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AMCOM urged to become efficient

Commander emphasizes need for ideas amid cuts

By SKIP VAUGHN
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AMCOM commander Maj. Gen. Jim Rogers wants you to help change this command for the better.

He emphasized the need for adapting for the future during a town hall meeting Nov. 30 in a filled 650-seat Bob Jones Auditorium. With the Army's ongoing and planned budget cuts, if we don't change on our own, others will make changes for us, according to Rogers.

"We've got to change," he said. "And if we don't change, someone will change us to what we're not going to like."

He encouraged the members of the Aviation and Missile Command to adapt, work smarter and become more efficient.

"I'm here to just emphasize the sense of urgency and hopefully influence you that you personally need to get involved," Rogers said.

Workers can submit their ideas for better ways of doing business to the following website: https://ams8.redstone.army.mil/cmcw/cmcw_change_home.

"We are at a point where we need everyone's help," Rogers said.

He used an analogy of a Rubik's cube but with "an unbelievably complex problem set."

"What we're working toward is trying to solve this Rubik's cube in the most optimal way," Rogers said. "There's not just one answer."

He asked everyone to get on board and suggest solutions to improve the command's processes.

"We are extremely effective," Rogers said. "We are horribly inefficient. And we've got to become efficient."

In fiscal 2010, the Defense Department had a budget of $698 billion. During the next 10 years, defense spending cuts must total $469 billion. And additional cuts are anticipated.

At the end of his presentation, Rogers asked the workers to stay safe during the holidays.

"Take some time out with your families and your loved ones over the holiday season because it's the right time to do it," he said.

Dan Norton, of AMCOM's Integrated Materiel Management Center, was among the workers filing out of the auditorium after the open forum.

"I liked it. It's a big job," Norton said of the general's presentation. "The CG being positive – I mean it's something that can be done. I'm going to go back (to the office) and look at some possible improvements."

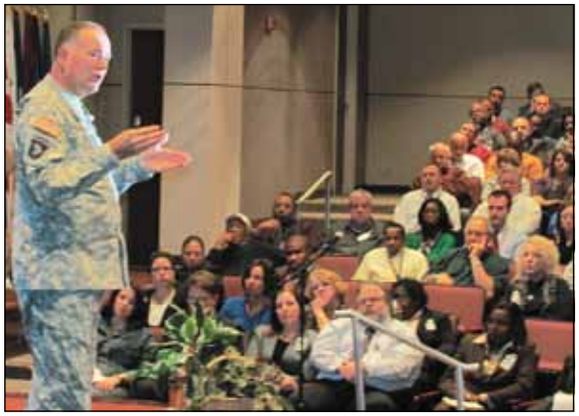

Photo by Skip Vaughn

Maj. Gen. Jim Rogers, commander of the Aviation and Missile Command, addresses a filled Bob Jones Auditorium during the Nov. 30 town hall.

Workers recognized for service in war zones

Their family members also receive thanks

By SKIP VAUGHN
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Soldiers, civilians and contractors weren't the only ones recognized at Thursday's deployed work force ceremony.

Redstone senior commander Maj. Gen. Jim Rogers also thanked their families.

"Thank you very much for what you do and what you have done. And I always want to thank your families because without their support you could not do what you do," Rogers said.

He recognized 105 Soldiers, civilians and contractors of Team Redstone who have deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan. These included 29 who received Global War on Terrorism medals and 76 recipients of certificates of appreciation.

Many volunteered to go overseas in harm's way to help the war fighters, despite the threat of improvised explosive devices. They included a mother-daughter team that deployed.

Besides the deployed members of Team Redstone, Rogers also expressed his appreciation to their families who stayed behind.

"The family takes over and has to run the family and take care of the kids while you're gone," he said.

Each honoree joined Rogers on the stage at Bob Jones Auditorium when his or her name was called during the Deployed Workforce Recognition Ceremony.

"Awesome," honoree Tyrone Odum said of the ceremony. "It's just an excellent opportunity to acknowledge the civilians that participated. I think it's great individually to be recognized but it's also good to be recognized in a forum like this."

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Photo by Skip Vaughn

The first honorees in line during the ceremony include, from left, Nasu Bethea, Jude Bhika and Frederick Bundy.

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Longtime worker plans to volunteer.
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Boxer back in ring for All Army shot.
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RocketViews

What's been the highlight of your year?

By SKIP VAUGHN
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Col. Phil Deaton
AMCOM Integrated Materiel Management Center
"Watching my two sons grow and mature. My oldest, Phil, being a freshman at the University of Alabama; and my youngest, Mitch, being a senior at Bob Jones High School."

Phil Olin
Education Center
"I guess the fact that I've stayed in good health. I haven't been restricted at all by health measures if I wanted to do anything."

Quenessa Pollard
Army Materiel Command
"My 20th wedding anniversary was this year (June 28). Twenty years is like a milestone for us (me and my husband Timothy). We met in the military and we both work for Army Materiel Command here. It was a great celebration. We've come from Maryland to Alabama. And we celebrated by attending the Baltimore Orioles vs. Atlanta Braves baseball game (which the Braves won 4-0 on July 1 in Atlanta)."

Gail Moskel
AMC Public and Congressional Affairs
"Joining the headquarters AMC (from the Precision Fires Rocket and Missile Systems Project Office) and being in this beautiful new building. I got a promotion coming here so that was the highlight. And working with a female four-star general – that's awesome."

Letters to the editor

Santa Run leads to state veterans home

The Sergeants Major Association is planning a Santa Run event at the Floyd E. Tut Fann State Veterans Home on Dec. 10. Now for those of you who are not familiar with a Santa Run, there is no "running" involved. No fun run or anything like that! As a matter of fact, I asked the same thing the first time I heard about it back in 2004 and I found out it was a very unique event.

The sergeants major gathered at the Vincent Street Fire Station, here on post, on a Saturday morning about 9. We had someone dress up as Santa and we broke down a bunch of candy into carrying bags. We then got on the fire trucks and went to the neighborhoods on post and passed out candy to the children.

This was a fun event for the association and for the kids. But last year we had to cancel going through the neighborhoods, due to insurance that we didn't have and couldn't afford. So our Santa Run last year was reduced to having Santa and a few elves go over to the Youth Center here on post and passing out candy to the children there. This year in addition to passing out candy to the children at the Youth Center, the association is going to try something a little different. This year the association members will bring back the Santa Run, minus the fire trucks and the police escort, and we will spread some Christmas cheer to the veterans of the Floyd E. Tut Fann State Veterans Home here in Huntsville. We will meet over at the veterans home on Saturday morning, Dec. 10, about 9. Instead of candy, we will present each veteran a gift, which we will purchase and proceed through the hallways, greeting the veterans and passing out the gifts. We will have Santa leading the way, hopefully. We will also have the AMC Band providing some Christmas music throughout the home.

I feel that this will be a meaningful and a memorable event for the veterans. The staff really appreciates the presence that we give to the veterans and are very open to any events that will be uplifting and bring some enjoyment to their daily lives.

Michael C. McSwain
Special Projects Committee,
Sergeants Major Association

Everyone's lifestyle affects someone else

Chaplain (Col.) Douglas Kinder

Grant Teaff, the former head football coach at Baylor University, tells an amusing true story about a hunting expedition he went on a few years ago. A farmer out in West Texas offered to let him and one of his assistants hunt on his property. Upon arrival, Teaff asked his assistant to wait in the truck while he visited with the farmer for a few minutes. While expressing his gratitude to the farmer for the invitation, Teaff also remarked, "If we can ever do anything for you, just let me know."

"As a matter of fact," said the farmer, "I do need your help! If you notice, about 50 yards in front of where you parked your truck is an old mule. That old mule has been in our family for nearly 20 years, and, frankly, coach Teaff, she has become just like a member of the family. Recently she contracted a disease, which is most painful and she needs to be put out of her misery. I just can't bring myself to do it, nor my wife. Since you have your hunting rifles, would be you willing to put our mule out of her misery?"

"Well, it seems the least I can do, considering you're being nice enough to let us hunt on your property," the coach said.

"Thanks. I sure appreciate it," replied the farmer.

As Teaff started back to the truck, he got an idea. He opened the door of his truck with an angry scowl on his face. The assistant immediately noticed and asked, "What's wrong, coach?"

With obvious anger in his voice, the coach responded, "That old farmer infuriated me! Can you believe he said Baylor would

See Lifestyle on page 8

Christmas spirit conveyed in inspiring stories

Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Timothy E. Sowers

The advent of the holidays and the New Year is at hand once again. O' how quickly the year goes by. As we reflect upon the passing of days gone by, and prepare for the celebration of the holidays it is important to have an attitude of appreciation for all the blessings that have come our way. In fact, have you noticed that the most inspiring stories are during the most difficult times of life? And so as you prepare, please reflect and be blessed by the following stories.

It was a bitter cold night on Christmas Eve of 1952, during

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Quote of **the Week**

'I define joy as a sustained sense of well-being and internal peace – a connection to what matters.'

— *Oprah Winfrey*

RedstoneRocket

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Getting to **know you**

By SKIP VAUGHN
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Name: Beth Skarupa

Job: Reporter, Redstone Rocket

Where do you call home?
Chicago, Ill.

What do you like about your job?
I love meeting people and interviewing them. I enjoy finding out about new things and working with the newspaper staff that feels like a family.

What do you like to do in your spare time?
Read, travel with my husband (Andrew), go to my kids' many concerts, games and activities.

What are your goals?
To bring up my (four) kids to be happy adults and to enjoy what I do.

What's at the top of your "bucket list" of things you want to do before you kick the bucket?
To travel to the Grand Canyon with my husband and kids because my kids have never seen it.

Crimes, accidents **& other occurrences**

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

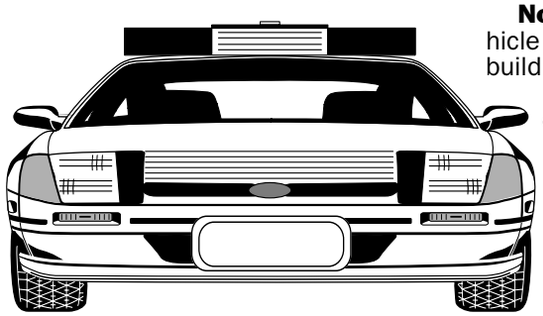
Nov. 25: A vehicle containing two undocumented persons mistakenly entered Gate 9. Checks were conducted through NCIC and Immigrations and Customs Enforcement, and their fingerprints were faxed to the FBI. All checks met with negative results. Both individuals were released, with the driver being cited for no driver's license. The vehicle was later removed by a licensed driver.

Nov. 26: A vehicle containing three undocumented persons mistakenly entered Gate 9. Checks were conducted through NCIC and Immigrations and Customs Enforcement, and their fingerprints were faxed to the FBI. All checks met with negative results. All individuals were released, with the driver being cited for no driver's license. The vehicle was later removed by a licensed driver.

Nov. 27: A vehicle being driven by an undocumented individual mistakenly entered Gate 1. Checks were conducted through NCIC and Immigrations and Customs Enforcement, and his fingerprints were faxed to the FBI. He was wanted by ICE for deportation. He was detained and later released to an ICE agent, after being cited for no driver's license. The vehicle was later removed by a licensed driver.

Nov. 29: A government employee was stopped by Redstone police for running a stop sign. An NCIC check revealed his driver's license was suspended. He received a citation for the stop sign and another for the suspended license and was released. The vehicle was removed by a licensed driver.

Nov. 30: A civilian reported his vehicle was damaged while parked in the building 5400 area.



Traffic accidents reported: Four without injury.

Violation notices issued: 20 speeding, 3 no insurance, 3 traffic control device, 1 suspended driver's license, 3 no driver's license, 1 failure to signal lane change, 3 cell phone.

CFC spotlight

Name: Teneka Burks

Job: Administrative assistant/clerk, Garrison Plans Analysis and Integration Office, with support to Garrison Resource Management and Information Management offices.

How long have you contributed to the Combined Federal Campaign?
I started working here in March. I didn't know exactly what the Combined Federal Campaign was, but once I got the booklet with all the charities listed I got very interested. It was so convenient to be able to review all the charities in the booklet and it made it easy to donate either locally or nationally. I was really excited to see my favorite local charities in the booklet.

Why did you decide to be a CFC contributor?
I do a lot of volunteer work in the community, so I saw this as another way to get involved and help the charities I care about. Before I came here, I was a supervisor at Kmart, and through that job I supported St. Jude's Children's Hospital. I also have volunteered in the past at the Harris Home for Children. So, when they asked me to be a key worker for CFC and they explained the campaign to me, I was glad to do it. Then we had the CFC kickoff and I really enjoyed the program where the little girl (cancer survivor Lindsey Jones, whose mom, Terry, works at NASA) sang the Star Spangled Banner. I thought it was neat that we could actually see and meet people that have benefited from CFC charities. That really makes it easier to relate to the campaign.

What charities do you like to contribute to through CFC?
Harris Home for Children. I have volunteered there through my church, Union Chapel Missionary Baptist, and have seen the difference it makes in children's lives. I am from Huntsville and some of my relatives have benefited from the care of Harris Home. It is so important to have places like Harris Home that will care for and provide for children who need a loving home. Another favorite for me is Girls Inc. I just love its message of sisterhood and girl empowerment. One of my daughters actually went there when there was a time of need for us. It was perfect for her to have somewhere to go where she had a positive influence. It was very convenient and affordable, and they made sure the girls did their homework, they helped them by providing tutors, they taught about teamwork through team sports, and they taught values like discipline and respect.

Why do you continue to be a CFC contributor?
I hope in future years I will be able to use the CFC booklet to choose other local charities to add to my list of charities. CFC makes it very convenient and easy to learn about other charities, and then to select different charities to support. I love that my donation comes right out of my paycheck. And I have really enjoyed being a key worker this year because it has allowed me to work with some really great people who have been motivators to me, such as Lucreacia Points (the Garrison's Combined Federal Campaign finance manager) and Donna Johnson (coordinator for the Tennessee Valley Combined Federal Campaign). As a key worker, I solicit donations for CFC from Garrison PAIO employees, and I help with CFC fund-raisers like the Garrison bake sale that we had recently. But I especially like how CFC gives you a way to help other people. You never know when you are making CFC donations who is benefiting from it. It could be a neighbor, a loved one or a co-worker who are in need. It could be help for things like paying utilities or providing health care, or providing services that help a family. By giving to CFC, you are helping others and you are benefiting the community. Just the CFC booklet itself and how it gives you facts and information about the charities should be enough to convince anyone that we can all help to make a difference through CFC.

