

Redstone Rocket

VOL. 55 No. 1

Published in the interest of personnel at Redstone Arsenal, AL

January 4, 2006

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War effort tops general's principles

Pillsbury outlines goals for 2006

By SKIP VAUGHN
Rocket editor
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Continued support for deployed Soldiers is the main focus of the AMCOM leadership at the start of 2006.

Maj. Gen. Jim Pillsbury, commander of the Aviation and Missile Command and Redstone Arsenal, and Dr. Richard Amos, his deputy, shared their thoughts in an interview with the *Redstone Rocket*.

"We're going to continue to provide world-class support to our Soldiers that are deployed in harm's way," Pillsbury said. "They are first and foremost in the minds of the leadership of AMCOM. Second, we are going to continue to reset the force that returns from theater and to simultaneously preset forces that are ready to redeploy."

"Thirdly, I want to continue initiatives started to revitalize the work force of LCMC (Life Cycle Management Command) to include leadership training, Lean training and where appropriate NSPS (National Security Personnel System) training.

"Fourth, I want to continue partnership with industry. I want our LCMC to continue working both personal and professional relationships with industry. And fifth, is to continue setting the conditions for successful BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure) deployments of the units both coming and going."

He and Amos described 2005 as a banner year for Team Redstone.

"I think 2005 was a great year for us," Amos said. "Our work force is focused on the commanding general's priorities. You can see folks are focused on what they do for the Soldiers. I think '05 was a very successful year from the standpoint of programs – modernization and transformation initiatives. And I think '05 was very successful from an LCMC concept. I think we've proven to the rest of the Army that LCMC



Photo by Skip Vaughn

PLANNING SESSION— AMCOM commander Maj. Gen. Jim Pillsbury meets with his deputy, Dr. Richard Amos.

is the right approach. And more importantly, we're providing better products to the Soldier because of the integration of what we do."

Base realignment and closure decisions from 2005 will bring, among other elements, the headquarters Army Materiel Command to Redstone from Fort Belvoir, Va. Construction plans for the moves are expected to continue this year.

"Quoting the vice chief of staff of the Army, Gen. Dick Cody: 'You cannot measure your importance to the war fight by your proximity to the shooting.'"

— Maj. Gen. Jim Pillsbury
AMCOM commander

"I think that you will see the first elements of the units mov-

ing down here to start hiring folks into positions at Redstone versus Washington, D.C.," Pillsbury said. "I think you will see the Army finalize its plan and put funding against that plan. So I think '06 will be a lot of planning for the future and the physical construction."

"From the perspective of the units already here at Redstone, '06 is going to be a planning year," Amos said. "How we're going to recruit and replace folks that we're going to lose to vacancies at other (incoming) organizations."

Pillsbury recognized Corpus Christi Army Depot (Texas), Letterkenny Army Depot (Pa.) and Fort Rucker for their work during the past year.

"The work of those three operations cannot be matched," he said. "The work force has stepped up time and again. I could not be prouder of the leadership, management and work force of those three organizations."

"I'd also like to tip my hat to the Garrison here at Redstone Arsenal for setting the conditions for us to be successful in our mission. Again, a herculean

effort by an under-funded Garrison staff."

Amos said the entire Team Redstone should be proud of what it has accomplished so far. He cited the positive reports from Soldiers fighting the ongoing war against terrorism.

"It's a marathon, not a sprint. So there's more work to be done this year," Amos said. He added that the workers should also ensure they take care of themselves and their families so they will be up to the challenge.

Pillsbury added his thanks for the members of Team Redstone "for a fabulous effort so far."

"What I like about Team Redstone is the positive attitude, positive cooperation and the desire I see on the part of everybody to support the Soldier," the commanding general said. "Because at the end of the day, that's why we're here."

"Quoting the vice chief of staff of the Army, Gen. Dick Cody: 'You cannot measure your importance to the war fight by your proximity to the shooting.'"

Letters to the Editor

Concerned about gas purchases

My understanding is that AAFES gas may only be purchased by authorized personnel (e.g., active duty and reservist, military retirees, dependents, etc.). However, unlike the AAFES department store, the gas station does not perform any ID check. It seems like anyone can purchase gas. When I visit other military installations, an ID check is performed if not in uniform.

How does AAFES verify that people not in uniform who purchase gas are authorized?

Michael Gilsdorf

Editor's note: The Garrison and the Post Exchange provided the following response. "Only authorized military members (active,

See **Gasoline** on page 3

Remember troops during holidays

Christmas time again is here,

When people hold their loved ones near.
Families gather, gifts are given,
And blessings come from God in heaven.

Turkey dinners with all the trimmings
Cakes and candies, none too slimming.
Twinkling lights surround the houses,
Sparkling scenes on women's blouses.

Pretty packages tied with bows,
Christmas cards lined up in rows.
Shoppers crowd the stores and malls
Tinsel and garland hang in the halls.

But for our Soldiers overseas,
This is not a time of peace.
No stockings to hang, no Christmas tree
No snowy nights will our Soldiers see.

No festive clothes, just boots and camo,
No Christmas presents, just guns and ammo.
Instead of a fireplace to keep them warm,
They need shelter from the fierce sand storms.

For Christmas dinner, instead of a feast,
They'll all chow down on MREs.
Then duty calls them back to the front line,
No rest for our Soldiers at Christmastime.

So this holiday season, while your prayers are said,
As you snuggle down in your comfy bed,
Remember our Soldiers that are fighting the fight,
To keep us all safe and protect our rights.

Don't forget those who won't be home again,
They're spending this Christmas with their Father in Heaven.
They've given their lives so that we could be free,
That's the ultimate gift if you were to ask me!

Tanya C. Pitman
administrative assistant,
OMEMS Training Management Division

Bicyclist on dangerous road

Recently, I've come across an individual riding a bicycle along Martin Road around 6:15 a.m.

Granted the person rides as close to the fog line as possible and carries a blinking light. Considering the lack of lighting, this contributes to a dangerous situation in the heavy early morning traffic period as there is not much of a roadway shoulder in this area. We once had a similar situation at Cape Canaveral several years ago where a biker was critically injured before security enacted an hour restriction to riding bicycles along heavily traveled routes. Can precautionary action be taken to prevent another person from being injured?

Ed Wensell
Lean facilitator,
AMCOM Office of
Continuous Improvement

Editor's note: The Garrison provided the following response in December. "Thank you for your concern regarding the safety of those bicycling on the installation.

"There are currently no time or roadway restrictions for bicyclists riding on post, however, operating bicycles in traffic can be hazardous no matter how you cut it. It is imperative that bicyclists wear reflective gear; in fact, DoDI 6055.4 par E3.9 Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety states "Participants should be educated to ... wear reflective outer garments during hours of reduced visibility."

"The Garrison Safety office is in the process of creating an installation safety pamphlet that incorporates bicycle safety issues into a consolidated regulation. Some options being considered for this safety pamphlet include:

"Restrict bicycle operations to installation bicycle paths only, per DoDI 6055.4 requirements.

"Provide bicycle safety training for operators including news articles (Redstone Rocket), per DoDI 6055.4 requirements.

"Bicycle lights, reflective outer garments and head protection especially during reduced visibility and heavy traffic, per DoDI 6055.4 requirements.

"Until such time as AMCOM 210-2 is fully revised and the new Garrison Safety pamphlet is published, we do recommend and encourage that all bicyclists take appropriate safety precautions to include taking into consideration the traffic volume on the roadways and wearing of brightly colored and/or reflectorized clothing while riding on any roadway."

An open lane random survey

What is your New Year's resolution?

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

Barbara Murphy
teacher

"I want to lose weight."



Kathy O'Dell
teacher

"I want to downsize and simplify."

Randy Griffin
reservist

"To get out of debt and stay debt-free."



Randy Herd
retiree

"My resolution is to lose weight."

Quote of the week

'All of our dreams can come true – if we have the courage to pursue them.'

— *Walt Disney*

Letter policy

Letters to the editor must be signed by the writer. The *Rocket* will withhold names upon request. Letters can be sent via e-mail to skip.vaughn@redstone.army.mil or faxed to 955-9138. The deadline for letters and all other submissions to the *Rocket* is noon Friday.

Redstone Rocket

Editorial office 876-1500 Editorial fax 955-9138 Retail Advertising 532-4539 Classified Advertising 532-4300 Fax 532-4349

The *Redstone Rocket* is published weekly on Wednesday. The publisher will receive editorial content for publication in The *Redstone Rocket* through the Public Affairs Office, Army Garrison-Redstone, Bldg. 5300 Room 5144, Redstone Arsenal AL 35898.

The civilian enterprise printer of the *Redstone Rocket* is *The Huntsville Times*, located at 2317 S. Memorial Parkway, Huntsville AL 35801.

The deadline for display and commercial classified is 5 p.m. Friday before Wednesday publication.

email: skip.vaughn@redstone.army.mil
Rocket articles are available online at the following:
https://ams36.redstone.army.mil:4443/portal/page?_pageid=614,1983766&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&p_cat_id=6&menupairid=prdz1870500

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Research Park, Huntsville. Mailing rates off post for The *Rocket* are \$30 per year, tax included. We do not guarantee timely delivery. "Third class mail may receive deferred service. The Postal Service does not guarantee the delivery of third class mail within a specified time." (Article 630 of the Domestic Mail Manual) We do not send subscription renewal notices.

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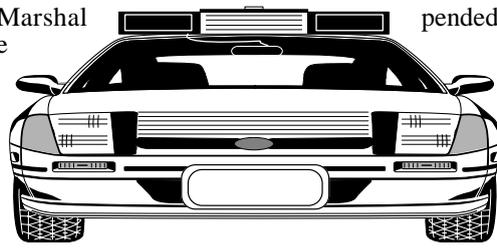
Crimes, accidents and other occurrences

The Provost Marshal Office provided the following list of reported incidents:

Dec. 23: An individual reported that someone broke the latch and entered an unoccupied quarters and put holes in the wall. Investigation continues by the Provost Marshal Office.

Dec. 25: An individual was found to be in possession of marijuana during an inspection at Gate 7. He was issued a DD Form 1805 and released. Investigation continues by the Provost Marshal Office.

Dec. 26: An individual was found to be operating his motor vehicle with a sus-



pended driver's license during an inspection at Gate 9. He was issued a violation notice and released.

Dec. 26: An individual reported that someone broke the latch and entered an unoccupied quarters and put holes in the wall. Investigation continues by the Provost Marshal Office.

Traffic accidents reported: three without injuries, none with injuries.

Violation notices issued: 6 speeding, 1 driving with a suspended/revoked license, 1 possession of a controlled substance, 1 improper backing, 1 no proof of insurance.

International group visits Music City

The International Military Student Office took Egyptian Capt. Ahmed El-Houty on a Nashville tour Dec. 21.

At the Tennessee Capitol, he received a guided tour of this impressive building. The capitol stands today as it did when it was completed in 1859. This historic building is one of the oldest original capitols still in active use in the United States. El-Houty learned the history of the

building, about the three presidents who have come from Tennessee, and the importance of the capitol in state history. This structure was designed by William Strickland, a notable architect of his time. When Strickland died in 1854, he was buried in the northeast corner, above the cornerstone, in a tomb of his own design. (*International Military Student Office release*)



Courtesy photo

Holiday visit

Egyptian Capt. Ahmed El-Houty visits "The Gospel According to Scrooge" at the Rock Family Worship Center in Huntsville. The International Military Student Office conducted this field studies program trip Dec. 14.

Getting to know you

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

skip.vaughn@redstone.army.mil

Name: Kerry Blankenship

Job: Engineering services lead, AMCOM G-4 (Environmental Division)

Where do you call home? Huntsville

What do you like about your job?

