feedback to improve the installation by making it a greener, more fiscally responsible place to live and work.

This highly publicized campaign called for the community's input through multiple venues, including the Community Information Channel, articles in the Bavarian News and Stars and Stripes newspapers, flyers, a display at the recent Earth Day celebration, and radio spots on the Armed Forces Network.

"Energy use is the garrison's number one controllable expense," said Melynda Weaver, Customer Service officer for the garrison, explaining why energy conservation is the solution in becoming financially responsible.

The campaign's two month duration, which lasted from mid-March to mid-May, promoted responses from 67 community members, with some participants making the same suggestion.

The most popular suggestion made by far came from concerned community members, confused by the seemingly wasteful energy use of lights remaining on for all hours of the night at the Grafenwoehr Physical Fitness center, Netzberg Elementary and Middle Schools, the Dragoon Field in Vilseck, and excessive use of street lights on post and around family housing.

In order to reduce lighting around post, the solution takes careful coordination with various agencies and is not as simple as one might think.

"In order to turn lights off, we would need to check with (the Department of Public Works) to see if it is possible, and balance it with force protection and

See LEADERSHIP Page 25

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE



Your Quality of Life takes precedence during garrison's transformation, summer activities

Last week's U.S. Army Europe FY2010 Transformation actions announcement was not unexpected, but it confirmed that our U.S. personnel population will increase by approximately 2,835 based on the increase of 1,134 Soldiers and approximately 1,701 family members.



This increase takes into account the units relocating from Grafenwoehr. This announcement highlights how critical our role as an enduring main operating base is.

The announcement coincides with the release of our Garrison Strategic Action Plan. Our strategic focus is taking care of people, our customers, who in turn will take care of our community. This is particularly important knowing we will have more customers but limited resources.

The action plan ties the Installation Management Command-Europe Headquarters' Strategic Plan with my intent and priorities, and the Senior Commander's Focus Areas.

The plan is not a "how to," but rather a "how to improve" a great organization.

This plan is also a living document - we will review and measure our goals and objectives on a regular basis in order to adjust to the changes and realities of the Army and the garrison.

Our four focus areas and five goals are centered around improving your Quality of Life based on our infrastructure, services

and facilities, flexibility, workforce and communications.

As IMCOM-E realigns this fall, and with a new Senior Commander also coming in, we expect to see some adjustments, but our commitment to improving Quality of Life will remain our driving force.

I believe we have developed and implemented a comprehensive plan in a very short amount of time. Our use of ICE (Interactive Customer Evaluation) comments is crucial to our reviews and measures. This information comes directly from you, the customer.

We held our second Community Advisory Council (CAC) this month. This meeting allows us to consolidate and prioritize the issues you have brought forward. It has proven to be a highly effective means of elevating and resolving issues.

In light of the recent tragedy at Camp Liberty in Iraq, I would like to again emphasize the medical, behavioral health and counseling services available at our garrison.

This case directly impacted our community, and my thoughts and prayers are with the families and friends of the 172nd's Sgt. Christian E. Bueno-Galdos and Spc. Michael Yates.

Whether it be grief and depression, or anger and frustration, our medical professionals and our chaplains are there to listen and they are trained to help you.

We have focused on preventing Soldier suicides. The signs that indicate a Soldier may be considering hurting himself or herself could also be signs that the Soldier could hurt someone else. Continue to use ACE - Ask your buddy, Care for your buddy, and Escort your

buddy - if you suspect something is wrong.

On a lighter note, Command Sgt. Major Berrios and I want to thank our entire community for your assistance in our Spring Cleanup. We have made significant headway towards improving our garrison's appearance and we are pleased for all the help you have given.

We are equally grateful for Club Beyond's volunteerism in cleaning up some of our hard-to-fix areas and for their help in judging the best yards.

We had a fantastic response to our call for volunteers to serve as judges in our best yard competitions. Look for the winners in the next issue of the Bavarian News.

You may also notice that we have modified our mowing contract inside the garrison for both Army Family housing and Soldier barracks.

In the coming weeks, you will notice that we are now mowing close to stairwells, multiplex and single homes, as well as our barracks.

Residents are still responsible for the areas bordering buildings and inside fenced areas, but for the most part, we are relieving a burden on our Soldiers and families - the result will be a uniformed mowing activity that should improve our overall appearance.

We remind you to please pick up toys and trash in your areas so our mowers and weed trimmers can do their work - they will not pick up excess material.

With summer fast approaching, we are in the final stages of three key community events: the Army Ten Miler qualifying race, the 4th of July, and our VolksFest.

On June 27, we will host the European

qualifying race for the Army Ten Miler. Register for the race at the garrison Web site.

For the 4th of July, we will have fireworks on both sides of the installation (Main Post and Rose Barracks), but this year we will focus our FMWR entertainment activities on the Grafenwoehr side to support the families of our deployed Soldiers from the 18th CSSB, 709th MP Battalion and the 172nd In. Bde.

This will also allow us to nest our 4th activities as a culminating event with the week-long Grafenwoehr City Fest.

Finally, we are in the final contracting phase for the annual VolksFest and are set to provide a three day, action packed event from July 31 to Aug. 2 at Camp Kasserine.

We are also refining many of our local community partnerships.

Summer is a perfect time to get out of the house and enjoy a range of activities here in the Oberpfalz region (the Upper Palatinate area of Bavaria), all within a very short drive from Grafenwoehr.

OTV, a German television station out of Weiden, has developed a video that explains all there is to offer in the Oberpfalz region. Watch this on our garrison web site, www.grafenwoehr.army.mil - scroll down until you see the "Welcome to the Oberpfalz" video link.

Take pride in Grafenwoehr and enjoy a wonderful season in Bavaria!

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

CSM CORNER



Thank you for making our spring clean-up a success, help us celebrate Army's birthday

Last week, I had the privilege of meeting 13 young Soldiers and Noncommissioned Officers as they competed for the Installation

Management Command-Europe Soldier and NCO of the Year titles. These Soldiers endured three grueling days of physical and mental competition which tested their knowledge and completion of Warrior Tasks and Battle Drills. As the Soldier's creed states, these warriors are experts and professionals.

The competition was tough and regardless of the outcome, they are



all prime examples of how every Soldier should strive to perform.

The NCOs that competed exemplified why we are the backbone of the Army.

In this, The Year of the NCO, the competitors rose above the challenges presented and showed not only their skills as leaders, but their professionalism and the pride they have for the job they do.

Congratulations to all the competitors, both Soldiers and NCOs, for coming this far. I know the individuals selected as Soldier and NCO of the Year will represent IMCOM-E well.

On June 14, the Army will celebrate its 234th birthday. With celebrations throughout the garrison, take this time to reflect on the sacrifices of our predecessors.

Celebrate their service and give

thought to the men and women, like those in the 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 172nd Infantry Brigade and the 709th Military Police Battalion, who will be celebrating in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Join the Grafenwoehr Dining Facility June 11 when they host a special lunch to pay tribute to America's fighting force.

Although we celebrate those who have stood and fought for the freedom of our country, we cannot forget the spouses and families that offer unconditional encouragement and support.

I met many such spouses during Spring Cleanup. The participation we had during our cleaning days was extraordinary. I was able to meet and talk with many of you as you cleaned your yards and neighborhoods.

To each of you, to include the participants of Club Beyond who gave up their Saturday to "police" the shopping center, who played a part in beautifying our installation - thank you!

We, as a community, must continue the effort and maintain higher levels of cleanliness.

In closing, I would like to extend my deepest condolences to the families and friends of Sgt. Christian E. Bueno-Galdos and Spc. Michael Yates, both of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force 3-66 Armor (Black Knights), 172nd Infantry Brigade, who were killed during the Camp Liberty shooting in Iraq May 11. Such a tragic event is hard to comprehend.

Please join the garrison community tomorrow at the Grafenwoehr Chapel at 1:30 p.m.

to honor the lives of these young Soldiers.

While we will never know if this tragedy could have been prevented, we do know that serving in the military, especially in a combat zone, brings with it unique challenges and stresses. These stresses reach beyond the uniform into the family unit as well.

I ask that every Soldier and NCO remember their duty to each other - Shoulder to Shoulder, No Soldier Stands Alone. Be a buddy. If you see a friend or family member in need, reach out and help.

*Command Sgt. Maj.
William Berrios
CSM, U.S. Army
Garrison Grafenwoehr*

GO HOME!

Visit the U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr Web page, www.grafenwoehr.army.mil, for up-to-date news, events, contact information and much more.

Bavarian News

Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, Ansbach, Schweinfurt, and Garmisch

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Survivor gives tour of concentration camp in which he was held, credits American Soldiers for saving his life

by Master Sgt. MICHAEL CAVALIER
Joint Multinational Training Command

"I left Flossenburg as soon as possible, but Flossenburg has never left me."

These were the words Dr. Jack Terry used to sum up his experiences as a survivor of the Flossenburg Concentration Camp during World War II.

Terry was the guest speaker at the Joint Multinational Training Command Equal Opportunity Office's "Days of Remembrance" ceremony in Grafenwoehr on May 1.

Approximately 100 Soldiers, Department of the Army civilians and family members listened as Terry shared his tragic story of survival during the Holocaust.

Following Terry's presentation, the group held a candle lighting ceremony to remember the more than 11 million victims of the Holocaust.

The U.S. Congress established the Days of Remembrance as an annual commemoration of victims of the Holocaust during World War II.

This year's theme was "Never Again - What You Do Matters."

In keeping with the theme, Terry reminded the audience that not only does it matter what you do, but also, "what you don't do."

Terry led a group of 67 Grafenwoehr community members on a tour of the nearby Flossenburg Concentration Camp, where Terry had been an inmate during the final year of the war.

He was assisted by his friend, Karlherman Schotz, Dean of the Evangelische Church in Sulzbach, Germany.

Terry was born Jakub Szabmacher in Belzyce, Poland in March of 1930. The youngest of four children, he was the only member of his family to survive the Holocaust.

During the presentations, he related how his world was changed forever when the Nazi's entered his small village in September of 1939.

Suffering humiliation and constant fear of death, Terry told of his journey through the



Photo by Melissa Wolff

Holocaust survivor Dr. Jack Terry leads a group from the Grafenwoehr community on a tour of the nearby Flossenburg Concentration Camp, where he was an inmate during the last months of World War II.

concentration camps of Nazi-occupied Poland and Germany.

He witnessed the murder of his mother, sister and brother by the Nazis, and later learned of the death of his father and remaining sister in the camps.

Terry arrived at the Flossenburg Concentration Camp on the Czechoslovakia-German border in August 1944.

At Flossenburg, the 14-year-old Terry was forced to work in the granite quarry, an airplane

factory and in the camp laundry.

In April 1945, a fellow inmate from Czechoslovakia hid the young Terry as the Nazis evacuated the Flossenburg camp in advance of Allied forces.

Only those ill and in the hospital ward were left behind. Of the 22,000 evacuated inmates, 7000 died from exhaustion or were shot by the guards on their 200 kilometer death march.

When the camp was liberated on April 23rd, 1945 by the U.S. Army's 90th Infantry Division,

Terry was the youngest of the remaining inmates and the only Jew who remained at the camp.

Terry briefly served as the gate keeper at the newly-liberated Flossenburg before being moved to a U.S. Army medical battalion headquarters.

An Army doctor, Lt. Col. Louis Leland, took an interest in Terry and moved him to France and eventually helped secure passage to the United States.

Terry says he has a special place in his heart for the U.S. Army. "They saved my life," said Terry. "For a long time the only people I was able to trust were U.S. soldiers."

Five years after his liberation from Flossenburg, Terry graduated from Brooklyn Technical High School, and from the Colorado School of Mines in 1954 as a Geologist on an Reserve Officers' Training Corps scholarship.

He served in the U.S. Army at the Engineer Intelligence Center in Schwetzingen, Germany from 1955 to 1957.

One of his duties was to study the unusual rock formations near Flossenburg, Germany.

In 1960, Terry returned to the U.S. and attended the Colorado University Medical School, where he earned his M.D. in 1964.

Terry subsequently became a Resident in Psychiatry and received training in Psychoanalysis at the New York Psychoanalysis Institute.

Terry retired from an Associate Professorship in the Psychiatry Department at Cornell University and from his private practice as a clinical psychiatrist in New York City where he has treated many former concentration camp survivors.

Terry has been deeply involved in the Holocaust memorial activities and travels frequently to speak and educate.

He has been married to his wife, Louise, for 49 years, they have three children and five grandchildren.

Terry travels to Germany several times a year for Holocaust memorial events.

His next visit will be in July for a reunion of the surviving inmates of the Flossenburg Camp.

Grafenwoehr rounds up, awards community volunteers

Story and photo by
AMY NEWCOMB
Bavarian News

U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr hosted its annual Volunteer Recognition Ceremony at the Tower View in Grafenwoehr April 30.

The ceremony allowed organizations within the USAG Grafenwoehr community to honor their volunteers and pay special tribute to those who stood out over the past year as extraordinarily talented, creative and compassionate.

The ceremony formally recognized 119 volunteers.

Among those recognized, 19 were awarded as Volunteers of the Year by organizations throughout Grafenwoehr and Vilseck; three 1,000 Hour Awards were presented, as well as nine 500 Hour Awards. Countless other volunteers were recognized for their service to the community.

Vicky Cunningham, the garrison's volunteer coordinator, along with other members of the Volunteer Advisory Council decided to call this year's

ceremony "Volunteer Round Up."

The Tower View was decorated in a western theme and denim, boots and hats were worn by many of the attendees.

Each volunteer was called up by "Bailiff" Sgt. First Class Gerald Malec and found guilty by "Judge" Nicole Heller for their deeds.

Each volunteer was then sent to "Sheriff" Col. Chris Sorenson, USAG Grafenwoehr commander, and presented with a certificate of appreciation.

"I think they are true citizens, they have a love for others and love for the military," Sorenson said.

Tina Ausbrooks, 2nd Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment's Bravo Company Family Readiness Group Leader received one of the 19 Volunteer of the Year awards.

Ausbrooks was recognized by 2-28 Infantry Regiment because she volunteered as an FRG Leader; participated in every leadership development class offered to include Army Family Team Building; participated in the Army Family

Action Plan; attended every unit function and town hall meeting gathering information to benefit families; supported the Grafenwoehr Community Spouses Club; mentored and educated new spouses to keep them motivated; introduced creative ideas to get information to spouses; and had the most active FRG in the Battalion due largely to her hard work.

"At the end of the day we are all the same. We all go through the same things and if I can help one person by volunteering and using the knowledge I have gained in the 18 years of service my husband has put in, then it makes it worth it to me," Ausbrooks said.

According to Sorenson, administrative challenges facing USAG Grafenwoehr for the 2009-2010 year will be getting people registered as volunteers.

Volunteering takes time and updating hours is important to the community.

"We would not be able to function without volunteers, there is no doubt in my mind," Sorenson said.



Mary Lou Solorzano receives a certificate of appreciation from U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr Commander Col. Chris Sorenson at the garrison's annual Volunteer Recognition Ceremony April 30.



Making a difference

Middle-school aged members of the Grafenwoehr Chapel's Club Beyond program participate in a PX/Commissary clean-up May 9 as part of the Club's 2009 community service project.

Future plans for the service project include beautifying the Grafenwoehr Chapel and Netzaberg housing area, as well as a children's program at the Vilseck Chapel.

Photo by Angelica Medina

Operation Cowboy anniversary honors 2SCR warriors, brings military past, present together

Story and photo by
Spc. JERRY WILSON
2SCR Public Affairs Office

The streets of Hostoun in the Czech Republic were transformed into something from a World War II movie May 1.

The past and present combined as vintage military vehicles, courtesy of the Military Car Club of Pilzen, and Stryker vehicles from the 2d Stryker Cavalry Regiment lined the streets.

Residents, dressed in their best WWII American military uniforms, gathered alongside troopers from Dog Company, 2nd Squadron, 2SCR to celebrate the 64th Anniversary of Operation Cowboy.

As WWII drew to an end, Patton's Third Army and the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment undertook what was to be a historic rescue mission that liberated 400 Prisoners of War and more than 670 horses.

Among the horses rescued were the world famous Lipizzaner.

The Lipizzaner breeding mares were taken from the Spanish Riding School in Vienna and were being held in Hostoun by German soldiers.

Fearing the horses would fall into the hands of the Soviet Army, a small task force was formed from the 42nd Squadron to drive the horses via an old-west style cattle drive from Hostoun to Bela nad Radbuzou which was under Allied control.

The mission was deemed Operation Cowboy. During this operation, Pfc. Raymond Manz and Tech 5 Owen Sutton, both of Alpha Troop, 42nd Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment, were killed by German SS forces.

In remembrance of these men, and to celebrate the liberation of their people by American forces, an annual pilgrimage is made along the historic route taken by those Soldiers so long ago.

This year's trip began with the unveiling of a memorial plaque in the town of Hostoun. "As Commander of Dog Company," said Capt. Scott Brandt, "I feel a special bond to this location and what happened here."

