

Redstone Rocket

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PUBLISHED IN THE INTEREST OF PERSONNEL AT REDSTONE ARSENAL, AL

April's Month of the Military Child



Identical twins Sierra and Cheyenne Dodds, 8, share a laugh at School Age Services. Their parents are both in the Army: Sgt. 1st Class Derrick Dodds, of Bravo Company, is Redstone's 2010 AIT Platoon Sergeant of the Year; and Sgt. Peggy Dodds is a combat medic with the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, Fort Drum, N.Y. In celebration of the Month of the Military Child, the Redstone Rocket staff dedicates today's issue to all military children.

Photo by Ellen Hudson

SPECIAL SECTION

Read all about growing up in the military and the youth programs provided by Redstone Arsenal in a comprehensive pullout keepsake in today's Rocket.

PAGE 17

LOOKING BACK

Losing her eyesight at age 32 taught author Joan Brock a lot about the life-sustaining value of friends, family and a deep faith.

PAGE 6



OVER THERE

Through a school's Flat Stanley Project, a little paper doll visited several countries and U.S. cities in the ammo pouch of Lt. Col. Sean Clark's uniform.

PAGE 14

WIN OR LOSE

Bravo Company captures the post basketball championship by going unbeaten in the tournament, routing four opponents by an average of 31 points.

PAGE 35



RocketViews

What's special about military children?

By **SKIP VAUGHN**
 Rocket editor
 skip.vaughn@theredstonerocket.com



Christina Park
 Mills Road Child Development Center
 "My husband's active duty, so my son is a military child. What's special about them? Everything. They learn to overcome and adapt because of their change in home life, change in residences."



Jeremiah Hightower
 5-year-old son of Capt. Warrick Hightower
 "It makes me happy. When he cooks stuff it's very good."



Elizabeth Villanueva
 Wife of retired Chief Warrant Officer 3 Francisco Villanueva and mother of three children (ages 1, 4 and 11)
 "New friends. New schools. We're new in Alabama."



Pfc. Vance Rupke
 Bravo Company
 "They have more of an opportunity to see the world. And living on base always seems to be a better lifestyle."

Quote of the Week

'Always be nice to your children because they are the ones who will choose your rest home.'
 — Phyllis Diller

RedstoneRocket

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Letters to the Editor

Interested in making carpool connection

With the price of gas going up these days, you would think more people would be interested in carpooling. Have you considered creating a section in the *Redstone Rocket* for people looking for carpools?

There used to be an online Carpool Connection site but the link I had (<https://dpd17.redstone.army.mil:4448/index.asp>) doesn't seem to work. One of the problems I've had with access to this website in the past was that I am not an AMCOM employee. It would be nice if there was one online webpage for all

Redstone Arsenal employees regardless of command, to include contractors. The larger the pool available the better it would be.

Teena McGee
 SMDC/ARSTRAT

Editor's note: Those interested in participating in a Redstone carpool, should call the AMCOM/Garrison Public Affairs Office at 876-4161 or email pao@redstone.army.mil. Employee name, work phone number and email, home address, place of work and work hours should be provided.

Military families deserve top quality of life

Previously, I discussed the progress we made resolving 17 of 40 quality-of-life issues at the AFAP General Officer Steering Committee held in February. During the same week, AFAP delegates representing Army garrisons and commands worldwide met in our nation's capital to review and prioritize 88 quality-of-life issues that had been identified throughout the year at midlevel AFAP conferences across the Army.

As the assistant chief of staff for installation management and the overseer of the Army Family Action Plan process, I had



Lt. Gen. Rick Lynch

the privilege to speak to these delegates and impress upon them the great responsibility of identifying the most critical issues for the Army to work. Delegates were comprised of Soldiers, spouses, DA civilians, wounded warriors and survivors. Each brought their own ideas, perspectives and experiences to share in the decision making process. The task before them was not an easy one, yet they met the challenge with an overwhelming sense of enthusiasm and energy. They reviewed, they discussed and they challenged each other on the issues. At the

conclusion of the conference, 16 new quality of life issues were identified and reported out to senior Army leadership.

The top five issues identified to senior Army leaders are:

- ID cards for surviving children with an active duty sponsor that annotate both active duty and survivor status
- Wounded warrior caregiver training
- Medically retired servicemembers' eligibility for concurrent receipt of disability pay
- Military Child Development Program fee cap
- Medical retention processing time restrictions for Reserve Component Soldiers.

See Families on page 3

Customer thanks retirement branch chief

I am writing because my story of superb support needs to be told. It's about a DA civilian going out of her way to do what was required. It is probably more common than folks give it credit for being. Specifically, I am writing to commend Barbara Moudy, who is the chief of the retirement branch at Redstone Arsenal. She is an excellent representative of the Army and understands the meaning of taking care of Soldiers.

Here are the facts: I retired on Jan. 31. My situation is unique. I was assigned to AMCOM in 2006 so I had access to the Garrison folks prior to conducting a local PCS in the Huntsville area in 2009. The unit to which I was assigned was ALMC (Army Logistics Management College) or what is now referred to as ALU (Army Logistics University). Although I had duty in Huntsville, my parent unit, was actually located in Richmond, Va. This became relevant when it came to my retirement.

Because of my affiliation I had to use the Fort Lee Retirement services to start the process of retirement. The folks there seemed

to be helpful, however, the distance made sitting down with them next to impossible. Communication was difficult. Everything had to be done on the phone and in email. Once my orders were ready and my retirement was approved, I was told that I could opt to use Redstone's retirement services. I did so.

I attended two or three TAP (Transition Assistance Programs) training events in which Ms. Moudy is responsible for organizing. These were extremely helpful. I fully attest that if you are separating from the Army or retiring that this is vital for your future. But that isn't exactly what I am writing about.

It was during the creation of the DD214 document, which is another function that Ms. Moudy provides, in which I asked a simple question: "I have documents here that demonstrate I served in ROTC, does that count toward my retirement?" Interestingly enough, I had asked the folks at Fort Lee the same

See Thanks on page 4

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Families

continued from page 2

Currently, there is no way to annotate both dependent survivor status and active duty status on an identification card. This issue affects dependants of dual military parents when one military parent dies or children of a surviving parent who remarry a servicemember. This may cause undue emotional stress when survivors must justify their survivor status in order to qualify for survivor specific services. The delegates recommend ID cards annotate both dependant survivor status and active duty status to ensure survivors quickly receive all survivor services available.

Delegates also recommend providing caregivers of wounded warriors formal standardized training on self-care, stress reduction, burnout and prevention of abuse/neglect. Without this training, caregivers may suffer from caregiver fatigue which may ultimately lead to neglect of a wounded warrior or damage to the wounded warrior and caregivers' relationship. The implementation of formal standardized, face-to-face training for designated caregivers of wounded warriors is critical to those who help heal our nation's heroes.

The elimination of the 20-year time in service requirement for medically retired servicemembers to be eligible for concurrent receipt of disability pay was also identified as an issue to be worked this year. The CRDP eliminates the offset between retirement pay and VA disability compensation. Removal of the 20-year restriction would restore the full retirement pay and VA entitlements to the medically retired servicemembers with less than 20 years of active service.

Some military families using military child development programs pay greater than 25 percent of their total monthly family income for childcare. The recommendation is to cap program fees at 25 percent of the military family's total family income.

Lastly, Medical Retention Processing for Reserve Component Soldiers is limited to

six months from their date of release from active duty. However, medical conditions resulting from active duty service are not always visible within the first six months of release from active duty. Extending the medical retention processing to five years would allow Reserve Component Soldiers to receive proper medical treatment.

The remaining 11 issues identified by the AFAP delegates are survivor, medical, family support and civilian personnel issues. I encourage you to learn more about these new issues by visiting the Army OneSource website at <https://www.myarmyonesource.com/familyprogramsandservices/>. In addition, you can follow the progress on all issues that are currently being worked by selecting "Active Issue Search" at the bottom of the page and then search by issue number or keyword. The website also allows you to submit a new issue directly to your garrison or unit AFAP process, and provides AFAP brochures, articles and videos to download. You can also download the "HQDA AFAP Issue Search" application for free on your iPad, iPhone and iPod Touch.

As I have said many times before, our Army will not break because of its Soldiers but it will break because of the stress placed upon our Soldiers and their families. Never before have we asked so much of our Army families. Because of this, the Army will continue to fully fund and staff Army family programs and keep our promise of providing Soldiers and families a quality of life that is commensurate with their service. In order to ensure the promise is always kept, we must continue to identify inefficient, redundant or obsolete programs and services so we can redirect those resources to where we truly need them. I challenge each of you to help us in this endeavor. In the near future, I will communicate to you where and how you can help. Moving forward, the AFAP process will not only be the identification of quality-of-life issues, but also the identification of potential offsets to resource those quality-of-life issues.

Lt. Gen. Rick Lynch
Installation Management
Command commander

Getting to know you

By **SKIP VAUGHN**
Rocket editor
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Name: Jamal Stoute

Job: Technology lab instructor, Youth Services

Where do you call home?

I'm originally from Staten Island, New York City.

What do you like about your job?

I enjoy working with the children. Getting to know the children. Getting to know their likes and dislikes. I like working in the computer environment with the kids, and being able to provide the opportunity for them to learn about technology.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

Play basketball. Watch basketball. Spend a lot of time with my family – my son (3-year-old Jayden Stoute) and my wife (Maranda Green).

What are your goals?

Just to be successful at whatever it is



I choose to do. And make every day better than the previous day.

What's at the top of your "bucket list" of things you want to do before you kick the bucket?

It would probably be to travel the world with my family. It'll give me a chance to see the world and spend time with my family.

Phoenix lands \$6.3M landscaping contract

As of April 1, Phoenix is responsible for all grounds maintenance at Redstone Arsenal. The contract, signed last week, calls for Phoenix to provide mowing and landscaping of 6,000 acres of Arsenal land, including at high visibility complexes such as the Sparkman Center.

"Phoenix is very pleased to enter into this new contract with our friends at Redstone Arsenal," Phoenix CEO Bryan Dodson said. "These new responsibilities will assist us with our mission to help people with disabilities improve the quality of their lives."

The positive impact of the contract, which has a value of \$6.3 million, has also been felt by several small businesses in north Alabama. Phoenix has purchased \$3.5 million of vehicles and equipment from local vendors such as Huntsville Tractor & Equipment and Woody Anderson Ford.

"The beauty of a contract like this

is that Phoenix isn't the only company that benefits," Dodson said. "We're proud that as an Ability One agency we are able to serve not only people with disabilities and the Arsenal, but we also are able to do business with great local companies."

This new contract will create 124 new jobs, of which approximately 60 percent initially will be filled by persons with disabilities. Eventually, persons with disabilities will comprise at least 75 percent of those working on the grounds maintenance contract.

"Our goal at Phoenix is to help every person with a disability in north Alabama who wants to work to get a job," Dodson said. "With this contract, we are making great strides in reaching that goal."

Phoenix is a nonprofit organization that has been providing jobs, job placement and a variety of other services to people with disabilities in Huntsville and throughout north Alabama since 1973. (Phoenix release)

Crimes, accidents & other occurrences

The Directorate of Emergency Services provided the following list of reported incidents for March 24-30:

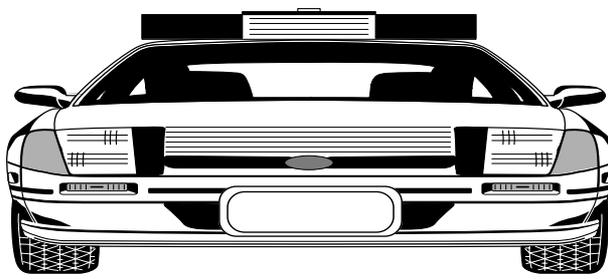
March 28: A Soldier was reported AWOL by his commander.

March 30: A Soldier was arrested by Albertville Police for desertion. After the Soldier posts bond, he would be released to Redstone Police and processed to his unit.

Traffic accidents reported: one with injury, four without injury – includ-

ing one deer strike.

Violation notices reported: 19 speeding, 2 failure to maintain control, 1 no proof of insurance.



Thanks

continued from page 2

question and was told quickly “no.” I wasn’t trying to scam the Army or go around the system or person... I just wasn’t satisfied with the answer I received. It didn’t seem right. True to her nature, Ms. Moudy didn’t dismiss my question at all. She tilted her head and straightened her glasses and said with a smile, “let me see ‘em, sir!”

But the story just keeps getting better! Not only was she friendly in the execution of her duties, she was technically proficient in her craft! She immediately indicated that according to “ARxx,” which in itself demonstrated she knew what she was talking about... that indeed the documents did count toward my retirement. Not wanting to get myself in trouble, I mentioned to her my discussion with Fort Lee and what I was told. She quickly focused me on the issue I had brought her and said – “here is where it says it does matter.” Imagine my surprise!

Now suddenly, I felt guilt that I had “potentially embarrassed” a civilian official at Fort Lee. What would they think of me? Ms. Moudy told me that what I was doing was for my family – not for me. And she was right! She further explained to me that my orders would have to be amended and that Fort Lee would have to do that. She told me not to worry that she would take care of this task. I would love to tell you that this happened on time or overnight. It didn’t. This took nearly two months to do. As you can imagine, the person at Fort Lee thought Ms. Moudy was wrong. And when they went to defend their position as to why my documents didn’t count, they produced an article from Harvard on the matter of computing time in the Army for retirement. (I couldn’t believe this!) Lucky for me, Ms. Moudy wielded the Army Regulation like it was a claymore and stated fact. Although she didn’t go into detail, I am sure that this had to be arbitrated by a higher level supervisor somewhere but Ms. Moudy never flinched. She knew she was right.

Finally, as my retirement date neared, I was told to come back in to see her. She handed me my revised DD214 and newly amended orders. She explained to me what this meant... basically my time had been carried incorrectly for over 22 years. When she said this, like any Soldier I asked her “does this mean that I will get some additional pay and will it increase my retirement pay?” She said that although she wasn’t a finance person

that she thought it would. When we checked the retirement calculator, it did increase my retirement pay nearly \$100 a month. And while I didn’t want to seem disappointed, I truly was because I considered her effort she put forth and realized that it wasn’t as great as I thought it should have been. It was a bit depressing. So I went back to the local finance office and I was told not to expect any money in terms of back pay. Now I truly felt terrible. Regardless, I was still grateful to Ms. Moudy for properly documenting my time. If anything she demonstrated personal courage to stick to her guns on a matter, no matter how small.

I thought the matter was closed. Well, that was until the other day. On Friday evening, March 18, I was coming home from my brand new civilian job here at the Arsenal. My retirement pay was already started but money was still uncertain when compared to my life on active duty. I was waiting for my first civilian pay check to be deposited to my bank account. When my wife and I spoke after dinner that evening she mentioned, “Oh, by the way, I think you got your first pay check but it’s got to be a mistake.” I asked her how much was deposited and she told me an amount that was nearly two months pay that I received when I was in the Army! You can imagine my jaw hit the floor. Yes, I told her. It was a mistake. Great! I love paying Uncle Sam back money!

When I went to work the following Monday, I called my bank and asked if they had more information. They gave me the pertinent financial routing data information and the number to DFAS. So I called them. I explained who I was and why I thought there had been a mistake. At first, the lady at DFAS thought the same thing and agreed it was a mistake. But then after spending several minutes away from the phone in research she said, “No, it says here this was for a service time re-calculation.” I about fainted!

I immediately called Ms. Moudy to thank her, she said “Sir, take your wife on a nice vacation. She deserves it.” What a nice thing to say! And while that may help me... it doesn’t do justice for Ms. Moudy. She deserves to be recognized. She demonstrates the Army Values in her actions. You could find examples of traits of Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Integrity, and Personal Courage in my comments alone. I know she has helped others too. The Army and specifically Redstone Arsenal is a better place because she is here taking care of Soldiers!

Jeffrey T. Knight

LookingBack

Loss of sight leads to new blessings

Friends, family and faith shed light on life's most valuable lessons

By KARI HAWKINS
Assistant editor
kari.hawkins@us.army.mil

Losing her eyesight at age 32 taught Joan Brock a lot about the life-sustaining value of friends, family and a deep faith.

"Because," she said, "we simply don't do life alone."

Brock, who was the featured speaker at the Team Redstone recognition of March as Women's History Month in Bob Jones Auditorium on March 30, shared her story of loss and rediscovery in both humorous and touching comments that traced her journey from sight to blindness and then back to a new level of sight.

Brock told her audience that the most important things in life – courage, faith, hope and love – can't be seen. But they can be felt, and they can lead people to do amazing things in their own lives and in the lives of others.

And when life brings troubles, she urged her audience to seek the strength of friends, family and God.

"Turn to your faith, not away from

it. We simply don't do life alone. The lame will walk. The deaf will hear. And the eyes of the blind will be open," she said, paraphrasing well-known scripture.

Brock shares her inspirational story with audiences around the world, and has written a book – "More Than Meets the Eye: The Joan Brock Story" – that has also aired in 2003 as a Lifetime original movie of the same name. She has been named one of the 35 inspirational women in America in a coffee table book titled "Believing in Ourselves."

Married and living in Iowa, Brock was working at a school for the blind when life brought her an unexpected and heartbreaking set of challenges.

"I had never seen a blind child. I had never worked with a blind child," she said. "And I was teaching 10 boys ages 7 to 11 who were blind. I had to teach them how to go down stairs safely, how to tie their shoes, how to put toothpaste on a toothbrush.

"Those little boys quickly taught me how to teach them."

She fell in love with her mission at the school, becoming a certified Braille instructor, working as a dormitory liaison and serving as the school's community spokesperson.

Then, one day, five years later, she

See Blessings on page 9



Photo by Ellen Hudson

Internationally known author and motivational speaker Joan Brock shares her story of loss and rediscovery during Team Redstone's recognition of March as Women's History Month. The loss of her sight at age 32 taught Brock how to find strength and comfort in friends, family and God.

Women's History Month recognition

Team Redstone's recognition of March as Women's History Month also included a heartwarming rendition of the poem "Our Strength, Our History" by Horace Wilson of the Army Materiel Command's Equal Employment Opportunity Office, and the performance of several jazz pieces (either composed or sung by women) by the AMC Four Star Jazz Orchestra.

Winners of the Women's History Month essay contest were: first place – Martin Roggio of Test Measurement and Diagnostics Equipment Activity; second place – Torri West, AMCOM Safety Office; and third place – Deborah Wills, NASA. Winners of the display contest were: first place – 2nd Recruiting Brigade; second place – HHC 59th Ordnance Brigade; and third place – Fox Army Health Center.

Also, winners of the Aviation and Missile Command's educational outreach program in relation to Women's History Month were: first place – Cassandra Martinez of Butler High School; second place – Lavonte White of Butler; third place – Antonio Pearson of Lee High School; and honorable mention – Darrison Kennemer of Lee.

Things to do for Army Emergency Relief

The annual Army Emergency Relief campaign is under way through May 31 with hopes of exceeding last year's \$265,000 in contributions.

Some of the AER fund-raisers include the following:

Throughout drive – Candy sale, sponsored by Business Management Office. For information call Pickard 842-6625.

Thursday – Bucket drop, sponsored by IMMC's Field Operations Division, Maintenance, at 10 a.m. at the Commissary/Post Exchange. For information call Pickard 842-6625.

April 12 – A "Chicken and Biscuit Sale" begins at 7 a.m. in the corridor of building 5300 and 5301.

April 14 – Basketball throw, sponsored by IMMC's Readiness Directorate, at 10:30 a.m. at Redstone Fitness Center. For information call Pickard 842-6625.

April 15 – Gift basket drawing at noon, sponsored by LMP/MMD. For information call Pickard 842-6625.

April 19 – Cinnamon roll sale, sponsored by Maintenance Directorate, at 8 a.m. For information call Pickard 842-6625.

