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Dining Facility prepares for its final meals

Redstone icon will close as school Soldiers leave

By Kari Hawkins
AMCOM/Garrison Public and Congressional Affairs

Photo by Kari Hawkins

Joice Baker serves up hot food for a young Soldier at the Dining Facility. The cafeteria-style facility will close its doors for the last time Aug. 31 because of the loss of hundreds of Soldiers who will no longer receive their advanced individual training at the Ordnance Munitions and Electronic Maintenance School at Redstone. The school's move to its new facilities at Fort Lee, Va., will be complete by the end of August.

For 27 years, Mattie Patton has served Soldiers. Come Aug. 31, her service will no longer be needed.

She and the food service staff at the Dining Facility will stop providing meals to the Arsenal's Soldiers when the facility closes at the end of August. The Dining Facility, which has been part of the Redstone landscape since the 1950s, is a casualty of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure recommendations.

Even as Redstone welcomes a four-star command, a recruiting brigade and a host of new BRAC-related and non-BRAC-related neighbors, it is losing its large contingent of young Soldiers who receive advanced individual training at the Ordnance Munitions and Electronic Maintenance School. And with that loss also goes some of the basic services provided to troops, such as the Dining Facility.

"We've known this was going to happen since BRAC was announced," Hal Weatherman, the Garrison's installation food program manager, said. "But it was something many of our employees just didn't want to believe.

"And even though they knew it was going to close, their dedication to serving and taking care of Soldiers never stopped. We will still provide the best service until the very last Soldier comes through the door."

At the peak of its business, the Dining Facility, located in building 3443 on Aerobee Road near Gate 10, served 500,000 meals a year and had 63 employees, who are employed through a contract with K&K Food Services.

Starting in March of this year, the numbers have been dropping as OMEMS has moved segments of its training courses. As recently as March, the staff of 55 employees was providing 50,000 meals a month. In June, only 16,400 meals were served.

Weatherman has been working the budget to reflect the monthly drawdown of young Soldiers at Redstone, cutting back on food supplies. At the end of June, the Dining Facility's contractor sent out layoff notices that took the staff down to 30. Those remaining will work through the August closing, and then another month to help clean and dismantle a Garrison icon that has often been a showcase to visiting dignitaries and local community leaders of the services provided to Soldiers at Redstone.

"We have several Army culinary arts trophies from competitions where judges came in and judged our facility against Army facilities worldwide. We've been in the top five dining facilities in the Southeast region in the large category several times," said Dan Tyree, the K&K dining facility manager, whose nearly 40 years in the food industry service includes military service and 12 years at the Dining Facility.

At the end of September, the Dining Facility and its inventory will be turned over to the Directorate of Public Works. The building will be renovated for future use.

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Working dog teams capture honors

Seabees help keep test mission on target

Army golfers named to league honor roll

Rocket Views

How concerned are you about the NFL and NBA lockouts?

By Skip Vaughn

Faye Yates
Integrated Materiel Management Center
"I'm not a basketball fan but I do love pro football and I would be upset about it. I think some of the players are good role models and I enjoy watching them play."

Lt. Col. Michael Miller
Integrated Materiel Management Center
"I'm more concerned about the NFL lockout. I'm really more on the peripheral as far as pro football because I really watch college football more. I don't know who's right and who's wrong. There's a lot of money out there. I just really wish they'd come to an agreement and just play ball. I probably would side with the players in this situation because, to me, the owners have created their own mess by paying them all of this money."

Charles Pollard
AMCOM Protocol
"I'm not concerned. I think that eventually they'll come to agreements on whatever their disagreements are. And I think eventually we'll have basketball and football."

Getting to know you

By Skip Vaughn
AMCOM/Garrison Public and Congressional Affairs

Name: Larry Underwood

Job: Greens manager/golf course superintendent, Garrison

Where do you call home?
I'm originally from Melbourne, Fla.

