

Redstone Rocket

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November 27, 2002

Post profile



Career logistician makes top 10 list
Page 9

Retired military



Labor camp survivor gets public recognition
Page 14

Win or lose



HHC 59th defense won't rest on laurels
Page 16

Army gives thanks for military families

November is national military family month

By **SANDY RIEBELING**
Staff writer
sandy@htimes.com

They don't carry weapons or march into battle but the Army would be lost without them. They keep the soldier strong, motivated and ready to serve. They are military families.

"Military families are special," Virginia Dempsey, manager of the family advocacy program at Army Community Service, said. "They are not like civilian families because they have a soldier and that soldier has a mission. Family life is built around taking care of that mission. We want to recognize the support they give the soldier and thank families for what they do to contribute to the success of the soldier."

November is celebrated as Military Family Month, a time set aside to better understand and more fully appreciate the sacrifices made by the husbands, wives, sons, daughters and even parents of soldiers in the armed forces.

"Military families have to be strong and resilient," Dempsey said. "Change is the story of their lives. The Army is making all these decisions for them — where they will live, when and where they will serve and for how long and if they will be deployed. It's a tough life. The soldier wears the uni-

form but the whole family makes the sacrifices."

Dempsey, along with a crew of ACS volunteers, has created appreciation packets for military families that provide information on activities and attractions that families can experience together, everything from an afternoon of bowling at Redstone Lanes to visiting local museums or touring the Galaxy of Lights at the botanical garden during the Christmas holiday.

"We tried to include a lot of activities on post," Colleen Nicholson, ACS volunteer and military spouse said, placing her hand on an inch-thick stack of fliers advertising a multitude of Morale, Welfare and Recreation sponsored activities at Redstone.

Also included in the packet is a listing of free support services offered to military families. ACS has some type of class going almost all the time covering topics such as parenting, communication, problem solving, financial management, stress management, Army family team building, successful step-families, building computer skills, job hunting, resume writing and more.

Guidelines for entering the Armed Services YMCA art contest, deadline Jan. 27 and essay contest, deadline March 17, are included in the information. Savings bonds will be awarded in several age categories for both contests.

A list of celebration activities suggests

See Families on page 9



Photo by Sandy Riebeling

FAMILY EVENT— Three-year-old twins Olivia, left, and Isabel, with parents SSgt. James and Colleen Nicholson, are ready to hand out information packets about fun family activities and services offered to support military families.

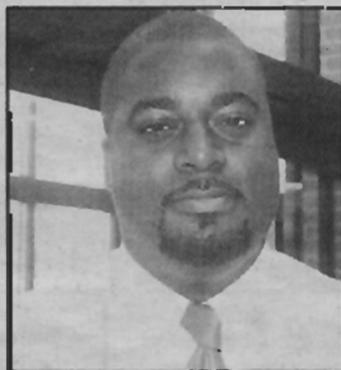
Here's what Redstone people think about Thanksgiving

What are you thankful for?

By **KELLEY LANE**
Staff writer
kelleyqa@bellsouth.net

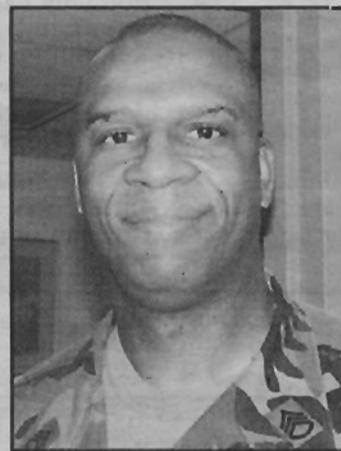


SSgt. Keith Thompson
"I'm thankful that I could be here at Redstone to improve my career and defend my country."



Reades Linton, contractor
Choice Behavioral

"I'm thankful for life in general, life and sanity. A lot of people are suffering from mental illness or neglected and they're going to miss out on a lot of the joy that comes with the holidays. I'm just thankful for the people who love and care about me."



SSgt. Melvin Johnson Jr.

"I'm thankful for my parents coming down to visit me. You only have one set of parents and you need to cherish those moments because you never know when your parents are going to be gone."



Barbara Anderson, nurse,
Fox Army Health Center

"I'm thankful for granddaughter, Hannah, and my healthy family. What else can a nurse be thankful for?"

See Thoughts on page 9

Letters to the editor

Thanksgiving greetings from Army leaders

Thanksgiving is a time for the Army family to pause and enjoy a day of rest, relaxation and fellowship. As families and friends gather, Thanksgiving also provides an opportunity to show our gratitude for the blessings we enjoy in a free and prosperous nation. Soldiers, Department of the Army civilians, veterans, retirees and all of their families can take pride in the fact that their service and sacrifices preserve the privilege of living and working in a free society characterized by the highest ideals of liberty.

Almost 140 years ago, Abraham Lincoln reminded Americans, "We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown." Those words were spoken in 1863 during the Civil War. Our nation emerged from that conflict stronger than ever before. And today, as the Army fights the war on terrorism as part of the joint team, those words still ring true as we enjoy the privileges and unparalleled freedoms that soldiers have helped secure for over 227 years.

And so on this special day, we offer our appreciation to you, the soldiers and civilians of the Army, who serve our nation with a level of devotion and selfless service unequalled in any other pro-

cession. You walk point for our nation 24 hours a day, uphold freedom's torch as you willingly step forward to defend the American people from all enemies and animate the values and principles that we hold dear — loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage.

Thanksgiving is also a time for families to join in celebration and reunions. Families have long provided strength and values to our soldiers, our Army and our nation. We know we do not soldier alone. For just as soldiers sacrifice and dedicate themselves to honorable service, their families also sacrifice and make invaluable contributions to the well-being of our Army and our nation. We give you our thanks, and a grateful nation thanks you as well.

We are proud of the Army family. And so to all of you, the dedicated men and women of the U.S. Army — uniformed and civilian — we offer special thanks for the difficult and dangerous work you are doing for the citizens of our great nation. We wish all of you and your loved ones a safe and happy Thanksgiving holiday.

Gen. Eric Shinseki
Army chief of staff;
Thomas White
secretary of the Army

Soldier sees flag's true colors

I am PFC Emilia M. Ortiz and the reason for this letter is because for the last week I've done flag detail and I've been greatly inspired. So I've taken some time to write exactly how I've felt toward the flag.

Thinking back to those days as a child in class holding my right hand over my heart and standing at attention not understanding the meaning behind the red, white and blue. It wasn't until the age of 30, when I raised my right hand and took the oath in front of the colors that have kept me free for all these years.

So while we, this country, stand at the moment where we might go to war, I've come to appreciate the colors that have taken the lives before my own.

So now I must wear my uniform proudly and learn to teach the children of the future what exactly does the colors of

the U.S. flag mean to us as a whole. It wasn't until I joined the Army that I've learned firsthand what it meant and took to be a soldier, although I'm just a baby learning to understand the military life.

Tears have fallen from my face out of anger and fear, for had I known long ago what I've learned today then my frame of mind would've taught me that my life doesn't belong to me alone. It belongs to the country and the soldiers that are fighting to keep us alive.

Hopefully, one day I'll look back at my life as a soldier and be thankful that I became the best by the guidance of those who were the best and left our American colors staying bright!

Peace all over the world!

