

Redstone Rocket

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Food for thought



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Warming up the trucks for Santa

Saint Nick to visit children
in housing area Saturday

By KARI HAWKINS
Staff writer
karihawk@knology.net

"You better watch out!
You better not cry!
You better not pout.
I'm telling you why.
Santa Claus is coming
To ... Redstone Arsenal!"

As if by holiday magic, the red-suited, white-bearded jolly Old Saint Nick will once again visit children living in housing on Redstone Arsenal.

So, mark your calendars, kids (and parents) for this Saturday morning. Starting shortly after 9 a.m., Santa and his elves will parade through the neighborhoods on post to the sounds of fire truck sirens and "Ho, Ho, Ho!"

The annual Santa Run will begin at the Vincent Fire Station, where Santa will climb into the back of a pickup truck and be escorted by fire truck and military police car through all Arsenal neighborhoods. He will first visit the Columbia Centre housing area, continue through Voyager Village and Apollo Landing, and then visit Freedom Landing, Pathfinder Pointe and Endeavor Village. He will travel on to visit children in New Endeavor Village and Saturn Pointe, making a brief stop at the Redstone lodging office before completing his visit at Challenger Heights.

Santa will be escorted by members of the Sergeants Major Association, Vincent Fire Station and Military Police.

"It's going to be great for the kids. And, it's going to be a lot of fun for all of us," said Jean Rose, a retired sergeant major who is helping to coordinate Santa's visit. "We all have a great time. It's fun to watch the children get excited when they see Santa on their street."

Every year for more than 10 years, the Sergeants Major Association has recruited members from among its 60-plus membership roster to serve as elves for the Santa Run. The sergeants major must help Santa by being his elves during this Redstone Arsenal visit because Santa's real



Photo by Kari Hawkins

ROOM FOR EVERYONE— Santa's lap was big enough last year to hold four friends – from left, then 11-year-old Trayvon Paton, 4-year-old Jalonni Gadist, 3-year-old Avery Norris and 11-year-old Peighton Little – while elf (retired Sgt. Maj.) Patrick Douglas finds room in front of the happy group. How many kids will be able to fit on Santa's lap this Saturday when he makes his annual Santa Run through Redstone Arsenal neighborhoods?

elves are busy making presents at the North Pole in time for Santa's big event on Christmas Eve.

"We have 10 to 15 members who help with this visit," Rose said. "We get a good turnout because this is a very special way for us to show our support to families with a Soldier member or families who have a deployed Soldier. Our guys have all been in their place, so we like to do this to support the Soldiers and the families who are making sacrifices for us now."

The visit spreads Christmas cheer beyond Arsenal families. It also puts a smile on the faces of the volunteers who escort Santa Claus.

"This event puts us in touch with children and families who we really care about," said retired Sgt. Maj. David Rivera, association president.

"This is a goodwill gesture and one that we really enjoy doing. The looks on the children's faces when they see Santa are really heartwarming. This is a great reward for us in return for doing a very little thing for the community."

It's hard for any family – with or without children – to sleep



Photo by Kari Hawkins

SHOES AND SHIRT NOT REQUIRED— Dressed in her pajamas and robe, Sarah Vanwinkle, then 4, daughter of Warrant Officer Walter and Michong Vanwinkle, spends a little time sitting with Santa in the back of his pickup truck during last year's Santa Run. Her sister, Laura, 3, was too shy to sit on Santa's lap. But, Santa kept his promise and visited both girls on Christmas Eve.

See Santa on page 6

An open lane random survey

What's your holiday message to the deployed troops?

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



Kevin Dykema
Project manager, Alutiiq Security Services
"I would say best wishes for an enjoyable holiday season."

Debra Cantrell
Retired staff sergeant
"I wish them all a merry Christmas and a happy New Year, and be safe. Hoo-ah."



Pfc. Jarred Williams
Marine Detachment
"Keep the faith and stay happy."

Pfc. Drew Novy
Marine Detachment
"Happy holidays. Stay safe and Semper Fi."



Quote of the week

'Football is bigger in Alabama than basketball is in Indiana.'
— **Mike Golic**
ESPN sports analyst

Salute to military entertains troops

The fourth annual Morale Welfare and Recreation "Salute to the Military" was a free event held Sunday, Nov. 19 at the Diane Campbell Recreation Center. The MWR Salute to the Military is a program designed to show MWR's appreciation for the men and women of our military services who are unable to travel home for the Thanksgiving holiday season. With more than 450 Soldiers and Marines in attendance, the Recreation Center was full of food, fun, entertainment and great prizes!

The event began with good old-fashioned home cooked meals provided by the following organizations and companies: Redstone Federal Credit Union, the Officer and Civilian Women's Club, the Enlisted Spouses Club, the Association of the United States Army, the Commissary, Knology Cable, Willowbrook Baptist Church, Pineview Baptist Church, Coca Cola, and Papa John's Pizza.

Redstone Federal Credit Union, USAA, the Post Exchange, and Blockbuster Video of Madison provided numerous door prizes, such as a DVD players, 12-inch TV/ DVD players, digital cameras, CDs and DVDs. Sprint/Nextel also provided free digital phone use for troops to call home, anywhere in the continental United States.

The atmosphere at the MWR Salute to the Military was very relaxed, as the Soldiers and Marines enjoyed movies from Blockbuster Video, participated in billiard tournaments, played videogames, and kicked their heels up for a great night of relaxation and camaraderie. Derrick Gould, director of Morale Welfare and Recreation, said "This event received tremendous support from the Redstone community. To me, that's what MWR and Redstone are all about; taking care of our Soldiers first."



Courtesy photo

GOOD EATING— Servicemembers line up at meal time during the fourth annual MWR Salute to the Military.

Command Sgt. Maj. Jose Garcia-Aponte, of the 832nd Ordnance Battalion, said "I really appreciate all of the MWR Campbell Recreation Center staff, Mrs. Gail Glass, sponsors, churches, and the ladies from the Officer and Civilian Women's Club, especially Mrs. Sharon Olshefski, wife of Col. John Olshefski, the Redstone Arsenal Garrison commander. Mrs. Olshefski's organizational skills were priceless during the MWR Salute Dinner. Her team was awesome; they were not only passionate, but also very mindful that my Soldiers are still young people."

Many thanks were echoed from individual Soldiers and Marines.

The MWR Salute to the Military has become a wonderful holiday tradition that we plan to make bigger and better every year. The next event for servicemembers will be a Football Frenzy Super Bowl Party hosted by MWR on Sunday, Feb. 4, from 2 p.m. to the end of the game. If you would like to support this and/or other MWR events, please call Andrea Mattox, MWR sponsorship coordinator, at 955-7250 or e-mail andrea.mattox@redstone.army.mil.

Andrea Mattox

Family appreciates your kindness

Perhaps you said a prayer, perhaps you spoke kind words, perhaps you came to visit, perhaps you sent a flower, perhaps you prepared a meal, or perhaps you just simply smiled! Whatever you did, you met our deepest need; and we really appreciate your expressions of love during the illness and passing of our loved one (Sonia Lucine Cutts).

The family of Sonia Lucine Cutts

Editor's note: Sonia Lucine Cutts was previously employed with the Software Engineering Directorate and THAAD Project Office.

Boy Scout organizes food drive at Commissary

Eagle project to help needy area families

A local Boy Scout is doing a holiday food drive at the Commissary for his Eagle Scout project.

Christopher Czarnecki of Boy Scout Troop 60 in Arab is collecting food for the Temporary Emergency Services of Arab.

"We're going to start now before the Christmas holidays to help families enjoy the Christmas season," Czarnecki said. "The project will continue to run until Jan. 15th, then we will continue to receive donations, then restock the shelves with what is donated after the holidays as well as clean and organize the TESA food store room."

His project involves providing donation boxes to the Commissary and collecting the donated food items. Czarnecki is also coordinating with Commissary managers and vendors for even more assistance and food donations.

He requests that Commissary shoppers drop off a food item to help him become an Eagle Scout and help TESA feed families during the holidays. The boxes are decorated with Christmas wrapping and are marked with the Eagle Scout medal.

"I would like to thank everyone for their help on this project," Czarnecki said, "and wish you a blessed and joyous Christmas holiday season."

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 has holiday break

The *Redstone Rocket* will celebrate the holidays by taking a two-week break Dec. 27 and Jan. 3. After the Dec. 20 publication, our first issue next year is Jan. 10. We hope you enjoy the upcoming holiday season.

Redstone Rocket

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Getting to know you

By SKIP VAUGHN
Rocket editor
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Name: Hal Weatherman

Job: Food program manager, Garrison

Where do you call home?
I'm originally from Wytheville, Va. I've lived in Arab (Ala.) for 30 years.

What do you like about your job?

I like seeing the satisfaction on the Soldiers (faces) of getting a good meal and a good place to eat it in, and good service.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

Cars – I've got seven muscle cars. NASCAR and cars are my hobby



What are your goals?

My goals are to retire one day in the future and enjoy life with my wife (Vickie) and my boys. I have two sons (Stephen, 26, and Colby, 20).

What's your favorite type of music?

Rock 'n' roll

Army Family Team Building celebrates 12th birthday

Volunteer program promotes readiness

Army Family Team Building will turn 12 years old on Saturday. AFTB is not a new concept. It's the formal recognition of something that Army and Army families have been doing for more than 200 years — sustaining and nurturing the force and serving the nation. This is a volunteer program conceived and developed by Army families for Army families.

AFTB is a serious business. It's about readiness — mission readiness and family readiness. If the family is not ready, the Soldier is not ready. Helping families in adapting to Army life, accepting challenges, dealing with change, and developing life skills are all goals of the program.

Due to the mobility and increased operational tempo of today's Army, AFTB promotes personal/family preparedness and self-reliance. The Army Family Team Building Program recognizes that leaders in the Army have a responsibility to establish a partnership between the Army and the Army families. Numerous studies indicate that Soldier performance, readiness and retention relate directly to family satisfaction with Army life. In support of this compelling responsibility and recognition, courses developed for AFTB educate the Total Army family — active, Reserve component, Army civilian employees, and family members — in a variety of knowledge, skills and abilities fostering personal and family

preparedness to enhance Army readiness.