"Dog Company traces its roots back to Troop Alpha in WWII," he explained.

"We are also here to pay tribute to Sgt. Sutton and Pfc. Manz," he continued. "Many of the Soldiers of Dog Company are combat veterans."

"We understand the ultimate sacrifice they made to free this great nation," Brandt said.

After the unveiling of the plaque and the laying of flowers at the memorial in Hostoun, the motorcade starts out on its journey.

The convoy stopped at a small stone memorial in the woods near the town of Rusov which was the site of the Nazi SS checkpoint where Sutton and Manz were killed.

The stone structure was dedicated to the memory of both men. The delegation stopped to pay their respects to the memory of Manz and Sutton and lay flowers in their honor.

"It was Soldiers from this squadron that rescued the Allied prisoners," said Lt. Col. Omar Jones, commander of 2nd Squadron, 2SCR. "It is truly an honor to be here to pay tribute to these brave men whose sacrifice helped rescue the Lipizzaner and helped the Czech people regain their freedom."

"When I think of Sutton and Manz," Jones said. "I think of two young men far from their



Troopers from 2nd Squadron of the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment prepare to lay a wreath at the foot of the Memorial commemorating the Soldiers of 2SCR who died during Operation Cowboy May 1 in Bela nad Radbuzou, Czech Republic.

homes at the end of many months and years of war.

"They were there for each other, their comrades," he continued, "and sacrificed to earn freedom for over 150 prisoners.

"They also ensured the legacy and culture of the Lipizzaner horses was not lost to the world."

The motorcade then proceeded into Bela nad Radbuzou where the trip concluded at a statue dedicated to the memory of Operation Cowboy and the sacrifice of Sutton and Manz.

During the ceremony the Mayor of Bela nad Radbuzou was presented with a plaque from the 75th Colonel of the Regiment, Col. James R. Blackburn.

AVID students visit Georgia colleges, prepare for academic success

by AMY NEWCOMB
Bavarian News

Vilseck High School's Advancement Via Individual Determination Program participated in a college search trip, traveling to Georgia during spring break.

This year, the AVID program had 25 participants on their yearly trip and eight chaperones who traveled from Grafenwoehr, Germany to Atlanta, Ga.

The students visited Georgia State University, Atlanta Metropolitan Community College, University of Georgia and the University of Tennessee.

AVID teacher and career practicum coordinator, Daniel Cunningham has been in charge of the AVID program at VHS for 13 years.

Cunningham has a love for the program and the students that need his guidance. "I honestly ask myself what I have done to deserve such wonderful students...I don't have one problem...I just have wonderful students," she said.

Patrick Rodriguez and Kayln Smithson, both sophomores at VHS, are in the AVID program and participated in the Georgia college search this year.

They are both taking advanced classes with the help of AVID.

Rodriguez, with encouragement from his family, joined the AVID program in eighth grade. "It was a good choice for my mom to encourage me because if not I would be learning simpler stuff and might not have had a chance to go to college," Rodriguez said.

Rodriguez has already begun his search for colleges with the hopes of securing his academic future.

He is preparing to apply to the University of Maryland, University of Georgia and University of Louisville.

Smithson was placed by a teacher in the AVID program when he was in sixth grade because he was having

trouble with organization and failed to turn homework assignments in on time. "[AVID] taught me how to organize my binder and I ended up getting my work in on time," said Smithson.

Smithson knew getting involved in the AVID program would be a good idea because he needed to make better grades to get into college.

One college that Smithson is going to apply for is the University of Georgia.

AVID is a fourth-through 12th-grade program to help prepare academically average students in advanced classes and prepare students for four years of college eligibility and success.

Funds donated from the Grafenwoehr and Vilseck Community Spouses Clubs, Warrant Officers Association, Grafenwoehr VFW and German American Community Council paid for AVID student's ground transportation when they arrived in Georgia.

For 2010, the AVID program has planned to open its yearly college search trip to students who are not enrolled in the AVID program, as long as they meet eligibility requirements. Next year they will be headed to Boston, Ma during spring break.

To learn more about the AVID program visit AVID online at <http://www.avidonline.org/>.

RETIREE CORNER

The dual tax agreement prevents paying taxes twice on your income

by DAVE STEWART
Graf Retiree Council President

Last month we reprinted information on health insurance options for retirees living permanently in Europe which was researched and produced by Major (Retired) Bernd K. Rieger.

In another of his series of reports, Rieger provides information on German Taxes as the laws relate to retirees.

Here is his report.

A dual tax agreement (DTA) exists between the U.S. and Germany that prevents paying taxes twice on the same income. If you are residing in Germany, you must pay German tax on all income generated on the German economy regardless of where you claim your center of life is located.

For tax purposes, U.S. citizens who have an Aufenthaltserlaubnis (German residence permit) stamped into their U.S. passports are considered to have their center of life in Germany, even if they keep an address in the U.S.

If you work for the U.S. Government and/or fall under the Status Of Forces Agreement after retirement, all your U.S. income is not considered generated in Germany.

Therefore, you have nothing to do with

the Finanzamt (German Revenue Service).

But whether you are under SOFA or not, and/or have German interest/dividend income, you or/and your spouse receive German pay or pension, a German job, rental or lease income from an apartment, house, land, forest, or business located in Germany, you must file taxes with the Finanzamt and declare your U.S. retirement pay, Social Security, income such as dividends from U.S. stocks, banks, bonds and funds.

Because Germans must declare all income including their foreign income, you are, if the above applies to you, for tax purposes, like a German citizen.

Relax though, this does not mean that you end up paying German tax on U.S. income due to the DTA, which says that if you have paid U.S. tax on your income you need not pay German tax on it again.

But, your U.S. income is included in your total German income to determine your tax rate. This process is called "Progressionsvorbehalt"

You may also want to apply for a "Nichtveranlagungsbescheinigung" (called a NV, no levy of tax) at the Finanzamt. The NV frees you from filing German taxes.

The DTA says that Social Security is taxed in the country where the recipient lives. So, in order to avoid paying taxes on your Social Security in the U.S. again, you file IRS Form 8833 with your 1040.

It is best advised to report all of your U.S. earnings to the German Finanzamt if you're living permanently in Germany and not protected under SOFA.

Just like U.S. taxpayers, all German taxpayers have an exclusion called a Freibetrag.

In addition, there are many deductions to help you reduce taxes if you end up owing German taxes.

If you speak German adequately, it is recommended that you purchase a German Tax Program to do your German taxes. To consult a German tax advisor often isn't worth the expenses because most cases are not complicated.

Retirement Services Officer leaves for new assignment in the U.S.

Our Garrison Retirement Services Officer, John Currie, (USAF Ret.), has accepted a new position with the Veterans Administration in Oklahoma and departs later this month. John has been a tremendous supporter of retiree programs.

He was also a central figure in assisting widows with funeral services and military financial matters after the deaths of their retired service member spouses often under difficult circumstances because of geography and missing paperwork. We wish John lots of luck with his new assignment at the VA.

In Memoriam

Sgt. First Class (Retired) Joe McCarthy

McCarthy served in the Navy in both Reserve and active status from 1943 to 1948.

He joined the U.S. Army in 1950 and retired as a sergeant first class in December 1965.

He lived in Grafenwoehr and was responsible for the establishment of the John F. Kennedy Memorial in the city.

He is survived by his widow Helga Schroeder and three grown children, John, Johanna, Mary and Margaret.

A funeral, with military honors, was conducted at the Grafenwoehr City Cemetery.

* Note: There will be no retiree column in June. We will be back in July with more information aimed at assisting retirees living in Germany.

German defense minister discusses Afghanistan, presents federal award

by German Air Force
Master Sgt. MARK WINKLER
GCMC Public Affairs Office

German Minister of Defense Dr. Franz-Josef Jung discussed the mission in Afghanistan following the recent North Atlantic Treaty Organization summit with students at the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies April 30.

Speaking to more than 154 students from 45 nations attending the Program for Advanced Security Studies, Jung discussed why Germany's role in Afghanistan continued to be crucial now and into the future.

"We are participating in operations in Afghanistan to protect citizens in Germany, Europe and beyond. By intervening militarily, the international community has succeeded in depriving the terrorists of their operational headquarters and safe havens in Afghanistan," he said.

"It is the goal of the international community to secure this success long term and to contribute to creating a stable and functioning Afghanistan," the minister added.

Jung said the German armed forces contribute much to operations in Afghanistan. German forces, he said, are the third largest contingent in International Security Assistance Force.

Germany has provided quick-reaction forces in the northern part of Afghanistan, where it is also the lead nation in the region. Germany also runs two regional provisional reconstruction teams. Germany's armed forces are also involved in training Afghan Security Forces.

Teamed with the U.S. and other nations, Germany's efforts are turning Afghanistan into a success story.

"The terror regime of the Taliban has been ended," Jung said. "Among other things,

education for children, upon whom the future of Afghanistan rests, has profited from this - 3,500 new schools have been built; 30,000 new teachers have been trained. The number of school children has increased five fold to approximately 6.5 million."

However, the work is not ended, according to the German defense minister, highlighting valuable U.S. work in Afghanistan, noting troops increases and more funding.

"This is without a doubt an important contribution to securing the future of Afghanistan," he said. "This modified U.S. strategy significantly strengthens the reconstruction component and dovetails with our German stabilization approach, which places the civilian aspect of our operations in Afghanistan at the center of all our endeavors."

Jung said the consequences of failure in Afghanistan rang clear.

"If we fail in Afghanistan, this will be a problem for everyone, not only the alliance. That is why it is so important that all countries and international organizations work very closely together to achieve over-all success in this very complex civil-military mission," he said.

"NATO is making a decisive contribution in the field of protection and security and is proving its political will and determination in the process."

Following the speech, Jung presented the Bundesverdienstkreuz, or the Order of Merit for the Federal Republic of Germany, to Marshall Center director Dr. John P. Rose.

Rose received the Great Cross of Merit for his work fostering the partnership between Germany and America at the Marshall Center while carrying out its international mission.

"I'm honored, but this award is not about me. Rather, it is a testament to our German-American Partnership and our international



Photo by Karlheinz Wedhorn

German Defense Minister Dr. Franz-Josef Jung speaks to the Program for Advanced Security Studies at the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies April 30.

team," Rose said.

The Marshall Center is one of five centers managed by the Defense Security and Cooperation Agency. It is the only center located in another country, partnered with Germany. Its mission is to "create a more stable security environment by advancing democratic institutions and

relationships, especially in the field of defense; promoting active, peaceful security cooperation; and enhancing enduring partnerships among the nations of North America, Europe and Eurasia."

The Marshall Center's web site is www.marshallcenter.org.

GARRISON SNAPSHOTS

In the past weeks there were several reports of foxes with unusual appearance and behavior.

German authorities are aware of the problem and are trying to resolve it by trapping the foxes.

Report unusual occurrences or dead foxes to the Military Police

Courtesy photo



Now that's an allowance!

Nadia Almosadder, a fourth grade student at Garmisch Elementary-Middle School, holds a packet of \$100 bills during a visit to the garrison's community bank and credit union as part of the Month of the Military Child observation.

"The credit union, as their part of contributing to the recognition of the Month of the Military Child, came and gave our students an assembly discussing money management and the purpose of saving," said GEMS Principal Debbie Strong.

Courtesy photo



Photo by John Reese

Fire Chief Wolfgang Pauls-Polch assists kindergarteners from Garmisch Elementary-Middle School with a school film project by speaking to them about fire safety and allowing them to try on his firefighting protective gear while they explored the garrison fire truck. The children received fire safety coloring books, t-shirts and toy helmets.

Two teachers with a camera escorted the children around Artillery Kaserne and recorded them visiting various garrison services, heading for the Army Post Office after visiting the chief.

Pauls-Polch was recently named the Installation Management Command Europe Fire Safety Officer of the Year for FY 2008.



ACS honors, pampers military spouses for their support, unique challenges they face

Story and photo by
KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

A free day at the spa including a facial, massage, manicure and pedicure was the big attraction at Army Community Service's Military Spouse Appreciation Day May 8, but the \$110 value ITR trip was just one of the day's features.

To honor military spouses, U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels ACS Mobilization and Deployment program hosted an open house featuring the sought-after spa giveaway for 13 lucky spouses, cake, a coupon for a free beverage from Brew in the Box and information from ACS programs and other post services.

"We wanted to show our support all across ACS for what military spouses do supporting not just our Soldiers, but our community and the Army," said Lara Clagett, Employment Readiness program manager.

"I think this is fabulous," said Carla Nwoga, a military spouse and one of the first two spa package winners.

"The advertising was great. Even Soldiers were getting into it and telling their wives about it."

First celebrated in 1984 when then-President Ronald Reagan proclaimed the observance to honor the contributions of military spouses,

the military now sets aside the Friday before Mother's Day each year to pay tribute to the spouses who play a vital role in the nation's defense.

"Today is to show a small appreciation to the value of military spouses," said Kurt Rager, ACS outreach coordinator and military spouse.

Rager is just one of the millions of spouses, men and women, throughout the military that know firsthand the unique challenges and rewards that bring married to the military can bring.

"Being away from family is hard and there are of course the challenges that come with pursuing your own vocation," he said.

"One of the advantages is living in a foreign country and being able to explore a different culture."

"You have to support a Soldier under any condition- deployments, long duty hours," said Kerwin Iglesias.

"You have to stay with the family, be mom and dad, when they get deployed."

Still, he is quick to acknowledge that military life has its benefits too.

"We have access to benefits in many areas- health care, recreation, education. And with these kinds of activities (Military Spouse Appreciation Day) they show there is another community beyond the

Soldier/sponsor. We are a different community with different challenges," he said.

Clagett said many of the challenges military spouses face, especially the challenges that come with being stationed overseas, can be overcome with some creative problem solving and perseverance.

She said she tries to convince spouses not to limit themselves when looking for jobs overseas.

"I also encourage them to continue their education here; we have a wide range of education choices.

"I can assist them through all the stages of looking for a job from resumes to interviewing and how to get into the federal system," she said.

"I can help from the basics to the more detailed aspects of job hunting," Clagett added.

Though it certainly brings unique challenges, spouses say military life offers many unique perspectives including one in particular all military spouses share.

"I think the average person doesn't see there are so many people giving up so much to serve their country and uphold our values," said Rager.

"I'm proud each day of my wife and the choice she made to serve her country and to be able to see that first hand in her and in others is very meaningful," he added.



Carla Nwoga, left, and Sandra Horton do the honors of cutting the cake at Military Spouse Appreciation Day May 8. Nwoga and Horton were the first of 13 spouses attending the event who won a free day at the spa courtesy of U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels Army Community Service.

Bakers impress judges at 4th annual baking contest

During the 39th Annual Hohenfels German/American Volksfest a panel of German and American judges sifted through a table full of pies, cakes and bars May 2 to decide upon

winners in each of four categories at The Turnbull Memorial Library 4th Annual Cooking Classics Baking Contest.

Listed are the four winning recipes.

Category: "Cheesecake Innovations"

Winner: Beth Barr with "Festive Flag Bars"

Crust:

3/4 cup unsalted butter, softened
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup confectioner's sugar

Lemon filling:

8 ounces light cream cheese, softened
2/3 cup granulated sugar
2 large eggs
1/3 cup lemon juice

Topping:

1 1/2 cups reduced-fat sour cream
1/3 cup granulated sugar
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

Garnish:

Fresh blueberries
Tubes of red piping gel

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Line a 13x9 inch baking pan with foil, letting ends extend above pan one to two inches.

For crust: In food processor or with electric mixer, process or beat butter, flour, and confectioner's sugar until mixture holds together and forms a dough. (You may need to use your hands to help the mixture form a dough.)

Press evenly over bottom of prepared pan. Bake 10 to 20 minutes or until light golden brown and firm when touched.

Lemon filling: Beat cream cheese and sugar in large bowl with an electric mixer on high speed until smooth. Reduce mixer to medium and beat in eggs and lemon juice until well blended. Pour over crust and spread in an even layer. Bake 20 minutes until top is almost set.

Topping: Mix sour cream, sugar and vanilla. Carefully pour and spread mixture on top. Bake 10 minutes longer. Remove pan to wire rack. Cool and refrigerate at least four hours before cutting. Lift foil ends onto cutting board. Cut into 18 bars. Place four blueberries in the top left corner, then pipe seven horizontal red stripes with piping gel.



Category: "Amazing Pies"

Winner: Margaret Kluza with "Coral Apple Pie"

Batter:

2 cup flour
3/4 cup unsalted butter, softened
3/4 cup powdered sugar + 2 tablespoons for sprinkling
4 egg yolks
A few drops of vanilla extract
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
2 tablespoons sour cream

Filling:

4 big apples
3 tablespoons granulated sugar
2 tablespoons coarsely chopped walnuts (optional)
1 teaspoons cinnamon

Peel apples and cut into cubes. Mix apples with sugar, walnuts and cinnamon. Set aside. To prepare the

batter mix all the ingredients together in a bowl and put into refrigerator for 30 minutes. Divide batter in half, use one half to fill the bottom of a 9-inch spring form pan. Fill with apples. Pour in the second half of batter for the crust. Bake for 45 minutes at 325 degrees. When cool, dust the top with powdered sugar.