PFC Emilia M. Ortiz
1st Platoon,
Charlie Company, 832nd

Overcoming pain is runners' gain

Running is not fun. People talk about running road races on Saturdays being "fun." These races could be as short as 5 kilometers and long as 100-plus miles. Pardon me but, I cannot see the fun in these activities. Also, there are so many running product catalogs and running magazines that portray runners running down the road with huge "say cheese" grins; as if to say "whoopie, look at me I'm a runner and it's so much fun!"

Running is not fun. The embodiment of fun to me is being 7 years old and waking up early on a chilly late December morning to find a brand new Schwinn Sting Ray bicycle under the tree and immediately heading out the door to ride my new wheels on the neighborhood sidewalks. Now that is fun.

Running is not fun. When I am on a long run with major hills such as the Cecil Ashburn Drive Hill Climb in south Huntsville, the hills are never ending and seem to taunt me as if to say "you don't have it in you, you are too tired, too sore and too out of shape to take me on." Still something inside grunts out in a very aggressive tone, "Oh yeah, let's get it on."

Running is not fun. There are a hundred other things I'd rather do on a Saturday morning besides running myself into the ground by doing one of many races throughout the year such as the June RC Cola Moon Pie 10 Mile Run in Bell Buckle, Tenn., or the October Pill Hill 10K in Huntsville. But still every year, year after year, I and hundreds of others do both of these races and dozens

See Running on page 3

Worker wants life saving device

Why are there not any defibrillators at AMCOM? I see this product at malls, hotels, motels, schools, restaurants, court houses, and places where the general public gathers. AMCOM should have one on every floor in every building on this Command as well as the Garrison.

Are we not a large body of people? Are we not worthy of this life saving device?

Shirley Carney
IMMC

Editor's note: The Garrison provided the following response. "Thanks for allowing us an opportunity to explain the Semi-Automatic External Defibrillator program to the Redstone community. As you stated these units are becoming more commonplace. On the surface it appears these units can be placed anywhere but

in reality these are considered prescriptive devices and a physician must approve their placement and the program in which they are operated. Section 403 of the Public Health Improvement Act, Public Law 106-505 governs the placement of SAEDs in public places and federal facilities. Guidelines for Public Access Defibrillation Program in Federal Facilities is outlined in the Federal Register 66 FR 28495, dated May 23, 2001. Each agency is responsible to write its program description. The program is then reviewed with Dr. Bosserman, the supervising physician for SAED programs at Redstone Arsenal. If all is in order, he writes a prescription for the purchase of the SAEDs.

"While these are relatively simple to operate, patient care and protecting the rescuer and patient from contaminating

See Defibrillators on page 3

Corrections

The article in last week's *Rocket* about winter honeysuckle had an error about the plant's height. The semi-evergreen, medium-sized shrub grows to 9 feet, rather than 9 inches.

Also, an article on Vietnam veteran Mike Davis inadvertently omitted his youngest son, Tyler, 14, a freshman at Athens High.

Redstone Rocket

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Combined Federal Campaign exceeds \$1.6 million goal

An extra week helped the Tennessee Valley Combined Federal Campaign.

CFC collected \$1,741,655 by Friday to surpass its \$1.6 million goal. AMCOM/Team Redstone workers contributed \$649,553 against a \$600,000 goal.

Campaign organizers expected some big turn-ins from other federal agencies this week and can accept money until year's end.

"The greatest thing about this campaign is it is a 'win-win' situation," CFC coordinator Gay Money said. "Many, many agencies benefit from our dollars and it is an employee's choice where they want their money to go."

The Tennessee Valley CFC Awards

Celebration to honor organizations is Dec. 3 at 9 a.m. at Bob Jones Auditorium. Everyone in the federal community is invited.

The award categories are:

- Early Bird Award — Goal met not later than the end of the third week of the campaign.

- Chairman's Award — Any agency that reaches its goal.

- Special Commendation — Any agency that exceeds its goal by 10 percent.

"Because of the many requests of the bidders in the Silent Auction, we are expecting a very special guest for a rare appearance," Money said.

Resource managers help Trinity Place

Members of the American Society of Military Comptrollers visited Trinity Place during lunch Nov. 19. Trinity Place, on Airport Road, offers Alzheimer's community day services. ASMC members served lunch and visited with the patients. Members also brought requested items of Baby Wipes, solid air fresheners and snack cakes.

Participants included Gayle Pridmore, Lisa Sparks, Christina Ridgeway, Sherry Masters, Ronnie Brogan, Lily Garner, Kathy Davis, Lisa White, Ann Baskett, Gwen Davis, Brenda Baeder, Jennifer Feemster, Debbie Willman, Virginia Branam, Velma Howze, Karyn Meeks and Theresa McBride.

Thanksgiving feast warming up

The troop dining facility's biggest meal of the year is Thursday.

The Thanksgiving meal is served from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. with single soldiers (initial entry soldiers) dining 11-12:30, soldiers with family 12:30-1:30 and retirees 1:30-2:30. The dining facility will be open to all active duty, retired military, their family members and one guest.

Cost of the meal is \$5.25, and \$4.55 for dependents of soldiers in the rank of E-4 and below.

The menu includes Steamship beef (150 pounds), turkey (350 pounds), Cornish hens (132 pounds), ham (216 pounds), duck (60 pounds) and shrimp (136 pounds) along with the traditional fixings including dressing, mashed potatoes, giblet gravy, candied sweet potatoes, buttered green peas with mushrooms, cranberry sauce, corn-on-the-cob, broccoli, tossed green salad, cole slaw, fresh fruit, fruit salad, hot rolls, pumpkin pie, mincemeat pie, fruit cake and beverages.

Benefits outweigh pain from exercise

Running

continued from page 2

of others across the United States. So my question is why? Why would someone intentionally inflict physical pain to themselves? It certainly isn't because running is fun.

From my personal experience, running is definitely not fun, however running offers an opportunity to break away completely, mentally and physically, from the workaday life and test the body and mind in an arena where the only thing that can stop you is you. From my point of view, our remote control world is continually decreasing opportunities to test our body and mind. Running helps by creating barriers to break through and self-directed goals to reach. Running creates a test of the mind over the body that can enhance thinking outside the normal paradigms. After one has mastered the basics of running, the only thing that can hold them back is a physical ailment or worse, their limited thoughts of how far they can go.

With that said, running can be analogous to life itself. After we humans master the basics of living, the only thing that holds us back is our limited beliefs of how far we can go. Running for me allows a disconnection of the mind to the body. With this running "disconnection," I am able to figure out problems easier, come up with new ideas quicker, and mostly, think about things in my life in new ways with shifted paradigms.

I guess some people would call this state of mind a "runner's high" which is an experience of a state of euphoria while running. In a nutshell the body is in such pain during the run that our body releases endorphins which are group of opiate proteins with pain-relieving properties that are found naturally in the brain. Sarah Willett of Lehigh University in Pennsylvania writes about runner's high: "Yiannis Kouros who could be classified as a legend in the world of Ultrarunning (greater than 26.2 miles)

once explained what he was feeling when he was running. In an article he wrote published by Ultrarunning magazine in March of 1990 he stated, 'Some may ask why I am running such long distances. There are reasons. During the ultras I come to a point where my body is almost dead. My mind has to take leadership. When it is very hard, there is a war going on between the body and the mind. If my body wins, I will have to give up; if my mind wins, I will continue. At that time I feel that I stay outside of my body. It is as if I see my body in front of me; my mind commands and my body follows. This is a very special feeling, which I like very much... It is a very beautiful feeling and the only time I experience my personality separate from my body, as two different things.'

