

All cooked up

An Elvis-inspired cooking class in Hohenfels bakes down-home southern secrets

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Bavarian News

www.grafenwoehr.army.mil

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

May 23, 2012

Community speaks out via recent survey

Staff Report

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — The U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr's Public Affairs Office asked and the community responded. Nearly 350 people participated in the Bavaria Military Community Command Information Survey, which ran May 1-18. The participation rate was more than three times that of a similar survey just two years ago.

The survey identified several interesting trends and pointed to changes in the manner in which community members prefer to obtain information.

For instance, most participants (60 percent) said they visit the garrison's Facebook page daily, almost every day or weekly. And although a Facebook window is available on the garrison's website, the majority said it used the website for the phone book, publications, and traffic and weather updates.

The community appears to obtain its news and information from a variety of sources, as shown by a relatively equal split between the community newsletter, AFN, Facebook and the Bavarian News.

Of those who responded, 63 percent called Grafenwoehr their "home" community versus 26 percent for Rose Barracks; 83 percent live off post, with a relatively even mix of responses from family members (38%), local nationals (25%) and DOD civilians (23%). Only 9 percent of active duty and reserve component Soldiers participated.

A total of nearly 70 percent said they read the Bavarian News occasionally or regularly, and the majority said it would still seek out the newspaper if it were only available online.

INSIDE

On the road again

Bavarian bikers kick off the rust and saddle up for Motorcycle Safety Day. See page 4.

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Cooking up success



Photo by Laura Masci

From left: Schweinfurt High School Culinary Arts team members Tyquell Kennedy, Kaitlyn Mayo and Yafreisy Ortiz work feverishly at the All-Europe Culinary Faire, May 8-10.

Schweinfurt takes gold at Europe-wide culinary competition

By Erin Bolinger
Schweinfurt High School

SCHWEINFURT, Germany — The high school's culinary arts team here competed for the first time and earned gold in two categories at the All-Europe Culinary Faire, May 8-10, at Sembach Middle and Elementary School.

Nine schools from across Europe competed including teams from Bitburg, Heidelberg, Kaiserslautern, Naples, Ramstein, Vilseck and Schweinfurt. Teams consisted of four students with one alternate.

Schweinfurt's culinary arts team included 10th-grader Tyquell Ken-

nedey, Yafreisy Ortiz and Kaitlyn Mayo of the 11th grade, and 12th-grader Michael Motto.

The competition consisted of six events. Baumholder took first for the Quiz Bowl and Apple Carving while Ramstein dominated in the Cake Decorating category.

Schweinfurt ruled the Knife Skills and Culinary Arts, taking gold in each.

"Who are we going to trust our knives to?" asked competition officials.

Schweinfurt appeared the underdog among all the teams wearing brightly colored and embroidered chef coats and other accessories. Undeterred by their hodge-podge garb, they went in and did their best with \$10 economy coats, three pairs of borrowed shoes and million-dollar smiles and attitudes.

Teams competing in Culinary

Arts had 20 minutes to gather ingredients and set up their stations. They were then given one hour to cook the entire menu, and an additional 20 minutes to clean up. Teams had to incorporate chicken breast, broccoli and rice into their menus and work within a \$25 budget.

"The diversity was amazing. Everyone was so different," said Mayo. "All these kids from different schools came together and completely blew the judges away. It was the best experience I've ever had."

Even though each team was out to win, they still found something in common.

"My favorite part was the interaction we had with all the other schools," said Kennedy. "Everyone

See CULINARY, page 16

Grafenwoehr welcomes 44th ESB Soldiers

By Sgt. Jess A. Williams
118th MPAD, Tennessee Army
National Guard

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — Despite a drawdown of U.S. Army forces in Europe and its installations, the Bavaria Military Community remains intact and enduring. This summer the Grafenwoehr community will welcome the 44th Expeditionary Signal Battalion out of Schweinfurt, Germany, as the 172nd Separate Infantry Brigade prepares to ease its colors, inactivate and depart the community in 2013.

Through August, Grafenwoehr's population will surge slightly as the garrison population adjusts to welcome the first of the expected re-stationing units.

"They (the 44th) have already signed for their company and battalion headquarters," said Henry McNair, the chief of Plans, Analysis and Integration office. "We are currently freeing up the maintenance facilities for the unit."

Beginning in mid-May, single Soldiers and families with young children will move to Grafenwoehr. In July, families with school-age children will report.

"Grafenwoehr is the largest training area outside of the United States. The training capabilities and capacity that Grafenwoehr has, is the reason why U.S. forces remain in Europe," said Jim Van Patten, the director of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security. "As we

See SOLDIERS, page 16

Redeployment affects clinic's availability

By Douglas DeMaio
Bavaria Medical Department Activity
Public Affairs

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — The health clinic here will support medical redeployment operations for Soldiers returning from Afghanistan throughout the month of June.

There will be reduced availability for appointments so the clinic's staff can support the medical redeployment process for the 172nd Infantry Brigade.

"As Soldiers return home to their friends and family, community members can expect an effect on the appointments we have available," said Lt. Col. Mark Carder, the Grafenwoehr Health Clinic commander. "Our team nurses can assist in coordinating care for referrals to host nation facilities."

Before going to a host nation facility, a referral is required except for emergency-room care.

"Taking care of our returning troops is imperative because it affords Soldiers and health care professionals an opportunity to identify and, if need be, treat any deployment-related health issue that can negatively affect a Soldier's life, relationship, well-being, career or future," Carder said.

Soldiers who redeploy are required to have a Post-Deployment Health Assessment

See CLINIC, page 16

Young artists exhibit work nationally

Story and photos by
Chelsea Bissell
Staff Writer

ESCHENBACH, Germany — For three young ladies who recently saw their art move to the national level of the Boys and Girls Club Fine Arts Exhibit, art is a newfangled area of success.

Before the exhibition, Brenna Krueger, 12, Tempia Nunley, 12, and Zoe Koons, 11, approached art as a casual pastime and never entered into an art show. So they were delighted when their entries, among 12 others, were chosen by Netzaberg Youth Center staff to represent Grafenwoehr in the Overseas European Regional level of the exhibition. The excitement grew as their works moved onto the National Level where the BGCA



From left: Brenna Krueger, 12, Tempia Nunley, 12, and Zoe Koons, 11, stand in the art room of Netzaberg Youth Center where they created their art pieces.

will choose a winner.

The girls hardly expected to progress so far in such a competitive exhibition. All seemed to enter their artwork on a curious whim.

"I kind of wanted to see how far I could get," said Krueger, who submitted a sculpture of a dragon, entitled "The Seer."

"I just wanted to see what it

would do," said Koons of her glass paint, gem and button collage. "I didn't think it would make it to the States."

Nunley expressed the same casual regard for the exhibition, adding, "I just thought it'd be a lot of fun." Her still life of paint brushes in a jar

See STUDENTS, page 16

Student shares thoughts as a survivor

By Mariah Morris
Vilseck High School

I have seen death in Germany; a close friend lost her father. An IED went through his eye and seeing her cry brought tears to my olive seed eyes. However, it was those same eyes that lit up when they caught sight of the Eiffel Tower, and oh how those eyes sparkled like the crystal from Prague when I saw the most beautiful glass I'd ever laid those eyes on.

Yes, some nights are as cold and lonely as the snowy mountains up in Austria. Like the night my best friend moved away, or the night my father returned to Iraq once his R&R was over. One year I planted sunflower seeds, but before they could grow the distance between them and I already had.

And no distance could have been greater than the ocean I couldn't cross when my uncle died, so instead of being at his funeral in person my soul paddled down the river I cried, met up with that great big ocean, and joined him in spirit.

I can remember a time when I was privileged enough to cross an ocean. I



Morris

ball game my brother was participating in. I'll never forget the noises it made or the frigid raindrops that kissed my cheek once we finally arrived in the UK.

My life has been a rollercoaster of up and down events; it has been composed of many joys as well as upsets. And after all of my experiences I can identify the toughest time of my life as right now. When I caught news of my brother's deployment my heart laid burdened with sadness, like the thick smoke that filled his lungs during his last deployment when his vehicle was hit and he almost didn't make it. My dad's deployments I could handle, but my brother, my big brother, he is another story.

Every night I pray for him, trying not to remem-

ber how easily my right fist bruised his left eye that one time we play fought like we often did. I try to forget how easily his skin ripped open when he flew off our scooter. While I try to forget these troubling thoughts I remember all the things tougher than flesh, like the bullet that pierced his right shoulder or the bombs that hide under the golden dust of the desert.

Most nights these thoughts get the best of me and sleeplessness taunts me as I try to stretch my eyes open during English class. My only relief is from God, he has sent me people such as my friends who fill my days with laughter and my family to comfort my fears with words of encouragement.

On days when I am privileged enough to talk with him, only every once in a while, before we hang up I always tell him, "Walk by faith and not by sight." The peace I hear in his response gives me ease.

Editor's Note: Mariah Morris is a Vilseck High School senior and submitted this essay for a Grafenwoehr Community Spouses' Club scholarship.



Photo by Chelsea Bissell

A walk to remember

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — Participants carry signs honoring fallen community members during the second annual Walk to Remember 5K, May 19. Though some hurried through the course, most took a casual approach and leisurely walked dogs or pushed strollers while children peddled bikes and even pushed themselves over the finish line on scooters. The Walk to Remember was the brainchild of a family member who lost a loved one in the field and was looking for an outlet for communication and remembrance for the family members and friends of fallen Soldiers, explained Roderick Cole, Survivor Outreach Services coordinator. "That way the family knows, we are not forgotten," said Cole. "We are not yesterday's news."

Class helps Soldiers budget for future

By Mark Iacampo
USAG Hohenfels Public Affairs

HOHENFELS, Germany — Members of the 527th Military Police Company got a crash course in personal finance as the Army Community Service Financial Readiness Center conducted an intensive two-day seminar for Soldiers and spouses in Hohenfels, May 7.

The class was initiated by Capt. Carlos R. Guevara, 527th MP Co. commander, who said many Soldiers across the Army live paycheck to paycheck.

"I want my Soldiers to have the opportunity to know that there is another way," he said. "I think the classes that ACS provided will give them a head start."

The course included everything from balancing a checkbook to buying a home and saving for retirement.

"Starting from the basics is the way to go," said Donna Gotell, Financial Readiness Program manager. "When we do money management, banking and checking, it might be boring for some, but for others, they've never

seen this before."

"We did an awesome class on check writing," she continued. "They had to balance their register, and if they were struggling with it, that means they need to come see me so we can do a one on one and I can get them on track."

During the "Understanding Money and Credit" portion, Gotell stressed creating a budget and setting some long-term financial goals. She said people often don't realize where or how much money they are actually spending, especially if they make most purchases with a debit card.

"We don't pay attention when we're using our card, we're just getting what we want," she said.

In an exercise, Gotell had Soldiers consider how much money they spent a day on coffee, cigarettes and other small items. "One guy said he spends about four dollars a day on coffee," Gotell said. "That adds up to \$1,400 a year. ... You could have paid off a small balance on your credit card or saved for a vacation."

"I'm not telling people to stop drink-

ing their coffee," she added. "But if we can just cut half of that, it can make a big difference."

Another class covered "the three deals of car buying" such as the purchase, the trade-in, and the financing. Saving for College discussed the rising cost of education and different ways to save for your child's college, such as 529 plans.

"It's going to be useful for a lot of people. They gave some very helpful pointers," said Spc. Jennifer Adcock.

Cupcakes and "Monster" drinks prizes helped keep the Soldiers engaged. "One or two of my Soldiers stopped by and said 'Sir, thanks for (the class),' said Guevara. "We had an FRG (family readiness group) meeting and the spouses were talking about it, so I believe it was a success."

"It was worthwhile," agreed Spc. Akira Shinomiya. "A lot of guys just spend their money on stuff, very impulsively. This gave a lot of information and it was presented well."

"And the cupcakes helped," he laughed.