Category: "Incredible Chocolate Cakes"

Winner: Jennifer Allen with "Rum-licious Chocolate Pecan Pound Cake"

For cake:

2/3 cup cocoa powder, divided
1/4 cup boiling water
2 2/3 cups sugar
2 cups flour
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
3/4 C chopped pecans
1 1/4 cups margarine
5 eggs
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 cup milk
1/2 cup rum

For chocolate glaze:

3 tablespoons margarine
1 tablespoon water
3 teaspoons corn syrup
1 cup chocolate chips

Heat oven to 325 degrees. Grease and flour a 12-cup fluted tube pan. In a small bowl, stir 1/3 cup cocoa and water until smooth, set aside. In a large mixing bowl beat margarine and sugar until creamy. Add eggs, one at a time. Add reserved cocoa mixture, beat well. Stir together flour, remaining cup of cocoa, baking powder and baking soda; add to margarine mixture alternatively with milk. Stir in pecans and rum. Pour batter into prepared pan. Bake 65 minutes or until wooden toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool 10 minutes; remove from pan. Cool completely. For chocolate glaze: In small saucepan combine butter, corn syrup and water. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly until mixture boils. Remove from heat and add chocolate chips, stirring until melted. Drizzle chocolate glaze over cake.



Category: "Kid's Creations"

Winner: Sophia Roark with "Sophia's Dark Chocolate Fantasy"

8 large eggs
1 lb bittersweet or semisweet chocolate, coarsely chopped
16 TB (2 sticks) unsalted butter, cut into 16 pieces

Adjust an oven rack to the lower-middle position and heat the oven to 325 degrees. Line the bottom of an 8-inch spring form pan with parchment paper or waxed paper and grease the sides of the pan. Wrap the outside of the pan with two sheets of heavy-duty foil and set it in a large roasting pan. Bring a kettle of water to a boil. Beat the eggs at high speed until the volume doubles, approximately 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, melt the chocolate and butter in a large heatproof bowl set over a pan of almost-simmering water until smooth and very warm. Fold a third of the egg foam into the chocolate

mixture using a large rubber spatula until only a few streaks of egg are visible.

Fold in half the rest of the foam. Let rest. Scrape the batter into the prepared pan and smooth the surface with the spatula. Set the roasting pan on the oven rack and pour in enough boiling water to come about halfway up the sides of the spring form pan.

Bake until the cake has risen slightly, the edges are beginning to set, a thin glazed crust (like a brownie) has formed on the surface and an instant-read thermometer inserted halfway into the center reads 140 degrees, about 22 to 25 minutes. Remove the cake pan from the water bath and set on a wire rack. Cool to room temperature.

Cover and refrigerate overnight. About 30 minutes before serving, remove the sides of the pan, invert the cake onto a sheet of wax paper, peel off the parchment paper and re-invert the cake onto a serving platter.



Customers give garrison instant feedback with new ICE kiosks

Story and photo by
KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

The computer monitor and podium that recently appeared in the waiting area of Bldg. 10 may not be the most exciting thing to ever happen at U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels, but if the excitement it elicits from garrison officials is any indicator, it is a small thing that could be the start of big changes at Hohenfels.

At first glance it seems innocent enough.

The computer monitor has the letters I-C-E printed on a banner above it that politely asks patrons to provide feedback on the service they just received.

Now picture that monitor, and the many that will soon join it at locations across post, coming to life in the spirit of the The Brave Little Toaster.

Proudly accepting its role as advocate for the people of USAG Hohenfels, it charges across post to Bldg. 309.

It enters the office of Annette Stanis, garrison plans and management analyst, and hands her messages written by customers about their experiences with various on-post service providers.

After Stanis routes the comments, they end up on the desks of Bridy Godwin, Plans, Analysis and Integration Office director, and the director of the appropriate service provider.

But the job of the brave little ICE kiosk is not done yet.

With head held high, the monitor walks down the hallway to the offices of Lt. Col. Gary Bloomberg, garrison commander, and Chris Saucedo, deputy garrison commander.

It hands them any unsatisfied customer comments, staying to make sure the garrison's highest leadership knows the concerns of community members.

Though in reality there is no ICE kiosk marching around Bldg. 309, the truth remains that all ICE comments are read and considered.

Every single unsatisfied comment, which Godwin said only add up to about 6 to 8 percent,

is read by the command group and corresponding service provider and a response is sent within 48 hours.

Every sixth satisfied comment receives a response "to let the customer know how much we appreciate the feedback," said Godwin, adding that those comments are just as important because they allow service providers to recognize outstanding employees and processes.

In the past, customers had to fill out paper ICE comments, which took time to input and process, or remember their comment until they could access the ICE Web site.

"(The kiosks) are an opportunity for the customer to provide real-time feedback right after they get service from one of our great providers," said Bloomberg. "It allows the community to tell us how we're doing, where we can improve, and recognize great people's efforts."

"Our dissatisfied comments allow us the opportunity to improve the services within the community. Most that come in are very easily fixed," Godwin said.

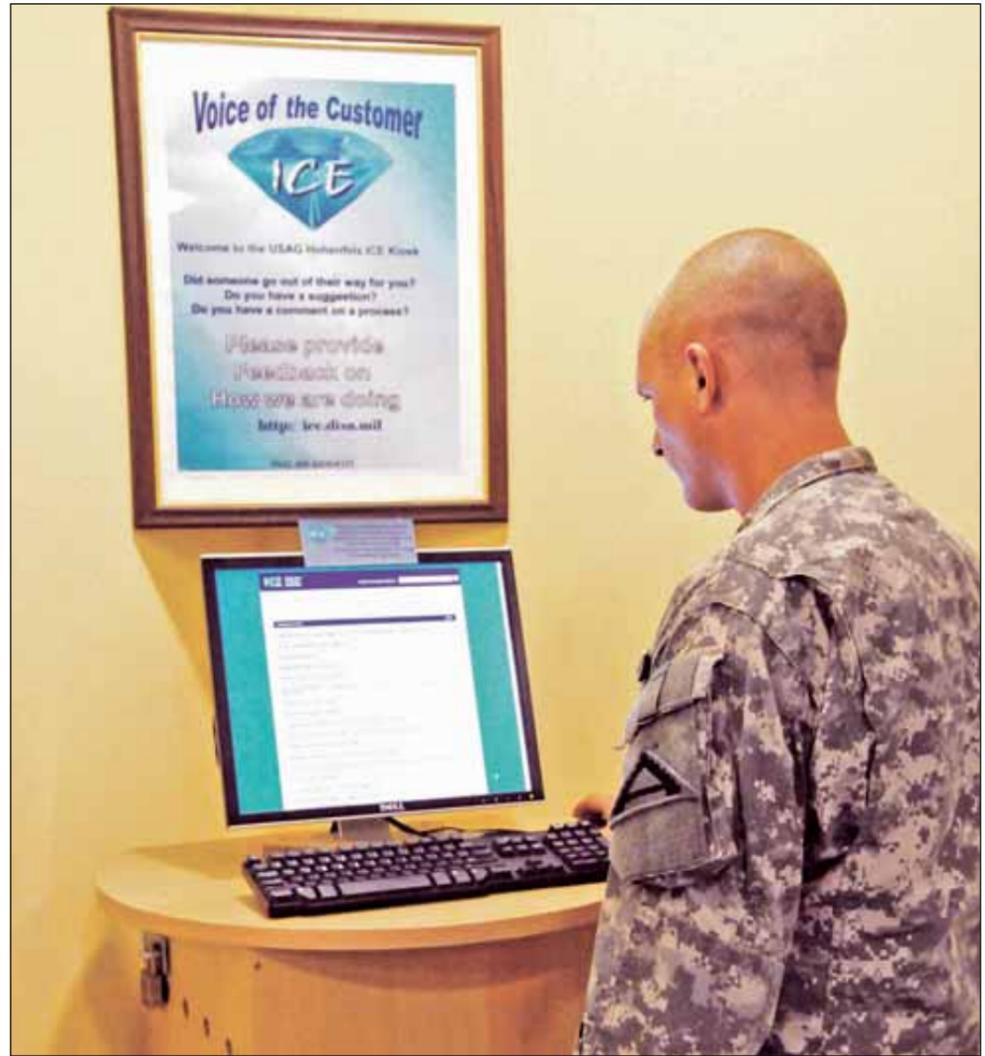
According to both Godwin and Bloomberg, kiosks will soon be placed at all major locations around post like the medical clinic, the gym, Army Community Service, the Post Exchange and more.

"I'm hoping that automating the system like this will generate even more comments. It's easy to complete and it's right there," Godwin said, adding that customers should include their contact information if at all possible so they can receive a response.

Godwin said not only is she excited about streamlining the system for customer feedback, she is proud of how they were able to do it.

She said though many garrisons in Europe and the United States have ICE kiosks, Hohenfels implemented the program for a fraction of the usual cost.

Instead of buying new computers and podiums, Godwin and her team used older, decommissioned garrison computers and the Directorate of Logistics built the podiums themselves with materials and tools they already had.



Sgt. 1st Class Tracy Reich completes an Interactive Customer Evaluation in Bldg. 10 at the first automated ICE kiosk at U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels. Though many garrisons in the United States and Europe have the kiosks, the Hohenfels kiosks were constructed for a fraction of the cost using recycled materials.

1-4 companies welcome new command

by **KRISTIN BRADLEY**
Bavarian News

Capt. Terry Howell transferred command of Company C, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment to Capt. Warren Simmons during a ceremony April 29 at Warrior Parade Field.

Simmons served as the assistant battalion operations officer and battalion operations officer for 1-4 Inf. for the past two years.

After receiving his commission in 2002, he spent a year in Iraq before coming to Germany.

Howell enlisted in the Army in 1987 and held ranks of private through master sergeant during his 14 years of service before receiving his commission as an Engineer officer from Officer Candidate

School in 2001.

His many duty assignments include the 75th Ranger Regiment in Ft. Benning, Ga. and Ft. Stewart, Ga. where he did a combat jump into Panama in 1989.

He served a year in Iraq before coming to 1-4 Inf.

Shortly after deploying to Afghanistan in June 2008 as the commander of Team Cherokee, Howell was wounded by enemy fire and spent months recovering in Germany before returning to Afghanistan.

Howell's next assignment is with a recruiting command near Los Angeles, Ca.

On May 6 Capt. Wayne Keeler transferred command of Co. D, 1-4 Inf. to Capt. William Duncan.

Duncan graduated from the U.S.

Military Academy at West Point in 2002 and received his commission as an armor officer.

He served as an M1A1 tank platoon leader and assistant S4 during his deployment to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Upon arriving in Germany he served as an operations officer at the Joint Multinational Training Command in Grafenwoehr.

After assignments in Romania and Bulgaria, Duncan served as the battalion logistics officer for 1-4 Inf before taking command of Co. D.

Keller enlisted in the Army in 1991, receiving his commission in 2000. He served a tour in Iraq before coming to Hohenfels and commanded Team Dragon during their deployment to Afghanistan in 2008.

JMRC unit receives Army logistics award

by **KRISTIN BRADLEY**
Bavarian News

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 7th Army Joint Multinational Readiness Center is one of 13 U.S. Army Europe units that received awards in the Department of the Army level of the Chief of Staff, Army Combined Logistics Excellence Awards competition for fiscal year 2009.

The annual CLEA competition recognizes units and organizations competing for three awards: the Army Award for Maintenance Excellence, the Deployment Excellence Award and the Supply Excellence Award.

The JMRC Operations Group received the SEA in the active Army Level III (B) Parent Level Table of Distribution and Allowances category.

"A number of units enter and only a few win," Mario Ambriz, logistics management specialist for U.S. Army Europe's logistics division, said at the Europe-level Combined Logistics Excellence Awards ceremony in April.

"As you get higher in the ranks, you learn that ... the challenge is, 'How do you sustain the combat arms forces?'" Gen. Carter F. Ham, U.S. Army Europe commander, said at the Europe-level ceremony.

"These guys have met that challenge with greatness."

"This is letting everybody know we have the best TDA S4," said Master Sgt. Ethen Thompson, the JMRC S4 noncommissioned officer in charge.

Thompson said winning the award is no easy task.

His unit is in charge of all JMRC property, including that assigned to 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, the Observer/Controller teams, other staff and tenant units.

Thompson said they also support the training units that come to Hohenfels, providing them with anything they need.

"We use the guidelines for running a supply room and make sure every I is dotted," he said.

Maj. Brad Eungard, JMRC S4, said he is proud of Thompson's Europe- and DA-level awards, calling him, "my all-star NCOIC."

The U.S. Army Reserve's 336th Engineer Company from Weirton, W.Va., constructs buildings at the Kittensee Military Operations in Urban Terrain site.

The company has been working on improvements at the site since they arrived in Hohenfels April 26. The company is on a 22-day overseas deployment training mission with the Joint Multinational Readiness Center.



Photo by Capt. Mark Smith

Summer's here!

Advertise your baby sitting, dog walking, or grass cutting skills in the classified ads!



**Log on to
www.milcom.de to
submit your ad.**

What's Happening

Grafenwoehr/ Vilseck Briefs

Memorial Day ceremony

VFW Tower Post 10692 will conduct a Memorial Day ceremony May 25 at the Grafenwoehr Cemetery starting at 10 a.m.

A follow on will be a ceremony conducted at the Flossenbürg Concentration Camp. Ceremonies are open to the public, and everyone is encouraged to attend.

For more, contact Steve Hood at DSN 475-8823, or Joe Livingston at DSN 476-2447.

AL-ANON

Worried About Someone's Drinking or Drug Use?

AL-ANON meets every Thursday at 7 p.m. at Counseling Center (downstairs), Building 206 (near CDS) in Grafenwoehr. The only requirement for membership is that there is an alcohol or drug problem with a relative or friend.

For more, call Carol at CIV 0171-9839151.

Tax centers are open

Scheduled appointments and walk-ins are available daily with extended hours several days a week.

In Graf, call DSN 475-9258, CIV 09641-83-9258, in Vilseck DSN 476-2714, CIV 09662-83-2714 for more.

Financial classes

Financial Peace University will host a three day course May 27-29 from 9 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.

Financial Peace University is an intensive training course for personal finance. FPU helps Soldiers strategically and effectively remove debt and build wealth.

Classes will be offered at JMSC classroom in Bldg. 1461. Participants have to attend all classes all three days.

Lunch is provided at the classroom. Spouses may attend. Child care is not offered.

For more information, call CH Hammond at DSN 475-8205, CIV 0162-296-6051, e-mail scott.a.hammond@eur.army.mil or Master Sgt. Cavalier at DSN 475-6505, e-mail mike.cavalier@eur.army.mil.

Travel opportunities

To sign-up for these trips, call DSN 476-2563, CIV 09662-83-2563, or DSN 475-7402, CIV 09662-83-7402.

European Daytrips

- Saturday- Europa Park Amusement Park
- Sunday- Geiselwind Amusement Park

• May 30- Rhine River Cruise

European Overnights

- June 4-7- Amsterdam, Holland
- June 13-22- Rome and Sicily, Italy
- June 26-28- Cracow, Poland

Employment readiness

ACS Employment Readiness Program offers weekly e-mails of jobs available within USAG Grafenwoehr.

Gain the skills you need to find the job you want. Call ACS at Vilseck CIV 09662-83-2650, or Graf CIV 09641-83-8371 for more or to be put on the job distribution list.

Estate claims

Anyone having claims on or obligations to the estate of Sergeant Christian E. Buenogaldos of 3rd Battalion, 66th Armor should contact the following summary court martial officer, Capt. Phil Hensel at DSN 474-2391 or email phil.hensel@eur.army.mil.

Anyone having claims on or obligations to the estate of Sgt. William P. Sullivan II of 3rd Squadron, 2d SCR, H Company, 2nd Platoon should contact court martial officer 1st Lt. Timothy L. Geitner at DSN 476-5286 or e-mail timothy.geitner@eur.army.mil.

Anyone having claims on or obligations to the estate of Spc. Israel Candelaria Mejias of 1-2 IN Task Force, 3-66 AR, 172nd In Brigade, should contact the following summary court martial officer, 1st Lt. Sean N. Dexter at DSN 475-9262 or e-mail sean.dexter@us.army.mil.

Summer camp program

Teen Centers in Netzaberg and Rose Barracks will be offering a summer camp program from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Many exciting activities will take place - we'd love to have you!

All youth must be registered in CYSS to attend. For more information on summer camp, contact either Teen Center at DSN 476-3144 or DSN 475-9390.

DoDDS positions open

DoDDS is looking for people who enjoy working with children of all ages.