"What Yiannis Kouros says, is that when he is running for a long enough time his body and mind separate. Other runners have experienced this same type of thing. One English teacher stated that during the last one and a half miles of the Ice Age Trail run in 1994 he, 'found myself running far faster than I had all day; I wasn't even conscious of my feet touching the ground as I crested the knoll ahead of the finish line, I wasn't running; it was as if something much larger than I was running me.' Generally, most people claim that a runner's high is when the mind takes over the body and the unconscious leads the mind." (From Runner's High: Sarah Willett)

So as you can see running is not fun; it's a jarring, painful, an exhausting experience, but frankly I would not have it any other way. The benefits of greater health, longevity, and an enhanced ability to process cognitive thoughts during a run can lead to better peace of mind, a quicker ability to troubleshoot all types of problems, and an overall feeling of well-being.

Gary W. Braden
Interactive Web Solutions
Team ITSS, Jacobs Sverdrup

Operators must be trained to use device

Defibrillators

continued from page 2

each other poses other health risks. These devices will only shock two heart rhythms: ventricular fibrillation (uncoordinated twitching of the heart muscle) and ventricular tachycardia (excessively rapid heartbeat). The SAED is a good first step in treating a victim with a shockable rhythm but most of the time a patient will also need cardiopulmonary resuscitation, oxygen and drug therapy provided by advanced life support. An

untrained person can't provide procedures such as these.

"The Fire and Emergency Services Division provides first responder medical services for the installation and they carry these devices. All firefighters are trained at the first responder level and 25 are also emergency medical technicians. In addition to using the SAED, they are all certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and the EMT can administer oxygen to a patient. Huntsville Emergency Medical Services Inc. provides the advanced life support and transports to the hospitals.

"For the reasons listed above, we have been careful about installing these devices — improper or untrained use could result in worsening the situation. But we are considering installing the SAED in some facilities in conjunction with training

operators, and will provide more information on the program in future issues.

"If you would like to learn more about the SAED and emergency services in general, please call the Fire and Emergency Services Division at 876-1893."

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Rock hard problem solved through recycling

Concrete from buildings crushed for road usage

By **KEN HEWITT**
manager of solid waste program

What began as a suggestion more than a year ago became reality this month. Because of the recent renovation and demolition activity on Redstone Arsenal, concrete has been produced at a record level. Since 2000, approximately 25,000 tons of concrete has been stockpiled within former Borrow Area 16, just north of the Redstone Arsenal landfill. Oftentimes problems bring challenges and opportunities. The problem was what to do with the current concrete stockpile, and what to do with certain additional future concrete supplies coming to the landfill.

The challenge was to address the issues with cost-effective resolutions with common sense, and applied environmental compliance. The questions on managers' minds were what to do with huge quantities of excess road curbing, sidewalk, building slabs and footings, and block. It is too cost prohibitive to haul concrete off post for disposal, and the Redstone landfill should not waste usable state-permitted fill space by landfilling concrete.

An opportunity was created from this seemingly insurmountable problem. That opportunity was borne out of a common-sense approach to take the stockpiled con-



Photo by Ken Hewitt

SOLID SAVINGS—Reed Contracting Services of Union Grove set up its crushing operation in four days and began processing concrete Nov. 13. Chugach expects Reed to crush 12,530 tons by Dec. 6 at \$7.35 per ton. Total cost of the operation was \$92,095.

crete and recycle it into a reusable commodity — something that should be used by the Army with the option of selling to a commercial market after Army needs are met. We are talking about concrete — and

plenty of it.

The managers with the Directorate of Environmental Management and Chugach Management Services partnered their resources and decided to recycle the concrete by crushing it for use as a road sub-base material. The crushed stone would be stockpiled on post for current and future road projects on Redstone. DEM-Installation Compliance went to work by securing government funding and identifying the project requirements so that Chugach could then hire a contractor to pulverize the huge slabs of accumulated concrete into 2-inch road gravel. Reed Contracting Services of Union Grove answered the call, set up their crushing operation in four days, and began processing concrete Nov. 13. Chugach expects Reed to crush 12,530 tons by Dec. 6 at \$7.35 per ton. The total cost of the operation was \$92,095. This is money wisely spent; figuring on the benefits of using the crushed stone and saving permitted landfill space for real waste material.

Concrete material must meet a certain size before it can be milled. Therefore, a hydraulically operated hammer is used to first smash the concrete into blocks. Next the track-hoe bucket lifts the broken pieces into the hopper where it is shaken and pulled into the machine's adjustable rotating tines where the concrete is pulverized to a specified size. The conveyor belt transfers the material under a moving magnet that removes re-enforcement bar

from the material where crushed stone drops into another hopper and shaken, then conveyed to the finished pile. The gravel is then collected, transported and stockpiled on site for future use. The rebar is collected as an impurity and later stockpiled for future steel recycling.

This process is not a one-time event for Redstone. In fact, the crusher will be back for another day of eating rock when the stockpile grows again.

The benefits of this program demonstrate the Garrison's commitment to pursue money-saving opportunities and promote recycling through good stewardship toward following guidance in Executive Order 13101 that promotes the recycling of government-purchased materials. With this action, Redstone Arsenal is also participating in reaching the goal of the Department of Defense Measure of Merit. MoM has as its goal that by the end of fiscal 2005, the diversion rate of non-hazardous solid waste is to be greater than 40 percent, while ensuring integrated non-hazardous solid waste management programs provide an economic benefit when compared with disposal using land filling and incineration alone.

Recycling Redstone's buildings for roads will save the Garrison millions of dollars in construction projects, maintain the sustainability of solid waste facility assets, and conserve precious permitted landfill storage capacity today and over the years to come.



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NCO Academy class building character at Home Depot

Soldiers conduct youth workshop as community service project

By **KELLEY LANE**
Staff writer
kelleyqa@bellsouth.net

Do they give Purple Hearts for blackened thumbs? If not, the policy may have to be reconsidered. Soldiers from the NCO Academy are learning about a whole new kind of bravery. As their community service project, they are volunteering at the Kids' Workshop project at Home Depot.

The project is simple: Help children build a small wood project of their choice. Soldiers give out pointers on the arts of sanding and woodworking, and hold nails steady while kids swing hammers.

The Kids' Workshop is free to the public. Not only are all materials provided, but the kids get their own child-sized orange Home Depot apron. The children see how patience and following directions can pay off while learning about pride in a job well done. The soldiers learn that giving back to their community can be a fun undertaking, while getting to demonstrate some of the courage under fire that the Army is famous for. It also helps them develop more patience.

"Just like working with privates," one soldier joked.

Every class at the NCO Academy must choose a service project for their entire class to participate in. Some decide to do their part at the veterans' home, local schools or other worthy cause. For this class the decision to spend their time working with kids was easy. SSgt. Chester Ince was enthusiastic about the opportunity.

"It's something we knew the kids would enjoy, and we're having a really good time," he said.

Other participants agreed. "It's great for the kids," Sgt. Adam Perez said. The smiles of the faces of everyone, big and small, say the kids aren't the only ones enjoying the activity.

NCO Academy soldiers aren't new to the Home Depot project.

"The academy caught wind of it a few years ago from a Boy Scout troop," Ince said. Troop leaders were coming out to help, but needed more adults to make the project a go, since an adult is required to assist every child.