The Army Family Team Building Program is a series of 42 classes led by volunteer trainers, consisting of information on resources, benefits, leadership and interpersonal skills. The goal of AFTB is to provide an educational program whose primary objective is to improve the overall readiness of the force by teaching and promoting personal and family readiness through standardized, progressive and sequential education to Soldiers, family members, civilians and retirees. However, the program can be used flexibly to meet the needs of the individual audience.

Army Family Team Building is divided into three levels of training. When or where a family member enters into AFTB training is based on his or her experience or choice of course enrollment, not rank or grade of sponsor.

AFTB classes will offer on the following dates at Army Community Service:

Level I, Jan. 23-25; Level II, March 19-22; Instructor Training, April 2-5; and Level I, May 1-3.

The Redstone Arsenal AFTB Program is always looking for volunteers to assist with the program. Training is provided. For more information or to register for classes, call Army Community Service at 876-5497.

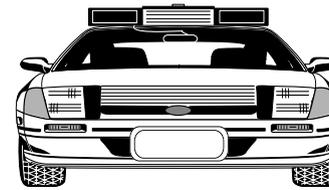
Editor's note: The Redstone community is invited to help celebrate the 12th anniversary of AFTB at the Post Exchange main lobby Friday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Refreshments will be served.

Crimes, accidents and other occurrences

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

Dec. 2: An individual was found to be operating their motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol after being stopped. The individual was arrested, processed and placed in the detention cell until their blood-alcohol content reached an acceptable level.

Dec. 2: An individual was stopped for speeding on Goss Road, and a check revealed that he was driving on a suspended license. He was issued two citations and released. The car was released to a licensed driver.



Dec. 3: Another individual was stopped for speeding on Goss Road, and a check revealed that he was driving on a suspended license. He was issued two citations and released. The car was released to a licensed driver.

Dec. 5: An individual stopped at Gate 10 requesting a visitor's pass en route to the ID card section, but

failed to have his license in his possession. A check revealed that he had three outstanding warrants for bad checks from Madison County District Attorney's Office. He was arrested by Redstone Police and turned over to the Madison County DA's Office.

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

Violation notices issued: 4 speeding, 1 failure to obey traffic control device, 1 driving under the influence of alcohol, 2 driving with a suspended driver's license, 1 expired tags, 3 following too close.

Leadership development program proves uplifting

Team reviews efforts for veterans hiring

The first class of the Leader Investment for Tomorrow-Level II graduated Dec. 6 in a ceremony at the Aviation and Missile Command headquarters.

Before the graduation, participants briefed AMCOM commander Maj. Gen. Jim Pillsbury, his deputy Dr. Richard Amos and other senior leaders on their team project. The team reviewed veterans hiring practices and identified ways to increase visibility of the veterans hiring program and processes.

The LIFT II team developed a brochure titled "Bridging the Gap...Quick Guide to Veterans Hiring," which will be made available to managers and supervisors. The team also studied the recruitment and retention of cooperative education students within the command, and gave Pillsbury some recommendations on enhancing the program to further bolster the command's role as an "employer of choice" within the Huntsville community.

The Leader Investment for Tomorrow-Level II is an eight-month program which began April 6 and met one full day per month. The program is designed for employees at the GS-14-15 level or the equivalent. LIFT II consists of formal leadership sessions with guest speakers, practical applications, leadership assessment, selected leadership readings,



Courtesy photo

CEREMONY— Participants in the LIFT II ceremony held Dec. 6 include, from left, program administrator Jackie Timme, Kathy Ray, Steve Fisher, Marsha Lawson, Judith Edmondson, Sandy Olinger, Richard Fisher, Marsha Thornton; Dr. Richard Amos, deputy to the commanding general; Louise Ystuenta, Lori Reynolds and Lorraine Lacy.

group project, staff ride and homework assignments.

Participants were engaged in focusing on the external environment and how it affects what people do at AMCOM, strategic communication, leading change, ethics and decision making, influencing and negotiating, achieving balance between professional and personal priorities and professional networking.

"LIFT II was a great experience that I would gladly recommend to others," Judith Edmondson of the Integrated Materiel Management Center said. "Focused on leadership skills and executive core competencies, this course covered a wide array of topics and incorporated a broad spectrum of learning techniques. The opportunity to listen to our

senior leaders discuss leadership competencies and share their experiences was invaluable. I would encourage all Team Redstone organizations to participate."

Participants of the LIFT II program represented the Integrated Materiel Management Center, Acquisition Center, Program Executive Office for Aviation, G-8 (Resource Management), G-6 (Information Management), G-1 (Human Resources) and G-4 (Logistics).

The next session of the LIFT II leadership program will begin in March. For more information on the program, go to the G-1 (Human Resources) web site at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/portals.do?sp=301150> or call Jackie Timme at 876-6061.

Depot supports Pennsylvania guard in Iraq

Battalion appreciates Tobyhanna workers

By KEVIN TOOLAN
Tobyhanna public affairs officer

TOBYHANNA ARMY DEPOT, Pa. — Tobyhanna Army Depot helped the Pennsylvania Army National Guard's 1-109th Infantry get ready for its recent mission in Iraq, and provided support throughout its yearlong tour there.

Lt. Col. Michael Konzman, the battalion commander,

visited the depot to present a certificate of appreciation to depot commander Col. Ron Alberto.

"I just wanted to thank the depot for the great support: from your teams that were over there, to the assistance back here with technical support, to the MWR (Morale Welfare and Recreation) help to our Soldiers and families," Konzman said.

Several depot employees were among area residents called to active duty for deployment with the unit, which faced the full spectrum of wartime operations, from combat operations to base security to

See Depot on page 6

Troop dining facility digests big year

More trainees served, but holidays looming

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor
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The dining facility has fed more troops this year, but the numbers are expected to decline soon.

That's because many Soldiers will be going home for their annual holiday break.

"Trainees leave Dec. 20 on (Christmas) exodus and they'll be back on Jan. 2, and that is most of my clientele," food program manager Hal Weatherman of the Garrison said.

The dining facility's schedule for Christmas Day, Dec. 25 is as follows: breakfast, 7-8 a.m.; Christmas meal, 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.; single Soldiers (initial entry training), 11 a.m. to noon; and Soldiers with family and retirees, noon to 2:30 p.m. But the times are flexible because the numbers will be down.

"We fed 197 people (for Christmas) last year," Weatherman said. "Most of my trainees are going to be gone."

The facility will be open that day for all active duty, family members, retirees and guests. Cost of the Christmas meal is \$5.90, and \$5 for dependents of Soldiers E-4 and below. "We appreciate if people try to bring the right change (to pay for the meal)," Weatherman added.

The Christmas menu includes glazed ham, roast turkey, shrimp cocktail, steamship round, cornbread dressing, candied yams, giblet gravy, assorted vegetables, assorted breads, assorted desserts, assorted drinks, mixed nuts and candies.

This has been a busy year for the troop dining facility, located at building 3443, which has seen an influx of trainees here. The facility fed 684 people the traditional Thanksgiving feast this year, compared to 522 in 2005.

"It was a fabulous year. We had a great year," Weatherman said. "We've really got the Soldiers right now. I'm feeding 2,300 meals a day right now. I fed 16,000 more in November of '06 than I did in November of '05. That really shows how our year's going. The head count has really picked up."

Besides the increase of wartime trainees, the Military Training Support System has also boosted the numbers.



Photo by Skip Vaughn

HOME COOKING— The dining facility serves 2,300 meals per day to the troops, compared to last year's average of 1,000 to 1,500 meals daily.

"I'm feeding about 8,400 a month on MTSS," Weatherman said. "That's NCOs that come to Redstone for training."

He expressed his appreciation to K&K Food Service, out of Hopkinsville, Ky., which operates the facility.

"I'd like to thank the employees of K&K for the wonderful job they'd done all year," he said. "I'd like to thank Dan Tyree, project manager, and Dennis Hardin, assistant manager, and the entire K&K staff. They really take pride in the work they do."

The facility will compete in June in the Southeast region for the annual Philip A. Connelly Food Service Awards program. It represented the region as an Armywide finalist last year.

"We want to keep improving on service and quality of food and try to keep new products coming in for the servicemember," Weatherman said. "Our goal is to be better than we were last year. There's always room for improvement in food service."



Photo by Skip Vaughn

Over the hill

Intelligence specialist Kevin McClure could thank co-worker Wendy Turney for decorating his work station on his 40th birthday Dec. 5 at G-2 (Intelligence and Security). "I was surprised," said McClure, who came to work here 21 years ago as an 18-year-old.

Units add 17 Soldiers in month

Seventeen Soldiers arrived in November; and the Garrison provided the following in-processing list. Note that some of the Soldiers may have already been on post but moved to other units here:

- Capt. Thomas Amodeo, Space and Missile Defense Command; Capt. Donna Marie Wilkins, Aviation and Missile Command; Chief Warrant Officer Juan Marcos Santiago, PEO C3T; Chief Warrant Officer Jeffrey Huber, Corpus Christi Army Depot, Texas; Chief Warrant Officer John Walter Jones, Program Executive Office for Aviation; Lt. Col. Phala Lea Patton, Logistics Support Activity; Maj. Marty

Joe Eaton, Aviation and Missile Command;

- Maj. Dennis Earl Wheeler, Garrison; Sgt. 1st Class Norman Thomas Smith Jr., Garrison; Sgt. Craig Ellis, Headquarters & Alpha Company; Sgt. Marquetta Scott, HHC 59th; Staff Sgt. Harry Lassiter, Ordnance Munitions and Electronic Maintenance School; Staff Sgt. Brian Keith Rogers, Charlie Company; Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Simmons, Garrison; Staff Sgt. Amanda Susan Wall, NCO Academy; Staff Sgt. Robert Floyd White Jr., Ordnance Munitions and Electronic Maintenance School; and Staff Sgt. Matthew Kyle Winbon, HHC 59th.