April 18-29 – The AMCOM G-3/Command Analysis Directorate's annual book sale for Army Emergency Relief will be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in building 5300, on the first floor in the corridor between 5303 and 5304.

April 21 – Bowling Tournament at 1 p.m. at Redstone Lanes. This will be a no-tap tournament; and nine is as good as a strike. Cost is \$15, with at least \$10 going directly to AER. Trophies and medals will be awarded for top three male and female games and series. This is not a team event. To register call Paul Sieja 842-9408 by April 19 or email paul.sieja@us.army.mil.

April 21 – Bucket drop, sponsored by IMMC's Field Operations Division, Maintenance, at 10 a.m. at the Commissary/Post Exchange. For information call Pickard 842-6625.

April 26 to May 12 – Four autographed footballs will be auctioned online. Each football has a team's logo – for Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama and Auburn – and is signed by its coach. For more information call KC Bertling, the AER chairperson for Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Forces Strategic Command, at 955-4082.

April 28 – IMMC Bowling Tournament at 11 a.m. For information call Pickard 842-6625.

May 3 – Hot dog sale and "homemade" cake walk, sponsored by ILS/Publications, Maintenance Directorate, at 10:30 a.m. For information call Pickard 842-6625.

May 5 – Bucket drop, sponsored by IMMC's Field Operations Division, Maintenance, at 10 a.m. at the Commissary/Post Exchange. For information call Pickard



Photo by Skip Vaughn

Elise Brasseale, of the Integrated Materiel Management Center's Automation Division, sells a homemade cupcake to IMMC's Austin Lundy on March 31.

842-6625.

May 6 – The IMMC Golf Tournament will be held at 8 a.m. at the Links.

May 7 – A golf tournament, sponsored by IMMC's Maintenance Directorate, will be held at 8 a.m. at FoxRun Golf Course in Meridianville. For more information, call Celeste Billings 313-2041 or 278-9617 or call Ralph Miller 652-2829 or 876-5806.

May 19 – Chicken and biscuit/pastry sale, sponsored by Systems Management Division, MMD, at 7 a.m. For information call Pickard 842-6625.

For Army Emergency Relief information, call Kathleen Riester of Army Community Service at 876-5397 or campaign chairman Capt. Blair Tighe at 955-0594.

Post Exchange calls on mobile phone center



Need a new cell phone? The Post Exchange has the place for you.

The Exchange Mobile Center opened March 30 with a ribbon cutting ceremony in the PX. This is part of a worldwide effort by the Army & Air Force Exchange Service.

"We're setting up 66 kiosks at 62 locations to include Hawaii, Alaska and Puerto Rico," Will Earls, AAFES telecom specialist for the central region, said. "In fact Puerto Rico opened this morning."

Fort Hood, Lackland Air Force Base, Fort Bliss and Fort Bragg have two locations apiece because of their installation's size.

There will be a worldwide grand opening for all 66 kiosks April 16 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The three carriers in the exchange mobile center include AT&T, Verizon and T-Mobile.

Photo by Skip Vaughn

Cutting the ribbon for the exchange mobile carrier are, from left, PX services business manager Ann Mims, Garrison deputy commander Curtis Clark and PX general manager Loraine Arbo.



Courtesy photo

Oakwood appreciation

Faye Brathwaite, business department professor at Oakwood University, presents a thank you certificate to AMCOM secretary of the general staff Steve Fisher. Fisher gave a career presentation to students as part of the Army Education Outreach Program.

Blessings

continued from page 6

couldn't see the pink socks among the green, blue and white socks in her 3-year-old daughter's sock drawer. At work, the fluorescent lighting made it difficult to see and gave her a headache.

Brock went to her doctor and several tests later she was told she was suffering from the beginnings of macular degeneration, which usually affects older adults and results in the loss of vision in the center of the visual field. Macular degeneration can make it difficult or impossible to read or recognize faces and results in being legally blind, although enough peripheral vision can remain to allow other activities of daily life.

At age 32, this young wife and mother was facing a prognosis that left her blind in three weeks.

"My doctor said to me 'The deterioration we're seeing, Joan, is irreversible.' My world stopped because I knew I would never see my daughter's face again," Brock recalled.

Despite her loss of sight, Brock went on, continuing to teach at the school for the blind.

"How could I make the choice not to go forward when I had been teaching these boys to go forward with their blindness? With a little denial, I took the tools I'd been teaching the last five years and integrated them into my life," she said. "We use the history in our lives to go forward positively and productively."

So, Brock kept working, coping and moving on despite challenges. Her organizational skills helped her to handle daily tasks. "When I got disorganized the obstacles came glaring through," she said.

Four years later, life sent her another challenge when her husband was diagnosed with cancer of the sinuses.

"Seven months after surgery at the age of 36, my husband Joe died," Brock

said. "So, there I was. More changes. More challenges. More coping."

Brock and her daughter, then 8, moved back to Brock's home state of California, where they could be close to family. With a small life insurance settlement, Brock and her daughter made a new home for themselves.

"Somehow, I had to show my daughter a positive, productive life," she said. "I was a blind, disabled, single-parent widow ... But I put a roof over my daughter's head and I started over."

Brock began writing a journal, which eventually became the basis for her book. She remarried and moved to Arizona. Her daughter has grown up to lead her own positive, productive life. And along the way, Brock became a motivational and inspirational speaker.

"I am very happy because I choose to be. I believe it is a choice," she said.

"There have been difficulties. There have been little things that can drive you crazy, like not being able to drive to the store to buy a card for your husband. In the midst of all the difficult issues, you need to find what helps you balance your life. There are difficult, sad, frustrating days. But you have to have something that helps balance your life."

Things like the music that songbirds bring to her in the backyard of her Arizona home and the memories from her sighted years help balance Brock's life.

"Continue to create those memories with your family, your colleagues. No one can take your memories from you," she said.

An appreciation of the body's senses, gratitude for the blessings in life and a sense of humor all help with balance, as will the love, comfort and encouragement of friends, family and God.

"People don't know what you are going through," Brock said. "I knew nothing about those 10 little boys who began teaching me what I needed to teach them. On the most difficult days, think about one thing that will lift the edges of your mouth up, not down."

Retiring assistant fire chief fulfilled life's dream



Bobby McFarland

Chief "Mac" will be missed throughout the Garrison. Assistant fire chief Bobby McFarland retired March 31 after 38 years of service.

McFarland grew up in a small town in Tennessee and became interested in firefighting in 1968, when his father joined their local volunteer department. He became a full-fledged volunteer firefighter himself at age 16. And he became chief of that same department in 1975.

In July 1973 McFarland accepted an offer at Redstone Arsenal to become a fulltime firefighter, thus fulfilling a lifelong dream. He continued to volunteer at both Ardmore and Athens fire departments while earning an associate degree in fire science from Calhoun Community College.

In 1985 McFarland was promoted to captain, serving with several of his friends that were also hired in 1973. During this time he became interested in hazardous materials response, recognizing the potential for that type emergency at Redstone, along with fellow firefighter Joey Boyd, he set out to train and organize a HAZMAT unit for Redstone Arsenal. Today, Redstone is recognized as a

leader in HAZMAT response in the region.

In 1995 he was promoted to assistant fire chief, supervising the operations of one shift consisting of four fire stations. McFarland went on to earn a bachelor's in public safety administration and more than 20 Department of Defense firefighter certifications, including the highest award of Fire Officer IV.

In 2001, after 25 years of service, McFarland was contemplating retirement but the events on Sept. 11th changed all that. He forgot about retirement and focused on better preparing Redstone for a terror attack.

Having turned down opportunities for advancement in the fire service, McFarland chose to remain as assistant fire chief. His philosophy is that a chief is not so much the boss, as he is a resource for the firefighters. The firefighters are the ones that win the fight; he is there only to help provide the needed resources or guidance to make it happen. He takes pride in having been a friend and a mentor to his employees, helping them through both personal and professional challenges. *(Garrison release)*

Missiles conference on launch pad in April

Under the theme "Better Affordability and Operational Integration," the 13th annual AUSA Missiles Conference runs April 25-26 in Von Braun Center's East Hall.

The conference provides an open forum for the presentation of current and future Army tactical missile programs in a collaborative government and industry environment. It also provides senior government and industry project managers, and their staffs, opportunities to meet and interact with their counterparts.

Industry leaders will learn how to assess their independent research and development efforts, in light of current and future program directions, with an eye toward win-win collaboration.

The April 26 morning session will be highlighted by a Team Redstone overview from AMCOM commander Maj. Gen. Jim Rogers, followed in the afternoon with a

state-of-the-PEO Missiles and Space briefing from Brig. Gen. Ole Knudson.

Also during the morning, senior leaders from the Army Staff, headquarters Training and Doctrine Command, the Missile Defense Agency and the commanding generals from all tactical missile user centers will speak from their perspectives.

The conference luncheon will feature an address by Lt. Gen. Bill Phillips, principal military deputy to the assistant secretary of the Army for acquisition logistics and technology. Afternoon presentations include all of the PEO Missiles and Space project managers.

On April 25, a golf tournament at Valley Hill Country Club will be followed by an icebreaker social at The Summit, Big Spring Park in downtown Huntsville at 5 p.m.

Register online at <http://www.ausaredstone.org>.

AMC workers receive progress report

By **CHERISH WASHINGTON**
AMC Public Affairs



Photo by Cherish Washington

AMC commander Gen. Ann Dunwoody speaks March 25 in Bob Jones Auditorium.

In a packed auditorium, with several outlying organizations participating through a live broadcast, Army Materiel Command's commander gave a progress report on the organization from a global perspective March 25.

That progress report came with gratitude to a work force that conducted operations amid challenges.

"I want to say thank you, because we don't get to do that often enough. Thank each and every one of you for what you do because each and every one of you makes a difference. That's the power of this organization - 70,000 people, making a difference every day," Gen. Ann Dunwoody said.

"I can't remember or think of a more complex busy time in our Army than the time that we are in right now," she continued. "Our leaders have led us through this change at war, deployed, supporting a war, moving a headquarters, some moving down here, some staying back, new leaders that made this transition during this really incredibly busy time."

Former UAH president recognized by Redstone

Team Redstone gave a heartfelt sendoff March 30 to the former president of the University of Alabama-Huntsville.

Maj. Gen. Jim Rogers, commander of the Aviation and Missile Command and Redstone Arsenal, presented mementos to Dr. David Williams at an afternoon reception in the command suite. Williams, who served as UAH president from July 2007 until March, has been named dean of the College of Engineering at Ohio State University.

Williams will start his new job April 18 in Columbus, Ohio.

"You've been a valuable asset to our team, Team Redstone," Rogers said. "And you've done so much."

Said Williams, "I look forward to hearing great things in the future about more partnerships between Team Redstone and the University of Alabama-Huntsville."



Photo by Skip Vaughn

Redstone commander Maj. Gen. Jim Rogers honors Dr. David Williams, who leaves the University of Alabama-Huntsville to become dean of the College of Engineering at Ohio State University.

Small Business training workshop ‘a huge success’

The Army Contracting Command’s Office of Small Business Programs held a two-hour training workshop March 23 at the Hogan Family YMCA in Madison.

The training was intended for local small businesses interested in learning how to do business with ACC and the Army. Approximately 80 people attended and ACC tweeted highlights of the seminar for those who were unable to attend.

“With a standing-room only crowd, the event was a huge success. We had a lot of positive feedback from attendees and will continue to plan such educational opportunities for the small business community,” said Alice Williams, associate director of the Office of Small Business Programs.

During the seminar, ACC small business specialists discussed the mission and role of ACC, where to find Army small business opportunities, sources sought responses, bid matching services, subcontracting opportunities, company capability statements, federal acquisition regulations and marketing strategies.

This was ACC’s second small business workshop and ACC intends to make it a monthly event. The command is working to establish an online registration system via its Facebook page for the next workshop.

The ACC Office of Small Business Programs provides outreach support to the small business community through a variety of methods. For more information about the ACC Office of Small Business Programs, email acc-smallbusiness@conus.army.mil or call 955-7651 or (703) 806-4017. *(Army Contracting Command release)*



Courtesy photo

ACC Office of Small Business Programs associate director Alice Williams discusses the importance of the sources sought response during the March 23 workshop.

One worker's idea spreads throughout security command

Performance measurement tool boosts foreign military sales

USASAC release

In the world of foreign military sales, doing the job better and more efficiently is essential to maintaining relationships with U.S. international partners and providing life cycle management for each sales case. At the Army Security Systems Command's Performance Management Office, one employee's big idea had an even bigger impact for regional case execution operations at USASAC's New Cumberland office.

In 2006, Dave Nicola, a program analyst for the USASAC's Performance Management Office, created a simple tool to enhance the Army's foreign military sales, system of record, CISIL, Centralized Integrated System-International Logistics, to help accomplish his duties faster, more efficiently, and with greater accuracy.

That simple tool is now known as the Case Execution Analyzer and is presented in a Windows-like environment and is a distinct change in usability from CISIL's "green screen" of decades past. The CEA provides a simple and intuitive way to analyze, summarize, query, retrieve, view and track case execution data for foreign military sales materiel and services for USASAC, and particularly its Performance Management Office.

From those simple beginnings, the CEA was quickly expanded and is now in use by all regional personnel at USASAC New Cumberland and has incorporated specialized modules for key processes. Although it all began with Nicola's vision, the CEA has been a regional operations community project. According to Nicola, Tony Groft,



Dave Nicola

central case manager, was invaluable in its initial development and trusted oversight from Don Butler, regional division chief, ensured a solid foundation that adhered to the principles and standards of USASAC.

The CEA continues to have community input.

"I receive recommendations from all grade levels, from technician to division chief. We have routine meetings with the regional division chiefs to see which recommendations to implement and see where we can impact the process with the greatest effect to maximize efficiency," Nicola said.

Nicola, the lead on the CEA project, is quite proud of how the USASAC New Cumberland family has gathered to support this project and helped guide and shape it. "As the Performance Management Office recognizes over six years of CEA use, they look forward to the future and the exciting and truly innovative things that are in the works. We are also looking to more than double the amount of data accessible through the CEA as well as add some new functionality that users will find extremely helpful and expand to USASAC (headquarters) Redstone," Nicola added.

Although the PMO also uses the CEA as a performance measurement tool and is seeking to incorporate many past and present review and analysis data points and metrics, the CEA still remains primarily a tool for regional operations (supporting the combatant commands). "This tool will always be under the control of regional operations as far as new requirements and functionally go. We will build whatever they need to more effectively manage the (foreign military sales) case execution process," John Neil, chief of the PMO, said.

Nicola's program continues to grow in use among USASAC employees, and other USASAC field offices have also begun incorporating it.

Paper doll teaches students about Soldier's life

Flat Stanley made worldwide visits in lieutenant colonel's ammo pouch

By **KARI HAWKINS**
Assistant editor
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During a two-year stint, a little paper doll visited several different countries and U.S. cities in the ammo pouch of Lt. Col. Sean Clark's uniform.

And if Clark was out of uniform on a vacation, that paper doll still went visiting, only on these trips he was placed snugly in a camera bag.

In 2008, "Flat," who is a member of an international literacy and community building activity program called the Flat Stanley Project, became a tool for special needs student Canaan Gilmore of Midtown Elementary School near Knoxville to learn about the world. The Flat Stanley Project is one of several educational programs used in schools throughout the nation to teach world history and geography.

Because of his teacher's military connection, Canaan's Flat was among several Flat Stanley paper dolls mailed from Midtown Elementary's third-grade class to Camp Victory in Baghdad, Iraq. He was lucky enough to become Clark's constant companion, first, on a one-month assignment and, then, on a two-year journey that included two wars and family travels.

"He has spent time with me in Iraq three times and in Afghanistan during a very harsh time. But he has also enjoyed cruising the Caribbean and a nice, long six-week cruise from Australia through New Zealand, the South Pacific, Hawaii and into Canada," Clark wrote in an e-mail to Canaan's teacher last year.

Clark, who is the assistant project manager for the desert deployments of Black Hawk in the Utility Helicopters Project Office, returned Flat to Canaan last May, but the memories of the adventures Flat had with Clark are still fun to recall, and Clark, who volunteers in local schools, would like to encourage other Soldiers and Arsenal employees to participate in the Flat Stanley Project if they get a chance.

But first they have to be asked.

"One of the majors who worked for me in Iraq had an aunt who is a school teacher at Midtown Elementary," Clark recalled.

"One day he got a large package with 30 of these Flat Stanleys in it. We worked for the 2145 Garrison Support Unit out of Nashville. The Flat Stanleys were distributed to Soldiers within our organization and others who were interested in the project."

Each of the Flat Stanleys, about 3 inches in height and wearing pants, and a shirt and tie colored with crayons, were on a one-month assignment with their Soldier. The Soldiers took pictures of their Flat Stanley at dif-

ferent locations in Iraq. They also wrote stories about their Flat Stanley's adventures to send back to the students.

"It was nice having something like this with us from home," Clark recalled. "It kind of took our minds off being 7,000 miles away from home in 135-degree temperatures. They provided us with a little piece of home in our down time. Canaan is a special needs student, so it was all the more touching to be able to give his Flat a really good story to tell."

When the Soldiers returned the Flat Stanleys to Midtown Elementary, school teachers put them on a bulletin board with a world map to show all the different places the paper dolls had gone.

And this is where Clark's story diverges from the rest. Canaan's Flat did not return after a month. Rather, he went on a worldwide trip with Clark for the next two years.

"With all the traveling we were doing and all the interesting places we were going, I decided to keep Flat. He stayed with me at Camp Victory from March to December 2008," Clark said. "Then, he went with me to Australia and the adventures just continued. I took him on a lot of pre-site visits that I made to get units ready for overseas deployments. Because of all the travels for work and pleasure, I kept him really longer than most people do."

During that worldwide trip, Clark photographed Flat in all kinds of places and situations. The collection of photos includes the paper doll with Clark at a hospital in Iraq, with stewardesses on a flight to Fiji, with a Star Wars artist on St. Martin Island in the Caribbean, with other Flat Stanleys in the Bahamas, with Koala bears in Australia, with a Bohemian police officer and with a bear Flat Stanley on a cruise ship.

Flat joined Clark in visiting 16 countries, including the U.S. Virgin Islands, Tahiti, Germany, Bora Bora and Afghanistan, and 25 states, including Alaska, Hawaii, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, Washington and California.

And everywhere he went, Flat was posed for a picture.

"We would think of places to take pictures of Flat," said Clark, who said his family, friends and even Soldiers got into the fun. "We would be traveling or going somewhere and we would think 'Hey, that would be a great place to take a picture of Flat.'"