To apply, visit <http://www.bav-dso.eu.dodea.edu> and click the employment link. The following openings are available to view:

- General clerk and assistant - No. OCA-2009-0303
- Secretary (office automation) - No. OCA-2009-0318
- Office automation tech - No. OCA-2009-0326
- Library tech - No. OCA-2009-1411
- Education and training tech - No. OCA-2009-1702 (General: 9316, Special education: 9255, Kindergarten: 9289, Sure start: 9254)
- Transportation tech - No. OCA-2009-2102

Send a complete application for each announcement, using the application checklist provided on the Bavaria Web site to bavaria.applicant@eu.dodea.edu. Incomplete packets will not be processed.

KONTAKT Club

Check out your local German-American friendship organization, KONTAKT Clubs in Grafenwoehr, Vilseck and Amberg.

For more, call DSN 475-8885, CIV 09662-83-8885, or DSN 475-1600, CIV 09641-83-1600, visit <http://www.kontakt-vilseck.de>.

Library hours change

Rose Barracks Library's new hours of operation are Sunday to Thursday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

They will be closed Friday and Saturday.

Community soccer signup

Sign up through May 31 at the Grafenwoehr and Vilseck Fitness centers. Call DSN 475-9007 or DSN 476-2214 for more.

Boxing invitational

A Boxing Invitational will be held June 6 at the Rose Barracks Memorial Fitness Center.

For information, call DSN 475-9007, CIV 09641-83-9007.

Ten miler qualifier

The U.S. Forces Ten Miler Qualifier will be held June 27 in Grafenwoehr.

Registration available at www.grafenwoehr.army.mil. Call DSN 475-7576/8207/7137 for more.

Spouses support group

Come to a support group for spouses of Deployed Soldiers on the 2nd and last Wednesday of each month from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Grafenwoehr Chapel Annex. Free childcare and lunch.

For more, call DSN 476-3276, CIV 09662-83-3276.

Hohenfels Briefs

Internet job search

This workshop is designed to teach you the basics and a little bit beyond by taking advantage of today's ever increasing technology.

This workshop will be held May 20 from 2:30-3:30 p.m. at ACS, Bldg. 10. For more information call Lara Clagett, Employment Readiness Program manager, at DSN 466-4088.

Federal resume preparation

Learn how to make the federal resume, CPOL and RESUMIX work for you.

This workshop will help you put a little punch into your federal resume and give you the tools to aggressively search for that perfect job. If a job search in the federal ring is coming up, this workshop is a must.

Help is available today from 3:30-5 p.m. at ACS, Bldg. 10. For more information call Lara Clagett, Employment Readiness Program manager, at DSN 466-4088.

House hunting?

This valuable workshop will tell you how much home you can afford and exactly how the VA Home Loan Guarantee Program works.

It will also give you tips on finding a realtor, types of mortgages, costs, researching the repo market, insurance, finding a home, record keeping and putting it all together.

Be smart; get your facts right now. Save thousands by attending today from 5-7 p.m. at ACS, Bldg. 10. For further information, please contact Rachael Sosa, Financial Readiness Program Manager on her direct line at 466-3401.

Little troopers playgroup

An interactive and educational playgroup designed to teach parents developmentally appropriate play and help children improve social, cognitive and motor skills. Open to all children from new-borns through 3 years old.

Check it out Friday from 9-11 a.m. in the former CDC Annex, Bldg. 44.

For more information call Pam Koch, Exceptional Family Member Program coordinator, at DSN 466-2083.

Black Forest trip

Visit one of the most unique places in Germany, the Black Forest.

Join ITR Saturday in the area where many of the cuckoo clocks are hand carved. We will visit the city of Triberg where we will be able to view the largest waterfall in Germany and shop for the cuckoo clock of your choice.

Remember to bring your VAT form. Bus will depart Hohenfels from ODR, building H15, at 4:30 a.m. and return around 9:00pm. Cost is \$45 per person includes transportation. Seating is limited to 50 people.

For information call ITR at DSN 466-2060, CIV 09742-83-2060.

Youth Sports mini camps

Summer Mini Camp enrollment runs through June 22. The first week of specialty camps and trips start June 22.

Camp activities include Start Smart golf and basketball, street hockey, basketball, golf, canoeing, Garmisch hiking and boating, sand boarding, extreme sports ventures, tackle football, mountain biking, European handball and more.

For more information call Youth Sports and Fitness at DSN 466-2558/2479.

FAST Class

If you need to raise your GT score or just brush up on basic reading and math skills to prepare for college, consider enrolling in the upcoming FAST class.

Instruction will be held at the Education Center from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. May 27 to June 9.

Interested Soldiers will need to come to the Education Center, Bldg. 351, for an enrollment form to be signed by their commander and take a TABE test. Contractual requirements specify that FAST classes have a minimum of 10 to be held.

For more information call Crystal Newman at DSN 466-2882.

Birthday celebration

The Joint Multinational Readiness Center and U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels invite members of the community to celebrate the Army's birthday on June 11 from noon to 1 p.m. at the Warrior Sports Café.

The scheduled guest speaker is retired Command Sgt. Maj. Larry Emery.

Youth summer opportunity

This summer, Club Beyond Hohenfels offers an exciting week of camp to both middle and high school youth. Beach Break takes place at Camp Darby, Italy.

The High School trip June 20-25

Customs Offices and Hours of Operation

Garmisch

Bldg # 209 MP Station, DSN 440-3601, CIV 08821-750-3601
TUE-FRI 1-4 p.m.

Grafenwoehr

Bldg # 621, Rm 102, DSN 475-7249, CIV 09641-83-7249
MON-FRI 9 a.m.-12 p.m. and 1-3 p.m.

Hohenfels

Bldg # 10, Rm 118, DSN 466-2012, CIV 09472-83-2012
MON-FRI 8 a.m.- 12p.m. and 1-4 p.m.

Vilseck

Bldg # 166, Rm 110, DSN 476-2105, CIV 09662-83-2105
MON-FRI 9 a.m.- 12p.m. and 1-3 p.m.

War Eagle Family Fit Race Series

30 May - Starts 8 a.m.

Registration at Dragoon Field, Rose Barracks

The course is adjacent to the registration site.

➤ Race day registration 6:30 – 8:15 a.m.

➤ The 1 mile Fun Run starts 7:45 a.m.

➤ 5K/10 miler race starts 8:30 a.m.

➤ online registration available at

wareagleraceseries@gmail.com



The **War Eagle Family Fit** series is open to all USAG Grafenwoehr community members. Registration forms available at Rose Barracks Fitness Center, 1/2 SCR Staff Duty (Bldg. 601), and Grafenwoehr Gym.

For questions, call CPT Neifert: DSN:476-5395 or Civ:09662-83-5395

DISA Europe Conference



"Securing Partnerships toward Enterprise Solutions"

The Defense Information Systems Agency-Europe invites all communication and information technology professionals across Europe to participate!!

Agenda includes

Theater Satellite Communications Challenges; Technology impact on Technical Control Facilities, and DISN Technology impact on the European and African Theater Information Grid.

Edelweiss Lodge & Resort in Garmisch, Germany

22-26 June 2009!

Space is limited!! Register by June 1, 2009 at the following website

www.disa.mil/conferences/europe
or call DSN (314) 434-5006 or (314) 434-5058 for more information

What's Happening

Ansbach Briefs

AAFES extends hours

In an effort to better serve the community and in response to customer requests, Army and Air Force Exchange Service is extending hours at two of its eateries in the Ansbach community.

Subway on Storck Barracks has extended its hours until 8 p.m. Mondays-Fridays.

Burger King on Katterbach has stays open until 8 p.m. Mondays-Saturdays.

Usage of facilities will determine if the house will be permanent.

Retiree Appreciation Day

The garrison hosts a retiree appreciation day June 15 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Illesheim Elementary School on Storck Barracks.

At the event, the Storck Health and Dental clinics, legal office, local retiree council as well as many other agencies will be on hand to offer services and information applicable to retiree needs.

For more information, call DSN 467-3301, CIV 09802-83-3301.

College registration

Start earning your degree now! On-site college registration runs through May 29. Courses will be offered by University of Maryland, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Central Texas College, University of Oklahoma, and University of Phoenix.

For details and distance learning schedules visit your local education center: on Katterbach Bldg. 5818, DSN 467-2817, CIV 09802-83-2817, and Storck Barracks Bldg. 6503, DSN 467-4750, CIV 09841-83-4750.

Travel changes

New U.S. Transportation Security Administration travel requirements are expected to take effect in July.

Travelers, when making their reservations, must ensure their reservations and tickets reflect their names exactly as they are shown on their travel documents, i.e., passports.

Also, SATO will soon begin asking for gender and date of birth information along with exact names for all reservations.

This change may impact frequent flyer programs. Check with your program officials to ensure you receive credit with these changes, or ask to have your name changed on the account to match your travel documents.

For more on these new requirements, call DSN 468-7957, CIV 0981-183-957.

CLEP it

The Ansbach Education Center offers the College-Level Examination Program

to help people save time and money while earning college credits.

CLEP gives students an opportunity to receive college credit through 34 exams in five subject areas - from independent study, prior course work, on-the-job training or professional development.

CLEP examinations cover material taught in courses that most students take as requirements in the first two years of college. Depending on a schools' CLEP policy, three to 12 credits can be awarded.

CLEP exams are free through the education center for Soldiers, and cost \$120 for family members and civilians.

For more call DSN 467-2817, CIV 09802-83-2817 at Katterbach or DSN 467-4750, CIV 09841-83-4750 at Storck Barracks.

College hybrid class

The University of Maryland Europe offers a hybrid Introduction to Sociology class May 31 through July 25.

The hybrid class offers 50 percent of the class online and 50 percent in the classroom.

This class features personal orientations during the first meeting and 24/7 technical support throughout the class to help ensure success for students.

The classroom portion of the hybrid meets Wednesdays from 5:30-8:30 p.m.

For more, call your local UMUC representative: Storck, DSN 467-4991, CIV 09841-83-4991; or Katterbach, DSN 467-2847, CIV 09802-83-2847.

School registration

USAG Ansbach area schools are accepting registration for the 2009-2010 school year. Parents are advised to register early so the school can allocate the appropriate resources and staff. For more, call your servicing school.

Medical appointments online

Katterbach Health Clinic patients can now make appointments online. Visit www.tricareonline.com to register and begin making appointments.

Mail notification via e-mail

The USAG Ansbach Community Mail rooms now offers registered patrons e-mail notifications for packages and bulky mail. For more, visit the CMR.

Marriage, family therapy

The Ansbach Behavioral Health Clinic on Bleidorn Kaserne, Bldg. 5083, has a marriage and family therapist available Mondays-Fridays from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to assist with pre- and post-deployment related issues that are impacting the marriage or family.

The therapist also sees couples and families for counseling not related to deployment. For more or to schedule an appointment, call DSN 468-7853, CIV 0981-183-853.

Schweinfurt Briefs

Memorial Day activities

The community is invited to attend the Memorial Day Ceremony at the 172nd Brigade Flagpole Garden, Conn Barracks, tomorrow starting at 11:30 a.m.

The guest of honor, Command Sergeant Major Mark Schindler of USA-REUR & 7th Army Operations, a Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart recipient, will speak at the event.

A complimentary barbecue lunch will be served immediately after the ceremony at the Conn Club pavilion. Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend.

Bulk trash

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

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

Product recall

Over-the-counter Hydroxycut dietary supplements have been pulled from store shelves following a May 1 Food and Drug Administration announcement of a voluntary recall of the products.

The FDA notice said 23 deaths have been linked to the products. In Germany, AAFES spokesman Lt. Col. David Konop confirmed that all of the affected products have been removed from AAFES shelves in Europe.

A notice has been posted on a Defense Department Web site in order to educate service members on the health risks involved.

The site can be found at www.health.mil/Press/Release.aspx?ID=687.

According to the Europe Regional Medical Command press release, customers are advised to make wise choices regarding further product use at home.

Sell household wares

Tables are for sale for the community to display and sell their household wares during the community flea market at Schweinfurt Elementary School May 31 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Half a table goes for \$10 and a full table runs \$20. Food sales are not allowed.

For information on purchasing table space, call 0171-774-5787 or email jennifer.overway@gmail.com.

Asian Pacific heritage event

Join the Ledward Library for lunch in a celebration of Asian Pacific heritage tomorrow.

The library offers a taste of Asian Pacific cuisine with assorted dish sampling from noon to 1 p.m.

The community is invited to attend.

Learn German

Want to learn the German language? Sign up for the Army Community Service beginner German language course running June 3-29.

Classes meet every Monday, Wednesday, Friday in Ledward Yellow Ribbon Room from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. To sign up, call CIV 09721-96-6933.

Summer reading program

Register your 6-11-year-old for the Ledward Library summer reading program, "Get creative at your library," starting June 1 at 10 a.m.

Registration packets can be picked up from the front desk. Call CIV 09721-96-1740 for more.

Book club

The library book club will meet May 28 at Ledward Library to discuss "Last Lecture" by Randy Pausch.

Beginning at 5:15 p.m. guests can enjoy coffee, tea, and treats.

For more information or to join the book club, call Pam Rio at CIV 09721-96-6487 or DSN 354-6487.

Saturday child care available

Do you need a break from the kids to run errands or just relax at home?

Sign up now for Child, Youth, and School Services' super saturday child care May 30.

Children ages 6 weeks to fifth-grade will be cared for from 9:30 a.m.

to 2:30 p.m. for \$16.

The program includes one meal. Children must be registered with CYSS and also have current immunizations.

Reservation deadline is Friday. Call CIV 09721-96-6414, DSN 354-6414.

Single Soldier events

Join Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers for activities throughout each month at the Finney Rec Center on Conn Barracks.

For times and details, call CIV 09721-96-8476, DSN 353-8476.

- Tuesday - Challenge (Guitar Hero)
- May 27 - Movie and popcorn night

Love and logic parent

Army Community Service offers classes for those interested in "Becoming a Love & Logic Parent."

The class is held Tuesdays from 9 to 11 a.m. at School Age Services. Those interested can attend at any time. Limited free child care is available.

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

Free computer class offered

Do you need to learn more computer skills?

Army Community Service is offering a free computer class tomorrow discussing how to use the Microsoft Access program.

Class meets at Ledward building 206 computer lab and runs from 8:30 a.m. to 12:50 p.m.

A certificate of completion will be issued at the conclusion of the class. To sign up, call CIV 09721-96-6933, DSN 354-6933.

Free concert

Armed forces entertainment presents Texas-based country singer Derek Sholl Saturday on Askren Manor at 7 p.m.

The concert is free and open to all ID cardholders. To preview some of his music, go to www.dereksholl.com.

Auto skills class

The automotive support spouse awareness program offers a class on passive restraints tomorrow at the Auto Skills Center beginning at 6 p.m.

Discover how air bags function and affect passengers during a collision. Class is free and open to all ID cardholders. No sign ups necessary.

For more information, call CIV 09721-96-8224, DSN 353-8224.

Memorial Day run

Kessler Fitness Center will host a Memorial Day run May 30 at 9 a.m.

Distances vary depending on age group and are listed below. For more information or to register, call CIV 09721-96-6735, DSN 354-6735.

- Adults division - 10K
- Ages 13-17 - 5k
- Ages 9-12 - 3k
- Ages 6-8 - 2k

Lunch Bunch

The Lunch Bunch will meet May 28 to dine at a local restaurant from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Soldiers and spouses can enjoy an outing at a budget-friendly and family-oriented restaurant with the assistance of an ACS local national staff member.

Open to all ID cardholders, participants will meet in the ACS lobby to carpool. Bring euro for lunch.

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

Need a job?

Army Community Service offers a class about how to find a job June 2 from 2 to 3 p.m.

The class offers tips on how to explore employment opportunities within the community and how to apply.

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

Crafts studio trip

The Ledward Crafts Studio takes a trip to the teddy and doll fair in Sonnenburg on Saturday.

Departure from the studio is at 1 p.m. Free transportation is only available for those who sign up.

The shuttle will stop at the Coburg flea market on the way home from the fair. For more information or to sign up, call CIV 09721-96-6903, DSN 354-6903.

FRG roundtable

If you are active in your Family Readiness Group and want to learn what's going on with other FRGs within the community, then attend the FRG roundtable discussion May 28 from 6 to 8 p.m. in the Yellow Ribbon Room.

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

Travel opportunities

The Exchange Service's Exchange Online Mall has partnered with the U.S. Army Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation to help troops take a break without going broke.

Authorized exchange shopper can log on to the Exchange Online Mall and book a vacation through FMWRC's Government Vacation Rewards program.

2009 ARTS & RECREATION Festival

Lucky you! Look what's coming to Ansbach...

LUCKY STIFF
a comedy on stage

29 May, 5 June & 6 June at 1930 | 31 May & 7 June at 1400
Terrace Playhouse, Bleidorn Housing Area

Don't miss this outrageous musical murder mystery farce!
For reservations & tickets call Terrace Playhouse at 468.7636 or 0981.183.636.