The new challenges that arise every day. The actual ability to interface with field personnel, primarily at the depots.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

Travel. I like to work around the house. I like to work around in the yard. I like to swim in my pool.

What are your goals?

To continue working for the U.S. Army



and retire here. Retire and live in Huntsville.

What's your favorite type of music?

Rock music

Teledyne Brown cited for safety

Teledyne Brown Engineering Inc. has received a Safety Award from NASA for attaining 2 million man-hours without a Lost Time Accident on its Propellants,

Pressurants and Calibration contract at Marshall Space Flight Center.

Teledyne Brown's last LTA was in March of 1992.

■ Only authorized users allowed at PX pumps

Gasoline

continued from page 2

retired, reserve and guard) and their authorized dependents may make purchases at any AAFES retail facility. This includes facilities that sell gas as well. Signing is posted on each of the pumps stating that only valid ID card holders may purchase gas. Management at the AAFES One Stop completes 1-3 daily spot check periods to ensure patrons are authorized. This is accomplished when they go out to check the paper and receipt cutters on the pumps during the course of the business day. We will not only continue to monitor daily, but will increase spot checks as well. Our procedures are in compliance with other

AAFES gas selling facilities.

"While many of our patrons would like the military member's DEERS information somehow encoded into their credit cards to assure that all that use Pay at the Pump are authorized, there is no link between the customer's military personal information and the credit card industry.

"We continue to encourage the military members to provide the license plate info on any vehicle that they suspect of being unauthorized. This information will be sent to PMI by AAFES management.

"Please feel free to contact the AAFES One Stop manager, Eileen Berth, at 883-0367, or the AAFES general manager, Kim Sumpter, at sumpterkim@aafes.com or 876-1064 ext. 124 if you have any questions or concerns in the future."

Troop vehicle carries promise for armored protection

Manufacturer builds locally

By EILEEN HEATON
For the Rocket

Teledyne Brown Engineering has built and successfully tested a new form of armored protection to safeguard U.S. troops in Iraq and other deployments where armored protection is needed.

The Multipurpose Troop Transport Carrier System is a unique solution that provides protection to troops in convoys, contains a weapons system platform and can be dismounted and reconfigured on the ground to provide fixed-position armor protection.



Courtesy photo

JUST TESTING— The Multipurpose Troop Transport Carrier System is tested with the Army's Rapid Equipping Force Program in Iraq.

"The Army doesn't have anything that combines the dual functionality of the MTTCS with the modular design that

makes the multiple configurations and roles possible," said Marty Runkle, vice president, TBE Systems Group. "The MTTCS is the only modular solution that adds this level of troop protection on any flatbed transport truck in the Army's inventory."

The MTTCS's modular design allows it to be mounted on a 2 and a half, 5 or 7-ton truck with a passenger capacity between four to 16 Soldiers. The MTTCS provides maximum protection against fragments from most improvised explosive devices and small arms fire up to 7.62-mm AP, contains an integrated roll cage and crew seating with safety harnesses to protect troops in the event of a roll over, features an air conditioner and provides two gun mounts and 14 gun ports.

When dismounted from the truck, the MTTCS can be reconfigured on the

ground and used for protection at checkpoints, as a hospital, storage facility or tactical operation center.

The original idea for the system came from Science Applications International Corporation.

"They brought us their concept and we engineered a functional, producible design and built a prototype unit that immediately was placed into an operational evaluation program," Runkle said. The MTTCS has undergone rigorous testing from the Army Test and Evaluation Command at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., and spent two months being evaluated by the Army's Rapid Equipping Force Program in Iraq.

Teledyne Brown plans to build the MTTCS at its 110,000 square foot manufacturing facility at its headquarters on Sparkman Drive in Huntsville.

Research laboratory again wins annual award

Army recognizes center for accomplishments

The Research Development and Engineering Center has again won the top Army research and development award in the large development laboratory category.

The Department of the Army Research and Development Laboratory of the Year Awards program evaluates Army laboratories on technical accomplishment and impact on the Army, management accomplishment and benefit, and contribution to the Global War on Terrorism or Homeland Security.

RDEC also received the RDL of the Year Award in 2003 and previously had been awarded the Research and Development Organization of the Year Award in 2000, 1994, 1993, 1989, 1985 and 1981. The center also has received 16 RDO Excellence Awards between fiscal 1976 and fiscal 2002.

The center developed and demonstrated in fiscal '04 the first Close-In Active Protection System for a moving vehicle against rocket-propelled grenades fired from short

range and multiple RPGs fired at nearly simultaneous times. The CIAPS radar is fast, accurate, sensitive and robust, and the CIAPS interceptor performance is highly repeatable. Breakthroughs by the center in microwave radar hardware architecture, tracking and fire control algorithms, and interceptor lethality optimization have resulted in exceptionally high-threat kill rates. PM Stryker BCT is integrating CIAPS onto Stryker BCT for a field demonstration, and CIAPS technology is ready for transition to Future Combat System.

The center has significantly improved the Army's ability to protect moving light vehicles from RPG attacks from the minimum arming range and from multiple RPGs fired at nearly simultaneous times. Most importantly, with CIAPS, a solution exists today for protection of the American Soldier.

In fiscal '04, the center completed the first cycle of a novel and innovative software engineering intern program to attract high potential employee candidates and expedite the development of their software engineering skills. The Federal Career Intern Program was used to accelerate the hiring

process. And to attract high potential employees, the center used its S&T Re-invention Laboratory Personnel Demonstration Program to provide flexibility in establishing starting salaries, offering hiring bonuses to new employees, and rewarding outstanding performance with substantial accelerated salary increases. In the last three years, the center has hired the top graduate from the University of Alabama-Huntsville's electrical and computer engineering department. To expedite the development of software engineering skills, the center interns are given carefully selected laboratory assignments and begin their federal career with attractive integrated work experiences and an on-site classroom instruction program. In the third year of government service, 14 successful interns were awarded a master's in software engineering from UAH, and all 14 are currently government employees working in the center.

The center significantly increased aircraft and crew survivability by developing, demonstrating, and deploying multiple quick responses in the Global War on Terrorism. Three examples were highlighted in the oral presentation to the Army Laboratory Assessment Group in August 2005. In the first example, a requirement was identified for increased aircraft awareness during covert nighttime operations in the ongoing war effort in Iraq and Afghanistan. In 42 days, the center developed, demonstrated and delivered to theater 250 Apache and 160 Kiowa anti-collision IR strobe kits, providing the required situational awareness. With the

fielding of the anti-collision IR strobe, there have been no mid-air collisions during covert night operations.

In the second example, a requirement was identified to improve the ability to provide suppressive fire from rotorcraft. The land-based M240 machine gun had been adapted to provide suppressive fire at each UH-60 window and on the CH-47 ramp but repeatedly jammed before 20 rounds were fired. In eight weeks, the center developed, demonstrated and fielded 840 improved M240 ammunition cans to prevent jamming problems. Final testing demonstrated 30,000 rounds from a UH-60 and 24,000 rounds from a CH-47 fired without a jam.

In the third example, shortly after a CH-47 was shot down by a SAM and 10 days after Dr. Tom Killion, deputy assistant secretary for research and technology, identified RDEC as the place where "if anyone can make this work quickly, it is the folks at AMRDEC," a flare dispense cable was designed, fabricated and fielded for the entire CH-47 fleet. Since the fielding, no CH-47s have been lost to SAMs.

The Research and Development Laboratory of the Year Awards program was established in 1975 to honor Army research and development labs that have made outstanding contributions in science and technology. Claude Bolton, assistant secretary of the Army for acquisition, logistics and technology, presented the 2005 award to center director Dr. Bill McCorkle during an award ceremony held in Arlington, Va., on Oct. 2. (*Research Development and Engineering Center release*)

Twelve complete logistics training at depot

By ROBERT V. JONES
For the Rocket

CORPUS CHRISTI ARMY DEPOT, Texas — A Phase 1 graduation ceremony was conducted Dec. 16 at the AMCOM LAR University campus located at Corpus Christi Army Depot.

During 10 weeks of intense training, 11 AMCOM logistics assistance representatives and one RDEC mechanical engineer completed the first of two phases of

advanced technical training at LAR-U Corpus Christi. This advanced technical training program at the depot has established itself as a premier aviation maintenance training program in the Army.

This training provides a unique opportunity for logistics assistance representatives and depot technicians to develop and hone the advanced technical skills required to maintain weapons systems in use today and meet the challenges of Army

aviation in the future. LAR-U is continuing to provide advanced depot level aviation training to worldwide AMCOM field logistics assistance personnel.

LAR-U training is divided into two phases. Phase 1 consists of 10 weeks of primarily classroom training and is designed to provide LARs, technicians, engineers and depot technicians with advanced technical training in the classroom as well as thorough, structured practical exercises. Phase 2 con-

sists of 13 weeks of hands-on training accomplished primarily through a structured rotation plan that rotates the trainee to various work centers and processes throughout the depot. This training program coupled with knowledge of depot techniques and skills gives the LAR, the Army's technical expert, additional insight and knowledge to make important technical decisions that directly affect airworthiness, readiness and safety of the aviation fleet. LAR-

U has the support of IMMC/AMCOM's senior leadership and the commander of Corpus Christi Army Depot, Col. Timothy Sassenrath.

The Phase 1 graduates included AMCOM logistics assistance representatives Gert Bindrich, Michael Konor, Kenneth Pearce, Dale Dawson, Dwight Kenon, Richard Krimmer, Chazz Pope, Linda Parker, Tom Newby, Adan Garcia, Steve Palmer and RDEC engineer Travis Massa.

Depot toured by Pennsylvania base development team



Courtesy photo

LETTERKENNY VISIT— Pennsylvania officials touring the maintenance facility at Letterkenny include from left, in the forefront, Art Stephens, Dan Gunderson and Dr. John Gray. Behind them are Suzanne Chubb and Mike Ross.

CHAMBERSBURG, Pa. — Congressional staff from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania visited Letterkenny Army Depot on Dec. 15.

They included Art Stephens, deputy chief of staff for Gov. Edward Rendell; Suzanne Chubb, assistant to the deputy chief of staff; Dan Gunderson, executive deputy secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development; and Joseph Spielbauer, director of Pennsylvania Base Development.

Accompanying them were Franklin County community leaders, L. Michael Ross, chairman of Franklin County Area Development Corporation; and Robert Zullinger,

Franklin County Base Development.

The group received an overview briefing describing Letterkenny's capabilities and economic impact upon the community. A tour of the maintenance facilities highlighted the depot's many resources and commodities.

"We were impressed with the diversity of the missions at Letterkenny," Stephens said. "It is clear that the cooperation of federal, state and local partners have made a difference.

"We in the Rendell administration are looking forward to continued partnerships with the local community and Letterkenny leadership in order to expand the workload at Let-

terkenny and enhance the opportunities at the installation for the benefits of the commonwealth and the country."

Gunderson was also impressed with the overview of Letterkenny and what he saw firsthand.

"Letterkenny is a world-class operation that has positioned itself to meet the most sophisticated needs of today's military," Gunderson said. "Governor Rendell knows the economic impact that Letterkenny has in Pennsylvania and the tremendous potential for attracting new defense and high-tech businesses that will create competitive compensation for our residents." (Letterkenny release)

Games collection shows support for troops

Community gives leisure activities

By KARI HAWKINS

Staff writer

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A simple question – What do you need? – led to a last-minute holiday donation drive that netted more than 2,000 games, cards and crossword puzzle books for Soldiers serving in Iraq and other places around the world.

“Operation Soldier Games,” coordinated and implemented by the Quality of Life Small Group of the Huntsville/Madison County Chamber of Commerce’s Leadership Class 19, was planned as a result of a Leadership Class visit to Redstone Arsenal during their Federal Day program in early December.