What do you like about your job?
It's outside. It's not you're in an office or manufacturing or anything like that. How could you not enjoy working on a golf course?

What do you like to do in your spare time?
I like to fish and, believe it or not, do gardening around the house (in Athens).

What are your goals?
Gee, I've met most of them. We keep trying to improve the golf course. We keep doing renovation and construction. We keep trying to make the golf course better and better. Last year we added the nine holes over here. And we just finished re-grassing the greens on the old Meadowview course, which would be the back nine of Warrior (course). That gives us a total of 36 holes.

What's at the top of your "bucket list" of things you want to do before you kick the bucket?
Go to Fenway Park. See the Red Sox play at Fenway Park.

Crimes, accidents and other occurrences

The Directorate of Emergency Services provided the following list of reported incidents for June 30 through July 6:

June 30: In the housing area, a family member was charged with domestic violence and destruction of government property.

July 1: Someone stole a cell phone from an individual at the School Age Service Building.

July 4: Someone entered a Soldier's car and stole stereo equipment valued at $520 while the vehicle was parked in the barracks area.

July 6: A Soldier arrested by Oxford Police for desertion was released to Redstone Police who processed her back to her Fort Benning, Ga., unit.

Traffic accidents reported: one without injury.

Violation notices issued: 19 speeding, 1 domestic violence, 1 destruction of government property, 1 no insurance, 2 stop sign violations, 1 failure to yield.

Letter to the Editor

Tornado victim appreciates support

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep and humble appreciation to the many people of the Close Combat Weapon Systems Project Office, the Integrated Materiel Management Center Publications Maintenance Division and the Integrated Logistics Support Division who came to our aid after the tornado of April 27. It would do a great many people a disservice if I named only the individuals that I can recall. They all seemed to come from nowhere and began doing things like cutting trees, moving debris and even bringing food and water without being asked.

To me and my neighbors, they were like angels coming to provide some comfort during the aftermath of the tornado. Without realizing it at the time, I needed as much emotional support along with the logistics of cleaning up and ensuring all of my family and neighbors immediate needs were met. The many people from the AMCOM organizations who acted like we were part of their family provided that. The group from CCWS provided a covered trailer to store what goods we attempted to salvage. I recall how coordinated their effort was despite working in the pouring rain. The group from ILS worked hours and hours helping clean up and salvage what we could. The Pubs Maintenance group helped do the same and then went to my neighbors and helped them clean up as well. Many individuals from the same groups took personal leave and came back on various days and continued to help me and my neighbors, to include offering us a place to stay or store what was left of our belongings. I do remember all of the faces, but not the names; new interns, co-workers, many retired friends and the many people from AMCOM that could not be there in person, but offered emotional and/or financial support.

The devastation was like nothing I had ever seen before. Our entire community looked like a war zone with trees fallen everywhere and every structure either severely damaged or destroyed. The house across the street on Pepper Road was blown completely away and carried one of the owners with it. God only knows how she survived that ordeal with only a severe cut on her leg. We have every intention of rebuilding at the same address we have lived at for more than 20 years. If there ever is an example of how an organization can and will come together during a crisis, this is it.

We must have said “thank you” and “I appreciate your help” more than a thousand times in the last two months. Each time, it was and is, meant from the bottom of our hearts. I know I speak for my family and I’m sure, for my neighbors as well.

Bob and Patty Borden and family

Dining, *continued from page 1 …*

In the early years of its long history at Redstone, troop dining actually consisted of five to seven dining facilities on post. In 2004, the current Dining Facility was built right next door to the original main facility for $7.5 million. Its 21,000 square feet were designed with troops in mind, providing state-of-the-art food preparation areas and equipment, a well-designed cafeteria-style food service area, and ample dining space to feed up to 500 Soldiers every hour.