MEB/PEB process is clarified

Attorneys offer advice for separating Soldiers

By R. Charles Collica II
MEB Outreach Counsel - Europe

Service members new to the Medical Evaluation Board (MEB) and Physical Evaluation Board (PEB) process are most often confused and weighed down with questions concerning their legal rights. MEB Outreach Counsel (MEB Counsel) and Soldiers Counsel (PEB Counsel) are licensed attorneys available to provide information, advice and representation to Soldiers throughout the MEB-PEB process.

The MEB Outreach Counsel is available to assist each individual Soldier from the moment he or she is referred into the MEB process. At the beginning, general advice and assistance is provided in developing a strategy to reach the Soldier's desired outcome. As the Soldier progresses through the system, the MEB Outreach Counsel can provide more specific advice and representation. The Soldiers Counsel is available to represent the Soldier once the case progresses from the MEB to the PEB stage.

The MEB Outreach Counsel who serves all Soldiers in USAREUR is located in the Wiesbaden Legal Center and has an office located in Vilseck Legal Center. Soldiers Counsel offices are located at Landstuhl, Heidelberg and Vilseck.

If you reside in U.S. Army Europe and are undergoing an MEB-PEB, legal teams are available at the following locations:

- Vilseck: DSN 476-3358, CIV 09662-83-3358
- Wiesbaden: DSN 337-4738, CIV 0611-705-4738
- Landstuhl: DSN 486-8286, CIV 06371-86-8286

Don't try to navigate this complex process on your own. Don't hesitate; take advantage of the free legal advice and representation available to you now. Your rights and benefits may be adversely affected if you don't.

Think safety before your next vacation

By Bob Van Elsberg
U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center

FORT RUCKER, Ala.

— What better time of the year is there for taking vacations than summer? The days are long, the temperatures are warm and the urge to get away — whether it's for sightseeing or visiting friends and family — is too hard to resist. But before you head out, remember safety.

You may be ready to hit the road, but what about your vehicle? Have you checked the tires for proper air pressure and wear? What about checking that spare to make sure it's properly inflated? And then there are your fluid levels.

Low engine oil, brake and transmission fluid or coolant can strand you beside the road short of your destination. If you're a Soldier, make sure your vehicle has passed a unit safety inspection.

If you're not a mechanic, be sure to visit your favorite garage for a good pretravel check.

After all, it's better your car starts the trip with a quick visit to the garage than ends up with a long, expensive stay in one.

Also, getting where you're going is like practicing marksmanship; you're only as good as your aim.

Be sure to complete a TRiPS assessment at <https://safety.army.mil/> trips to hit the mark for safety.

Community celebrates life

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — AFN Bavaria and The Exchange are proud to announce April's winners of their monthly photo contest. Clockwise from right are: Regina Wallace's third place photo of her son, Jayden; Joshua and Sandra Guilford's first place photo of their daughter, Elizabeth; and Pamela Hodson Emmons' second place photo.

The theme for the month of May is fests. Community members have until May 31 to submit their photos on AFN's Facebook page.



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If you have newsworthy ideas or stories to submit, contact the managing editor at 475-7113, or e-mail jeremy.s.buddemeier.civ@mail.mil.

The editorial deadline is noon on Tuesday, the week prior to the publication date. Publication dates and submission guidelines can be found at www.milcom.de. Prior coordination is a must.

All editorial content is the responsibility of the U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr Public Affairs Office and the final decision on whether content will run rests with the managing editor.

The Bavarian News is an authorized publication for members of the Department of Defense. Contents of the Bavarian News are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, the Department of Defense or the U.S. Army.

The Bavarian News is published every two weeks by Werbeagentur und Verlag Roswitha Lehner, a private firm in no way connected with the U.S. Army under exclusive written contract with U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr. The newspaper has a printed circulation of 7,000.

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Water Tower art by Dane Gray

USPS: Lithium batteries are a no-go at APO

By The U.S. Postal Service
News Release

Until January 2013, the Postal Service will not be able to accept packages containing lithium batteries and electronic devices containing lithium batteries addressed to international destinations. This includes mail destined to, or from, APO (Army Post Office), FPO (Fleet Post Office) and DPO (Diplomatic Post Office) locations.

This change is required by the standards of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the Universal Postal Union (UPU), both of which currently prohibit lithium batteries in mail shipments that are carried on international commercial air transportation.

This change will not apply to packages containing lithium batteries and electronic devices containing lithium batteries when mailed within the United States on domestic commercial air or ground transportation.

International organizations apply different rules to the carriage of lithium batteries in mail shipments carried on commercial aircraft as compared to domestic requirements.

We anticipate that by January 2013, international aviation rules will be changed to allow mailing of lithium batteries when installed in the personal electronic devices they are intended to operate.

USPS is working with expert organizations to determine if any new exceptions can be developed prior to January 2013. Further announcements will be made should USPS be able as soon as any new options become available.

We appreciate our customers' business. We recognize this change will pose an inconvenience to our customers and we look forward to continuing to be their international shipping partner.

Additional information on exceptions is available at <http://about.usps.com/news/service-alerts/international-updates.htm>.

Scouts create habitats for critters

Girl Scouts in Hohenfels 'go green,' make hotels for World Thinking Day

Story and photos by
Mark Iacampo
USAG Hohenfels Public Affairs

HOHENFELS, Germany — Members of the Hohenfels Girl Scouts, with some help from some male siblings and a handful of adults, rolled up their sleeves and dug into the dirt to construct two "insect hotels" in Hohenfels, April 28.

Planting flowers, stacking pallets and spreading straw, the scouts created two distinctly different "hotels." One is near the Girl Scout hut on Linderberg Street, and the other is located close to Gate 2 near the beginning of the PT running course. Both are well marked with large informational signs.

"Every year the Girl Scouts celebrate World Thinking Day, and the theme this year was 'Go Green, Save Our Planet,'" said Dominique Schnell, Brownie Troop 555 leader. "And since this is also the 100th year anniversary of the Girl Scouts I wanted to do something special, something big."

While the Girl Scouts normally celebrate World Thinking Day in February, Bavarian winter weather prompted Schnell to wait for spring.

"The girls received permission from the recently departed Garrison Commander Lt Col. Kevin Quarles," Schnell said. "They also coordinated with the Environmental Division of DPW to acquire the locations for the two hotels."

Reiner Buettner of the Environmental Division joined the girls as supervisor and "architect." Buettner said that though the designs of the two hotels are different, the basic structure is the same.

"Just give the animals a large variety of several habitats. Straw, which can get moist when it's

See HOTELS, page 16



Above: Ashlyn Haskins digs a hole to plant a flower while Elena Binns watches during the Girls Scouts' World Thinking Day in Hohenfels, April 28. Left: Victoria Hoffer and her mother, Amanda, of Daisy Troop 900 help prepare a habitat for insects.



Jeishka Farinacci, left, proudly displays her Schweinfurt Youth of the Year award to a crowd gathered at Askren Manor, April 28. Farinacci logged more than 350 volunteer hours while maintaining honor roll status as a student. Among a host of accomplishments, she plans to continue volunteering in the Schweinfurt community.

Farinacci named Youth of the Year

Story and photo by
Margaret Gotheridge
USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

SCHWEINFURT, Germany — As a junior at the high school here, Jeishka Farinacci has volunteered more than 350 hours, is bilingual, an honor roll student, a theater participant and an active member of the religious community. She has made lasting impressions on many community members and, just recently, was named Schweinfurt's Youth of the Year by the Boys & Girls Club of America.

The BGCA awards youths who have overcome enormous odds and have demonstrated exceptional character and accomplishments. The winners of such an acclaimed award have displayed a commitment to their community, their family and to their academics, and are examples of strong moral character and act as a positive model for other youth, according to the group's website.

Farinacci is the daughter of 1st Lt. Jorge Farinacci Sr. and Nitza Vera-Rosado. She and her family arrived in Schweinfurt during the summer of 2010 and she has been actively involved in the community ever since.

"Moving is challenging, but moving here posed a new challenge

of being outside the U.S.," said Farinacci. Fortunately, the Schweinfurt Youth Center has introduced several programs that help people become more active members of the Schweinfurt community, said Farinacci.

Farinacci participated in the community theater. And as an apprentice with the Child, Youth and School Services' HIRED program, a Keystone Club member and a youth leader in the Torch Club, she has learned valuable tools she can use in the future, she said.

"She has been active in many facets of our daily programs since she arrived here," said William Toliver, USAG Schweinfurt work force preparations specialist. "Farinacci's sincerity, strong moral character and commitment to better those around her, has renewed my faith in the potential that exists within us all," said Toliver.

"I have been able to grow as a person mentally, emotionally and intellectually through all my experiences these past two years," said Farinacci. "The youth center has made such an impact in my life that after my apprenticeship with CYSS I continued to volunteer at the center. I enjoy being able to work with other teens who are like me and are actively participating in events that support the community."

'Cooking Like Elvis' class to deliver down-home, southern style goodness

Story and photo by
Mark Iacampo
USAG Hohenfels Public Affairs

BURGLENGENFELD, Germany — When Elvis Aaron Presley served as a U.S. Soldier in Germany, he brought his grandmother along to prepare his favorite southern recipes. During the "Elvis Presley — well camouflaged in the Oberpfalz" exhibition at the Oberpfälzer Volkskundemuseum (Oberpfalz Folk Museum) here, Hohenfels community member Gregory Harvey will be sharing some down-home southern dishes of his own in his "Cooking Like Elvis" class.

"I saw an ad in the news briefs last year, that the museum was going to be celebrating Elvis, and they needed a cook to teach some American cooking courses," Harvey said. "I've been a cook for almost 30 years. I could do that."

The Elvis exhibition runs through Aug. 19 and provides an excellent overview of Elvis' time in Germany, including while stationed in Grafenwoehr, with placards tracing his adventures in English and German. Vintage magazines, newspapers, albums and more fill several rooms.

"The memorabilia was all donated by fans and collectors who loved Elvis," said museum curator Dr. Margit Berwing-Wittl. "They have kept the singles, music, everything for more than 50 years, never lost or sold them."

One of the highlights is a piano Elvis played during an impromptu concert for a small gathering of friends and family in 1958 at the "Mickey-Bar" in Grafenwoehr. The bar is long gone, but the piano has graced the foyer of the Hotel Russweier in Eschenbach-Grosshotzenreuth for years. It has never before been loaned to any museum exhibition.

Berwing-Wittl said every summer the museum features a differ-



A visitor peruses a case full of Elvis memorabilia at the folk museum in Burglengenfeld, May 11. Two "Cooking like Elvis" classes, which are currently sold out, will be held June 13 & 15.

"I'm not saying I'm the best cook, but I do put a lot of love into what I cook."

Gregory Harvey, Cooking Like Elvis instructor

ent exhibit from around such far-flung places as Africa, Turkey or the United States. With every display, they also do a cooking class from the same region.

"I want to do things that they can actually go out on the German economy and pick up the stuff," Harvey said. "It wouldn't make any sense if I bought everything at the commissary and they can't."

Harvey will run two classes, on June 13 and 15, respectively. The menu for the first night includes fried chicken wings, southern fried catfish, potato salad and homemade apple pie. On the 15th, he plans a full-out barbecue, with ribs, hamburgers, chicken noodle salad and baked beans.

"And they requested peanut butter and jelly," laughed Harvey, noting that Elvis was fond of peanut butter and banana sandwiches. "That threw me a little, but I said no problem."

Berwing-Wittl said the classes were sold out right away, and that the participants are especially excited.

"It's going to be hands on," said Harvey. "They are actually going to help me prepare the stuff and then we're going to sit down and eat."

Harvey learned the tricks of his trade while serving as a mess management specialist on the USS Kitty Hawk, an aircraft carrier where over 18,000 meals are served each day.

"I wanted to do this to get out there and have better relationships with the local people," said Harvey. "I'm not saying I'm the best cook, but I do put a lot of love into what I cook, and I want people to enjoy my food. I'm going to put out 100 percent so they get a good impression that we don't eat just hamburgers," he added.

Other special activities during the exhibition include concerts, Elvis impersonators, and talks with authors, including Peter Heigl who wrote the book "Sergeant Elvis Presley in Grafenwoehr." For a full list including dates and times, visit www.burglengenfeld.de/html/volkskundemuseum.