"The NCO Academy recommended it to us and we jumped all over it," Ince said. Although this particular class will be graduating before it is workshop time again, a new class should be found hammering away on the second Saturday of each month. They will be helping kids build birdhouses, bookends and self-esteem with a smile on their faces and maybe a few band aids on their thumbs.



Photo by Kelley Lane

SAND MAN— Sgt. Adam Perez shows Harley Lane the proper technique for sanding.

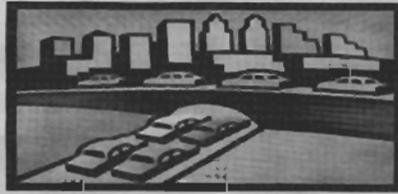
Redstone Arsenal soldier convicted of stealing from another soldier

Pvt. Stevie Reed Jr. of Bravo Company was convicted by a general court-martial Nov. 5 of multiple violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, including charges involving the theft of government property as well as theft of another soldier's money.

The evidence presented at the court-martial revealed that Reed conspired with another trainee to steal government laptop computers from AIT classrooms. After stealing the computers, Reed sold one of the computers to an unwitting fellow advanced individual training student for

\$600. Shortly thereafter, Reed stole the same soldier's ATM card and pin number. Reed then drained the victim's bank account of \$1,200 over three days, according to the Office of Staff Judge Advocate.

After being convicted in accordance with his pleas, Col. Dan Trimble, military judge, sentenced Reed to 18 months in military prison, reduction to E-1, forfeiture of all pay and allowances, and a bad conduct discharge. Reed will serve his sentence at the Fort Knox, Ky., Regional Confinement Facility.



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Support integration manager receives major promotion

Native of Hamilton, Ohio has been in Army 14 years

Nov. 7 was a big day for an officer at the Research Development and Engineering Center.

Audrey Ransom, support integration manager for Advanced Systems Directorate, was promoted to major in a ceremony at RDEC's Sela Auditorium. Her sister, Cheryl Cook, and Col. Kelley Griswold, the center's deputy director, pinned on her new rank.

"I thank God first of all and I thank everyone who supported me in making it to this level in my career," Ransom said.

The 34-year-old Hamilton, Ohio, native has been in the Army 14 years. She arrived at Redstone last December from Fort Campbell, Ky.

She and her husband, Capt. Wilton Ransom, both belong to HHC AMCOM. He is assigned to the Program Executive Office for Tactical Missiles.

The Ransoms have two daughters: Brittany, 3, and Tiara, 18 months.



Mary Petty/Photo Lab

NEW RANK— Audrey Ransom is promoted to major at the Research Development and Engineering Center. Pinning on her new rank are her sister, Cheryl Cook, and Col. Kelley Griswold, the center's deputy director.

Bicentennial Chapel sets holiday events, services

Bicentennial Chapel announces the following holiday events and services:

- Community - Greening (seasonal decorations) at the chapel, Saturday at 9 a.m.; and Holiday Tree Lighting, 4 p.m. Dec. 5.

- Catholic - Thanksgiving Mass, 9:30 a.m. Thursday; Catholic Advent Celebration, 10:45 a.m. Dec. 8; Christmas Around the World, 5 p.m. Dec. 8; Penance Service, 5 p.m. Dec. 16; Christmas Vigil Mass (Candlelight), 5 p.m.

Dec. 24; Christmas Day Mass, 9:30 a.m. Dec. 25; New Years Eve Mass, 5 p.m. Dec. 31; and New Years Day Mass, 9:30 a.m. Jan. 1.

- Protestant - Protestant Advent Celebration, 9:30 a.m. Dec. 8; Christmas Musical, 11 a.m. Dec. 15; Caroling, 5 p.m. Dec. 22; and Candlelight Communion Service, 7:30 p.m. Dec. 24.

Note, there's no Sunday School or CCD on Dec. 1, 22 or 29.

Command awards contract for firing test services

ERC Inc. has won a contract to support the Redstone Technical Test Center's Firing Test Division.

The contract, awarded Oct. 23, has options for up to five years with a ceiling value of \$88.8 million. The work requires a variety of skills, including engineers, technicians, computer specialists, photographers and designers with expertise in the test and evaluation of weapon systems, assemblies, sub-assemblies, components and associated equipment.

ERC Inc. was selected among other small businesses as the "best value" to the

government. Contractors were evaluated on their technical capability, management capability, past performance on other contracts, and price. The Research Development and Engineering Center Directorate, Division A, of the Acquisition Center conducted the source selection.

ERC Inc. will provide the support services necessary to perform tests, evaluations, analyses and other activities scheduled to be conducted by the Flight Test Branch, Airborne and Field Sensors Test Branch, and Telemetry and Data Management Test Branch of the Firing Test Division of RTTC.



Courtesy photo

SIGNING CEREMONY— The command and ERC Inc. sign a \$88.8 million contract for test services. Seated are Kathy James, AMCOM contracting officer, and Dr. Ernest Wu, president of ERC Inc. Standing, from left, are Ray Shores, AMCOM contract specialist; Glenda Collins, AMCOM attorney adviser; Richard Williams, AMCOM contracting officer; and Sharon Mueller-Myers, RTTC contract specialist.

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Friday, Nov. 29th - Military Appreciation Day and Battle of the Bands featuring 4 of North Alabama's best local bands - Shiny Wang, Liquid Cannon and Crash Midnight • Play begins at 10:00 a.m.
CHAMPIONSHIP SATURDAY, Nov. 30th - THE ALABAMA BLUES BROTHERS will be appearing at Center Court • Play begins at 3:00 p.m.

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Top 10 worker of year says it takes a team effort

Rick Turner receives honor from higher headquarters

By SKIP VAUGHN
Rocket editor
skip.vaughn@redstone.army.mil

Just like his beloved St. Louis Rams, logistician Rick Turner believes in sharing the credit after a big win.

Turner, deputy executive director of the Integrated Materiel Management Center, was honored Friday as one of the Army Materiel Command's top 10 per-

sonnel of the year for 2001. He was the only honoree from the Aviation and Missile Command.

The plaque from Gen. Paul Kern, higher headquarters' commander, was presented by Maj. Gen. Larry Dodgen, commander of AMCOM and Redstone.

"I know of nobody that deserves this honor or this recognition by our boss more than Rick Turner," Dodgen said.

"He epitomizes the word excellence," John Chapman, IMMC executive director, said.

Turner, 50, was born in Rochester, N.Y., and raised in Florida. He received a bachelor's in business management in

1975 from Central Florida and a master's in systems management in 1983 from Southern California. He began his career in 1976 as an AMC supply intern at Red River Army Depot, Texarkana, Texas. Turner came to Redstone in 1977, worked in Germany from 1979-84 and returned to Redstone. He worked at Close Combat Missile Systems from 1984-86 and at Unmanned Aerial Vehicles Project Office from 1988-90. He returned to the Integrated Materiel Management Center in September 1990. Besides his time in Germany and special assignments at the Pentagon, 20 of his 26 years of government service have been spent at Redstone.

He and his wife, Janice, have a son, Bradley, 19, a sophomore engineering student at University of Alabama in Huntsville, and a daughter, Angela, 15, a sophomore at Bob Jones High. The Turners reside in Madison.

"There's no way you can do anything alone. It's with a team," Turner said of his award. "So I accept this award for the team."