Unmanned Aircraft Systems lands in Sparkman Center

Project office workers celebrate move from leased space off post

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

skip.vaughn@redstone.army.mil

The Unmanned Aircraft Systems Project Office has officially arrived at Redstone.

The approximately 220-member office celebrated its move into the Sparkman Center from leased space off post in an open house ceremony Dec. 5.

“The fact that we’re here signifies the importance of unmanned aircraft systems to the future,” project manager Col. Don Hazelwood said.

Its previous location was University Square where it had arrived in January 1993 from building 5250, which was then the headquarters for the Missile Command.

Now the workers take up the second floor and a quarter of the fourth floor at

building 5300, headquarters for the Aviation and Missile Command. They moved in during October.

“It gets us closer to PEO Aviation, that’s the main thing,” program support specialist Lisa Black said. “I work administrative/personnel (matters) and we’re able to communicate better with PEO Aviation.”

The project office – which includes civilian employees, military and contractor support – is under the Program Executive Office for Aviation.

Its previous leased space was “very crowded,” according to Bill Nichols, deputy product manager for Shadow unmanned aerial vehicle. The retired lieutenant colonel has worked in the project office since June 2005.

“Over time, as UAVs got more popular and the programs grew, there was less and less opportunity at the site we were on to expand,” Nichols said. “And with the PEO here it made all the sense in the world to move on post.”

It did add more time to his commute from west Madison, he said, but he’s not complaining.



Photo by Tarah Hollingsworth

BLUE RIBBON EVENT— Dedicating the Unmanned Aircraft Systems Project Office’s move to building 5300 are, from left, Paul Bogosian, program executive officer for aviation; Cendi Fuller, administrative assistant for the deputy project manager; Col. Don Hazelwood, the project manager; Lisa Black, program support specialist; Tim Owings, deputy project manager; Tim Sharp, automation leader; and Maj. Gen. Jim Pillsbury, commander of the Aviation and Missile Command and Redstone Arsenal.



Photo by Sgt. Eliamar Trapp

Warranting merit

Warrant Officer Orville Wilson, of the Warrant Officer Training Division, Ordnance Munitions and Electronic Maintenance School, is promoted to chief warrant officer by his sister, Orvietta Shannon, left, and wife, Sgt. 1st Class Sandra Hall, during a ceremony Dec. 1 at the division.

Guard unit recognizes Tobyhanna workers

Depot

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transportation security. The unit operated primarily from an air base in the dangerous Al Anbar province. The unit mobilized from July 2005 to June 2006 and comprised Task Force Blue Steel while in the theater of operations.

Konzman said the battalion had a peak strength of 1,100 Soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines and logged over 850,000 vehicle miles while completing more than 2,000 missions including base security, area

security, convoy security and other combat and combat support operations. Other missions included providing security for the vice president and the recovery of a downed aircraft.

"The unit performed exceptionally well and that's a credit to the Soldiers and the other military personnel in the task force," Konzman said. He credited intensive training at Camp Shelby, Miss., as well as at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, Calif., for having the unit prepared for operations in Iraq.

Tobyhanna's assistance in the maintenance arena contributed to that success, Konzman said.

Post youngsters better watch out for Santa

Santa

continued from page 1

through Santa's visit. The mini-parade includes blaring fire truck sirens announcing Santa's arrival in each neighborhood. Santa's elves scurry from house to house, knocking on doors and inviting children to visit with Santa in the back of the pickup.

"We are expecting to see 150 to 200 children," Rose said. "We encourage all the children to come out to see Santa. In the past, we've had babies sitting on Santa's lap as well as teenagers. Santa is there for children of all ages."

Often, elves will carry little children out to see Santa. Most are still dressed in their pajamas and slippers. But, that doesn't matter. What matters is that they get a chance to talk to Santa about their Christmas wishes.

"A lot of the kids ask for the same thing — Can I have my daddy or mommy home for Christmas?" Rose said.

Or, they will ask for a special gift for someone they love.

"They'll tell Santa they don't want anything for themselves, but could he bring something nice for their mom," Rivera said.

Those requests are far from the commercialism of Christmas. But, they do say something about the love military families share.

"It's not sad," Rivera said. "It's beautiful. It leaves us speechless. When a child asks for their parent to come home, Santa will tell them we will all say a special prayer and the Lord will take care of that."

But, the requests from children can be fun, too.

"It always happens that some kids will ask for something their parents might not want them

to have," Rose said.

"Last year, one child asked for a cat. But, their mom or dad was in the background shaking their head 'no, no.' As a rule, children will ask for toys or games. Whatever they ask for doesn't matter as much to us as seeing the big smile on their faces."

One child was silly enough to ask Santa for a Mercedes last year. Yet, in the same vein he and other children also asked for gifts for their parents or siblings.

"The children always want to make sure somebody other than themselves will have a good Christmas," Rivera said. "And, that always surprises me."

The kids often get inspired by the Santa Run — even on a cold, crisp Saturday morning — to make up a little of their own fun.

"Some of the kids will see Santa, and then they will sneak around the block and see Santa again," Rose said. "They will be running, and laughing, and having a fun time."

Their childish silliness is matched by the holiday cheer delivered by Santa through the Sergeants Major elves.

"Kids will be kids," Rivera said. "It's really neat to watch a bunch of older adults dressed up like elves acting like kids, running and jumping around to get the young kids up into the truck to see Santa."

Besides holiday cheer and the promise to return on Christmas Eve, Santa and the elves also give each child some Christmas candy. Often, parents will take pictures of their children sitting with Santa in the truck bed.

So, Redstone Arsenal families, remember to set those alarm clocks and wake up early this Saturday for a visit from Santa. And, if you don't? Well, then be prepared to be awakened anyway by a "Ho, Ho, Ho!" outside your window.

Local engineer wins pageant in her spare time

Miss Black Alabama USA works at Huntsville Center

By DEBRA VALINE
Engineering and Support Center

Miss Black Alabama USA 2006 is a civil engineer at the Engineering and Support Center, proving you can be smart and beautiful.

Arnecia Bradley of the Huntsville Center's Engineering Directorate competed against five other Alabama women in the pageant and was selected to represent Alabama at the upcoming Miss Black USA Pageant June 2 in The Gambia, West Africa.

The Miss Black USA Scholarship Pageant was founded in 1984 to advance educational and professional opportunities for women of African-American descent. Its foundation was built on integrity and unity among African-American women.

"The pageant historically has been held in Washington, D.C., but in 2007 it is in The Gambia," Bradley said. "It will be a great trip, but many of my family and friends will not be able to attend. Nevertheless, we begin in D.C. with three days of personal interviews, and then we leave from there to go to The Gambia."

The road to being named Miss Black Alabama USA was not the typical beauty pageant — they didn't have an official pageant. The Alabama contestants sent application packets to the Miss Black USA Scholarship Pageant headquarters in Washington, D.C., and participated in numerous interviews.

The packets included each contestant's platform; talent — Bradley will perform a comedic monologue; background; academic achievement; and community involvement.

"It is with great pride that I can tell you Arnecia was the best candidate to represent the lovely state of Alabama,"



Courtesy photo

REPRESENTING STATE— Arnecia Bradley of the Huntsville Center's Engineering Directorate will represent Alabama at the Miss Black USA Pageant June 2 in The Gambia, West Africa.

said Karen Lyew, executive director and chief financial officer, Miss Black USA Scholarship Pageant and Foundation. "Arnecia stood out in the process because of her intelligence and her confidence. She was able to clearly articulate her passions and goal in life along with her platform: 'Math and Science Literacy: Unlocking the Doors for Educational Opportunity.' Considering we are a scholarship pageant, education is our primary focus."

"This is overwhelming; it all happened so fast," said Bradley, 25, who won her first pageant, Little Miss College Station, when she was 4 years old. "I have wanted to participate in this pageant for two years. I first heard about it from a friend in

Chicago; then a year ago I met Miss Black Georgia.

"It means a lot to me to be representing the state of Alabama," she said. "It's a great honor — especially since I am from Arkansas! I feel we all have something we can bring to the community. I thought this was a way I could bring my platform to the community.

"Learning should be continuous," Bradley said. "We should encourage cooperation rather than competition. Increasing the public's understanding and appreciation of mathematics and science will influence a growth pattern in our youth's hard work and application in these areas."

Bradley also volunteers in the community with The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society; Big Sister/Little Sister Ministry at her church; and Girls Inc.

"I see a lot of girls are not getting the education they need in science and math. Being Miss Black Alabama will help me bring awareness to the state of Alabama," said Bradley, a 2004 engineering graduate of Alabama A&M University.

Bradley's manager is her mother, Arnella Hayes, who lives in Little Rock. Hayes handles appearances and is sending out sponsorship letters. To schedule an appearance or to become a sponsor, visit the web at www.missblackal.org.

"I do all my appearances and speaking engagements in the evenings and on weekends — it does not interfere with my duties at the Huntsville Center," Bradley said.

In addition to being a civil engineer during the day and a beauty pageant winner in her spare time, Bradley served as the financial chairwoman of the Huntsville Center's Combined Federal Campaign from Oct. 9 to Nov. 17. She also is enrolled in Leadership Huntsville, Connect Class 4; the Huntsville Center's Leadership Development Program; Society of American Military Engineers; and is pursuing her master's degree in business administration with the University of North Alabama.

"Arnecia is exactly the kind of role model anyone would want to represent

their organization," Lyew said. "We like to think that our state delegates are the epitome of excellence in their community. We believe the pageant is only a minor accomplishment in which Arnecia will experience in her lifetime. This young lady has a very positive future ahead of her. It is definitely our pleasure to have Arnecia as a part of our Miss Black USA Family."