Children step into Soldiers' shoes

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. Mark Albright
2nd Cavalry Regiment Public Affairs

VILSECK, Germany — Vilseck Elementary School students were treated to some fun and learned a little bit about how to be a trooper on a recent field trip to the Artillery Hell, Fires Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment.

The children learned how to apply basic principles learned in the classroom to everyday Soldier tasks.

Fires Squadron troopers creatively displayed lessons so children could see how their family members apply it their jobs.

"This is also a chance for the kids to see what their parents do on a daily basis and how they use it in the unit," said Capt. Mark Osmack, assistant squadron operations officer and coordinator of the field trip.

The field trip combined fun events with physics to demonstrate basic artillery fundamentals. One event the children participated in was a real version of a popular phone application called the Paper Toss. The children stood about 15 feet from a short garbage can and tried to throw a piece of balled-up paper into it. A fan was placed to the side of the can to provide wind resistance to push the paper from its flight path. This shows how wind resistance can affect artillery rounds as they travel through the air.

"What we are doing is showing the kids that what they learn in school — weather, geography and those things, that there is a practical



Vilseck Elementary students search for items in historical photographs at the Reed Museum at Rose Barracks during a recent field trip. In addition to the search, students used flashlights to simulate the basics of how radar works.

use in adulthood and could even lead to careers in the Army," said Osmack.

Children also learn the basics of how radar works with the use of flashlights.

"The flashlights are representing the radar beams. This illustrates to the kids how we get a location on enemy cannons," said Staff Sgt. Seth Fleming of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, Fires Squadron.

In addition, students learned about the his-

tory of the 2CR during a scavenger hunt. After a class about the regiment, they were given a tour of the Reed Museum and engaged in a competition to identify specific items in photographs related to the regiment.

"Soldiers don't often get to be children again, and children don't often get to be Soldiers," said Osmack, "but, I think they loved it."

Local bikers kick off rust for safety

Story and photo by
Chelsea Bissell
Staff Writer

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — On May 4, Soldiers, civilians and local nationals donned helmets, padded jackets and sturdy boots for the annual Motorcycle Safety Awareness Day.

Nearly 90 riders came out to revive their skills in maneuvering, fast breaking and avoiding obstacles after a long winter where bikes stay in storage and even die-hards prefer the comfort of a car. This review can play a significant role in keeping the community safe.

According to Acting Garrison Safety Director William Whitman, motorcycle accidents account for the "most off-duty fatalities" in the Army. Whitman cites the hazardous nature of motorcycles as large part of the problem. They're fast, unstable on two wheels and leave the rider vulnerable to dangers on the road.

But, Whitman also lists riders' inexperience as a major factor in motorcycle accidents.

"Sometimes they get into more than they can handle," he said.

In an effort to increase aptitude, experienced riders and local experts, including German polizei and the representatives from the on-post driving school, led a series of exercises designed to keep bikers' skills and wits sharp.

They careened around a corner without breaking, performed a long distance swerve at 50 kilometers an hour, weaved through cones at a walking pace, looped figure eights and stopped short at 50 kilometers an hour using only



Riders in bright, reflective jackets line up and wait their turn to practice a long distance swerve at 50 kilometers per hour at Motorcycle Safety Day on May 4.

the emergency brake.

With 20 years of experience riding street bikes and as president of KINGZ motorcycle club on post, Sgt. 1st Class Jason Lopez, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Joint Multinational Training Command, was an obvious choice as a drill instructor for Safety Day. He admitted that it might be a long time before a rider uses one of the skills, but, he warned, it's still important to practice.

"That way when they do have to use it, it's fresh in their minds."

Sgt. Mikhail Chelyadin, Bravo Company, 7th NCO Academy, concurred that for practiced riders, Safety Day reinforced beneficial procedures.

"It refreshes the old techniques and methods we use," he said. "It

cleans out the rust."

Lt. Col. Rivers kicked off the day with opening remarks out in Camp Kasserine. After the statements, Capt. Jason Hesseling, a chaplain at USAG Grafenwoehr, kept with German tradition and blessed the motorcycles of the gathered participants.

A "drag test" followed the blessing. Tied to the back of a motorcycle and wearing ACUs over his protective equipment, Stefan Oetter, was dragged 40 meters on the ground to demonstrate the importance of proper gear when riding. The ACUs were torn to shreds, but Oetter emerged unscratched and unharmed thanks to the shielding effect of the equipment.

"It was very dangerous," said Oetter of his safety stunt. "I was

very happy I had all the protective gear on."

After Oetter's daring drag, the participants ran through each motorcycle handling exercise before breaking for a barbeque lunch of hotdogs, hamburgers and soft drinks at KINGZ Motorcycle Club. The bikers needed to refuel before their 140-kilometer group ride through Bavaria.

For Hans Oetter, father of the dragged Stefan Oetter and mastermind of the event, the day's goal was to promote social riding, or riding in groups. As a professional German driving instructor and motorcycle racer, Hans Oetter urges other motorcyclists to "get out of the lone rider mentality."

Those riding alone, explained Hans Oetter, tend to accelerate faster and faster. Social riding mitigates this need for speed and keeps bikers alert.

Henrik Klueter, a local national whose brother works on Grafenwoehr, attended the event to prepare for his upcoming motorcycle roadtrip around the world. A week after Safety Day, Klueter left for Russia on his bike. He planned on taking a circuitous route through Czech Republic, Slovenia, Greece and onto Turkey where he will take a ferry over the Black Sea to Ukraine before heading into Russia. From Russia, he will take a boat to Bangkok to continue the rest of his excursion in Southeast Asia.

Safety Day served as an important refresher for Klueter before he headed off and marked the first time he performed safety exercises with all the gear and baggage he will carry through the world.



Photo by Spc. Sherrie Payzant

Cold, rainy weather didn't detour participants of the 1st Lt. Michael L. Runyan 5k Run/Walk, May 12.

Garmisch cleans up for busy weekend

By **John Reese**
USAG Garmisch Public Affairs

GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCHEN, Germany — May 11-12 were busy days at U.S. Army Garrison Garmisch, with all but one significant event taking place despite a dramatic drop in temperature, wind gusts, even snow at the higher elevations.

Friday began with an intense spring cleaning of Artillery Kaserne under a blue Bavarian sky and summer-like weather. All garrison staff, excluding a handful of personnel necessary to keep essential services running, turned out with trash bags, brooms, buckets, rags and gardening equipment.

"Clean-up coordinators oversaw all efforts per building to assure trash was picked up, hard surfaces were weeded, and the grass was cut," said Jeff Darrow, Directorate of Public Works. "All debris was brought to dumpsters or when too bulky, brought to the curbside for Roads & Grounds pick up."

In addition to the mother of all police calls, DPW provided soil and trays of potted flowers to housing residents and offices, and some of the Bundeswehr soldiers who share Artillery Kaserne also pitched in to further beautify the garrison.

"We gave this community the appearance it deserves," said Darrow.

A clean-up photo album can be viewed online at www.facebook.com/USAG.Garmisch.

Immediately after the clean-up, Darrow and garrison manager John Cavanaugh manned the grill. Senior leadership cooked the main course of brats and burgers, and each directorate contributed side dishes and drinks.

Somewhere in between cleaning and cooking, librarian Aileen Patail made time for Military Spouse Appreciation Day at the award-winning garrison library.

Saturday kicked off at 9 a.m. with the 1st Lt. Michael L. Runyan 5k Run/Walk benefitting the Wounded Warrior Project. The day before had been sunny and hot; Saturday morning dawned cold and miserable with a steady drizzle under a gray sky. Nevertheless, about 50 community members participated, some pushing baby carriages, their spirits not dampened by the Alpine weather. Participants donated \$15 each for the run, so some people who chose not to run because of bad weather simply made a donation. As an incentive, the Exchange offered special deals to anyone wearing a run T-shirt.

"We raised over \$1,048.90!" said Capt. Jena Roark, commander, Headquarters and Headquarters, USAG Garmisch and the key organizer.

Three other events on May 12 were the Garmisch Community Club's garage sale (moved indoors due to the rain), a wine tasting put on by Outdoor Recreation, and the Garmisch Elementary-Middle School's second performance of Little Red Riding Hood, a production orchestrated by the Missoula Children's Theatre now making the rounds of garrisons across Europe.

One event that didn't happen was the Motorcycle Safety Day and poker run. It was a hard call postponing it on Friday while the weather was perfect for a motorcycle ride.

"We'll reschedule it," promised safety officer Andi Tuerk. "With the rain and wind forecast, it didn't make safety sense to go ahead with it."

It turned out to be the right decision. Bikers from the garrison doing a final route reconnaissance on Friday afternoon discovered the intended poker run route on Highway 2060 past King Ludwig's Schloss Linderhof to the Plansee was undergoing major construction, and as of sunset May 11, the scenic highway was still closed, blocked with asphalt trucks and heavy equipment.

Through rose colored (beer) glasses



Photo by Molly Hayden

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — Audre Binder, director of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation, U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr, attempts to walk a dotted line (wobbly at best) as she dons "beer goggles" during the safety day training, May 10. The booth, run by German polizei, simulated one's ability — or inability — to drink 6 to 10 beers and pass a drunk driving test. Other organizations, including the German feuerwehr (fire depart-

ment), the Army Wellness Center, Directorate of Public Works' Environmental Division and the Bundeswehr, organized displays and conducted training throughout the day. From crash simulators and handling ammunition to proper use of a fire extinguisher, a wealth of important information was exchanged to create a safer work environment for garrison employees. The event was sponsored by the Garrison Safety Office.

Czechs relive history, forge friendships

Story and photo by
Mark Van Treuren
JMRC Public Affairs

PILSEN, Czech Republic — On the evening of May 6, 1945, tanks from Gen. George Patton's Third Army drove down Pilsen's Sady Petatratniku ending six years of Nazi occupation of this city, bringing a close to World War II. The people of Pilsen have never forgotten.

Each and every replica of those vehicles now makes the same trek into Pilsen as the main event of the Pilsen Liberation Festival.

Leading this modern day march into Pilsen are some of the same men, the American veterans, who first heard the cheers from the people here in 1945.

Along with the vets, who are all smiles and thumbs up as they ride through town, are members of Czech re-enactment clubs, the young liberation enthusiasts who have made it their hobby to keep the memories of 1945 alive while at the same time forging new friendships with soldiers their own age, many of whom are Americans.

"I think many of the U.S. Soldiers are interested in history, too, and this is a chance to meet informally. This festival helps to improve relationships between the soldiers," said 24-year old Mark Malafa, a college student at West Bohemian University studying British and American history.

Malafa, an aspiring diplomat, said he enjoys his opportunities to meet with U.S. Soldiers based in Germany.

"People from re-enactment



Czech re-enactors portraying U.S. Army 26th Infantry Soldiers on "work detail" cut stencils at the Pilsen Liberation Festival, May 4. Pilsen holds an annual celebration to honor the American Soldiers who fought there as part of Gen. George Patton's Third Army near the end of World War II.

clubs like us visit the bases in Germany and are trading with the American Soldiers — uniforms and stuff." Malafa added, "It helps when you can talk to veterans and modern day Soldiers. It is better than internet and books. We share pictures of this event and sometimes we go to bases in Germany."

As participants walk around Pilsen during the festival, re-enactors sport uniforms from the both 1945 era and even some from today. Unit patches are everywhere and come from some of the U.S. Army's most iconic units, the 2nd Infantry Division and 82nd

Airborne, to name just a couple. There are re-enactment camps throughout the downtown area, where the enthusiasts set up shop for the weekend, tents and all, while putting on displays of equipment they have purchased from the Internet, U.S. stores and even eBay.

Most are young, many not even old enough to remember Communism, but now glad they can honor the Americans who they know freed their city in 1945.

"The atmosphere at the end of the war was unique. You can tell by the pictures and the stories you hear. We were not allowed to honor

Americans during Communism. We were taught in school that the Russian Army liberated us. We are proud that today we talk to Americans at bases in Germany now," Malafa explained.

The re-enactment clubs fall under the umbrella of "Pilsen 1945" the group, which plans and organizes the yearly festival. It is a labor of love for the young people who take part.