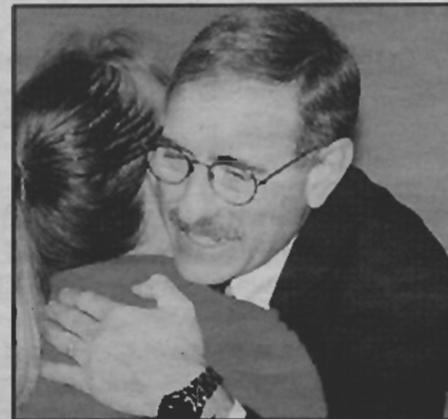


Photo by Skip Vaughn

CONGRATULATIONS— Rick Turner, one of the Army Materiel Command's top 10 personnel of the year for 2001, receives a hug after his award ceremony Friday.

His hobbies include playing golf, going for walks, having family outings and traveling.

■ Military families appreciated for their support, sacrifices

Families

continued from page 1

families complete an MWR Treasure Hunt, join a social group associated with military families, do volunteer work together, exercise at one of the fitness facilities on the Arsenal, plan get-togethers with other military families, have a family game, movie, craft or library night, get involved with the ChildWise program to meet and network with other families with young children or enroll in the sports program.

Several activities and classes provide free child care so that parents can build a support structure while the children enjoy playtime and make new friends, all within the military family environment.

"We're giving out these packets to let people know what's available to families right here on post and in the downtown community," Dempsey said. "Maybe they can develop some new family traditions

since most are so far away from home."

Packets were handed out at the Post Exchange on Saturday and are available at ACS, Youth Services, Child Development Center and School Age Services.

In a letter of appreciation to military families, Jack Tilley, 12th Sergeant Major of the Army, wrote: "In this day of worldwide deployments and lengthy periods of separations, we are truly thankful for our loved ones and blessings. As we continue to strive for a more peaceful world we all can look back and realize that we can count on the support of our spouses and children during these times. Part of every mission's success depends on the trust that soldiers have, knowing someone at home is waiting on their return with open arms and open hearts.

"During this week of celebration, we would like to recognize and applaud you for your efforts; they are truly deserving of praise. I extend my most heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to you from those of us who serve."

■ Redstone people express thanks during holiday

Thoughts

continued from page 1



Jacqueline Rice, medical clerk, Fox Army Health Center

"I'm thankful for my two boys, Jonathan and Isaih, and the lovely dinner we had on the 20th here at Fox."



Pvt. Heath Bailck

"I'm thankful for my family. I'm thankful for the Army. I'm thankful for a lot of things, that I got a second chance in life and a lot of stuff."

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A&M president says teachers shape lives nationwide

American Education Week underscores role of schools

By SKIP VAUGHN
Rocket editor
skip.vaughn@redstone.army.mil

Local educators were reminded of their value to society during the American Education Week luncheon Nov. 18.

"You are now part of a noble profession that continues to shape lives of men and women throughout this nation," Dr. John Gibson, president of Alabama A&M University, said during his keynote address.

About 305 people attended the event at the Huntsville Hilton with the theme, "Making Public Schools Great for Every Child."

Redstone Arsenal's soldiers of the month, NCOs of the quarter and the NCO of the year were among the honorees. Awards were also presented to top local teachers and schools.

"American Education Week recognizes that our schools have long been and continue to be an integral part of our com-



Photo by Skip Vaughn

EDUCATION FOR ALL— Dr. John Gibson, president of Alabama A&M University, talks with garrison CSM Lawrence Rogers after the American Education Week luncheon.

munities," Gibson said.

This year's theme for American Education Week, Nov. 17-23, was "An Army of One, an Education For All."

Engineers help students learn 'watts up' with electricity

Program designed for fourth-graders

By KATHRYN MALONE
Botanical Garden education director

Members of the navigation and control technology area of RDEC's Missile Guidance Directorate volunteered at the Huntsville/Madison County Botanical Garden's "Watts Up!" program for fourth-graders Thursday.

The program is designed to highlight the Garden's annual Galaxy of Lights event by educating area students about electricity. Steve Cayson and his group from navigation and control created and

demonstrated experiments and activities for students from West Morgan Elementary School concerning electricity, conservation and safety.

Bill McMahan discussed the history of electricity with the students and demonstrated homemade motors and rail guns that operate using household power. Mark Dixon provided an opportunity for students to crank a generator to produce electricity and light a light bulb and discussed the various power systems that utilize natural resources. Traci Ray introduced the students to the concept of circuits and provided an opportunity for them to manipulate

See Electricity on page 11

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Teens find fine arts competition rewarding

Local poetry contest opens annual program

By KELLEY LANE
Staff writer
kelleyqa@bellsouth.net

As an unofficial kickoff to its annual fine arts program, Youth Services held a poetry contest for community teens as a part of a two-day celebration of black poetry. Teens were invited to submit an original poem on the subject of their choice to be judged by a panel.

The idea originated with Sheryl Scott-Astle, computer lab/homework instructor at YS. She and the rest of the staff were surprised at the serious nature of the topics presented in the poems entered.

"They were deep," Scott-Astle said. Poet Horace Wilson spoke to the teens and read some of his work before autographing copies of his poems.

Three winners were announced at the

end of the day. Frederica McCallum took first place for her poem titled "You Hurt Me," followed by Frances Jimenez with "Love Shouldn't Make You Think" in second, and Brittini Moreno in third with "My Troubles." The winners then submitted their work to Poetry.com for its online contest and its \$10,000 grand prize. The deadline for submission was Nov. 15. With \$1,000 up for grabs initially, the results of the online contest are being awaited anxiously.

The poetry contest opens the door for the larger Fine Arts Program through the Boys & Girls Club of America. It is being sponsored for the fifth year by cosmetics company L'Oreal as a way to identify budding artists and encourage the pursuit of art as a hobby and as an occupation.

"We are most fortunate to have such a high-profile brand as L'Oreal underwrite this fine arts program," said Miranda A. Brown, special events coordinator for Boys & Girls Club of Redstone Arsenal

who is spearheading the fine arts program. Competition is in four age groups and 10 categories, including oil paint, pastel, acrylic painting, watercolor and collage. Local winners will advance to regionals and some will go on from there to the national competition at Boys & Girls Clubs of America's Atlanta headquarters. A winner from each age group in each category will be selected for a total of 40 national winners whose work will be exhibited at events throughout the year. Those selected will take home an engraved plaque, letter of congratulations from club president Roxanne Spillet and a cash award.

Redstone teens are already hard at work on their projects for the competition in December. Redstone will hold its portion of the contest Dec. 2-6. Judges are yet to be announced, but some are being recruited from the art community here at Redstone. Excitement is running high with the memory of Donald Tabb's regional win earlier this year in the photography competition. While the lure of recognition and prizes is strong, the larger benefit to the entering teens may be sim-

ply in the participation itself. "They get a broadened sense of art and just learn to appreciate it and its beauty," Brown said.



Photo by Sheryl Scott-Astle
FREDERICA McCALLUM

■ Young students hear from engineers

Electricity

continued from page 10

the flow of current through electrical devices such as motors and light bulbs.

Phillip Smith used wattmeters and a simple household circuit to illustrate energy consumption and the issue of power conservation. Krissy Stams, a cooperative education program participant from Auburn University, helped students read a wattmeter and work problems related to energy usage and cost.

The students and teachers were enthu-

siastic about the activities provided by the group as well as the opportunity to interact with professional engineers. The event closed with an opportunity for the members of the navigation and control technology area to discuss their personal job descriptions and answer questions about careers in engineering.