Photo by Skip Vaughn

Personnel givers

Members of the South Central Civilian Personnel Operations Center contribute gifts each year to Christmas Charities Year Round. Kneeling are Linda Loy, left, and Tammy Adams. Standing from left are Angela Thomas, Gail Hughes and Nancy Flinn. "Hopefully this will encourage others," said Loy, a supervisory human resources specialist. The entire SC CPOC participated in the annual giving; and this year they even made stockings.

Martin Road construction on schedule



Photo by Andy Roake

BUILDING BRIDGES— Abutments of the new Indian Creek Bridge await support beams, scheduled to be delivered Dec. 12. Construction of three new bridges on Martin Road is expected to be completed by March. The new bridges will allow heavy vehicles and school buses to use Gate 7 and Martin Road.

Gate 7 reopening expected by March

By **ANDY ROAKE**
For the Rocket

While the recent rain and cold have impacted construction on the Indian Creek Bridge on Martin Road, post officials say the work is still close to being on schedule.

“The contractor recently increased their work hours to make up for the weather delays,” said Keith Cook, program manager for the engineering division in the Garrison Directorate of Public Works. “They are working six days a week, nine hours a day to meet the construction schedule.”

Cook said the construction is scheduled to be completed the last week in February, barring any unforeseen delays.

“The cold and rain put us behind, but we’re satisfied with how the contractor is working to make up the lost time,” Cook said.

Construction on Martin Road, just inside Gate 7, began Sept. 5 to construct new bridges over Indian Creek and two culverts. All three previous bridges were built prior to 1940 and were deteriorated and in need of replacement to ensure the safety of motorists. The bridges had weight restrictions which prevented school buses and large trucks from using the road and Gate 7.

The construction of the two new culvert bridges is complete

and support beams for the Indian Creek Bridge were scheduled to be delivered Dec. 12, Cook said.

“The abutments for the Indian Creek Bridge are nearly complete. Once the beams are delivered, things will start flying from there,” he said.

The new Indian Creek Bridge will be 2 to 3 feet higher than the old bridge. Once the bridge construction is complete, the roadway approaches to the Indian Creek Bridge will be built up to meet the height of the bridge and then new asphalt will be laid down on all three of the bridges.

Martin Road will remain a two-lane road for the foreseeable future due to cost and environmental issues, Cook said.

Final construction costs of the new bridges will be approximately \$1.2 million.

Christmas tree safety grows with water

Fire prevention branch extends suggestions

What’s a holiday party or even the traditional Christmas morning scene itself without a fresh beautifully decorated tree? The Redstone Arsenal Fire Prevention Branch wants you to enjoy the holiday safely.

If your household, as those of more than 33 million other American homes, includes a natural tree in its festivities, the Fire Prevention Branch asks that you follow its suggestions.

First, keep the tree watered. Did you know that Christmas trees account for 200 fires annually, resulting in six deaths, 25 injuries and more than \$6 million in property damage? Typically shorts in electrical lights or open flames from candles, lighters or matches start tree fires. Well-watered trees are not a problem, but neglected and dry trees can be.

Here are some more helpful hints for keeping your Christmas tree safe and fireless:

- Choose a fresh tree – dispose as soon as possible after Christmas Day.
- When setting up the tree, saw off the trunk at an angle and keep water above the cut at all times.
- Support the tree well – the stronger the support the less chance it will fall.
- Set tree away from a radiator or fireplace.
- Check all strings of light – frayed cords, loose sockets and worn connections.
- It is wise to turn tree lights off when you retire for the night or leave the house.
- Avoid overloading circuits.
- The larger the tree, the greater the hazard.
- Avoid placing anything electrical beneath the tree.
- Follow basic tree and lighting safety guidance.
- Know the load being placed on extension cords.
- Have fun while decorating safely. (Fire Prevention Branch release)

Put safety first for vehicle tires

Protection against avoidable breakdowns and crashes. Improved vehicle handling. Better fuel economy. Increased tire life. Those are just a few of the reasons to take five minutes every month to check your tires, according to the Garrison Safety Office.

Simply use the following checklist to help ensure tire safety:

- Check tire pressure regularly (at least once a month), including the spare.
- Inspect tires for uneven wear patterns on the tread, cracks, foreign objects, or other signs of wear or trauma. Remove bits of glass and other foreign objects wedged in the tread.
- Make sure your tire valves have valve caps.
- Check tire pressure before going on a long trip.
- Do not overload your vehicle. Check the tire information placard or



owner’s manual for the maximum recommended load for the vehicle.

• If you are towing a trailer, remember that some of the weight of the loaded trailer is transferred to the towing vehicle.

• Slow down if you have to go over a pothole or other object in the road.

• Do not run over curbs, and try not to strike the curb when parking. (Garrison Safety release)

Volunteers making ink pens for deployed troops



Courtesy photo

WRITE STUFF— Here are six examples of pens that have been turned, in many woods from white oak to cherry, at the MWR Arts & Crafts Center in support of the Freedom Pen Project.

Arts and crafts center involved in project

By **BOYCE ALLEN**
MWR Arts & Crafts Center

Have you heard about the Freedom Pen Project? No? Well, neither had the staff of the MWR Arts & Crafts Center, until one of its volunteers, Bill Hastings, brought it to their attention. After doing a bit of research, it was decided that this was a perfect way to support troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.

But first, a little background information: The Freedom Pen Project was spearheaded in 2004 by the members of Saw Mill Creek Woodworkers Forums in Hayes, Va. To date, more than 59,984 pens have been shipped to American servicemembers in the Middle East. A prepared statement from Saw Mill Creek Woodworkers states, "Show your support for our sons and daughters who proudly serve their country. Get involved and help us fund, produce and ship custom handwriting pens to our military servicemen and women serving in the Middle East. It's more than just saying 'thank you' or 'I support our troops'; show them you care, and have some fun making Freedom Pens with your friends and family."

In October, the MWR Arts & Crafts Center set out looking for how to get involved. The staff contacted David Sapp, owner/operator of the Woodcraft Store in Nashville. Sapp immediately donated 50 pen kits to get the projects started on Redstone Arsenal. The Woodcraft Corporation has been a major sponsor of the project since it began.

The staff and volunteers of the MWR Arts & Crafts Center are now off and running, and will continue their involvement as long as America has troops in a combat zone. Pen turning is the woodworking art form that takes a solid, roughly-hewn piece of wood, places it on a motor-powered lathe, and "turns" the wood into a cylindrical object. Examples of this very ornate wood-working art form can be items as large as front porch pillars and

stairway banisters, to things as small as an ink pen.

The project coordinator for the MWR Arts & Crafts Center is Boyce Allen, who has contacted his past pen-turning students and many other wood turners in the area; and they have all been very enthusiastic about volunteering.

If you're a wood turner, and you would like to donate some time to turn a pen or two, contact the MWR Arts and Crafts Center by calling 876-7951 or by e-mailing art@redstone.army.mil. Don't yet know how to turn a pen? Call the MWR Arts & Crafts Center for a schedule of upcoming classes. For more information on the Freedom Pen Project, go to <http://www.freedompens.org/>.



Photo by Skip Vaughn

Welcome sight

A Christmas tree greets visitors in the reception area at Sparkman Center's building 5300.

'Mom, what if you don't come back?'

Single parent nurse recalls deployment

By KARI HAWKINS
Staff writer
karihawk@knology.net

The hard reality of deployment quickly hit home for Capt. Latonya Walker.

She was assigned to the med-

ical company at Fox Army Health Center in June 2004. As a single mom, she was busy in her off time getting her two boys — one then a rising middle schooler and the other a rising high schooler — ready for their new schools in the fall.

It wasn't long after getting her sons acclimated that she got the news — she and 12 other Soldiers from Fox would be

deployed to Iraq in November with the 86th Combat Support Hospital out of Fort Campbell, Ky. The one-year deployment meant she would have to relocate her boys again, leaving them in the care of relatives in Louisville, Ky.

"I had no problem with the deployment," Walker said. "We've got kids over there my son's age who are kicking in doors, who have boots on the ground. I'm an Army nurse. I wear the uniform. But, relocating my kids after getting them settled here was rough on all of us."

Being a single parent compounded the problem of deployment in other ways. She is the only parent her two sons can rely on, which caused her youngest to be particularly anxious about her year in a war zone.

"He kept asking me 'What if you don't come back? What if you don't come back?'" Walker recalled.

But, she was bound and determined to come back to her boys. Her duty in Iraq presented challenges beyond her imagination. And, yet, she survived and returned, and now serves as the head nurse of the Primary Care Clinic at Fox Army Health Center. Her sons are now once again the center of her life.

"In Iraq, my sole focus was to make it through every day and come back," Walker said. "I was disengaged from my family. At the end of the day, I was 10,000 miles away. How much control could I have over my boys and what they were doing?"

"In Iraq, death is something you face every day. So, I focused on keeping myself safe and working to get the Soldiers I was treating well enough to go home. When I did come back, the focus couldn't just be on me anymore. I had to reconnect with my two

sons and get them back on track."

Until recently, Walker and the other 12 Soldiers from Fox were not allowed to discuss their experience because of an HBO documentary called "Baghdad

ER" that was filmed while they were stationed at Iba Sina, an Iraqi hospital facility that once served as Saddam Hussein's private hospital. Now, with the

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Working in south Iraq was deployment win

Soldier implements technology while working in air base lab

By KARI HAWKINS
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While the majority of the 86th Combat Support Hospital worked in Baghdad, a few Soldiers — including Capt. John Sonneman from Fox Army Health Center — were assigned to serve as a split operation in southern Iraq.

During his deployment, Sonneman served as the chief of pathology services at Tallil Air Base in Nasariyah, Iraq. Though he was outside the Green Zone, Sonneman said the assignment proved to be less dangerous and less stressful than what his comrades experienced in Baghdad.

"The tempo and volume of casualties we saw was very limited," he said. "We deployed right before the elections so there were a lot of 'What ifs.' But, the region remained relatively stable while I was there."