"The uniforms are paid for personally. It's our hobby. We are very appreciative of our liberation in 1945, we are very happy we can celebrate (this) day," said 21-year old Daniel Musil, a law student in his second year and one of the organizers of the camp.

Musil explained that his club began with one old tank in 2008 and today he leads a full camp in a downtown park. He said he would like to some year have his club's equipment alongside modern day U.S. equipment.

"It would make for an interesting comparison," said Musil.

These young enthusiasts take great pride in making the Liberation Festival a yearly success. But they are also quick to point out they feel the festival is a great opportunity to forge new friendships with the grandchildren of the American veterans and the Soldiers stationed in Germany. They are well aware Czech soldiers are training regularly at U.S. bases in Germany.

"It's important for our security and peace in Europe," said Musil, explaining why he hopes the Americans will stay in those bases so close to his home in Pilsen.

Patriot Express offers options for pet travel

PE's climate controlled cabin, cheaper fees give customers choices for PCS moves

By U.S. Army Europe Public Affairs
News Release

HEIDELBERG, Germany — The Patriot Express, a Department of Defense-chartered air travel, originating at Baltimore/Washington International Airport (BWI) and transiting to Ramstein Airbase (RAB) offers options for trans-Atlantic travel with pets.

"During the summer months, May through September, most airlines may impose a Summer Heat Embargo and will not allow individuals to transport pets in the cargo compartment," said Maj. Steven Czap, operations officer with USAREUR G1. "Most Patriot Express flights to BWI are climate controlled and can fly year round without restrictions on breeds, or air temperature and pet travel costs on PE are generally cheaper when compared to commercial carriers."

According to the Air Mobility Command (AMC) Passenger Policy Branch, there is a minimum fee of \$112 for up to 70 pounds and a max fee of \$336 for a 150 pound animal to fly on the PE. This calculation is based on the pet and kennel's combined weight and is broken down into three weight increments.

Commercial carriers calculate pet shipping cost based on cubic feet of cargo space taken up by the kennel and air space around the kennel for proper ventilation. This calculation can cost anywhere from \$395 for an average kennel to over \$1,160 for the largest commercial kennel to support a 150 pound animal for the same itinerary.

Currently there are 10 pet spaces, cats and dogs only, available on the Tuesday Patriot Express flight primarily used for PCS transportation. Each week there are also three other Patriot Express flights, (formerly known as Cat B or "Freedom Bird" or "Rotorator") flying Soldiers from the CENTCOM area of operations that transit through Ramstein AFB to BWI, and these often have temperature controlled spaces for pets, equating up to 40 pet allocations per week.

A very limited quantity of small pets may be authorized to travel in cabin. Pets must be able to fit comfortably in a kennel (hard-sided or soft-sided) no larger than 20 inches long x 16 inches wide x 8 inches high in order to fit under the seat in front of you. Pets must be able to stand up, lie down, and turn around with normal posture and body movements.

When making outbound travel arrangements for pets, service members will have to keep in mind that they will have to make appropriate onward movement arrangements of their pets from BWI to their PCS destination. This may be harder during the summer heat embargo period than the rest of the year.

If there is no space available on the PE flight, travelers still have the option to ship their pets via commercial carrier or through air cargo (both unaccompanied). Some additional options to off-set the cost of pet shipping include, but are not limited to:

Shipping a POV to the port of Baltimore in advance of official travel and drive to the permanent duty station or leave address. This option requires coordination with the local transportation office. Source specific guidance is the Joint Federal Travel Regulation (JFTR), Chapter 5, U5435.

Renting a car to travel from BWI to their permanent duty station and bringing the pet with them in the rental vehicle, but travelers will not be reimbursed, except for the mileage at \$0.555 per mile when submitting travel voucher to DFAS. Specific guidance is in JFTR U5105.

Transporting a pet via commercial or government air (PE) in advance of travel (non-reimbursable) and have family members receive pets at the arrival airport.

The Patriot Express offers cost-effective pet travel, however, whether flying on the PE or a commercial airline, the cost for shipping pets rest solely on the owner and is not reimbursable by the government.

For specific Patriot Express flight details and reservations contact your SATO travel representative.

SATO offices

Grafenwoehr: Bldg. 244; CIV 09641-02120
Rose Barracks: Bldg. 161; CIV 09662-411210
Hohenfels: Bldg. 10; CIV 09472-91110



A Soldier from 500th Horizontal Engineer Company creates a stockpile using a bucket loader during the 15th Engineer Battalion's spring training in Grafenwoehr, May 5.

15th Eng. Bn. completes training in Grafenwoehr

Story and photo by
Spc. Mary Taylor
15th Engineer Battalion Public Affairs

SCHWEINFURT, Germany — For the first time since its redeployment from Operations New Dawn and Enduring Freedom, the 15th Engineer Battalion returned to the Grafenwoehr Training Area to conduct its spring range density and training, April 24 through May 5.

This year's training was marked with sadness at the loss of a Soldier, unit supply clerk Spc. Bernard Hill Jr., and the injuries of five others in an automobile accident April 24. The battalion displayed its "Drive On" spirit and continued with training, celebrating the life of Hill in a battalion memorial ceremony in Grafenwoehr April 28, and also supporting the memorial service held in Schweinfurt, May 1.

Due to reset and reintegration following redeployment, a majority of individual weapons systems required zeroing and calibration of optics. The conclusion of this process requires that each firer hit a certain number of targets to qualify on their respective weapon system. Marksmanship, the basic fundamentals all Soldiers use when firing a weapon, was the focus of this field training.

Soldiers from the 500th Horizontal Engineer Company cross-trained with Soldiers from the Forward Support Company to learn different methods of vehicle recovery.

"Everybody likes to play in the mud every once in a while," said 1st Sgt.

Richard Fry.

Soldiers learned how to expediently recover vehicles staged in deep, murky mud pits. The more experienced non-commissioned officers taught younger Soldiers how to attach tow bars and winch cables to a range of vehicles. They all took turns trudging through the waist high muck to attach the winch cables to disabled vehicles.

"The best way for anyone to learn is to be hands on and do it yourself," said Sgt. 1st Class Jeremy Parkin as he supervised a new Soldier attaching a tow cable to a Palletized Load System stuck in the mud. The PLS is a vehicle used to load and transport pallets.

Headquarters and Headquarters Company also rehearsed recovery methods during their convoy training, using tow bars to move inoperative vehicles off roadways.

Soldiers new to the 500th Horizontal Engineer Company learned how to operate heavy machinery, concluding in their annual "Titan Olympics."

"Each team is made up of a senior specialist and new Soldiers that may not have much experience. Prior to this event, each team was given a full day to train on the gear for familiarization," said Sgt. John Snodgrass, one of the scorers for the competition.

Among weapons qualifications, a variety of certifications and cross training with other companies, Soldiers were given maximum opportunity to experience broad spectrum training during their time in Grafenwoehr.

'Forward Progress' builds emergency medical readiness

By 1st Lt. Maggie Kohler
30th MEDCOM Public Affairs

MIESAU, Germany — Soldiers of the 212th Combat Support Hospital trained medical logistics to improve their ability to deploy within hours of notification during Operation Forward Progress, here, April 19-May 3.

"We're focusing on the mobility of the unit and their ability to conduct an Emergency Deployment Readiness Exercise," said Col. Ann Sammartino, commander, 212th Combat Support Hospital.

Just days after assuming command of 30th Medical Command — the higher headquarters of the 212th CSH — Col. Koji Nishimura, along with Command Sgt. Maj. Alexis King, visited Miesau. He met the Soldiers, toured the facilities, climbed into the vehicles, and witnessed the work of Operation Forward Progress as part of his introduction to the unit.

"The 212th CSH Team is creating the environment for Soldiers and Families to take care of each other, do the right thing, and strive for world-record performance — our command philosophy for innovation and discipline in the future," said Nishimura.

The head nurse of the Intermediate Care Ward, Capt. Laurette Mangan, walked the commander and command sergeant major through the unit warehouse. She explained how each section developed electronic inventory lists and vehicle load plans for all of the hospital's supplies and equipment, pointing to aisles filled with color-coded containers perfectly lined up on shelves in cages for each section of the hospital.

"When there is a product that is going to expire soon, we have records of that on the computer. We now know exactly which box it is located in, in order to replace it," said Mangan.

"I am very proud of the Soldiers, NCOs and officers that all went above and beyond my expectations during this exercise and truly set the standard of world-record performance," said Sammartino.

The 30th MEDCOM, headquartered in Heidelberg is the enabling medical command asset for the European Command theater of operations. Its Soldiers provide medical support for combat, humanitarian assistance and training missions for U.S. European Command, U.S. Army Europe, U.S. Africa Command, U.S. Central Command, and Operations New Dawn and Enduring Freedom and Kosovo Force.

For more information on the Soldiers of the 212th Combat Support Hospital and the 30th Medical Command, visit the 30th MEDCOM homepage at www.30thmed.army.mil.

Veterans can obtain most service documents for free

By U. S. Army Human Resources Command Public Affairs
News Release

FORT KNOX, Ky. — Army veterans who served on active duty or in the Army Reserve, and the family members of those veterans, are eligible to receive service-related documents for free through a number of official sources.

Soldiers who separated in October 2002 or later can submit a signed Standard Form 180/Request Pertaining to Military Records (www.archives.gov/research/order/standard-form-180.pdf) to the U.S. Army Human Resources Command using one of the following methods: a signed request can be scanned and e-mailed to askhrc.army@us.army.mil, or mailed to:

U.S. Army Human Resources Command
Attn: AHRC-PDR-V/
Department 420

1600 Spearhead Division Ave.
Fort Knox, KY 40122-5402

Soldiers who separated prior to October 2002 should submit a signed SF 180 to the National Archives and Records Administration's National Personnel Records Center at:

National Personnel Records Center
1 Archives Drive
St. Louis, MO 63132-1002
or call the NPRC at 314-801-0800.

National Guard Soldiers are encouraged to contact their State Adjutant General. Contact information for each State National Guard Agency can be found at www.nationalguard.mil/resources/states.aspx.

Veterans can also access their information directly through a joint partnership between the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense known as eBenefits.

For more information about eBenefits, visit www.ebenefits.

va.gov.

The Army Human Resources Command also provides veterans with services such as creating DD Form 215s, updating retirement points for Reserve Component Soldiers, verifying veterans' service for VA home loans, and providing statements of service for veterans' employment verification.

Soldiers can contact HRC directly by calling 1-888-AR-MYHRC (276-9472).

Many "for profit" third-party commercial businesses are charging for the services described above, often advertising that they can expedite processing or delivery times for documents.

These claims are false, because no increased levels of service or access to veteran records are provided to these commercial entities. By requesting these documents directly through the government agencies listed, you can eliminate the middle man, saving yourself time and money.



Photo by Doug Demaio

Getting the scoop

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — Lt. Col. Mark Carder, Grafenwoehr Health Clinic commander, explains to Lt. Gen. Patricia D. Horoho, surgeon general and commanding general of the U.S. Army Medical Command, how a portion of his clinic is used in the post and pre-deployment health assessment, May 9. Horoho toured medical facilities in Grafenwoehr, Illesheim and Vilseck.

Franconian friends

GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCHEN, Germany — The German-American Men's Club of Middle Franconia receives a briefing from Yvonne Levardi, public affairs officer for the George C. Marshall Center for European Studies, during a portion of the club's tour of U.S. Army Garrison Garmisch, May 7.

Photo by John Reese



Be aware of your surroundings. If you see something suspicious, do not investigate; report it by calling 112.



What's Happening

Ansbach

Paint Your Own

May 23, 25, 30, June 1: Paint your own pottery and bring it home the same day at the Recreation Center at the Storck Community Activity Center, Bldg. 6510. Call DSN 467-4663, CIV 09841-83-4663.

Parent Ed. workshop

May 23: Join CYS Services and EDIS for fun-filled, educational workshops. Topics include positive discipline, potty training, sign language, growth and development, children's health and nutrition and more. Free and open to the public. 5-6 p.m.

Call the Katterbach School Age Center at DSN 467-2533, CIV 09802-83-2533.

Lights Out comedy

May 23: Nightclub atmosphere for five comics from Armed Forces Entertainment to strut their adults-only humor. Barbecue and libations begin at 6 p.m., show at 7 p.m.