Editor's note: The CFC spotlight is a special feature in honor of "50 Years of Caring." Each week during the annual charity drive, the Redstone Rocket will feature a contributor to the Tennessee Valley Combined Federal Campaign.

ConstructionNews

Arsenal back in rail business

New track, loading dock offer transport options

By KARI HAWKINS
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Photo by Kari Hawkins

Tom Richardson, left, and Les Miller, both of the Garrison's Directorate of Public Works, look over plans for loading ramps and a loading dock at the upgraded train rail installed near Gate 9.

A major upgrade related to the Redstone Gateway business development project near Gate 9 is bringing the sound of train whistles back to Redstone Arsenal.

The recently completed $900,000 upgrade to the Arsenal's train track spur makes rail transportation to the installation once again a viable transportation option for Arsenal organizations.

"The tracks have been upgraded to meet present day standards," said Tom Richardson, the Garrison's civil and traffic engineer, Directorate of Public Works.

"The former tracks were antiquated. Every time a train came to the Arsenal the track had to be inspected and repaired to some degree. Rails today have significant higher load carrying capacity, and the former track just didn't handle well that kind of capacity. The former track had limitations because of its age."

The track, located in the northwestern section of the Arsenal in the Redstone Gateway development just outside Gate 9, connects with the Norfolk Southern main rail line that runs along I-565 between Huntsville and Decatur. Approval to actually use the upgraded rail is expected from Norfolk Southern soon with responsibility for managing the Army's rail turned over to the Directorate of Logistics.

"It's not quite open for business. But by the calendar year end we should be ready to receive traffic," Richardson said. "We're finishing up with the connection of our spur with the Norfolk Southern main line. This is a priority for Norfolk Southern and they understand that we need to get it open."

In addition, future plans call for the addition of loading ramps and a loading dock at the end of the rail. The loading ramps should be in place by February.

Funding for the project has been provided by the Redstone Gateway developer, Corporate Office Properties Trust, as part of the in-kind services being provided in return for a land use lease agreement on the 468-acre site near Gate 9. The upgrade was contracted and managed on behalf of the Arsenal by the City of Huntsville.

"I look forward to seeing the Redstone rail upgrade reopen soon in support of Arsenal customers," Garrison commander Col. John Hamilton said. "We appreciate all the effort that has been put in by the Redstone Gateway and Team Redstone to take our outdated train rail and replace it with one that is state of the art. The new rail and the eventual addition of a loading dock give us greater capabilities in supporting the success of current operations and future operations on Redstone."

Prior to the Redstone Gateway development, the half-mile of train rail was inside the Arsenal's secure area. Now, it is an unsecured area.

"The original track is original to Redstone Arsenal and was built in the 1940s," said Les Miller, the Garrison's branch chief of operations, Directorate of Public Works. "It was the main source of bringing materials to Redstone Arsenal. It's always been an Arsenal asset.

"In the beginning, it had frequent use. But then with transportation going to truck/van carriers we didn't need the track as much unless there was a load that couldn't fit the road requirements or couldn't be permitted to travel the highway because of weight."

In recent years, the track was used only three to five times a year.

"Because of the heavier loads, if customers wanted to use it they would also have to bear the cost of inspecting and repairing the track," Miller said.

Construction on the rail upgrade began this past summer and was completed in October. In the rail upgrade, the track was been relocated further north to accommodate the Redstone Gateway development.

"Whatever a train can carry, it can now come in on the new rail," Miller said. "Once we get the loading ramps in, it will make it easier to drive materials off rail cars and, when we get the dock in place, we will also have a permanent facility for loading and unloading rail cars. Right now, it's a track and a loading pad. We have some preliminary plans for constructing loading ramps and the loading dock."

Until the loading ramps and dock are in place, customers using the rail must bring in cranes or other equipment to assist with loading and unloading.

The new rail allows the Garrison to offer an added transportation benefit for Arsenal customers, and makes the Arsenal more attractive for further government and industrial growth.

"NASA is probably going to be one of our major customers," Miller said. "And there are other customers on post who will use it."

The loading pad parameters were designed to accommodate use for shipments in support of NASA's heavy lift rocket program.

The 10 motors used by the Space Launch System – the next generation heavy lift rocket – will be shipped to Marshall Space Flight Center via rail for testing in the 2014-17 timeframe, said Bob Devlin, deputy director for operations at Marshall.

"We will be bringing components up here to test," he said. "We can't bring them by air because they are too heavy. We can't bring them by ground because they are too slow and too large, and would tie up traffic. We can't bring them by barge because they will be coming through Utah. So we will be moving them by special rail to Redstone."

Marshall has two kneel down transporters, described as giant crawlers, that the motor components will be moved to from train cars at the new Arsenal train rail. The transporters, which move at a speed of 2 to 5 mph, will take the motor components to Marshall test areas at Redstone for "shake, rattle and roll tests," Devlin said.

"That has been the main driver for getting the track modified. That and that our installation took its biggest hit during Base Realignment and Closure

See Rail on page 7

Equal opportunity adviser sees strength in diversity

By AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON
Staff writer
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Photo by Amy Guckeen Tolson

Sgt. 1st Class Jason Cundiff, installation equal opportunity program manager and SHARP (Sexual Harrassment/Assault Response and Prevention) program manager, is busy at work planning the Jan. 10 Martin Luther King Jr. Day observance ceremony.

The posters that line the walls of Sgt. 1st Class Jason Cundiff's office are a daily reminder of his mission at Redstone Arsenal.

"The poster right here, the specialist, a female, she won the Silver Star," Cundiff said. "I actually processed that award when I was in Afghanistan. Reading about what she did, it's unbelievable. She truly deserved that award. When you think about the Army and diversity, we really need diversity. What she did that day for the United States Army and her country is unbelievable. If we didn't have her in our service then we'd be a weaker Army."

Diversity has become a full-time job for Cundiff, the installation equal opportunity program manager and SHARP (Sexual Harrassment/Assault Response and Prevention) program manager. Since his arrival on the Arsenal at the end of September he has discovered it's not just the work that's diverse, it's also the post itself.

"It's unbelievable for the organization and what Team Redstone is all about," Cundiff said of the Arsenal's diverse work force.

Cundiff spends his days as installation equal opportunity program manager and SHARP program manager promoting human relations, getting the word out for the commander about equal opportunity, doing training and educating the work force through observances, such as the upcoming Jan. 10 Martin Luther King Jr. ceremony. While people may not think about it, the immense diversity throughout the Army makes it a stronger work force and a stronger Army.

"When you have multiple ideals, people from different cultures, different backgrounds, bringing their ideals forward, having them contribute to the mission, it brings a wide scope of what we can do to complete the mission," Cundiff said. "There's such a diversity in the Army and the military service that you have to make the diversity work for the command so they can continue their mission."

Cundiff has been hard at work in support of that mission since he joined the Army in 1992. Growing up in small town Hartford, Ky., Cundiff joined the military as a human resources specialist to expand his options after high school.

"Where I'm from there weren't many job opportunities. All the coalmines were shutting down. Either you're a farmer or you moved somewhere else, so I joined the military," he said. "The recruiter came down, told me I could do better with myself. So I did. I joined and then I found out that I loved it."

Nearly 20 years later, Cundiff has fallen in love with the teamwork, camaraderie and following in his grandfather's footsteps, "actually doing things for your country that your ancestors and your forefathers did before you," he said. "I feel really honored. My grandfather served in WWII. To hear about some of his stories and talk about things that he talked about doing that I'm doing today makes me feel really proud."

A father of three, Cundiff's wife and three children live in Clarksville, Tenn., where he spent eight years in the 101st. While a geographical bachelor, it is through the support and love of his family that he's able to do his job as a Soldier.

"I have a great supportive family who support me in what I do," said Cundiff, who's able to visit them as the mission allows on weekends. "It makes it really easy as far as still continuing on with my career, for all the deployments and being away from home. It makes it easier for me to do my mission."

Don't be short on Christmas tree safety

Carefully decorating Christmas trees will help make your holidays safer. Every year the National Fire Protection Agency compiles the records for all fire incidents. The statistics are used to address nationwide fire trends. In order not to become a statistic during the holiday season, follow these safety tips and all manufacturer instructions for a safe holiday:

- When decorating trees, use tree safe lights and all lights should be listed by a testing laboratory.
- Don't use electric lights on metal trees.
- Any string of lights with worn, frayed or broken cords or loose bulb connections should not be used.
- Always unplug Christmas tree lights before leaving the house or going to sleep.
- Never use lit candles to decorate a tree, and place all candles away from tree branches.
- Try to keep all trees as moist as possible by giving them plenty of water daily. Do not purchase a tree that is dry or dropping needles.
- Choose a sturdy tree stand designed not to tip over.
- Keep a watchful eye on children around the tree and do not let them play with the wiring or lights.
- Store matches and lighters up high, out of the reach of children.
- Ensure the tree is at least 3 feet away from any heat source and try to position it near an outlet so that cords are not traveling long distances.
- Do not place trees where it may block exits.
- Safely dispose of trees when it begins dropping needles. Dried out trees are highly flammable and should not be left in a house, garage or placed against a house.

Family and Morale Welfare and Recreation events

The Garrison's Directorate of Family and Morale Welfare and Recreation provided the following list of upcoming events:

Turkey shoot

Outdoor Recreation's turkey shoot is Dec. 17 from 10 a.m. to noon. Cost is $3 per shot, shells provided. Children can participate with adult supervision. For more information, call 876-4868.

Bowling center hours

Redstone Lanes is now open Mondays and serving lunch. Its new hours are 10:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and 1-8 p.m. Sunday. Brooklyn's Sports Bar is closed Saturday and Sunday.

Holiday parties

Book your holiday party at the Weeden Mountain Grill and your golf event with the Links at Redstone. Now is the time to book your holiday parties and golf tournaments for the coming year. For more information, call 883-7977.

Youth appreciation

FMWR Partnership/EDGE Program and Redstone Lanes present Youth Appreciation Day, Dec. 17 from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Redstone Lanes. There will be free bowling, free food and drinks and door prizes. For more information, call Redstone Lanes 876-6634 or FMWR Partnership/EDGE Program 842-3202.

Auto Skills open house

Auto Skills Center's annual open house, brought to you by Woody Anderson Ford, is Dec. 14 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the center, building 3617 on Entac Circle. Safety classes will be offered every hour on the hour and free winter vehicle inspections. For more information, call 955-7727.

Rail

continued from page **4**

Commission discussions because we didn't have a modern track," said Devlin, who was the Garrison commander during the Arsenal's work in compiling reports considered by 2005 BRAC officials.

"Not having the new rail could have made a big difference in our role with the motor testing."

The Marshall official said the International Intermodal Center at the Huntsville International Airport was considered as an alternative to an Arsenal track. But in the end, it just wasn't feasible.

"It was a much more costly discussion. These components are fairly heavy and the diameters are fairly large," he said. "Would we be able to close I-565 long enough to get them to the Arsenal? Would we have had to resolve any damage done to the interstate and other roads during transport? There are a ton of other issues that could have very well derailed the whole thing if we hadn't had the Arsenal rail as an option."

Lifestyle

continued from page 2

never win another game while you and I coached there?"

"What?" was the incredulous reply.

"Not only that, but he said we were probably the worst coaching staff in the history of football!"

"But we were supposed to hunt on his property."

"Not only did he say to get off his property immediately, but if we don't, he is going to call the law on us!"

"I can't believe it," said the dumbfounded assistant.

"Yep. Makes me so mad," Teaff responded. "I think I'll shoot his mule!"

"Oh, coach, no! You talk about trouble with the law! We'll really be in trouble if you shoot his mule!"

"Trouble or not, I'm tired of people badmouthing Baylor. This is it!"

Trying hard to hide his ever-widening grin, Teaff pulled his gun off the gun rack, lined up the poor old mule to do her a great favor and squeezed the trigger. Bang! The shot rang out.

As he turned to see the reaction of the assistant coach. Bang! Bang! Two more shots rang out from the other side of the truck and the assistant coach shouted, "I got two of his cows. Now let's get out of here!"

No matter who we are in life, whether a senior officer, the lowest ranking private, or a civilian, we frequently fail to realize the impact we often have on other people. You never know how much your actions and character influences someone else, whether subordinates, peers, family members or even superiors. As the Apostle Paul asserted in Romans 14:7, "No man lives unto himself, and no man dies to himself. (v.13) Take heed never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of another."

The lesson here is simple: My lifestyle, the way I choose to live, is affecting someone else. No man or woman is an island. You've touched someone else today, whether you know it or not. Think about your own life. Who is it that God sent your way to model yourself after, to challenge you to change, to shake off that tendency to settle for less than your full potential, to stretch and pursue and conquer new territory you once never believed possible? All of us can name at least one individual, can't we?

Very briefly, I'd like to share with you four characteristics usually found in those who impact our lives:

Consistency – These people are not flashes in the pan. Here today and gone tomorrow. Nor are they given to fads and gimmicks. They're reliable and unaffected by the fickle winds of change. They're consistent!

Authenticity – People who impact others the most are real to the core. No amount of probing will reveal any hypocritical flaws. They're solid and genuine to the core, not some alloy covered over with a brittle layer of chrome.

Unselfishness – Those who impact us most watch out for themselves the least. They notice our needs and reach out to help, honestly concerned about our welfare. You don't often hear them use the words "I," "me," "my" and "mine." They're unselfish.

Tirelessness – With relentless determination they refuse to quit. They seem to press on regardless of the odds, ever focused on the goal and virtually unconcerned with the obstacles, they're resilient and persevering. They're tireless.

As we are about to begin a new year, take stock of the way you impact the lives of others, and how you'd like to. As a start, apply the four principles I've just mentioned. After all, life is much more than doing something for other people, it's being something for them.

Chaplain (Col.) Douglas Kinder
SMDC/ARSTRAT

Spirit

continued from page 2

the Korean War. A young woman, homeless, pregnant and nowhere to turn was desperate to find shelter as her labor pains became more intense. Due to the ravages of war, many had died and many were homeless. As the young woman cried from help, her pleas fell on deaf ears. No one would lend a helping hand. "Help me! Please. My baby." The young woman doubled up from a contraction. "Please. … Someone," she begged. She knew of a missionary living in a nearby village and decided to walk there in the icy cold weather. As the snow fell, she crawled under a bridge and delivered her baby on Christmas Eve. The next day the missionary heard the sounds of a crying baby from under the bridge. There he found the young mother frozen to death, but still clutching the baby in a desperate attempt to keep the baby alive. The missionary took the baby boy home and adopted the child. Ten years later on Christmas Eve, his adoptive father told him the story of his mother's death on Christmas Eve. The boy was overcome with emotion at the sacrifice of his mother. The following morning, the boy was nowhere to be found. As the missionary searched, he saw a set of footprints leading to the nearby bridge. Kneeling in the snow was his son, naked and shivering uncontrollably. His clothes lay beside him in a small pile. Moving closer, he heard the boy say through chattering teeth: "Mother, were you this cold for me?" God has given His all that we might have life and peace.