While the other 12 Soldiers from Fox Army Health Center worked in the demanding environment at Iba Sina hospital in Baghdad, Sonneman served in the less stressful environment at Tallil Air Base near Nasariyah from November 2004 to November 2005. While there he supported the care of Soldiers and local civilians, and worked to improve medical facilities and implement new technologies.

"I tell people I won the deployment lotto," Sonneman said. "I was able to talk to my family on a regular basis. We were in a secure situation. It was fairly peaceful."

Still, he and others with the medical unit stayed busy with day-to-day medical concerns.

"There were normal sick calls, various injuries and illnesses, and preventive medicine," he said. "We provided for the medical

See Medic on page 18



Photo by Kari Hawkins

GLAD TO BE HOME— Capt. Latonya Walker, the head nurse of the Primary Care Clinic at Fox Army Health Center, is glad to be back home at Fox, where she works with a great staff that includes Diane Kum, a licensed practical nurse in internal medicine. Walker deployed to Iraq with the 86th Combat Support Hospital and served primarily as head nurse of the intermediate care ward at Iba Sina hospital. Being a single mother of two sons made the deployment especially hard on her family.

Pharmacy specialist sees benefits from experience

Soldier re-enlisted during Iraq tour

By KARI HAWKINS
Staff writer
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There are many things that stand out to Sgt. Wilson Griffin as "lessons learned" during his deployment with the 86th Combat Support Hospital at Iba Sina hospital in Baghdad.

But, one thing that is still a surprise to him today is something people around the U.S. complain about nearly daily. That complaint: the majority of media only report on the bad things.

That's especially true of the coverage in the Global War on Terrorism, Griffin said. That's especially true about his deployment to Iba Sina hospital in Iraq. Sure, there are a lot of bad things. But, there is a lot of good, too.

"I was scared at first when I found out I was being deployed," said Griffin, who is now 23. "There was a fear there. I was worried because I saw from the news in the media all that was going on."

What that media didn't show Griffin was the number of qualified and trained Soldiers who deploy to Iraq and do, indeed, return to the States. That media didn't show the stories of sur-

vival, success and sense of purpose that Soldiers experience as part of their deployment.

So, Griffin was anxious to be among the 13 Soldiers from Fox Army Health Center who deployed with the 500-member 86th Combat Support Hospital out of Fort Campbell, Ky. During the deployment from November 2004 to November 2005, Griffin learned what it meant to be a Soldier serving during wartime.

As a pharmacy specialist, Griffin admitted being "shell shocked" at the 18-hour days he spent filling prescription after prescription. The pharmacy at Iba Sina hospital mixed, on average, 300 IVs a day to treat injured Sol-

diers and Iraqi civilians.

"We didn't have enough pharmacy personnel when I first got there to run a 24-hour operation seven days a week," Griffin said of the six-Soldier pharmacy staff.

"It was rough in the beginning. Eventually, we cross-trained a medic who worked with us and we did get two more personnel. But, the pharmacy was stressful for me. It was hard. It was long hours. At some points it was exhausting. At times, it was fast. I've never worked like that, period."

As a young pharmacy specialist, Griffin hadn't had much experience with supplying pharmaceuticals for severe inpatient care.

"There were a lot of IV medications that I had never mixed up before," he said. "There was a lot of on-the-job training. The main thing about mixing IVs is the math. You have to know the basic ratios and proportions for calculating doses. I'm strong now in ratios and proportions."

Every day brought its own set of challenges for the pharmacy. The only constant was the admission and discharge of patients.

Though Griffin was relatively safe and at ease in the Green Zone, he said Soldiers had to live with the constant fear of the unexpected happening.

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Nurse

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documentary aired and available for purchase, the Soldiers can talk about their experiences working in “the busiest trauma center in the world” from November 2004 to November 2005.

Though Walker’s sons and family – including her father who retired from the Army — know about the challenges she survived to return to them, it is hard for her to really make others understand the Iba Sina experience. Her time working at the hospital will always be a part of her that is separate from her family, a part of her that only other medical Soldiers who have been deployed in a war zone can understand.

“I went over there prepared for what I thought was the worst,” she said. “I was expecting portable hospitals and tents. So, in that respect, I didn’t get the worst.

“But, the type of injuries I saw ... I wasn’t prepared or expected for any of that. No way could I have been prepared for that.”

An oncology nurse by training, Walker arrived at Iba Sina hospital to find herself assigned to work as a medical surgical nurse in the intensive care unit.

“I quickly had to learn about things like blood pressure meds, drips and wound dressings that could take as long as four hours to complete,” she said.

“I helped critically ill patients at all stages of recovery. I saw some bedside surgeries. It was a whole other experience than what I’ve ever seen before. Seeing all that and dealing with all that left me with no desire to work in ICU.”

The assignment quickly took its toll. She stopped eating, and started having nightmares and other sleep issues. After a month, she went to her supervisor and asked for a transfer out of ICU.

“I said ‘I told my kids I was going to come back to them. I need to be able to function when I go back to them. If I spend a year in ICU, I won’t be able to function when I return to my kids,’” Walker recalled.

Her concern was heard. At the same time, there was a need for a “Soldier’s nurse” who could serve as head nurse on the intermediate care ward, which was operating under the care of nurses and medical personnel who were mostly in the 18- to 20-year age range.

“There were a lot of new nurses in the intermediate care ward,” said the 39-

year-old who now has 22 years in the military.

“They needed someone with leadership and experience. I started on the enlisted side and worked up to where I am. The ward needed a mentor and a leader along the lines of someone who knew what it meant to be a Soldier and how to act like a Soldier. They needed someone who knew the Army.”

In the intermediate care ward, Walker quickly fit in and was able to contribute to the care of patients.

“In the ICU, I wasn’t able to contribute at 100 percent,” she said. “I wasn’t use to having to ask questions and to depend on others for help. In the intermediate care ward, I knew what to do to help the wounded Soldiers. I knew how to do my job. I was able to give it 100 percent all the time I was there.”

But, that doesn’t mean Walker left the horror of severely wounded Soldiers or Iraqis in the ICU. Many of those patients would also need care in the intermediate care ward. Like others working in the intermediate care ward, Walker’s deployment was split – with one half working on the American side of the ward and the other half on the Iraqi side of the ward.

“We took care of Soldiers, contractors, foreigners, children, civilians and Iraqi insurgents,” she said. “There were burn patients who needed our care. There were leg wounds, amputees, shrapnel wounds. We treated every kind of wound.”

The most horrific cases were burn patients who were burned over 98 percent of their bodies.

“We gave comfort and care until it was their time to go,” Walker said.

Seriously injured American Soldiers were transported to Landstuhl, Germany, for further care within 72 hours of arriving at Iba Sina while Soldiers with minor wounds were returned to their unit after receiving treatment. Iraqi insurgents were sent to Abu Ghraib prison after treatment. Iraqi civilians were cared for until they could go home.

Working 12-hour days and responding to many off-hour mass casualty emergencies, Walker and the rest of the Fox Soldiers had very little time to establish relationships with Iraqi civilians outside the Green Zone. Walker did have some contact with the families of Iraqi civilians who were treated at the hospital. Yet, that contact was through a translator who helped provide information about a patient’s at-home care.



Capt. Latonya Walker

The medical staff, however, did get to know their interpreters.

“They were top notch. They took enormous risks daily to come to work with Americans,” Walker said.

“They risked a lot for the money they were paid. It didn’t seem like a lot. But, in Iraq, one person could make enough as an interpreter to support eight or 10 people. They did it for their families. At the end of the day, the Iraqis wanted the same thing we did – a better life for their families.”

The traumas and casualties seen at Iba Sina hospital kept medical Soldiers working nearly non-stop. Medical supplies were at a premium, especially in the first few months Walker was there.

“The amount of supplies and drugs that we went through on a daily basis was mind boggling,” she said. “And, the time needed to treat patients was also unreal. It could take one to two hours to change a dressing based on the extent of the wounds.”

Beyond medical treatment, the nurses and medical staff also worked to make their patients happy and comfortable while they waited to be transported on to other care or return to their unit.

“The Soldiers would thank me all the time,” Walker said. “I would tell them there was no need to thank me when they are out there every day kicking down doors for freedom.”

One Iraqi girl called Walker “mom,” an endearment that fit her well. “Many of the younger patients could very well have been my child,” she said. “I treated them like I would want someone to treat my son.

“We all would treat them with compassion. If they needed to cry, we would let them cry and sometimes we would cry with them. We tried to help 18, 19 and 20 year olds who had lost limbs or were battling serious injuries in any way we could.”

Walker remembers a Marine unit that arrived at Iba Sina hospital with only two of its Soldiers uninjured. The rest were either dead or wounded.

“They were crying for each other,” she said. “When you see the toughest crying, you cry with them. These are the best the military has and to see a Marine break down like that ... well, you never get over it.”

The nurses and other staff of the intermediate care ward became a close knit group during their deployment. Walker recently returned from a captain’s career course where she roomed with nurses she worked with in Iraq.

“You bond when you are deployed,” she said. “We became a dysfunctional family, just like the ones in the States. We might disagree and argue. But, at the end of the day, we were all each other had.”

In a way, returning to the U.S. seemed surreal to Walker. While in theater, she saw Soldiers who sacrificed everything in a war. And, yet the only people who seem to care at home about the escalating deaths and injuries are politicians, Soldier families and veterans. Although the number of Soldiers killed in the Global War on Terrorism now exceeds the number killed on 9/11, Walker said she hasn’t seen the families of dead Soldiers or the families of permanently wounded Soldiers get the kind of support they need.

“There are Soldiers who have lost a leg or an arm, who are the only support for their spouse and kids,” Walker said. “Where’s the extra support they need? Where’s the help they will need for a lifetime?”

Walker still deals with sleep issues from her deployment. And, the experience has changed her, making her more intense about family issues and less concerned with material success. Occasionally, she has what her co-workers at Fox call “an Iraqi moment,” times when situations at work cause her to get overly emotional.

“Sometimes things will happen that will make me remember what I dealt with on a daily basis in Iraq,” she said. “Iraq is something that you never forget, that you never get over.”