LUCKY STARS
Best of the Best Talent Competition

Finals: 30 May 2009 at Katterbach Movie Theatre
1400 for Youth Talent | 1800 for Adult Talent

Join us for this Europe-Wide Talent Competition!
For more information, email ansbachboss@eur.army.mil

LUCK of the DRAW
cycling - running - golfing triathlon

30 May 2009 starting 0900
Katterbach Fitness Center

Three ways to luck out! Bike, run and putt your way to victory.
Sign up at your fitness Center

ARMED FORCES ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS

dereksholl

FREE ADMISSION

www.dereksholl.com

IT'S TIME TO IRON THOSE BLUE JEANS

Texas-based crooner Derek Sholl, whose deep baritone voice has a mellow texture like fine-aged whiskey, puts on a show that promises to be a down-home good time. So iron those jeans and get ready to spin around the dance floor.

SUNDAY, 24 MAY 2009
LONGBOW LOUNGE
STORCK BARRACKS, ILLESHEIM
DOORS OPEN 1830 | CONCERT 1900

ARMED FORCES ENTERTAINMENT

MWR
FOR ALL OF YOUR LIFE



Cambodia

A land rich in history, spirit, culture

Photos by Colleen Caputo & Nickayla Myers-Garner

by **COLLEEN CAPUTO**
Special to the Bavarian News

Cambodia is not on many American's "must-see" list.

After seven years in Germany I have checked-off many sites on that list and knew it was time to go a bit farther afield and expand my view of the world beyond western culture.

The little we hear about this country in the media has led many Americans to perceive Cambodia as a very rugged, poor country ravaged by war and danger, so when my friend and I traveled to Cambodia for spring break we were unsure of what to expect. We planned our trip using the travel agency About Asia, www.asiatravel-cambodia.com.

What we found over our five-day trip was a safe country rich in culture, history and spirit.

Attractions

We visited 18 temples, met a local honey harvester, experienced local markets, food, a floating village, a fishing village and were graciously welcomed by local people.

Our vacation was full of explorations

and surprises throughout the north of Cambodia in Siem Reap which proved to be a life changing experience.

Upon arrival into Siem Reap, we paid a visa fee of 25 U.S. dollars.

Our trip to Siem Reap, the capital of Siem Reap Province, included hotel, private guide and driver, entrance into temples, a boat trip, and many other extras for less than \$500.

Our guide and driver were waiting with friendly smiles to greet us at the airport. They took us to La Maison d'Angkor, a French-owned hotel more charming and intimate than the other large-scale hotels in the surrounding area that featured bungalows, private pool and jacuzzi.

The first day in Siem Reap we visited Angkor Wat, a temple built in A.D. 113.

This temple has been a UNESCO World Heritage site since 1992 which has given the Cambodian government an incentive to preserve the temple.

Angkor Wat rises out of the lush jungle with towers, a moat and bas-reliefs depicting the Devantas, or dancing ladies of the court. This is a large tourist attraction, but the walls

and monks dressed in saffron colored robes gives you a sense of this temple's majestic appearance and purpose.

Tonle Sap Lake

Our second day we traveled by boat through the Tonle Sap Lake.

During the rainy season, this is the largest freshwater lake in Southeast Asia and produces a huge fish crop.

In the distance, the floating village appears like little wooden houses and boats bobbing up and down.

Our boat snaked its way along the tributary past a floating school, including a floating basketball court. Cruising along the lake for 45 minutes, the tree trunks and leaves extend high to compensate for the swelling of the lake during the rainy season.

After walking on one of the floating shops/restaurants, we traveled to the fishing village Kampong Pluk.

High on stilts, this village depends on the fish and shrimp crop for survival.

The towns have homes built on both sides of a main dirt road. During the rainy season you can float down the main street.

The town was full of life with locals getting haircuts, kids playing various games, dogs and chickens running about and the smell of drying shrimp filling the air.

Though poor by U.S. standards, the people who live there exude happiness.

They were very welcoming, asking us questions and even letting us into their homes. Simple pastimes, such as talking with neighbors and playing volleyball had all the locals smiling and laughing.

This experience put the importance of material possessions into perspective.

Ta Prohm Temple

The next day we arrived at Ta Prohm, a temple left un-restored in the dense jungle.

Taken over by massive fig, banyan and kapok trees, the tentacle-like roots have strangled the temple's stonework.

The sheer size and scale of the trees' roots as they tower over the temple create a feeling that nature has claimed Ta Prohm for itself.

This temple is also well known as the "Tomb Raider Temple" where Angela Jolie filmed the first of these series of films.

While walking through ruins we saw monks dressed in saffron robes and children sketching the carvings in the stone walls.

Though temples are a big part of experiencing Cambodia, the local trades are fascinating to experience.

We spent some time in a silk factory where locals continue to

use traditional means for growing silk worms, collecting and weaving the silk.

We were also fortunate to meet a local bee harvester and experience a honey harvest in the forest. We were only inches from the hive and watched as the Africanized honey bees swarmed around us in a cloud of smoke.

After being swarmed by thousands of bees we went for a walk through the bogs searching for wild orchids and insect eating plants.

Though much of Cambodia is full of beauty and life, millions of landmines, originally placed during wartime, still exist throughout country.

Now, during peace time, there is a mission to recover and defuse landmines that maim and kill many Cambodians, many of them children.

This is a slow and tedious job, but with international funding and local determination the amount of landmines still existing within Cambodia has significantly decreased. These efforts have been documented in many landmine museums, which are an important stop on any tourist's Cambodian visit.

Hidden treasures

While crossing the countryside visiting temples and villages, any traveler is going to get hungry.

Some of Cambodia's culinary treasures can be found in local markets such as the Psa Leu market that is constantly buzzing with the sounds of locals shopping and stall-owners chatting.

Locals sell fresh fish, chicken, salted eggs, dried fish, piles of brightly colored fruits and vegetables and large bags of dried spices and sauces from stalls in a large, barn-like structure.

We were fortunate to try one of the local dishes, a snake-head fish stew cooked inside of a coconut.

This delicious dish is made using this special fish cooked with vegetables, coconut milk and spices. Eating hot food out of a coconut was an adventure in itself in addition to eating the delicious stew inside.

Things to remember

Anyone planning a trip to Cambodia should remember a few key things.

The climate in Cambodia is very hot and humid. Pack light clothing, a hat and comfortable walking shoes as the steps at most temples are steep and narrow.

Avoid drinking the water and eating raw vegetables. Bottled water and sodas are readily available to purchase. Our travel agent, About Asia, provided us with bottled water and cool towels in our van which was an added convenience.

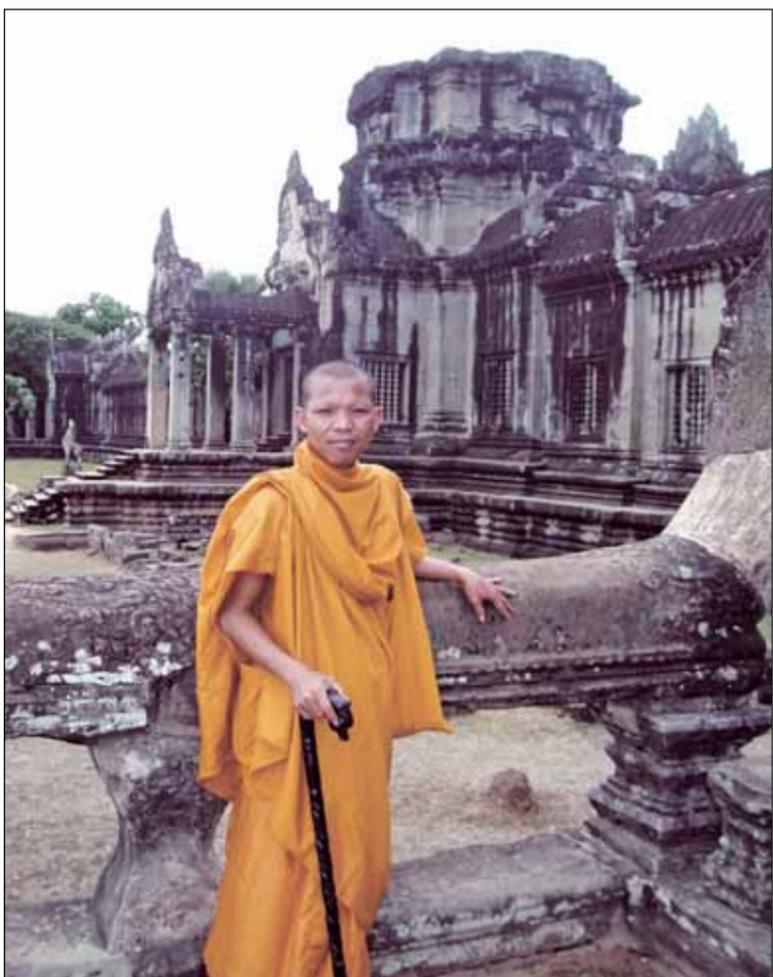
It is wise to bring travel rolls of toilet paper, wipes and hand sanitizer in the event that they are unavailable.

The children love to talk and ask questions. When visiting the villages, bring along pencils, pens, stickers or small notepads as a token for the children.

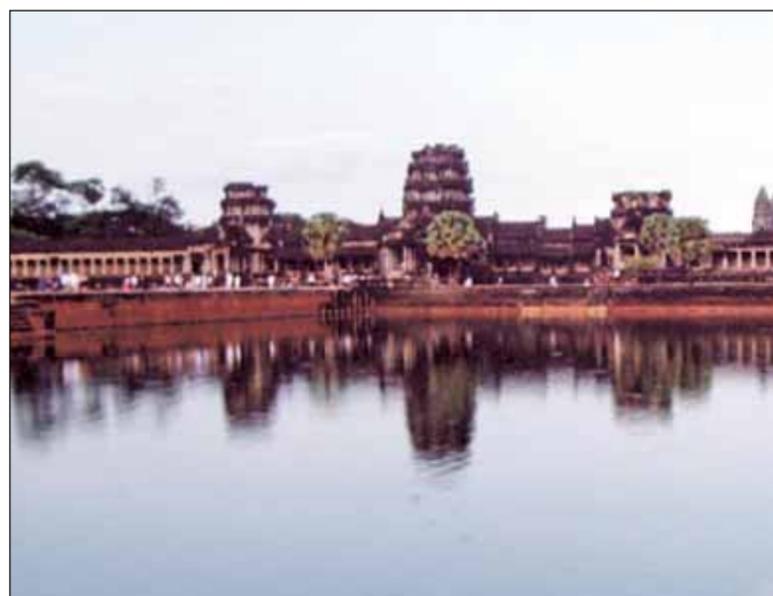
Candy is not recommended as the Cambodians do not have local dental care. There has been a rise in dental problems in children due to the candy provided by tourists.

Cambodia is an exciting place to visit, full of local flavor and flare that enhances one's view of the world and of another culture's priorities.

Many Americans would be astounded at the Cambodian way of life upon arrival and would leave as an admirer of this very unique and rich culture.



A monk stands at the Angkor Wat temple, one of many attractions in Cambodia.



The Angkor Wat a temple, built in A.D. 113, was named a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1992.

Army prevention, treatment programs get serious about mental health, stress, care

by JERRY HARBEN

U.S. Army Medical Command

This month, the Army joins the rest of the nation in observing National Mental Health Month.

The mental health of Soldiers and Soldiers' families has received great attention in the news media, and Army leaders are putting emphasis on programs to deal with psychological issues.

"Soldiers are getting comprehensive training to deal with stressors which they may encounter. An example is Battlemind training, a program with modules specific to the phases of the deployment cycle, as the types of stressors that Soldiers encounter are different when they are preparing to deploy, are in theater and upon return home.

"Battlemind also has training for spouses, as deployment has a significant impact on Families," said Col. C. J. Diebold, chief of psychiatry at Tripler Army Medical Center, Hawaii, and psychiatry consultant to The Surgeon General of the Army.

"In addition, suicide prevention is a very high priority, and the Army is being very aggressive in educating Soldiers through chain teaching from the senior level on down.

"The emphasis is on awareness of warning signs and risk factors of suicide, and being comfortable enough to ask if you are concerned about your buddy's safety and knowing how to get him the help he needs. The central theme of the program is 'ACE', which stands for 'Ask, Care and Escort,'" Diebold continued.

"An additional major initiative is emphasis on comprehensive Soldier fitness," Diebold said. "It's along the lines of taking a look at the entire person and assessing what their needs are - biological, psychological, social - to maximize the ability to function well throughout their entire military careers. It's proactive and based on a prevention-type model, in contrast to waiting to treat a problem after it occurs."

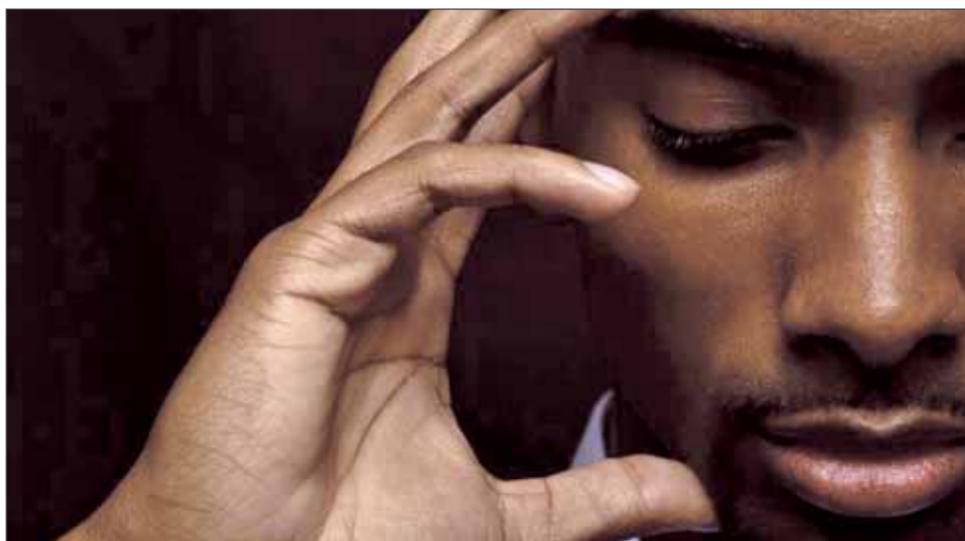
Brig. Gen. Rhonda Cornum, a physician and combat veteran, is leading a project to develop an assessment tool for all aspects of Soldier fitness.

"The best way to treat a death by heart attack is not CPR," Cornum recently told the Army News Service.

"The best way is to prevent the heart attack. It's a lifestyle and culture change. And that's how we should look at mental health. Look at it with a preventative model and enhanced health model, not a 'waiting until we need therapy' model. That's what comprehensive Soldier fitness is setting out to do."

"The Army is very cognizant of the stigma with seeking mental-health care," Diebold said. "This issue is not unique to the military, but Soldiers have been reluctant to see a mental-health provider due to concern over potential negative impact on one's career and being identified as 'broken' by command and fellow Soldiers.

"The good news is that slowly but surely stigma in seeking mental-health care is decreasing. One very important reason is because leaders at all levels have taken the initiative mandate that no Soldier is to be denied access to mental-health



Courtesy photo

Comprehensive training aims to help Soldiers and family members deal with the stresses of combat and the military lifestyle.

care, there will be no reprisal for seeking care, and they will not be labeled as 'weak' or 'broken' for getting help."

The Office of The Surgeon General recently issued a fact sheet listing Army behavioral-health programs and initiatives. Included are:

- Some 250 new behavioral-health providers and more than 40 marriage and family therapists have been hired to work in military treatment facilities in the United States.

- Health care providers receive post-traumatic stress training so that they can accurately diagnose and treat combat stress injuries.

- On average, 200 behavioral-health personnel from all military services are deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, and about 30 in Operation Enduring Freedom.

- All Soldiers receive a Post Deployment Health Assessment on re-deployment, usually in the theater of operations. The Post Deployment Health Reassessment some 90 days later provides Soldiers the opportunity to identify any new physical or behavioral-health concerns that may not have been present immediately after redeployment. This assessment includes an interview with a health-care provider.

The fact sheet states this has been a very effective new program for identifying Soldiers who are experiencing some of the symptoms of stress-related disorders and getting them the care they need before their symptoms manifest into more serious problems.

- The Respect-Mil pilot program at Fort Bragg, N.C., integrates behavioral-health care into the primary-care setting, providing education, screening tools, and treatment guidelines to primary-care providers.

It has been so successful at reducing the stigma associated with seeking mental-health care that 15

more sites have implemented it, and another 17 sites should implement it in 2009.

- Battlemind training is a strengths-based approach highlighting the skills that helped Soldiers survive in combat instead of focusing on the negative effects of combat.

It has been expanded into programs for Soldiers and spouses. The Web site www.battlemind.org explains the program.

- Mental Health Assessment Teams deployed into theater in 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007. Never before had the mental health of combatants been studied in a systematic manner during conflict.

Based on MHAT recommendations, the Army has improved the distribution of behavioral-health providers and expertise throughout the theater.

- Medical Command created a behavioral-health Web site www.behavioralhealth.army.mil; a Behavioral Health Proponency Office; and a new PTSD training course.