“The professional staff has a daily direct effect on Soldiers’ morale and duty performance,” Mike Durham, chief of Plans and Operations for the Garrison, said. “All their efforts are focused on preparing the best food and service for the Soldiers. The staff takes great pride in providing this food service – greeting each Soldier with a smile on their face, and hoping to receive a smile or ‘thank you’ in return.”

Three times a day during the week, and twice a day on weekends, Soldiers have made their way to the Dining Facility. The facility’s staff starts their day at 4 a.m. and ends their work at 10 p.m.

On special occasions, such as Thanksgiving, Christmas and the Army birthday, retirees were invited to join Soldiers for holiday meals. The facility also supported community special events involving Redstone, and provided food services for local Guard and Reserve units as well as Redstone emergency services workers, international military students, Command and General Staff College students, and Boy Scout and JROTC groups.

But it was the young Soldiers that the Dining Facility staff enjoyed the most.

"This is one of the best jobs in the Army," said Weatherman, who has 24 years of service with the Dining Facility. "We have the Soldiers three times a day to take care of them. It can be a hard job. But it's also a rewarding job 365 days a year."

Those 365 days a year have included some trying times, such as the Thanksgiving 2003 electrical fire at the old dining facility that caused the staff to move its traditional Thanksgiving meal to the Sparkman Center cafeteria. Or the April 27 tornado, when the Dining Facility was able to serve meals despite issues with electrical power.

"We're never closed. We have seriously dedicated employees who make it through snow, ice and all kinds of bad weather to feed the troops. We've never missed a mission," Weatherman said. "Our dedicated work force makes us look good."

"Our job has been taking care of the privates," Tyree added. "They are our VIPs."

Those privates – between the ages of 18 and 29 – have enjoyed the best full food service the Army has to offer at the Dining Facility, which is managed in line with Army regulations. But along with serving up meals, the staff also serves up care and concern.

"You see Soldiers come and go. They start out here as privates. Then, they come back and you can see how they've climbed all the way to sergeant major," said employee Patton, one of nine Dining Facility workers with more than 25 years of service.

"They will seek you out when they come here and say 'Do you remember me?'"

Employee JoAnn Lewis often encourages Soldiers to stay in touch with their families.

"I will ask them: 'When was the last time they talked to their families?'" she said. "I will ask them 'You're going to call them this weekend, right?'"

Lewis has spent 24 years serving Soldiers at the Dining Facility.

"We will be proud of our work here until the very last day. We will love and support these Soldiers until they lock us out the door," she said.

"But I'm not sad. When one door closes, another one opens. You just have to trust in the Lord. He'll lead. My prayers are for other people anyway and for the Soldiers, not for me."

Dennis Hardin

Extended family misses Dining Facility assistant

Dining Facility assistant manager Dennis Hardin served the Redstone troops since 1975. He referred to his peers as his extended family.

Hardin died June 27. He was 53.

"There are no words that can do 'Big D' Dennis justice," Dining Facility manager Dan Tyree said. "He was our son, father, brother, husband, friend and right arm taken from us for a greater purpose known only to God. I am proud to call him a friend/brother."

Hardin, a Harvest native, was a member of New Zion P. B. Church where he served as treasurer and culinary host.

Survivors include his mother, Mamie L. Hardin McDonald; a dear friend, Brenda Dudgeon; two sons, Dennis W. Hardin Jr. and Anthony Wilson; five brothers, Michael Hardin, Roy McDonald, William H. McDonald Jr., William Hampton and Billy Malone; six sisters, Cheryl McDonald, Linda Payne, Joyce Lacey, Emma Hill, Marion Thompson and Jackie Brown; one grandchild, Cyanna Wilson; one great-aunt, Savannah Brown; six aunts, Margaret Hughes, Rebecca Gaines, Carol Hampton, Maxine McCrary, Colleen Stitt and Geneva Hammonds; four uncles, Pastor Johnnie Jones, Willie Jones, Joe H. Jones and Gordie Langham; and many nieces, nephews, cousins and extended family members.