Singapore students have eye-opening visit

Three military students from Singapore saw Southeastern attractions and a hockey game during their stay.

Lt. Joanne Lee, Capt. Ryan Ong and Capt. Wilson Tan, all of the Singapore Civil Defense Force, attended the Technical Escort Course from Nov. 13 to Dec. 8.

"It's been great," Lee said of her time at Redstone. "The folks here are ever so friendly and helpful.

"We had a chance to visit Atlanta and Nashville over the weekends and we went for a hockey game, too. That was really an eye-opener, because back at home, no one plays ice hockey."

Ong said he also enjoyed his time here. The four weeks were mainly filled with lessons, interspersed with trips and gatherings during the holidays and weekends.

"Everyone is helpful and friendly," Ong said.

Tan mentioned the Thanksgiving lunch they had with a family.

Americans is a friendly bunch of people," Tan said. "The people are open and will not hesitate to make visitors feel at home."

The International Military Student Office provides field trips and other activities for students from outside the United States.



Lt. Joanne Lee



Capt. Ryan Ong



Capt. Wilson Tan



Courtesy photo

Candy house

International military students visit Nashville's winter wonderland attraction called "ICE" on Dec. 3. Inside a candy house sculpture are Sgt. Khaled Alshahab of Kuwait, left, and Warrant Officer Abdulkarim Alyamany of Saudi Arabia. The International Military Student Office took 14 international soldiers on the Nashville field trip. They were from Greece, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Singapore.

■ Medical captain spends year in southern Iraq

Medic

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needs of the troops stationed at the air base. The more serious wounded Soldiers would be (air evacuated) almost immediately after we got them stable."

The local population also came to the hospital at the air base in search of medical care.

"They would come to the base with sick children and when we could we would care for them as well," Sonneman said. "We had local nationals who actually worked on the base. But, the language barrier made it difficult for us to get to know them."

Sonneman worked with two technicians to do lab tests on patient blood work. They worked 12-hour shifts every day of the deployment, although their services weren't always needed.

"When traumas came in then that's when you earn your money, so to speak," Sonneman said. "We worked those until they were all done, regardless of how long it took."

Sonneman's work often took him into the hospital's operating room.

"We were primarily responsible for transfusion medicine," Sonneman said. "Basically, if anyone gets injured and has a large volume of blood loss, we had the capability of testing for the transfusion of blood. We did diagnostic testing of blood. We were a mini-lab in a box, so to speak."

That work was a lot different than what he does at Fox, where there are no requirements for inpatient blood work or transfusion medicine. His work at Fox primarily involves managing clinical tests.

But, that didn't cause Sonneman to doubt his capabilities.

"We always have confidence in our ability to do well. I went there knowing I could succeed and do well," he said. "The Army moves you around enough and gives you the right training so that you feel comfortable with the challenges presented to you. There was not anything we faced that we weren't able to overcome."

Sonneman's lab was part of a network of American military labs in Iraq that worked together as needed.

"There were five or six lab officers in theater throughout Iraq while I was there," he said. "If I had a problem or a concern, I could ask these colleagues and get their input. If we were running short on something, I could ask another lab to help supply what we needed."

When he first arrived at Tallil Air Base, construction of a modular hospital was still under way. The medical unit was working and living in tents.

"We were operating in tents," Sonneman recalled. "It was challenging in that environment because you sweep a lot and clean a lot, and learn to deal with a certain amount of conditions that were not up to U.S. standards."

Once the hospital was completed, Sonneman's lab was located in an isobox, a portable, metal-sided room, right outside the facility. During his deployment, he oversaw the implementation of a computerized medical record system within the hospital.

Sonneman also implemented some new technologies while in theater. One was the use of an apheresis machine, which separates platelets from the rest of blood. Another was the thrombosis astrograph that allowed doctors to get a real-time analysis of blood clotting factors during surgery on a massive trauma patient.

"It was basically kind of on-the-job training and implementation of these technologies," Sonneman said. "They were some of the more interesting aspects of this deployment."

Sonneman actually talked to the company that made the thrombosis astrograph while in theater to make sure it was properly implemented.

"The analyzer is primarily used in hospitals specializing in transplants," he said. "But, with massive traumas you have a similar situation where the chemistry of the blood is changing rapidly and you have to constantly analyze blood clotting factors."

Although the fear of insurgent attacks was relatively low, Soldiers



Photo by Kari Hawkins

TOOLS OF TRADE— Pathology is an exacting science involving the use of technology. But, in Iraq, Capt. John Sonneman overcame local conditions that often presented challenges to his scientific work as chief of pathology services at Tallil Air Base in southern Iraq. Sonneman was part of the 13-member team from Fox Army Health Center that deployed with the 86th Combat Support Hospital.

did have to protect themselves from unpredictable weather conditions at Tallil.

"Sand storms would come out of no where. It was actually an amazing thing," Sonneman said. "You had to carry a face scarf at all times because you never knew when one was going to come up. And, it wasn't the soft kind of sand that we see at the beach. It was hard dirt. It was like pellets hitting you. It was very painful."

Sonneman left his wife and 6-month-old daughter during his deployment. It was a sacrifice that was difficult to make for a family man.

"A deployment always presents challenges and difficulties," he said. "But, in the same respect, that's what the Army pays me to do. You have mixed emotions. No one wants to leave their family behind."

E-mail, MWR phones, calling cards, camera phone videos and video camera links all helped Sonneman stay in touch with his family.

"It wasn't as bad as I had anticipated," he said. "I was fortunate. I was lucky."

■ Soldier re-enlists during tour as pharmacist in Iraq

Pharmacist

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“You feared the unexpected because at any point in time a mortar could explode or something could happen to the facility or the Soldiers around the area,” he said. “There was even a fear of the local nationals who would work with us because there was a potential for those guys to do something.”

After a few months in theater, Griffin was put in charge of ordering supplies for the pharmacy. He had to know when to order vital medications, keeping in mind it could take two to three weeks for a shipment to arrive.

“It took awhile to figure out how long medications would last,” he said. “The worry was you didn’t want to run out of medications you use a lot.”

Griffin re-enlisted during his deployment. Since returning, he has resumed his college education and is pursuing a commission. He hopes to receive an appointment to Officers Candidate School.

“If I hadn’t gone to Baghdad, I would have gotten out of the Army, and gone into ROTC at Alabama A&M to finish college,” he said. “But,

there were big bonuses to re-enlist and I could do the commissioning program. I want to get commissioned and get into a branch that I like. I will possibly make this my career.”

Before he went to Iraq, Griffin had mixed feelings about the war. Now, he understands the need for the U.S. to help the Iraqi people in their quest for democracy and freedom.

“We kind of really need to stay and help them get back on their feet instead of just leaving them,” he said. “I guess if I hadn’t gone I would have never seen that part of the situation.”

Griffin said he expects to be reassigned soon, possibly with orders for Fort Benning (Ga.), Fort Campbell or Fort Stewart (Ga.). There is also a possibility he will be re-deployed to Iraq. But, his first deployment has made him confident that he can survive a return to the war zone.

“Of the 500 who went with us, everybody came back,” he said. “Overall, it was a good deployment.”

His experiences in Iraq have taught Griffin not to take life for granted and to be thankful for life’s blessings.

“I’m thankful for my life, for my relationships, for my arms and legs, for being healthy,” said the Greenville, S.C., native. “I think the experience made me a better pharmacy specialist and a better individual, period.”



Photo by Kari Hawkins

NORMAL HOURS— Sgt. Wilson Griffin is back to normal work hours after working 18-hour days as a pharmacy specialist during his deployment to Baghdad with the 86th Combat Support Hospital. On an average day during his deployment, Griffin and the pharmacy staff would mix up about 300 IVs to treat severely wounded patients.

REDSTONE ARSENAL ARMY FAMILY ACTION PLAN CONFERENCE REDSTONE OFFICERS AND CIVILIANS CLUB

FEB. 27-28, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
REGISTRATION FORM

DATA REQUIRED BY THE PRIVACY ACT OF 1974; AUTHORITY: 5 USC 301, 10 USC 3013,
PRINCIPAL PURPOSE: Identification of participants in the Army Family Action Plan Conference.
ROUTINE USES: Used to record the names and addresses of attendees at the Army Family Action
Plan Conference. Used to contact participants. DISCLOSURE: Disclosure is voluntary. If the
requested information is not provided, registration for the conference may not be possible.

1. FIRST NAME: _____ MI: _____ LAST NAME: _____
MAILING ADDRESS: (Line 1) _____
or OFFICE SYMBOL (Line 2) _____
CITY _____ STATE: _____
ZIP: _____
DAYTIME PHONE: _____ FAX: _____
E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

Do you require Daycare: _____ If So, Ages of Children: _____
You must register at the Child Development Center to use their facility.

COMPLETE ALL THAT APPLY:

2. YOUR MILITARY AFFILIATION?
(If not applicable, go to item 3.)
3. YOUR DA CIVILIAN AFFILIATION?
(If Active Duty Military go to item 4.)
- a. Are you a:
 Soldier or Retiree
 Spouse of Soldier or Retiree
- a. Are you a:
 DA Civilian Employee
 Spouse of DA Civilian
- b. Are you or is your sponsor:
 Active-duty
 Reserve
 National Guard
 Retired
- b. Are you or is your sponsor:
 APF (GS, WG)
 NAF (NF)
- c. Rank: _____
d. Job Title: _____
- c. Series/Grade: _____
d. Job Title: _____
4. YOUR MARITAL STATUS?
 Single Married Widow/Widower
5. YOUR FAMILY TYPE?
 Dual-Military Sole-parent Traditional Other
6. YOUR CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION?
 Delegate Admin support
 Facilitator Issue Support
 Recorder Youth Delegate
 Subject Matter Expert
7. HAVE YOU EVER PARTICIPATED IN AN
AFAP CONFERENCE? WHERE / WHEN?
 Installation level; what year(s)? _____
 MACOM level; what year(s)? _____
 DA Level; what year(s)? _____
 Never participated at any level
8. YOUR AREAS OF INTEREST (pick 3 and indicate 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choice):
- _____ Medical/Dental _____ Commissary/AAFES
_____ Family Housing/Facilities Maintenance _____ Morale, Welfare and Recreation Activities
_____ Traffic/Transportation/Personnel(civilian & military)/Finance

Please return this form to your organization's AFAP point of contact or send to: Cathy Hays,
IMSE-RED-MWA, Bldg 3338, Redeye Road, Redstone Arsenal, AL 35758-5000 or fax to 955-9171
or e-mail: cathy.hays@redstone.army.mil or visit www.redstonemwr.com to register and submit a
Quality of Life Survey.