No cost tickets available at Concierge in the Von Steuben Community Activity Center on Bismarck and a limited number at the door.

Call DSN 467-2930, CIV 09802-83-2930.

Garmisch water sports

May 25-28: A weekend full of adventure: progressive kayaking instruction, canoeing, hiking, mountain biking, rustic lodging at Kean's Lodge (camping and white water rafting trips available, too).

Transportation, lodging and equipment: \$129/adults, \$79/children, \$279/family. Preregister at Outdoor Recreation. Call DSN 467-3225, CIV 09802-83-3225.

Soldiers Lake fishing

May 26: Get the first catch at the newly stocked lake. Cost is \$15 (you must have a license to participate). Drawing and prizes. 6 a.m. Call DSN 467-3225, CIV 09802-83-3225.

One day trip to Berlin

June 2: Discover Berlin and its turbulent history in one day. Visit Checkpoint Charlie, the Brandenburg Gate, Berlin Wall and surviving medieval buildings near Alexanderplatz as well as an ultramodern glass and steel structures in Potsdamerplatz.

Transportation only: \$99/

adults, \$59/children, children 3 and under are free.

Preregister at Outdoor Recreation by calling DSN 467-3225, CIV 09802-83-3225.

FRG child care night

May 23 & 30: Offered at no cost for mission-related meetings. 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Make reservations at least two weeks in advance to CYSS Outreach Services director by calling DSN 467-2617, CIV 09802-83-2617.

Grafenwoehr / Rose Barracks

Faces & places

Check out pictures and storyboards from recent garrison events, activities and programs under the faces & places tab on rotating banner at the top of the garrison's website, www.grafenwoehr.army.mil.

School registration

School year 2012-2013 registration is currently underway! If students are not registered by the end of the current school year, there is a chance there will not be enough teachers and supplies for the 2012-2013 school year.

If you know your family will be PCSing in the fall, but you do not have your orders in hand, register your student for school year 2012-13.

Retirement ceremony

May 30: Join the USAG Grafenwoehr community for its next retirement ceremony in the Grafenwoehr Field House, Bldg. 547, at 4 p.m. For more, call DSN 475-8821.

Community soccer

Through 31 May: If you can "Bend it like Beckham" or just like to play soccer then stop by one of the fitness centers to sign up.

For more information contact Rose Barracks, DSN 476-2998, CIV 09662-83-2998; Grafenwoehr, DSN 475-9007, CIV 09641-83-9007; or call the Sports Office at DSN 475-8207, CIV 09641-83-8207.

Asian Pacific heritage

June 9: From noon until 5 p.m. at the Big Mike Lake Pavilion on Rose Barracks.

Join us in celebrating the 2012 Asian Pacific Islander American Heritage Month and

the diversity, contributions and sacrifices Asian Pacific Islanders offer. Cost for food is \$10 per person or \$35 for a family of four. Tickets required for meals. For more, contact Sgt. 1st Class Janette D. Gaillard, EO advisor, at DSN 475-7215.

Evening paddling

Every other Tuesday, next paddle is June 5: Whether you are a beginner paddler or already kayak regularly, join us for a leisurely paddle on a nearby lake or river.

Every other Tuesday evening we will explore a local body of water while learning or refreshing our kayaking skills. Participants must be able to swim. For more, call DSN 476-2563.

Mtn. Bike Mondays

Every Monday we saddle up and mountain bike different trails in the surrounding area. These rides are designed to accommodate all ranges of ability, but the rides can be physically demanding. Don't have a mountain bike, or concerned your bike isn't up for the challenge? No worries! You can borrow one of ours for the evening ride, or bring your bike by for a tune-up.

For more, call DSN 476-2563. New to the sport? Beginner rides will take place June 5, July 3 & 31.

Youth sports

Registration for Fall Youth Sports activities is open through July 27. Contact Parent Central Services at DSN 476-2760 or CIV 09662-83-2760 for more information or register online at https://webtrac.mwr.army.mil/webtrac/Grafenwoehrcyms.html.

PT through ODR

Available upon request! Contact the Rose Barracks ODR at DSN 476-2563 for booking. Activities include mountain biking, canoeing, climbing and others.

Caving

June 2: See Germany from a different angle ... underground! We will take you through the largest natural cave in Bavaria — the Bismarckgrotte. Using headlamps we crawl through tunnels, climb up tubes, and rappel underground. Expect darkness, tight spaces and maybe some bats. For more, call DSN 476-2563.

FAST classes

June 4-14 & June 19-29: Grafenwoehr Education Center,

Bldg. 538, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

Functional Academic Skills Training (FAST) provides Soldiers with instruction in reading, mathematics, and language skills and is an excellent tool to prepare Soldiers to raise their GT score. This class is a 60-hour course and is limited to 20 students. For more information, contact Rose Barracks (Vilseck) Education Center at DSN 476-2653/3292 or Grafenwoehr Education Center (Grafenwoehr) at DSN 475-6219/6786.

We're here for you

Military life consultants provide solution-oriented consultations to individuals, couples, families and groups. They are designed to provide anonymous, confidential support to Soldiers and their family members, especially those returning from deployments. To contact a military life consultant, call Rose Barracks 0152-0294-0761 or Grafenwoehr 0152-0293-4290 / 0152-0241-5226, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-8 p.m.

Leisure Travel Services

Upcoming overnight trips:

- June 14-19: Rome & Verona
- July 3-9: Scandinavian capitals (Copenhagen, Stockholm & Helsinki)
- July 12-16: Paris, France
- Aug. 8-13: United Kingdom (Cornwall)
- Aug. 3-Sept. 3: Budapest, Hungary.

To enroll, ODR at DSN 476-2563, open Mon, Tue, Thu and Fri, from 11 a.m.-6p.m. Customers must pay a \$100 deposit per person to sign up. (Passport required for all overnight trips).

Hohenfels

Asian Pacific Heritage

May 24: Join the Asian Pacific community in celebrating Asian Pacific Heritage Month. Enjoy food sampling, cultural dance performances and much more. Observance will be held from 4-7 p.m. at the Community Activities Center.

For more information, call Sgt. 1st Class Ulysses Reed, Equal Opportunity Advisor, at DSN 466-4102.

Garmisch outdoors

May 25-28: This trip is packed with adventure activities such as mountain biking, white water kayaking, flat water kayaking and canoeing, and hiking. We offer progressive white water kayak lessons and Class I-III river trips.

White water rafting trips to

vAustria can be arranged for an additional cost. The rustic Kean's Lodge offers shared bathroom facilities, and a fully equipped kitchen. Camping is also available on site. Time: 9 a.m.; Cost: \$129 adults, \$79 children, \$279 family. Stop by or give ODR a call at DSN 466-2060, CIV 09472-83-2060.

Coupon Sense Tour

June 12, from 10:30 a.m.-noon: Feeling the budget squeeze? Learn how to be a savvy shopper when you buy groceries. Adriana Gonzales shares her secrets on how she regularly saves \$100-\$200 clipping coupons. Learn which coupons to use in the commissary, matching coupons to store sales, meal planning, the top couponing websites and more. Child care hours available. Call ACS at 466-4860.

Summer Hire Program

Through June 17: Family members between the ages of 14 and 22, with valid dependent ID cards, can start applying for the upcoming summer hire program.

The Summer Hire program begins July 16 and will end Aug. 24. Visit the following website at https://cpolrhp.cpol.army.mil/eur/employment/index.htm.

Fall Bazaar

The HCSC, in conjunction with the Hohenfels FMWR presents "Oktoberfest - the Hohenfels Fall Bazaar 2012," Sept. 21-23, at the CAC and Post Gym.

This exciting event features unique items not only traditional to Germany (like clocks, dirndls/lederhosen and beer) but also from all over the world. Things like antiques, pottery, rugs, furniture, wine, cheese, chocolate, clothing, and so much more. It's like taking a world trip in one weekend!

For more information, visit the HCSC website at www.hohenfelsesc.com or the HCSC Facebook Page, type in Hohenfels Community & Spouses Club.

Jiu Jitsu classes

Adult Jiu Jitsu classes are now being offered Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 6-8 p.m. in Bldg. 47. Stop by if interested.

Schweinfurt

Environ. Awareness

May 22-24, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Join the Schweinfurt DPW Environmental Division and the Schweinfurt Elementary/Middle School at the Recycling Center

on Conn Barracks as they celebrate Environmental Awareness Days 2012. Due to the event the Conn East gate will be closed to all out-bound traffic.

For more information, contact Mr. Ruckert with the Environmental Division at DSN 354-6795, CIV 09721-96-6795.

Geiselwind Park

May 26, from 8 a.m.-6 p.m.: Bring your family to one of Bavaria's leading amusement parks. Your family can enjoy numerous rides, play grounds, live shows, electronic theaters, animal shows, exhibitions and relaxing areas.

The cost is \$15 per person, entrance fee not included.

For more information, contact the Outdoor Recreation Center at DSN 353-8080, CIV 09721-96-8080.

Right-Arm Night

June 1, from 5-7 p.m. at the Conn Club Patio on Conn Barracks: The 7th Theater Tactical Signal Brigade invites all USAG Schweinfurt community members to this great Army tradition.

No need to RSVP. Just show up with your "right arm."

For more information, contact the 7th TTSB headquarter office at DSN 354-3319 CIV 09721-96-3319.

Texas Hold 'Em

June 2, from 11 a.m.-midnight: Try your luck at the Texas Hold'em Tournament at the Warrior Zone on Ledward Barracks. The event is open to all ID card holders 18 and older.

Preregister at the Warrior Zone by June 1. The entry fee is \$30. Come win one of the great prizes that are available (no cash).

For more information, contact the Warrior Zone at DSN 354-6082 CIV 09721-96-6082.

Europa Park

June 9, from 6 a.m.-midnight: Enjoy Europa-Park, the largest theme park in Germany and the third most popular theme park resort in Europe.

The entrance fee to the park is 32 euro, plus transportation fee TBA. The deadline to sign-up is June 2 and a minimum participation of 30 people is required.

After June 2, the trip is offered to all adult community members. Sign-up at the Warrior Zone on Ledward Barracks, Bldg. 224 or by calling DSN 354-6082, CIV 09721-96-6082.

You may also sign-up at the Finney Recreation Center on Conn Barracks Bldg. 64, DSN 353-8476, CIV 09721-968476.

Copenhagen

Searching for Vikings, mermaids and Danish beer in the capital city

Story and photos by
Karl Weisel

USAG Weisbaden Public Affairs

COPENHAGEN, Denmark — A trip to Copenhagen demands sturdy shoe leather. After only a few days, visitors will quickly discover they've logged many miles while crisscrossing the Danish capital in search of the sights, sounds and landmarks that make it one of Europe's most popular tourist attractions.

But while hoofing it around town, make sure to stay out of the way of the thousands of bikes jockeying for space alongside the cars and pedestrians — many with children or pets in tow on their specially built bicycle rickshaws. Like many cities in Europe, bikes can also be cheaply rented as a means to further explore Copenhagen.

A quick stop at the Tourist Information Center, located across the street from the main train station, is recommended for any first-time visitor. With computer assistance, shelves full of brochures and personal recommendations by the staff on ways to get to know Copenhagen, the Tourist Office offers a wealth of valuable tips and special money-saving multiday ticket selections. They can also provide information available on places to stay, concerts and recreational opportunities.

As a country where one is never more than 52 kilometers away from the coast in any location, Copenhagen reflects that lengthy relationship with the surrounding seas. Whether arriving by train or car, one must travel by ferry or bridge to gain access to Zealand, the island on which the capital resides — one of many including Lolland, Bornholm, Falster and Funen, among others, that make up Denmark.

For a quick first impression, consider hopping on one of the sightseeing boats or double-decker, hop-on-hop-off buses that leave from various points around town. The view from the just-above-water-level tour boats offers a unique look at the many government buildings, fortresses and the ever-popular "Little Mermaid" statue, inspired by Danish native son Hans Christian Andersen's well-known fairy tale. Besides helping orient visitors in the Danish capital, the boat tours also feature a quick history lesson and close-up views of the former Navy quarters that have been converted into coveted waterfront apartments offering kayak access to the canals and other unusual attractions such as an underwater sculpture display.