The second story is of a little girl and a present she wrapped for her father. The gift from the child was wrapped in fancy gold paper about the size of a shoe box. When the father opened the gift, the box was empty. The father began to explain that, "When you give someone a present you are supposed to put something inside the package." The little girl was crushed, and with tears rolling down her face she explained, "Daddy, it's not empty. I blew kisses into it until it was all full." The father was so overwhelmed he could only fall on his knees and give his little girl a hug for such a wonderful gift. Not long after that Christmas, the little girl lost her life in an accident. Filled with grief, the father kept the box close to his bedside to remember the love of his child and the imaginary kisses. Each of us has a box of imaginary kisses from our family, and friends. Take time and enjoy all the kisses that come your way this holiday season.

The third story is about a World War I (1914) Christmas Eve. That evening many German soldiers put up their Christmas trees, decorated with candles, on the parapets of their positions. Hundreds of trees lighted the German trenches. The British soldiers could see the lights but it took them a few minutes to figure out what they were from. One British soldier wrote home to his sister about the experience:

"My dear sister Janet,

"It is 2:00 in the morning and most of our men are asleep in their dugouts – yet I could not sleep myself before writing to you of the wonderful events of Christmas Eve. In truth, what happened seems almost like a fairy tale, and if I hadn't been through it myself, I would scarce believe it. Just imagine: While you and the family sang carols before the fire there in London, I did the same with enemy soldiers here on the battlefields of France. … As darkness fell on our Christmas Eve, the shooting stopped entirely. Our first complete silence in months! … I went to the dugout to rest, and lying on my cot, I must have drifted asleep. All at once my friend John was shaking me awake, saying, "Come and see! See what the Germans are doing!" I grabbed my rifle, stumbled out into the trench, and stuck my head cautiously above the sandbags. I never hope to see a stranger and more lovely sight. Clusters of tiny lights were shining all along the German line, left and right as far as the eye could see. 'What is it?' I asked in bewilderment. And John answered, 'Christmas trees!' And so it was. The Germans had placed Christmas trees in front of their trenches, lit by candle or lantern like beacons of good will. And then we heard their voices raised in song. 'Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht.' … When the song finished, the men in our trenches applauded. Yes, British soldiers applauding Germans! Then one of our own men started singing, and we all joined in. 'The First Noel, the angel did say.'… They responded with enthusiastic applause of their own and then began another. 'O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum.' … Then we replied 'O Come All Ye Faithful.' … Before long a bonfire was built, and around it we mingled – British khaki and German grey. … Even those who could not converse could still exchange gifts – our cigarettes for their cigars, our tea for their coffee, our corned beef for their sausage. Badges and buttons from uniforms changed owners, and one of our lads walked off with the infamous spiked helmet! I myself traded a jackknife for a leather equipment belt – a fine souvenir to show when I get home. … As it grew late, a few more songs were traded around the fire, and then all joined in for – I am not lying to you – 'Auld Lang Syne.' Then we parted with promises to meet again tomorrow. … I was just starting back to the trenches when an older German clutched my arm. 'My God,' he said, 'why cannot we have peace and all go home?'… And so, dear sister, tell me, has there ever been such a Christmas Eve in all history? And what does it all mean, this impossible befriending of enemies? … Still, one cannot help imagine what would happen if the spirit shown here were caught by the nations of the world.

"Your loving brother, Tom."

God Bless you with peace of heart and mind as you celebrate the holiday season.

Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Timothy E. Sowers
Deputy AMC chaplain

Future military officers receive career advice

Five ROTC cadets awarded gold bars

By SKIP VAUGHN
Rocket editor
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Military officers of the past and present gathered Nov. 30 to honor their counterparts of the future.

They recognized five ROTC cadets from Alabama A&M University and the University of Alabama-Huntsville who will become commissioned officers this week. The A&M/UAH ROTC gold bar award ceremony was part of the monthly luncheon of the Military Officers Association of America, Huntsville Chapter, held at the Officers and Civilians Club.

"You are about to embark on an incredible adventure," Garrison commander Col. John Hamilton told the cadets.

Hamilton was commissioned as a second lieutenant more than 20 years ago when he graduated from the ROTC program at Florida State.

There is no set blueprint for an Army officer's career, he said. "Each of you is going to walk a particular path." He offered the cadets the following advice:

- First of all you have to be a good Soldier. "Before you can ever be a good officer, you have to be a good Soldier. Don't ever forget that," Hamilton said.
- You will be responsible for the organization that you lead. "You are responsible for everything that organization does or fails to do," Hamilton said.
- Develop your communication skills. "Work on your communication skills. It will be one of the most important things that you do," Hamilton said.
- Seek the hardest jobs you can find and "when you have it embrace it," he advised.

The colonel told the cadets their choice of careers is worthy and they will help defend this nation's liberties.

"I thank you for the service you've already put in as cadets and the service you're about to embark on," he said. "It's going to be a real honor to serve with you in our Army."

Photo by Skip Vaughn

The five ROTC cadet honorees include, from left, Dalkeith Mullings of Alabama A&M, Anna White of UAH, Sarah Knapp of UAH, Avery Watson of Alabama A&M and Coleman Erwin of UAH.

The cadets included Coleman Erwin of UAH, Army Nurse Corps; Sarah Knapp of UAH, Chaplain Corps; Dalkeith Mullings of Alabama A&M, Infantry; Avery Watson of Alabama A&M, Army National Guard; and Anna White of UAH, Military Intelligence Corps.

Watson, 22, from Watertown, N.Y., will receive his commission Thursday and graduate Friday from Alabama A&M with a bachelor's in biology. He plans to enter the Army medical service.

"It's going to shape me as a leader," Watson said of entering the Army, "give me a great foundation and hopefully pay for medical school."

White will receive her commission Thursday and graduate from UAH on Saturday with a bachelor's in psychology.

"I'm pumped," she said of entering the Army. "It's something I always wanted to do, follow my dad's footsteps."

The luncheon's 54 attendees included 21 guests and 33 members of the chapter.

JROTC students encouraged to pursue their goals

By BETH SKARUPA
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HARVEST – What's the best branch of the military? The JROTC students at Sparkman High School were asked this by AMCOM Command Sgt. Maj. Ricky Yates, the speaker at their Career Day on Nov. 30. He got the expected resounding reply of "Army!" Then he corrected them.

"No. It's one team. It's not just about the Army, it's about all the branches of the services – the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the Marines and the Coast Guard," Yates said. "You can serve your country as a servicemember or even as a government employee civilian."

Yates was there to tell the students about the many career paths available to them in the military. So he encouraged them to look at all the websites, not just the Army's, and he invited representatives from all the local recruiters as well as a government employee civilian to attend the career day and help him answer students' questions. He will be doing this again at several other JROTC Career Days at area high schools in the upcoming months.

One of the most important messages he wants to get across to the students is to get an education. He wants them to become aware and take advantage of the many ROTC programs where some or all of their education is paid for by the government.

"Take your opportunities where they are. If the government can give you an education, then let it give you an education. Whether it's Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines or Coast Guard, it's pretty much paid for, so get an education," he said.

He explained that students need a college education if they want to pursue their goals and attain leadership positions in the military. He told the students about his daughter-in-law enlisting and then going to classes at night and on the weekends for four years because she wanted to be a lieutenant. He said it wasn't easy and that's why students should take advantage of the education system now instead of waiting until later.

Photo by Beth Skarupa

AMCOM Command Sgt. Maj. Ricky Yates addresses students at their JROTC Career Day on Nov. 30 at Sparkman High School.

After asking how many students were Alabama fans and how many were Auburn fans, he admitted that even though he is an Alabama fan he thinks that both schools are good ones. Then he asked if there were any LSU fans in the room.

Some good-natured ribbing of the lone LSU fan in the room followed, but Yates then reiterated that students should take advantage of the good schools around them including UAH, Calhoun Community College, and even LSU. He also mentioned West Point, the Naval Academy and the Air Force Academy.

"Look into what's best for your future. You have your goals – you know what education you need – don't ever let anyone or anything push you away from them," he said.

Finally, he commented that the JROTC students should appreciate their teachers because they have a difficult job, especially if their teachers have some students who do not want to learn. He suggested that the students try to encourage their fellow students.

"Please learn every day and thank your teachers every day. They're trying to teach you to be good citizens," he concluded.

Docs have no patience for no-show patients

Unfulfilled appointments cost health center money

By AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON
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At Fox Army Health Center, every patient has an impact on the facility's level of patient care – all they have to do is show up for their appointments.

From November 2010 to November 2011, 3,048 patients were "no-shows" at Fox, patients who had an appointment but did not show up for their appointment and did not notify Fox of their inability to keep the appointment. Currently, Fox has an active duty no show rate of 8.8 percent, with the MEDCOM standard being less than 5 percent.

The financial cost adds up – 3,048 no shows equals about $206,028 lost, $412,056 when considering patients that had to be sent to an outside facility due to the unavailability of an appointment, which equals the cost of hiring two additional providers. But it's not necessarily the money that has Fox concerned, it's the impact no shows have on the level of patient care.

"Appointments are in high demand and an early cancellation gives another person the possibility to have access to timely medical care," Barbara Williford, chief of Fox's clinical support division, said.

Fox sees about 500 patients a day on average. If a beneficiary calls for an appointment and "no" appointments are available, Fox must then refer them to an outside urgent care facility. However, if a patient knows they will not be able to make their appointment and cancels in advance, those appointments are available for patients when life's unexpected health concerns pop up.

"Our patients are happier when they see us. They want to see us, and we want them to come to see us," Williford said. "However, if we don't have the space for them, or the capacity to see them, due to people not showing up for their appointments, we can't see them and we have to send them somewhere else. Our patients are not as satisfied when they have to go somewhere else for care, which is the result when there are no appointments available due to no-shows that were not canceled. We want our patients to be happy and to want to come here."

Reducing no show rates also allows for better patient centered management and continuity, Williford said, by allowing patients to spend more time with their primary care provider.

"I really want people to be able to see their primary care provider every time they come and not somebody else's provider," Williford said. "If people didn't no-show and we knew in advance, it would give that provider time to really look at his schedule and be able to spend more time with the scheduled patients. Even if I didn't fill that slot, if he's got his own patients in there, he can spend more time with his assigned patients."

The Appointment Reminder System, implemented in November 2009, reminds patients of scheduled appointments 48 hours prior to appointment time, at which time patients have the option of canceling an appointment. Or, a patient may call Fox at 955-8888 anytime to cancel an appointment. If a patient contacts Fox 24 hours prior to the appointment to cancel, they are not considered a no-show. Patients are encouraged to cancel their appointments as early in advance as possible. Patients can also schedule primary care appointments via the Internet 24 hours a day, seven days a week at www.tricareonline.com.

Workers

continued from page **1**

The honorees included:

- Nasu Bethea, Jude Bhika, Bessie Breedlove, Frederick Bundy, Sam Chow, Willie Clark, Cindy Coleman, Larry Cunningham, George Flynn, Mike Foley, Anthony Frails, Katherine Fry, Adam Garnick, Kyle Hamlin, Daniel Hinton, Gordon Jones, Sherree Knox, Timothy McKenlly, Lavonda Odum, Tyrone Odum, Ty Oswald, Brandon Parise, Frederick Pieper, Michael Ring, Scott Robbins, Paul Square, Arlean Thomas, Owen Wasmoen, Timothy Wright, Lt. Col. Shawn Waldrip, Maj. Johnathan Frasier, Sgt. 1st Class William Patterson, Crispin Banda, Erlene Barnes, Elaine Battise, Lawrence "Rusty" Bonkoski, Jackie Burgreen, Patrick Burns, Timothy Clark, Jaime Clayton, Patty Creque, Ricky Dillon, Carolyn Farmer, Wayne Fields, Chris Ford
- Michael Gainey, Curtis Gross, Roger Groves, Courtney Guasti, Jennifer Haigler, Asa Harris, Danny Herron, Christopher Holden, Dana Kammeyer, James Kidd, Daniel McGauley, Joshua McKay, James McNutt, Ronald Miller, Jeni Moreno, Donald Murrow, Porscha Porter, Margie Reed, Warren Reppond, Robbin Riley, Maggie Rivers, Olusegun Salami, Joan Serpa, Doreen Simmons, Everett Smith, Kirk Smith, Michael Smith, Vivica Stokes, Kenneth Tavares, Sanford Thornton, Louis Washington, Lynn Watts, Shanell Weissinger, Laura Wyatt, Millie Wyskida, Ryan Brewer, Gregory Brown, Stephen Coons, Curt Cutler, David Cutlip, Robert Espinosa, David Fales, Paul Morgan Gilbert, Joseph Greene, Jason Hambrick, Scott Huddleston, Michael Hudson, Al James, Thomas Janzen, Jimmy Kennamer, Josh Lambrecht, Kenneth Lance, Steven Lebron-Arroyo, Reginald Lindsey, Anthony Luke, Christopher Mazur, Steven Rainey, Scott Reis, Terry Rhodes and Ervin Rivera-Soto.

Hail and **Farewell**

Leaving Redstone but still planning to serve others

By BETH SKARUPA
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This time she's retiring for good. Ruth Ann Burton, a program analyst for the Army Contracting Command-Redstone, is retiring after 36 years of service. She had retired from the federal government in March 2006, but immediately started working for CAS as a contractor after that. This time she has no plans to come back to work.

"When I came back to work as a contractor, I thought I'd work for a year or maybe two ... and here it is five years later," she said. "I decided it was just time to retire now."

Burton started working for the government in Kwajalein in 1972. She took a two-year break while she worked for MIT, flying and back and forth to Roi Numur every day, but ended up working for the government again after that.

She came to Huntsville in 1974. Married to a serviceman at the time, she moved here because his job brought him to the Space and Missile Defense Command's headquarters. She ended up liking it here.

"I'm not moving. I plan to make Huntsville my home for as long as possible," she said.