“We were having breakfast with Soldiers on Federal Day when class members asked two of the Soldiers what it is they are not getting enough of when stationed in Iraq or other places,” said Faye Wishik, a member of the Quality of Life Small Group.

“They told us they need more free time activities. Books, puzzles and games. And they never seem to get enough playing cards.”

Those two Soldiers – Sgt. 1st Class Michael Johnson and Sgt. 1st Class Vincent Henderson, both serving at Redstone Arsenal – have done tours of duty in Iraq.

Once they heard of the need, the 52 members of Leadership Class 19 quickly agreed to collect games, cards, puzzles and other easy-to-carry activities. Word of the game drive was spread quickly by leadership class members and through the media. The games were collected in time for Christmas delivery to active duty, Reserve and National Guard Soldiers in deployed units.

“We are sending the games with a letter from us wishing the Soldiers a Merry Christmas,” Wishik said. “Since these Soldiers will not be able to come home over the holidays, this is one small way we can show our support, and thank them for their sacrifice and service.”

Outside the Huntsville/Madison County Visitors Center on Church Street on a cold, sunny day, Johnson, Henderson and Wishik were joined by Sgt. 1st Class



Photo by Kari Hawkins

TAKING INVENTORY– From left Master Sgt. Anthony Sheff, Sgt. 1st Class Vincent Henderson, Sgt. 1st Class Michael Johnson and Sgt. 1st Class Rochelle Witherspoon pull games from the back of a Humvee so they can be counted as part of Operation Soldier Games.

Rochelle Witherspoon, Master Sgt. Anthony Sheff and Leadership Class 19 members Brandi Quick and Candy Burnett to organize and pack the games, puzzles and cards.

Becky Pillsbury, wife of post commander Maj. Gen. Jim Pillsbury, provided assistance to the group in planning the game drive. Army Community Service made sure the items were sent to Soldiers serving overseas.

“This is so special,” Witherspoon said as she separated games and cards into different piles for packing. “I am so impressed.”

The game drive has been so successful that Leadership Class 19 plans to continue it into January. Games, cards and other activities can be donated at the Huntsville/Madison County Chamber of Commerce at 225 Church St., and the Visitors Center at 500 Church St. The leadership class is also looking into the possibility of organizing game drives for Soldiers all across the country.

Sheff, who has served overseas and has orders to return to Afghanistan in January, hopes to see some of the games during his free time while on deployment.

“Having games like these to occupy your free time helps to take your mind off the daily grind,” he said. “It’s good for Soldiers to have games and cards and things like this to help them relax and enjoy themselves when they are so far away from home.”

Military retirees, community share Christmas spirit

Event bears gifts for youngsters

By KARI HAWKINS
Staff writer
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Clutching a Christmas bear and wearing a red dress trimmed with white fur, 4-year-old Bethany Moore was all smiles as she sat on Santa's lap and told him she wanted a purple Barbie jeep for Christmas.

"It goes fast!" she said. Santa Claus promised Bethany he was getting ready for his annual visit to her house.

"I'll see you on Christmas Eve. Don't tell anyone. It's our secret," he whispered into Bethany's ear.

But, Bethany couldn't keep the secret from her mom and dad and brother, 11-year-old Hunter.

"Daddy, you may need to go sit on Santa's lap, too," Bethany said as she looked up at her father, Army Reserve Staff Sgt. Steven Moore of Tusculum.

"You can tell him what you want for Christmas."

About 300 children took their turn sitting on Santa's lap during the second annual Operation Christmas Bear, organized by the North Alabama Veterans Coalition in conjunction with the Association of the U.S. Army, Army Community Service and several sponsors. It was held on a Saturday afternoon at the Cahaba Shrine Temple just a few weeks before Christmas.

Children of military from all branches of the service as well as children of DoD civilians who are deployed to combat zones were invited to attend Operation Christmas Bear. Each child was



Photo by Kari Hawkins

SHARING A CHRISTMAS SECRET— Mrs. Claus (Janett Beasley of Huntsville) whispers in the ear of 4-year-old Jalonni Gadist as the two share a moment in front of a sparkling Christmas tree surrounded by a miniature train. Jalonni, who is holding a Christmas Bear given to her by Santa Claus, is the daughter of Staff Sgt. Tina Paton, whose work at MEDDAC earned her NCO of the Quarter during the third quarter of 2005.

given a stuffed bear with a "My (Mom/Dad) is My Hero" nametag and camouflage scarf.

Besides their special time with Santa, children also enjoyed visiting with Mrs. Claus, decorating Christmas cards for Soldiers or other family members, getting their face painted, sliding down a big slide and jumping in the moon bounce, watching a train display and a magic show, and eating pizza.

James "Checkers" Robinson, a Cahaba Shrine clown wearing a vest and pants featuring Sponge Bob characters, spent the afternoon making balloon critters for children.

"What is it?" Checkers asked 4-year-old Jorge Medina as he twisted and shaped a blue balloon. "You find them in the flowers."

Jorge was too shy to answer. But his adult friend, Spc. Jessica Roman, guessed correctly when she said "a lady bug."

While Checkers often makes swords for boys and puppies for girls, he chose to make a girl turtle for 3-year-old Laura Vanwinkle, the daughter of Michong and Warrant Officer Walter Vanwinkle, who is stationed at Redstone Arsenal.

Balloon critters weren't only for children. Clown Steve "Bubbles" Ackermann made a lady bug for Huntsville Mayor Loretta Spencer to wear on her wrist. Spencer, along with Becky Pillsbury, wife of AMCOM commander Maj. Gen. Jim Pillsbury, attended the event to share their wishes for a "Merry Christmas"

with military families who live in Huntsville and North Alabama.

Operation Christmas Bear gave Spencer an opportunity to show servicemembers and their families "how much I respect what they are doing and the sacrifices they are making," she said.

"It was great to see all the children happy and smiling, but it was also sad to hear them say that all they wanted for Christmas was to have their parent come home. I hope the fun they had at the event helped bring a little more joy to their Christmas holiday this year."

Six-year-old Trinity Mathew of Madison spent time during Operation Christmas Bear making a Christmas card for her stepdad, Master Sgt. Dennis Hubbard, who left a month ago for a tour in Afghanistan, leaving his wife, Stacey, to care for Trinity and her brothers, baby Quenton and 14-year-old Deandre.

Volunteer Jennifer Clark of Bob Jones High School painted Christmas decorations on the face of 4-year-old Beverly Robinson, the daughter of Rejeane and Staff Sgt. Anthony Robinson, stationed at Redstone Arsenal, while Mrs. Claus (Janett Beasley of Huntsville) spent time talking to children about what Santa is really like.

"A lot of the children ask me what Santa does because he is so busy," Mrs. Claus said. "Some of them are a little scared of Santa. But if I can go with them when they go see Santa, they are usually OK."



Photo by Kari Hawkins

HAVING A LITTLE FUN OF HIS OWN— It was hard to tell who was having more fun at Operation Christmas Bear — the talking chipmunk (also known as David Carney, a retired National Guard sergeant fist class and an organizer of the event) or the children who laughed at the antics of chipmunk and his Santa and Christmas bear puppets. Carney spent the afternoon sharing his brand of Christmas cheer with the children of Soldiers.

Eight-year-old twins Ashley and Christen Grace, whose father, Marine Stephen Marcos, is stationed in Iraq, and 10-year-old Dixie Riggins and 12-year-old Curtis Riggins, whose stepfather, Sgt. Kevin Andries, is also stationed in Iraq, traveled from Arab to get their picture taken with Santa. Holly Andries, mother of Dixie and Curtis, brought them to the event.

The older children weren't shy about telling Santa what they wanted for Christmas. On the top of their lists was the safe return of

their fathers from Iraq. But like all children, they also had dreams of special toys they hoped they would get for Christmas.

"I told Santa I wanted a double bass drum set so I can annoy my mom. She thinks all my music is a racket," joked 13-year-old Emmanuel Frye, whose father, Lt. Col. Dr. Ronald Frye, works at Fox Army Health Center.

Santa counted in Spanish and said "Feliz Navidad! Merry Christmas!" to 12-year-old Logan, 9-year-old Dominic and 4-year-old Cheyenne, the children of National Guard Sgt. Kirk Frazier. He told the Yohnke children — 5-year-old twins Madison and Brook, and 6-year-old Cheyenne — to "be good for mommy. That's what mommy wants" while their dad, Sgt. Daniel Yohnke, serves his country in Iraq.

Many of the children spent time being entertained by Huntsville magician Russell Davis while others — like 2-year-old Aidan Johnson, the son of Vickie and Spc. James Johnson, who is in basic training at Fort Jackson, S.C., and 3-year-old Kaleb Hankerson, son of Kim and Staff Sgt. Tony Hankerson, enjoyed the 20-foot-by-40-foot train village that included several trains, bridges, towns and depots.

Other children, like 3-month-old Alexandria Hayes, daughter of Barbara and Sgt. 1st Class Dana Hayes, who is stationed at Redstone Arsenal, just enjoyed

See Bears on page 13



Photo by Kari Hawkins

A SPECIAL VISIT FOR MAYOR SPENCER— Huntsville Mayor Loretta Spencer stopped by Operation Christmas Bear to visit with the children of Soldiers and the volunteers who made Operation Christmas Bear possible. During her visit, she also was entertained by Steve "Bubbles" Ackermann, who made her a ladybug to wear around her wrist. Ackermann is the director of the Cahaba Shrine's clown group.



Photo by Kari Hawkins

SITTING ON SANTA'S LAP— One of the best parts of Operation Christmas Bear was the time children were given to talk with Santa Claus and to sit on his lap. Six-year-old Cheyenne Yohnke and her sisters, 5-year-old twins Madison, center, and Brook, right, all of Decatur, enjoyed spending time with Santa. They each promised to be good for their mommy, Amanda Yohnke, while their father, Sgt. Daniel Yohnke, serves in Iraq.

Santa spreads cheer throughout housing area

Children enjoy visit on pickup truck

By KARI HAWKINS
Staff writer
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It wasn't hard for 5-year-old Malik Arnold to answer Santa's favorite question.

Sitting on Santa's lap in the back of a pickup on the road outside his Redstone Arsenal home, Malik responded without hesitation when he was asked "What do you want for Christmas?"

"I want a Power Ranger," Malik said, smiling at the man with the curly white

beard and red suit.

But when Santa asked what he should bring Malik's mother, Staff Sgt. Theresa Arnold of 832nd Bravo Company, the little boy had to think for a minute.

"She's too big for toys," he finally replied before running off to rejoin his mother.

Malik was among about 200 children who braved cold morning temperatures, many in their pajamas and stocking feet, to talk with Santa during the annual Santa Run through Redstone Arsenal. Santa's visit to the Arsenal communities was hosted by the Sergeants Major Association, and escorted by fire engines from the Vincent Fire Station and military police.

For some children, Santa's visit was a great excuse to run around outside, get a little candy from elves and jump up in the back of a pickup truck to share Santa's lap with friends. Eleven-year-old Peighton Little and 3-year-old Avery Norris, children of Sgt. Hendon and Terra Norris, joined their neighbor friends 11-year-old Trayvon Paton and 4-year-old Jalonni Gadist, children of Staff Sgt. Tina Paton, to chase Santa's pickup through their cul-de-sac.

With candy in hand and rosy cheeks, the children took a few minutes to sit on Santa's lap and then ran off to watch Santa and his entourage continue through the neighborhood.