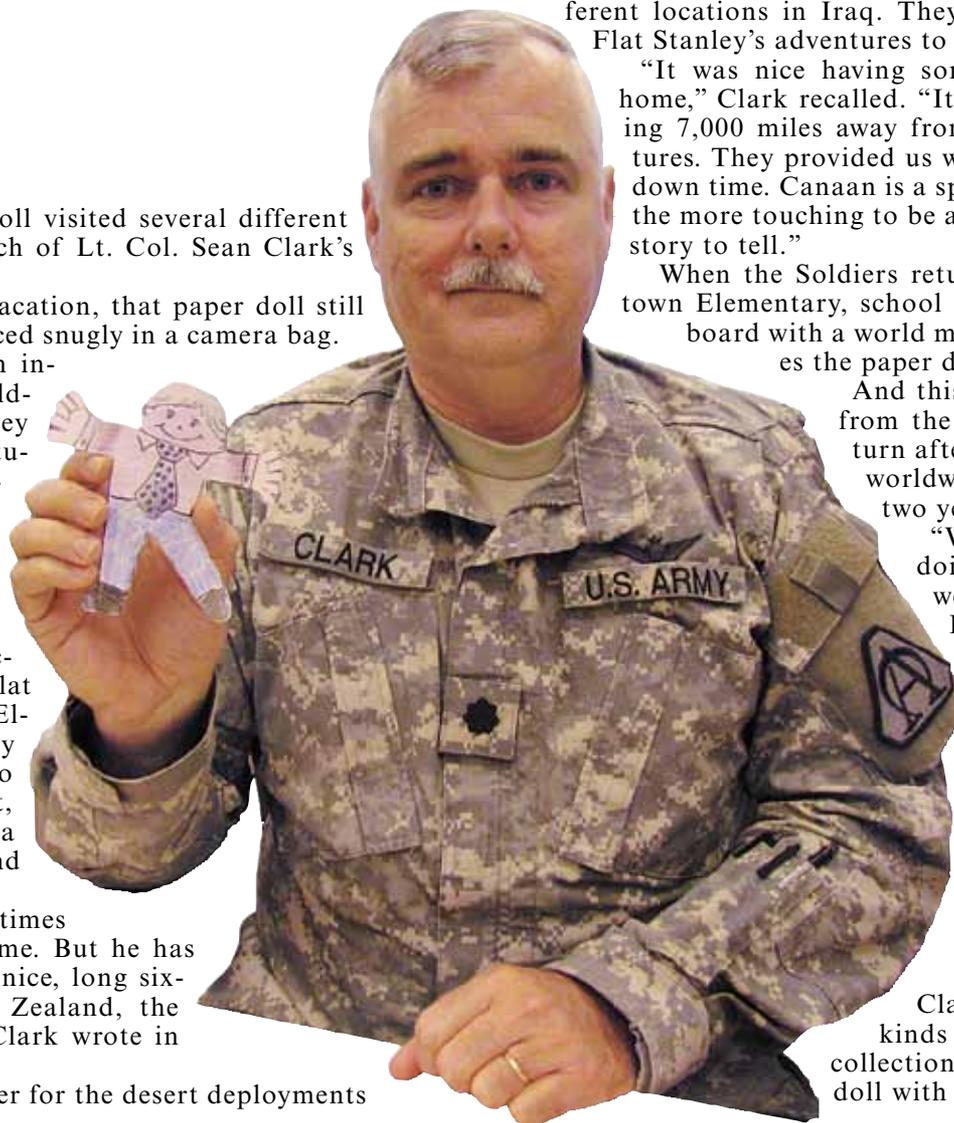


Photo by Kari Hawkins

Lt. Col. Sean Clark, who now works at Redstone Arsenal, poses with a copy of the Flat Stanley that spent two years with him traveling the world. The paper doll gave Clark an opportunity to teach school children about the world and to carry a little bit of home with him as he deployed to Southwest Asia and went on vacations with his family. Flat has since been returned to his student owner and fellow classmates at a Tennessee school.

Female aviators defy reported odds

Women pilots fill new roles never before open to them

By Sgt. 1st Class STEPHANIE L. CARL
Army News Service

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – When Chief Warrant Officer 4 Trudy Truax arrived at her first unit as an OH-58A pilot in 1996, her commander refused her orders.

“I’ve had my own battalion commanders not speak to me,” Truax said.

Truax was one of the first females to join the community of Cobra, Apache and Kiowa pilots after then-President Bill Clinton lifted the restrictions that kept women from flying the traditionally combat-focused rotary-wing birds. She was one of only six women in her class – three from West Point and three warrant officers.

Today, she’s the only one of the six still serving in the Army, and she serves as the standardization instructor pilot for Company C (Dustoff), 1st Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment, which is currently deployed to Afghanistan with Task Force Thunder, the 159th Combat Aviation Brigade.

According to a study released in March by the Military Leadership Diversity Commission, women account for only 16 percent of leadership positions in the military – a seemingly staggering statistic to release during National Women’s History Month in March. The numbers aren’t so shocking when compared to the overall statistic of women serving in the military, which is 16.4 percent, according to a Sept. 30 report released by the Department of Defense.

To Truax and the other women who fill key positions within the aviation community, the numbers are just that – numbers. And they don’t take into account the positions that women are holding within the military or where they were 20 years ago.

Lt. Col. Neil Reilly, the squadron commander for 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment, was assigned to 2nd Sqdn., 17th Cav. Rgt., in 1998. With him was then-Warrant Officer Anne Wiley, who had recently graduated as an OH-58 Kiowa pilot. Today, Wiley is a chief warrant officer 4 and serves as the senior standardization instructor pilot for Reilly’s unit. She is the first female to hold that position at a squadron level. But she didn’t get there overnight.

“I went through relentless hazing,” Wiley said of her time as a new pilot

and a female in a man’s world. “But today, when one of my peers comes up and bumps me on the shoulder and asks how it’s going, I know it was worth it, and that I’ve made it.”

The challenges Wiley and her counterparts faced in the beginning paved the way for many who’ve come since.

“Flying has been my recurring dream since I was little,” said Capt. Carmel Cammack, an assistant operations officer in Task Force Palehorse and an OH-58D Kiowa Warrior pilot. “I’ve never been treated any differently, and I appreciate the fact that (other women) were the ones to pioneer this for me. I know that they went through a lot of hazing and a rash of other stuff that I have not had to go through.”

For Reilly, it’s never been about gender, and Wiley and the female pilots like her have proven that time and again.

“Miss Wiley maintains a mission focus, but has the personality, the charisma, and also has the professionalism and experience that afford her a great deal of credibility,” Reilly said.

For the women filling the leadership roles, the professionalism and experience are the important parts.

“As you show your competence and as you show that you can hang with the boys, you show that you’re as good as the boys, your acceptance is there,” Truax explained. “You must always maintain, as with any aviator, proficiency and excellence, and if you can show that’s what you have, then you’re fully accepted.”

While Truax and Wiley have been around long enough to know what it’s like to be evaluated on gender rather than competency, they’ve witnessed the shift throughout their careers, and the younger women coming up behind them have only experienced evaluations based on capabilities.

Capt. Donna J. Buono, the company commander for Company B, 3rd Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment, which is task-organized under Reilly’s unit for the deployment, was commissioned in 2004 and joined her first unit as a platoon leader while the company was deployed to Iraq. She was the first female to serve with the company in more than 15 years.

“I was anticipating a little bit of push-back,” she said. “And I think what I got for about a month was less female-male stuff it was more new platoon leader, and after about that month of transition – getting used to them and getting to know ‘em – I think I had a

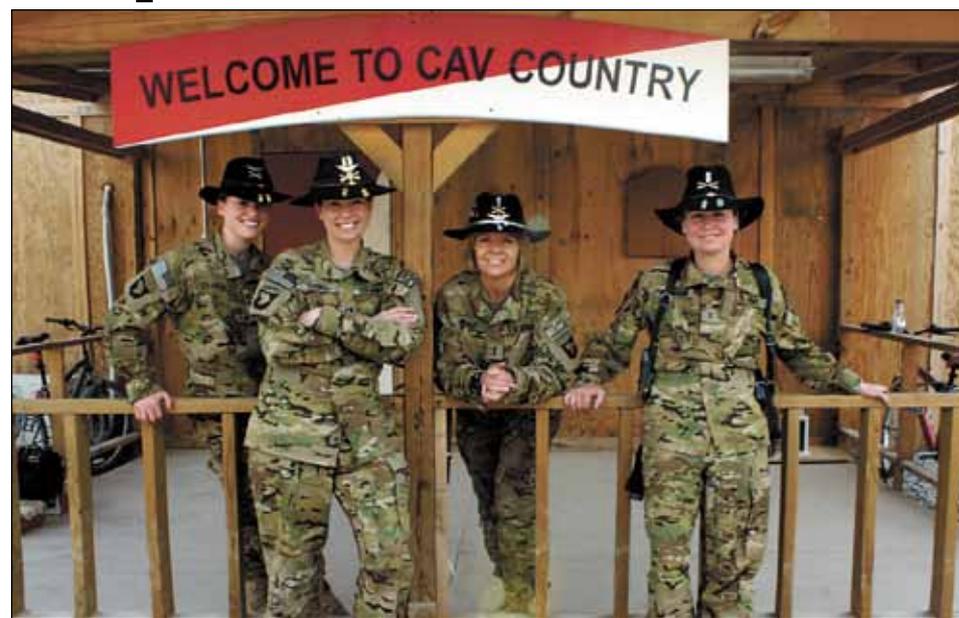


Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Stephanie L. Carl

From left, Capt. Carmel Cammack, Capt. Donna J. Buono, Chief Warrant Officer 4 Anne Wiley, and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Elizabeth Kimbrough, all leaders within Task Force Palehorse, pose outside the task force’s operation center at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

very positive experience.

“It’s more about being a good leader and being competent, and much less these days about male-female,” she explained.

In fact, the main challenges that limit the number of females serving in leadership positions are often brought on by their own accord rather than by restrictions or gender bias within the Army.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Elizabeth Kimbrough is a pilot in command and safety officer with Co. B, 3rd Bn., 101st Avn. Rgt. She flies the AH-64D Apache, which often serves to intimidate on the battlefield. At nearly 32, Kimbrough said she loves what she does, but thinks her family is afraid she’ll stay in forever.

“My time will be up after June of next year, and I’m still on the fence,” she said. “I love, love my job, but I’d still like the opportunity to get married and have kids, and I don’t know how I’d do it if I’d stay in. So that’s something I think about nearly every single day.”

Kimbrough isn’t the only one facing that challenging decision.

“I have kind of fended off most relationships that have possibly started,” said Cammack. “I personally think it would be extremely hard to have a family in the military. Right now I have the opportunity to say that I don’t want kids in the military. I think that would be hard, and that is not something that

I want to do. How that’s going to play into a future career? I don’t know. I don’t know. It’s tough.”

As pioneers for women in aviation, both Wiley and Truax stand as an example in this regard too. Wiley started her aviation career as a single mom. Truax has a different perspective.

“Women can be in the Army, and we can have 20-plus year careers and we can have 20-plus years married to the same man, and like I have – I have four children,” she said. “I want it all. I want the cake and the ice cream. You can have a solid marriage. You can have children and still do your time in combat.”

As with anything in life, it’s about balance and maintaining that delicate harmony between professional and personal. But for those women who want to fill the leadership roles, the doors are far from closed.

“I never expected to be where I am today, and I never expected to be in the positions I’ve been in,” Truax said. “Standardizations wasn’t a place women went. I think the new men of the Army, new commanders, they understand, and if I didn’t cut the mustard I wouldn’t be in the positions I’ve been in. But they very much have unlocked the doors to allow us to show that we have the ability to do what we (Army aviators) do.”

“I had to open the doors by proving myself, but they unlocked them for me.”

West Point parachutists train with French Foreign Legion

By Cadet LISA KIM

West Point Class of 2013

WEST POINT, N.Y. – For the first time in 38 years, the American flag was raised during morning reveille alongside the French colors at Camp Raffalli, just outside the coastal town of Calvi on the Mediterranean island of Corsica. The 2nd Regiment Etranger de Parachutistes, an elite airborne regiment of the French Foreign Legion, hosted the West Point Parachute Team March 11-20.

The objective was two-fold, to conduct joint free fall training, and to provide an intercultural exchange between the West Point Parachute Team, or WPPT, and the soldiers of the 2nd Regiment Etranger de Parachutistes.

A C-130 from VMGR-452, a Marine Aerial Refueler Squadron out of Stewart Airport in Newburgh, not only transported the team across the Atlantic, but was also the platform for all airborne operations during the week. Training was very intense and productive, a testament to the professionalism and enthusiasm of the aircrew.

“This definitely ranks in the top three things I’ve done,” loadmaster Gunnery Sgt. Philip Baldrige said. “The training was great for us, good for (the cadets). We got 704 (jumpers out) this week and in my past 17 years leading up to this I’d only sent out 1,100 jumpers.”

The cadets used the freefall time to practice the events they compete in for

collegiate nationals. This included four-way and six-way relative work, where groups execute numerous formations in a horizontal position, as well as vertical relative work where teams fly in either a sit position or a head-down position.

“This trip was unlike any other training my classmates and I have had thus far on the team in that we tried everything from four to 15 ways during the day. Plus, we got to immerse ourselves in a completely new and different culture on the ground,” said West Point Class of 2013 Cadet Christian Beckler.

Cadets and legionnaires often jumped together in joint teams. The soldiers from the 2nd Regiment Etranger de Parachutistes are trained in high-altitude, low-opening infiltration techniques, and do not often get an opportunity to hone their freefall skills. Similarly, cadets were afforded an opportunity to teach relative work techniques to their hosts.

The result was a productive professional development experience for all parties.

“In the four years since I have been on the jump team, we have traveled all over the U.S., but never abroad. The training with the French Foreign Legion was incredible, both for the sport and our professional development,” explained West Point Class of 2011 Cadet Christina West.

The joint jumps turned out to be a high point for the week for many cadets.

“Jumping with the French Foreign Legion has been a privilege. It’s some-

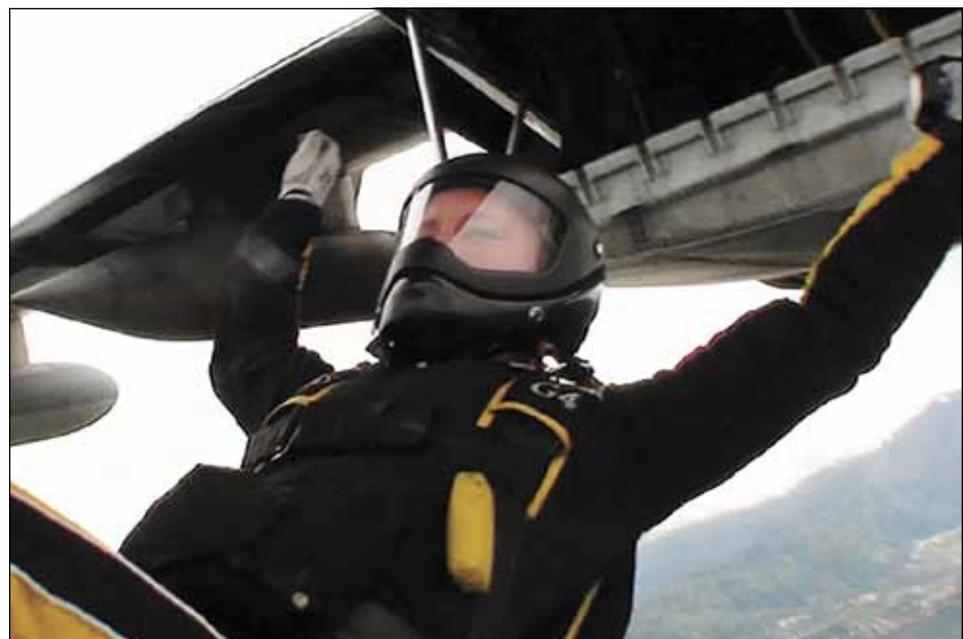


Photo by Col. Kevin Huggins

West Point Class of 2012 Cadet Pam Baker exits from the tail ramp of a C-130 to train in vertical relative work skydiving.

thing I’ll tell my grandchildren about,” West Point Class of 2012 Cadet Nick Luis said.

An important training tool for incoming members of the WPPT are tandem jumps, which allow them to experience and practice free fall techniques while safely attached to an experienced tandem master. WPPT coaches used this week to exercise their skills by taking select members of the 2nd Regiment Etranger de Parachutistes on tandem jumps.

When not executing jump operations, cadets were able to learn firsthand about the rich and proud history of the French Foreign Legion and about the unique Corsica culture. The team got an intimate view into the day-to-day lives of the legionnaires.

“We come from a lot of different backgrounds. One of the guys from my class came from living on the street to knocking on the (Foreign Legion’s) door. You get people from high (social) classes and low,” explained Cpl. Mike Jones, an American who joined the legion three years ago after previously serving in the U.S. Navy.

Probably the best way the team was able to bond with the hosts was on the fields of friendly strife. Activities such as an hour-long run on a high ridge overlooking the bay, soccer and American football provided the needed ice-breaking.

Cadets also learned about the unique Corsican culture by exploring the nearby towns. Rich in history and beauty, the island was the birthplace of both Christopher Columbus and Napoleon Bonaparte. Usually a tourist destination, the

island was quiet due to the off season.

“The island has everything you need: beaches, mountains, hiking, skydiving, good food, good people. You can’t beat it,” West Point Class of 2013 Cadet Ben Garlick said.

Such a complex undertaking did not occur without the help of many people. Col. Brice Houdet, the French military attache in Washington D.C., and a former commander of the French 2nd Foreign Legion Parachute Regiment, first proposed the idea of the WPPT training in Calvi. He was also instrumental in guiding the proposal process through the French government.

In addition, a detachment from the Airborne Mobile Training Team, based out of Quantico, Va., assisted the team during the week.

They performed a drop zone survey, which was required prior to airborne operations. Additionally, they provided tandem jumps as well as shooting video during training jumps, enabling the coaches to provide feedback to cadets.

“(It was) phenomenal training,” Marine Gunnery Sgt. Shane Denna said, “a great pleasure training with the West Point cadets and the French.”

As the week drew to a close, the WPPT exchanged memorabilia with the legionnaires (including pins, unit patches and berets), took their last look at the splendid snow-capped mountains to the east and the deep blue Mediterranean to the west, and hoped that the novelty of this week would soon grow into an ever-appreciated annual event.

Growing up

Khloe Shannon plays Peek-a-boo with her dad, Sgt. Kenster Shannon, after the 2010 Month of the Military Child parade.

Photo by Amy Guckeen Tolson



M I L I T A R Y

'It was a great way of life for us'

Growing up in military family builds strength for lifetime

By **KARI HAWKINS**
Assistant editor
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Traveling and adventure mixed with parental absences and changes in residence define the life of a military-connected child.

Growing up military is about living with the good and the bad of life, much like that with any child. The difference, though, in a military family is that the family's right to choose its own destiny, its own path through life, must be sacrificed to the will of the Army and its Soldier needs. And the military-connected child runs a greater risk of losing a beloved family member.

For Malicia Walters, giving up the right to choose where they would live was a sacrifice her family was willing to make in exchange for a Soldier dad who had a satisfying and interesting military career, the chance to visit relatives across the ocean and the security of knowing the family had a stable income.

"It was a great way of life for us," said Walters, who now volunteers at Army Community Service.

"My dad came from a very small farming community in North Carolina and he had no college. But his Army career took him around the world and he loved every minute of it. It gave him a life

he wouldn't have had if he didn't join the Army."

Walters was born in 1962 on an Air Force base in Abilene, Texas. His brother, Jeff, was two years older. Their mom, Betty, from Vienna, Austria, met and married their dad while he was stationed in Germany.

"My dad (retired Chief Warrant Officer 4 Jarvis Wilson) was 18 when he joined the military. It was a way for him to get out of his surroundings. He had seen from his uncle that it was a good life," Walters said. "It was always a steady paycheck, a nice home, a stable environment and a good fit for our whole family. We lived in Germany, and got to visit our relations there. We camped out all through Europe. We were an international family because of the Army."

Walters' family also saw their North Carolina relations on a regular basis, visiting between their dad's assignments or on vacations.

But the moves to different assignments did create a dynamic in their family that "more grounded" civilian families don't experience."

"You don't really have a permanent home because you are always moving," Walters said. "You don't really have close friends that you've known a long time. And many times, you miss out on things with your extended family. There's a closeness with your extended family – your aunts and uncles, your cousins and your grandparents – that you don't have because you are far away."



Photo by Ellen Hudson

Military youngsters

From left are Denver Harper, 4, son of Staff Sgt. Derrick and Taketha Harper; Felicia Taylor, 3, daughter of Sgts. Torrence and Stephanie Taylor; and Marshall MacBride, 5, son of Sgt. 1st Class Brandon and Elena MacBride.

Because of her dad's work in missile defense, Walters spent half of her growing up years in Germany. She enjoyed those tours because she and her brother and mother got to spend time with her mother's family. Her dad's tours stateside took the family to Fort Bliss, Texas.