She doesn't plan on staying home too much, though. She wants to travel and visit family all over the country. Her mother was the oldest of 13 children, so Burton has 66 first cousins. Some family members still live in the Sand Springs area of Iowa where she grew up, so that's at the top of her list of places to visit. She plans to visit Albuquerque, N.M., to see her sister's granddaughter, Angel Thom, and her husband Eric and their two young boys Logan and Ian. She also looks forward to visiting her niece, Angela Maddin, in Dallas. She may eventually travel to Europe or take a cruise with her significant other, Doug Stephens, as well. Oh, and she loves Disney World so that's on her list, too.

When she first moved to Huntsville, Burton worked as a secretary in the Roland Project Office. Then she moved to the TOW Project Office. In 1977 she changed her career path and became an engineering technician, working for the Chaparral Project Office until 1990. In 1990 she changed career paths again and went into the program analyst field, working for the Sentinel Project Office which later became the Cruise Missile Defense Systems Project Office.

Burton was team leader of the budget execution team when she retired from the federal government in 2006. She has worked in a similar position as a contractor with CAS, working in database and requirement scheduling and planning and also supporting budget execution. She came to the Acquisition Center in January 2010, now known as ACC-Redstone, also supporting financial management.

What was the most challenging aspect of her job? She said assuring that she had used the Army's resources how they were meant to be used – in accordance with fiscal law – was most challenging.

What will she miss most about working? The people. She knows she "most definitely" will keep in touch with several co-workers because they have become good friends. She commented that her

See Burton on page 18

Photo by Beth Skarupa

Ruth Ann Burton, an ACC-Redstone program analyst, enjoys being at work a few days before retiring.

Courtesy photo

Logistics speaker

Logistics Support Activity commander Col. Pat Sullivan receives a token of appreciation from Deborah McLemore-Baugh, SOLE chapter chair. He was guest speaker at the Nov. 16 luncheon of the Tennessee Valley Chapter of the International Society of Logistics.

The operation of making a Christmas bear

People keep returning to volunteer at event

By MEGAN COTTON
For the Rocket

For Janet Marino it was love at first sight. Last year was the first time she walked into Operation Christmas Bear and she just knew she wanted to be a part of it.

"We popped in to give Mike Roddy (their neighbor) a hand with the trains and I fell in love," Marino said. "Once I saw everything they were doing and that there were things that we could help with our skill sets, I knew I wanted to be involved."

In its eighth year, Operation Christmas Bear gives the children of active, Guard, Reserve and families of DoD civilians currently deployed in a war zone, a fun time to celebrate the holiday season. It will be held on Saturday from 1-4 p.m. at the Cahaba Shrine Temple in Huntsville. The event is made possible by the volunteers who spend their time making sure the day is fun for the kids.

Marino, who worked the T-shirt making station last year, said she had a great time watching the kids have fun.

"You know this little day is not only a special day for them but a memory that they will remember and share with their deployed loved one," she said. "All of those things continue beyond the day."

Annie Powers has been involved with the operation since its first year. She works registration the day of the event and helps "dress the bears" beforehand.

Photo by Megan Cotton

The women of GFWC du Midi Woman's Club made more than 300 bear ornaments to give to the children that will attend the event on Dec. 10.

To "dress the bears," they take off the ribbons and bows that come on them and put on a camouflage handkerchief and a button that says, "My dad or my mom is a hero." Every child who attends will not only get one of the bears but they get to take their picture with Santa.

"This is a happy occasion for them," Powers said. "My husband was in the armed services for 27 years and we never had anything like this during the Vietnam era. I had a young son so I saw what he went through and how hard it was. So this is something special for the kids.

"It's very hectic but so much fun. You just can't help but keep going back."

The ladies of the GFWC du Midi Woman's Club also do their part by helping to make Christmas bear ornaments for each of the children.

The bears are cut out at the Arts & Crafts Center and then individually dipped in wood stain to make them darker. After that, six to eight women get together and make an assembly line, painting the noses, feet and ears, then adding the stitching with a Sharpie and a little camouflage bow around their neck. It takes about 50 hours to make all 300.

"We'll work a table where we hand out the ornaments to the children and they get to write their names and the date on them," said Adelaide Cape who has been volunteering with Operation Christmas Bear for five years. "We like to see them personalize them with their names.

"It's always rewarding to see the smiles on the kids' faces and know they are having a good time."

Ellen Mahathey and her husband Gordon have the very important role of playing Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus.

"We became involved in Operation Christmas Bear after I read an article in the *Redstone Rocket* and went to a meeting," said Mahathey who works as the management assistant to AMCOM's deputy commander. "I immediately volunteered the Clauses and have never regretted it. In Mrs. Claus' Corner, I get to talk to the children and read books. I also have the opportunity to see all the kids before they visit Santa."

She said she and her husband are beyond happy to participate in the event.

"Our Soldiers are taking care of us and it is great to be able to take care of their families during the holidays," Mahathey said.

Anyone wanting to volunteer should email Valerie Coffey at valerie.coffey@mda.mil.

Burton

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co-worker, program analyst Michael Schneider, has been one of her "coffee buddies" each morning and she joked that he won't know how to find the coffee without her. The two of them already get together with a group of friends outside of work, so she doesn't expect their friendship to suffer.

"She's awesome. She's my mom," Schneider said. "She actually took the time to train somebody new. That's just the type of person she is."

What will she do with all her free time when she's not traveling? She plans to do some quilting since she loves to quilt. She also expects to have two or three volunteer organizations "latch on" to her as soon as they figure out she's retired. Those organizations include the American Cancer Society (one of her dear friends has been fighting cancer) and Good Shepherd Catholic Church where she's been a parishioner for many years.

"I'm waiting to see how she'll survive," Schneider joked. "She's too outgoing and involved with so many things to retire."

Although Burton insists that she is retiring for good, she expects that she may have another job soon enough – but it will be a volunteer job instead of a paid position.

"I'm looking forward to doing all of those kinds of things that I haven't been able to do because I was working," she said.

Tree lighting sends holiday greetings to troops

Redstone community joins in celebration

By AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON
Staff writer
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As Team Redstone wished Mackinzie and Mikayla McDonald a merry Christmas, the 12-year-old McDonald twins were hard at work making sure Soldiers overseas got the same holiday greetings.

Redstone Arsenal celebrated its annual tree lighting Friday at the Officers and Civilians Club. While the theme "Trees and Treats" and hard work of FMWR ensured there was plenty of holiday spirit to go around, the celebration also remembered Soldiers that are away from home this season.

"Let's all not forget all of those that are still deployed and say a prayer for them every night when you go to bed, because we've got to keep them in our prayers and in our hearts, and also the families that are back home over this holiday season," Redstone senior commander Maj. Gen. Jim Rogers said. "This is all about families and taking care of people."

Attendees wrote holiday messages and words of encouragement on chalkboards and posed with their greetings for pictures that will be posted on Team Redstone's Flickr page for troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan to see. From tidings of "Merry Christmas" to "Go Army," to the smiles on the faces of those that wrote them, wishes of comfort and joy will find their way to the battlefield this Christmas. Luminaries burned in memory of those Soldiers who lost their lives.

Rogers, with the help of plenty of excited children, lit the tree, marking the official opening of the holiday season on Redstone Arsenal. Pictures with Santa, cookie decorating with Mrs. Claus, holiday press-on tattoos, tile painting in Santa's Workshop, music by the Army Materiel Command's Four Star Jazz Orchestra, a scavenger hunt for some missing elves, and plenty of goodies, including a chocolate fountain, completed the annual celebration.

"This night is about community, this event is about community, and truly it's about you, to get together and fellowship together and celebrate this great season," Garrison commander Col. John Hamilton said.

Families that got their pictures taken with Santa can download their pictures beginning Thursday through Jan. 8 at www.flickr.com/gp/redstonemwr/k31Z25. For information, or problems with pictures, call 876-5232.

Photo by Ellen Hudson

Ruth Hellman, 8, left, samples the refreshments in the Officers and Civilians Club.

Photo by Ellen Hudson

A toy soldier and a child stand in front of the Christmas tree just after Friday's lighting.

NASA launches Christmas season

Marshall Space Flight Center families gather for their annual Lighting of Rockets

Photo by Ellen Hudson

Santa and an elf give out gift bags during the event.

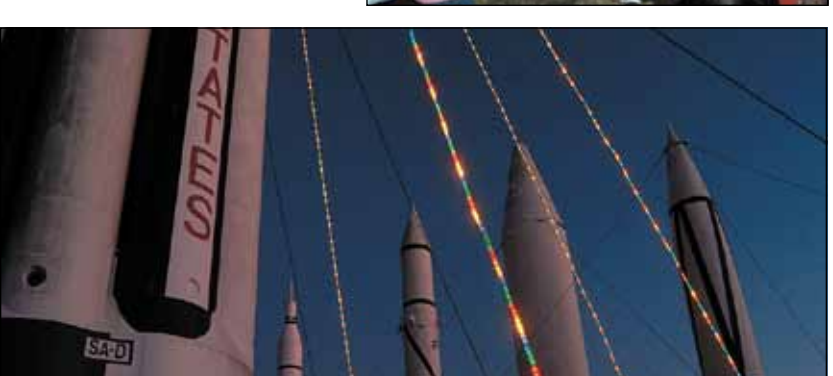

Photo by Ellen Hudson

The lighted rockets make a colorful display at Marshall.

Photo by Ellen Hudson

Sharing a moment at the lighting are Santa's elf Merry Obert and 4-year-old Charles Ise, 4, son of Carl and Dayna Ise.

Photo by Ellen Hudson

Richard and Karen Cole and their 3-year-old son, Landon, attend Thursday's Lighting of the Rockets at Marshall Space Flight Center.

Always watch your step in snow and ice

Safety suggestions for parking lots

By LEAH FOX
Garrison safety manager

There is an increased risk of slips and falls due to icy sidewalks, parking lots and work areas. Now is the time to ensure precautions are taken to minimize the risk of slip and fall injuries in the coming winter months ahead.

Here are some tips for winter safety:

• Plan ahead and give yourself sufficient time.

• Streets and sidewalks that have been cleared of snow and ice should still be approached with caution. Look out for "black ice." Dew, fog or water vapor can freeze on cold surfaces and form an extra-thin, nearly invisible layer of ice that can look like a wet spot on the pavement. It often shows up early in the morning or in areas that are shaded from the sun.

• Wear shoes or boots that are specifically designed to provide traction on wet, slippery surfaces.

• When entering and/or exiting vehicles, use the vehicle for support. Never jump from vehicles or equipment.

• Carrying heavy items can challenge your sense of balance. Try not to carry too much – you need to leave your hands and arms free to better balance yourself.

• Test the travel path for slickness by gently sliding your shoe/boot on it before proceeding.

• Walk slowly; never run on snow or ice covered surfaces. Take short steps to maintain your center of balance over your feet. Bending your knees a little and taking slower and shorter steps increases traction and can greatly reduce your chances of falling. It also helps to stop occasionally to break momentum.

• When walking on steps, always use the hand railings and plant your feet firmly on each step.

• When entering a building, remove snow and water from footwear so as not to create wet, slippery conditions indoors – walk carefully.

Here are more suggestions for parking lot safety:

• Buckle up. Even low speed collisions can result in injuries.

• Distracted driving can lead to vehicle crashes; put down your cell phones and be aware of your surroundings.

• Avoid parking in tight spots or between two SUVs which could block your view of other cars and pedestrians.

• Slow down. This buys you time to react and avoid a collision. Be especially cautious when turning corners and backing up.

• Park away from other vehicles. This may be inconvenient, but it is the holiday season and the extra walking is good exercise.

• It is getting darker earlier, so make sure your lights are on.

Editor's note: Garrison safety specialist Keith Coates added his thoughts on parking lot safety. "When backing out of a space, you must not only be aware of the clearances between your vehicle and the other vehicles to either side, but you must also be aware of cars and pedestrians that might drive or walk into your line of travel. You should constantly be moving your eyes to the left, right and directly behind as hazards can develop in an instant. Another vehicle's driver might be rushing to get to a space and not see you pulling out, another vehicle could suddenly pull out of a space behind you, or a pedestrian might be engrossed in their latest purchase and could walk right into your path. Don't depend on your horn; the other driver might not react quick enough to avoid hitting your car. The best deterrent to a parking lot accident would be awareness and preparedness."

Newest Chinook helicopters arrive at Big Windy

Aviation support unit welcomes addition

By Sgt. 1st Class CHRISTOPHER DeHART
12th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs Office

KATTERBACH, Germany – The latest model Chinook helicopters, the CH-47F, were officially assumed by B Company, 5-158th General Support Aviation Battalion, 12th Combat Aviation Brigade, during a unit equipped ceremony Dec. 1 in Hangar 5 at Katterbach Army Airfield.

Among the guests present for the long-awaited ceremony were Maj. Gen. Tim Crosby, the program executive officer for aviation; Mark Ballew, the director of Business Development Mobility Rotorcraft Programs with Boeing Military Aircraft; and many of the members of the German community both from the cities and the German military and Polizei.

Lt. Col. Daniel Ruiz, commander, 5-158th GSAB, was first to speak on behalf of those present for the ceremony, which included the majority of B Company, known to most as "Big Windy."

"To the Hookers in attendance today, thank you for all your tireless efforts in fixing and flying these beautiful helicopters that make this battalion the most coveted asset in all of (European Command)," Ruiz said of his Soldiers. "I could not be more proud having the honor to serve with you today."

Crosby and Ballew were both members of Big Windy in their earlier days and recounted the times fondly as they spoke to those in attendance. And for both men, they spoke with pride of serving with the men and women in that unit and how its reputation was known far beyond the reach of the hangar they worked in and the airfield they flew from because of those same Soldiers and their professionalism. Specifically, Ruiz and Crosby talked of how B Company in particular continued to make missions happen even while training on and integrating the new Chinooks into the unit.

Courtesy photo

Program executive officer for aviation Maj. Gen. Tim Crosby speaks Dec. 1 at Katterbach Army Airfield.

"Big Windy did not have the luxury to stand down and focus only on learning a new helicopter. … Every other unit in the Army that has gone through the (new equipment training) has shut down all other operations. Not Big Windy," Ruiz said.

And those who moved on to other units later would be helping to train others as they gained the new aircraft, again spreading their skills and knowledge sharpened in Big Windy to the rest of the aviation world.

Crosby and Ballew thanked B Company's Soldiers for their work and efforts in leading the way.

Of the new CH-47Fs, one of which rested in the hangar for everyone to see and explore, Ruiz spoke highly of their prowess, summing up what all those who have crewed with or rode upon the aircraft feel whenever they see it.

"Just look at this beautiful CH-47F helicopter behind me, with the awesome Griffin Patch on the maintenance platform and the 'Smoking Joe' sticker on the nose. … There is no finer aircraft in the Army inventory," Ruiz said.