The "Watts Up!" program is offered to area fourth-graders every November at the Huntsville/Madison County Botanical Garden. For more information concerning this trip or any of the other educational opportunities for children and adults, call the Education Department at 430-3572 ext. 226.

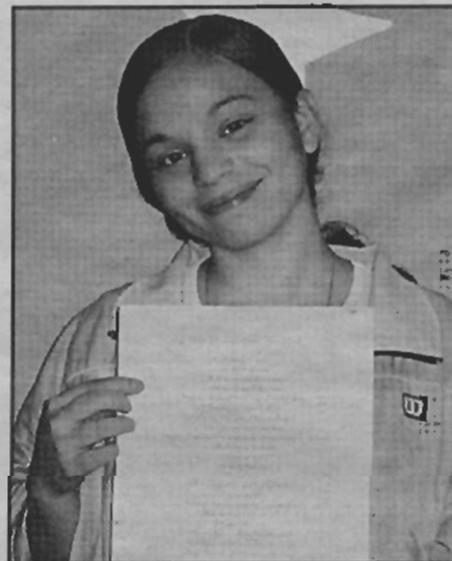


Photo by Sheryl Scott-Astle
FRANCES JIMENEZ



Photo by Sheryl Scott-Astle
BRITTINI MORENO



Courtesy photo

ENLIGHTENING CLASS— Phillip Smith of Missile Guidance Directorate discusses energy consumption with fourth-graders from West Morgan Elementary School.

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Retired military Concentration camp survivor prefers to share recognition



Photo by Skip Vaughn

TOKEN OF APPRECIATION— Retired MSgt. Bob Sawada receives a coin from Maj. Gen. Larry Dodgen, commander of the Aviation and Missile Command and Redstone Arsenal.

Retired MSgt. Bob Sawada cited for his public service

By SKIP VAUGHN
Rocket editor
skip.vaughn@htimes.com

Bob Sawada knows firsthand the price of freedom.

A native of Poland, Sawada witnessed the shooting of his parents by German soldiers in 1939. He was separated from his sister, Olga, and sent to the concentration camp at Auschwitz. He spent the next five years in a series of forced labor camps and killing centers including the Dachau concentration camp outside of Munich, Germany. He escaped several times but was always recaptured.

Sawada found himself in a labor camp in Ulm, Germany, as World War II was ending. As the Americans advanced on the camp, the Germans machine gunned the inmates. Sawada survived by hiding in a latrine trench, where he eventually lost consciousness. Later in the hands of his liberators, he was revived and the 17-year-old Sawada weighed only 31 pounds.

He was adopted by his liberators, came to the U.S. in February 1946, and finished high school in Fairhope, Ala. In 1949 he served with the 26th Infantry Regiment,

1st Infantry Division, as part of the occupation forces in Germany. While with those forces, he learned that Olga had been killed in an allied bombing raid. He later served two tours in Vietnam.

Sawada retired as a master sergeant in December 1971 and became an engineering technician at the Research Development and Engineering Center. He worked there for 22 years until retiring in 1994. Sawada became a founding member of the Redstone Arsenal Retiree Council and has served on the council since 1972.

On Nov. 19 he received the Commander's Award for Public Service from Maj. Gen. Larry Dodgen, commander of the Aviation and Missile Command and Redstone Arsenal.

"This is a small token for what has been years of government service," Dodgen said. "Thanks for doing a great job."

"Thank you, sir. I don't deserve it," Sawada said. "It's other people that deserve it more than I."

Sawada, 73, resides in Huntsville with his wife of 50 years, Dorothea. They have a daughter, Maria Anderson of Duluth, Ga.; a son, Bobby, of Hazel Green; and two grandchildren, ages 12 and 9.

"I'm very, very grateful to the military retiree office, especially Phil Friedrich," Sawada said of his award. "He's the driving force behind the organization."

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Shoppers fill Rustic Lodge during annual open house

The Beanie Babies went fast and so did the food.

The Rustic Lodge drew a full house at its fifth annual open house Thursday. The event was billed as a Shopping Extravaganza with a variety of vendors displaying their wares for the holidays.

"We've had over 450 people come through here," Valerie Carey, business manager for the Civilian Welfare Fund, said midway through the event. "That's not including vendors, we

have something like 35 vendors. This is the biggest one we've had yet so it's been great."

"We anticipated 250 people," Pat Cross, chairman of the special events committee for the CWF Council, said. She is an administrative assistant with Scout Attack Product Office.

Carey was enjoying her last open house before retiring Jan. 1. "We mix a little bit of food in with the shopping," she said of the day's activities.



Photo by Skip Vaughn

HOLIDAY AIR— Sales clerk Sherry Gentle, left, of Balloon Express Flowers & Gifts, shows an item to potential customer Pat Cross, chairman of the special events committee for the Civilian Welfare Fund Council. The fifth annual Shopping Extravaganza drew hundreds Thursday to the Rustic Lodge.

Jewish holiday celebrates fight for religious freedom

8-day festival of lights starts sundown Friday

Throughout the world, members of the Jewish faith will begin reciting prayers of celebration and kindling the Hanukkah lights the day after Thanksgiving.

This year the first night of Hanukkah begins at sundown Friday. (Each year this holiday falls at a different time, depending on the Hebrew Calendar.) An additional candle is added to the menorah each evening of the eight-day festivity.

This holiday commemorates the successful fight for religious freedom back in 164 B.C.E. Judah Maccabee and his sons defeated the vast armies of the Syrian-Greek King Antiochus, when they had forbidden the Jews' religious practices, taken over the holy temple and substituted pig sacrifices at the altar. After three years of struggle, the Maccabees recaptured the temple. Joyously, they purified the altar and prepared to light the great menorah lamp; however, they could only find one cruse of oil, enough to fuel the lamp for a single day. The soldiers took eight days to pick and press the olives to

purify the oil.

Amazingly, the few drops of oil from the cruse lasted for eight days that were needed to keep the great menorah burning. The legend of the long-lasting oil symbolizes Jewish continuity. When the menorahs are lit today, using candles instead of oil, it is a reminder that by remaining true to their beliefs, the Jewish people will continue to survive long after oppressors have been forgotten. It commemorates how a small group of untrained soldiers defeated a huge army and the impact that this act had on the survival of their religion, against all odds.

Customs and traditions of this holiday include exchanging gifts, eating potato pancakes (latkes), which are fried in oil, and playing the dreidel game, which is a four sided top with Hebrew letters engraved on each side. Each letter also stands for a word in Hebrew: Nes Gadol Hayan Sham. The words mean: "A great miracle happened there."

So, during this joyous time, it is quite appropriate to send a Jewish friend a Hanukkah card, or wish them a happy Hanukkah.

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Win or lose

Defense leads HHC 59th's quest to defend championship

Postseason tournament opens for troop flag football teams

By SKIP VAUGHN
Rocket editor
skip.vaughn@redstone.army.mil

Usually in sports, the defense does the dirty work and the offense gets the glory. But any account of HHC 59th's quest to defend (pun intended) its flag football championship would be remiss without kudos for its stop troops. The 59th's defense has been downright nasty to opponents week after week.

This trend continued Nov. 20 in the postseason tournament when the unbeaten 59th whipped Headquarters & Alpha 48-12. The tournament resumed this week with four games scheduled Monday, three games Tuesday, two games Dec. 2 and the championship Dec. 3, weather permitting.