"We went to Germany as many times as possible," Walters said. "We all loved it over there. I was very fortunate with my dad that I got to see part of the world, basically Europe. When you move around a lot, you get to meet other people and you are exposed to different backgrounds and different ways of life. You get to meet very interesting people."

In Germany, Walters and her brother attended Department of Defense schools, which, at the time, were fairly small in their number of students. "We went to school with other military kids, and we liked that," she said.

When at Fort Bliss, there were times when Walters' dad went on assignments that took him away from his family. He also spent a year in service in Korea.

"My mom did have to raise us on her own, just like other military wives and mothers. But all the changes and moves of military life can make you a more outgoing person, and it can make you more flexible and independent," Walters said. "You learn to adapt to different situations in life."

Walters' dad never went to war, so the family didn't have to endure the worry and stress that deployed Soldiers and their families are living through today.

In 1974, Walters' dad retired after 30 years of service, taking the family back to his hometown in North Carolina. That experience created challenges for her family that they hadn't expected.

"It was very hard to adjust to the civilian way of life," Walters said. "You think you can go back home, but you can't. My dad couldn't find a job.

"High school was really hard. My brother and I had gone to school mostly with military kids, and in North Carolina there were no military kids around. It was strictly civilian and the kids had lived there their whole lives. I had the worst time fitting in."

The family also missed the support system offered by the Army and Army Community Service. "You just don't have that in the civilian community," she said.

Walters graduated from high school in 1977 and, in the early '80s, her dad became a civil service employee assigned overseas to Germany. Walters joined her parents in the move back to Germany and took a job with Army Community Service, eventually meeting and marrying an Army lieutenant who also hap-



Photo by Kari Hawkins

Raised as a military child, Malicia Walters likes to stay connected to the military by volunteering at Army Community Service. She enjoys working with Soldiers and families as they face the opportunities and challenges of military life.

pened to be from North Carolina.

"Staying connected to the military was what I knew. It was what I was familiar with," Walters said. "The Army has a tendency to take care of its people. After awhile it does become a small family."

Walters agrees that multiple deployments have made it harder for today's military families to cope with military life. She works at ACS with one staff member – quality of life program manager Carie Green – who knows all too well the price paid by military families whose Soldier deploys.

"The hardest experience for a military family is seeing their Soldier deploy," Green said. "When my husband deployed to Afghanistan, I saw how much it affected our oldest son."

At the time, Savannah was 5. Their second child, Shaun, was nearly 2. And Green was pregnant with their youngest, Sydney. Green was herself a Soldier stationed in Germany when she met her husband, Sgt. 1st Class Lance Green, who now works in the AMCOM/Garrison Equal Opportunity Office. Her own service helped Green to be strong while her husband deployed.

See Life on page 28

Events swing in Month of Military Child

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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Military children are special. And every year at this time, the military services make sure they know it.

April is the Month of the Military Child with a full calendar of activities at both the Goss Road and Mills Road child development centers.

"The Stars of Today are the Leaders of Tomorrow" is this year's theme.

"My husband just retired (as an Army master sergeant)," Linda Smith, assistant director of the Goss Road center, said. "To me, having a Month of the Military Child is just letting the children know they're appreciated and it's in support of their parents."

The Goss Road center has 164 children, including 77 military youngsters. Deborah Nickles is the director.

"I think it's important to celebrate children no matter what," assistant director Diane Engbretson said. "These are going to be our future Soldiers and our future leaders in the community. So it's important that we recognize that these children are going to grow up and let them know they're going to be leading us one day."

"I think all children are special," Engbretson said. "I just think military children have sometimes added stress. Sometimes other children don't understand what it is to be deployed."

Said Smith, who has three grown children, "The (parent) deploying, the constant moving, the leaving of friends that they've met. It's a lot they have to endure but they seem to always bounce back."

The Mills Road center, which opened in November, has 140 children including 43 with military parents.

"We got possession of the building in October but we didn't actually open until November," Mills Road center director Karen Luckie said.

Month of the Military Child events are scheduled throughout April at both centers. "A lot of the things are going to be the same, just

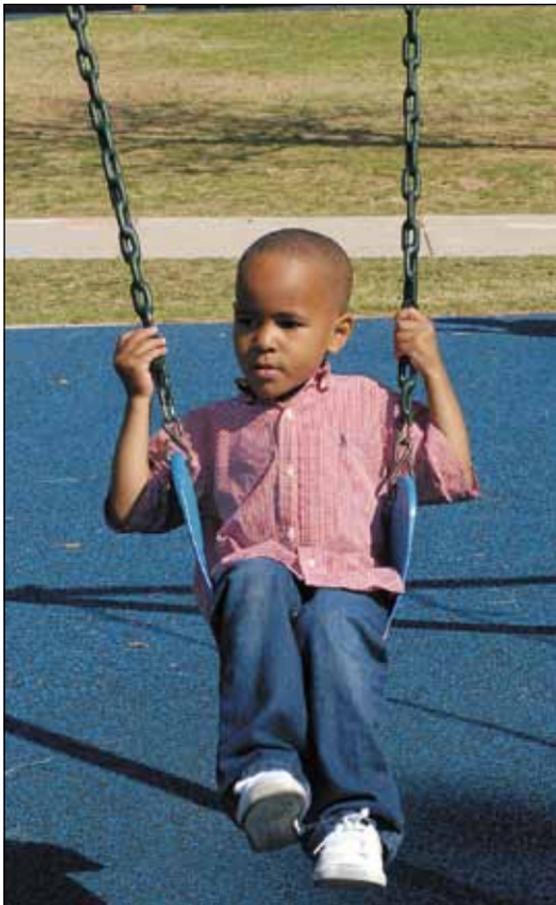


Photo by Ellen Hudson

Denver Harper, 4, is the son of Staff Sgt. Derrick and Taketha Harper.

different days," Luckie said.

The Goss Road center's calendar includes Sunglasses Day today, Open House from 4:30-5:30 p.m. Thursday, Pajama Day on Friday, Bubble Day on April 11, Soldier Story Day (where military parents are asked to read to the children) on April 12 at 10 a.m., Clothes Inside Out Day on April 13, Outside Art Gallery on April 14, Olympic Day on April 15 at 10 a.m., Mismatch Day on April 18, Team Jersey Day on April 19, Outdoor Music Day on April 20, Stuffed Animal Day on April 21, Wear Your Month of the Military Child T-shirt on April 22, Easter Egg Hunt on April 23 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the sports field off Goss Road, Share a Book Day on April 25, Red White and Blue Day on April 26, Ice Cream Social on April 27, Tunnel Crawl on April 28, and Western Day on April 29.

For more information, call the Goss Road center at 955-0116 or the Mills Road center at 842-5862.

Child Youth and School Services for every age

By **AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON**

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For the parents that live and work on Redstone Arsenal, the conflict between mission requirements and parental responsibilities is a reality, but with the help of Family and Morale Welfare and Recreation's Child Youth and School Services, both the mission and child are well served.

"Parents who are eligible to use Child Youth and School Services are provided with quality programming and affordable, convenient locations," said Missy Richards, program operations specialist with CYSS. "Our programs are nationally accredited with highly trained staff and a variety of opportunities for children and youth."

One of the most basic ways CYSS reaches out to families is through child care opportunities for children 6 weeks old and up through the Child Development Centers and School Age Services, as well as the Youth Center, which serves middle and high school students. Children are welcomed into safe, nurturing environments that not only take care of them while their parent is at work, but also promote physical, social, emotional and cognitive growth. In addition to the parent's convenience of having their child taken care of on post, CYSS ups the ante through its Outreach Services by providing after school bus transportation from area schools to the centers.

"Many parents take advantage of our free after school bus transportation from 28 local schools in Huntsville city, Madison city and Madison County," Richards said. "When children arrive at our centers, they are given a nutritional USDA snack, have access to computer labs, homework center assistance and other fun indoor and outdoor leisure activities. An advantage to parents who utilize the after school programs is the convenience of our operational hours and picking their child/youth up before ever leaving the installation."

In addition to child care, activities to meet a variety of interests and ages are available through CYSS. Sports and Fitness provides children with opportunities to participate in team and individual seasonal sports, such as this spring's baseball and flag football, as well as the chance for younger children to build skills



Photo by Ellen Hudson

Enjoying game time are, from left, military children Darrian Simpson, Amariah Flores and Abrianna Johnson.

through instructional programs, while SKIESUnlimited helps children expand their knowledge and acquire new skills through classes in areas like photography, music, Taekwondo and Cheernastics.

School Liaison Services connects youth through 4-H and the Boys and Girls Clubs of America, as well as supporting youth as they go through educational transitions, providing them with information and guidance as they enter a new school, supplying post-secondary education information, and creating opportunities for work force preparation, citizenship and leadership development. The HIRED! Apprenticeship Program helps youth through yet another transition – into the working world – through apprentice positions in career fields such as education, marketing and graphic design, information technology and recreation and tourism management. From birth to high school, there is something for every child.

"We encourage parents to allow their child/youth to take part in an exciting and innovative after school experience," Richards said.

Active duty, retired, active reserve military, as well as civilians, contractors and NASA employees are eligible for the services provided through Child Youth and School Services. Families must register through Central Enrollment in building 1500. Registration is free. For more information, call 876-3704.

Bicentennial Chapel grows faith through youth outreach



Photo by Amy Guckeen Tolson

Erica Bell, 13, an eighth-grader at J.E. Williams Middle School, relaxes with her Club H2O friends.

By **AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON**

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Some members of Club H2O can't even begin to count the number of moves they've made as military children, but through the work of Bicentennial Chapel, they have learned that the one thing they can count on is God.

"Being from a military family, when your mom or dad gets deployed, you need somebody to turn to," said Cody Sumnar, who attends the Protestant youth ministry group. "God can be that person."

Only 4 percent of children born between 1976 and 1994 attend any type of religious activities, whether they be Protestant or Catholic, according to Garrison Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Marvin Luckie, making the chapel's outreach to the youth of the community all the more important in reversing that trend.

"Our youth are important," Luckie said. "It's important to pass our values and our faith in God, and how we serve our community through our churches and our faith. It's important to have these components here at Redstone Arsenal, and that we continue to reach out."

"My vision for the youth is for teenagers to understand their Catholic tradition, to understand what it means to be Catholic," said Chaplain (Maj.) Ray Kopeck. "It's important to understand your identity."

The traditional programs designed to help children learn about their faith – Sunday School for Protestant children and CCD (Confraternity of Christian Doctrine) for Catholic children – are in place at Bicentennial, but other opportunities to help youth dive even deeper into their faith are also available, including youth groups, small faith sharing groups, a winter retreat, vacation bible school and summer camps, Student Life and SHINE (Serving Him in the Needy and Elderly).

"The importance of faith in the life of a teenager is important because all through life there's going to be times when we're going to suffer," said Darrell Good, youth pastor. "All through life there's going to be times when we're hurt, when we feel let down, sometimes to the point where you're hurting so bad, there's not a good word a friend, a parent or even a youth pastor can say to make you feel better. And that's where faith is important."

The giggles of middle schoolers fill the back patio of the Chapel Youth Annex on Bomford Road on Tuesday nights, a safe haven for teens and pre-teens to be themselves and learn about Christ

through the guidance of Good, and his wife Cheryl, at Club H2O, which aims to help young people grow and develop in their path of discipleship, while helping them through the challenges in life. The middle school group meets Tuesday evenings, high school on Thursdays.

"With kids that are going through a lot of stuff in their life, before they can even begin to understand the reality that there really is a God that loves them and cares for them, we've got to be willing to get down there and be with them where they are in their everyday lives and spend time with them," Good said.

Plenty of time for fun and games is allowed, as well as the chance to learn about Jesus, and talk about the difficulties the youth may be facing in their life, such as peer pressure, bad grades and everything else the teens refer to as "drama" – boys, rumors and backstabbing friends.

"There is no drama here," said Erica Bell. "It's drama free. It's been a blessing for me to come here. You can come here and get away from that."

For Bell, 13, an eighth-grader at J.E. Williams Middle School, the drama free zone has been a welcome relief to get away from life's other distractions to focus on Jesus, and her relationship with him. As a military child, she can't exactly recall all the places she's lived, but the Tuesday night youth group has become home, where she can truly be herself. With her family's next move, to Hawaii, looming in the near future, the teenager is sad to leave the youth group, but will carry the lessons she has learned with her.

"This place has been a real eye opener about God, teaching me how he wants me to live my life," Bell said.

While having a place where military youth can turn to in faith is important, a place for the entire family to come together is also paramount, not just for their spiritual lives, but for the family life as well, Luckie said.

"No matter how you cut it, slice it or dice it, it's difficult for families to deploy to war, to come back and have limited time as families, as units, as moms and dads and brothers and sisters," Luckie said. "You have to put forth opportunities for families to be together. It pays great dividends. These opportunities sometimes are few, but when we offer them, they pay wonderful dividends to build and rebuild that connectedness of love and relational values. Being deployed, being separated is hard on families, and that's the bottom line. A community of faith brings that healing, brings that love, rebuilds that trust through prayer, through

See Chapel on page 26

Child and youth offerings at chapel

Catholic

- CCD, Sunday from 10:45 to 11:45 a.m., kindergarten through adult
- Catholic Youth Group, Sundays from 10:45 to 11:45 a.m.; first and third Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. at Bicentennial Chapel
- SHINE (Serving Him in the Needy and Elderly) Work Camp, June 27 through July 2 in Memphis

Protestant

- Sunday School, Sundays from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. at Bicentennial Chapel, kindergarten through adult
- Club H2O, junior high meet Tuesdays from 6:30 to 8 p.m., high school on Thursdays from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Club House, building 50, Bomford Drive
- Club H2O Pre Teens Group, Sundays from 5:30 to 6 p.m. at Bicentennial Chapel, grades 3 to 6
- Club H2O small mentoring/disciple-

ship groups, meet Tuesdays, Wednesdays, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at Club House, building 50, Bomford Drive

- Club H2O Junior High/High School small group, Sundays from 5:30 to 6 p.m. at Bicentennial Chapel
- Club H2O/Student Life Kids Camp, June 27-30, Shocco Springs in Talladega, grades 3 to 6, parents have option to attend with their preteen children
- Club H2O Junior High/High School Student Life Camp, July 11-15, Daytona Beach

For more information call the Bicentennial Youth Office, 842-3318, or email Darrell Good, darrell@redstone-clubh2o.org.

Vacation Bible School

- Vacation Bible School, June 6-11, 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., kindergarten through 6th grade, open to all faiths

For more information about Bicentennial Chapel, call 842-2176.

Peer programs welcome newcomers to local schools

By AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON

Staff writer

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MADISON – The places Melissa Dryer has lived reads like an atlas.

New York, Alaska, Tennessee, Texas, California, Iowa, North Carolina, Louisiana – the 17-year-old has called them all home as a military child. With each move came a new school for the Bob Jones High junior, new friends, and new challenges.

“It was difficult to have to pick myself up and move every year,” Dryer said. “Having to make new friends was the hardest. Trying to settle back down, knowing that you’re just going to go somewhere else is kind of difficult. You didn’t really want to make that attachment to friends.”

They come from across the country and the world, places like California, Iowa, Texas, Thailand, Colombia and Uganda, but the anxieties and fears of new students coming in to a new school are one in the same – who will I eat lunch with? Where are my classes? Will I make new friends? As the largest high school in Alabama, Bob Jones High in Madison boasts a student body population of approximately 2,300, roughly the size of a small town that’s only growing with BRAC movement. Since the start of the school year, Bob Jones has added more than 170 new students, over in Huntsville, Columbia High has welcomed approximately 130 this year. As the numbers of incoming students across the Tennessee Valley show no signs of slowing, reaching out to new pupils, many with a military connection, has become a priority for both students and educators.

“Transitioning students need to know that other students have gone through the same move-related issues they are experiencing,” Dr. Jennifer Garrett, principal of Columbia High in Huntsville, said. “There are the typical issues of saying goodbye to old friends and trying to make new friends and adjusting to a new class schedule and teachers. Then there are the adjustments regarding different standards for graduation from state to state and county to county. Our goal is to ease those bumps in the road during the transition.”

The Student 2 Student program, available at both Bob Jones and Columbia, takes away those bumps by providing peer helpers, or ambassadors, to guide newcomers through the transition. Ambassadors eat lunch with new students, field questions, help them navigate the school, and introduce them to athletics and other extracurricular activities.

“The S2S program brings the transitioning student into the Columbia family and makes them feel a part of the Columbia tradition,” Garrett said. “Indeed, the transitioning student program is a part of the Columbia tradition. The new students



Photo by Ellen Hudson

Student 2 Student Peer Helpers await the busy lunch crowd at the Bob Jones High cafeteria in Madison. Part of the helpers outreach to new students is eating lunch with them on their first day of school.

adapt more easily and are welcomed in the athletic programs, the arts, the academic programs, wherever their niche is, we help them find their place at Columbia. Within weeks, the new students are no longer new, but are part of Columbia.”

As the new students continue to assimilate into their educational environment, the peer helpers continue to provide outreach to the students – at least two new student luncheons are held each year at Bob Jones, which gives the newcomers time to get acquainted with each other, and Columbia’s ambassadors host S2S Recess, where the new students and their guides get together to play games, share information and discuss interests and hobbies. The S2S program, according to Barbara Williams, youth education support services director for Child Youth and School Services, makes all the difference between a successful and unsuccessful transition for the new student.

“It means everything,” Williams said. “It’s a lifeline. Many of the students are resilient, but some are not. Some have real fear and concerns about moving. You get

See Peers on page 28

Children’s month first celebrated in 1986

SAN ANTONIO – During April, U.S. military installations around the globe recognize the contributions and sacrifices that servicemembers’ sons and daughters make daily.

April is Month of the Military Child.

More than 1.7 million children under the age of 18 have at least one parent serving in the armed forces. And it is estimated that more than 900,000 children have had one or both parents deployed multiple times.

Accordingly, garrison-level Child Youth and School Services programs will hold special events to honor Soldiers’ children. These events will stress the importance of providing children with quality services and support promised them through the Army Family Covenant, according to Installation Management Command officials.

Installations of all services are honoring military children by providing a month packed with special activities – arts and crafts shows, picnics, fishing derbies, carnivals, parades, block parties and other special activities – to acknowledge the unique contributions they make.

The monthlong celebration, first held in 1986, reinforces to military children that they are, indeed, a key part of the armed forces community.

For example, last year, First Lady Michelle Obama noted: “As a grateful nation,

it is our sacred responsibility to stand by our military children, just as they and their families stand by us.”

President Barack Obama earlier this year spotlighted the importance of military family support overall, recalling a trip to Afghanistan in December 2010 where he spoke to troops, asking what he could do to better support them.

“Without missing a beat,” he said, “they looked me in the eye and they gave me their answer. It wasn’t about more equipment. It wasn’t about more resources on the battlefield. In fact, it wasn’t about them.

“They said ... ‘Sir, take care of our families. If we know our families are all right back home, then we can do our jobs.’”

In late January, Obama unveiled a government plan to strengthen military family support, including the education and development of military children and expanding child care options for military parents.

Servicemembers and their families, the president said, have done everything the nation has asked of them in this decade of war. Such commitment by the youngest members of the Army community will be highlighted throughout Month of the Military Child, and their accomplishments will be on display for all to appreciate. (*Installation Management Command release*)

Fun warms up with summer camps

Arsenal and community open doors to fill school break with adventure

By **KARI HAWKINS**

Assistant editor

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Friends make the world go 'round – especially for children and teenagers.

So, it's not surprising to hear that friends are the hook that keeps bringing back the children and teens who enjoy the summer programs offered by School Age Services and Youth Services at Redstone.

"I have lots of friends here," said Kaitlyn McClung, a 12-year-old who will be a repeat participant in the summer program at Youth Services.

"I can't wait to see all my friends again. As soon as school is out, I will turn 13, and I will be here having fun with my friends and enjoying all the activities."