Crosby reminded everyone of one very important point, that no matter how amazing these aircraft are, they are nothing without the Soldiers who fix them and fly them.

AbilityOne partnerships 'a good fit' for Army

Contracting command touts disabled program

By DAVID SAN MIGUEL
ACC Public and Congressional Affairs

One needs only to read the headlines, listen to the radio or watch the evening news to learn that the unemployment rate is high and thousands of people are without jobs.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor statistics report that the unemployment rate for October stood at 9 percent – an estimated 13.9 million Americans without work. According to AbilityOne Program statistics, the unemployment rate for individuals with disabilities is an "alarmingly high rate of 70 percent."

Employment opportunities can prove more challenging, notes Deborah Ault, chief, contracts division, Mission and Installation Contracting Command, Fort Knox, Ky. This year in March, she was recognized as an AbilityOne Champion by the National Industries for the Severely Handicapped.

The AbilityOne Program is a federal initiative that works with public and private organizations to generate employment for individuals who are blind or have other disabilities. It employs more than 47,000 disabled individuals at more than 600 community-based nonprofit agencies across the country, including more than 3,300 wounded veterans.

"It's a good fit for the Army Contracting Command," Ault said. "Contracts awarded under the program provide good job opportunities for people with disabilities, specifically disabled veterans. Once a service or supply is added to the procurement list, a long-term relationship is formed that should continually improve services over time and decrease procurement lead time."

ACC executive director Carol Lowman agrees. In September she was appointed by President Barack Obama as a member of the Committee for Purchase from People who are Blind or Severely Disabled.

An avid supporter of the AbilityOne Program, Lowman does what she can to facilitate and encourage AbilityOne contracts. But, she adds, "It's the contracting officers in the field that do the work to support the program."

Partnerships between the ACC and the AbilityOne Program have extended to ACC-Rock Island, Rock Island, Ill., where six legally blind individuals have been employed to help close out the more than 120,000 contract files left over from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The workers came from the Chicago Lighthouse for People who are Blind or Visually Impaired, a 105-year-old social service nonprofit agency located on the city's west side.

See Partnership on page 33

Car show participant finally earns gold standard

Achieves his highest rating in 20 years of competing

By SKIP VAUGHN
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The shiny white 1987 Buick Regal turbo, with burgundy trim and interior and exterior chrome package, drew immediate attention when it pulled into a remote area off the road. "Is that for sale?" a bystander asked.

No way. This was just a photo opportunity. The owner, Ken Bernhardt, spent three months cleaning up his show car for a national Buick competition.

And his hard work paid off when it achieved the gold standard from the team of judges.

"It shows the overall condition of the car," Bernhardt, a logistics management specialist in AMCOM's Security Assistance Management Directorate, said. "It's a good car to be able to place like that."

Bernhardt should know. The retired Soldier has participated in show competitions since 1992, off and on, since returning from Egypt.

This was his first gold standard in the Concours class, the highest level of judging in car show competitions. He won best in the GNX class at the same national competition in 1998 and subsequently sold that black 1987 Buick GNX five years ago.

In February he traveled to Milwaukee, Wis., arriving in the morning with 4 feet of snow on the ground and 7 degree temperature. Only a serious car enthusiast would go to such measures to purchase his current trophy car – he won't say how much he paid.

"It's in original condition," he said.

He keeps it in mint condition, too. "It's got 10,546 miles on it and it's all original – to include the paint," he said.

Bernhardt transported the car by trailer to the Buick Gran Sport Club of America competition held Oct. 21 in Bowling Green, Ky. The four judges spent about 20 minutes scrutinizing his vehicle, looking for scratches and any other flaws. His car scored 397 out of a possible 400 points, earning its gold rating.

Photo by Skip Vaughn

The next stop for Ken Bernhardt and his 1987 Buick Regal turbo is the Buick Club of America competition in June in Concord, N.C.

"The only thing they found wrong was the condition of valve covers and an incorrect fuel pressure regulator," Bernhardt said.

It placed second out of the five Regal turbo entries. The winner, a 1987 Buick GNX, scored a near perfect 399. Bernhardt received a plaque and bragging rights with his peers.

"It just felt good to be recognized for all the hard work and attention to detail that went into preparing for it," the 49-year-old, from Shalimar, Fla., said. "This car looks good now, but I'm going to have to spend three months again just to get ready for the next one."

That next competition will be the Buick Club of America in June in Concord, N.C.

Bernhardt retired from the Army in 2001 as a sergeant first class after 20 years. He and his wife, Rae Ann, reside in southeast Huntsville with their two sons, Lance, 22, and Ryan, 13.

Besides show competitions, his other hobbies include boating and New Orleans Saints football. "I'm a season ticket holder," he said.

He has a 1987 Buick Grand National, with 38,000 miles, that he's restoring.

"Some people like Mustangs," Bernhardt said. "I like Buicks."

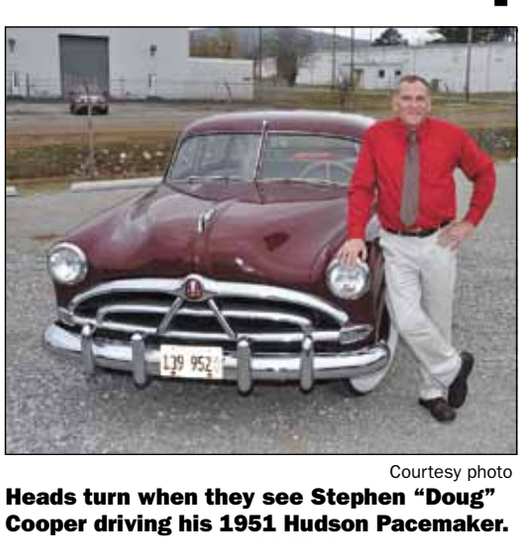
Classic car enthusiast keeps it moving down road

By LARRY McCASKILL
ACC Office of Public and Congressional Affairs

Television shows like "Happy Days" and "Leave it to Beaver" may invoke nostalgic, romanticized feelings for days gone by. But for Stephen "Doug" Cooper, those times can be found cruising around town in one of his vintage automobiles.

Cooper, a procurement analyst with Army Contracting Command contract operations, is the proud owner of two Hudson Motor Car Company vehicles. Produced in Detroit from 1909-54, the automobiles were among some of the low-priced cars on the American market selling for around $1,000 in 1909 and a 1957 Hudson Hornet cost about $2,845. In time the company would merge with other companies and become American Motors.

"I like the orphan cars like Hudson, Packard, Studebaker and Kaiser Frazer," Cooper said, referring to cars where the manufacturer has discontinued business entirely. "It's important to keep these cars on the road for others to enjoy. I'm always getting comments when driving, usually from people who had a Hudson or whose parents had a Hudson."



Courtesy photo

Heads turn when they see Stephen "Doug" Cooper driving his 1951 Hudson Pacemaker. He also owns a black 1947 Hudson Commodore Eight.

Cooper's gravitation to older cars can be connected to his upbringing.

"I've liked the late '40s early '50s Hudsons since I was a teenager. They are well-built cars and drive very well. The styling was popular during that time and still looks good," he said. "Hudson had many firsts in the industry including many safety innovations, and in 1948 had the first car that was a 'step-down' design. Prior to the step-down, cars commonly had a running board that provided a step to get into the car."

His father bought a 1947 Hudson Commodore Eight sedan in 1974 that the two of them worked on.

"I was in high school but didn't drive yet. I think he liked it because that was the year he graduated from high school. We both enjoyed working on and driving that car and it's still in his garage in Illinois, though he passed away a few months ago," he said.

"I purchased a 1951 Hudson Pacemaker four years ago. My wife, Nancy, and I enjoy traveling in it," said Cooper, who does as much of the automotive work on the vehicles as possible, sometimes with antique tools unique to the Hudson. "It's a pretty good road car but not geared for interstate driving."

According to Cooper, the Hudson was known for winning stock car championships in the early 1950s with the Hudson Hornet version, featured in the 2006 animated movie "Cars," with Paul Newman as the voice of "Doc Hudson."

When the rubber meets the road, for Cooper, the Hudsons are all about memories old and new.

"I really don't track how much I put in the cars. Since I do most of the work myself, it keeps the cost down. My wife and our three girls have enjoyed riding in the vehicles, especially at Christmas time when we would drive around looking at lights. It's become a tradition," said Cooper, who enjoys spending time with his family today much like he enjoyed spending time with his father as a younger man.

"These cars have a special place in automotive history. They drive very nicely and are reliable when maintained properly," he said. "They really got around in style back then and there was such a variety of automotive manufacturers trying to compete."

No wonder heads turn when they are seen on the road today.

Advanced Hypersonic Weapon demonstrator launched

By JASON CUTSHAW
SMDC/ARSTRAT Public Affairs

At the Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Forces Strategic Command, successes sometimes happen faster than a speeding bullet.

In a flight which lasted less than 30 minutes, SMDC/ARSTRAT conducted the first test flight of the Advanced Hypersonic Weapon concept Nov. 17. The AHW is a first-of-its-kind glide vehicle, designed to fly within the earth's atmosphere at hypersonic speed and long range. It was launched from the Pacific Missile Range Facility, Kauai, Hawaii, to the Reagan Test Site, Army Kwajalein Atoll, Marshall Islands.

"It is a first-of-its-kind glide vehicle that has a potential to change warfare forever," SMDC commander Lt. Gen. Richard Formica said. "It is a great example of how the material development function in the SMDC Technical Center is a part of ARSTRAT that is developing future capabilities for U.S. Strategic Command – for 'the day after tomorrow.'"

The Army's Advanced Hypersonic Weapon Technology Demonstration is a cooperative effort within the Department of Defense to develop a conventional Prompt Global Strike capability. More specifically, the AHW-TD is an all endo-atmospheric boost glide, non-ballistic, missile flight that will advance state-of-the art thermal protection materials, enabling and integrating systems such as controls and communications, and internal thermal management schemes. Further, in-flight environmental data collection will advance the understanding and modeling efforts for all Prompt Global Strike concepts such as the Conventional Strike Missile being developed by the Air Force.

The conical-shaped AHW is designed to meet the demanding environments and operations of continental United States-based systems capable of global strikes. As a precision glide body flying at supersonic speeds, the AHW can deliver a variety of payloads at medium and global ranges.

"This was a total team effort with Sandia National Laboratories, Albuquerque, N.M., the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Research Development and Engineering Center, Huntsville, and under the direction and funding of the Office of the Secretary of Defense's Prompt Global Strike," Formica said.

Hypersonic flight is defined as speeds of Mach 5, about 3,600 mph, or higher.

The objective of the test is to collect data on hypersonic boost-glide technologies and test range performance for long-range atmospheric flight. Mission emphasis is aerodynamics; navigation, guidance, and control; and thermal protection technologies.

Courtesy photo

The Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Forces Strategic Command conducted the first flight of the Advanced Hypersonic Weapon concept Nov. 17.

"Two key technical challenges that the flight test addressed was thermal protection/thermal management and navigation, guidance and control," Debra Wymer, SMDC Technical Center director, said.

The AHW program is managed and executed by the SMDC program office in Huntsville. The booster system and glide vehicle were developed by Sandia National Laboratories and the thermal protection system by the AMRDEC.

"The success of the AHW test is a solid step toward demonstrating the technology required to achieve a conventional prompt global strike capability," Wymer said.

A three-stage booster system launched the AHW glide vehicle and deployed it on the desired flight trajectory. The vehicle flew a non-ballistic glide trajectory at hypersonic speed to the planned impact location at the Reagan Test Site. Space, air, sea and ground platforms collected vehicle performance data during all phases of flight. The data collected will be used by the DoD to model and develop future hypersonic boost-glide capabilities for Conventional Prompt Global Strike.

"It was great to have a successful launch," Jerry Esquibel, AHW program manager, said. "I was following it along its trajectory profile and when it went into its glide phase we considered it a success.

"This is a great team. Many organizations came together in order to make this happen. I am proud of everyone involved."

You're never too old to get what you want

Management assistant graduates at age 68

By BETH SKARUPA
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It's never too late to get a college degree.

"I can attest to that," said Carolyn Nation, a management assistant for AMCOM G-8 (Resource Management). She earned her bachelor's in organizational leadership and graduated from Columbia Southern University on Oct. 21. She is proud to say that at age 68 she was the second oldest graduate at the graduation ceremony in Orange Beach, Ala.

The accomplishment was even greater considering that she lost her husband Dudleigh to cancer in December 2010, just 19 days after she began her pursuit of the bachelor's degree.

"It's been hard," she said. "Not everybody would go do this, but I'm glad I did it."

She said she had to rely on God to "walk with her each day," or she would not have been able to get through the past year. She has had to rely on her faith to give her strength.

Nation received her degree in organizational leadership and she is already putting what she learned into action. She said the coursework taught her how to be a better leader as well as how to have good relationships with the people she works with.

"It teaches you how to treat people with respect and dignity, how to treat your co-workers the way that you would want them to treat you," she said.

The decision to get the degree came about because Nation wanted to get upward mobility and advance her career. She has worked for the government for 26 years.

Nation's first job was working as a secretary in Huntsville after she graduated from New Hope High School in 1961. Her first government job was as a temporary employee for the Multiple Launch Rocket System. Her first permanent government job was as a clerk typist for Fox Army Health Center.

When she's not working, Nation enjoys making jewelry although she misses that her husband used to help her by doing all the finishing work. She also enjoys cooking, especially making different kinds of breads and pastries from scratch or making up new recipes. She has two grown sons who live in Huntsville. Eric works for Horizon and Mark works for the Auto Skills Center on the Arsenal. When they were young, she enjoyed teaching cooking at the private Christian school her sons attended.

The distance learning program offered by Columbia Southern University made it easier for Nation to get her degree. She commented that she really liked the distance learning program. "I like to make good grades. I guess I'm a perfectionist," she added. "I like to make good scores and be proficient in what I'm doing at work, too. I like to get things right."

Nation noted that at the graduation ceremony the man who sat next to her told her that she was an inspiration to him. He later introduced her to his daughters because he wanted them to meet her and hear her story. Also, after attending the university's open house, a woman from Virginia who was there to receive her master's at a ceremony the next day was waiting for Nation in the parking lot. She stopped to tell her that she had inspired her, too. "That was a shock to me. She told me that she was very inspired by me getting my bachelor's degree at my age. That meant a lot to me," Nation said.

In the future Nation would like to travel to many different states including North Carolina and Nevada, as well as to go on a cruise for the first time and visit a friend in Adelaide, Australia. However, a top priority is continuing her studies.