From one of their youngest guests - 8-month-old Xavier Blanco, son of Staff Sgt. Stanley and Shantel Blanco - to one of their oldest patrons - Chief Warrant Officer Harry Hobbs of the 59th Ordnance Brigade, who tried to give Santa's volunteers a donation - Santa, his elves and members of the Sergeants Major Association enjoyed delighting children of all



Photo by Kari Hawkins

NEVER TOO YOUNG— Eight-month-old Xavier Blanco, son of Staff Sgt. Stanley and Shantel Blanco, isn't scared at all to sit on Santa's lap. Xavier didn't say much to Santa, but Santa promised to visit him on Christmas Eve.

ages with blaring fire truck sirens, lots of candy and promises of a Christmas Eve visit.

"I'm enjoying my tour through Redstone and spreading good cheer," Santa said.

Even the parents of the children were excited about Santa's visit.

"This is great!" said Staff Sgt. Steven Delcore of the 832nd Ordnance Battalion as his son, 9-year-old Alexander, hopped down from the pickup truck with two candy canes clutched in his hand. Alexander hoped Santa would bring him a pack of Yu-Gi-Oh cards on Christmas Eve.

Staff Sgt. DeeDee Reid was not sur-

prised when her daughter, 6-year-old Tara, asked Santa for a cat for Christmas.

"Her cat ran away," Reid said. "She's been feeding a stray cat."

When the Abel brothers - Martin, 9, and Jamar, 7, children of Capt. Martin and Tina Abel, walked out to Santa's pickup, they were greeted by that age-old question: "Have you been good this year?"

After the boys assured Santa they had been good, he asked them what they wanted for Christmas. The answer: new bikes.

"I'm pretty sure if you let your mommy and daddy know then you will get those bikes," Santa replied. He then gave each boy heaping handfuls of candy.

Outside the Nulk home, Santa greeted 8-year-old Blair, the daughter of Col. Ray and Missy Nulk. The third grader asked Santa for a sewing machine, and then the two talked about Santa's reindeer.

"Reindeer all have bright noses," Blair told Santa.

Gently correcting her, Santa said Rudolph was the only one with a bright nose.

"He's a special reindeer," Santa explained. "All the other reindeers pull the sleigh and go fast. Rudolph only comes on special occasions."

At the Fil residence, 10-year-old Mary, daughter of Maj. Gen. Joe and Wendy Fil, convinced Santa she had been good for the year, although her older sister, 14-year-old Rebecca, wasn't so sure. While Mary wanted a game for her Game Boy for Christmas, Rebecca asked for success in passing her ninth-grade exams.

After asking Rebecca if she had studied, Santa assured her she would be successful.

"Do you know why I know that? Because I'm Santa," he said. "I know you are doing well because I am Santa Claus."



Courtesy photo

Better watch out

Santa visits children of the Trinity Day Care during the Dec. 8 luncheon of the American Society of Military Comptrollers. The children entertained the attendees with Christmas songs at the Trinity Personal Growth Center.

Military helps military through chapel project



Photo by Skip Vaughn

SANTA'S BEEN HERE— Bicentennial Chapel member Sonya West and her daughter Jordan, 3, admire the presents collected for the Veterans Angel Tree.

Congregations collect gifts for veterans home

By SKIP VAUGHN
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Christmas presents of various shapes and sizes were piled along the walls of the assembly room at Bicentennial Chapel.

They represented the outpouring from the "Veterans Angel Tree" project, a joint venture between the Catholic and Protestant congregations to contribute gifts to the residents of Tut Fann State Veterans Home. "I was overwhelmed the first day I walked in," said Sonya West, one of the two volunteer coordinators for the project, as she surveyed the scene. She represented the Protestant congregation; and the other coordinator, Donna Ragucci, represented the Catholic congregation.

Beginning about Nov. 20 they put together an angel tree for the 149 residents, including five women, of the veterans home. Between the two congregations and community members, every angel was adopted. About 745 packages were collected to deliver to the veterans home Dec. 17.

"I think the response shows the true meaning of this season," West said. "And if anybody's doubting what Christmas is about, they should just come here and take a look. It's overwhelming."

West had help from her husband, 1st Sgt. Thomas West of the NCO Academy, and their two daughters:

Jordan, 3, and Jennie, 5.

The project had the full blessing of Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Larry Lawrence, the Garrison chaplain. Patty Wilson, religious education coordinator, said she was impressed by the many gifts.

"It is just amazing what people have done," Wilson said.



Courtesy photo

Giving staffers

Members of AMCOM G-3 wrap gifts for the Garrison Angel Tree Program. The G-3 adopted six angels this year, representing children of military families stationed at Redstone Arsenal. Clockwise from left are Carly Sinur, Kim Stenberg, Rebecca White and Kathy Engle.

AMC's top enlisted Soldier prepares for change

Army Materiel Command insight shared for Soldiers, work force

By JULIE FREDERICK
For the Rocket

Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel Elder of Army Materiel Command discussed working for AMC, his mission, America's Soldiers, and base realignment and closure during an interview Dec. 12 with the Redstone Rocket.

Tell us about yourself, your family and the background that you are coming from.

"Sure, I'll soon be celebrating my 24th anniversary in the Army. My wife and I celebrated our 22nd anniversary last month. We are the typical Army family, you know, joined the Army from Southern California, traveled all around overseas and stateside, all the great spots I think.

"I am coming to the Army Materiel Command right out of Fort Hood, Texas. I was the command sergeant major for the 13th Corps Support Command, that's the logistics element for the 3rd Armored Corps also located at Fort Hood.

"I've been with the command since July. Since we held our change of responsibility ceremony, I've been out visiting the AMC activities, installations, people and work force. I've also been visiting our customers, the war fighters, divisions and Soldiers that use the items and materiel AMC maintains and procures."

What is your mission or your role as AMC command sergeant major?

"During part of the interview process, and before I was getting ready to assume my duties, (AMC commander) Gen. Benjamin Griffin laid out some expectations to me, and they were pretty clear.

"He wants all non-commissioned officers of AMC to be the face of AMC to the field and to our commands. Each of our subordinate commands, like here at AMCOM, have command sergeants major; and one of our responsibilities is to take our field experience and knowledge from down at the Soldier/troop level and share that back. One aspect of what we hope to do is represent the Soldier in all that goes on in what we do.

"Another area that he has asked me to focus on is to represent AMC back to the field, to be the spokesman of AMC to the Soldier, our ultimate customer. As I go around and talk to people, usually when I have a group of Soldiers in a room, and I'm talking to them about what we do for them I ask the question, 'What is AMC and how are we doing for you?' Usually it gets kind of quiet. There are many people in our Army, many of our leaders and people in industry who understand what AMC does, but if you look at it, our ultimate customers don't always understand what we do. So, what I try to do is inform them how AMC supports them. Then I try to develop a long term dialogue with them to help provide feedback to us. We offer ways to communicate, and information on what we are doing, the cutting edge things we see on the horizon. So being that link to the Soldier in the field is important.

"The third thing is to work with senior leadership especially senior enlisted leaders, of all the services, and share with

them the same types of things: what AMC is doing for them, what they could be providing for us. I try to work programs where Soldiers, particularly those who have recently returned from operations and were using our stuff, are able to get involved in the feedback system. We want them to either tell us, 'Hey you did a great job, we appreciate what you are doing,' or 'Hey maybe you could do something a little bit better.'"

What are some of the major concerns for the Soldiers out in the field that you have run across in talking to them?

"You know, the great thing about Soldiers is if you ask them their opinion, they are going to tell you. The problem is this is hard stuff sometimes. You line up 10 Soldiers and ask them the same question and you will get 10 completely different answers. What I have to do is make sure I get at what the real issues are when they talk about things that are not going well. Let me tell you, it is not all negative. I've heard many good news stories. There are many things that people are appreciative of. There's nothing better than being in a room of Soldiers and a young man stands up to say 'hey, you know that Humvee you guys gave me, I was in it in Iraq, an IED blew up beside me and that Humvee saved my butt.' My general sense is that Soldiers are motivated. I see them as they are getting ready to go overseas, as they are getting ready to deploy. I just came from the 10th Mountain Division, they are getting ready to go to Afghanistan and another portion has just returned from Iraq after a one year deployment. I talked with them and their leaders. The thing that they, as leaders, are concerned about is preserving life and limb of their Soldiers. The things that they are concerned with are whether they are going to have enough time to get issued all of the equipment we are going to give to them and then train with it in advance and get proficient on it. So, I think they have got some very important concerns.

"I think there is generally a lot of confidence out there. Soldiers are confident in their equipment, themselves and their leaders. Those that are getting ready to go know that they have a mission and they are very focused on it. Those who are coming back are very proud of what they have done and the things that they have been a part of ... no matter where they have been — Afghanistan, Iraq or somewhere else like Hurricane Katrina."

What advice would you give to civilians who work for the command? What could they do better to help support the Soldiers?

"Our civilian work force, contractors and government employees, are patriots. Our civilian work force serves our country very similar as our Soldiers. Their uniform may be a little different; they may not march in step or sing in cadence. However, they have the same level of commitment as our Soldiers and it's evident in all that they do. Many of them deploy side-by-side with Soldiers, endure the same, wear the uniform and protective gear, and ride in the same Humvees. But we recognize that they are not Soldiers, and they should be treated as the professionals they are.



Courtesy photo

Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel Elder

"What I have seen from my position as I return back to AMC is that the Army, the Department of Defense, and government service is changing. Whether we like it or not it is going to continue to change. We see some things like NSPS (National Security Personnel System) coming up. We see decisions in BRAC that are causing the force structure to move around. We see QDR (Quadrennial Defense Review) looming on the horizon. And the one thing that's constant in the DoD is change. I think in this respect we are seeing major overhauls in many areas. We have to be open to change.

"Lean and Six Sigma are two strong management tools that we have adopted in the Department of Defense, the Army and the Army Materiel Command. Lean principles are great; it just makes good common sense. You don't have to be a rocket scientist to think about some of these things. We've got to be lean, an efficient organization. It's all about preparing yourself for change, being a part of change and embracing change. If you can do that with your eye to the future, I think you will do well."

How are you and AMC as a command starting to prepare to move here with BRAC?

"Move, what move, is there a move coming up? (Laugh)

"I tell you, we're like everybody; there was a lot of anticipation of the BRAC announcement coming out. AMC has postured itself in preparation for BRAC. Until it became law, other than studying and preparing and maybe standing some BRAC cells up to move, I really don't think there was a lot of moving in a forward direction. I know that a lot of people were waiting on the law before things could happen. I think it's up to the leadership to now start showing the people what they are going to do, fulfilling their expectations. There is a lot of work going on. We still have to await some decisions; like budget, who is going to move in what cycle and when, and when dollars will be allocated. There are still some individual plans that have to be approved, and when those get approved more decisions will be made, but there is a lot of buzz about it. A lot of people talking about it and there's a lot of interest in what will happen next."

How much of an effect do you think the decision to move the AMC headquarters here will have on the Soldiers that you serve?

"I think Soldiers are the least affected by BRAC. Soldiers live the life of a nomad. We pack up our ruck sack and move every couple of years. We've grown accustomed to it; it is part of our nature.

"I believe that many Soldiers that are going to have to move, at least from the AMC headquarters, are really looking forward to it. I think that they are excited about the opportunity to come to the greater Huntsville community.

"We have to remember to not just look at BRAC from an AMC standpoint, but at the big picture.

"With that said, I have a lot more concern for the civilian work force that doesn't traditionally move as often. Many of them have second and third generation roots with their families within these communities. Many of them signed on to serve as a young employee and now they are a seasoned employee with many years of experience and talent. Fort Belvoir (Va.) may be losing a four-star headquarters, but the end result when the tallies are done show it will gain about 4,000 positions. So the temptation is that they don't have to follow AMC but could still possibly stay in the community, not uproot family, children or grandchildren. They might still be able to stay there and still work for a government entity at Fort Belvoir. That gives me a concern. What do we do to overcome that? This is our challenge. First, there are some skill sets that are critical to AMC that we run the risk of losing. You can't just develop some talents in people overnight, although you can through education and time. We have to be careful that we don't lose our entire talent base. I'm sure that the Huntsville community has a great many people that are equally capable and could fill those voids. I'd like to believe that we'd have a good number of people that would come along with us because AMC is a great family."