And that brings us to the second thing that makes the Arsenal's summer programs so popular – the field trips that take children and teenagers to places like Point Mallard, the Tennessee Aquarium, Sci-Quest, the Nashville Zoo, Southern

Adventures and Kids Kingdom.

"I love Point Mallard because we get to go swimming and slide down the slides," Kaitlyn said.

If it wasn't for the summer program at Youth Services, Kaitlyn would be spending a lot of her summer staying at home on the computer.

"My mom works at the Sparkman Center and my dad lives in Nashville. My mom doesn't want me to be at home all the time by myself," Kaitlyn said. "This gives me someone to be around because I'm an only child."

Whitesburg Middle School eighth-grader Eddie Poniatowski has two adult siblings, but the age difference makes it seem at times like he is an only child. And that's why he, too, likes to spend his summers at the Youth Center.

"I love the various activities and the summer reading program," he said. "They have lots of different competitions for us during the summer. We have competitions on the computer, and with air hockey and pingpong, videogames and basketball."

Kids participating in the School Age Services and Youth Services summer programs enjoy swimming, social time,

See Fun on page 27



Photo by Kari Hawkins

Eddie Poniatowski may be spending his afternoons studying medieval history for advanced eighth-grade English at Whitesburg Middle School, but this summer he plans on having lots of fun with his friends. Eddie is one of many Redstone Arsenal-connected youth who enjoy spending their school day afternoons and their summers at the Youth Center.

'They know they'll have fun when they're here'



Photo by Ellen Hudson

Carter McCurdy, 3, attends the Child Development Center on Goss Road.

Child development centers provide caring alternatives

By **AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON**

Staff writer

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Whether their children are just learning to crawl or asking for the car keys, parents that work and live on the Arsenal need look no further than inside the gates for affordable, quality childcare.

From full-day care for children 6 weeks old and up, to aftercare for school age children and a place to hang out for middle and high school students, Child Youth and School Services offer a variety of opportunities for parents and children alike. Active duty, retired, active reserve military, as well as civilians, contractors and NASA employees are eligible for the services provided through CYSS. In addition to the accessibility of child care being located on post, the centers also boast the convenience of being open for care during school breaks, summer and on snow days – provided it is not a federal holiday or the installation is closed.

The Child Development Centers, lo-

cated in building 4135 Goss Road and 5600/5601 Mills Road, are available for children 6 weeks old through 5 years. The centers open at 5 a.m. and close at 6 p.m. weekdays. Hourly care, designed for parents that only need care on an occasional basis, is available from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Parents may reserve up to a month in advance; a maximum of 20 hours per week is allowed.

Currently, there is a waiting list for enrollment at the CDCs, according to Wanda Quigley, with CYSS. Parents placed on the waiting list may list a preference for the Goss Road or Mills Road CDC, and will receive a list of other childcare providers available in the area that they may choose from if they wish as they wait for a spot to open up. Expectant mothers may place their unborn child on the waiting list.

Child care fees are based not on age, but on total family income, an advantage for parents with younger children, who are typically more expensive to enroll in daycare.

"It doesn't matter how old your child is, we can offer the same level of care," said Deborah Nickles, director of the Goss Road Child Development Center.

Unlike many daycare providers in

the area, the Goss Road CDC is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children; the Mills Road CDC, which opened Nov. 1, is currently working toward its accreditation. To find another location accredited by the NAEYC off post, a parent would have to go to Arab or Guntersville.

"It's an accreditation process. You know what you're going to get," said Karen Luckie, director of the Mills Road CDC, of the consistent, high standard of care that parents can expect.

The Creative Curriculum approach offered by the CDCs provides children educational opportunities in reading, math, science, social studies, arts and technology. Children learn through hands on experiences and play that help them develop motor, cognitive, social and emotional skills through exploration and planned curriculum in individual, small and large group activities.

"They know they'll have fun when they're here," Nickles said of why children are excited to come to the CDCs. "For some children, this is like a second home to them."

That bond is thanks largely in part to

See Daycare on page 25

Daycare

continued from page 24

the teachers and staff, according to Nickles and Luckie.

“The staff is very caring, very loving, very devoted to what they do,” Luckie said. “Each teacher brings their own personality into the classroom.”

For Stefanie Ali, the cost of care and proximity to her home is what drew her to choose the CDC for the care of her daughter, Jamilah, 4, but the level of care is what has kept her coming back.

“I love it,” Ali said. “Everybody is wonderful.”

Marshall Space Flight Center also operates a Child Development Center, accredited by the National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs, at building 4346, Morris Road, for children 6 weeks until they enter kindergarten. Open from 6:45 a.m. to 5:45 p.m. weekdays, the center is open to the Arsenal family. For more information, call the registrar, Rosalind Cylar, at 544-0090 or visit mcdc.msfc.nasa.gov.

Children don't want to leave and parents want to stay at School Age Services, building 3155, where students in first through fifth grade stay, play and learn while mom and dad are at work. From art to music and drama, sports, 4-H,

Boys & Girls Club, robotics and video games, there's something for everyone. Doors open for before school care at 5 a.m., and again from 2:30 to 6 p.m. for after school care. With a well-trained staff that works with the children, SAS takes the worry out of what happens to a child after the school bell rings.

“You have someone to watch them,” said Mary Washington, director of SAS. “Their mind is always working, so safety is the biggest thing.”

Parents and their children need not bring anything with them – except maybe homework – everything from snacks to toys are provided to keep the kids entertained. Computer and homework labs are available for students to take care of schoolwork, in addition to areas that allow time for reading, art, music, science and outdoor play.

“They have just tons and tons of things to do, and they're able to interact in an educational environment with other children,” Washington said.

Yashira Rodriguez and Maria Cunningham can't quite remember how they met, but they know part of the foundation of their friendship was built on the Arsenal. Rodriguez, 15, a student at Sparkman High School enrolled in after school care on post when she was in fourth grade, and Cunningham, 16, a student at Columbia, enrolled when she was in sixth grade, which brought the girls together. Today, the duo

call the Youth Center their home away from home after school.

“I like the people,” Rodriguez said of the Youth Center. “You can go around and talk to your friends who you don't get to see very often.”

Afternoons at the Youth Center, building 3148, are abuzz with music, the sounds of basketballs dribbling in the gym and the usual chatter that accompanies teenagers. Open to middle and high school students, ages 11 to 18 in sixth through 12th grade, the center provides a place for youth to relax, do homework and just have fun after school, at no cost to the youth or parents.

“I would encourage anyone who hasn't been here, just stop in or give me a call,” said Scott Shuffler, director of Youth Services. “See what we have to offer. There's a lot of good opportunities here and you can't beat the price.”

Between 3:30 and 4 each afternoon the center goes from zero to between 60 and 70 students as youth are dropped off from their various schools. Snacks like spaghetti and meatballs, chicken noodle soup and fruit and crackers are offered before the teens head off to do their homework, blow off some steam in the gym, get creative with art or music, or play videogames, among a variety of activities. No matter what they choose to do, for the teens the bottom line is getting to hang out with their friends.

“They like being here with their friends. The kids here have grown up with each other,” Shuffler said. “It feels safe. It feels comfortable. We work very hard just to have fun.”

The impact of the outreach that is being done with the youth is apparent in volunteer Ronnie Clark, 22, a student at Northwest-Shoals Community College, who spends his afternoons at the Youth Center, helping with snack time, in the homework lab and wherever else he's needed. Clark himself was a Youth Center teen, and began using the afterschool care services available on the Arsenal when he was in sixth grade.

“We had so much fun,” he recalls of the afternoons spent playing videogames and shooting hoops. “I wanted to be here.”

Today, Clark returns to the center to give back, a way of thanking the center for the opportunities, support and mentoring he received as a teen.

“I love kids,” Clark said. “I love trying to help the kids and teach them things they don't know, about the things they're getting ready for, whether it's sports or just learning new things.”

In order to make use of the Goss and Mills Road Child Development Centers, School Age Services and the Youth Center, families must register through Central Enrollment in building 1500. Registration is free. For more information, parents should call 876-3704.

Williams family keeps military tradition

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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The past seven years have been unusual for the Jonathan Williams family.

This is the longest they've lived in the same place without moving. During his more than 20 years in the Army, they would move every two or three years.

He retired in 2006 as a sergeant first class – after 20 years, four months and 17 days (but who was counting?). That's why the family has taken root in Harvest. But now he and his wife of nearly 23 years, Harriet, have got their passports ready just in case.

Any of their three children – all of whom have followed Jonathan's footsteps into the Army – might go overseas, so they'll want to visit them.

"I'm actually honored that they would choose to serve the country," said Jonathan, an information technology specialist for the Network Enterprise Center.

There will be plenty of green uni-

forms at this family's gatherings. The oldest sibling and lone daughter, Camil, 23, is a Reserve specialist in the 926th Engineering Battalion (Forward Support) in Birmingham. A food services specialist, she is also attending both the Aveda Institute for cosmetology and the University of Alabama-Birmingham for accounting. She has been a reservist and college student since 2008.

Jonathan Jr., 20, is a specialist with the 92nd Chemical Company at Fort Stewart, Ga. A unit supply specialist, he joined in April 2008. He entered the Reserves between his junior and senior year in high school; so when he was a senior, he had already completed basic training.

Joshua, 17, a senior at Sparkman High, enlisted Dec. 23, 2010. He will leave May 31 for basic training at Fort Benning, Ga. After about 10 weeks of basic training, he'll go to Fort Gordon, Ga., for advanced individual training in computer/detection systems repair. Ironically, his father was trained at Fort Gordon as an electronics maintenance chief.

"I wanted to have job security," Joshua said of his main reason for joining the Army. "I know how the economy's going. I lived a pretty good lifestyle. I saw my father's example.

"Another (reason) is to serve my country and the American way of life. To get my education while I'm in. And it's a family tradition."

Joshua was born in Heidelberg, Germany, and grew up around the world – including stops in Augusta, Ga. (Fort Gordon); Baumholder, Germany; Verona, Italy; and finally Huntsville since 2004.

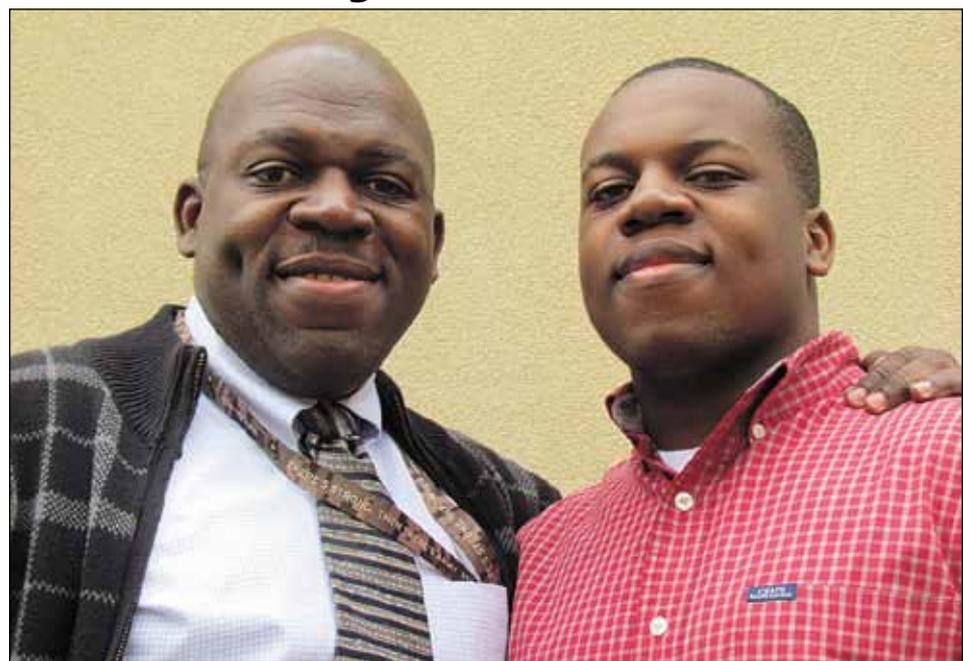


Photo by Skip Vaughn

Retired Sgt. 1st Class Jonathan Williams is proud to see his three children join the Army, including his youngest, Joshua, 17.

"I know my lifestyle's different from other people," he said. "I'm more diverse. I have diverse friends. And I like to see the big picture, I'm not simple-minded."

The military lifestyle has its ups and downs, he said. The downside was not having the same friends for extended periods because of all the moving.

"You don't know what to call home. But actually you do know what to call home. Home is where the family is," Joshua said. "It brings families together. I know (while) traveling around, my family was all I had."

Another upside to the military lifestyle is "being able to see different parts of the world," he said.

His father, 44, a native of Com-

pton, Calif., retired from the military as an equal opportunity adviser for the 59th Ordnance Brigade. His more than 20 years as a Soldier included about 11 years overseas in Germany and Italy.

"Had great times," Jonathan said. "I left the military I thought in good standing. I think that's the reason my children wanted to join. I enjoyed my career. I enjoyed serving in the United States Army."

And now his three children are having that opportunity themselves.

"What do you think?" Jonathan asked his youngest son. "You think you're ready?"

To that, Joshua replied, "I was born ready."



Courtesy photo

From left, in front row, are Jonathan Williams Jr., his sister Camil and their brother Joshua; and in back row, Jonathan Jr.'s wife Damesha and his parents Harriet and Jonathan.

Chapel

continued from page 21

relationships, through maturity and also the community brings opportunities to come back together and celebrate those moments. We're here to do that."

From the Youth Life Ski Trip, Christmas caroling, a trip to Six Flags and fund-raisers, the chapel's activities have brought together the family of Col. Timothy Wulff – his wife Andrea and children Timber, 16, Annika, 14, Mia, 12, Gabby, 10 and Xander, 7 – allowing them to spend time as a family

having fun, while praising Jesus at the same time. Since the family's involvement in the youth programs, Timber and Annika have recommitted their lives to Jesus, choosing to be baptized again because "they wanted their baptisms to be done because they chose to have it done."

"These spiritual programs are miracles in my eyes," Wulff said. "How do you even begin to fathom the importance of such programs that bring our kids to love Jesus Christ for the first time or to grow existing love for Christ exponentially? These programs save lives."

It has been heartwarming for Wulff

and his wife Andrea to watch their eldest daughters grow in their faith through both their attendance at youth programs, as well as the changes that have occurred as a result of that involvement, such as applying Bible teachings to everyday life, turning away from material things and choosing WAY-FM, a Christian station, over popular music. As the younger children have seen the impact of faith on their older sisters' lives, they too have begun to grow in their faith, inviting friends to attend youth group and taking turns saying grace at dinnertime.

"Our kids want to go to church and youth group," Wulff said. "Humbles me because I didn't have that zeal as a kid.

My kids are teaching me things about the Bible!"

But it isn't just about the Bible stories – the lessons learned have given the Wulff children something to lean on when life gets tough in their roles as military children.

"These programs are extremely valuable to help our children understand that God is in charge even if they cannot control their lives that are constantly in turmoil due to PCS moves and parent deployments," Wulff said. "My kids, although they hate me being gone, understand that God will take care of me and them while we are apart. They teach kids how to cope with everyday issues."

Fun

continued from page 23

games, field trips, outdoor activities like geo-caching, sports, crafts, recreation and fun.

Eddie admitted it can be hard for new kids to feel comfortable when they first start participating at the Youth Center. But it doesn't take long to make friends, he said.

"Once I got some friends, it was really fun to be here," he said.

Like Kaitlyn, Eddie said Point Mallard is the summer's best field trip. He enjoys the water park's Toilet Bowl swimming area and the Wave Pool.

With both of his parents working as civilians, staying at home alone wasn't an option for Eddie. He tried the extended day program at his school, but found it didn't give him enough freedom.

"They stay on a strict schedule at extended day. This is much better here because things are more relaxed. And my parents like it because it's close to their work and they know I am having a good time," he said.

Signups for the summer programs for School Age Services and Youth Services have begun. For more information, call School Age Services at 876-6596 or the Youth Center at 876-5437, or visit Child Youth and School Services at building 1500 on Weeden Mountain Road. Information can also be found at the Family and Morale Welfare and Recreation website at <http://www.redstonemwr.com>.

Child Youth and School Services isn't the only organization in town offering summer fun for children and teenagers. Several local organizations, including the Huntsville Museum of Art, YMCA and Burritt on the Mountain offer summer programs, and several local churches offer Vacation Bible School programs. For information on these programs, visit the organization's websites. Here is a synopsis of some of the local summer camps open to children and teenagers.

Outdoor Playground

The best place to be in the summer is outside! And there are plenty of outdoor activities for children at the Botanical Garden this summer. The fun kicks off May 31 for children in grades first through sixth with the Nature's Playground camp, featuring four days full of nature crafts, outdoor games, getting wet, plant lore and much more. Nature's Playground will be repeated throughout the summer as will the following camps: I know What We're Gonna Do Today featuring engineering, science and being creative; Alpha Bugs featuring ants to walking sticks and all the bugs that creep around us; Junior Master Gardener Level I featuring an innovative gardening program for kids; Animal Kingdom investigating the different types of creatures that roam the planet; The Earth Rocks!

featuring an investigation of the violent earth; Are You Civilized? featuring hanging gardens, gladiators, making papyrus and all things classical from ancient times; The Magic Treehouse featuring dinosaurs, pirates, animals, mummies and more from the popular book series; History's Mysteries featuring astronomy, geology, geography, DNA sampling and more; Rainbows All Around exploring what rainbows are made of; and Savage Planet featuring giant plants, carnivorous vegetation, strange animals and other bizarre flora and fauna. The Botanical Garden is located at 474 Bob Wallace Ave. For more information, and camp ages, fees and registration, visit the Botanical Garden's website at <http://www.hsvbg.org> or call 830-4447 ext. 226 or email sgoglick@hsvbg.org.

Discovering Space

In Huntsville, the ultimate summer camp offering is Space Camp at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center. Founded in 1982, Space Camp couples premier educational programs to promote the study of math, science and technology with hands-on activities that teach teamwork, decision-making, and leadership. Dr. Werner von Braun, who founded the nation's space program at Redstone Arsenal, inspired these programs that attract young space enthusiasts from all 50 states and more than 40 countries and territories. More than 500,000 students and adults have attended Space Camp since the program began in June 1982. Today, youth can choose between Space Camp, Space Academy, Advanced Space Academy and Aviation Challenge. Camps are available for fourth grade through high school-age students. Additional programs are available for trainees who are blind or visually impaired, and for the deaf or hard of hearing. "Space Is Special" is a program for special education students. Space Camp is located at One Tranquility Base. For more information on the programs and the cost, visit the camp's website at <http://www.spacecamp.com> or call 1-800-63-SPACE.

Science Fun

Sci-Quest, North Alabama's science center, offers a wide range of summer camps that engage children in the exploration of the sciences and the world around them. For ages 4 and 5, Sci-Quest offers classes like Little Geologists, One Starry Night and the Science of Goo; a single-day workshop to explore the beach and ocean; and half-day camps called Mess It Up and Amazing Animals. For children in grades first through third, single-day workshops include Dolphin Talk, Tooth or Consequences, Pizza! and Close Up Science; and half-day camps including Campasaurus, Star Kids, Icky, Sticky and Gross, Treasure Trek, Exploring Ecosystem, and Make It, Break It and Take It. For children in grades fourth through sixth, single-day workshops include Short Circuit, Who Glows

There and Blood and Guts; and half-day camps including Dangerous Plant, Ultimate Exploration, 60 Seconds to Success, A Knight's Quest, Robot Rampage, and Meatballs and Molecules. And for seventh-graders and older, there are single-day workshops on Fast Good Chemistry, Stingrays and Star Fishes, Mystery Matter and Fashion Lab; and half-day camps including Gamers Laboratory, Digital Animation Studio, Robots Rule, and Caves, Crystals and Chemistry. Sci-Quest is located on Calhoun College's Huntsville campus at 102-D Wynn Drive. For more information on its camps and their cost, and to register, visit the Sci-Quest web site at www.sci-quest.org or call 837-0606.