A good place to start a canal boat tour is at the Nyhavn (new harbor), a canal dug out by Swedish prisoners of war in the 17th century lined with colorful restaurants and bars, tethered boats of all shapes and sizes, tattoo parlors and more. After purchasing your tickets and waiting for the next boat tour to start, sit canal-side in one of the outdoor eateries or enjoy one of the hot dogs Copenhagen is famous for from a nearby vendor.

After disembarking once again at Nyhaven consider strolling up the Bredgade into the Frederiksstad



district for a trip back in time. Stroll into the Frederikskirken — a grand basilica also known as the Marble Church — before heading onto the star-shaped Kastellet grounds. This 17th century fortress, still used by the Danish military, offers yet another place to relax amongst water and greenery while providing unique views back over the city from the grassy embankments surrounding the fortress.

Before deciding how to spend your hard-earned Danish Krone (although in the European Union, Denmark is not a member of the Euro Zone and hence does not use the euro) consider taking in some of the many available free attractions. Among highlights are the Nationalmuseet (National Museum of Denmark), the Frihedsmuseet (Museum of Danish Resistance 1940-1945) and the Staatens Museum (National Gallery of Denmark). All three offer insights into the history and development of the country and its cultural heritage.

One gets a quick snapshot of Denmark from prehistoric times to the present at the Nationalmuseet. Besides special children's exhibits, displays about the voyages of the Vikings and a look inside renaissance interiors, the museum also features "Stories of Denmark," detailed accounts from everyday Danish citizens from the 17th to the 21st centuries.

Meanwhile at the Frihedsmuseet, visitors are taken back to the years when Nazi Germany moved into Denmark under the pretense of "protecting the country from outside interests." Audio and video accounts, paintings and other artifacts trace the underground resistance movement that continued through World War II unabated despite the constant threat of imprisonment, torture and death for those who attempted to bring an end to German occupation of Denmark.

The Staatens Museum offers another kind of history lesson — the history of art in Denmark — from 14th century European paintings and sculpture to modern video installations. With something for every taste, visitors are invited to take their time wandering through the expansive structure taking time to see how Scandinavian artists were influenced and helped shape the art world through the ages. The museum's cafeteria also offers a taste of Denmark; this visitor enjoyed a salmon salad (like a tuna salad, but with capers) on a bed of fresh spinach and other greens.

Clockwise from top:
A glass-topped excursion boat makes its way through the canals of Copenhagen. Copenhagen's Tivoli Gardens offer a wide range of entertainment during the warmer months. Children pose for a snapshot with the Little Mermaid — a statue inspired by native son and fairy tale writer Hans Christian Andersen. A windmill and cannon sit on the raised embankments surrounding the Kastellet (fortress) grounds.



Other free admission museums in the city include the David Collection (Islamic art, 19-century interiors and more) and the Dieselhouse (a look at the ship engine industry).

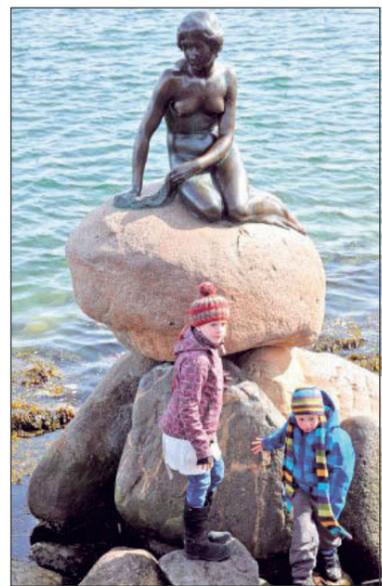
Of course, a little time out for an afternoon tour of the Carlsberg Visitors Center — or for those with younger visitors in tow — to the Copenhagen Zoo may also help round out a visit. A visit to the Carlsberg Brewery provides a look at how beer was first invented by early ancestors, how it developed over the years and the many varieties created for ever-changing tastes.

Carlsberg, the world's fourth-largest brewery group which includes breweries in 35 countries and more than 500 brands, is headquartered in a green section of the city adjacent to parks and not far from the city's zoo. Visitors are welcome to explore the brewery museum on their own before sampling one of the Tuborg or Carlsberg brews available on site. Be sure to also check out Carlsberg's collections of unopened

beers from around the globe — more than 21,330 bottles as of February 2012, the huge draft horses in the brewery's stables and the large stone elephants (the beer's trademark) at the entrance of the facility.

Like most European capitals, there are an untold number of other sights worth visiting during a stay in the Danish capital. But many of these can be equally appreciated from the surrounding parks and waterfront benches offering time off one's feet while munching on Danish pastries and a host of tasty baked goods. Stops in the park at Rosenborg Castle, in the courtyard at Christiansborg Palace or along the canal in Christianshavn are guaranteed to provide time for people watching and memorable digital snapshots.

A climb up the Rundetaarn (round tower) is also highly recommended. This former university observatory, dating back to 1642, is ascended by a circular, brick-paved walkway built to provide access to



horse-drawn carriages. From the top observation platform one can view most of the city's famed landmarks. The tower also features exhibition and concert space.

During the warmer months, visitors may also want to plan a visit to Tivoli Gardens, a 19th century park and amusement center in the city's center, or to the Amager Strand, a five-kilometer sandy beach just north of the city.

In the evenings look for a host of clubs and venues offering a wide variety of music, dance and theatrical presentations. Visitors can also head to the local cinemas for films in their original languages.

For information about planning a trip to Copenhagen browse to www.cph-tourist.dk, stop by your local library for guidebooks or www.bahn.de to arrange train travel.

Clark assumes command of ERMCM

Story and photo by
Edward Drohan

Europe Regional Medical Command

HEIDELBERG, Germany — With the ceremonial passing of the colors, Col. Jeffrey Clark assumed command of the Europe Regional Medical Command from Brig. Gen. Nadja West at Patton Barracks, here, May 8.

Army Surgeon General Lt. Gen. Patricia Horoho presided over the ceremony. Clark was previously the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center commander, while West has been selected to become the assistant surgeon general for Force Sustainment in the Falls Church, Va., office of the Army Surgeon General. The ERMCM commander is also the U.S. Army Europe command surgeon.

Horoho praised both the outgoing and incoming commanders during her comments.

“With me today at this change of command are two of the most competent, committed and courageous Soldiers and leaders in Army Medicine — Brig. Gen. Nadja West and Col. Jeffrey B. Clark,” Horoho said. “Changes of command provide the perfect opportunity to reflect on leadership. It is possible that no two people define leadership in the same terms but most of us conclude that we know it when we see it. It is visibly present today.”

West, who assumed command of ERMCM in May 2010, said unit’s success is the result of dedicated



Col. Jeffrey Clark accepts the Europe Regional Medical Command colors from Lt. Gen. Patricia Horoho, Army surgeon general, as outgoing ERMCM Commander Brig. Gen. Nadja West looks on during the change of command ceremony at Patton Barracks, May 8.

people throughout Europe.

“There are literally thousands of people who deserve my heartfelt thanks for making this command a success, over 6,700 of them in ERMCM alone,” West said. “Unfortunately, time will not permit me to call the rest of you by name, but you know who you are and know that you have my utmost appreciation for all that you did and continue to do every day to make this the best

region in the entire (Army Medical Command).”

She also said that Clark, who has been nominated for promotion to brigadier general, is the right person at the right time to command ERMCM.

“Your firsthand knowledge of the region will be vital to ensuring the KMC project stays on course and that all of the transformation-associated changes in the region are

flawlessly executed,” West said of Clark.

The KMC project is a proposed replacement hospital in the Kaiserslautern area that will combine both the current Landstuhl Regional Medical Center and Ramstein Air Base Clinic.

Clark thanked Horoho for the opportunity to command ERMCM and pledged to “take full advantage of the inherent opportunities during this time of transformation, for there is always great opportunity during times of great change.”

“We will efficiently and cost effectively improve the experience of care as we move from a health care system to a system of health focused on the well-being of those we are privileged to serve,” Clark said to the crowd of more than 200 people at the ceremony. “And we will remain trained and ready, maintain the stance to address any operational contingency. Our proximity to the Middle East and Africa, and our strong alliance with our NATO and other coalition partners mandate that we do so.”

The Europe Regional Medical Command serves U.S. Army Europe, U.S. European Command, U.S. Africa Command, and U.S. Central Command Warriors serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The command operates 17 military treatment facilities throughout Germany, Italy and Belgium, including Landstuhl Regional Medical Center.

Springtime comes with health risks

By Europe Regional Medical
Command
News Release

HEIDELBERG, Germany — Spring is here and people are heading outdoors to enjoy the brisk weather. But such harmless activities as taking a walk through the woods or cleaning out the attic could put you at risk for some pretty serious medical issues if you’re not cautious.

A walk in the woods exposes hikers to ticks which can carry both Lyme disease and tick-borne encephalitis, while dust stirred up from that spring cleaning job can contain dried rodent droppings that can cause hantavirus in humans. All three diseases are common to Germany and, in some areas like Baden-Wuerttemberg and Bavaria, are prevalent, but all can be prevented with some simple precautions.

Lyme disease is caused by bacteria, while tick-borne encephalitis is caused by a virus, both of which live in ticks and can be transmitted when the tick bites a host.

The earliest symptom of Lyme disease is a rash that looks like a bullseye at the site of the tick bite, and can progress to flu-like symptoms including muscle soreness, headache, fever and malaise. Early treatment with antibiotics can usually cure the disease, but left untreated it can cause persistent chronic problems and physical disability.

Tick-borne encephalitis can affect the central nervous system and causes symptoms similar to Lyme disease — headache, fatigue and muscle pain. In the event the virus does affect the central nervous system, paralysis can occur and hospitalization might be required.

In the case of tick-borne diseases, the best offense is a good defense. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend minimizing areas of exposed skin by wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants, boots and hats. Tucking in shirts, tucking pants into socks, and wearing closed shoes instead of sandals may reduce risk. Repellents or insecticides, such as those that contain DEET, can be applied to clothing and gear for added protection.

You should also check yourself, your family and your pets for ticks after a trek through the woods. If you have been bitten, you should remove the tick carefully using a pair of tweezers as soon as you discover it. Remove it as close to the skin as possible and avoid squeezing the tick or removing the head while removing the tick.

An effective vaccine for tick-borne encephalitis is available, and is a series of three shots given over a period of approximately 9-12 months. The makers of the vaccine have not sought U.S. licensure, so it is not available at military treatment facilities. However, Tricare beneficiaries with at least nine months remaining in Germany may obtain the vaccine from a host nation facility with a prescription from their primary care manager. Beneficiaries in Bavaria with outdoor occupations or hobbies are particularly encouraged to talk to their primary care manager about the vaccine.

Hantavirus is carried by rodents — the Red Bank Vole in Germany — and is usually spread through contact with their urine and excrement. In most cases, people are infected when they stir up dust in areas that are frequented by the rodents and breathe in the dried particles of those droppings.

Patients infected with the strain of hantavirus common to Germany may suffer from the abrupt onset of fever and flu-like symptoms, followed by abdominal pain and, in some severe cases, kidney failure. In 2010, more than 1,500 cases of hantavirus infections were reported across Germany, with the majority reported in Baden-Wuerttemberg and Bavaria.

Preventing hantavirus begins with keeping rodents away from your home, garage or campsite. Cleaning up spilled food to avoid attracting rodents and sealing holes that could allow them access to your house or garage are a good start. When you start your spring cleaning in areas that are dusty (e.g. attics, garages and basements), wet down or wet mop the area first to avoid disturbing any dust that contain dried rodent droppings and wear a filter mask to avoid breathing in any particles while cleaning.

Springtime in Europe offers opportunities to get out and see the countryside. By taking a few simple precautions, you can ensure your outdoor experiences are safe ones.

Having a ball at work not recommended

By John Pentikis

U.S. Army Public Health Command

There has been much research in the past few years devoted to trying to make people healthier at work. One of the more popular ideas is the use of an exercise ball to replace a traditional office chair. However, there seems to be a great deal of debate comparing the pros and cons of using an exercise ball as an office chair and what effect the ball will have on the back.