Can AMC move without its mission being degraded?

"I won't put words in Gen. Griffin's mouth, but he's been asked in forums if AMC can fight the global war, support our nation's Soldiers and move. Gen. Griffin's response is always we can do it. He says our work force is capable of doing this; they are capable of doing more than one thing at a time. We are not going to unplug the phones and shut out the lights and be out of the net for a couple of months while we move. We can't shut down operations. We will probably spread out the moves. I know that we want to move key groups together, so there's a lot of different ways to mitigate that, and Gen. Griffin's very sensitive to that.

"Our nation is at war, we have Soldiers that are engaged today and we cannot stop the services we provide them. For places like Redstone or Letterkenny (Pa.) or Corpus Christi (Texas), we just can't stop, we have to continue our support and we have to move while we do that. It's a tall order, but the CG has the faith and trust and confidence that we have the capabilities to do it."

See Change on page 13

■ Command sergeant major represents headquarters in field

Change

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We are just in a new fiscal year and have just entered into a new calendar year. What are some things that we should see coming from AMC in the future?

“One thing that is happening this fiscal year is, like any good organization when things seem to be kind of moving along, we are going to change. Some reorganization has occurred at the headquarters to be more efficient. I think one of our challenges is communication to the field. Certain pockets of people know very well what we do, certain pockets are well in tune with what goes on in AMC, but at the Soldier level and in the field they don’t have that same understanding. Also, there are probably places in Washington that need to know what AMC does. The way I look at it is if I have a program or product that Soldiers need and I have to work to get that program funded, then it is better for people to understand what those capa-

bilities are and what I do for Soldiers. In a lot of respects the Soldiers need to understand what we do. Those leaders that we interact with need to understand what we do. I think we are going to see, in the near term, a real hard effort in strategic communications to our Soldiers and leaders in our Army, and to our nation about what AMC does.

“Every time I go somewhere, I meet great people and they are doing the nation’s business and a lot of times it goes unsung, or if the story is told, it is only within their own circles. Well, I think we are going to work harder to get those stories out to a larger and probably newer audience that maybe we haven’t been able to reach before. How we are going to do that, I don’t know. I do know there are a lot of people working on it and we’ve got some great leaders, both military and civilian, that are involved.

“We’ve reorganized to be a little bit more efficient in the staff of AMC. We are going to focus hard on our communication down and up and all around, and then I think we’ve really got to pay attention to

the ongoing operations. What is it going to look like in ’06 and beyond, what are the support requirements going to be, what are we going to hand over to contractors; all of that affects our business and what we do. We can’t get into a groove, we can’t think ‘OK, we are in a battle rhythm and we are going to stay like this.’ We have really got to pay attention because there may be some changes on the horizon and we have to adjust to support.

“I think another thing that we are doing that you may see this year is a change to AMC’s face to the field. The Army Field Support command is also undergoing transformation. I think we are going to see some of that follow through this year as they posture themselves to represent AMC at the Soldier level, at every place where Soldiers are generally gathered whether it is deployed in theater, back in the states or at a training base. The Army Field Support command is really going to be highlighted over the next 12 months as they restructure to support Army transformation.”

Is there a message that you would like to get out to the Redstone Arsenal community?

“As we prepare and progress, I will always ensure that we take care of our work force, Soldiers and civilians. They are being considered in all things throughout these moves. I really believe that as painful as it seems or as people anticipate change, I believe it’s going to be full of great new opportunities for a lot of people, and a lot of different communities, like here in Huntsville, at Redstone Arsenal, even for Fort Belvoir. It is a great

opportunity for everyone as they grow in size and build new buildings which may energize the economy, spark it a little bit in some places. I think there is a lot of goodness in this, no matter how we decide to do it. It’s a foregone conclusion, it’s done, we just have to figure it out and get on with it.”

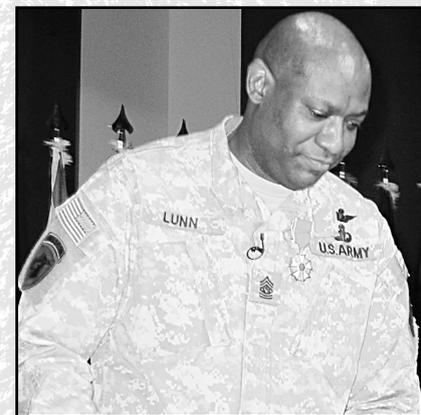


Photo by Skip Vaughn

Lunn leaves

Command Sgt. Maj. Gregory Lunn leaves the stage at Bob Jones Auditorium after his farewell ceremony Dec. 12. He served as command sergeant major for Redstone Arsenal and the Aviation and Missile Command the past two years and leaves to become the senior enlisted adviser at the U.S. Transportation Command, a joint four-star command at Scott Air Force Base, Ill. His new boss is Air Force Gen. Norton Swartz.

■ Children of military visit Santa during Operation Christmas Bear

Bears

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the Christmas outing with their parents.

“The children really loved seeing Santa Claus,” said retired Sgt. 1st Class David Carney, who helped organize Operation Christmas Bear.

“But this event was really more about bringing military families together and showing them that the community cares. It is really important for us to show our support to these families and their Soldiers. When it comes to supporting the

military, Huntsville is the most phenomenal city in the U.S.”

As vice president of AUSA, a member of the Veterans Coalition and a member of the Cahaba Shrine, Carney has worked with many volunteers, especially military retirees, who are always eager to be involved in programs that support the local military community.

“Those of us who have been in the military know what it means to be away from family during the holidays,” he said. “We want to help today’s Soldiers who are serving their country by sharing the Christmas spirit with their families.”

Sponsors of Operation Christmas Bear were: Air Defense Artillery Association RSA Chapter, ASMDA, AUSA, Anteon Corp., Applebee’s Sports Group, Army Community Service, BELZON Inc., Boeing, CSC, Cahaba Shrine, City of Huntsville, Chamber of Commerce of Huntsville/Madison County, CD’s Associates, COLSA, DESE, Dynetics, Dominos Pizza, ERC Inc., Goodrich, Gray Research Inc., Hertha Technology Inc., Inergi, InfoPro, Lockheed Martin, Millennium Systems Services Inc., NDIA Tennessee Valley Chapter, N&L Industries, Northern Alabama Crisis Services, Orbital Sciences Corp., Raytheon, Redstone Arsenal, SAIC, SERG, Sea Wire and Cable Inc., Sparta Inc., Sverdrup Technology, Teledyne Solutions Inc., Tyco Fire & Building Products CPVC Div., Voiture 1012, The William Wilson Co. Inc., Westar Aerospace and Defense Group. Individual sponsors were: James Burruss, Bill and Mary Hogan, Tom Kahlert, John A. Robinson, and Gerald and Carol Wittenstein.



Photo by Kari Hawkins

A LITTLE CHRISTMAS PAINT— Volunteer Carol Jones paints Christmas lights on the forehead of 4-year-old Grace Palenapa. Grace attended Operation Christmas Bear with her mother, Yulie Palenapa, while her father, Reserve Maj. Jay Palenapa, was in Birmingham doing drill duty.

Climber approaches mountain goal one step at a time

Rappel record attempt on horizon for summer

By DAN O'BOYLE
For the Rocket

In his weekly role, Dirk Siron works to live the motto: "One shot, one kill," as a TOW missile engineer in the Close Combat Weapon System Project Office.

But as next summer approaches, he also is tightly focused on a personal motto: "One mountain, one goal."

Specifically, Mount Thor in Canada's Auyuittuq National Park will be the site where Siron and his other seven team members attempt to set a world rappel record. The Canadian National Park service has to grant permission to the team for the attempt first.

Siron was part of a seven-member team that tried to set the record in July 2004.

"I wasn't recruited, but I happened to be in the right place at the right time," he said. "I was thankful that I was thought worthy of being on the trip. Plus, I had the money and the built-up leave time."

The expedition team had no support crew and no sponsor and did everything necessary at a price tag of \$3,500 each.

"In that summer of 2004, we had possibly the longest rope in the world," Siron said. "That rope was specially made in Canada by Esprit Ropes Inc., measuring 9 mm (0.35 inches) in diameter, 5,784 feet in length and made of static kernmantle nylon."

That rope, in fact, proved to be but one of the many challenges that the team faced, as the rope had to be transported in 80- to 90-pound back packs from the park entrance at Overlord to the expedition base camp at Mount Thor's base.

"All told, we had to hike 75 miles to get the rope, a backpack filled with camping gear, fuel and rigging supplies, and a backpack filled with food for a month to the base," Siron said. "We had to cover the 15-mile route five times to get each of the rope, gear and food-filled backpacks to the base. It was mind-numbing."

In poignant testimony to the invincible Mount Thor, when the team abandoned the rappel attempt and had just finished derigging the rope, the weather cleared.

From their base camp, the team members had estimated that it would take five days to get to Thor's summit, rig and drop



Photo by Dirk Siron

FATE TEMPTERS— Redstone's Dirk Siron was part of a seven-member team that attempted to set a rappelling world record in 2004, and will try again this year.

the rope. In reality, it took 12 days, with the mountain's 45-degree, car-sized boulder-filled scree slope proving to be more than expected. What's more, on the first day of the summit assault, an avalanche was encountered.

"In the park, there is nothing but rocks," Siron said. "There are no trees and the wind cuts right through. Once we decided to abandon the attempt, all that we could think about was getting off of the mountain alive."

The rocky terrain was covered with lichen, which is OK under dry conditions, but slippery and dangerous when wet.

"I started training in February 2004 by wearing a backpack wherever I went, including to work, gradually increasing the weight until the pack weighed 100 pounds. I also climbed 1,500 feet of rope per week," Siron said. "I got some pretty funny looks, when I would walk in from the parking lot with that backpack, as well as wearing it to meetings and on test ranges.

But I needed to take advantage of every opportunity to train. It may have been more psychological than anything, but I knew that this was going to be one of

the hardest things that I ever did in my life.

"I wore that backpack everywhere, except to the bathroom. I have my limits. I also took five-mile hikes during the week and 14- to 20-mile hikes on weekends."

Siron and the team's 2006 goal is to best the current world rappel record of 3,627 feet, set by four British Royal Marines who rappelled down the Cleveland, England's Boulby Potash Mine in 1993.

"I have been kind of miffed," Siron said. "These big, tough Royal Marines did this in the ventilation shaft of a Potash mine, Dark Matter Research Facility in the UK and I was thinking to myself that they probably took an elevator back to the top. Since returning from Mount Thor I rappelled off of El Capitan in California's Yosemite National Park. Now, there's only one thing left to do."

El Capitan is a 2,650-foot rappel.

Siron, 47, has also rappelled off the new River Gorge Bridge in West Virginia — 876 feet — and the Black Canyon in Gunnison, Colo. — a 1,570-foot rappel.

Compellingly enough, Mount

Thor — which bears the same name as the Norse God of Thunder, War and Strength — has been the answer to Siron's question.

"Although it was in the summer of 2004, we were well above the Arctic Circle, with daytime highs only in the 40s," Siron said. "It's hard to adjust and keep on schedule, because the sun never sets and the mosquitoes attack viciously and relentlessly."

Siron said that for the first time in 15 years, he wore a wristwatch — solar-powered, on military time and synchronized by satellite signal. He would also pull a headband down over his eyes during sleep hours, "because if you wake up in the middle of the night, the sun is still shining."