Special Children

Camp Merrimack is an arts half-day camp for children ages 3 through 12 with special needs, including cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, autism and more. Classes include music, theatre, dance and visual art. Offered by the Merrimack Hall Performing Arts Center, the 1:1 staff-to-camper ratio and the center's creative environment provides students with opportunities to build social skills and helps to create an environment where they are sure to succeed. There are two camp sessions being offered this summer, one June 13-17 and the other June 20-24. Classes are limited to 15 children per age group and spaces are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Children ages 3-7 will attend camp from 9 a.m. to noon and children ages 8-12 will attend camp from 1 to 4 p.m. Cost is \$75 per child. For more information or to inquire about financial scholarships, contact Hayley Henderson, outreach coordinator, at hhenderson@merrimackhall.com or call 534-6455. Merrimack Hall is located at 3320 Triana Boulevard.

Learning Chinese

Children kindergarten to seventh grade will be immersed in Chinese language and cultural activities from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. each day during the week of June 20-24. Children will take Chinese language lessons in the morning, and learn to prepare and then taste a Chinese lunch. In the afternoon, they will enjoy a wide range of Chinese cultural activities, including dance, music, arts and crafts and games. Camp fees range from \$100 to \$200 per child. The camp is located at 2113 Old Monrovia Road, Huntsville, and can be reached by calling 797-7970.

Camp Cha-La-Ke

Located on the shores of Lake Guntersville, Camp Cha-La-Ke offers four-day, three-night resident camp experiences for children from first through eighth grades incorporating wholesome outdoor activities and character development. Activities on the 61-acre campus include canoeing, horseback riding, ropes, archery, boating, tubing, swimming, arts and

crafts, and nightly devotionals, among others. Children enjoy an eight-to-one ratio of campers to staff, and a first responder is available during the entire camp session to administer first aid and for dispensing of medication. For information about camp fees and schedule, visit the Heart of Valley YMCA website at <http://ymca.nss-corp.com>.

Camp Sumatanga

This Methodist-associated summer camp has been active since the 1950s. The camp combines plenty of outdoor fun – fishing and canoeing, hiking, a ropes course, a swimming pool, game fields, tennis courts and a basketball court – with an exploration of faith for children in grades three through senior high. This summer's camp theme "Re-birth" – explores Christ's birth, miracles, parables, death and resurrection, and how Christ changes the lives of believers. Camp Sumatanga is accredited by American Camping Association. Weeklong camps as well as day camps, music camps and special needs camps are offered throughout the summer. The camp is located in Gallant. For more information, visit Camp Sumatanga's website at <http://www.sumatanga.org> or call 538-9860.

Camp Maranatha

A ministry of the North Alabama Presbytery, Camp Maranatha is located on 150 acres along the shores of Lake Guntersville in Scottsboro. Camp Maranatha gives children in third grade through 12th grade the opportunity to share God's love, learn about holy living and understand the challenges of discipleship. The summer camp experience includes outdoor skills instruction, speakers and musicians, use of recreational facilities, crafts, high adventure opportunities and exposure to dedicated Christian role models. Besides the traditional Christian camp, Campa Maranatha also offers a golfing, scuba, mission and worship camp. For more information, visit Camp Maranatha's website at <http://maranathacc.com> or call 574-4539.

Lookout Mountain

Lookout Mountain, an Appalachian chain stretching 93 miles along wild and scenic rivers, bordering lush forests, and shrouding sheer rock cliffs and majestic valley views, is home to a dozen children's summer camps that welcome more than 12,000 children each summer. Each camp is designed to give your child an enriching summer experience filled with exciting adventures. Activities include horseback riding, archery, boating, swimming, craft making and rock climbing. Camps in the Mentone area include: Alpine Camp of Boys, 634-4404; Camp Laney for Boys, 634-4066 or info@camplaney.com; Nature's Classroom, 800-995-4769 or info@riverviewcamp.com; and Riverview Camp for Girls, 800-882-0722 or info@riverviewcamp.com.

Peers

continued from page 22

integrated a lot quicker into the school and school activities, as opposed to going day by day to see if I can step up a bit more. Somebody's already reaching out to you."

Summer Dawkins is all too familiar with being the new kid. Growing up with her father in the Air Force, she's gone through the emotions of coming to a new school, many times. Today as a peer helper at Bob Jones, she uses her experiences to bring newcomers out of their sense of isolation.

"I know what it is like to be the new kid," Dawkins said. "Being part of this, I can make it a little easier. It feels like we're making a difference. We're reaching out."

Now that her father is retired, Dryer has broken the cycle of being the new kid, and instead serves as a peer helper.

"Knowing I can help out so many new students that have been through this tons of other times, just like me, I can really relate," Dryer said.

For educators Bridget Drummond and Michael Hoyle, who together lead the program at Bob Jones, the impact can be seen in the way the new students carry themselves within just a few days, weeks, and months at the school.

"I think these kids really help the transition," Hoyle said. "You're coming in to the biggest high school in the state of Alabama. It's overwhelming. If you don't know anybody or have anybody here to guide you at least through the first day, you can get lost in the shuffle.

I think these guys have made a tremendous impact on new kids, because we do, we do see new kids and they're walking around with friends they've made and people they've been introduced to."

Sparkman High School and Discovery Middle School are both in the process of developing Student 2 Student Programs, according to Jennifer Craig, guidance counselor at Sparkman, and Sharon Willis, principal of Discovery.

At Grissom High in Huntsville, it's all about establishing connections through the school's REACH program, which, like Student 2 Student, pairs new students with volunteers from the student body to help newcomers establish themselves within their new school.

Student helpers go beyond the basics of just teaching the new kids on the block how to navigate Grissom, and actually get to know the new student to the point where they can recommend activities and organizations that fit their interests, and introduce them to others that share those same interests. How long an individual remains in the REACH program varies, depending upon how quickly they assimilate to their new environment or how much assistance they desire.

"We want our students to feel welcome," said Laura Worshim, assistant principal. "We want them to know it's going to be okay."

Being a new student is all fun and games – literally – at Lynn Fanning Elementary School in Meridianville where new students participate in a scavenger hunt to get to know the school better. Accompanied by a Student Council member, new students are provided with

a checklist to complete, such as getting a thumbs up and coupon for free ice cream from the lunch ladies, visiting the playground to discover their favorite area and stopping by Mrs. Plant's office, the school principal, for a special surprise. Scavenger hunts typically take place within a week of the student's first day of school, according to Melissa Pogue, school counselor, who came up with the idea after a Military Child Education Coalition institute in 2007.

"It's just a great way for the new students to meet other children and to learn about our school and meet faculty from a peer instead of an adult," Pogue said.

Once a military child has adapted to their new educational environment, the support does not stop. The pictures on the Veterans Wall at Harvest Elementary School in Harvest tell the tale of the military children that call the school home. Each Veterans Day, students with parents in the military bring in photos of their loved one that remain on display throughout the school year. Approximately 30 pictures decorate the board today.

"The wall is something that's very special to them," said Rachel Rosenberg, school counselor.

Military connected children are given special care through the Military Child Support Group. Students meet once a week for a half hour, six weeks prior to breaking for Christmas, as well as six weeks before summer break, to help them prepare for what may be an emotionally trying time at home.

"That's one of the hardest times for them if mom or dad is deployed through

the holiday season," Rosenberg said.

Creative play mixes in to the sessions to help the students learn about and cope with the emotions they may be going through with activities such as "Pipe Cleaner Characteristics" where students work with pipe cleaners, and "What Bugs Me," an activity where students create their own little bugs to help them discuss what's bothering them.

"The pipe cleaners are flexible, just like the military family has to be flexible," Rosenberg said. "That's to help them understand that they have to be flexible, because their lives change depending upon whether or not mom or dad is deployed. We have to be ready and flexible for when that happens."

The group discusses their feelings, what makes them happy, like using Skype to talk to their parent who is deployed, as well as what makes them sad or angry, like not having their parent there for summer vacation.

"The whole point is to understand there's no right or wrong feelings," Rosenberg said. "It helps for them to know they're not alone in their feelings."

Since the group has been instituted, teachers have noticed a difference in their students, as they have developed coping skills to help them come to terms with issues at home that often left their little minds wandering during class time.

"It was always on their mind," Rosenberg said. "They weren't being as attentive in the classroom and not doing as well as they could. This gives them an area where they can get it all out. It helps them focus their attention on their schoolwork and classroom."

Life

continued from page 18

"During his deployment, I watched the news more. Savaughn would ask me 'Is daddy fighting the bad guys?' He wanted to know what was going on," Green said.

Before the deployment, Green's husband taught Savaughn how to take care of himself.

"He taught him how to take a bath by himself, how to button his shirt, and how to take care of himself. With one not yet two and the other one on the way, Lance knew I would need all the help I could get," Green said.

"Savaughn stepped up. He would take the trash out. Daddy taught him before he left how to take care of mommy. He learned to use the microwave. He grew up fast. He still helps a lot with his brother and sister."

Green's husband still travels with his work. And sometimes, that shows in her children's behavior.

"One day, Shaun (now 5) acted up in class. The teacher said she was going to call his dad. Instead of backing down, he told the teacher 'My dad's not home. He's TDY,'" Green said.

"When Shaun was 2, his dad went to Korea for six months. When he came back, Shaun screamed 'Daddy! Daddy!' and started to cry. Our daughter didn't remember her daddy and she didn't really want to talk to him. She'd peek around the corner to see him. But, now they are inseparable."

Green's husband makes up for his absences by spending a lot of quality time with their three children when he is home. The kids thoroughly enjoy their father and want to do everything with him. Their daughter, now 3, insists on getting a haircut with her daddy. "She is close to him and doesn't want to be left out," Green said.

Green, who didn't grow up in the military, has seen how military life has affected her children.

"The kids are more mature, more helpful and more resilient," she said. "The have a better understanding of change and are more well-rounded. They are used to meet-

ing different people and they have experienced much more diversity."

Even so, Green is hoping her husband will choose to retire this fall after 20 years in the Army.

"His tour in Afghanistan was extended from 12 to 15 months. I learned about that by watching CNN," Green recalled. "If Lance stays in, he will get a new assignment and he will be deployed again. We love it here at Redstone. My friends here are my family. We don't want to leave."

Even though Walters grew up military, her daughter did not. Walters and her Soldier husband divorced in the early years of their marriage and Walters moved to Huntsville, where her dad was working as a civil servant in missile defense at Redstone. Walters raised the couple's daughter, Kelly, in Huntsville.

"I can see the benefits of her growing up in one place. She has the benefits of friends compared to what I had. I can see the advantages of her staying in one place," she said.

Kelly is now in her third year at Auburn University, where she is majoring in German. She hopes to eventually

move to Germany and teach in German schools. When Kelly went to college, Walters decided it was time to reconnect on her own with the Army.

"I missed working with Soldiers, and I missed seeing the uniform and working with people in the military," Walters said. "So, I volunteered with ACS. Most of the people here are prior military. It's like a little family."

"I like the atmosphere. I like working with Soldiers, and helping Soldiers and their families. ACS at Redstone is a great place to work and we have a great director in Sue Paddock."

No matter the challenges of growing up in a military family, Walters is thankful it has been part of her life.

"Even though the military can be a hard way of life, I find that it is a special way of life," Walters said. "In the military, you always have a common thread that helps you make friends quickly and easily. When you have been a military kid, you can relate to other people who have been in the military."

"It's a wonderful life and you meet some great people through it."

Here's a primer on registering for local schools

By **AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON**

Staff writer

amy.tolson@theredstonerocket.com

Amidst the packing and unpacking that accompanies a move, military connected families with school age children are faced with yet another item on their to do list – finding the right school for their students. Enter Barbara Williams, youth education support services director for Child Youth and School Services.

“There’s a lot of parents who want to know about our schools and they want the best school for their children,” Williams said. “I’m able to help them feel better and feel secure about where their children will be going to school.”

Even though an active duty family may move anywhere between nine and 14 times in a student’s academic career, that doesn’t necessarily make the process any easier. Williams is there to smooth the transition, whether it be guiding families through the school registration process or helping them find the right academic environment to serve their needs and interests. To contact Williams, call 842-962 or email barbara.w.williams@us.army.mil.

To register a student for school, parents/guardians may either go through

their school district directly or enlist the help of Williams. Registration for Huntsville City Schools occurs at the school where the child is planning to enroll. To determine the appropriate school zone, families should contact the school nearest their residence or call Pupil Services at 428-6890. Forms required for registration include birth certificate, certificate of immunization or exemption, Social Security card, proof of residence, as well as a utility or phone bill addressed to the parent or guardian at the address being established as residence. For more information, visit www.hsv.k12.al.us.

Students moving into the Madison City School District must enroll at the Central Office, 211 Celtic Drive in Madison. Forms needed for registration include a parent/guardian picture ID, Alabama Blue Immunization Form, certified birth certificate for the student, Social Security card, withdrawal form from previous school, grade level verification such as a transcript or report card, and proof of residency such as a lease or electric bill. More information, as well as a map listing the various zones throughout the school system is available online at www.madisoncity.k12.al.us.

To be eligible for enrollment in Madi-



Photo by Ellen Hudson

Reading at School Age Services are, from left, Alex Long, 9, Robert Jackson, 9, Brandon Williams, 7, James Malik McCullers, 8, Andrew Bruer, 8, and Savaughn Green, 9.

son County schools, families must reside in Madison County, but not within the city limits of Huntsville or Madison. Registration is done at the school located within their zone. For questions about school zones, call 859-9447 or 852-2557. Birth certificate, immunization card, Social Security card, proof of legal residence and custodial parent documenta-

tion, if applicable, is required for registration. Students transferring from other schools must provide an official withdrawal from their previous school and transcripts or a current report card.

For more information about School Liaison Services, visit www.redstonemwr.com/family/child_&_youth/liason.html.

Redstone the smart choice for youth sports

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

skip.vaughn@theredstonerocket.com

Military youngsters aren't the only ones who can compete in Redstone's youth sports program.

It's also open to children of government workers and contractors – generally anyone with access to the Arsenal. Besides baseball, soccer and basketball which are in partnership with the city of Huntsville, Redstone offers flag football.

"We can offer them things that sometimes the other places can't," youth sports director Mike Gates said.

And all the sports here are for both boys and girls. "Even baseball," added assistant director Jodi Fowler.

An introductory program, called Start Smart, provides parent participation classes to introduce the young children to basic sports skills. The six-week classes meet on Saturdays. Baseball, basketball and soccer are for ages 3-5; and golf, tennis and flag football are for ages 5-7. Cost is \$20 per six-week class.

Team sports are for ages 5-18. Basketball registration starts in September and October and the season goes from January through February. Soccer registration begins in July and August; and the season starts after Labor Day and continues through October. Baseball registration begins in January and February; and the games run from April through June.

Redstone's flag football – "we do that through the NFL," Gates said – begins with registration in February and March. The youngsters practice in April and May; and the games are in May and June.

This is the second year for the swim team, called the Redstone Arsenal Launchers, which competes in the Rocket City Swim League.

"Last year was the first year we had it," Gates said. "It went really well. I think we had 51 kids. They finished 14th out of 18 teams at the city meet, which is not bad for the first year."

Registration is under way through May 14 and the cost is \$125, which includes uniform. Meets are Wednesday nights at 6 beginning in June. Boys and girls ages 5-17 are welcome and they must be able to swim the length of the pool, 25 meters. The season culminates with the city meet in July.

Redstone also offers a golf league in the fall at the Links. Registration begins in July and August and the league runs in September and October.

"I think we offer a variety of activities," Gates said. "We have the standard team sports. And we're trying to offer more individual sports, maybe more nontraditional activities – not focusing on your standard baseball, basketball and soccer which everybody did growing up. It's the Army's philosophy."

Fowler, who has been at Redstone about a month, said she hopes the programs draw people from Huntsville onto the Arsenal.

"We do our best to offer what we think the kids will come and do, and make it comparative to the city sports," she said. "And hopefully draw them to other things we do."

Register for youth sports at Parent Central Services, building 1500 on Weeden Mountain Road, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



Courtesy photo

Peyton Hayes competes last year for the Redstone Arsenal Launchers swim team.

The phone number is 876-3704. The fee for team sports is generally \$40 to \$45; and other costs vary depending on the sport.

Miniature air vehicles take to skies for competition

In late May, teams from around the world will arrive in Alabama to showcase their innovation, creativity and technical skills by "filling" the skies over Decatur and Redstone Arsenal with tiny micro air vehicles during the Spring 2011 International Micro Air Vehicle competition.

Hosted by the Advanced Science and Technology Directorate, this year's competition will take place May 23-27 at Redstone Arsenal, Calhoun Community College and the Alabama Robotics Technology Park.

The flying systems involved in the event must meet stringent standards: weigh less than 5 kilograms and measure no greater than 1 meter in any direction. Control of the air vehicle may be remote, operator control through on board video, or autonomous. There are scoring factors that favor the least amount of direct operator control and input.

Dr. Suzy Young, director of the ASTD, Aviation and Missile Research Development and Engineering Center, is this year's host and is excited about the opportunity to hold the competition here.

"The annual IMAV conference and flight competition event serves as a platform to exchange information on the

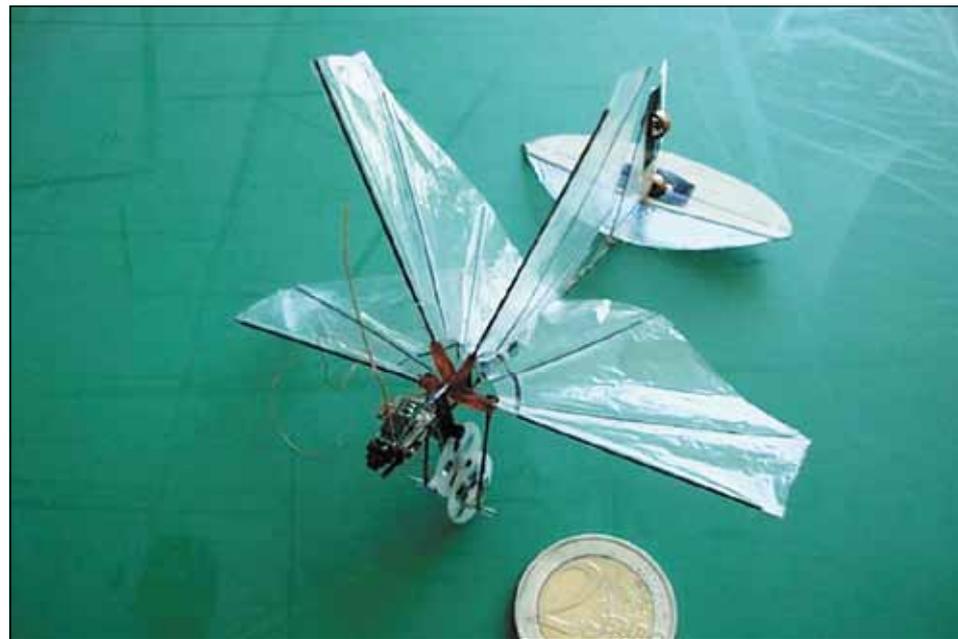
state-of-the-art of micro air vehicles. The event is focused upon the development of autonomous controls for very small unmanned aircraft. I have been to several competitions in the United States and overseas and each competition gets better because the competitors improve and try to outdo each other," Young said.

The most recent competition, held in Braunschweig, Germany in July 2010, was hosted by Dr. Peter Vorsmann, chairman of the International Micro Air Vehicle Conference and Flight Competition Program Committee. At this event, 15 teams competed in several events.