"Everybody knows their role and they're doing it to perfection," said Laevrmonde Watts, a rusher on the 59th defense.

"We have a couple of aggressive players and we stick together," cornerback Jermaine McGee said. "We play together."

"We work as a team," outside linebacker Ronald Steele said. "We play smart. We have an experienced defense that plays smart."

Other members of the defense for the 59th, which improved to a perfect 10-0, are outside linebacker Stephen Dix, safety Patrick Perry, middle linebacker Michael McGilton, rusher Eddie Bryant, rusher Jason Byrd, cornerback Rashad Valmont and safety Derrick Davis.

"Basically the reason we've been able to do so well on defense is forcing some turnovers, we've been able to get a lot of interceptions," Dix said. "And basically what causes that is pressure from our linebackers, putting pressure on the quarterback."

Dix made a key interception return for a touchdown in the 59th's final regular season game Nov. 13 against the Marines. On the opening drive, the Marines advanced to within the 59th's 20-yard



Photo by Skip Vaughn

DEE-FENSE— Members of HHC 59th's defense get ready to defend their title. From left are cornerback Jerryl Yarbrough (1), who has since moved to Delta Company; rusher Laevrmonde Watts (4), outside linebecker Stephen Dix (9), safety Patrick Perry (13), middle linebacker Michael McGilton (14), rusher Eddie Bryant (17) and rusher Jason Byrd (20).

line. Dix intercepted a pass at the 12 and ran it back 68 yards for the score. The 59th went on to win 36-12.

"We're a lot better than we were last year," Dix said of the defense. "Last year it was like we just tried to score more points than the other team to win. This year our defense is scoring a lot of points, too. I don't think there's been a game yet that our defense hasn't run one back for a touchdown."

Dix, Watts, Perry and Steele are the defensive returnees from last year's championship team. Perry has six interceptions this year, including two against Headquarters & Alpha in last week's play-off game.

"We play a lot of help defense. Everybody communicates really well with each other," Perry said.

With a 10-0 record, Dix sees a clear path for the defending champion in the double-elimination tournament.

"I don't think anybody's gonna beat us," he said. "If they get by us once, they're not gonna beat us twice."

Last week's results included:
• Nov. 19 – Headquarters & Alpha def.

Marines 44-20, Delta def. Alpha 131st 30-0 and Charlie def. MEDDAC 13-2.

• Nov. 20 – HHC 59th def. Headquarters

ters & Alpha 48-12, Alpha 131st eliminated the Marines 48-26 and NCO Academy def. Bravo 6-0.

Skip's picks

Mississippi favored to top Miss. State

By SKIP VAUGHN
Rocket editor
skip.vaughn@redstone.army.mil

Skip's picks went 26-8 in the 12th week of the college football season, bringing the season totals to 295-105.

Here are my predictions for this week:

- Alabama at Hawaii – Bama
- Miss. State at Ole Miss – Ole Miss
- LSU at Arkansas – Arkansas
- Florida at Florida State – FSU
- Oklahoma at Okla. State – Oklahoma
- West Virginia at Pittsburgh – Pitt
- Rutgers at Boston College – Boston College
- East Carolina at Southern Miss – Southern Miss
- UNLV at Colorado State – Colorado State
- Utah State at Middle Tennessee – MTSU
- Virginia at Virginia Tech – Virginia Tech
- Wake Forest at Maryland – Maryland
- Notre Dame at Southern Cal – Notre Dame



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Holiday spending tips pay off in new year

Creative gift-giving, planned shopping cut cost and ease stress of season

By SANDY RIEBELING
Staff writer
sandy@htimes.com

Planning that holiday shopping spree for 5 a.m. the day after Thanksgiving is probably a good bet, if you have what it takes to round the parking lot seven times for a space, muscle through the crowds for those special buys and then wait in a checkout line from here to Birmingham.

It's a great way to save a little money and work off that extra slice of pumpkin pie but beware of the pitfalls. The lights, the sales, the free gifts can turn into a frenzied spending spree that may take you the next year to pay off.

"There's so much commercialism this time of year," Virginia Dempsey, manager of family advocacy program at Army Community Service, said. "The stores are doing everything they can to get you to spend. You have to decide what you're going to give them — what you can afford. Try to remember the spirit of the holidays."

Planning is the key to controlling holiday spending. Most consumer resource guides suggest writing a budget as the first thing to do for a successful holiday season. Start by listing the people you will buy for and decide on the dollar amount you can realistically afford to spend on each person. It's important to write that figure down by the name.

If the list gets too long, consider ways to cut down. If everyone in the family buys for each other, suggest drawing names and a spending limit instead. Same thing goes for co-workers. Your office may want to forego gift-giving altogether and donate a few dollars each to charity.

Once you have the final list of people and spending limits, take some time to think about each person on the list and what would be the best type of gift to give. Some moms would love to have an evening of free baby-sitting much more than a decorative candle set. Many times older persons have accumulated all they need around the house but could benefit from an offer to do summer yard work, plant spring flowers, rake leaves in the fall, paint a room, clean out a basement or attic.

Coupons for services can be some of the most meaningful gifts because it is a gift of time and talent from the giver. The gift may include the purchase of some items like paint, cleaning supplies or flowers but that can be done at a later date, easing the Christmas crunch.

For the crafty or culinary talented, a personalized homemade craft may be just the ticket. Baked goodies are usually a hit, especially if you have a secret recipe or unusual dish you're willing to make. Instead of exchanging gifts, friends can get together for an afternoon of baking and make baskets of goodies for people on their lists. It doubles the fun and

divides the work.

And although not everyone would welcome a secondhand gift, some have no problem with it. Do you have something in your home, garage or attic that you don't use but you know your friend or relative would love to have? If it's something you're willing to part with, wrap it up special and give it away.

Consider putting together a scrapbook or photo album of family events to give to relatives. Perhaps you can find an old photo that would be a great gift in a new frame. Home videos can also be a real treasure, especially if they are created with gift giving in mind.



For those who prefer the good ol' trip to the mall for Christmas gifts, a little wisdom and a lot of comparison shopping can stretch your dollar a long way.

"Holidays are tough for military families because they're away from home and sometimes they start to feel guilty and that makes them want to spend more than they can afford," Sue Paddock, ACS director, said. "And then there are the younger soldiers that come in and this is their first real job. The paycheck looks big so they start spending but then it doesn't go as far as they thought."

Before you buy, comparison shop both with store competitors and online. Know what you are looking for. Impulse buying can bust a hole through your well-planned list. Always have your gift list and never take your credit cards. Using only cash will also force you to stick with planned spending. Shop at discount stores, outlet malls and closeout stores. Many have name brand items at a lower cost.

Don't wait until the last minute to shop because you may feel the urge to stray from your budget. Timing is also important for gifts that must be mailed. Ship them early to avoid express delivery fees.

Other cost saving tips include sending e-cards instead of mailing Christmas cards, agreeing to do the gift exchange after the holidays to benefit from clearance sales, and pooling money with relatives to buy gifts. If you do use a credit card for purchases, try to fund one with a low interest rate by either switching companies or negotiating with your current company.

"It's so important to remember what the holidays are all about," Dempsey said. "Yes, presents are nice but not if it's going to be a burden. Try to introduce less expensive traditions. Getting all stressed out and finding yourself in financial trouble when the bills come isn't what you want for Christmas. Spend time instead of money with family and friends. Put the joy back in your holiday."