During that expedition, the team had a satellite phone, but the written instructions were lost on the way to the park and the team could not get it to work. The team was incommunicado for 31 days.

"Planning for the food, gear and supplies on a month-long effort like this is crucial," Siron said. "We also knew that we would encounter quick sand,

have to make numerous river crossings and might have polar bear encounters."

On the way up to Thor's summit, a camp dubbed "Meat-grinder" was established, as well as one aptly named "The Donner camp" since they were snowed in and running out of food during the three days they camped there.

When the team did finally summit, they had been gone from base camp for nine days. Then as quickly as the weather cleared, it worsened.

"Now we're snowed in on the summit," Siron said. "When we got back to our base camp, we were completely exhausted. Altogether, I lost about 25 pounds on what I call the Mount Thor diet."

"Surprisingly, I have a healthy fear of heights. Heights are scary and intimidating. But that is a fear that I felt I could overcome. That healthy fear keeps me sharp. The events of Sept. 11 had a lot to do with my desire to do what some might consider extreme. Sept. 11 taught me that life is short and that we need to grab every opportunity to enjoy life to its fullest. Plus, I wanted to show my kids that even an old man like myself should never stop trying to better himself and challenge himself."

Siron said that like any aircraft landing that you walk away from is a good one, any caving or rappelling activity that is completed safely is a good one. His personalized license plate reads "OFFROPE," which is a vertical cavers' safety term, meaning that the rappel or climb has been completed successfully and that no one is "ONROPE."

A life member of the Huntsville-based National Speleological Society, Siron has been a caver for 10 years and is also a member of the Huntsville Cave Rescue Unit.

"When I first enter a cave, I am in an exploration mode," Siron said. "But as soon as it's time to turn around and head out, I'm in the 'self-rescue' mode. Preparation is the key."

Siron's fervent prayer is the Hail Mary.

"I lived through something that I knew I could die any second," he said. "One wrong step is all it takes. And I especially extend heartfelt appreciation to my supervisor, my co-workers, my team, and — most importantly — my wife, Cindy. The knowledge of their support and encouragement, throughout this experience, has made my endeavors possible."

Hobbyist hatches repeat win in egg decorating contest

Entry to represent Alabama at White House egg display

By SKIP VAUGHN
Rocket editor
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Mike Chemsak is on the guest list at the White House again in April. For the fifth time in six years, he has



Photo by Skip Vaughn

CAN'T BEAT THIS— Recreation division chief Mike Chemsak shows his decorated egg which will represent Alabama in the 2006 Easter egg display at the White House.

decorated an Easter egg selected for the annual display at the White House visitor center. His egg will represent Alabama in the 2006 display with eggs representing each of the 50 states plus the District of Columbia on the weekend before Easter.

First lady Laura Bush is usually there to meet the winning artists.

"I felt really proud," Chemsak, chief of the recreation division at Morale Welfare and Recreation, said of his selection. "I enjoy decorating eggs. It's nice when somebody else recognizes what you do."

The event is co-sponsored by the White House and the American Egg Board. Every state has a representative on the egg board; and Alabama's representative selected one of the four decorated eggs Chemsak submitted. Chemsak photographed the eggs and e-mailed the picture for the contest.

"It has to be a chicken egg, pointy side up and represent your respective state," he said. He's unsure how many people competed. "Egg decorating doesn't have a big following," he said laughing.

Chemsak has been involved in this hobby off and on for the last 30 years, especially the past eight since his two sons have grown and left home. He sells his decorated eggs out of his Madison home or at a store in Huntsville.

His winning egg, finished about three months ago, has Alabama cotton and rhinestones and beads. One of the two medallions has the Alabama seal; and the other shows the state capital in Montgomery.

"It took me about 10 hours to make the egg," Chemsak said.

His wife, Maureen, is a career counselor at Athens State University three days each week; and she has her own counseling business the other three days. Their sons are Nicholas, 23, of Antioch, Tenn., married and working for Gibson Guitar; and Stephen, 28, in New York working on his doctorate at Columbia University.

Easterwood cited for work in saving project money

Larry Easterwood, director/supervisor of the manufacturing and product assurance directorate in THAAD Project Office, has received the ninth annual Robert B. Tarquine Value Engineering Achievement Award.

He is responsible for the execution of THAAD's value engineering program which has reported savings of more than \$46 million. He was nominated for his years of leadership to the THAAD value engineering program and his continued VE process improvements.

Tom Reynolds, chief of the industrial operations division, and Col. Charles Driessnack, THAAD project manager, presented the award Dec. 15.

The award, named after the late Robert B. Tarquine, is presented annually by the Command VE Office to a key individual for outstanding achievements in value engineering.

"Mr. Tarquine was a key participant and contributor to the early success of the command VE programs," Reynolds said. "His leadership and expertise had a major, positive impact on Team Redstone. He truly was a benefactor of the AMCOM VE Program and we present the award in his honor for his sustained achievements in value engineering."

Previous recipients include Mrs. Robert Tarquine, wife of Robert Tarquine; Jean Grotophorst, Army TACMS-Bat Project Office; Robert Yanulavich, Army TACMS-Bat Project Office; Sylvia Budd, Integrated Materiel Management Center- Corpus Christi Army Depot Maintenance; Joel Ellis, THAAD Project Office; Jamie Martin, Lower Tier Project Office; Richard Spence, SHORAD Project Office; and Clayton Vance, Aviation Engineering Directorate.

Pilot course lifts future leaders

The first class of the Leader Investment for Tomorrow-Level I graduated Dec. 14 in a ceremony at Aviation and Missile Command headquarters.

Prior to the graduation the students briefed Dr. Richard Amos, deputy to the AMCOM commanding general, and other senior leaders on their team project. The team project was to look at the LIFT I course curriculum and make recommendations for improvement.

The Leader Investment for Tomorrow-Level I pilot was a six-month program which started July 27 and met one full day per month. The program consists of formal leadership sessions with guest speakers, practical applications, leadership

assessment, selected leadership readings, group project, and homework assignments.

The students were engaged in focusing on their role in Army transformation and Army values. The students also learned about effective decision making, metrics, risk and issue management, selling ideas through presentation, conflict resolution, and situational awareness and ethics.

Participants of the LIFT class are from Integrated Materiel Management Center, Acquisition Center, Security Assistance Management Directorate, Legal, Safety, Test Measurement and Diagnostic Equipment, and Internal Review and Audit Compliance.



Shawn Harris/Photo Lab

GRADUATES— The LIFT I graduates from left, in back row, are Stacy Potts, Jody Creekmore, John Schocke, Bryan Lorge, Steve Rainsford, Amy Pierce, Tonya Wood and Brian Toland. In front row are Rick Gray, Eura Reaves, Paula Brazier, Kay O'Brien, Lorie Williams, Bobbie Moore and Elise Fulda.

G-3 workers bid adieu to year

It's not everyday that employees get to see their supervisors perform in song and dance in the course of an average day. However, this was an exception for the G-3 workers at their annual Christmas Celebration and Charity Auction.

Wayne Bruno, chief of the Systems Analysis Division, played the keyboard and performed a variety of Christmas tunes and was accompanied by Marlin Arrington and his band "Morning Star."

Gary Nenninger, director of the G-3, and supervisors Frank Lawrence, Wayne Bruno and Col Walter Lorcheim performed as auctioneers and portrayed the part of Vanna White. Vanna's "show me the item skills" were not lost on the audience members who were bidding for auction items. As auction items were placed up for bidding, numerous demonstrations by the posing "Ms. Vanna White a.k.a., Lawrence/Bruno and Lorcheim" produced a rousing demonstration of other alternative uses for ordinary household items.

The auction raised more than \$900 to be donated to local charities, to include a local Morale Welfare and Recreation family that lost its belongings in a house fire. The G-3 hopes to continue the tradition of celebrating the holidays in fun and unusual ways while also helping the community. (G-3 release)

Aviation systems workers contribute to community

*Toys for Tots
under their tree*

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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Members of the Aviation Systems Project Office wanted to do something special for Christmas.

Besides their holiday party plans, they decided to give to the Marine Corps' annual Toys for Tots effort. They contributed toys for needy local children during their party Dec. 15 at the Officers and Civilians Club.

"It exemplifies their giving capacity," project manager Col. Shelley Yarborough said. "They're a great group of folks. They give their all for the folks in the field and they give their all for the community. And this is just a great example for that."

Michael Kather, a support contractor for the Fixed Wing Product Office (among seven product offices within Aviation Systems), said the 147 luncheon attendees collected more than 500 toys.

"It's about giving back," he said. "This is to give to the local community."

The fixed wing product office was this year's host for the luncheon.



Photo by Skip Vaughn

FESTIVE SPIRIT— Tik Tokaz tweaks the nose of the inflated penguin at the Aviation Systems Project Office's Christmas party. He works for contractor CSC in support of air traffic control product manager. Looking on is Cathy Knipe, administrative assistant for future cargo aircraft.

Headquarters & Alpha wins flag football championship

Gators beat Marines in tournament final

By SKIP VAUGHN
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The Headquarters & Alpha players were in agreement after outlasting MEDDAC in overtime Dec. 12.

They wanted one more win. Another victory would give the Gators the 2005 post championship in flag football. The tournament final would be three nights later at the field off Patton Road.

The resurgent Marines were their opponents from the losers' bracket. The Marines finished 2-8 in the regular season but won 4-of-5 to advance to the postseason final.

"We just came together as a team," Marines coach/cornerback Marvin Fletcher said. "And it seemed like everyone here just doubted the Marines. We had to go ahead and just put something together and prove just who we

are." Headquarters & Alpha beat the Marines 14-8 on Dec. 15 for the championship at the field off Patton Road.

"We stayed composed and pushed the ball over the goal line," Gators guard Thomas Coker said. "That's how we won."

On their first offensive series, the Gators drove 65 yards in 10 plays for a touchdown. Guyron Brock scored on a 17-yard run, an option play to the right. Quarterback/safety Del Williams passed to wide receiver Michael Gola for the extra point and a 7-0 lead at 10:50. That was the score at halftime.

Williams scored on a 40-yard interception return for a touchdown at 12 minutes in the second half. He ran for the extra point and a 14-0 cushion for the Gators (12-2).

"Just a lot of run and pass blocking," Williams said of the win. "Most of the time, we ran the ball. We used a silent count also. Since it was muddy, we used a silent count so that our offensive players, the linemen, could already engage in their blocks before the defense knew what happened."

The Marines (6-10) scored with three minutes left when quarterback William Burket connected with receiver Fletcher on a 40-yard touchdown pass. Burket passed to center Harold Hardee for two points.

"In a big game like that, we've been making the big plays all season," Fletcher said. "Just (in the final) we couldn't make the big plays. We couldn't get it when we really needed it. Everybody on the team gave at least 110 percent. It just came down to one play and we didn't convert it."

On Dec. 12 in the winners'



Photo by Skip Vaughn

GET THIS STARTED— Headquarters & Alpha's Michael Gola kicks off against MEDDAC on Dec. 12.

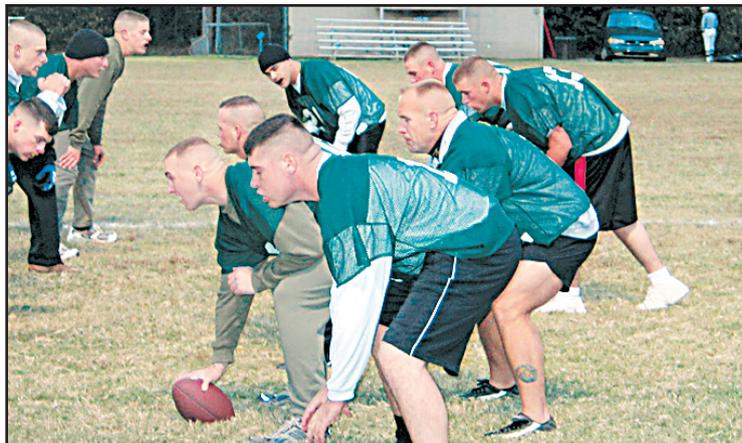


Photo by Skip Vaughn

PREPARATION— The Marines, practicing during the season, advanced to the postseason tournament final.