"I'm so close to getting my master's degree now, that there's no reason to not get it. That is my goal and I will attain it," she said. "I'll probably be the oldest graduate to get my master's degree at that ceremony, too."

Photo by Anthony Cornealius

Management assistant Carolyn Nation receives her bachelor's degree from Columbia Southern University at a ceremony in Orange Beach, Ala.

Photo by Patrick Sheahan

Aviation outreach

Members from the Utility Helicopters Project Office visit students in teacher Amy Alsup's class Nov. 29 at Sparkman High School. Maj. John Seitz, second from right, assistant product manager for UH-60 modernization, discussed Army aviation, the theory of flight, and the missions and contributions of Black Hawk helicopters to America's defense. Deputy project manager Greg Gore, fourth from left, thanked the students for the many care packages they have collected and sent to deployed Soldiers worldwide.

'Faith is the only way our family survived'

Hunting accident killed patriarch 37 years ago

By AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON
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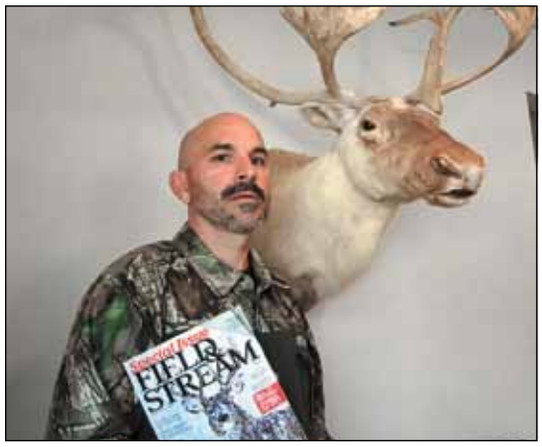

Photo by Ellen Hudson

Mark Witt stands next to his caribou which is on the wall in the Outdoor Recreation Center. He holds a copy of the December/January issue of *Field & Stream* which includes an article on the hunting accident that killed his father when Witt was age 12.

Faith brought Mark Witt through his father's death 37 years ago, and faith, he said, will bring him back to his father's arms.

"When I saw my dad in the casket a couple days before Christmas, I knew I'd see him again," said Witt, customer support representative to AMCOM, DLA land customer operations. "Not because he was a school teacher, not because he was a deacon, not because he'd been baptized or obeyed the Ten Commandments, but because of his faith and trust in Jesus Christ and his relationship with Christ."

Witt and his brother Dan are featured in the December/January issue of *Field & Stream* magazine article, "Following Our Father," which details the hunting accident that claimed their father Walt's life when Witt was just 12. T. Edward Nickens, editor-at-large for *Field & Stream*, brought Witt and his brother back to the hemlock tree where their father was mistaken for a buck and breathed his last breath.

"We didn't understand it when it first happened, we both reacted differently," Witt said. "My brother got very angry, very bitter, because our dad was such a godly father. We had neighbors who both drank, one neighbor who owned the bar, and we had one neighbor who was drunk, beating up his wife all the time. And my brother would go out, point his finger at God, and say, 'Why not those two? Why our dad?'"

Faith has given them the answer to that question. While a secular magazine, it was hard for Nickens to ignore the incredible impact Walt Witt's faith had on his two sons. In addition to chronicling the hunting accident, the article also describes the path the brothers have taken since that fateful day in December 1974, a path that has led them on a closer walk with the Lord.

"Faith is the only way our family survived," said Witt, a Sunday school teacher at Capshaw Baptist Church.

The Witt brothers have been traveling the country and Canada since 2004, speaking about their faith and hunting safety to outdoor lovers and Christians alike. For Witt, sharing that story with *Field & Stream*'s 1.25 million subscribers is an important part of his evangelism.

"I think besides the safety aspect of hunting, and how to make sure of your target before you point a gun at it, I think knowing where you're going to spend eternity is the most important thing," Witt said of the lessons to be learned from the article. "Nobody plans on dying. My dad didn't have a second chance. I didn't get a second chance to tell him I love him. I tell the kids every time I teach, make sure you go home and tell your parents you love them, because you never know."

The day Walt Witt died he was preparing a sermon on heaven to give at a church in Maryland the next day. Mark Witt will finally deliver that message on behalf of his father in March.

"I've been told I'm a lot like my father," Witt said. "I believe he's very much aware of what's going on. He was preparing a message on heaven and the streets of gold, and the next minute he's in heaven, walking on the streets of gold. He was prepared. He wasn't planning on it, but he was definitely prepared, and that's what counts."

In the days following the hunting accident, questions circulated whether alcohol was involved, or whether Witt was wearing orange, but the unfortunate truth was Walt Witt did have fluorescent orange on and alcohol wasn't involved. The gentleman that shot him was color blind, and from his vantage point, couldn't see Witt's vest, just his head, which from afar, amidst the branches of the trees behind him and the way his long black sideburns resembled the nose of a deer, made the other hunter think he was looking at a buck straight on. The shot to the head killed Walt Witt instantly. Even though one pull of the trigger changed the course of the Witt family's life forever, the family does not hold a grudge against the hunter that killed their father.

"We have forgiven him. Hopefully one day he'll be able to move on," Witt said.

Witt and his brother grew up hunting with their father, carrying turkeys, rabbits, squirrels and other game for their dad before they reached 12, legal hunting age in Pennsylvania. Even after his death, the brothers took to the woods to share their father's passion.

"It was already in our blood at that time," said Witt, who now hunts exclusively on private property, and often bow hunts for the safety aspect of it. "Spending time with dad was a big part of it."

Today they carry on that tradition with their own children.

"It's just getting out, getting in a tree," Witt said. "It's just a quiet time and spending time with our children."

Courtesy photo

Education outreach

Ladonnna McCann, a physical scientist in the environmental division documents branch at AMCOM G-4, speaks to an environmental science class at Huntsville High School on her career path and studies. She spoke as part of the AMCOM Army Education Outreach Program.

Soldiers, animals build bonds during deployments

By JASON CUTSHAW
SMDC/ARSTRAT Public Affairs

The dogs wagged their tails as they reunited with loved ones from war.

Nowzad is a charity set up to relieve the suffering of stray and abandoned dogs, cats and other animals in Afghanistan and Iraq.

"Most people don't realize the connection that Soldiers and animals make while in a combat zone," said Lt. Col. Joseph Crocitto, Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Forces Strategic Command strategy and policy branch chief, G-3. "It is a bond that is not easily broken and to be able to have those animals come back to the states is a great thing for the Soldiers who befriended them."

Nowzad was named after the village in the Helmand Province of Afghanistan, Now Zad, which the British Royal Marines arrived at in 2006. It was organized after Royal Marine Sgt. Pen Farthing and others became attached to some of the local dogs and cats and wanted to be able to bring them home once their tours were completed.

Through Nowzad's work, neglected and undernourished dogs are relocated to western countries where they can find the love, care and attention they deserve. For many of the stray animals in the Middle East, they now have a guardian for the first time in their lives. Further, the dogs also serve returning troops as emotional support animals.

"Nowzad is a great organization," Crocitto said. "They do all they can to help reunite loved ones. The bond the Soldiers and the animals make is one that words really can't describe. I am proud to have been a part of it."

Crocitto talked about his trip to greet two dogs and a cat his wife had chosen to save at JFK Airport in New York City on Nov. 16. He talked about the emotional reunion of Soldiers and the 14 dogs and one cat that became a part of their lives.

At the reunion were Sarah Ferguson, duchess of York, and Arthur E. Benjamin, founder of American Dog Rescue who helped reunite veterans from Afghanistan and Iraq and the four-legged friends they bonded with while deployed.

"It was amazing to see how other people were involved and how much they cared about not only our Soldiers, but also the animals who finally made it to their new homes," Crocitto said. "It was truly a sight to see when everyone came together, never to be separated again."

Crocitto's wife, who was deployed to Afghanistan, talked about how she became involved with the program and how she came to have five animals join her family.

Courtesy photo

Lt. Col. Joseph Crocitto, Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Forces Strategic Command Strategy and Policy Branch chief, G-3, holds onto his dog, Nakita, as he speaks with Sarah Ferguson, duchess of York, who is holding Crocitto's puppy, Hesco. Nakita and Hesco were brought to America Nov. 16 at JFK Airport in New York City through the efforts of Nowzad and America Dog Rescue.

"I met Nakita and just fell head over heels for her. She was so beautiful, gentle and well mannered during my visit, like she was on display," said Crocitto's wife, retired Chief Warrant Officer 3 Julie Sorenson, a maintenance and logistics task order monitor working in Afghanistan as a contractor. "When I went into the house where I met Hesco, I scooped him up in my arms. He licked my face and then laid his head on my shoulder; I was sold by that time."

Sorenson told how Hesco was rescued and Nakita had been in the shelter since December 2010 and no one wanted her because of her size. She also described the cats that were rescued. Sameera, an orange tabby cat became a companion to Scooter, a white and gray cat, and Khawlah the cat was initially named Carl but was renamed Khawlah, which sounds like Karla, when they figured out she was a girl.

"I was overjoyed to have all five animals home for Thanksgiving," Sorenson said. "I am ever so grateful to the Nowzad shelter; Pen Farthing, Nowzad founder; Louise Hastie, from the Nowzad shelter in Kabul; Dean Thorburn, from the Dubai kennels and cattery; American Airlines for shipping Nakita, Hesco and Sameera; and to my husband who went to meet the animals in New York City.

"Nakita, Hesco and Sameera ended up being transported by Pen Farthing to our home in New Hope, Ala., via U-haul as Nakita was too large to fly from JFK to Huntsville," she added. "So the story ends as Joe and I have integrated all five animals with our existing five animals (three dogs and two cats) on our 38-acre property. The five rescues from Afghanistan are all enjoying their new life and environment."

Sorenson talked about how Nowzad makes it possible to reunite old friends who have shared a difficult time together and have bonded in ways few people will ever know.

"The Nowzad program is a lifesaver to the Soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan who rescue and befriend animals at the forward operating bases and who cannot bear the thought of leaving them behind knowing there is no hope for them," Sorenson said. "These animals bring a part of home to the Soldiers while they are deployed and bonds between the Soldiers and animals are formed. The animals of Iraq and Afghanistan touch the lives of many contractors, civilians and personnel serving along with the Soldiers, so it's not just servicemembers who feel a sense of obligation to give a home to an animal who has given them so much."

Sorenson talked about how those deployed overseas got to know and love the animals. She mentioned how these future "family members" bring a feeling of home in a foreign land.

"It sounds like a lot of effort but if one just knew how much these animals touch the lives of all personnel serving in these countries they would understand the reason people cannot just leave the animals behind," Sorenson said. "The Nowzad program also works with the local communities to promote the spaying, neutering and vaccination of all animals to include a program designed to trap, spay and neuter and release the feral animals to prevent them from overpopulating the country."

She also mentioned why she decided to send those animals back to the states to join her family in Alabama.

"People have asked 'why adopt or rescue from Afghanistan when there are so many animals in the U.S. that need to be adopted?'" Sorenson said. "I say, 'the animals in Iraq and Afghanistan have no hope and no one to give them what we in the United States take for granted and that is a chance to survive and love a family and to be loved.'

"I did not rescue and adopt and offer to provide a home for these animals thinking that a story would be published anywhere," she added. "I rescued and adopted because I could not leave them behind and have so much love for animals no matter where they are located."

For more information, visit the Nowzad website at www.nowzad.com. They have approximately 100 dogs and 10-15 cats at the shelter. Another website for helping save abandoned animals is www.americandogrescue.org.

They go through a large 20-pound bag of dog food a day to feed the dogs. Petco will ship dog and cat food for free if anyone would like to donate food. It can be shipped to the following address: Louise Hastie, PARSA, APO AE 09356-9997.

Courtesy photo

Flight time

During the ASA(ALT) Senior Leader's Training, Amanda Simpson, special assistant to the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Acquisition, Logistics and Technology), visits the Redstone Test Center and spends some time in the cockpit of the Army's premier utility helicopter.

Space cadre spend holiday with their troops in Korea

By DOTTIE WHITE and RACHEL GRIFFITH
SMDC/ARSTRAT Public Affairs

The Joint Tactical Ground Station at Osan Airbase, Korea, Charlie Detachment, 1st Space Company, runs a 24-hours-a-day operation. Their in-theatre early missile warning support mission never stops, not even on Thanksgiving Day.

Usually the holidays are a time when airports are crowded so people can fly home to spend time with their families. This Thanksgiving, the leadership team from the 1st Space Brigade boarded a plane and came more than 5,000 miles to spend this holiday with their Soldiers overseas.

Col. Eric Henderson, 1st Space Brigade commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Eagan, command sergeant major, 1st Space Brigade, have flown in from brigade headquarters in Colorado Springs to enjoy a tradition known to many of those who wear the uniform, a holiday meal eaten in the local dining facility.

"I relish the opportunity to be in the company of Soldiers, particularly those Soldiers who more often than not, are far away from their family during the holidays," Henderson said. "I want them to understand that they are appreciated by every level of this command, and that due to their diligence and vigilance, thousands of their fellow servicemembers can enjoy their holiday in safety and security because the Soldiers of JTAGS are on watch."

The leadership team sat down for a Thanksgiving meal with just over two dozen Soldiers from the site, many of whom are here without their families. But the Soldiers at C Detachment are more than just co-workers.

"With this being a small unit, the camaraderie becomes a military family in itself. In fact, I plan on doing Thanksgiving with some of the Soldiers and their families again tonight," Staff Sgt. Alan Soderberg said. "It's nice to have the senior leadership here today. They have taken time away from their families to spend Thanksgiving with us. It shows how much they care."

Photo by Rachel Griffith

Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Barber, detachment NCO-in-charge, consults with Staff Sgt. Jason Pitre on Thanksgiving Day at Osan Airbase, Korea.

This holiday meal with the Soldiers is the first holiday Eagan has spent with Soldiers at SMDC.

"There is no greater honor than spending the holiday in the company of Soldiers," Eagan said. "Coming here was the right thing to do, and there was nowhere else I would rather spend this Thanksgiving. These Soldiers work long hours to accomplish their mission. Coming here is just a small token of our appreciation for their selfless service and their commitment to the Army values."

While advances in technology do let the leadership team speak with outlying units via video teleconference, there really is nothing that can replace an in-person visit with the sites. The mission at JTAGS is an important one and one that never rests. A trained and ready crew is always on watch.

"We are on a 24-hour-a-day mission here in Korea," Spc. Brandon Schoen, JTAGS operator, said. "We help provide the overall picture to the lower echelons in theatre and make sure they are protected on a 24-hour basis against any incoming missiles, and of course working with CONUS (continental U.S.)."