- Two DVD/CDs that deal with Family deployment issues are now available: an animated video program for 6- to 11-year-olds, called "Mr. Poe and Friends," and a teen interview for 12- to 19-year-olds, "Military Youth Coping with Separation: When Family Members Deploy."

Viewing the interactive video programs with children can help decrease some of the negative outcomes of Family separation.

To access the programs, go to www.behavioralhealth.army.mil and click on children.

- In mid-July 2007 the Army launched a PTSD and mild traumatic brain injury Chain Teaching Program that will reach more than 1 million Soldiers, a measure that will ensure early intervention.

The objective of the chain teaching package was to educate all Soldiers and leaders on PTSD and TBI so they can help recognize, prevent and

treat these debilitating health issues.

- In 2008 the Defense Department revised Question 21 on the questionnaire for national security positions, regarding mental and emotional health.

The revised question now excludes non-court ordered counseling related to marital, family, or grief issues, unless related to violence by members; and counseling for adjustments from service in a military combat environment.

Seeking professional care for these mental-health issues should not be perceived to jeopardize a person's professional career or security clearance.

Failure to seek care actually increases the likelihood that psychological distress could escalate to a more serious mental condition, which could preclude a person from performing sensitive duties.

- In 2008, the Army began piloting Warrior Adventure Quest. WAQ combines existing high adventure, extreme sports and outdoor recreation activities, such as rock climbing, mountain biking, paintball, scuba, ropes courses, skiing, and others, with a leader-led after action debriefing.

This helps Soldiers transition their operational experiences into a "new normal", enhancing military readiness, reintegration and adjustment to garrison or "home" life.

- This year the Army conducted a "standdown" to ensure that all Soldiers learned not only the risk factors of suicidal Soldiers but how to intervene if they are concerned about their buddies.

The "Beyond the Front" interactive video is the core training for this effort. It will be followed by a chain teach which focuses on a video "Shoulder to Shoulder; No Soldier Stands Alone" and vignettes drawn from real cases.

Innovative approaches include the Restoration and Resilience Center at William Beaumont Army Medical Center, Fort Bliss, Texas; and the Warrior Combat Stress Reset Program at Darnall Army Medical Center, Fort Hood, Texas.

Beaumont's R&R Center uses techniques such as group counseling, biofeedback and Reiki massage to help Soldiers deal with post-traumatic stress disorder. It has graduated 80 Soldiers, with 64 percent being classified fit for duty.

The reset program at Darnall is designed to reduce hyper-arousal symptoms and inappropriate reactions to everyday events.

"We use a variety of body and mind health techniques along with group and individual counseling," said Maj. Lynette Heppner, officer in charge of the program.

"I visited Fort Hood recently and was very impressed by the program there. They have started treating specific symptoms of PTSD, using a wide array of therapies," Diebold said.

"There are excellent mental-health prevention and treatment programs across our Army installations. The Army is very sensitive to the mental well being of Soldiers and their Families throughout the deployment cycle, and has responded accordingly," he added.

AAFES pulls over-the-counter aspirin from deployed locations

AAFES Press Release

Per the Department of Defense's instruction, Army & Air Force Exchange Service operations in contingency locations are removing all products containing aspirin from their shelves.

According to a memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of

Defense, aspirin in combat zones is to be controlled. Furthermore, the memorandum states that "there should be no over-the-counter access through AAFES outlets or other Morale, Welfare and Recreation activities."

As aspirin is a blood-thinning agent, the intent of the instruction to control aspirin products in deployed locations is to reduce blood loss in the

event of an injury.

This will provide the widest margin of safety for evacuation of casualties.

All personnel, military and civilian, deploying to a combat zone are advised to stop taking aspirin at least 10 days prior to departure, unless advised by their health care provider to continue use.

Aspirin, a blood-thinning agent, will be removed from AAFES shelves in certain locations. The drug, according to the Assistant Secretary of Defense, will be controlled in combat zones to reduce blood-loss in event of injuries.

Courtesy photo



! SAFETY ALERT !

HYDROXYCUT RECALL

IF YOU ARE USING HYDROXYCUT, STOP DOING SO IMMEDIATELY.

On 1 May 2009, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) published a consumer warning advising consumers to **immediately stop using** Hydroxycut products. These products have been linked to at least 23 cases of serious liver injuries, including damage requiring liver transplant and one confirmed death.

If you have used Hydroxycut, the early signs of liver injury include loss of appetite, nausea, fatigue or weakness. Symptoms can progress to vomiting, brown urine, light-colored stools, and/or yellowing of the skin or whites of eyes (jaundice).

Other problems associated with Hydroxycut

products include seizures, heart problems, and muscle damage. The symptoms can occur at any dose and at any time.

Products with similar ingredients may also pose a risk of causing harmful health effects and should be avoided.

If you have any symptoms that could be associated with these or other dietary supplements, consult a physician or other health care professional. Report all adverse effects you've experienced to the FDA by going to <https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/medwatch/medwatch-online.htm> and send an email to supplements@usuhs.edu.

RECALLED PRODUCTS INCLUDE:

Hydroxycut Regular Rapid Release Caplets
Hydroxycut Caffeine-Free Rapid Release Caplets
Hydroxycut Hardcore Liquid Caplets
Hydroxycut Max Liquid Caplets
Hydroxycut Regular Drink Packets
Hydroxycut Caffeine-Free Drink Packets
Hydroxycut Hardcore Drink Packets (Ignition Stix)
Hydroxycut Max Drink Packets
Hydroxycut Liquid Shots
Hydroxycut Hardcore RTDs (Ready-to-Drink)
Hydroxycut Max Aqua Shed
Hydroxycut 24
Hydroxycut Carb Control
Hydroxycut Natural



For more information:

<http://www.fda.gov/consumer/updates/hydroxycut050109.pdf>
<http://www.lovate.com/supplements@usuhs.edu>

Physical fitness program, colorful menus help Soldiers maintain healthy lifestyle

Story and photo by
Pfc. Bethany L. Little
172nd Infantry Brigade

During a deployment there are many opportunities for Soldiers to better themselves mentally and physically.

The 172nd Infantry Brigade Physical Fitness Program is one way for Soldiers to maintain and enhance their physical fitness while they are in Iraq and when they redeploy back to Germany.

The program began in January of this year after Command Sgt. Maj. Steven W. McClaffin, 172nd Inf. Bde. Command Sergeant Major, observed the physical fitness levels and the appearance of some Soldiers within the formation.

"Every Soldier within the formation is provided the opportunity to volunteer to be a part of this program," said McClaffin.

"The overall goals of this program are to promote a healthy lifestyle, education of Soldiers and establish responsibility within the formation's leaders."

Proper education of diet and nutrition helps Soldiers to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Within the Blackhawk Inn dining facility, there are educational cards to help Soldiers make wiser decisions for their meal choices.



Soldiers participate in combat physical training, which is a requirement in the Blackhawk Combat Leaders Course. All participants must wear their protective vests during the physical training as they run and conduct buddy aid around the forward operating base in Iraq.

Each card has a certain color: green, amber or red.

Any food with a green card is a healthy choice because it is low in fat and sodium.

Food choices with an amber card are okay to eat, but Soldiers need to watch the amount they eat of that category.

Red card foods have either a high fat content or high sodium content, which means Soldiers should limit the amount consumed.

Watching what Soldiers eat is just one way for them to maintain a healthy lifestyle, but Soldiers also

have to increase and maintain physical fitness.

"Soldiers need to get away from focusing their training solely on their physical fitness test," said McClaffin, a native of Princeton, Ind.

"This fitness program allows the Soldiers to train for the rigors of com-

bat," he said.

The program focuses on several areas of physical fitness, which include combat physical fitness, interval training, running, foot marches, weigh-ins and physical fitness tests.

By focusing on these areas, the program uses reasonable but challenging requirements so Soldiers will achieve a high standard of physical fitness.

To further assist Soldiers, there are exercise classes offered in the Kalsu Gym such as step aerobics, extreme abs and Pilates.

"Pilates primarily builds the core muscles and shapes the abs, thighs, hips and buttocks muscles," said Staff Sgt. Kelly Bowyer-Trump 172nd Inf. Bde. Surgeon Cell noncommissioned officer in charge.

"The class has been very successful so far. There have been four Soldiers who have come off of the Army Overweight program so far."

Soldiers have been successful so far by increasing their physical fitness test scores, reducing their body weight and fat through the education they received about exercise, diet and nutrition.

"This program is not a fad diet, it is a way life," said McClaffin. "Today's Soldier has to meet the requirements put on them while coping with stress, fatigue and the weight of their combat load."

Blackhawks win deployment of excellence award

by Capt. STEPHEN C. SHORT
172nd Infantry Brigade

Deploying a brigade is hard. Deploying a brigade and receiving recognition for doing it better is what the 172nd Infantry Brigade, Blackhawks, based in Grafenwoehr, Germany did during their deployment to Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2008-2009.

The Blackhawk Brigade underwent the process of observation and judging by logistics experts, which led to their selection as the winner of the active Army Operational (large unit) category Deployment Excellence Award.

"Deployment excellence recognition means a lot to logisticians, because deployment is the Super Bowl for logisticians," said Maj. Maurice O. Alsing III, a multi-functional logistician involved in the brigade's deployment.

"Most of our issues were alleviated with good leadership up front and the brigade commander's primary guidance of accounting for all equipment and personnel during this deployment."

"Our brigade was supported by U.S. Army Europe and the garrisons of Schweinfurt and Grafenwoehr," stated Alsing. "Everyone in the brigade is involved in the planning and execu-

tion of a deployment because the process touches each of us."

Active-duty and reserve-component units that deploy anywhere in the world have the opportunity to showcase their training or contingency deployment successes by entering the 2009 annual Army Chief of Staff Deployment Excellence Awards for deployment excellence.

Aside from the opportunity to highlight a command's deployment successes, the DEAs began in 2000 to capture and share methods commands use to improve their deployment processes.

Competition categories include large unit (battalion and above), small unit (company and below), supporting unit, installation and a special operational deployment category.

According to Kevin W. Rhodes, who serves as an observer, 99 percent of the time those units are unaware the observers are watching the process and only know about it when the unit has been notified they've won a DEA.

Representing the Brigade at the June awards presentations in Washington, D.C. will be Major Patrick R. Arends, the Blackhawk Brigade logistics officer and native of Colombia, Missouri and Master Sgt. William F. Fox from the brigade's rear detachment, Task Force Shield.



Courtesy photo

172nd Infantry Brigade Soldiers load vehicles for rail transport in Grafenwoehr, Germany Oct. 28, 2008 in preparation for their deployment to Iraq.

Firefighters prepare for emergencies by exploring military vehicles

Story and photo by
Pfc. Bethany L. Little
172nd Infantry Brigade

On a day when things were going as usual for the 9th Engineer Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Company Assault Command Post platoon, an opportunity to train presented itself.

The ACP platoon was performing preventative maintenance checks on their vehicles to make sure that everything was ready to go when it

Pfc. Steven A. Bell, 9th Engineer Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Company combat engineer, discusses military vehicles and different ways to evacuate personnel in the event of an emergency, May 9, with Forward Operating Base Echo Fire Department members.

came time to leave.

While passing the platoon, the Forward Operating Base Echo Fire Department crewmembers seized a chance to receive hands-on training about military vehicles May 9.

"We don't receive official hands-on training on any military vehicles," said Bruce Altizer, FOB Echo Fire Department Lieutenant.

"When we see a convoy sitting around waiting to leave we will head over and ask if they can show us their vehicles."

Upon approaching the vehicles, members of the ACP platoon excitedly began to share their knowledge of their vehicles.

Conducting hands-on training enables the fire fighters here to hone their skills and knowledge in safely evacuating and treating anyone who would potentially be in the vehicle during an emergency, Altizer later added.

"I'm blown away by the amount

of time put in to prepare these vehicles," said Sam Greco, FOB Echo Fire Department fire fighter.

"We rarely get the opportunity to go through their vehicles."

Pfc. Steven A. Bell, 9th Engineer Bn., HHC combat engineer, took the fire department members through various vehicles, one being the RG-33 mine resistant light armored vehicle.

He showed them the best way to cut off power to the engine as well as the different escape exits.

"I'm more than happy to show them around," said Bell, a native of Sarasota, Fla.

"They want to be aware of the vehicles and the methods to safely evacuate personnel out in case of an emergency."

"We hope to have actual training in the future," said Greco, a native of Huntington Beach, Calif.

"Training on the vehicles helps us to better serve the military."



We want to see you here!

Rear detachment commanders, contact us with your deployed Soldiers' activities. Call Mary Markos at DSN 475-7113 for more.

CYS Services pays tribute to staff for dedication to mission, children

by
RONALD H. TOLAND JR.
Bavarian News

Ansbach Child, Youth and Schools Services employees were recently recognized for their dedication and support to the mission.

"Over the last year, 46 Child and Youth Services employees put in a lot

of hard work and extra hours, which were directly related to deployments, and we wanted to publically recognize them," said John Hartman, CYSS coordinator for the garrison.

"The workload is high, and people tend to burn out from working too much and many long nights, weekends and special events. We needed to combat that mission fatigue by recognizing our

staff," he said.

Because of the high workload, Hartman said CYSS probably has the highest turnover of any organization within Ansbach Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation. Recognizing the staff is the result of the high levels of quality programs, which Hartman says boils down to caring about people.

"We want to let them know we appreciate what they are doing and we understand it is a very stressful environment," said Hartman.

When the staff feels appreciated, it gives them more energy and motivation to support the mission, and makes Soldiers and families comfortable about leaving their children under CYSS care, he said.

"They know their children are in good hands," said Hartman. "Our staff is really giving and pouring their hearts into our programs."

Giving their all means making a commitment - working additional hours, coming in on weekends, at night and working off days to fill in for other colleagues, he added.

And parents are satisfied with the services offered.

"You do not want your child to be uncomfortable when they are not at home," said Amy Washington, who has a 2-year-old enrolled in the toddler program at the Katterbach Child

Development Center. "They work with the children and teach the kids a lot, and the centers are well managed."

She said her son, Adrian, can count from one to 25, point out states on a map, knows his colors and shapes - all at two years old.

She attributes his learning level to the high standards upheld by the center.

"He benefits every day he is there," said Washington. "We see him growing more and more compared to the kids in other like programs. You see a big difference between the civilian day care centers in the states, because they are privately owned, and the military child care centers - they take more time with the kids because I believe the standards are higher."

Hartman explains why standards are set so high - devotion and experience.

"Our standards are so high because of the commitment the Army has made to the children," said Hartman, citing the Army Family Covenant as an example.

"The main thing this does is support, first and foremost, the Soldier that has deployed or has just returned, and take care of the Soldier by taking care of the Soldier's family."

When applying Army Family Covenant initiatives, Hartman said families benefit by participating in the

programs, allowing them more free time to care for other things.

"Families with deployed Soldiers receive 16 free hours of child care, 20 percent discount on their fees, which allows spouses to care for their family," said Hartman.

"As a result of that commitment, the Army's childcare program is seen as a model program and adapts to the needs of the environment - the children."

But what keeps families and children coming back?

"It is the quality of the programs," he said. "Our programs are very high standard - the highest in the world," he said.

Mike Miller, garrison program operations specialist for CYSS, agreed.

"Congress realized over 20 years ago that there was a need for child services, resulting in the Military Child Care Act, passed in 1988," he said. "This evolved into the Army regulation for child and youth services, governing everything we do, to become the standards that we use and adhere to today."

With that in place, Miller said family expectations are high worldwide.

"If a youth or child leaves here going to another base, they should expect the same type of quality," he said.



Photo by Joanna Fraticelli

Bob Jones (left), CYS program assistant, receives recognition March 12 from Mike Miller (center), CYS Program Operations Specialist and Deputy Garrison Commander Tim Bolyard.

Cobbled Corner Crafts offers more than crafts

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

The Cobbled Corner Crafts center in Ansbach has a lot to offer - woodworking, painting, pottery, sewing, quilting, framing and more.

Whether you are interested in painting, framing, quilting or making pottery, the magic begins at Cobbled Corners, said Dave Frost, manager of the Barton crafts facility.

"The magic happens when you finish a project and you look at it and say, 'I did that myself' - that is the magic and you can see it," said Frost. "Accomplishing something you have done yourself with your bare hands."

Like a lantern from the 1800s.

"Every month we make a lantern from the 1800s and go on a tour with it in Dinkelsbühl - 12 meters underneath the city in the tunnel system - with the night watchman, Richard Kirschner," said Frost.

Frost also explained a concept to bring the crafts to the customer.

"Craft shop on wheels," he said. "We go to the family readiness groups and the elementary schools. And we take people places, like the lantern tours and our antique tours."

The antique tours show people how to purchase antiques and come back to the crafts center to restore it, he said.

"It is about team building - families working together."

With most of the magic happening at the facility, Frost explained before crafters can use the facility, they must first be checked-out on all the equipment and tools.

"First there is a 3-1/2 hour safety class, covering all the machines - testing material is provided and it is self-paced," said Frost. "Then there is a hands-on portion on each machine and finally a test, after which crafters can begin their project."