Army Family Action Plan Conference Quality of Life Survey

This is your opportunity to make suggestions or express concerns about programs, services, or benefits affecting you and your family. These will be discussed at the Redstone Arsenal Army Family Action Plan Conference scheduled Feb. 27-28.

Consider what could be improved in the following areas to include but not limited to: Medical and Dental Services, AAFES, Commissary, Military or Civilian Pay, Allowances, Entitlements, Relocation, Housing, Traffic, Travel, Transportation, Education, Child Care, Morale Welfare and Recreation.

(Please type or write legibly)

How would you improve the Army's programs, services, or benefits?

(Be specific and recommend solutions. Give brief examples. Issues can be anything affecting the quality of life at Redstone or impacting the total Army family. Issues must have attainable solutions. Personal complaints will not be addressed. Comments may be continued on a separate sheet. One issue per page.)

Please include the following in the event we need clarification:
(Optional)

Name: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Send your completed survey to Army Community Service, building 3338, Redeye Road, Directorate of Morale Welfare and Recreation, U.S. Army Garrison, Redstone Arsenal, AL 35898-5000 or fax to 955-9171.

If you would like to participate as a conference delegate, please contact your organization's AFAP point of contact or send to Cathy Hays at 876-5041, fax 955-9171, or cathy.hays@redstone.army.mil or visit www.redstonemwr.com to complete the registration online and complete this Quality of Life Survey. Surveys for the AFAP Conference will be accepted until Jan. 23.

Playoffs begin with '3-headed monster'

Trio of flag football teams sporting strong resumes

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

The postseason tournament for flag football began Thursday with three favorites for the crown.

The Marines, Charlie Company and 326th Chemical Company had the best season in the seven-team league. The tournament final is scheduled this Thursday at 6 p.m.

"It's a three-headed monster," 326th defensive tackle/offensive guard Eddie Bryan said. "It's basically going to be either 326th, Charlie Company or the Marines."

The Marines and Charlie both finished the regular season at 9-1. The Marines earned the tournament's top seed and a first-round bye by scoring more points than the Wolfpack during the season. The 326th was 7-3.

The 326th tuned up by beating NCO Academy 22-12 on Dec. 4 at the flag football field off Patton Road.

"It was heart and dedication," Bryan said of the win. "We played together as a team. And we never quit and we never gave up."

The Dragons went on to beat Bravo Company 26-14 on Dec. 5 but lost to Charlie Company 22-18 on Dec. 6, the final night of the regular season.

In Thursday's openers for the double-elimination tournament, 326th edged Bravo 14-13, Charlie beat defending champion Headquarters & Alpha 20-13 and HHC 59th defeated NCO Academy 12-6.

"We've got a good chance (of winning the championship)," Charlie coach Chelsie Stokes said. "The only loss we had (during the season) was to the Marines and then we came back and beat them."

End-of-season results from last week included:

- **Dec. 4** – 326th Chemical def. NCO Academy 22-12.

- **Dec. 5** – Charlie def. HHC 59th 26-19, 326th Chemical def. Bravo 26-14 and NCO Academy def. Headquarters & Alpha 14-0.

- **Dec. 6** – Headquarters & Alpha def. Bravo 20-7, Marines def. HHC 59th 12-8 and Charlie def. 326th Chemical 22-18.

The final regular season standings had the 1. Marines (9-1), 2. Charlie (9-1), 3. 326th Chemical (7-3), 4. NCO Academy (5-5), 5. HHC 59th (4-6), 6. Bravo (3-7) and 7. Headquarters & Alpha (3-7).



Photo by Skip Vaughn

DEFENDING FLAG— Charlie Company (in dark jerseys) and the Marines (in white) are two of the better teams in the flag football league.

Ohio State favored to win national championship

Buckeyes over Florida Gators

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

Skip's Picks finished the college football season at 354-129 for 73 percent. Here are my predictions for the SWAC championship and the bowl games:



Photo by Skip Vaughn

RETURN ENGAGEMENT— 326th Chemical cornerback Jeremy Hamilton returns an interception during a preseason game in October.

- Southwestern Athletic Conference Championship** Dec. 16 in Birmingham – Alabama A&M over Arkansas-Pine Bluff.
- Poinsettia Bowl** Dec. 19 in San Diego – TCU over Northern Illinois.
- Las Vegas Bowl** Dec. 21 – Oregon over BYU.
- New Orleans Bowl** Dec. 22 – Rice over Troy.
- PapaJohn's Bowl** Dec. 23 in Birmingham – South Florida over East Carolina.
- New Mexico Bowl** Dec. 23 in Albuquerque – San Jose State over New Mexico.
- Armed Forces Bowl** Dec. 23 at Fort Worth, Texas – Utah over Tulsa.
- Hawaii Bowl** Dec. 24 in Honolulu – Arizona State over Hawaii.
- Motor City Bowl** Dec. 26 in Detroit – Central Michigan over Middle Tennessee.
- Emerald Bowl** Dec. 27 in San Francisco – Florida State over UCLA.
- Independence Bowl** Dec. 28 in Shreveport, La. – Alabama over Oklahoma State.
- Holiday Bowl** Dec. 28 in San Diego – Texas A&M over California.
- Texas Bowl** Dec. 28 in Houston – Kansas State over Rutgers.
- Music City Bowl** Dec. 29 in Nashville – Clemson over Kentucky.
- Sun Bowl** Dec. 29 in El Paso – Oregon State over Missouri.
- Liberty Bowl** Dec. 29 in Memphis – South Carolina over Houston.
- Insight Bowl** Dec. 29 in Tempe, Ariz. – Minnesota over Texas Tech.
- Champ Sports Bowl** Dec. 29 in Orlando, Fla. – Maryland over Purdue.
- Meineke Bowl** Dec. 30 in Charlotte, N.C. – Boston College over Navy.
- Alamo Bowl** Dec. 30 in San Antonio – Texas over Iowa.
- Chick-fil-A Bowl** Dec. 30 in Atlanta – Georgia over Virginia Tech.
- MPC Computers Bowl** Dec. 31 in Boise, Idaho – Miami over Nevada.
- Outback Bowl** Jan. 1 in Tampa, Fla. – Penn State over Tennessee.
- Cotton Bowl** Jan. 1 in Dallas – Auburn over Nebraska.
- Capital One Bowl** Jan. 1 in Orlando, Fla. – Arkansas over Wisconsin.
- Gator Bowl** Jan. 1 in Jacksonville, Fla. – West Virginia over Georgia Tech.
- Rose Bowl** Jan. 1 in Pasadena, Calif. – Southern Cal over Michigan.
- Fiesta Bowl** Jan. 1 in Glendale, Ariz. – Oklahoma over Boise State.
- Orange Bowl** Jan. 2 in Miami – Louisville over Wake Forest.
- Sugar Bowl** Jan. 3 in New Orleans – LSU over Notre Dame.
- International Bowl** Jan. 6 in Toronto – Cincinnati over Western Michigan.
- GMAC Bowl** Jan. 7 in Mobile – Southern Mississippi over Ohio.
- BCS National Championship** Jan. 8 in Glendale, Ariz. – Ohio State over Florida.

Sports & Recreation

Jogger safety

The Garrison reminds joggers that they shouldn't run on any roads where the speed limit is greater than 25 mph – this includes the shoulder, gravel portion. Joggers should use the jogging trails. Security officials cite AMCOM regulation 210-2 for jogging on post.

Conferences & Meetings

Sci-fi readers

The Post Library is co-sponsoring the Bailey Cove Science Fiction Book Club which meets on the first Thursday of each month discussing classic and contemporary novels. On Jan. 4, the pick is "Tar-Aiym Krang" by Alan Dean Foster. All gatherings are at the Bailey Cove Library, intersection of Weatherly Road and Bailey Cove Road, at 6 p.m. Walk-ins are always welcome. For information call 881-0257.

Bible studies

The Protestant Women of the Chapel have Bible studies each Thursday at Bicentennial Chapel. The morning Bible studies are at 9:30 a.m., the lunch Bible study at 11:30 a.m., and the evening Bible study at 6:30 p.m. Nursery care is provided for all Bible studies. For more information, call Erica Hobbs 489-3018 or Sharon Olshefski 489-0404.

Comptroller society

The American Society of Military Comptrollers' monthly luncheon meeting is Thursday at 11:30 a.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church, Trinity Personal Growth Center. The Trinity preschoolers will entertain with Christmas songs and there will be a visit from Santa. For tickets or more information, call Jessica Dunaway 842-7107 or Lisa Lowry 876-7086.

Project management

The Project Management Institute North Alabama Chapter will hold its monthly luncheon meeting Dec. 21 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Marriott, 5 Tranquility Base. Willie Alexander will discuss "Creating Super Teams." The cost is \$20. RSVP by 5 p.m. Dec. 18 at www.northalabamapmi.org.

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.

Strategic speakers

Strategic Speakers Toastmasters Club 6054 meets each Wednesday at 11:30 a.m. in room 3018 of building 5225 (Von Braun Complex). Toastmasters is a non-

profit organization that assists with the development of communication and leadership skills. For more information, call C. Purifoy 651-3621 or 313-4696 or e-mail cpurifoy@bellsouth.net.

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 Civilian Acquired Skills to include 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 Warrant Officer David Ricketts 955-4026.