Photo by Skip Vaughn

NUMBER ONE— Headquarters & Alpha players celebrate their 7-6 overtime win over MEDDAC on Dec. 12. They won the championship against the Marines three nights later.

bracket final, MEDDAC and Headquarters & Alpha battled through a scoreless first half. Gators slot/cornerback Draper Hollier opened the scoring on a 5-yard touchdown run with 13:49 left. MEDDAC center Freddie McElveen caught a 1-yard touchdown pass from quarterback Eric James to even the score at 6-all at 1:50.

The game went into overtime where the ball starts at midfield on the 40. Each team gets four plays; and the winner is determined by where the ball ends up — who has advanced further. Headquarters & Alpha won 7-6 after moving into MEDDAC territory.

The Gators of course went on to celebrate their championship after beating the Marines later in the week. This was a repeat title for Hollier and linebacker/coach Ian Cutting, who were members of last year's champion Delta Company team. Delta deactivated and merged with Headquarters & Alpha in June.

Here are results from the eight-team tournament:

- Dec. 5 — Headquarters & Alpha def. Bravo 15-14 in overtime, 326th Chemical def. NCO Academy 12-7 and Charlie won by forfeit over HHC 59th.
- Dec. 6 — MEDDAC def. Marines 14-8, Headquarters & Alpha def. 326th Chemical 27-8 and NCO Academy def.



Photo by Skip Vaughn

ON RUN— Guyron Brock of Headquarters & Alpha looks for running room against MEDDAC on Dec. 12.

Bravo 33-18.

• Dec. 7 — MEDDAC def. Charlie 22-6, Marines won by forfeit over HHC 59th and NCO Academy def. Charlie 14-0.

• Dec. 12 — Headquarters & Alpha def. MEDDAC 7-6 in overtime and Marines def. 326th Chemical 22-6.

• Dec. 13 — Marines def. NCO Academy 36-30 and Marines def. MEDDAC 34-30.

• Dec. 15 — Headquarters & Alpha def. Marines 14-8 for championship.



Photo by Skip Vaughn

WHAT A NIGHT— Gators defensive end Juan Simon (11) enjoys the victory with his teammates Dec. 12.



Photo by Skip Vaughn

Missed turn

A tanker of non-hazardous liquid nitrogen overturned about 1:30 p.m. Dec. 16 on Martin Road at Dodd, causing a minor injury to the driver. Police cordoned off the half-mile stretch between buildings 4488 and 4505 for several hours. The tanker belonging to Air Products, out of Decatur, was making its normal delivery to one of the NASA facilities.

First ladies of Redstone Arsenal

Women workers kept doors open in World War II

By **KELLEY LANE**
Staff writer
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When World War II sent their husbands, brothers, fathers and sons off to war, women all over the nation stepped up to take their places in the factories and businesses left behind. They worked tirelessly at Redstone and elsewhere to ensure servicemembers had what they needed to achieve their missions and return home.

With worker pools dwindling in the face of the draft and those volunteering for the military, the Army put out a call. The newly built Huntsville Arsenal was no exception. Designed to build and store chemical munitions, the facility was the sole manufacturer of colored smoke munitions. It also made gel-type incendiaries and toxic items such as mustard gas, white phosphorous and tear gas. More than 27 million such



Courtesy photo

ON THE LINE— Redstone's own versions of Rosie the Riveter, such as Elnora Taylor, kept the production lines rolling during World War II.

items were produced at the plant, according to documentation by Dr. Kaylene Hughes of the AMCOM Historical Office.

The Ordnance Corps built its own facility for shell loading and assembly nearby and named it Redstone Arsenal. Using the materials produced at the chemi-

cal plant, Redstone made rifle grenades, assorted bombs and things of a similar nature, Hughes said.

By the end of 1942, Hughes estimated that about 40 percent of the ordnance production work force in Huntsville was female. That number continued to rise

slowly and peaked at 62 percent by fall 1945. These women left their homes to take on grueling and often dangerous tasks.

One such ordnance worker was Elnora Taylor, who joined her husband, Leo, and brother-in-law on the production lines in 1942. When her husband went off to fight, she stayed behind and did what she could for the cause. She filled white phosphorous shells, according to family friend and Redstone worker Ralph Garrison.

During the years she worked there, she was never responsible for any accidents or a hold up on the line — an enviable record for any worker male or female. It even earned her a photo and article in the Arsenal's first publication, *Patriot*.

"It was one of the more dangerous production lines. They had showers set up to wash anyone who got the stuff on them," Garrison, an information technology specialist with the Corporate Information Office G-6, said. "Of course, if there was too much on someone then there was nothing they could do. A few people died doing that job."

Garrison said his own mother, then Mamie Hornbuckle, did her part in the munitions plant. This was while the man who would later become her husband, Waymon Garrison, was on the front lines in Europe with field artillery. Given the nature of the items produced at Redstone, it is entirely possible the same ordnance passed through both of their hands.

Garrison said he hopes that remembering the sacrifices and contributions made by both the men and women of the time will help history live on.

"I read recently that WWII veterans are dying on average at 1,000 per day and the story is going with them," he said. "Unless it is recorded, eventually no one will know anything about their history. We need to keep that history alive."

"I'm sure the war would not have been won the way it was without the high percentage of women who joined the work force. Had we not had the war effort that we had from both men and women, it might have ended differently."

Army Family Team Building marks 11th year



Photo by Skip Vaughn

CAKE CUTTING— AFTB honorary adviser Sharon Olshefski cuts the birthday cake for Army Family Team Building. Looking on is Larry Leggett, quality of life program manager at Army Community Service.

Happy birthday, Army Family Team Building.

The volunteer program, which provides classes Armywide to family members on what they should know about the military, celebrated its 11th year Dec. 16. A cake-cutting event was held that day at the Post Exchange.

"We have more than 25 members in the Redstone Arsenal AFTB," Larry Leggett, quality of life program manager at Army Community Service, said. "And we conducted over six classes during 2005 and trained over a hundred. Basically it's Army 101."

Amanda Medley is the AFTB volunteer program manager. Sharon Olshefski,

wife of Garrison commander Col. John Olshefski, is the honorary adviser.

Army Family Team Building has three levels of progressive training. A level one

class, "Introduction to Army Life," is Jan. 24-26 from 6-9 p.m. at Army Community Service. Call 842-8375 before Jan. 13 to enroll.

Don't let trips and falls slip up on you

Falls are the second leading cause of accidental death. They come in all sizes from serious falls down a flight of stairs to small trips over the curled edge of a floor mat. Any tripping accident can injure you.

The Redstone Injury Compensation Office reports that during the latter half of 2005, some 30 of the 71 work-related injuries reported were due to slipping/falling to the floor.

This 1-2-3-4 approach to fall prevention can keep you safe on the job and at home:

- Spot hazards in advance. Hazards are easy to see if you pay attention. Keep all aisles, walkways and stairs clear; get rid of obstacles; clear away clutter; close cabinet doors and file drawers.
- Steer around hazards. Slow down, stay steady and look carefully where you put your feet. Allow enough time to get where you are headed.
- Alert others. Alert others to the hazard if possible. Repair the hazard if you can or report the location so the hazard can be marked and repaired.
- Choose appropriate footwear. Choose footwear that is appropriate

for the circumstances.

A long stride lets you cover a lot of ground but increases your risk of falling. Shorter steps are safer, especially on damp surfaces. Make wide turns at corners, so you can see who is on the other side. Turn on the light before you enter a room. Don't walk in the dark. Replace burned-out lamps and bulbs or report them to your supervisor. Use handrails when you go up and down stairs.

Wet surfaces are one of the main causes of on-the-job falls. The walking surface in some work areas is constantly wet. Sometimes the hazard is an occasional spill. Sometimes there is ice or snow on walking surfaces. You can reduce slip hazards by cleaning up the spills fast. If you spot a spill or wet surface, alert your co-workers and report the spill for cleanup. Take care around wet surfaces. Slow down, keep a firm footing and maintain your balance. Practice fall prevention tactics and keep a healthy balance.

Remember: Safety doesn't have to slip away if you work at preventing falls. (Civilian Personnel Advisory Center and AMCOM Safety Office release)



Sports & Recreation

Computer gamers

Morale Welfare and Recreation is hosting the first Local Area Network party Jan. 21 from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the Diane Campbell Recreation Center, building 3711. The games will include Warcraft III: Frozen Throne, Half Life 2: Deathmatch, Unreal Tournament and many more non-tournament games. There will be more than \$1,000 in cash and prizes. This event is open to the entire Redstone community. Entry fee is \$10 and you must provide your computer equipment. Lunch, dinner and snacks are provided. Spaces are going fast. To reserve your space, call 955-7250. For a flyer, visit www.redstonemwr.com.

Ballroom dancing

MWR is offering Waltz and Tango lessons starting Jan. 12 from 7:30-9 p.m. at the Diane Campbell Recreation Center, building 3711. Tuition is \$33 per person or \$66 per couple. No experience is necessary. A dance partner is required. Registration deadline is Jan. 10. For more information, call 876-4531.

Baseball beginners

"Start Smart" Baseball is an introductory baseball program for children ages 3-5. The program prepares children for organized tee ball, baseball and softball in a fun, non-threatening environment. This program consists of six one-hour practices. Parents are expected to attend and participate with their child. The program is Saturdays, Jan. 7 through Feb. 11 from 10-11 a.m. Registration fee includes participant manual and a "Start Smart" T-shirt. All other equipment will be provided. For more information, call 313-2177.

Bowling benefit

Junior Achievement's 21st annual Bowl-A-Thon is Feb. 11-12, 2006 at five local bowling centers (Madison Bowling Center Inc., AMF Parkway Lanes, AMF Pin Palace, Plamor Lanes and Redstone Lanes). Last year more than 40 companies and 700 bowlers participated in the weekend fund-raiser. Each bowler pays a \$12 registration fee that covers the cost of bowling three games, shoes, a T-shirt and a door prize ticket. For more information, call 533-4661.



Conferences & Meetings

Toastmasters

Tennessee Valley Toastmasters meets the first and third Saturday of each month at 9 a.m. at the Radisson Inn, 8721 Highway 20 West, Madison. For information call 876-8706 or e-mail amy.donlin@us.army.mil.

Enlisted spouses

Enlisted Spouses Club meets on the second Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Challenger Activity Center. New members are always welcome. Child care reimbursement is available to members. For more information, call Jean Mulcahy 881-7024.

Computer users

Lauren Carter of the Ars Nova School of



Courtesy photo

Young emcee

Jasika Simone Williams, 10, who attends the School Age Services program on post, was the organizer and emcee for the "Island Holiday Celebration" Dec. 16. She was chosen student of the month for December. Her mother, Kathy Williams, is a human resources assistant in the South Central Civilian Personnel Operations Center. Her father, Charles, is a retired sergeant first class.

Arts will speak to the Huntsville Personal Computer Users Group at 10:45 a.m. Jan. 14 at the Senior Center, 2200 Drake Ave. She will show how computers are used in teaching music. Preceding her presentation, Eunice Bellingrath of the HPCUG will present a program for the Internet/Windows Special Interest Group at 9:15. For more information, call 883-9601.