Frost added he is available at all times.

"I am here to assist in your journey through what you want to do, but not to do it for you."

Ideally, Frost said the center can be therapeutic and what they want to offer is an after-hours recreation outlet for Soldiers and families.

"I have people coming in here and they just want to sand," said Frost, adding that customers say it's relieving from the daily grind.

Along with the wood-shop, there is do-it-yourself-framing and matting, and more.

"Boyd's custom framing and a portrait studio are additional services we offer," said Frost. "We also have sewing classes, quilting, pottery classes, scrapbooking and balloons."

With all the tangible opportunities the center has to offer, one thing Frost says the center has is intangible.

"We care--about families, Soldiers and people like you," he said. "It is one big happy family in a small community where people really watch out for each other."

And one family team is a testament to that.

"You have to start somewhere and this place



Dave Frost assembles part of an absent customer's project—just one of many services the Cobbled Corner Crafts Centre in Ansbach provides their patrons.

offers that--it gives families something else to do to get out of the house," said Melissa Hardy, recreation aide at the facility.

She said when her husband uses the center, he says it is a lot of fun, has convenient operating hours and is something he can do after work to

relax with no pressure.

The center is open Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays from noon to 8 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

For more, call the Cobbled Corner Crafts center at DSN 467-7627, CIV 0981-183-627.



Celebration

Twenty-four elementary students from Mrs. Farrell's 6th grade class at the Ansbach Elementary School stand proudly with the U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach Drug Abuse Resistance Education officer, Jason Kopulos, Daren the lion and AES Principal Essie Grant at the 2009 D.A.R.E. culmination ceremony May 7.

Kopulos said the program is important in preparing students for the real-life situations they may find themselves in as they grow into adults.

"It gives realistic scenarios that the kids might get into; they are our future," he said.

At the celebration, Kopulos gave special thanks and noted garrison support agencies: Illesheim Elementary Parent Teacher School Association; Ansbach Spouses' & Civilians' club; Community Bank; Ansbach Post Exchange; Veterans of Foreign Wars Post #9342 (Ansbach); VFW Post #10436 (Kitzingen); American Military Scottish Rite Bodies and the students, parents, teachers and staff of the school.

Photo by Ronald H. Toland Jr.

Archbishop welcomes members of faith through sacrament of holy confirmation

by SANDRA WILSON
Bavarian News

The Schweinfurt Catholic community welcomed the fourth Archbishop of the Military Services, Archbishop Timothy Broglio, who came to perform the sacrament of confirmation at Ledward Chapel for community members May 1.

"It doesn't happen often, mostly like once a year during confirmation events," said Chaplain (Capt.) Hermes Losbanes about the archbishop's four-day visit, which included Bamberg as well. It brings a lot of excitement. It also uplifts the faith of the congregation knowing the fact that, as a member of the military archdiocese, he is our pastor," Losbanes said.

The pastoral visit, as it is called, allowed the Catholic congregation to get to know Broglio and give him a chance to acquaint himself with the people of Schweinfurt and Bamberg. Interacting with the people is the best part, Broglio said.

"The thing that I have really appreciated ... is the tremendous spirit of the people," Broglio observed during the 15 months that he has been in the archdiocese of the military services. "They really are fine people, and it's an honor to be able to serve them."

The culmination of his visit came May 1 when Schweinfurt and Bamberg communities gathered at the Ledward Chapel to celebrate the sacrament of confirmation. Fourteen people were confirmed in their faith by the archbishop that evening.

"For most, it's the first time in their lives where they have made the decision on their own. They really take ownership in a very public and official way of their faith and they agree to live according to that faith," Broglio said, explaining the significance of the event.

A year of classes and doing charitable work prepares the participants, mostly eighth-graders, for the "moment of passage," according to Broglio. Adults who missed the chance to be confirmed earlier in life can also be given the opportunity to participate.

"This community can now expect to be enriched by your contributions," Broglio told the newly confirmed.

From left, Lucille Torres and Frances Negrón-Miranda stand before Archbishop Timothy Broglio and Chaplain Hermes Losbanes as Negrón-Miranda is confirmed.

Photo by Emily Athens



Infant massage class bonds parent, child

Story and photo by
SANDRA WILSON
Bavarian News

"Relaxation is a key element to feel that bond with your baby. If you are relaxed, they will be relaxed," said Heidi Smith, New Parent Support Program Educator at Schweinfurt's Army Community Service.

Relaxing with a crying baby can be difficult, which is one of the many reasons why infant massage has become so popular.

A class to learn proper massage techniques is offered by ACS free of charge. Babies 6 weeks old up to before crawling-age are perfect participants for the class.

"There's a lot of different benefits," Smith said, listing a few to be stimulation of the neurological and gastrointestinal systems, relaxation, positive impact on the infant's self-esteem and awareness, and creation of a bonding and nurturing atmosphere between parent and infant.

Massages include water-soluble oils for caressing little feet, legs, and tummies.

The instructor demonstrates each move on a mannequin infant and includes an explanation of each move and its benefits with soothing music playing in the background.

Mothers, with their own babies, follow along with each move.

"I think it helps her - she seems more calm throughout the day," said Kaci Gullet, participant in the class with 6-month-old Madison. "She loves it. It's really good bonding especially for daddy."

Some mothers explained how they started using massage as a way to settle down their over-stimulated babies.

"She gets so tired that we need to just calm her down," said Jennifer King, about 6-month-old Addison.

Massage prepares her for bedtime, King added.

In addition to the hands-on massage instruction, discussions are also facilitated by the instructor.

Parents share coping strategies, parenting styles, and converse about hot topics like spoiling or bed-sharing.

"The moms are the experts on their babies. I am not supposed to be an expert necessarily on these topics. (I am) just being an active listener and being sure that I don't give my advice or opinion, but I give information and encourage discussion," Smith said.

The research and articles that the instructor provides gives balanced evaluations of discussion subjects and offers a starting point to help get the moms thinking about their opinions.

The class ends with singing a soft lullaby to the babies as an indication that the massage time is over.

Babies cue into the beginning and end of an activity when there's a distinct start and finish, Smith said.

In the final class of the series, Smith

addressed child abuse awareness and Month of the Military Child "and the connection that infant massage has in reducing the risk of abuse."

For information on the next infant massage class which starts June 1, call ACS at 09721-96-6933.



From right, Jennifer King massages 6-month-old Addison's leg while Kaci Gullet follows suit with her daughter of the same age, Madison, in the infant massage class offered by Army Community Service.

Art show displays students' creativity, imagination

Story and photo by
EMILY ATHENS
Bavarian News

Elementary students showcased their creativity April 30 at the 2009 Schweinfurt Elementary School "I Am Art" art show.

Members of the community

browsed the elementary students' masterpieces, enjoying a dance finale performed by students.

"We wanted everyone to see how many different kinds of art there are ... art is huge. We did speaking art, (visual art), and dancing art," said Angela Oliverson, elementary school art teacher.

Prior to the show, the students' art was judged, awarding six students from each grade a certificate for outstanding art.

"We had four judges. We had to judge the art based on the criteria of the project, overall artistic style, and the art of it," Oliverson said, adding that everyone's art is different, and "your art doesn't have to look like my art."

Of the winners was fifth-grade student, Zach Nevard, who took home first place for his scratch art project he called "the Dragon of China".

"I like that we get to express our feelings through art without anyone saying anything about it," Nevard said.

The overall 'best in show' award for the school was presented to fourth-grade student Natalia Ocasio for her scratch art project entitled

Students perform a dance finale at Schweinfurt Elementary School's "I Am Art" show, where students displayed their artistic abilities in the form of visual art and dance expression.

"Diamond Fish."

Fifth-grader Ethan Stemmerding was awarded runner-up for his acrylic painting he called "Calm and Fierce."

Oliverson explained how each student offered something unique and special to the show and responded positively to the different projects throughout the year.

"My job and purpose in life is to help kids and adults to believe in themselves and realize that they are art."

"You're only not an artist if you think you're not," Oliverson said.

"Art is inside everyone ... sometimes you just need someone to show you that it's there, then you too are art and you can do anything that you believe in."

Parents also expressed a positive response to the many artistic talents displayed, crediting the school's art program.

"I really like that the school gives them this opportunity to express artistic abilities in ways I wouldn't think of," said Christi Nevard, parent.

"It's obviously been a positive experience for them," she added.

Community recognizes impact of volunteers

by MARK HEETER
Schweinfurt CI Chief

The numbers said it all.

Six-hundred-and-five volunteers donated 29,000 hours, under the supervision of 107 organizations, offering the U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt more than \$569,000 in savings from March 31, 2008 to April 1, 2009.

"We, as a garrison, can't do our jobs without our volunteers," said Lt. Col. Anthony Haager, USAG Schweinfurt commander, at the garrison volunteer recognition ceremony in the Kessler Bowling Center April 23.

"We want to celebrate our volunteers not just reward them," Haager said in remarks at the event, created more as a party than a ceremony, and called "Volunteering is right up your alley."

Volunteers of the year were named in six categories, from a list of 16 candidates.

The ceremony, coupled with a luncheon and free bowling, gave USAG Schweinfurt a chance to publicly recognize its volunteers, said Katy McClelland, with Army Community Service.

"This really lets them know that their community, that they give so much to and they care about, that we really care back. And we want them to know how important they are to our way of life," McClelland said.

Although a system exists for detailed tracking of hours contributed, many volunteers get caught up in the act and do not record all their hours, McClelland said.

"Most volunteers do it because it makes them feel good, they enjoy what they do. They don't necessarily take the time to record the hours," she said.

Sgt. Charles Harris, who was named the active duty volunteer of the year, enjoys working with youth sports programs. "I want to give back to the community and give the kids an outlook on life," said Harris, with the 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment (Airborne).

"The kids have taught me about, like in the military, being a team player," Harris said.

Finally, Harris offered one piece of advice for anyone who is not yet volunteering. "Get out and get involved in the community," he said.



Engineers compete in Sapper challenge

by **EMILY ATHENS**
Bavarian News



Courtesy photo

2nd Lt. Anthony Huebner (left), and 2nd Lt. Marc Sterling complete the poncho raft and swim event where teams were tested on their ability to construct a poncho raft, complete a helocast, and swim a designated distance.

From April 20 through 23, Sappers from all over came together to compete in the 5th annual Best Sapper Competition.

Hosted by Fort Leonard Wood's Sapper Leader Course in Missouri and sponsored by the Army Engineer Regiment, this three-day, six-event challenge tests physical strength and tactical knowledge offering engineers the chance to showcase their abilities and battle for the prestigious Best Sapper title.

To be eligible to sign up, Soldiers must have completed the 28-day Sapper course or be a part of an engineer unit.

Of the 34 teams who signed up from units across the Army, two members of the Schweinfurt community, 2nd Lt. Anthony Huebner and partner, 2nd Lt. Marc Sterling, of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 15th Engineer Battalion, represented the only team from United States Army Europe.

They participated as part of the elite group of individuals who willingly face difficult tasks while subjecting themselves to substantial physical and mental strain.

"The first day we had to complete a physical fitness test consisting of push-ups, sit-ups, and a 3-mile body armor run," Sterling said, explaining how the first event sets the tone for the rest of the competition. "You have to overcome mental challenges and there is a strategy involved trying to maintain strength throughout the events of the

first day," Sterling added.

Huebner explained that the next event, in what is called the Round Robin phase, consisted of making a poncho raft and falling out of a plane into water and swimming 500 meters to the shore.

"You just hope your raft floats and your weapons are attached," Huebner said.

Furthermore, they competed in a military operation on urbanized terrain breach where a simulated warzone was created to test shooting accuracy, mobility, and communication.

"We had to make two charges and calculate how much explosives we needed to use. Then we blew down steel doors and engaged the target," Huebner said.

Other events included a demolition exam, knots and ropes systems, land navigation, a road march, and much more.

After each day of competition, half of the remaining teams qualified to compete in the next day's events, narrowing it down to three teams to participate in the last event held on the third day of competition. Huebner and Sterling made it through the second day, but fell just short of being part of the top ten to partake in the final champion events.

"We were exhausted. You go away with some regrets and wish you would've done more strategizing," Sterling said, though adding that they feel like they accomplished something.

Both aren't sure if they'll return next year, but do know that if they decide to participate again, they'll know exactly how to train.

Optometry externs ending five months in Schweinfurt clinic

Story and photo by **SANDRA WILSON**
Bavarian News

For the last five months, the Schweinfurt Optometry Clinic has been able to accommodate an increased number of patients due to some extra stateside help.

Since January, three optometry students from Salus University of the Pennsylvania College of Optometry have brought their fresh college knowledge to the Schweinfurt clinic in order to complete the first of five clinic rotations needed to finish their degrees.

The extern program, as it is called when doctoral students leave the educational institution in which they reside, is not a new idea.

Schweinfurt got the idea to begin the extern program from the days when Wuerzburg hospital had the program running.

"One of the greatest goals besides fostering mentorship and energizing

the clinic is that it also allows greater access to patient care.

"We can go out and see more patients," said Dr. (Maj.) James Eddis, Chief of Optometry at the Schweinfurt Clinic.

For the benefit of the community, the team was able to perform vision screenings at Schweinfurt Elementary School as their first project in January.

"The school screening was a big success here. Without these guys, I never could have done that many kids at the elementary school over three days," Eddis said, explaining that the team screened more than 550 kids.

The optometry students have benefited in numerous ways from the extern program as well, they said.

"We have a lot of hands-on work here. We're not just observing," said Lorrie Nguyen, one of the students.

Adjusting to a full-time job after being in the classroom for years was a challenge, Nguyen said.

Xiao Yu, another of the three

externs, remembers going to bed every night at 7 p.m. in order to be ready for another full day of work when they first arrived in Schweinfurt.

The externs have also had to get used to being away from home, family, friends and many daily conveniences.

"It's tough being away from your friends. It makes me appreciate the Soldiers being away from their families so long," said Nicholas Appleman.

Despite the lack of college friends in Schweinfurt, the three have been able to take advantage of their five-month stay by traveling to popular destinations in Europe on the weekends.

Their Schweinfurt clinic rotation ends in May, and then the externs will be going their separate ways.

But Schweinfurt Optometry Clinic will not end the extern program upon their departure, according to Eddis.

In fact, other students are already lined up to participate in the near future, he said.



From left, Xiao Yu, Lorrie Nguyen, and Nicholas Appleman, optometry students from Pennsylvania, have worked in the Schweinfurt optometry clinic with Dr. (Maj.) James Eddis, Chief of Optometry since January.

Science club opens students' eyes through experiments, celebration

Story and photo by **MARK HEETER**
Schweinfurt CI Chief

"I like the science club because it's fun and unique," said fifth-grader Brittany Patrick.

"And sometimes you see stuff explode," she quickly added.

Patrick is one of the nearly 50 children in third- through fifth-grade at the Schweinfurt



Elementary School who wrapped up their year as science club members May 1 with a bang.

Well, more like a frothy, foamy oozing. That was the scene in the multi-purpose room when teacher and club sponsor Jean Kenny created a chemical reaction involving hydrogen peroxide, food coloring and dishwashing detergent that spilled out of the beakers and bottles, to the delight of the club members.

"It's just the idea of, 'Wow! This is exciting!'" Kenny said.

The last day for the club was a celebration during which the children got to try several scientific experiments, such as determining how many drops of water a penny could hold, how to create an electrical circuit, and how to create a tornado.

"It's fun. They learn not only to interact with each other but to build things," Kenny said, adding that exploration is the key and entire point of learning with the science club.

"I think parents should allow students to explore, while always thinking about the safety aspects," she said.

And ask questions. "If a child asks a question, don't say, 'No, it can't happen.' Ask the question back, 'What do you think?'"

"They will start thinking and give you an answer. It may not be correct, but it gets them thinking," she said.

Nickolas Schulz tests the theory of how tornados are formed during the last meeting of the science club.

SKIES class gives youth, teens chance to develop their voice through songs

by **SANDRA WILSON**
Bavarian News

Choir is not just for church—it is now offered to the youth in the community through the Schools of Knowledge, Inspiration, Exploration, and Skills program.

For those who like to sing this is the perfect opportunity.

The ages are split into two groups: 6-12-years-old meet Mondays from 4:30 to 6 p.m. and ages 13-18 meet Wednesdays from 4:30 to 6 p.m. for a \$35 per month fee.

"Singing is very important for kids in general," said Priscilla Pearson, SKIES choir instructor. "Kids really like to sing together, and they have a lot of fun. They can express themselves."

The 90-minute class consists of warming up the voice with stretches and breathing before practicing songs.



Pearson

"Everyone can sing, it just goes more into technique ... to make their singing better," Pearson explained about the vocal training the classes offer.

Included in the choir classes, some basic instruments or noise makers may be thrown into the group as well as dancing that is appropriate to the songs.

"I've always been in choir since elementary (school). The voice is second, they have to want to sing (first)," Pearson said.

Once the group learns a variety of songs, Pearson hopes to have a performance of some sort where the kids can show off their talent.