Exercise balls were not originally intended as a piece of exercise equipment, but rather as a therapy tool to improve balance and strength. The instability of the exercise ball forces the use of the core muscles of the midsection. As an exercise tool, this is a positive feature because it is important to strengthen the muscles of the lower back and abdomen. However, those same features are not necessarily desirable for a chair.

There has been little research done on the effects of using an ex-



ercise ball as a full-time seat. One study suggested that extended sitting on an unstable seat surface does not really affect the overall spine stability. Sitting on a ball appears to spread out the contact area, which could explain the reported discomfort. Another study’s results found an increase in muscle use in

certain back muscles as well as an increase in discomfort while sitting on the stability ball.

From an ergonomics point of view, stability balls are not an effective solution for reducing low back pain in the workplace for these reasons:

- Active sitting increases the rate of fatigue due to constantly being off balance. In addition to fatigue, continuously maintaining your balance throughout the day may be an issue for some individuals and people with previous back injuries.

- Exercise balls do not have armrests or back supports, key features in supporting the body.

- A reclined sitting position is the most comfortable position for the back, and an exercise ball does not allow you to sit in this position.

There are also safety concerns if someone is not using the exercise ball properly.

Exercise balls do not have a stable balance and present a potential safety risk of falling off of them, or

the ball may pop, causing the user to fall. In addition, a general user may not realize that a fully inflated exercise ball is going to be much more difficult to sit on than a less inflated ball.

The only situation recommend for extended use of an exercise ball is as a form of exercise. In an office setting, an exercise ball should only be used for a few minutes at a time spread throughout the day for an exercise break, but not as a full-time desk chair.

Exercise balls are a great addition to a comprehensive exercise/health program. However, they are not a suitable addition to a comprehensive ergonomic computer workstation. The best way to reduce low back fatigue and discomfort from sitting is to limit prolonged exposure to sitting to one hour and to choose a chair that allows you to change your sitting posture frequently throughout the day.

Editor’s Note: John Pentikis is an ergonomist with the U.S. Army Public Health Command.

Eye care an integral part of mission readiness

Soldiers should focus on protecting their most valuable asset

By Robert N. Kang, Ph.D.

U.S. Army Public Health Command

Today’s Soldiers understand the importance of mission readiness. We prepare our equipment and we train to ensure we are ready to go. But, how about your eyes — are they ready to go? You know you need protection from dust, wind, UV and bright sunlight. How about a 0.15-caliber steel fragment coming at you at 660 feet per second? How about your glasses prescription? Are you seeing 20/20 or just think that you are?

Here are the facts: eye injuries are a large part of combat injuries and can lead to blindness. Your sight is important and the Army’s Military Combat Eye Protection program wants to protect your eyes.

The Army has teamed with commercial manufacturers to develop,

test and field combat eyewear. The spectacles and goggles are tested to meet not only the industry standard, but also the even more stringent military standards.

For example, the military ballistic fragmentation standards are five to six times stronger than industry standards for impact protection. Program Executive Office Soldier then places all approved eyewear on the Authorized Protective Eyewear List. Units and Soldiers can choose spectacles and goggles to suit their mission needs.

This provides Soldiers the opportunity to check proper fit and to ensure the product can accommodate their prescription inserts. APEL provides assurance that the items have been certified to meet military and industry standards and have been approved by users down-range.

In a 2009 survey of MCEP users, 33 percent indicated personal experiences where they felt the combat eye protection saved their eyes from injury. Another report showed MCEP users had nearly 10 percent

less eye injuries in combat operations. The same report also showed significant decrease in the severity of eye injuries in MCEP users. The USAPHC monitors battlefield data on eye injuries and the results clearly show that ballistic eye protection works.

The current APEL has six goggles and nine spectacles. They all come with both clear and neutral gray tinted lenses that are interchangeable and replaceable. The products, and all replacement parts, have national stock numbers and can be obtained through normal logistic channels. The program also has products that protect from lasers.

For Soldiers who need vision correction, four of the goggles and seven of the spectacles are compatible with prescription inserts (similar to the gas mask inserts). Unfortunately, not all the prescription inserts are interchangeable between brands. The program office is working to create a universal prescription inserts. Until then, it is important to know what brand of military com-

bat eye protection you are issued, so that your local optometry clinic can order the correct prescription inserts.

Even though different prescription inserts may look alike or be of similar size and shape, any “work around” is not recommended. The APEL items are tested as a “unit” with matching inserts to ensure proper protection. Testing has shown that unapproved inserts may shatter upon impact. The shattered pieces can get into the eyes and can possibly cause injury. Starting August 2011, to make identification of authorized products easier, an “APEL” logo will appear on the left temples of all APEL goggles and spectacles.

Keep it simple: look around, ask around, and make Military Combat Eye Protection a part of your readiness. Use it in training and preserve your sight to fight!

To learn more about the MCEP program, the APEL, and to see the latest authorized protective eyewear list, go to <https://peosoldier.army.mil/equipment/eyewear>.

Ranch opens, free to all veterans

By Sgt. Mark Cloutier
Army News Service

OLYMPIA, Wash. — Disabled combat veteran Bill Campbell and his wife, Domenica, opened their 14-acre farm recently, free to all veterans and their families.

Nestled into the thick, green Capitol Forest, just off State Road 8 about 30 miles south of Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., is the peaceful respite known to many as Wounded Warrior Ranch.

Bill said the ranch is a place where veterans and their families can simply drop in for a time of peace and solitude and drop out of life's rat race at the same time — a place where regimentation and schedules are checked at the door.

"Our mission is to honor and serve our nation's veterans and their families with gratitude and appreciation through personal experience," Domenica said. "We want people to rest and to relax and to feel as though they are at home when they're here."

There is plenty to do - or not to do, at the Wounded Warrior Ranch, or WWR. Veterans and their families can choose from things like hiking, boating, horseback riding, and horseshoes, or they can relax in the newly constructed dayroom, watch television, or read a book. Some choose to work in the garden or have a picnic on the shore of the Oxbow pond.

For those who choose to take advantage of the miles of riding trails, Domenica has many years of equestrian experience from which to draw on and share knowledge. There are also several arenas and paddocks in which guests may ride one of the Campbells' four horses and ponies.

"We want to remain open to whatever our guests come up with," Domenica said. "The whole point is for them to find peace and to let go of stress."

Bill, himself a former Army National Guard Soldier and disabled vet, suffers from post-traumatic stress, traumatic brain injury and seizures, all sustained from his 2004 deployment to Iraq with the 81st Bri-



Courtesy photo

Bill Campbell, owner of Wounded Warrior Ranch in Olympia, Wash., and former Army National Guard Soldier, rides one of the ranch's horses. Wounded Warrior Ranch is free to all veterans and their families.

gade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division. Having 'been there and done that,' Bill said it's easier for him to understand what other vets have gone through, and are still going through; he understands the process of mental and emotional healing from the scars of war.

As the homemaker/wife of a wounded warrior and mother of two (to include a son who serves as a British Royal Marine Commando), Domenica has earned her stripes by dealing with the trials and tribulations of military family life. She has a whole other point of reference to share when times are appropriate.

The WWR is a non-profit establishment. The Campbells pay out of pocket toward its overall operation, but it is important to Bill and Domenica to note that the continued growth and commitment that the WWR has

to all veterans would be greatly hampered without the volunteer funds, which come from those personally motivated to give.

Volunteer time and work are both welcomed and appreciated at the ranch. There is a 'to do' list as well as a 'wish list' to be found at the website, www.wounded-warriorranch.org, for all who are interested.

WWR is a place where no one will feel burdened by any set expectations. "We are here to provide a place to be among peers," Domenica said. "It's a place where you are welcome, understood and honored."

"Sometimes you just need a reason to get out of the house," Bill said. "And what makes Wounded Warrior Ranch different from other veteran-based programs is that you don't have to be here at a certain time, or complete a set of tasks and you're not limited by a predetermined agenda."

Military, families get free pass to all US National Parks

By Lisa Daniel
American Forces Press Service



WASHINGTON — Service members and their families will be able to enter all of America's national parks free of charge for a year under an initiative announced today.

The pass — the America the Beautiful National Parks and Federal Recreation Lands Annual Pass, which normally costs \$80 — will become available to service members and their dependents on Armed Forces Day, May 19.

Interior Secretary Ken Salazar made the announcement this morning, along with National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis, at a ceremony at Colonial National Historical Park in Yorktown, Va., the site of the last major battle of the Revolutionary War. The area surrounding the park hosts installations from all the military services, including the world's largest naval base.

"I think when one goes into Virginia and you see all the sites, the Yorktown battlefield and the whole history of the country, it's important that those who have fought in the tradition of making sure the nation's democracy and freedom are protected also have access to these wonderful sites there," Salazar said yesterday in a conference call with reporters.

The passes allow the holder and passengers in a single private vehicle access to some 2,000 sites that charge per vehicle. At sites where entrance fees are charged per person, it covers the pass owner and three adults age 16 and older.

The National Park Service estimates that giving away the passes to service members and their families will result in a revenue loss between \$2 million and \$6 million, but Jarvis said that won't cause a significant impact on the agency, which collects about \$150 million in fees each year.

Military personnel can get the passes at any national park or wildlife refuge that charges an entrance fee by showing their military ID. Family members also will be able to obtain their own pass, even if the service member is deployed or if they are traveling separately. The pass will be accepted at National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Army Corps sites that charge entrance or standard amenity fees.

The free pass will be

made available for activated members of the National Guard and reserves, but not for military veterans or retirees, whom Jarvis said have other opportunities for free or reduced admission, such as the National Park Service's "Access Pass" or a seniors pass for those 62 and older.

Jarvis, a 40-year Park Service employee, said that while the free passes are a first, they are representative of the parks' history with the military, which dates back to the Buffalo Soldiers' battles with Native Americans in the mid-1800s and the recruitment of former military members to serve as park rangers under the first NPS director, Stephen T. Mather. The Park Service maintains many military historical sites from Gettysburg to Pearl Harbor, and in World War II even closed some parks, such as Mount Rainier in Washington state, to all but active military members, he said.

Right after World War II, the Park Service invested heavily in infrastructure to prepare the parks for returning service members, Jarvis said. Today's generation of warriors also deserves a deep connection to the parks, he said.

"From my perspective, it is incredibly important to return this group of returning military members to their national parks," Jarvis said. "Nothing is more core to the American experience than the national parks. These are places for quiet and contemplation and to reconnect to the American experience. And we don't want there to be any barriers to that."

The free pass initiative is part of the "Joining Forces" campaign first lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden, launched last year to rally Americans around supporting service members and their families.

"Our nation owes a debt of gratitude to our servicemen and women who make great sacrifices to protect our country and preserve our freedom," Dr. Biden said in a White House statement. "In recognition of their service, we are so pleased to be putting out a welcome mat for our military families at America's most beautiful and storied sites."

Soldiers shave heads to raise money

Story and photo by
Wendy Brown
Army News Service

WIESBADEN, Germany — People will pay a lot of money to see their supervisors bald.

That has led A Company from the 24th Military Intelligence Battalion in Wiesbaden to raise thousands of dollars for this year's Army Emergency Relief campaign. It started when Capt. Justin Brown and 1st Sgt. Robert Gardner said they would shave their heads for cancer awareness and to raise money for the campaign, said Lt. Julio Torres, Army Emergency Relief, or AER, project officer for the 24th Military Intelligence Battalion of the 66th Military Intelligence Brigade. Lt. John Rollinson soon followed suit, and it was not long until 36 members of the company were bald, said Torres, who also shaved his head.

By late April the company had raised \$8,270, Torres said, and the battalion as a whole had raised more than \$15,000. There are about 330 people in the battalion. With a total of \$5,267.33, the battalion's C Company also raised a signifi-



Members of A Company, 24th Military Intelligence Battalion, pose for a photo on Wiesbaden Army Airfield, Germany, after shaving their heads to raise money for Army Emergency Relief.

cant amount of money.

In all, the garrison has raised more than \$35,000 this year, and there are still a few days left until the campaign ends May 15, said Leary Henry, Wiesbaden's AER officer.