"The focus of the conference and flight competition orients primarily on academia. The German Institute of Navigation (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Ortung und Navigation e.V.) is a member of the IMAV Committee, which invites members from science, industry, military, government agencies and users to participate," Young said.

Two years ago the competition was held in the United States.

"The event was hosted by Eglin AFB in 2009 which established the U.S. as a more permanent partner and we are continuing to build this partnership with Spring IMAV 2011," said Paul DiNardo,



Courtesy photo

This micro air vehicle competed in the International Micro Air Vehicle Conference and Flight Competition IMAV 2010 in Braunschweig, Germany.

unmanned systems concepts manager, Advanced Science and Technology Directorate.

For more information, visit the website at <http://springimav2011.org/>. (AMRDEC release)

Employees' union election scheduled April 11



AFGE Local 1858 will hold an election for president and assistant president April 11 from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. at its office in building 3202 on Mauler Road.

Any member who has paid dues prior to March 14 and is in good standing, will be eligible to vote. Members will be asked to present a driver's license or some other form of picture identification at the polls.

In the event any voter is challenged, that voter will be provided two envelopes, one plain in which to place the ballot, and the other (outer envelope) to identify voter and reason for challenge. The Election Committee will determine the validity of any challenged ballots immediately following the closing of the polls. If found valid, challenged ballots will be placed with other ballots prior to counting of ballots.

There will be no loitering at the polling place or campaigning within 50 feet of the polling place and parking lot. Each candidate will be provided an opportunity to have a reasonable number of member observers present throughout the election process. A candidate may not be an observer.

The candidate for each office must win by a majority (more than 50 percent) of the votes cast for each office.

All protests to the election must be in writing and received by the Election Committee prior to, during or within 10 days after the election. All protests must be mailed to Chairman, Election Committee, AFGE 1858, P.O. Box 8362, Huntsville, AL 35898.

This election is governed by the AFGE Rules of Conduct for an election, set forth in Appendix A of the AFGE National Constitution and U.S. Department of Labor.

The Election Committee will handle absentee votes in accor-

dance with Appendix A, Paragraph 7 of Local 1858's by-laws which states "Members who, for acceptable reasons, will be unable to attend the election meeting, upon written request to the chairperson of the Election Committee, shall be furnished ballots and properly marked envelopes in which to send their ballots to the Election Committee chairperson. The absentee ballots shall be opened and counted with the remainder of the ballots."

All requests for absentee ballots should be addressed to Chairman, Election Committee, AFGE 1858, P.O. Box 8362, Huntsville, AL 35898.

Members requesting absentee ballots citing TDY as a reason must enclose a copy of travel orders with their request. Members on leave may also request an absentee ballot in writing and must enclose a copy of their official leave application. Members permanently stationed at Kwajalein Island, Fort Bliss, HELSTF, New Mexico, SAMD overseas, or Moffitt who were furnished absentee ballots, should return them as soon as possible.

All absentee ballots must be mailed to Chairman, Election Committee, AFGE 1858, P.O. Box 8362, Huntsville, AL 35898, and received by the Election Committee by 5 p.m. April 11.

If a runoff is necessary, it will be held May 13 at building 3202; and the general voting rules will apply.

The elected president and assistant president will serve from 2011-13.

The Election Committee includes Juan Mendoza, Steven Geaschel, Karen Moten and alternate Gregory Noble. (American Federation of Government Employees Local 1858 release)

More than half of contracting command has arrived

By ED WORLEY

ACC Public and Congressional Affairs

Army Contracting Command's move to Redstone Arsenal passed its "tipping point" in March as the personnel strength in Alabama surpassed the 50 percent mark.

ACC headquarters and the headquarters of one of its two subordinate commands, the Expeditionary Contracting Command, are relocating to Redstone Arsenal from Fort Belvoir, Va.

"We now have more people working at the Redstone campus than we have at Fort Belvoir," Gene Duncan, ACC director of strategic initiatives and the ACC command group representative at Redstone, said. "Several of our directorates are operating from here and others aren't far

from it. We've been very pleased not only by the rate of the recruitment processes but by the quality of people. We've had people come from all over the U.S. and overseas including Europe and Korea to be part of this organization."

The latest class of ACC newcomers pushed the staffing level to 174 at the command's new headquarters – about 53 percent of the headquarters' total projected strength. The move is scheduled to be completed this summer, Duncan said. ACC and ECC have scheduled a combined transfer of functions ceremony June 15 at their Redstone headquarters.

ECC's move is about 30 percent complete. Command Sgt. Maj. John Murray, ECC command sergeant

major, is the first of the ECC command group to move to Redstone.

ACC Contracting Operations and the G-1, Human Capital are already fully operational at Redstone. G-2, Security and Intelligence, is also fully mission capable at Redstone with 80 percent of its staff in place. G-3, Mission Operations, has also tipped with about 65 percent of the staff at Redstone, although it is still functioning as a split operation. G-4, Installations and Logistics, is 50 percent staffed at Redstone and operating as a split organization. G-8, Resource Management, is operating out of Redstone and will be 60 percent staffed by the end of April.

The ACC/ECC campus has grown to six relocatable buildings, with

two more being delivered this week. Duncan said the two facilities, once assembled and setup, will complete the temporary headquarters campus, located at the intersection of Mauler and Wells roads.

ACC's mission is to provide global contracting support to war fighters through the full spectrum of military operations. Along with its two subordinate commands, the ECC and the Mission and Installation Contracting Command headquartered at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, ACC's 5,500 military and civil servant workforce operates at more than 115 locations worldwide, including contingency contracting operations supporting U.S. forces in Afghanistan, Iraq, Kuwait and Qatar.

Doll

continued from page 14

Finally, in late 2009, Clark was stationed at Redstone. It was time, he decided, to take Flat back to Canaan.

"I wanted to personally take Flat back with a few mementoes," Clark said. "I notified the teacher and they shut down school that afternoon (in May 2010) so the whole school – 350 kids – could come to a slide show I had put together about Flat and his travels. They enjoyed the stories I had to share with them and the pictures. It was a good way to close out the project for me."

Clark said he would take on another Flat Stanley. After all, they don't weigh much or take up much space in a suitcase, and they don't cry or complain. For Clark, Flat provided him a way to reach out to children and to teach them about the world.

"It's very entertaining and educational for the child involved and fun for me," Clark said. "A lot of the kids in Canaan's class and his entire school haven't even left the county where they live. They were able to learn about the world through all the places Flat was photographed."

"I was really very moved by the whole response the kids gave me when I brought Flat back to the school and to Canaan. His mom burst out in tears. Everyone was very appreciative of the effort I made to take pictures of Flat in different places."

During the school presentation, the children asked a lot of questions about Flat's adventures. But they also asked a lot about Clark's job as a Soldier.

"I got questions like: 'Did you shoot a bad guy over there?' Those are the kinds of things young kids will ask. Instead of answering that directly, I put a positive on it and told them we were in charge of keeping the peace," Clark said. "But, those kinds of questions did give me a chance to share with them what it's like to be a Soldier and be in the Army. I love what I do and I love sharing that with children."



Courtesy Photo
Flat Stanley visits Afghanistan with Lt. Col. Sean Clark, who carried Flat in his uniform's ammo pouch during three deployments to Iraq and one very harsh deployment to Afghanistan. Clark was asked to take Flat on adventures by elementary special-needs student Canaan Gilmore. Those adventures went on for two years as Clark took Flat to 16 countries and 25 U.S. states.

Win or Lose

Bravo Company completes dominating run to title

Bulldogs slam dunk foes in tournament

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

skip.vaughn@theredstonerocket.com

The Bravo Company fans finally got what they'd been waiting for in the post championship basketball game against the NCO Academy.

Another thrilling slam dunk from Tristan "High Flyer" Wilson.

It came with 4:30 left and put Bravo up by 14 points. By then, the Bulldogs and their fans knew the title was theirs.

Bravo completed its dominant run through the postseason tournament by beating a determined NCO Academy team 61-37 in Thursday night's final at the Redstone Fitness Center. The Bulldogs finished 13-2 and won their four tournament games by an average of 31 points.

"Sheer talent of young kids," Bravo coach Andrew Hildreth said, "and one old fart."

He was referring affectionately to his oldest player, 27-year-old Phillip Diaz, who grabbed nine rebounds.

"He's a beast," Hildreth said. "Diaz is our defensive heart and soul."

"The key was defense," Diaz, a power forward, said. "We knew we had to be aggressive on defense. We came out as a team. We played team basketball, that was the key. We stuck together as a team. And we were able to come out victorious."

Victor Evans had 15 points, six rebounds and two assists. Don Hall had 12 points and two steals. Corey Redfearn had 11 points and eight rebounds. Wilson had 10 points, including his crowd-pleasing dunk, and two blocks.

"Teamwork," Evans, the point guard, said. "We've been playing like this all season. Since our team formed up, we've been playing like this every single game. It's all teamwork."

The Bulldogs scored the first seven points, led 35-17 at halftime and never trailed. The NCO Academy closed within 37-26 with 14:11 left when Hil-

dreth called a full timeout. "When you give up eight you've got to do something," he told an onlooker.

After regrouping, the Bulldogs went up 45-30 on Wilson's bank shot with 7:25 left. They led by no fewer than 12 the rest of the way; and Hildreth sent in mass substitutions at 2:05.

Johnny Palmer scored a game-high 20 points and had six rebounds for the NCO Academy (11-7).

"They're just a better team," Palmer, the point guard, said. "They're like a high school basketball team. They're better players."

"They came out to play," NCO Academy coach Shawn Jones said. "We both came out to play. They're a very talented team. And they got the best of us tonight."

The NCO Academy advanced to the final from the losers bracket by beating the National Guard 62-44 and then edging the 326th Chemical Company 55-54 on Palmer's 3-pointer at the buzzer March 30. Palmer's 25-footer capped his 20 points.

"Considering the fact that we lost a lot of good players in the season due to rotation," the Academy's Richard Morgan said, "I think we did very well."

In last week's other games, Headquarters & Alpha beat 375th Engineer 48-38 and NCO Academy defeated Charlie 63-50 on March 28; Bravo beat 326th Chemical 63-39, National Guard stopped Headquarters & Alpha 64-51 and NCO Academy defeated HHC 59th 48-36 on March 29.



Photo by Skip Vaughn

National Guard forward Corey Cato claims a defensive rebound between NCO Academy's James Storton (15) and Richard Morgan during the Academy's 62-44 win March 30.



Photo by Skip Vaughn

The champion Bravo Company team includes from left, kneeling, Corey Redfearn, Travis O'Neal, Mico Jones, Ramone Hill; and standing, Phillip Diaz, Tristan Wilson, Anthony Leslie, Don Hall, Victor Evans, Nicholas Howard and coach Andrew Hildreth.

Rocket Announcements

Sports & Recreation

Golf tournament

Redstone Test Center will hold its annual Commander's Cup Golf Tournament on May 13 at the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail at Hampton Cove. All proceeds will benefit the Military Child Education Coalition. Sponsorships and team slots are available now. Contact Sherry Hilley 842-6715, sherry.hilley@us.army.mil, or Mike Krause, mike.krauseSR@us.army.mil.

Basketball benefit

Buckhorn High School will hold its inaugural 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament April 29-30. There will be multiple age divisions, three indoor gyms, slam dunk and 3-point contest. The cost is \$40 per team, and a portion of the proceeds will go to the American Cancer Society. Registration on-site that afternoon at 4 or at any Jack's location. For more information, call 683-5439 or go to 977thezone.com and look in "events."

Fishing trail

National Bass Fishing Trail, Alabama North District, serving the Redstone Arsenal and the Tennessee Valley area, is a tour-

namment trail for the weekend angler. NBT offers a low-cost entry fee and membership with a high percentage payout. No partner needed, this is a solo trail. However, junior division is also included for anglers 17 and under. Juniors fish with the adult that brings them, but against the other junior anglers. New members, non-boaters, large and small boats and juniors always welcome. Alabama North will hold its next tournament April 16 at Guntersville Lake, at the Waterfront ramp. For more information, visit nbtbass.com, call Donnie Story 777-3428 or email donnie@nbtbass.com.

Boating safety

The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary will provide a Boating Safety six-week course April 14 through May 26 each Thursday night at 6:30 at the Garrison Safety Office, building 3687. Each session lasts about two and a half hours. The course is designed for all boaters and others interested in the safe handling of watercraft. There is a fee for the instructional manual only. For more information, call Tom Kunhart home 830-6621, cell phone 527-4475 or email tkunhart@knology.net.

Bass tournament

The second annual Homeland Security

Bass Tournament is April 23 at Ingalls Boat Harbor in Decatur. First place is \$1,000. Retirees and veterans are also invited and may sign up now. For more information, call David Whitman or Ed Whitman at The Boathouse 652-3446 or 337-0909.

Judo club

The Huntsville Judo Club is looking for members to join – brand new or experienced, young or old, male or female. Members practice at The Matrix at 3228 Leeman Ferry Road on Sundays from 3-5 p.m., Tuesdays 6:30-8:30 p.m. and Thursdays 6:30-7:30 p.m. The first hour on Sundays and Tuesdays is more dedicated for children, though adults are still welcome, and Thursdays are for adults. Cost is \$40 per month for adults, discounts for families and children. For more information, call Bryan Hurley 509-5980 or Art Dawkins 603-0464.

Bowling tournament

An AER Bowling Tournament will be held April 21 at 1 p.m. at Redstone Lanes. This will be a no-tap tournament; and nine is as good as a strike. Cost is \$15, with at least \$10 going directly to AER. Trophies and medals will be awarded for top three male and female games and series. This is not a team event. To register call Paul Sieja 842-9408 by April 19 or email paul.sieja@us.army.mil.

Association golf

Redstone Arsenal's Sergeants Major Association will hold its second annual Golf Tournament on May 12 at 8 a.m. at the Links. There are still some sponsorship and team slots available. The tournament is open to everyone that

has FMWR access and their guest. Sign up at the Links from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. through April 23, call retired Command Sgt. Maj. Reginald Battle 509-2473 or e-mail reginald.battle@us.army.mil.

Golf benefit

Health Establishments at Local Schools will hold its second annual "HEALS on the Green Pro-Am Golf Tourney" May 2 at The Ledges. The shotgun starts are 8 a.m. and 1 p.m. Cost is \$250 per person or \$1,000 per team. Sponsors, players and volunteers are wanted. For more information, call Lauren Mosley 428-7560 or e-mail Lauren.Mosley@healsinc.org.

Conferences & Meetings

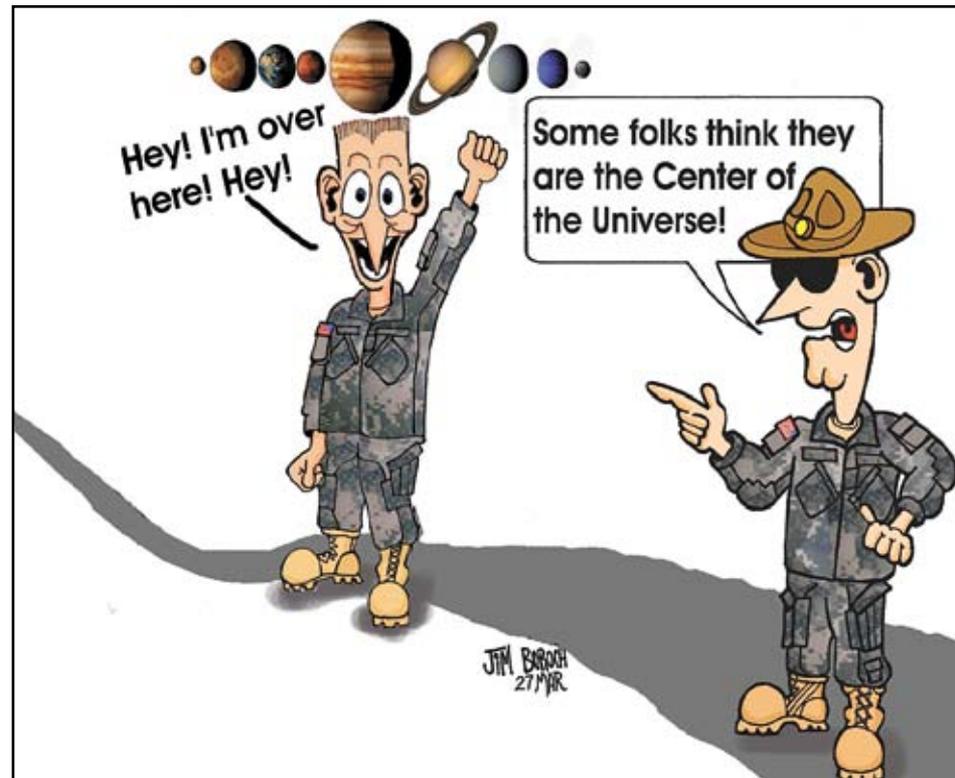
Weekly worship

The Contemporary Christian Worship Service is held each Sunday night at Bicentennial Chapel. Fellowship begins at 5 p.m. followed by Bible study at 5:30. The actual service starts at 6:15. Bicentennial Chapel is located on Goss Road, building 376. For more information, call the Garrison Unit Ministry Team 842-2176.

Bible studies

The Protestant Women of the Chapel meet each Thursday at 9:30 a.m. at Bicentennial Chapel for friendship, fellowship and Bible study. The lunchtime Bible study meets at 11:30 a.m. The Korean sisters begin their study at 10:30 a.m. There is some child-care available with proper registration. For more information, call Laura Coffey 585-2547.

See Announcements on page 37



Rocket Announcements

Sergeants major

The Sergeants Major Association conducts a monthly meeting every third Thursday of the month at 6:30 a.m. at the Community Activity Center. Members are offered breakfast for \$6 plus tip. The Sergeants Major Association meetings are open to all E-9 ranks, from all services – Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and the Coast Guard. Membership into the association is a one-time lifetime fee of \$30. “We encourage all active, retired, reserve and National Guard senior Soldiers to come out and join us,” a prepared release said. “Let’s try and make a difference in the lives of the Soldiers, families and retirees in the Tennessee Valley area.” For information call retired Command Sgt. Maj. Reginald Battle 859-3784.

Industrial security training

Mid-South Chapter of the Society of Industrial Security Professionals will hold its 12th annual Training Seminar on April 14 at the Von Braun Center, North Hall. This full-day event will feature several government and industry security executives. Government agencies and security service suppliers will exhibit an array of complementary materials and media products. Registration is \$90. For more information, call Stan Miller 651-7118. Program content and online registration are available at <http://www.eventbrite.com/event/1257997705%5D>.

Men’s ministries

Men’s Ministries, “addressing the needs of men and planting seeds for spiritual growth in Christ Jesus,” meets every second or third Saturday – for exact monthly date,

call Harry Hobbs at 425-5307 – at 8 a.m. at the Redstone Links golf clubhouse. Breakfast is served for \$5. For more information, call Hobbs 425-5307.

Parkinson’s support

The Parkinson’s Support Group of Huntsville will meet on Sunday at 1:30 p.m. at Willowbrook Baptist Church, 7625 Bailey Cove Road. Dr. Amy Amara from UAB will discuss “Parkinsonism and Sleep Disorders.” Family, friends and caregivers, as well as those with Parkinson’s disease, are invited. For more information, call Fred Seeley 534-6767.

Test week

Test Week 2011 will launch June 13-17 at the Von Braun Center’s South Hall. This DoD-sponsored forum focuses on the issues of Test and Evaluation. Information can be found on www.testweek.org. Registration fee is \$425; visit Course Catalog F113TW in TIP. The conference will hold tutorials, technical program, TST 303 certification, exhibits and other events. For more information, call event coordinator Sherry Hilley 842-6715 or e-mail sherry.hilley@us.army.mil.