Women accountants

American Society of Women Accountants meets Jan. 10 at the Holiday Inn Select on Williams Avenue downtown, in the Sun Room of Lofton's. Social begins at 5:30 p.m., dinner at 6 and the program at 6:30. Linda Steakley of Huntsville Hospital Wellness Center is to speak on women's health issues. Cost is \$16.50 for members, \$17.50 non-members and \$10 full-time undergraduate students. For reservations call 830-0377 by noon Friday.



Miscellaneous

Reserve unit openings

A local Army Reserve detachment doing weekend drills on Redstone Arsenal has openings for computer specialists. The unit seeks prior active duty Soldiers or transfers from other Reserve/National Guard units with a specialty of 25B information systems operators and 42A human resources specialists. For 25B, the unit will consider reclassification action to 25B if you can document with resume your education/experience in the following computer skills: data base management, programming, networking and telecommunications. Minimum of a secret clearance is required. And you must possess the personal qualifications to pass a SBI background investigation process to obtain a top secret clearance soon. Specialties 74C and 74F have merged into the

25B career group and convert to 25B as well. To schedule an interview, call Sgt. 1st Class Harold Cook 876-8710 or Chief Warrant Officer Robert Smith 955-9722.

Civilian deployment

Civilian employees are needed to support Aviation and Missile Command missions overseas. Deployment opportunities exist in Southwest Asia in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Skill sets needed include acquisition, maintenance, supply, quality assurance, engineers, operations officers, logistics and automation, among others. Volunteers must be currently employed by AMCOM. Contractors cannot be considered to fill these positions. Civilians interested in deploying should notify their supervisor and call Eddie Allen 876-4106 or Carl Washington 876-2082. Contractors and other interested people can access www.cpol.army.mil for openings and opportunities for overseas employment.

Surplus sales

Marshall Space Flight Center's surplus property can be purchased through the General Services Administration sales web site. Go to www.gsaauctions.gov, search by State of Alabama; and there you will find items located at MSFC and other federal agencies in Alabama to bid on. For more information, call 544-4667.

Thrift shop

The Thrift Shop, building 3209 on Hercules Road, is open for shopping 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesdays and 9-4 Wednesdays and Thursdays. Walk-in consignment hours are Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9-1. The shop is accepting winter clothing/items. Donations are accepted and tax slips are available. The shop is closed Saturday, Jan. 7. For more information, call 881-6992.

Computer classes

Self-paced computer classes are offered at Army Community Service to assist military spouses in learning or enhancing their computer skills. Classes are available in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Access, Publisher and Windows XP. All classes are free and are offered Monday through Friday anytime between 8 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Certificates will be given after successful completion. Call 876-5397 to pre-register.

Chapel services

Weekly services at Bicentennial Chapel, on Goss Road, include: Weekdays (except Friday) - noon Catholic Mass. Saturday - 5 p.m. Catholic Mass. Sunday - 9:30 a.m. Catholic Mass, 10:45 a.m. CCD, 9:30 a.m. Protestant Sunday School, 11 a.m. Protestant Worship Service. Many Bible studies are throughout the week. For information call 876-2409.

Merit awards

The rising cost of higher education is a growing concern; and the Officer and Civilian Women's Club can aid their members in this endeavor through the OCWC Merit Awards Program. Applicants for merit awards must be a member, spouse of a member, or the dependent of an OCWC member in good standing as of Oct. 18, 2005. Merit awards are based on

the applicant's scholastic achievements, citizenship and sincere desire to pursue higher education. Application categories are as follows: high school seniors, undergraduates, graduates and member/spouse. Applicants must live within a 50-mile radius of Huntsville. The applicant must be a U.S. citizen and have no prior felony arrests or convictions. The application deadline for merit award consideration is Feb. 3. Previous winners may compete in succeeding years, but may only win once in each category. In addition, students receiving full scholarships (defined as a scholarship that covers tuition, books and related expenses) are not eligible to apply for a merit award. Applications will be available at OCWC monthly luncheons. For more information, call merit award chairperson Sharon Samuelson 880-1594.

Aviation scholarships

Tennessee Valley Chapter of the Army Aviation Association of America is sponsoring two Aviation Challenge 2006 Scholarships in conjunction with the U.S. Space & Rocket Center. Children and grandchildren (between the ages of 9/attending or completed fourth grade and 18, not started college) of individuals who are Tennessee Valley AAAA Chapter members by Dec. 31, 2005 will be eligible to compete for the scholarships. The scholarships will be awarded in the form of certificates for use during 2006. Applications for scholarships and membership and more information on Tennessee Valley AAAA Aviation Challenge Scholarship application procedures will be available at the Tennessee Valley AAAA chapter Christmas social as well as on the TVC web site at www.tennvalleyquad-a.org/scholarships.html. Applications are due Jan. 31 in accordance with the instructions on the application. For more information call Tom Harrison, chapter vice president for scholarships, 882-6709.

Weather closings

If inclement weather causes Redstone Arsenal to close or delay its opening, tune in to any of the following stations for the most current information: radio - WAHR, 99.1 FM; WDRM, 102 FM; WEKR, 1240 AM; WEUP, 1600 AM; WGSV, 1270 AM; WJAB, 90.9 FM; WLRH, 89.3 FM; WRAB, 1380 AM; WRSA, 97 FM; WTKI, 1450 AM; WVNN, 770 AM; WWIC, 1050 AM; WZYP, 104.3 FM; television - WAAY (Channel 31), WAFF (Channel 48) and WHNT (Channel 19). Two additional methods have been implemented to provide current information about delays or closures: You can call 955-8445 to hear a recorded announcement, or you can click the button for adverse weather alert/information on the Team Redstone Internet site (<http://www.redstone.army.mil>), click on links and then Adverse Weather, the AMCOM Portal Intranet site (<https://intranet2.redstone.army.mil/>), click on Adverse Weather under Key Sites; or the AMCOM Internet site (<http://www.amcom.redstone.army.mil/>), click on Adverse Weather.

Volunteer opportunities

There are many benefits to volunteering. One is to make a difference, and at Army

Community Service you can do that by giving your time to help Soldiers, family members and retirees. But you can also help yourself by gaining skills and teamwork experience, boosting your self-confidence in the workplace, and gathering job experience to put in that otherwise blank spot on your resume. ACS has different programs that need volunteers as assistants. The hours and days are flexible and child care is free while you are volunteering. No experience necessary. Be a part of the ACS team. Call Phyllis Cox 876-5397.

Tax assistance volunteers

The Redstone Arsenal Tax Assistance Center is a free service helping servicemembers on active duty, military retirees, and their dependents prepare and file federal, state and local tax returns each year. Last year's center was a major success, with more than 3,000 returns prepared, resulting in over \$2 million in refunds. The center is accepting volunteers for the upcoming 2006 tax season. Scheduling will be flexible and volunteers are needed in both the tax preparation and front desk operations areas. No prior experience is necessary, because comprehensive training will be provided. This is an opportunity for the community to give back to servicemembers and their families. To volunteer or for more information, call Capt. Daniel Papajcik 876-9008 or Randy Duff 420-3223.

Young apprentices

The Department of Defense initiated the Science and Engineering Apprentice Program in 1980, under the direction of the Executive Office of the President, to involve academically talented high school and college students in hands-on research activities and student-mentor relationships during the summer. This program is designed for students who have demonstrated aptitude and interest in science and engineering courses and careers. A major benefit of the program is pairing the students with university and professional engineering mentors. The high school and college programs are designed for students who are U.S. citizens and 15 years old by the beginning of the program June 5, 2006. The apprentice program is divided into periods of 8, 10 and 12 weeks. Both programs are fast-paced and require disciplined professional work habits.

Junior and senior scientists and engineers gain additional experience by serving as mentors for first time students, and providing guidance through interactive research processes. The points of contact for applications are senior counselors at all public, private, and parochial high school and college placement services. Possible career placement areas at the Garrison include physics, chemistry, computer science, engineering and mathematics. The deadline for postmarking applications is Jan. 31. If the student is unsuccessful in receiving an application from the high school senior counselor or college placement service, call the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center, Julie Lumpkins 313-4834.

Scholarship program

The American Society of Military Comptrollers announces its annual scholarship program for ASMC members and their immediate families. This scholarship is open to high school seniors, undergraduates and those working on graduate programs. The application can be found at <http://www.asmc.org/national/nationalawards.shtml> or you may call Judy Smith 876-6163 or Debie O'Neal 876-2671. Application deadline is Feb. 28. Packages may be mailed to AMCOM, Attn: AMSAM-RM-FD, Judy Smith, Redstone Arsenal, AL 35898 or taken to Smith in building 5300, third floor, work station 53B062.

Drill sergeant of year

The Ordnance Munitions and Electronics Maintenance School, 59th Ordnance Brigade, will host its 2006 Drill Sergeant of the Year Competition from Jan. 30 through Feb. 3. The winner will be selected to represent Redstone Arsenal and OMEMS at the Training and Doctrine Command 2006 Drill Sergeant of the Year competition. The TRADOC competition will take place at Fort Monroe, Va., from June 20-24. There will be a DSOY luncheon to announce the OMEMS winner at the Officers and Civilians Club from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Feb. 3. Everyone is invited to attend. For more information, call Sgt. 1st Class Warnie Stokes 842-9794.

AER scholarships

Army Emergency Relief is accepting scholarship applications for dependent

children of active duty and retired Soldiers for the 2006-07 school year. Scholarship applications can be found at the AER web site www.aerhq.org. Applications will be accepted through March 1. For more information, call Kristi Foster of Army Community Service 876-5397.

Dr. King luncheon

Martin Luther King Jr. Day will be celebrated with a luncheon Jan. 12 at 11 a.m. at the Officers and Civilians Club. Scheduled speaker is Dr. Virginia Caples, interim president of Alabama A&M University. The A&M University Jazz Ensemble will perform. Tickets are \$10 per person. If interested call Sarah Brazzel 313-0546, Demetria Cruz 876-9718, Eugene Edwards 842-2142, Bridget Elmore 876-5848, James Feagan 313-7250, Gail Glass 876-4531, Daisy Ingram 842-8355 or Master Sgt. Tuynuykua Jackson 876-9224.

Night of jazz

Tickets are available now for A Mid-Winter's Night of Jazz at The Ledges, Feb. 18 from 6-10 p.m. Proceeds will benefit the Huntsville High Band program. "A superb lineup of jazz musicians and elegant dining in the beautiful ballroom of The Ledges will provide an exciting and memorable evening for all," a prepared release said. "A silent auction will also be held featuring jewelry, artwork, a catered barbecue party, and other unique items." Tickets include hors d'oeuvres, dinner

and door prize entry; cash bar will be available. Tickets are \$75 per person and will be limited to the first 150. For tickets call Kathy Wachs 955-8722 or Janice Lowther 883-9163.

DRMO in transition

Defense Reutilization & Marketing Service has announced the final decision on the A-76 competition. The tentative decision announced June 30 has been upheld and execution of the A-76 stock, store, and issue of excess property in the continental U.S. and Hawaii will be retained in house. Reorganization is under way and a new structure called the Most Efficient Organization is being formed. DRMO Huntsville will not be affected by this transition until July 2006. For more information about upcoming program changes, visit the A-76 web site <https://www.drms.dla.mil/drms/intranet/A76/a76transition.htm> or call the DRMO site manager at 842-2532.

Ebony fashion fair

The 48th annual Ebony Fashion Fair is Jan. 11 at 7 p.m. in the Von Braun Center for the benefit of Huntsville Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. Ticket prices — \$25 general admission, \$30 reserved, \$15 students — include a one year subscription to EBONY magazine or six month subscription to JET magazine and chances to win round trip transportation for two to any destination

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