"I applaud A Company, 24th and their determination to be the best," Henry said. "This is a unit with leaders that understand the value of the AER program."

The AER Office provides

emergency financial assistance to Soldiers, both active and retired, Reservists and Guard (activated under Title 10 for 30 consecutive days or more) and to their widows, orphans and spouses with power of attorney, Henry said.

"AER is Soldiers helping Soldiers," Henry said.

AER also offers interest-free loans and payment amounts that accommodate loan recipients, Henry said, adding there is no

reason Soldiers should take out high-interest loans when AER is available.

Torres said he supports the program because he can see the results right here at his local garrison.

"It's good because it is right here," Torres said, "and you never know when you might need it."

Editor's Note: Wendy Brown writes for USAG Wiesbaden Public Affairs.

Odierno explains regional alignments to begin next year

By Rob McIlvaine
Army News Service

WASHINGTON — The Army will begin implementing a regionally-aligned force concept next year to better support combatant commanders, the service's chief of staff announced May 16.

Gen. Raymond T. Odierno made the announcement at a Pentagon press conference as he outlined the Army's vision for the future to meet the te-

nets of the DOD Strategic Guidance signed by the president in January. He said the Army will be transitioning to a leaner, more agile, adaptive, innovative, versatile and ready component of the joint force.

The regional alignments are part of that vision and the concept will begin with a pilot program involving a brigade combat team from the 10th Mountain Division aligned with U.S. Army Africa Command, Odierno said. This will be followed by

more units aligned to other theaters, he said.

"The regionally aligned forces concept will be especially important in the Asia-Pacific region as we move forward, home to seven of the 10 largest Armies," Odierno said, adding that enduring commitments in some theaters may warrant rotational units in the future.

About 92,000 Soldiers are currently deployed in support of operations, he said, and 68,000 of those are

in Afghanistan.

"First, our Army Force Generation, or ARFORGEN, process has served us well in meeting our demands over the last several years in Iraq and Afghanistan. But with operations in Iraq complete and ongoing transition in Afghanistan, we will have the opportunity to adapt this process to be more wide-ranging, especially as we re-balance toward the Asia-Pacific region," Odierno said.

The intent of this new process,

he said, will be to focus units during their training cycle on specific mission profiles and unique environmental characteristics that will make them available to specified combatant commanders for employment.

"In today's increasingly uncertain and complex strategic environment, we must ensure that we sustain a diverse mix of rapidly deployable

Students find their creative edge

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was a standout among the submissions.

Though Krueger, Nunley and Koons feel modest about their artistic bents, they speak with zeal about their other hobbies and pastimes.

Precocious and deep-thinking, Krueger possesses an intimidating wealth of interests. For fun, she reads encyclopedias, rides horses, devours fantasy books (her dragon sculpture was inspired by the "Eragon" series,) runs, collects model horses and reads her dad's medical books.

Her dream is to be the first female jockey to win the Kentucky Derby on a Philly, but recognizes that her continually climbing height may sour that ambition. She is instead setting her sights on being horse veterinarian.

She has traveled to Egypt, keeps abreast of current events, and cites the British Museum as a favorite



Koons



Krueger



Nunley

destination.

Krueger acknowledges her broad spectrum of jumbled pursuits, but emphasizes that she finds them easy to compartmentalize. She compares this disorderly classification to a bedroom.

"I organize my room, but my drawers are still messy." After a beat, she adds, "but my life is more complicated than that."

Nunley has spent the past year painting, trying to squeeze it in between her other activities like softball. But, her artistic talents find

other ways to emerge. Nunley is nearly done knitting a scarf, a project that has taken her the greater part of a month to complete.

She also plays the flute in advanced band at Netzaberg Middle School. Though Nunley is only in seventh grade, she was vaulted into the eighth grade advanced band due to her good grades.

Her real joy in school, however, is math class. Nunley cites this subject as her favorite because, as she philosophically put it, "life sort of revolves around math."

Nunley's devotion to the subject is such that she aims to become an accountant as her career so she can continue to exploring math even into adulthood.

Koons' love of motorcycles set her apart from the other girls.

"That's what I want my first car to be," she explained.

Koons is smitten with motorcycles. The speed, appearance, aggressive sound and cool factor of bikes all contribute to her yearning.

Other, tamer interests inspire Koons, as well. She likes reading "books with big words" and playing Wii and Xbox. Like Nunley, Koons cites her favorite subject as math, a preference she attributes to her teacher.

"The teacher (Scott Keiser) pushes me to learn," she said. "If I have it wrong, the teacher pushes me to get it right."

Eventually, Koons wishes to join the military as a doctor in order to continue her family's tradition of military service.

Soldiers move to Grafenwoehr

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drawdown, and particularly when 172nd Separate Infantry Brigade inactivates, Grafenwoehr will still have the largest contingent of U.S. Soldiers and civilians in Europe."

During a May 3 town hall meeting Soldiers and their families got acquainted with Grafenwoehr and the programs and processes to help them settle into the community.

"We will conduct a tour at Graf for the Soldiers and their families and show them the installation and nearby communities so they are familiar with local facilities, such as the hospital and local housing," said McNair. "Not only are we able to train troops here at Grafenwoehr, but now we're able to station Soldiers and their families here."

Since the 172nd Infantry Brigade is reintegrating from a yearlong deployment and the 44th is inprocessing prior to expected drawdown activities McNair said the number of troops on post will spike until 172nd troops start departing.

"Schweinfurt is great, but the facilities at Grafenwoehr are more state-of-the art, said Maj. Jared Snawder, the 44th ESB training officer. "We had old German World War II barracks. The barracks in Graf are nice and new."

Snawder said the move the Grafenwoehr means easy access to ranges and schools.

"We won't have to constantly send Soldiers TDY," he said. "It's right down the street."

The 44th Expeditionary Signal Battalion is permanently stationed at Grafenwoehr. The move from Schweinfurt was announced in February of this year.

"I think what is important for the community to understand is that the 44th Signal Battalion is a unit that will probably be around for a long time, as will this installation," said McNair. "For example, local communities have the opportunity to partner with the unit. They should engage this organization early on and start building that relationship."

The U.S. Army has made a significant investment in new facilities, he said. "We are pretty sure Grafenwoehr will be here for a long time to come."

Culinary arts team takes home gold

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took basically the same ingredients and we came up with so many different things. I didn't think so many things could be done with those three ingredients."

I loved how teams came up with creative ways around the restrictions of the rules, such as figuring out how to make a soufflé without an oven."

The judges were especially impressed with the communication and teamwork from the

Schweinfurt team. They were even more impressed when they learned that one of the SHS cooks, Yafreisy Ortiz, spoke only Spanish.

"When we first started together it was difficult for me to even ask for something as simple as a plate. It took a lot of gestures and talking to each other. Now when I need a plate it appears in front of me. We are four individual people, but when we cook together we are one," Ortiz said.

Breaking the language barrier only strengthened the teamwork.

"At first I was scared that the language thing was going to hold us back, but we realized that we had to work even harder together to make it happen and it pushed us to do even better than we would have. It actually made us stronger as a team," Mayo said.

The Schweinfurt High School cooks overcame their underdog status and communication barriers to place first in two coveted categories. These four contestants worked hard for months to prepare for their one chance to be called All-Europe Culinary Arts

champions.

"My team's common languages are professionalism, teamwork and respect. They demonstrate daily what it means to work in a modern kitchen and I could not be more proud of them," said Hana McWilliams, culinary arts instructor and head chef.

Editor's Note: Bolinger is a junior at Schweinfurt High School and a student in the Career Practicum class. She is also a contributing writer for the USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs Office.

Clinic appointment availability is in flux

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within 30 days after their deployment so a comprehensive a health screening and examine for physical and behavioral health concerns associated with deployment can be addressed, Carder said.

Beneficiaries who use the Grafenwoehr Health Clinic can expect to be referred to a host nation provider if no appointment is available during the month of June.

"We thank the community for their patience as we take care of our returning Soldiers and we thank them for their understanding to the short-term interruption of our normal health care operations," Carder said.

To minimize the impacts to the community, the clinic and its headquarters are coordinating for more provider support from both within Europe and the U.S., he said.

On days Soldiers redeploy, they become the priority effort, and these additional providers should help reduce a majority of the impacts to access to care.

"At any time you feel your health

Our team nurses can assist in coordinating care for referrals to host nation facilities.

Lt. Col. Mark Carder
Grafenwoehr Health
Clinic commander

is in jeopardy, do not hesitate to go to the closest emergency room," Carder said. "If your condition is not an emergency, there are a few options for care."

Carder said those options include:

Calling the nurse advice line at 00800-4759-2330

Team nurses can assist in coordinating care for referrals

Visiting the clinic's pharmacy to get over the counter medications based on symptoms

Using Tricare Online to view and book an appointment.

Structure of Army to change in 2013

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capabilities, adapt processes to reflect a broader range of requirements, and (provide) options to our national security decision makers," Odierno said.

As the Army reduces two forward-stationed brigade combat teams in Europe over the next two years, he said it will leverage pre-positioned equipment and multi-lateral training exercises to promote regional security and sustain relationships with NATO and other European allies.

"Finally, as the Army's end strength reduces over the next five years, it is important to note that this leaner Army will be vastly more capable than our pre-9/11 Army," Odierno said.

Also, he said, with 10 years of hard-earned combat experience, the Army will continue to increase Special Operations force capacity.

"We have significantly increased our ability to conduct intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. We've increased our aviation assets to support worldwide missions and responsiveness around the world. We continue to increase our cyber capability as we move forward, and we continue to look at other capabilities in order to move forward.

In his introduction to the new



Photo by C. Todd Lopez

Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Raymond T. Odierno briefs reporters, May 16, at the Pentagon, about the Army's vision for meeting tenets of recently released DoD strategic guidance.

strategic guidance, President Barack Obama wrote the following:

"Our nation is at a moment of transition we have responsibly ended the war in Iraq, put al Qaeda on the path to defeat allowing us to begin the transition to Afghan responsibility.

However, the Budget Control Act of 2011 mandates reductions in federal spending, including defense spending, he continued.

"I therefore directed this review

to identify our strategic interest and guide our defense priorities and spending over the coming decade," he said.

As today's wars end, Obama continued, America will focus on a broader range of challenges and opportunities, including the security and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific, the Middle East and North Africa, join allies and partners to build their capacity.

Hotels for crawling critters make up for areas mankind destroyed

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raining, some dry places upstairs, some wooden logs with some holes, clay pots and so on," said Buettner.

"Some of the materials, including pallets, wood and potting soil, have been donated; other materials, including straw, clay pots and small plants, the girls brought themselves, as well as hard work," Schnell said.

Buettner said that many animals and insects lose their natural habitat through man's intensive use of natural resources. He added that it doesn't



just include roads, homes and cities, but also modern agriculture which does not tolerate wild flowers.

"For example, this meadow we are standing on only has two flower species, and that's not suitable for a lot of insects," said Buettner. "Build-

ing insect hotels gives them a chance to find some substitute habitats."

Solitary bees, solitary wasps, ants and some reptiles are just a few of the visitors who might find lodging at the hotel.

"Mice will certainly use it, and possibly the European hedgehog," Buettner said. "It can give him a chance to hibernate or find a dry and safe place where he can stay at night."

Besides the benefit to the animals and insects, the hotels will allow community members a chance to watch nature in action.

"It's a chance for the children to watch some insects they may never see," said Buettner. "They can see several species all in one spot, watch them building their breeding chambers, hatching, carrying the pollen and so on."

Schnell said the hotels also represent the Hohenfels community's commitment to keeping their installation green and livable, not only for the people but for the smaller creatures, as well.

"The girls are learning we must be good stewards of Mother Earth," she

said.

The scouts didn't wait for the hotels to be finished to begin watching insects, though. Even as they prepared the hotel, 11-year-old Ashlyn Haskins said she spotted worms, beetles, ants, lady bugs, crickets and grasshoppers.

Isabel Enriquez said she was thrilled to be able to give something back to the local wildlife.

"What about those insects? We take away their homes just for people's homes," she said. "Well, now it's our turn to give them a home!"