Toastmaster clubs

Anyone interested in improving their public speaking ability is invited to attend the Research Park Club 4838, which meets Wednesdays from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Sentar offices, 315 Wynn Drive, Suite 1. For information call Valerie Cortez 313-9753. The Strategic Speakers Toastmasters Club 6054 meets on the second and fourth Wednes-

See Announcements on page 38



Courtesy photo

End of era

Dr. Harry Hobbs, communications relations officer for the Huntsville Police Department and a retired chief warrant officer 5, addresses Redstone’s final graduating class for warrant officer missile training. The 12 warrant officers completed the 17-week, 948-Delta Missile Systems Technician course March 10. The training is going to Fort Lee, Va., as part of the Ordnance school’s move under base realignment and closure.

Rocket Announcements

day from 11:30-12:30 at building 5301, second floor, in room 1217. For information call Caville Blake 876-7351. The Redstone Toastmasters Club 1932 meets Tuesdays from 6-7:30 p.m. at the Radisson Hotel, 8721 Madison Boulevard in Madison. For information call Margrit Carr 313-1952.

Civil War round table

Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table will meet April 14 at 6:30 p.m. at the Elks Lodge, 725 Franklin St. Dr. James Sasser, a native of North Carolina who taught American history for 40 years at Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, will speak about Gen. Robert E. Lee. Chicken dinner buffet starts at 5:30 for \$7.95. Visitors are welcome. For information call 539-5287.

Small business input

The U.S. Small Business Administration will bring its national Small Business Jobs Act Listening Tour to the University of Alabama-Huntsville campus April 15. The UAH Small Business Development Center and the District SBA Office are coordinating the event to be held in the Chan Auditorium, located in the College of Business Administration Building. The program begins at 9 a.m., and is free to all

participants. Meet with leaders from SBA, give input on new regulations, and learn how you can take advantage of new tools coming out of the Small Business Jobs Act that became law last fall. The SBA's office of Government Contracting and Small Business Development is seeking participants' input on regulations, and how SBA can help grow local businesses and create jobs. To learn more on the April 15 Small Business Jobs Act Listening Tour, visit <http://www.sba.gov/jobsacttour/sessions>. To register, go to <http://www.sba.gov/jobsacttour/huntsville>.

Air defenders

Air Defense Artillery Association, Redstone-Huntsville Chapter, will hold a spring social April 27 from 5:30-8 p.m. at the Firehouse Pub skybox. This is free to corporate and individual ADAA members. Hors d'oeuvres and drinks will be provided. For information, e-mail corby.dellarocco@smdc.army.mil.

Tricare briefings

Humana Military Healthcare Services, the Tricare managed care support contractor for the South Region, holds informational briefings on Tricare every Monday at 1 p.m. and Wednesday at 10

a.m. in the Tricare Service Center, Fox Army Health Center, second floor.

Active/retired employees

The Huntsville/Madison County Chapter 443 of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association will meet Saturday at the Thomas Davidson Senior Center, 2200 Drake Ave. A breakfast buffet, catered by David King from Creative Catering, will be served at 9 a.m. Tickets (\$7) may be reserved by calling Louise Garman 461-9408. All breakfast attendees will have their name put in a drawing for a \$25 Walmart gift certificate. The business meeting will begin at 10, and the program to follow. Scheduled speaker is Cynthia Parker, executive director of the Land Trust of North Alabama. For more information, call 508-8250 or 539-1333.

Space development

The National Space Society and its host chapter, the Huntsville Alabama L5 Society, are bringing the 30th International Space Development Conference to Huntsville May 18-22 at the Von Braun Center and Embassy Suites. The annual event invites entrepreneurs, engineers, scientists, politicians and private citizens who are interested in creating a space-faring civilization "From the Ground Up," which is the theme of the conference. For more information on calls for papers or sponsorship, volun-

teer, or trade show opportunities, contact ISDC2011@gmail.com. The conference website is www.isdc2011.org.

Weight watchers

Weight Watchers at Work meetings are held Thursdays at the Sparkman Center from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. "Weight Watchers new PointsPlus program makes it easy to lose weight without that dreaded four letter word 'diet,'" a prepared release said. "The Weight Watchers PointsPlus program works because it's not a diet. You'll learn how to eat right and live healthy. The PointsPlus program is based on the latest nutritional science, and factors in the way your body actually processes food. Combined with the proven advantages of the Weight Watchers approach, the program helps you make healthy choices for long term success." For more information, call Pat Sandy 313-5655 or e-mail pat.sandy@us.army.mil.

Resource managers

The American Society of Military Comptrollers, Redstone/Huntsville Chapter, will hold its monthly luncheon April 14 at 11:30 a.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church in Wesley Hall. This month's topic will be "What you should know about Long Term Care" presented by Eric Jackson. For ticket information, call Audra Edwards 313-2382 or Lisa Lowry 876-7086.

See Announcements on page 39

International trade

North Alabama International Trade Association will hold an Export Controls Roundtable, covering releasability and technology transfer for defense trade, Friday from 8-10 a.m. at the Huntsville/Madison County Chamber of Commerce, 225 Church St. For reservations call 532-3505 or email naita@naita.org. ... The 28th annual World Trade Day luncheon – featuring keynote speaker Courtney Fingar, editor of “fDi Magazine” – is April 12 at 11:30 a.m. at The Westin. For more information and to register, visit www.naita.org.

Organizational performance

The Huntsville Colloquium on Organizational Performance Optimization is April 14 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at PPT Solutions Inc., 4825 University Square, Suite 6. To register, email tina.price@pptsinc.com.

Romance readers

Bestselling author Kerrelyn Sparks will speak at the 14th annual Romance Readers’ Luncheon, sponsored by Heart of Dixie, the North Alabama chapter of Romance Writers of America, on April 30 at 11 a.m. at the Von Braun Center. Registration is \$25 and must be received by April 15. For more information and registration forms, call 586-5962 or visit www.heartofdixie.org.

Miscellaneous Items**Civilian deployment**

DA civilian volunteers are needed to support Aviation and Missile Command missions in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation New Dawn. Skill sets needed include acquisition, maintenance, supply, quality assurance, operations, logistics and automation, among others. The new personnel deployment website is at the AMCOM homepage or <https://apdw.redstone.army.mil> for your use. Volunteers must be currently employed by AMCOM or AMC. Contractors cannot be considered. Department of Army civilians interested in deploying should notify their supervisor and visit the deployment website or call Eddie Allen 876-4106 or Nicole Massey 876-2082. Contractors and others interested can access www.cpol.army.mil for openings and opportunities for overseas employment.

Motorcycle safety

Army policy has changed concerning the motorcycle safety course. Military personnel are still required to complete the motorcycle safety course in order to register their motorcycles on Redstone. But current DoD and Army policy is

Rocket Announcements

stating now that officials do not check civilian personnel or contractors to see if they have taken an MSF course or have taken such to register their motorcycle or to drive on post. The assumption is that if they have a motorcycle endorsement on their license they have been properly trained. In other words, civilians and contractors must have the motorcycle endorsement on their driver’s license when registering their motorcycles. There are two Motorcycle Safety Foundation courses offered free of charge to Army personnel and on a space-available basis to others authorized access to Redstone Arsenal. To enroll in motorcycle training, e-mail MSF rider coach Ralph Harris at 93hdstc@bellsouth.net. The Garrison Safety contact is Keith Coates at 876-3383 or keith.coates@us.army.mil.

Reading with Taka

The Post Library presents the “Tales with Taka” reading program on the first Saturday of each month from 10 a.m. to noon. Children age 5 and older are encouraged to read to Taka, a registered therapy and Reading Education Assistance Dog. The program is available to

anyone who has access to the Post Library. All children who participate in the program will receive a gift bag from Taka. Under “Taka’s Frequent Reader Program,” children who read to Taka five times will receive their own “pawtographed” copy of one of Taka’s favorite books. Sign up to read to Taka at the library’s front desk. For more information call the Post Library 876-4741 or Jamie Ward, Taka’s owner and handler, 233-3962.

Surplus sale

NASA/Marshall Space Flight Center’s surplus property can be purchased through the General Services Administration website. 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.

Officer recruitment

Interested in being an Army officer? If you have completed a four-year college degree and are interested in the opportunities being an Army officer can provide, call 539-6511.

See Announcements on page 40

Rocket Announcements

Flight training

If you're interested in becoming an Army aviator, you can apply for the Warrant Officer Flight Training Program by calling 539-6511.

Fraud hotline

The Huntsville Fraud Resident Agency (USACIDC) has implemented a fraud hotline. It is designed to help you, the taxpayer, to report incidents of suspected fraud involving government contract companies, government employees or government agencies. If you suspect or know someone who either is committing, or has committed any type of fraud against the government on Redstone Arsenal, or surrounding area, report it by calling 876-9457. You do not have to leave your name – all information will remain confidential and anonymous. Please leave enough information so any followup investigation can be completed.

Education test center

Taking online college courses? Need a proctor for your exams? If so, call the Redstone Arsenal Testing Center 876-9764 for more information. They can proctor exams for most colleges. Proctoring services are free and available to the Redstone Arsenal community.

Prior service military

If you are prior service military without any military service obligation and are interested in joining the Army Reserve, call 1st Sgt. Brian May or Capt. Stacy Hopwood 539-6511.

Tax assistance center

The Redstone Arsenal Tax Assistance Center is now open and accepting appointments. You may call 842-1040 to schedule an appointment. Federal and state returns are prepared and e-filed free of charge. The center is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. by appointment only. Its location is building 3489 at the corner of Zeus Road and Ajax Road. Visit <http://www.redstone.army.mil/legal/taxcenter.html>.

Health fair/forum

Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Inc. will sponsor the North Alabama Community-wide Health Fair and Forum on Saturday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the University of Alabama-Huntsville, University Center Exhibit Hall. This public event is free. For more information, call 656-7797.

AER book sale

The AMCOM G-3/Command Analysis Directorate's annual book sale for

Army Emergency Relief is April 18-29 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Sparkman Center building 5300, on the first floor in the corridor between 5303 and 5304. They're accepting donations of books, books-on-tape, CDs, DVDs and videotapes until April 27. To donate items or for more information, call Brian Barry 876-8563.

Stepfamily seminar

The Bicentennial Chapel and Army Community Service's Family Advocacy Program are co-hosting a StepFamily 911 Seminar on April 29 from 6-8:30 p.m. and April 30 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the chapel's Activity Room. There will be free child care at the Child Development Center next to the chapel. The presenters are Todd and Tammy Gangl. Pre-registration is required. Call ACS at 876-5397 or e-mail Denise English at wanda.english@us.army.mil.

Mr. Man pageant

SB Productions has begun its search for the exceptional caliber of men needed to compete in the 2011 "Mr. Man Premiere." This year's event is Aug. 27 at the Embassy Suites in Huntsville. Candidates will go through a screening process for the final selection. Finalists will have runway preparation and etiquette training for the pageant. For more information, call Samuel Brown 683-3083 or visit www.mrmanpremiere.com.

Reserve openings

If you are an Army prior service (enlisted/officer) military member with a remaining military service obligation, are assigned to the Army Individual Ready Reserve, and interested in transferring to a local Army Reserve unit, call Sgt. 1st Class Ramiro Torres 665-6557 or Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Burley 374-9659 to

discuss available positions and benefits of serving with a Reserve unit.

Gardening workshop

A Home Gardening Workshop will be presented Thursday from 8:15 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Mayfair Church of Christ, 1095 Carl T. Jones Drive. Attendees will learn the basics of gardening in North Alabama soil and climate. The workshop is sponsored by the Master Gardeners North Alabama and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. The workshop fee is \$25 and includes snacks, lunch, handouts and door prizes. To register, send a check to MGNA Workshops, ATTN: Diane Campen, 268 Dublin Circle, Madison, AL 35758. For more information, call 864-9470 or e-mail diane.campen@gmail.com.

Chapter scholarship

The Redstone Arsenal Chapter of the Army Warrant Officers Association will present one \$1,000 scholarship in 2011. The application deadline is May 1. For details, eligibility and the application form, visit www.redstonewarrants.com.

Indoor flying

Grace United Methodist Church, 2113 Old Monrovia Road, welcomes pilots and spectators of all ages to its gym for indoor small electric radio-controlled airplane and helicopter flying from 1-4 p.m. April 24. For more information on this free event, call Jim Marconnet 772-3946, email jmarconnet@gmail.com or visit <http://tinyurl.com/GFFF2011>.

Free wedding dresses

Army Community Service's Hearts Apart program is working with a Huntsville dress boutique to provide free wedding dresses to active duty military-connected

See Announcements on page 42

Rocket Announcements

brides and wounded warrior military-connected brides. Winners of the dresses will be chosen through an essay writing contest. To enter the contest, military brides or their grooms should submit an essay answering the question "What is your love story and how did you meet?" The deadline is April 21. Application forms and directions for submission are available by contacting adavidson@soldiersangels.org.

Charity car show

The seventh annual Charity Car Show, sponsored by Vets with Vettes and Corvette Owners, is April 16 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Bridge Street Town Centre. It's open to all makes of cars, trucks and motorcycles. Registration is from 8-11:30 a.m. with awards at 2 p.m. Proceeds will benefit local charities, including wounded warriors, Tut Fann Veterans Home, and Toys for Tots. Entry fee is \$20. For information call Ken Ille 828-5351.

Line dance classes

The Huntsville Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. presents Line Dance Fitness Classes, open to the public, from 6-7 p.m. Tuesdays at the Richard Showers Center on Blue Springs Road. For more information, email Chiquita Suggs at cgbksuggs@att.net.

Ballet performance

Huntsville Ballet Company will present its annual spring performance and discover dance community program Saturday at 1:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. at the Von Braun Center's Concert Hall. "A lively,

colorful tribute to the military will highlight an evening of eclectic and exciting dance," a prepared release said. Tickets can be purchased at the VBC ticket office or through Ticketmaster. For more information, call the ballet office 539-0931 or visit www.communityballet.org.

Senior volunteers

Madison County Retired and Senior Volunteer Program is partnered with various non-profit organizations in Huntsville and Madison County that utilize volunteers. RSVP recruits, places and trains individuals age 55 or older to fill community service needs. For more information about RSVP or volunteer opportunities, call director Pamela Donald 513-8290 or email at pdonald@seniorview.com.

Motorcyclists' benefit

Wingstock XI, to benefit the Ronald McDonald House Charities and Children's Hospital in Birmingham, will be held May 21-22 at 27 Berryhill Lane in Fayetteville, Tenn. Pull tabs from aluminum cans are collected to help cover the cost of families staying at the Ronald McDonald House while their children are being treated. The Dice Run begins at Halftime Bar and Grill on Highway 72 in Madison. Registration starts at 9 a.m., with the last bike out at 11. There will be music by Down Stroke and Prairie Wolf, biker games, a 50-50 raffle, and a chicken drop. For more information call Kenneth Kelly, president of the Lapdance Riders Club, 466-7801.

Arts update

"Mountain Stories" will be presented at Renaissance Theatre, 1214 Meridian St., on Friday from 8-10 p.m. For tickets call 536-3117 or go to renaissancetheatre.net. For more information on this and other art oriented events, visit www.ourvall-eyevents.com or www.artshuntsville.org.

Boat ride

Omega Psi Phi Fraternity will hold its 2011 boat ride, "Q-Rooze With the Qs," on June 11. The boat is the the Southern Belle Riverboat in Chattanooga. Cost is \$75 per person which includes, Bon Voyage Party at the Omega Center, bus transportation to and from Chattanooga, onboard beverages and light snacks, heavy hors d'oeuvres at the hotel prior to the cruise, and heavy hors d'oeuvres during the cruise. Reservations must be made by May 1. For more information or tickets, call Themika Sims 599-6612 or Gerald Vines 682-1071.

Multicultural event

The Links Inc., Greater Huntsville Chapter, will celebrate its 13th annual

"Multicultural Extravaganza" Saturday at the Wesley Center, First United Methodist Church, 120 Green St. "This is a free family event that promises to be an enriching experience," a prepared release said.

Children's ball

The Greater Huntsville Chapter of Jack and Jill of America Inc. will hold its second annual Pink, White and Blue Children's Ball at the Embassy Suites on April 16. Dinner will begin at 6 p.m., and the ball and silent auction to include basic ballroom instruction for all children will begin at 7:30. All net proceeds will be donated back to the Madison County community and to the Jack and Jill of America foundation, the philanthropic arm of Jack and Jill of America Inc. Tickets are \$40 for adults and \$25 for children ages 3 to 10. For more information, email Belinda Savage-Edwards at bsavage-edwards@rehabneuro.us or call Candice Rucker-Tibbs 885-9708 ext. 237 or Irene Tucker 830-4404.

Corporate open house

LogiCore will hold a ribbon cutting and open house ceremony April 28 from 3-5 p.m. at its new corporate headquarters, 920 Explorer Boulevard, Suite B in Cummings Research Park west. To RSVP, email rspv@logicorehsv.com by April 21.

Pastor's appreciation

Little Elk M.B. Church will celebrate pastor Dr. Eugene English's 10th anniversary April 17. The morning service will begin at 9 and the guest speaker is Minister Dee Dee Booker Lacey from Eagles' Nest Ministries in Huntsville. The second service will begin at 2 p.m. Rev. Damon Betts and the Little Zion Mass Choir will be in charge of this service. Dinner will be served. Everyone is invited. For more information, call program coordinator Bernadette Jones 479-1279.

YMCA military discounts

The Southeast Family YMCA, 1000 Weatherly Road, offers free memberships to families of Reserve Soldiers deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan. The membership is free to the family throughout the deployment; Soldiers may come in during the three months leading up to the deployment and three months following. A copy of the Soldier's orders and military ID must be presented at the time of joining; deployment must be for six months or longer. Membership has a requirement of eight visits per month. If a Soldier is not Reserve, but is deployed, families may receive the Military Currently Deployed discount. Cost is \$35 per month, \$27 per month for families without children; joining fee is waived. Copy of deployment orders and military ID must be presented upon joining. Upon return from deployment, the Soldier will be moved to the Active Duty Discount group. Cost is \$39 per month for adults,

\$55 for families, \$47 for families without children, \$36 for senior adults and \$46 for senior families. Joining fee is also waived for the Active Duty Discount.

Space for children

Youngsters are invited to 4-H Day on April 16 at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center. For \$18 per person, you get: admission to the museum, one IMAX or 3D movie, hamburger box lunch, simulators, Discover Theater and guided tours. For more information, call JoSandra 721-7016 or 721-7218. A Space Food Workshop for ages 6-12 will be held April 16 from 10:30 a.m. to noon and 1-2:30 p.m. Cost is \$10 for members, \$15 for non-members or \$5 with the museum admission. Call JoSandra 721-7016 or 721-7218.

Regiment commander

Lt. Col. Jimmy Bowie will relinquish command of the 4th Battalion, 321st Regiment, to Lt. Col. John Perrel in a ceremony April 30 at 2 p.m. at the Post Parade Field. RSVP by April 28 to Cameron Caddell 876-4074 or cameron.caddell@usar.army.mil.

Commissary news

The Commissary will be open Easter Sunday, April 24 from noon until 5 p.m.

Red Cross blood drives

American Red Cross blood drives this month include the following: April 8 from 6:30 a.m. to noon at the Corps of Engineers and 7-noon at building 5681. ... April 15 from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at NASA building 4487. ... April 21 from 7-noon at building 5400 and 7-noon at the Sparkman Center. ... April 22 from 7-noon at building 4545. ... April 28 from 7-noon at building 6263 and 7-noon at building 5222.



Photo by Rhonda Pyatt

Cadet of year

Cadet Capt. Michael Guthrie receives the Wing Cadet of the Year Award for support provided to the Civil Air Patrol's Alabama Wing in 2010. Wing commander Col. Lisa Robinson makes the presentation.



Photo by Cherish Washington

Scholarship gala

Lt. Gen. Jim Pillsbury, deputy commander of the Army Materiel Command, speaks March 24 at Alabama A&M University's 11th annual Black Tie Scholarship Gala.