While making personal sacrifices is nothing new as a Soldier – one of the Army values is selfless service – the dedication level of these Soldiers doesn't go unnoticed by their leaders.

"It's really motivating to the Soldiers to see their leadership giving up their holiday and time with their families, to fly overseas to spend the time with them," said Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Barber, C detachment noncommissioned officer-in-charge. "The Soldiers get a sense of how important their mission is over here, and it re-energizes them. We have a tough mission, and we work a lot of long hours.

"A visit like this, especially on a holiday, will keep these Soldiers motivated to continue to serve," he added.

Charlie Detachment is commanded by Capt. Corey Ruckdeschel and expertly run and led by Barber, who are hosting their brigade leadership team for the first time since they have been in command of the detachment.

As the world's only space brigade, the 1st Space Brigade is arrayed across the globe, making travel by the leadership team a challenge, albeit one they embrace.

"It is great the brigade command team came out to Osan, taking time away from their families during Thanksgiving, spending time with our Soldiers here who don't get a chance to see the brigade command team often," Ruckdeschel said. "It is really nice to have them out here."

RTC photo

Test tour

NASA administrator Charles Bolden Jr. visits Redstone Test Center facilities Nov. 18 to witness the NASA Lunar Lander autonomous hover test flight. The lander prototype has been undergoing multiple testing at RTC facilities over the last several months.

Win or**Lose**

Local gym inspires Army boxer's return to ring

Soldier will try out for All Army team

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

Army recruiter Sgt. 1st Class Bobby Judge thought his boxing days were over. But everything changed when he saw something while driving in his truck in Huntsville.

Judge, who arrived at Redstone from Florence in October 2010, saw three men working on what looked like a boxing ring outside a little building on Governors Drive.

He stopped and found out they were with the Rocket City Gym and were building a float for the Veterans Day parade to carry the Army World Class Athlete Boxing Team. The team from Fort Carson, Colo., was visiting Huntsville for the second straight year.

Oh, and by the way, they asked, would Judge be willing to use his truck to pull their float in the parade?

"I went home and told my wife I found a boxing gym," Judge said.

He's been working out at the Rocket City Gym ever since, helping to inspire the young men that proprietor Larry Bright draws in – keeping them off the streets and into a disciplined sport. And they've inspired Judge to keep boxing.

Judge, operations NCO for the 2nd Recruiting Brigade, has been accepted to the All Army trial camp to compete for a spot on the All Army boxing team.

"I'm excited," he said. "I didn't think I was going to get selected because I've been away from boxing for so long."

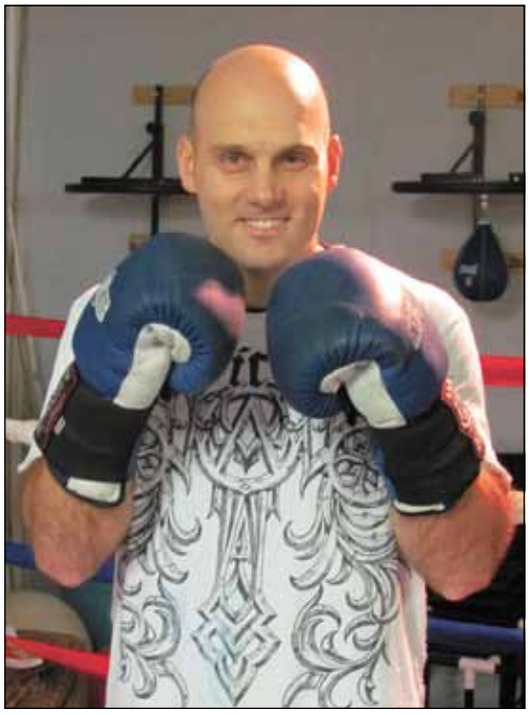

Photo by Skip Vaughn

Sgt. 1st Class Bobby Judge will report to the All Army boxing camp Dec. 28 at Fort Huachuca, Ariz.

All Army coach Charles Leverette made the selections based on the applications submitted. Judge will report to the camp Dec. 28 at Fort Huachuca, Ariz.

"I've been working my tail off (in the gym). I've been training," Judge said.

At 5-foot-11 and 199 pounds, he'll compete as a heavyweight. That division is for fighters lighter than 201 pounds, whereas the superheavyweights are over that weight.

The Los Angeles native fought at middleweight, 165, in his first trip to the All Army trials in 2002. He lost in the finals by decision to Julius Fogle, who was then the nation's top-ranked 165-pounder and a member of the world class athlete program. Fogle, who went on to turn pro and won a middleweight title, has since retired.

Photo by Skip Vaughn

The Rocket City Gym, on Governors Drive, is where Sgt. 1st Class Bobby Judge works out Monday through Saturday.

Judge, who initially entered the ring as a 12-year-old, quit boxing after that loss and was away from the sport for about seven years.

He was a recruiter in Las Vegas when he returned to the sport in late 2008. He was planning to turn pro but then he got transferred to Florence. Judge ran a recruiting station in Florence for two years until he reported to Redstone.

And then he just happened to be driving on Governors when Bright and two others happened to be building a boxing float outside their gym.

"Before I knew it, they took me in like family," he said.

Bright, himself a former Army boxer, is his coach and mentor. Bright works at Redstone as product team lead for calibration sets in the systems sustainment management division in AMCOM's Integrated Materiel Management Center.

"He's a mature active duty Soldier so he provides a lot of leadership for the kids in the gym, provides a good example for them," Bright said. "As a boxer he's competed in the Southeast Association, done very well. He's fought at both heavy and light heavyweight. His objective is to fight as a heavyweight in these upcoming trials."

At 32 years old, Judge is realistic about his boxing future. He said he hopes to become the All Army heavyweight champion and subsequently win the All Armed Forces heavyweight division in San Diego.

"Yep, that's my short-term goal right there," he said. With 12 years in the Army, his career goal is to become a command sergeant major.

"I'm a Soldier first and I know the long-term picture is the Army," Judge said.

He and his wife, Bonny, reside at Redstone with their three daughters – CJ, 11, Jayla, 10, and Toni, 5. He said he appreciates her letting him spend so much time in the gym with his second family.

Alabama A&M, Navy picked to win final games

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

Skip's Picks were 501-161 for 76 percent after 14 weeks of college football. Here are my predictions this week:

Grambling vs. Alabama A&M – **Alabama A&M**

Navy vs. Army – **Navy**

Military children can start shopping for scholarships

Annual scholarship program opens application window

By TAMMY L. REED
DeCA marketing and mass communications specialist

FORT LEE, Va. – 2011 Scholarships for Military Children recipient Jordan Cherry said receiving extra money for college lightened her financial load.

"This scholarship definitely decreases the financial burden of school, which we all know is a big benefit," she said.

Applications for the 2012 Scholarships for Military Children Program are available starting at commissaries worldwide as well as online through a link on http://www.commissaries.com and directly at http://www.militaryscholar.org.

Awards will be based on funds available, but the program awards at least one $1,500 scholarship to a student at each commissary. Scholarships are funded by donations from commissary vendors, manufacturers, brokers, suppliers and the general public. Every dollar donated goes directly to funding scholarships. No taxpayer dollars are expended on the scholarship program.

If there are no eligible applicants from a particular commissary, the funds designated for that commissary are used to award an additional scholarship at another store.

The scholarship program was created to recognize military families' contributions to the readiness of U.S. armed forces and the commissary's role in the military community. Since the program began in 2000, it has awarded more than $9.3 million in scholarships to 6,069 military children from 62,000-plus applicants.

"While these numbers are impressive, what's even more impressive is what past scholarship recipients are doing with their education," Defense Commissary Agency director and CEO Joseph H. Jeu said. "Many recipients have entered a wide range of career fields such as teaching, business, law and military service – to name just a few. Many others have earned advanced degrees. They are making their way in this world, and they are making a difference."

To be eligible for a scholarship, the student must be a dependent, unmarried child, no older than 21 – or 23, if enrolled as a full-time student at a college or university – of a servicemember on active duty, reservist, guardsman, retiree or survivor of a military member who died while on active duty or survivor of a retiree. Eligibility is determined using the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System database.

Applicants should ensure that they, as well as their sponsor, are enrolled in the DEERS database and have a current military ID card. The applicant must also be planning to attend or already attending an accredited college or university, full time, in the fall of 2012 or be enrolled in a program of studies designed to transfer directly into a four-year program.

Applicants must submit an essay on a topic available on http://www.militaryscholar.org. Applications must be turned in to a commissary by close of business Feb. 24.

The scholarship program is administered by Fisher House Foundation, a nonprofit organization that provides assistance to servicemembers and their families. Scholarship Managers, a national, nonprofit, scholarship-management services organization, evaluates applications and awards these scholarships. If students have questions about the scholarship program application, call Scholarship Managers at 856-616-9311 or email them to militaryscholar@scholarshipmanagers.com.

Holiday safety advice from emergency services

The holidays can present potentially dangerous situations for children. Some simple prevention measures can help keep your children safe during the season. The following tips from the Directorate of Emergency Services can help you be more careful and prepared during the holiday season:

- If possible, leave small children at home with a trusted babysitter.
- Teach your child to go to a store clerk and ask for help in case your child is separated from you.
- Teach children to stay close to you at all times while shopping.
- Never allow children to make unaccompanied trips to the restroom.
- Children should never be allowed to go to the car alone and they should never be left alone in the car.
- Teach children their full name, address and telephone number to give to police officers or mall security. Teach children to immediately inform you if a stranger is bothering them.

The holiday season is also a time when busy people can become careless and vulnerable to theft and other holiday crime. The following tips from DEH can help you be more careful, prepared and aware during the holiday season:

- Avoid driving alone at night.
- Keep all car doors locked and windows closed while in or out of your car. Set your alarm or use an anti-theft device.
- If you must shop at night, park in a well-lighted area.
- Avoid parking next to vans, trucks with camper shells, or cars with tinted windows.
- Park as close as you can to your destination and take notice of where you parked.
- Never leave your car unoccupied with the motor running or with children inside.
- Do not leave packages or valuables on the seat of your car. This creates a temptation for thieves. If you must leave something in the car, lock it in the trunk or put it out of sight.
- Be sure to locate your keys prior to going to your car.
- Keep a secure hold on your purse, handbag and parcels. Do not put them down or on top of the car in order to open the door.
- When approaching and leaving your vehicle, be aware of your surroundings.
- Do not approach your car alone if there are suspicious people in the area.
- Ask mall or store security for an escort before leaving your shopping location.
- Be extra cautious about locking doors and windows when you leave the house, even for a few minutes.
- When leaving home for an extended time, have a neighbor or family member watch your house and pick up your newspapers and mail.
- Indoor and outdoor lights should be on an automatic timer.
- Leave a radio or television on so the house looks and sounds occupied.
- Large displays of holiday gifts should not be visible through the windows and doors of your home.
- When setting up a Christmas tree or other holiday display, make sure doors and passageways are clear inside your home.
- Be sure your Christmas tree is mounted on a sturdy base so children, elderly persons or family pets cannot pull it over on themselves.
- If you use lights on your Christmas tree ensure the wiring is not damaged or frayed. Frayed or damaged wiring can cause a fire.
- Place your Christmas tree in water or wet sand to keep it green.
- Never place wrapping paper in your fireplace.

Partnership

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Success stories, like those found at Rock Island, help educate the public about the variety of disabilities and how individuals with these disabilities can still contribute.

"The biggest challenge is with the customer," Ault explained. "Customers are concerned that people with disabilities cannot perform certain functions or that quality of service will decline. This is typically overcome by educating the customer about the variety of conditions that constitute disability, both cognitive and physical, and sharing contract success stories."

Lowman noted that initially there may be some resistance. Concerns are often raised on whether individuals with disabilities can accomplish the job.

Lowman recalls an incident when an AbilityOne employee was cleaning her office and whose hours were being reduced as a result of budget cuts.

"I asked him how he felt about his hours being cut," she said. "He responded by telling me he didn't mind because he knew that the money he would have made would be going to support the Soldier. He knew that he, too, was serving his country. That's what this program is all about and I am proud to support it."

"Support of the AbilityOne program is the easiest part of my job as a contracting officer," Ault said. "Knowing that as a result of my contracting efforts people with severe disabilities will have job opportunities makes that support easy to give. It's a win-win program."

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Conferences & Meetings

Weekly worship

The Contemporary Christian Worship Service is held each Sunday at 11 a.m. at the Youth Center, building 3148. For more information, call 842-2964.

Protestant women

You are invited to join the Protestant Women of the Chapel on Thursdays at Bicentennial Chapel as they meet for friendship, fellowship and Bible study. Choose from three sessions: morning from 9:30-11:30, lunch time from 11:30-12:30 and evening at 6. Some child care is available at the morning session, upon registration with Youth Services.

Sergeants major

The Sergeants Major Association conducts a monthly meeting every third Thursday of the month at 6:30 a.m. at the Officers and Civilians Club. Breakfast is available at the club. 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 955-0727.

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 Wednesday from 11:30-12:30 at building 4488, room B-306. For information call Claudinette Purifoy 955-9422. 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 Dan Cutshall 684-2359.

Men's ministry

Men's Ministry, "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 9 a.m. at the Redstone Links golf clubhouse. Breakfast is served for $5. For more information, call Hobbs 425-5307.

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.

Administrative professionals

Redstone Arsenal Chapter of the International Association of Administrative Professionals will hold its 17th annual Seminar and Education Forum, with keynote speaker Ron Woods, on Feb. 6 at the Officers and Civilians Club. The topic is "My job would be easy if it weren't for other people!" For more information, call Alpha McRae 313-1957 and Gala Horry 842-8389.

AMCOM industry briefings

Aviation and Missile Command along with Team Redstone will hold the annual Advance Planning Briefings for Industry 2011 Conference and Exhibition on Dec. 14-15 at Redstone Arsenal. This year's theme is "Soldiers First: Partnering to Improve Efficiency and Effectiveness." This free conference is open to U.S. citizens in industry, academia and government. For conference information and to register online, visit https://conference.redstone.army.mil/. For more information, call the APBI Conference Team 842-9967 or email redstone-apbi@conus.army.mil.

Civilian leadership summit

The Redstone-Huntsville Chapter of the Association of the U.S. Army will hold its inaugural Department of the Army Civilian Leadership Summit on Jan. 26 from 1-4 p.m. at the Officers and Civilians Club. This free event will be followed by a Leader Social for all guest speakers and attendees from 4-5 p.m. Those interested in attending can register in the Training Information Program. Log into TIP at https://tip.redstone.army.mil.