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

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Rocket Announcements

4 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays and 9-5 Thursdays. Walk-in consignment hours are Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9-12:45. The shop, which will be closed Dec. 26-28, is accepting fall/winter items. Donations are accepted and tax slips are available. For more information, call 881-6992.

Water cooler refills

The Thrift Shop has begun to stock water cooler refills as part of its goal to raise more money to give back to the community. Water cooler replacement bottles, 5-gallon jugs, are available at good prices at the shop. For more information, call Christi Graves 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 Officer and Civilian Women's Club is accepting applications for Merit Awards. Eligibility is as follows: dependents, or members in good standing as of Oct. 17, 2006; high school senior/GED (must be a graduating high school senior or have obtained GED); undergraduate student, pursuing an undergraduate degree; graduate student, pursuing a graduate degree; member or spouse, pursuing an undergraduate degree. Forms are available at the OCWC monthly luncheons, Education Center and Army Community Service. For more information, call K.C. Bertling 541-0450 or e-mail samnkc@knology.net.

Grissom High reunion

Grissom High School Class of 1977 is planning a reunion in July. Organizers are looking for all graduates from that year. If you are a grad or know one, please e-mail GHS77@comcast.net.

Aviation challenge

The Tennessee Valley Chapter of the Army Aviation Association of America is sponsoring two Aviation Challenge 2007 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, 2006 will be eligible to compete for the scholarships. The

scholarships will be awarded in the form of certificates for use during 2007. Applications for scholarships and membership and more information on Tennessee Valley AAAA Aviation Challenge Scholarship application procedures will be available at the chapter Christmas social as well as on the web site www.tennvalleyquad-a.org. Applications are due Jan. 31. For information call Tom Harrison, chapter vice president for scholarships, 319-0100.

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 — WDRM 102FM, WEKR 1240AM, WEUP 1600 AM, WGSV 1270AM, WJAB 90.9FM, WLRH 89.3FM, WRAB 1380AM, WTKI 1450AM, WVNN 770AM, WWIC 1050AM and WZYP 104.3FM; 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 find adverse weather announcements on the Team Redstone Internet site (<http://www.redstone.army.mil>) by clicking on "Links" and then Adverse Weather; on the AMCOM Portal Intranet site (<https://intranet2.redstone.army.mil/>) by clicking on Adverse Weather under Key Sites; or the AMCOM Internet site (<http://www.amcom.redstone.army.mil>) by clicking on Adverse Weather.

Casino night

HarborChase of Huntsville will celebrate its seventh anniversary with "Holiday Casino Night," a fund-raiser event for the Blount Hospitality House, on Thursday from 6-9 p.m. at HarborChase Assisted Living, 4801 Whitesport Circle, behind Crestwood Medical Center. Tickets are \$15 per person and \$25 per couple. For tickets call Nicole Thompson 650-1155.

Science apprentices

The Science and Engineering Apprentice Program announces applications for 2007. The Defense Department initiated the SEAP 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. 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 4, 2007. The apprentice program is divided into 8, 10 and 12 weeks. Applications should be available from senior counselors at all public, private and parochial high school and college placement services. Possible career placement areas at the Army Garrison-Redstone Arsenal include physics, chemistry, computer science, engineering and mathematics. The deadline for applications is Jan. 31. If the student is unsuccessful in getting an application from the high school senior counselor or college placement

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service, call Julie Lumpkins of the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center 313-4834.

Health center holidays

Here's the Fox Army Health Center holiday schedule — subject to change because of mission requirements — for the rest of fiscal 2006: Dec. 25, Christmas — closed. Dec. 26 — Open from 8 a.m. to noon; extended hours clinic and pharmacy are open. Jan. 1, New Year's — closed. Jan. 2 — Open from 8 a.m. to noon; extended hours clinic and pharmacy are open. Jan. 15, Martin Luther King Jr. Day — closed. Feb. 19, President's Day — closed. May 25 — Open from 8 a.m. to noon; extended hours clinic and pharmacy are open. May 28, Memorial Day — closed. July 4, Independence Day — closed. July 5 — Open from 8 a.m. to noon; extended hours clinic and pharmacy are open. Aug. 31 — Open from 8 a.m. to noon; extended hours clinic and pharmacy are open. Sept. 3, Labor Day — closed. The Primary Care Extended Hours Clinic is open on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to noon for scheduled appointments. The health center is closed Sundays. Advice nurses are available 24 hours a day, at 955-8888 or 1-800-223-9531, to provide care advice. Fox has no emergency room or emergency medical services. Dial 911 to activate EMS.

King observance

Team Redstone will have a Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Observance Program on Jan. 11 from 10 a.m. to noon at Bob Jones Auditorium. Scheduled speaker is U.S. District Judge U.W. Clemon of the northern district of Alabama, who in 1980 became this state's first black federal judge. Members of the Redstone/Huntsville community are invited. For more information, call Demetria Cruz 876-9718.

Green to gold

The Army ROTC at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana seeks talented young enlisted Soldiers who want to earn baccalaureate degrees. If you are a quality enlisted Soldier with officer potential and have served at least two years on active duty, then you are allowed to voluntarily participate and enroll in Army ROTC through these Green to Gold Programs. For more information call toll-free (877) 863-4768, e-mail arotc@uiuc.edu, or visit the web site <http://www2.uiuc.edu/unit/armyrotc/>.

Lateral entry

If you are qualified prior service or a member of the National Guard or Reserve and wish to become an officer, the University of Illinois Army ROTC Lateral Entry Program may be for you. The Lateral Entry Program allows eligible students to contract into the Reserve Officer Training Corps as cadets when they are academic juniors, seniors or graduate students with four semesters of coursework remaining before graduation. For more information call toll-free (877) 863-4768, e-mail arotc@uiuc.edu, or visit the web site <http://www2.uiuc.edu/unit/armyrotc/>.

Gifts for troops

Unmanned Aircraft Systems is collecting small gifts to send to Soldiers deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. The drive ends today. Drop unwrapped gifts off at building 5300, second floor. Gift ideas include books, movies, snacks, socks, T-shirts, etc. For more information, call 313-5404.

Admin professionals

The Redstone Arsenal Chapter of International Association of Administrative Professionals will hold its 12th annual seminar, "Pathways to Professional Excellence," on Feb. 12 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Officers and Civilians Club. Judy Kehr, educator for Hoover High School, will speak on communicating across cultures and generations. For the afternoon sessions, attendees can select two of the six developing topics by local presenters. The course is in TIPS by the course number PPE; and the vendor name is International Association of Administrative Professionals. Tuition costs \$125; and student rates are \$50. You do not have to be in the administrative career field to attend. For more information, call Susan Douglas 842-6795 or Ellen Mahathey 842-9888.

Santa visits housing

Santa Claus will arrive Saturday at Redstone Arsenal, hosted by the Sergeants Major Association with the Vincent Fire Station and the Military Police. His visit will begin at the fire station that morning where he will be escorted by members of the Military Police, members of the Fire Department and the association — and of course some of his elves. They will depart Vincent Station at about 9:30 going to Columbia Centre housing area. They will continue to Voyager Village and Apollo Landing, on to Freedom Landing,



Photo by Mark Wolfson

Inventory sale

The June M. Hughes MWR Arts and Crafts is hosting an Inventory Reduction Sale beginning Dec. 18 and lasting until everything's sold. Sale hours will be 1:30-5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday. There is a variety of craft items including scrap booking paper, ribbon, iron-ons, canvases, paints, brushes and more. All items are at or below wholesale prices. The crafts center is on the corner of Vincent and Gray roads in building 3615. For more information, call 876-7951.

Pathfinder Pointe, and then on to Endeavor Village, New Endeavor Village and Saturn Pointe. He will make a brief stop by Redstone Lodging office and his final destination will be Challenger Heights. For those children who live in those areas that are under construction, Santa will make every effort to reach you. Santa looks forward to seeing all the children of Redstone Arsenal on his annual visit. Listen closely for the sirens and horns.

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 had more than 3,000 returns prepared, resulting in over \$2 million in refunds. It is now accepting volunteers for the upcoming 2007 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. To volunteer or for more information, call Capt. Paul Laracy 313-6782 or Randy Duff 420-3223.

College registration

Calhoun Community College, Redstone Arsenal Extension, offers eight-week sessions with classes at 8:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m., 4:30 p.m. and 7:20. This Servicemembers Opportunity College has a VA approved curriculum and is accredited by Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Registration for spring continues through Dec. 18. For more information, call 874-7431 or visit www.calhoun.edu.

Quarterly retirements

The next Quarterly Retirement Ceremony is scheduled Jan. 16 at 4 p.m. at Heiser Hall. All military personnel who are scheduled to retire within the next 3-6 months are required to participate in one of the quarterly retirement ceremonies. To arrange participation, call Sgt. 1st Class Steven Walker 876-7969. Dec. 27 is the sign-up deadline. Retirement ceremonies are also scheduled March 22 and June 21.

Christmas trees

All offices, day rooms, military personnel on active duty, and other activities requiring Christmas trees are authorized to cut trees on a self-help basis in the area northeast of the Ammunition Supply Point which is located across the road from the Redstone Arsenal Saddle Activity. Trees should not be cut for commercial or unauthorized use. This area has been marked with orange flagging for easy recognition. Travel will be limited to the single pasture trail along the east side of the open pastureland. Cutting operations will be limited to inside the Christmas tree cutting area only. Extreme caution should be exercised to prevent straying outside of the area or off the access route and removing any objects other than a Christmas tree. Trees should be cut through Dec. 24 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The trimmings should not be left on grassed rights-of-way, railroad tracks or access roads. For further information and a location map, contact personnel at the Outdoor Recreation Office, building 5132, phone 876-4868.

Holiday concert

The Gardners will give a free Christmas concert — with a special guest to sing "O' Holy Night" — at 7 p.m. Saturday at Hyun's Korean Garden Restaurant. "You are all invited and enjoy the nominees

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