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Lung cancer researchers trying to fight the good fight

Family deals with diagnosis that father has lung cancer

By SANDY RIEBELING
Staff writer
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Debra Wymer wears a small, crystal ribbon outlined in gold on the lapel of her suit coat. Because it is clear, it blends into the maroon color, making it almost unnoticeable. It is a tiny pin representing an enormous problem — one that she and her family are determined to overcome.

"It's a lung cancer awareness pin," Wymer, technical management director at the Program Executive Office for Air and Missile Defense, said. "It is clear to symbolize the invisible population of people with lung cancer."

Her husband, John, is one of those people.

John Wymer works in the Ground-based Midcourse Defense Joint Program Office. About 16 months ago he began having severe headaches. After talking with his family doctor, he was referred to a neurologist who ordered an MRI, a magnetic imaging test, that detected a brain tumor on his left frontal lobe. He was admitted to the hospital that very day.

"It was serious," Debra said.

But worse news was yet to come. John had to undergo treatment to reduce the size of the tumor as well as other tests to



Courtesy photo

IN THE LAB— Dr. David Carbone, left, of the Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Institute in Nashville, shows test specimens to Debra and John Wymer, Redstone workers, and Janet Healy, foreground, Advocacy Program manager for the Alliance for Lung Cancer Advocacy, Support and Education, during the Living with Lung Cancer workshop Nov. 12. John Wymer was diagnosed with lung cancer in August 2001.

prepare for brain surgery. A full body CT scan detected a mass in his lung. A biopsy determined John had non-small cell lung cancer. The brain tumor was actually a secondary tumor.

"Amazingly enough, the brain surgery wasn't horrible," John said. "I went home two days after the surgery. The five weeks of radiation treatments after surgery were harder than the surgery itself. It didn't hurt

but it zapped my energy. I lost my appetite."

Now the family was left to decide a course of action to deal with the disease.

"This thing came out of nowhere," Debra said. "There were no warning signs. No reason at all to suspect John had lung cancer."

John and Debra began researching options and treatments and met with an oncologist at the Comprehensive Cancer Institute in Huntsville. They were offered standard treatments including radiation, chemotherapy and clinical trials for drugs but they were also encouraged to seek a second opinion which led them to Dr. David Carbone at the Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center in Nashville.

"Vanderbilt is a center of excellence for cancer research and treatment," John said. "There was nothing wrong with the treatment options we were given in Huntsville but Vanderbilt provided some more aggressive approaches."

After extensive scans and tests that showed no other metastases or spreading of the cancer, John opted for surgery to remove the tumor Oct. 30, 2001. Initial tests were inconclusive but a month later a CT showed the cancer had spread to his lung, adrenal glands and possibly his liver.

"By December I could feel my health declining," John said. In January he began 18 weeks of chemotherapy treatments along with an investigational drug, monoclonal antibody. "It is a targeted therapy instead of the shotgun approach of chemo."

He was feeling better in a matter of weeks and at one point was in complete remission for about four months.

"But as cancer sometimes does," Debra said, "it came back while he was still on the experimental drug. A CT showed it had returned in all the places except the brain."

About three months ago, Carbone recommended another investigational drug in clinical trials and John is again feeling better and has even gained back a few

pounds he lost during his treatment after surgery. He and Debra travel to Nashville for an intravenous drug treatment once every three weeks.

"We've been very lucky in a lot of ways," John said. "First that the brain tumor was in a good spot to be removed, the lung tumor, too. There are some good drugs out there. Not perfect yet but at least there they've made some tremendous advances in cancer treatments in the last 20 years. Even in pre-treatment and countering side effects of the chemo. I've been lucky that I've felt pretty good all the way through. I don't miss work except for the one day I have the treatment."

They see many other reasons to count themselves blessed. Their insurance policy, Blue Cross Blue Shield Federal Employee Program, has been very cooperative in coverage of treatments. Both have understanding bosses and co-workers. Debra's parents live nearby in Tennessee and are a tremendous help in caring for their three children when needed. Their friends and church family have responded to their situation and delivered meals and offered support in many different ways.

And while they are thankful for the help and support, they both have had to take battle positions in this fight for life. Not just to overcome the disease but to create an awareness and lobby the public for support in their fight for research dollars to aid in finding new treatments and ultimately a cure for this most deadly of cancers.

November is lung cancer awareness month.

"Lung cancer is the No. 1 killer of both men and women," said Debra, who has become a patient advocate associated with Vanderbilt. "New treatments, combinations of treatments and technical advances are increasing the survival rate but so much more could be done. With more money for research, a screening could be developed to detect cancer earlier which would increase the survival rate."

John was diagnosed in stage four, the last stage of cancer, because there were no telltale signs and no routine screening for detection as there are for prostate and colorectal cancers.

More Americans die each year from lung cancer than from breast, prostate, ovarian and colorectal cancers combined. Every three minutes another person is diagnosed with lung cancer and each hour 18 people will die from it. The American Cancer Society estimates that more than 169,000 Americans will be diagnosed with lung cancer and nearly 155,000 will die from the disease in 2002.

The five-year survival rate for lung cancer patients is 15 percent because most are diagnosed in the later stages. Research indicates that five-year survival rates could reach 80 percent if detected early.

The correlation between new cases reported and deaths each year are significantly different for lung cancer compared to other cancers. Cancer mortality rates in 1998 show that there were 170,000 new

See Cancer on page 19

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Cancer

continued from page 18

cases of lung cancer and 160,000 deaths that year, compared to about 95,000 new cases of colon cancer and 47,000 deaths; 180,000 new cases of breast cancer and about 45,000 deaths and almost the same numbers for prostate cancer.

The National Cancer Institute reported that lung cancer research receives far less funding, per death, than other cancers. In 2001, it spent an estimated \$1,311 per lung cancer death compared to \$11,704 per breast cancer death, \$8,190 per prostate cancer death and \$3,625 per colorectal cancer death.

"I think a lot of the reason we don't get the funding is because people aren't aware of the lack of funding and because there is a certain stigma attached to lung cancer," Debra said. "The feeling is that it's something that people bring on themselves."

While it's true that tobacco addiction is the biggest cause of lung cancer, there are non-related causes including exposure to radon, diesel fuel, asbestos and other toxic chemicals. About 50 percent of people newly diagnosed with lung cancer each year are non-smokers or former smokers.

John and Debra are former smokers. John started smoking when he was 23 and

quit 10 years later. He hasn't smoked a cigarette in 20 years.

"They used to say that your lungs would go back to normal 15 years after you quit smoking," Debra said. "Our oncologist told us that they can detect DNA damage after smoking as little as 100 cigarettes 20 years ago."

Debra's quest is to raise awareness of the dangers of smoking, convince government and private agencies to invest more money in lung cancer research and to help start support groups for people living with lung cancer.

"Developing an FDA screening would be an incredible step in the right direction," Debra said. Short of that, "they could at least develop a standard for using CT or PET scans as a type of screening so insurance companies would pay for them until something better comes along. There is some investigation into using sputum samples to detect cancer on a cellular level."

For now, Debra, John and their children Jimmy, 14, Elizabeth, 12, and Jack, 4, fight the good fight of hope. They are realistic yet optimistic. The diagnosis may have changed their priorities in life but also strengthened their bond and sparked a deeper level of appreciation for life.

"I'm thankful for all our blessings," John said. "I'm also more conscious of how fortunate I am."

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