Resource managers

The American Society of Military Comptrollers, Redstone/Huntsville Chapter, will hold its monthly luncheon Thursday at 11:30 a.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church. Stars and Clowns from the Academy for Academics and Arts will perform a holiday program. For ticket information, call Audra Edwards 313-2382 or Lisa Lowry 876-7086.

Federal employees

The Huntsville-Madison County Chapter 443 of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association will hold its annual Christmas luncheon Saturday at the Senior Center on Drake Avenue. Chapter officers for 2012 will be installed. Meeting starts at 11 a.m. The show choir "The Trouveres" from Lee High School's music department will entertain. Ticket are $14. For reservations, call Louise Garman 461-9408. For more information, call 519-3327 or 539-1333.

Space society

The Huntsville Alabama L5 Society, the local chapter of the National Space Society, will hold its January program Jan. 5 at 7 p.m. at the Huntsville-Madison County Main Public Library downtown. HAL5 will have its Membership and Strategic Planning Meeting. The event is free and open to the public. A social will follow at IHOP Restaurant off University Drive. For more information, visit www.HAL5.org.

Women's luncheon

The Redstone Arsenal Community Women's Club will hold its monthly luncheon meeting Dec. 13 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Officers and Civilians Club. The women's club is open to all women who have independent gate access to Redstone. This month the club's outreach project will be the Marine Corps "Toys for Tots" program. Lunch is $14 and the deadline for reservations is Dec. 9 at noon. For more information, visit www.rsacwc.org or call Tonya Daniels 489-3009.

Miscellaneous Items

Civilian deployment

Army 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. Volunteers must be currently employed by AMCOM or AMC. Contractors cannot be considered. Army civilians interested in deploying should notify their supervisor and visit the deployment website or call Nicole Massey 313-0365. Contractors and others interested can access www.cpol.army.mil for openings and opportunities for overseas employment.

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 courses? Need a proctor for your exams? If so, call the Army Education Center Testing Office 876-9764 for an appointment. They can proctor exams for most colleges. Proctoring services are free and available to the Redstone Arsenal community (military/government ID card holders).

Ride needed

Julie Jordan, a badge checker in building 5303, works 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and does not drive because of her disability. She lives off Airport Road and is willing to pay. No handicap accessible equipment will be required. If interested call 604-8433.

Understanding solicitations

UAH procurement specialist Mary Jane Fleming will present "Understanding Government Solicitations" Dec. 13 from 9-11 a.m. at the Chamber of Commerce of Huntsville/Madison County auditorium, 225 Church St. This is sponsored by the UAH Small Business Development Center and Procurement Technical Assistance Center. The fee is $20 per person (pay day of event with check or credit card). To register call 824-6422 or email SBDC@uah.edu.

Community assistance

Each year the Redstone Arsenal Community Women's Club distributes money to a variety of requesting nonprofit organizations. "Thanks to all of our enthusiastic and supportive members who contribute their time and talent to make each fund-raising event a huge success," a prepared release said. Several fund-raising events are being planned this year to continue the club's humanitarian efforts to benefit the military and civilian communities. Applications for the RSACWC community assistance grants are now being accepted. Forms are available at the RSACWC website at www.rsacwc.org (click on community assistance) and will be used to collect the same information from each requesting organization. By doing this, it will reduce the influence of such things as professionally prepared advertising, writing styles, supporters and the amount of information the club receives. All requests must conform to the RSACWC Community Assistance Request Form. Send to rsacwccommunityassistance@gmail.com. Deadline for submission of the grant request is Jan.

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28. All requests must be postmarked no later than the deadline. Requests received after the deadline will not be considered.

Breast cancer campaign

In support of Breast Cancer Awareness and Education, Zeta Tau Alpha Fraternity is teaming up with Yoplait for the 2011 "Save Lids to Save Lives" campaign. From now through Dec. 15, drop off your pink "SLSL" Yoplait lids in the Pink Collection Box located in the Sparkman Center Cafeteria (by the doors to the courtyard). For each lid collected, Yoplait will donate 10 cents to Susan G. Komen for the Cure to benefit breast cancer outreach programs and research. Join in on the fight to end breast cancer.

Tax assistance center

The Redstone Arsenal Tax Assistance Center is a free service helping servicemembers on active duty, military retirees and their family members prepare and file federal and state tax returns each year. Last year's center was a success, with more than 3,900 returns prepared which resulted in over $3 million in refunds. The center is now accepting volunteers for the upcoming 2011 tax season. Scheduling will be flexible and volunteers are needed to assist with tax preparation. No prior experience is necessary as comprehensive training will be provided. This is an opportunity for the community to give back to servicemembers, retirees and their families. To volunteer or for more information, call Rachael Yeoman 876-9007 or email rachael.yeoman@conus.army.mil.

Holiday ball

The Team Redstone Holiday Ball will be Friday at 6 p.m. at the Officers and Civilians Club. Tickets are $45 per person. For a reservation form, email Barbie Baugh at barbie.baugh@us.army.mil or call 876-7138.

Advent concerts

The Music Ministry of Asbury United Methodist Church will present its 2011 advent concert season at 6 p.m. today and Dec. 14 in the church sanctuary, 980 Hughes Road in Madison. The elementary children's choirs will perform the Allen Pote musical "Chimes in the Night" today; and the Chancel Choir and Asbury Orchestra, directed by Susan Farris, will perform "Come Ye Faithful" on Dec. 14. The services are free to the public.

Bake sale benefit

The board of directors and membership of the Society of Government Meeting Professionals, Rocket City, Alabama Chapter, announces its third annual Bake Sale fund-raiser Thursday at the Marriott Shoals Hotel & Spa. For more information, call Bennie Jacks 603-0894.

Holiday gala

The annual 100 Black Men of America-Greater Huntsville Chapter's annual Holiday Gala is Dec. 29 at 6 p.m. the Von Braun Center's North Hall. The theme is "Preparing Our Youth Today for Leadership Tomorrow," and the program will reflect the organization's emphasis on mentorship and its commitment to growing and developing community youth. The evening will begin with a reception at 6, and the program will begin at 7 and continue with dining and entertainment through midnight. Tickets are $75 per person and $600 for reserved tables for eight. For more information, call Kenneth Anderson 679-4241, James Matthewson 714-8921 or Freeda McDowell at the 100 BMOA-GHC business office 536-8050 where credit card purchases can be processed.

Free performance

The seventh annual free military performance of the Nutcracker Suite performed by the Huntsville Ballet Company will be Thursday at 6:30 p.m. in the Concert Hall of the Von Braun Center. Program will be preceded by a performance of the Army Materiel Band's Dixieland Jazz Combo. Active, Reserve and retired military will receive free admission by showing their military identification card. For more information, email David Carney carney50@mchsi.com. For tickets call 539-0961, and present military ID upon arriving at the performance.

Thrift shop grants

The Thrift Shop will be taking applications for 2012 grants until Feb. 29. These grants are open to all non-profit groups (no individuals please) that impact the Redstone community. For more information, call Lisa Loew 604-8777 or email lloew3@gmail.com.

Army museum

The National Museum of the United States Army, scheduled to open at Fort Belvoir, Va., in 2015 will be the nation's only museum to present the complete Army's history since 1775. Its immersive exhibits, Soldier artifacts and venues will tell the stories of selfless service and personal sacrifices of the 30 million Americans who have worn the Army uniform. For more information, call 1-800-506-2672 or visit www.armyhistory.org. The 2011 Army Commemorative Coins, benefiting the museum's construction, will no longer be sold by the U.S. Mint after Dec. 16. The $5 gold coin, silver dollar, and clad half-dollar made available to the public early this year celebrate the Army's storied history. All three coins can be ordered at www.usmint.gov/catalog or by calling 1-800 USA-MINT (872-6468). The pricing of the coins includes a surcharge – $35 for each gold coin, $10 for each silver coin, and $5 for each clad coin – which is authorized to be paid to The Army Historical Foundation to help finance the museum.

Instructors wanted

On behalf of the FMWR Directorate, the Army NAF Contracting Office, Atlantic Region South, will be soliciting for a concession contractor to provide the following instructions within Child Youth and School Services: drum line, guitar, piano, drivers education class and SAT/ACT Prep classes. Interested personnel should have at least three years of verifiable teaching/instructional experience. If you are interested in an opportunity to provide these services on a concession contract basis, call Karvellis Lee, SKIESUnlimited program manager, 690-6235.

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Courtesy photo

Intelligence support

Sharon Boclair, security and intelligence chief for the Aviation and Missile Research Development and Engineering Center, and her team received a letter of appreciation from Army Materiel Command commander Gen. Ann Dunwoody for the support they provided during AMC's move from Fort Belvoir, Va., to Redstone Arsenal. From left are AMRDEC director Eric Edwards, Boclair and Richard Russell, senior national intelligence service, deputy G-2, AMC. Boclair and her team provided the AMC G-2 team with logistical support, office space, information technology support, and classified video teleconferencing and data transfer capabilities.

Rocket Announcements

Merit awards

The Redstone Arsenal Community Women's Club is accepting applications for merit awards. These financial awards are available to graduating high school seniors, college students and spouses who are U.S. military and DoD civilian family members whose primary residence is located within the Redstone Arsenal community and who meet the eligibility requirements. Applications will be accepted through Jan. 31. Information and applications regarding the merit award program are available online. For more information and to download the application, visit the women's club website at www.rsacwc.org or contact Teresa Lee, the Merit Award chair, at www.rsacwcmeritawards@gmail.com or 830-0562. The Redstone Arsenal Community Women's Club is a non-profit, private organization not affiliated with Redstone Arsenal or the Army.

Christmas comedy

The Columbia High School Theater Company will present the comedy "The Nick of Time Christmas Show" at 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday at the Columbia High auditorium, 300 Explorer Boulevard. Tickets – $7 for students, $10 for adults – will be on sale at the door.

Book fair

The Mills Road Child Development Center is holding a Scholastic Book Fair through Friday from 3-5 p.m. Books can be purchased at building 5600 or online at http://www.scholastic.com/schoolbookfairs/2982200. Funds raised will help support events and activities at the center, which provides care and education to children in the Army community from 6 weeks to 6 years old. All books will be delivered in time for Christmas – give a child you love the gift of reading this holiday season. For more information on the book fair or the Mills Road Child Development Center, call Sandra Spillane 842-5864.

Red Cross blood drives

The American Red Cross blood drives this month include the following: Dec. 9 from 6:30 a.m. to noon at the Corps of Engineers, and from 7 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at building 5400. … Dec. 15 from 7-noon at MDA (Von Braun II Complex) building 5222, from 7-noon at building 6263 and from 7-noon at the Sparkman Center. … Dec. 16 from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at NASA building 4487 and from 7 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at building 4545. … Dec. 20 from 7 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at building 5400. … Dec. 22 from 7-noon at building 5222. … Dec. 30 from 7-noon at the Sparkman Center.

Thrift shop

The Thrift Shop is accepting seasonal consignments with a limit of three Christmas items per day. Consignments are taken from 9-11:45 a.m. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Call the NO-LIST number 881-6915 before bringing your consignments. The list changes each week. The shop's hours are Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Thursdays from 9 to 5 and the first Saturday of the month from 10-2. The shop is in building 3209 on Hercules Road. Donations are always welcome and tax deductible. From Dec. 13-15, all holiday items that are Thrift Shop property will be 50 percent off. The shop will close Dec. 20 and reopen Jan. 3.

Student apprentices

The Defense Department initiated the Science and Engineering Apprentice Program in 1980 to involve academically talented high school and college students in hands-on research activities and student/mentor relationships during the summer. The high school and college programs are designed for students who are U.S. citizens, with a Social Security card, and at least 16 years old by the beginning of the program June 4, 2012. The apprentice program is divided into periods of 8, 10 and 12 weeks. Possible career placement areas at Redstone include physics, chemistry, computer science, engineering and mathematics. The application deadline is Feb. 24. In addition to your application, you are required to submit copies of your transcripts and teacher recommendations by March 2. If students are unsuccessful in receiving application information from high school senior counselors or college placement services, call Angela Jefferson 842-8981 or Vivian Whitaker 313-3198 at the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center or review application information at http://www.gwseap.net or http://www.usaeop.com.

Scholarship program

The American Society of Military Comptrollers scholarship program is to provide financial assistance to aid ASMC members or their immediate family in continuing their educational endeavors. The 2012 application deadline is Feb. 29. For more information call Lindsey Harper 876-8361, Michelle Cobb 842-0228 or Judy Smith 876-6163.

Senior volunteers

Madison County Retired & Senior Volunteer program is partnered with various nonprofit organizations in Huntsville and Madison County that utilize volunteers. R.S.V.P. recruits, places and trains individuals who are 55 or older to fill community service needs. For more information about R.S.V.P. or volunteer opportunities, call R.S.V.P. director Pamela Donald 513-8290 or email at pdonald@seniorview.com.

Commissary news

Here is the Commissary's holiday schedule: Open 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Dec. 19; closing at 4 p.m. Dec. 24; closed Dec. 25-26; reopening Dec. 27; and closed Jan. 1.

Logistics course

Alabama A&M University will conduct onsite registration for its logistics course Dec. 15 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Education Center, building 3222 on Snooper Road. Since recently evolving into a full-fledged major, the logistics and supply chain management program at A&M is expected to increase significantly, with up to half of the courses being offered online, according to Dr. Amin Sarkar, dean of the College of Business and Public Affairs. For more information about the program in logistics and supply chain management or onsite registration, call Bonnie Banks, interim chair of A&M's Department of Accounting and Logistics & Supply Chain Management, at 372-4783 or email bonnie.banks@aamu.edu. Interested persons may also visit http://www.aamu.edu/business.

Photo by Ellen Hudson

Veterans memorial

The Huntsville/Madison County Veterans Memorial was unveiled Nov. 11 in Veterans Park in downtown Huntsville.

Photo by Stephanie Johnson

Retirement certificate

Lt. Col. Thomas "Trey" Kelley III, right, accepts his retirement certificate from Maj. Gen. Tim Crosby, program executive officer for aviation, during Kelley's retirement ceremony Nov. 28 at Bob Jones Auditorium. Kelley, a master aviator, retires after 21 years of service to the Army and numerous assignments including deployments to Central and South America in support of the nation's counternarcotics missions. His last assignments were as the deputy product director for Unmanned Aircraft Systems airspace integration, science and technology advisory to the Combined Joint Task Force Paladin in Afghanistan and director for external programs in PM UAS. He plans to remain in Huntsville with his wife and three children.