"I always liked the idea about a community choir," said Peter Potter, SKIES director.

"It's just also fun for the children, but I also thought it would be nice to have a community choir which could perform" at a Christmas program or the Kinderfest, he said.

For those interested in private voice lessons, Pearson also offers those for ages 13-18 by appointment at \$50 per month for weekly one-hour lessons.

Call SKIES to sign up at DSN 354-6460, CIV 09721-96-6460.

**Got a story idea?
Call USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs Office
at DSN 354-1400, CIV 09721-96-1400.**



Bamberg *at* Hohenfels



Tigers sweep Barons in two game matchup

Story and photo by
KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

Hohenfels shut out Bamberg in both games of their two-game matchup May 9 at Hohenfels, beating Bamberg 6 to 4 in the first game and 14 to 5 in the second.

Pitcher John Leon allowed 4 runs on 13 hits to pick up the game one victory with John Mesch picking up the save.

Leon went 3 for 3 with 2 doubles and an RBI, Mesch went 2 for 2 with a RBI, William Karafa went 1 for 3 with a 2 RBI double and Max Maupin was 2 for 3 with an RBI for Hohenfels. Bamberg pitcher Anthony Lestochi scattered 11 hits while striking out 7 and went 3 for 4 with the stick and Knuckles went 2 for 3.

In game two Mesch allowed 5 runs on 7 hits for a complete game victory.

Leon, Mesch and Maupin were each 3 for 4 with Leon and Mesch picking up an RBI and Maupin picking up 3 RBI's.

Lance Howard and Rene Bourgeois were each 2 for 4 in an eighteen hit attack. Bamberg's Knuckles was 2 for 3 with a RBI and Lestochi was 1 for 3 with 2 RBI's.

Hohenfels catcher Bryce Cooper threw out five would-be base-stealers to help keep the Tigers ahead.

After game one Bamberg coach Jim Davis remained optimistic and focused on what his team had been doing right against a tough opponent.

"Except for a few running errors and a few batting errors, we did well," he said. "The top of their batting order is tough, their infield is tough. We knew it would be a tough game."

"In the next game I want them to continue being just as aggressive at the plate, which is something they are doing more today than in previous games," he said.

With one more home game (May 16 against Ansbach) before European Championships, Hohenfels coach Darren Mesch hopes to keep up the momentum.

"I think we have a good chance of winning in the small school division with Div III and Div IV teams," he said.

"I know that AFNORTH, which probably would like some payback from last year's tournament and Rota are going to be tough contests. The bottom line it should be a very interesting tournament."



Hohenfels' Will Karafa, center, tries to grab the ball and beat Bamberg's Ray Luna back to second base during the first game of the Bavarian teams' double header May 9 at Hohenfels.

Schweinfurt bowling center offers something for everyone

Story and photo by
SANDRA WILSON
Bavarian News

Coffee and pastries may be considered a pleasant start to a morning, but why not throw a little bowling in there, too?

Kessler Bowling Center offers just that: coffee, pastries, and three games of bowling every Tuesday and Wednesday at 9 a.m. for only \$6 per person including shoes.

"It's something for the wives after the kids go to school," said Bobby Boggs, operations assistant at the bowling alley. "It's just something for them to do in the morning."

"It's nice to get out. It's peaceful. They are very accommodating. They know our shoe sizes," said Jenn Overway, about the bowling center staff. She comes in every Tuesday morning for the Coffee Bowl with two other friends.

"We're quite thankful that they offer this," said Kirsten Scott. The women also bring their preschool-aged children in and the kids enjoy

their own game of bowling at the same time.

"It gives us a chance to get to know each other," said Nicole Butler, explaining how they participate as a team in the family readiness group (FRG) league as well on Thursdays at 10 a.m.

Though the name may be misleading, the FRG league is actually open to all adults, and the same goes for the mixed bowling league which meets Thursdays at 6 p.m.

"They are open to anyone that cares to join up. You can still come and join," Boggs said.

Apart from the leagues, the bowling center helps to change up the regular game of bowling by offering various theme days. In addition to the Coffee Bowl, community members can also participate in the Penny Bowl Tuesdays from 5 to 11 p.m. by only paying for shoes and a penny for each pin knocked over.

The Red Pin Bowl takes place Wednesdays at 5 to 11 p.m. and has one red pin mixed in with the white in each lane.

When the red pin makes it to position one and the player gets a strike on that turn, they are awarded a free game.

"On our normal pricing, we're below IMCOM standards. We try to keep our prices low because the community is so small and our target is the Soldiers and the families," Boggs said.

Regular price Cosmic Bowling begins the weekends on Friday nights at 8 p.m.

"It's basically disco bowling," Boggs said. The bowling center turns out the lights and black lights illuminate the alleys with disco music playing.

Saturdays invite youth from 8 to 18 years old to participate in the Yaba bowling club at 10 a.m. Sundays offer discounted family bowling at only \$1.50 per game with free shoes.

Between now and August, youth ages 4 to 16 are invited to join the Bowlopolis club any day of the week for free games, episodes of the "Bowlopolis" show, and a chance at winning prizes.



From left, Kirsten Scott watches as Jenn Overway tosses the ball down the lane during the Tuesday Coffee Bowl at Kessler Bowling Center.

Academics, athletic skills earn two Vilseck students college scholarships

Story and photo by
AMY NEWCOMB
Bavarian News

Two Vilseck High School seniors who have played soccer competitively in Germany, will now be able to test their skills on state-side turf.

Tamaria Hollis and Erik Bidinger both received academic scholarships to play soccer for colleges this fall. Hollis will attend Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo. and Bidinger will attend Lincoln Memorial College in Harrogate, Tn.

While Hollis and Bidinger both played soccer for Vilseck High School for four years and participated in soccer with the Olympic Development Program, a national identification and development program for high-level players, both were also honor students taking advanced placement classes.

This past summer, Hollis played with a Club League in Texas which gave her the opportunity to be seen by colleges.

After excelling with the Texas team, Hollis was invited by Southwest Baptist University to participate in their soccer camp. Hollis' mother Shamaria Fields, who has also coached both Hollis and Bidinger, said SBU extended an extra hand to her daughter, "We'll come pick (Hollis) up from the airport, we'll take care of your daughter," school officials told her.

Hollis stayed in the dorms at SBU with current members of the team not realizing she was in the process of being recruited.

Only three of 30 participants received letters that offered them a position on the team. Hollis was one of them.

"I am so happy that I get to play soccer. I decided to go with that school because I really liked it and I really liked the coach," Hollis said.

Like Hollis, Bidinger has played organized sports his entire life. He has participated at camps

throughout the U.S. and Germany which allowed him to be observed by colleges.

The Lincoln Memorial soccer coach contacted Bidinger after noticing his athletic and academic abilities.

Bidinger was enthusiastic regarding the scholarship to Lincoln Memorial. "I'm excited that I can play soccer which is what I love to do," Bidinger said. For Easter, Bidinger and fellow Olympic Development Program soccer players spent ten days in Dallas and participated in the Dallas Cup.

Bill Bidinger and Fields have coached Hollis and Erik Bidinger through youth sports and ODP. The two are described as being competitive teammates whose relationship is not unlike a brother and sister. "Even when I have the worst days (Erik) says 'just do what you do,'" Hollis said.

During the past four years, they participated with the ODP team, camps and travelled to soccer games throughout Europe, always helping and supporting each other. "They see the kindred souls in each other," Bill Bidinger said. "They take after each other - they want to do well in school and play soccer in college, so they push themselves to get to their goals."



Friends and competitors, Vilseck seniors Tamaria Hollis (left) and Erik Bidinger take a break during soccer practice.

USAG Grafenwoehr students bring home six medals, 51 ribbons from Special Olympics

Netzberg Middle School sixth-grader Laura Octavo, displays her gold medals and ribbons won during the 2009 Special Olympic Games in Enkenbach-Alsenborn, Germany May 6.



Courtesy photo

by **AMY NEWCOMB**
Bavarian News

This year, Special Olympians from U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr proved themselves as athletes to contend with, bringing home three gold, one silver, and two bronze medals and 51 ribbons collectively.

Gold medalists, 15-year-old Damon Watson, a sophomore at Vilseck High School, participated in the Special Olympics for the first time this year bringing home a gold medal for the 50-meter dash.

"I just did my best," Watson said of the games.

Watson also had the unique privilege of carrying the torch during the Special Olympic games parade.

Twelve year old Laura Octavo, a 6th-grader at Netzberg Middle School finished her fourth year in the games.

Octavo received gold medals for the 50-meter dash and badminton.

Octavo brought home a ribbon in her favorite event, the basketball competition.

Between the two gold medalists, they brought home 24 ribbons from various competitions.

Fifteen-year-old Tracey South, a freshman at VHS, received a silver medal for the assisted wheelchair race.

He also brought home four ribbons he won throughout the day.

VHS had two bronze medalists. Fifteen-year-old freshman, Miguel Quimones and 18-year-old Bryan Hogg, a junior, received their medals for the 50-meter dash.

Hogg has competed in the Special Olympics for several years in Panama, the United States and Germany.

This was Quimones' second time to compete in the games.

"I got four ribbons at home from the last Olympics but this was my first bronze medal," Quimones said.

Quimones and Hogg also won 13 ribbons between the two of them in other challenges.

Ronald Diaz, 13, a 6th-grader at NMS participated in the Special Olympics for the first time this year and brought home ten ribbons.

The garrison Olympians expressed excitement over this year's competition and look forward to competing in the games next year.

It is a place to renew old friendships

and make new friendships, they said.

Hogg and Octavo had the opportunity to visit with friends made from games held in previous years.

Co-hosted by the U.S. Army Garrison Kaiserslautern and the German Police Academy in Enkenbach-Alsenborn, the games brought more than 800 athletes from German and Department of Defense Dependents Schools in Europe.

More than 1,500 volunteers traveled to the games to support the student athletes helping in the competitions as "Buddies."

VHS contestants in the games were able to participate this year with the help of the Vilseck Community Spouses Club

NMS contestants raised their money for the games with snack sales at school dances.

ON PAGE 1: Olympian Damon Watson, Vilseck High School sophomore, carries the torch May 6 at the 26th Special Olympics Spring Games. (Photo by Christine June, USAG Kaiserslautern)

Competition tests Soldiers' physical, mental strength

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Each participant went through varying kinds of competitive mental and physical preparation with their sponsor and chain of command at their installation.

Soldier of the Year competitor Spc. Justin Bengé, USAG Grafenwoehr, said he had a lot of support from his NCOs. During the work-week "we do a study session for eight hours and before and after we do (Physical Training). Normally in the mornings we do a run, and normally in the evenings we do ruck marches," said Bengé.

The competitors and sponsors, leading NCOs or peers who were present in support of each competitor, enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere of the barbecue and were able to meet other competitors and mentally prepare themselves before the intensity of the competition began.

The competition commenced Monday with an Army Physical Fitness Test.

Competitors performed sit-ups, push-ups, and a timed two-mile run. Challengers crossed the finish line of the run to the sound of shouting and cheering from sponsors and onlookers.

The day continued at the firing ranges where the soldiers and NCOs, donning Kevlar and protective gear, zeroed their weapons and tested their marksmanship.

Later, weapons' maintenance exercises also tested the competitors' knowledge on the safety, cleaning, disassembly and malfunction procedures for the M16-series rifle.

Their mental stamina was further challenged during a written exam and essay which rounded out day-one of the competition.

Day two began at 4:50 a.m. with a 12-mile ruck march. Each competitor carried a 35 pound ruck sack on their backs and approximately 20 pounds of other gear to include a supply of water, a rifle, and Interceptor Body Armor.

The march took competitors through both wooded and populated areas of the Grafenwoehr training area.

Many competitors did not perform the challenge alone. Their sponsoring NCO walked and ran the length of the route alongside him, shouting words of encouragement and support.

NCO of the Year competitor Staff Sgt. Ronald White, USAG Stuttgart, crossed the finish-line first with a time of 2 hours, 29 minutes and 57 seconds.

White, who did a ruck march every week for the last four weeks to train for the event, said, "I pushed myself, gave everything I had, and didn't leave anything."

He said he felt the competition was important to build "Esprit di Corps, that warrior spirit. And it's really good when the soldiers see us out here doing this kind of stuff. It motivates them - this is why I joined the Army! It's even more important because it's the Year of the NCO and it would mean a lot to me to win this in the Year of the NCO."

Bengé, who prepared for the event with the

2008 IMCOM-E winner, did ruck marches every other day to ready himself. Bengé said, "He told me even with our training it wasn't going to be the same. He was right. It was a little bit more difficult out there than it looks."

When asked about what it takes to be competitive, Bengé said, "You've got to have a lot of focus, a lot of heart. You have to just stay with it, not give up, and not let everything that happens get to you. Just keep a positive attitude and have positive people around you."

After a chance to eat breakfast, the Soldiers and NCO's were taken to a land navigation course.

Armed with a compass and map, the competitors raced to locate four points in the wooded navigation area.

Amongst the trees of the course, competitors were also tested on a set of warrior tasks and drills, to include administering first aid, radio communications, interacting with the media and Nuclear, Biological and Chemical equipment exercises.

That evening, the challengers faced a two hour nighttime land navigation course.

The final day of the competition posed the longest and most difficult mental challenge to the participants - the selection board.

Seven command sergeants major from installations across IMCOM-E, performed a final review of the Soldiers and NCOs.

Competitors were asked a wide array of questions, ranging from uniform regulations, to their role in combating sexual assault, to current events.

USAG Vicenza Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey Hartless said that "it was an awesome competition. Everybody poured their hearts into it... In three days, a lot of stuff happened here and there was no break time.

"They went from one even to the next to the next. That's what makes it really tough. Especially today, everybody's really tired and you come in front of all these sergeants major and you are under a microscope."

Command Sgt. Maj. William Berrios, USAG Grafenwoehr command sergeant major, host of this year's event, added, "We can see the effects of the training today. We have tested them physically and mentally but that's what we want to do so that we can pick the best of the best."

USAG Stuttgart Command Sgt. Maj. Mark Barbary agreed by saying that this type of competition "insures that these outstanding Soldiers continue to be recognized for their outstanding abilities. In this thorough competition we see warrior leaders performing at their ultimate best."

The competitors will gather again, May 28, in Heidelberg, Germany, when the 2009 Soldier of the Year and 2009 NCO of the Year is announced.

View photos of the Grafenwoehr competition at www.flickr.com/photos/usaggrafenwoehr/.

Transformation brings 2,835 personnel to Grafenwoehr

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Soldiers, and 821 Family members).

- Bamberg: population decrease of 73 Soldiers, and approximately 110 Family members; approximate total decrease of 183 U.S. personnel.

- Grafenwoehr: population increase of 1134 Soldiers, and approximately 1701 Family members; approximate total increase of 2835 U.S. personnel.

- Kaiserslautern: population decrease of 77 Soldiers, and approximately 116 Family members; approximate total decrease of 193 U.S. personnel.

- Schweinfurt: population decrease of 1388 Soldiers, and approximately 2082 Family members; approximate total decrease of 3470 U.S. personnel.

- Wiesbaden: population decrease of 322 Soldiers, and approximately 483 Family members; approximate total decrease of 805 U.S. personnel.

In addition, force structure changes in Italy

associated with these actions will result in an approximate increase of 20 in the U.S. Army total population in Italy (8 Soldiers and 12 family members).

- Aviano: population increase of 117 Soldiers, and approximately 176 family members; approximate total increase of 293 U.S. personnel.

- Vicenza: population decrease of 88 Soldiers, and approximately 132 family members; approximate total decrease of 220 U.S. personnel.

- Livorno: population decrease of 21 Soldiers, and approximately 32 family members; approximate total decrease of 53 U.S. personnel.

These numbers reflect the total personnel associated with the units and organizations in this announcement.

No Local National or U.S. government employees are affected by these actions.

Coordination with Host Nation officials was conducted prior to the announcement.

Leadership considers turning off lights, other suggestions submitted

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public safety," Weaver said.

Another suggestion made multiple times by participants, either knowingly or unknowingly, is already being executed by the garrison - using solar panels to cut energy costs.

According to Tom Hayes, director of Public Works, the locations that will be retrofitted with solar panels in Grafenwoehr are two of the existing barracks buildings and building 244.

Two other buildings in Vilseck will also receive the upgrade as part of a trial for this year's program.

"If it works out (the solar panels are found to be cost and energy efficient), we will get funding

to complete the project (on installing more panels in the future)," Hayes said.

Although the campaign is officially over, additional suggestions or feedback will be accepted anytime.

Visit the garrison Web site, www.grafenwoehr.army.mil, and scroll down and to Customer Management Services.

Community members can either complete an Interactive Customer Evaluation survey, or click the link to submit an email to the customer service officer.

Check out the next issue of the Bavarian News for more on how the garrison plans on using the ideas submitted by community members.

Do you have an opinion on something you'd like to share with the community? Do you have a complaint, request, or compliment?

Write a letter to the editor and let us know!

E-mail letters to mary.markos@eur.army.mil with "letter to the editor" in the subject line.