Pagano Gym patrons like their renovated building

By Skip Vaughn
AMCOM/Garrison Public and Congressional Affairs

Pagano Gym got rave reviews during tours of the newly redone facility Friday.

The gym, closed the past 11 months, opened for business July 11 after the largest renovation project ever for the 1940s era building. It was completely redone inside. Walls were knocked down and rooms were expanded.

Ron Haws, of the Army Contracting Center-Redstone, heard about Friday's open house from a friend. He sometimes goes to Redstone Fitness Center.

"I just got done with the tour," Haws said as he returned to his car in Pagano's busy parking lot. "Oh my goodness. It's the Taj Mahal of fitness centers.

"The locker rooms, oh my gosh, it's incredible. I've been to many fitness centers. There's nothing like it. I'm really surprised. I don't think you can get any better than this. We're very fortunate to have that here so we can use as a civilian. I definitely see it as a perk."

Photo by Skip Vaughn
Pagano Gym staffer Joe Reed gives a tour Friday of the upgraded facility.

Redstone police officer Bill Quire has used Pagano since 1978 when he was a member of the 291st MP Company.

"Awesome facility, top notch," Quire said after touring the building. "Equal to any big base I've been on."

The $1.8 million project started in July 2010. Pagano's hours are Monday through Friday from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m., Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The weekend hours have reverted back to Pagano from the Redstone Fitness Center. Redstone Fitness Center's hours are Monday through Friday from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. The other two gyms operated by Family and Morale Welfare and Recreation include the Sparkman Fitness Center and the Col. Stephen K. Scott Fitness Center.

Blues festival tunes up on post activity field

Community invited
for music, barbecue

By Skip Vaughn
AMCOM/Garrison Public and Congressional Affairs

Redstone's annual Army concert has proven popular with country music fans, but others were ready for another genre.

They've gotten their wish.

Welcome to the first "Blues, Brew and Barbecue Festival," Aug. 20 at the Redstone Activity Field. The festival begins at 3 p.m. Gate 10 at Patton Road will open at noon; and the activity field gates open at 2.

Leela James

"This is the very first blues festival that we've ever done," Christal Howard, administrative management specialist in Family and Morale Welfare and Recreation, said. "Our customers wanted us to do something different. I guess everybody's tired of all the rock and country and wanted us to do something else. So we listened to our customers."

The entertainers include headliner Leela James; the Delta Guitar Slingers, featuring Michael Burks, Lurrie Bell and Sherman Robertson; opening act Rick Ward & Company, from Huntsville; and Tinsley Ellis.

"And we're going to have a variety of craft beers and Southern-style barbecue," Howard said. "And this event is open to the public."

Advance tickets are $15; and the cost is $20 on the day of show. "We have a premium ticket for $60 and that includes seating, separate restrooms, catered barbecue dinner, free domestic premium draft beer and wine," Howard said.

There will be a cash bar. Handicap seating will be available at the event.

Tickets are on sale at the Redstone FMWR ticket offices, including building 3711, the Post Restaurant Fund at the Sparkman Center, the Post Exchange and the bowling center; and also through ticketmaster.com. Premium tickets can only be purchased at the Community Activity Center, building 3711. For more information, call 313-5224 or visit www.redstonemwr.com.

Sponsors include Woody Anderson Ford, 94.1 WHRP, Fox 54, Knology, Miller Lite, Redstone Federal Credit Union, Verizon, Boeing, USAA, Blue Moon, Samuel Adams, Sweetwater, and Operation BBQ.

"This is the first time we've had a blues festival/concert here at Redstone Arsenal," Kenneth McDonald, chief of resource management division under FMWR, said. "So we're offering the community diversity and first-class entertainment at a great value."

Kiowa Warrior helicopter display recalls fallen aviators

By Kari Hawkins

AMCOM/Garrison Public and Congressional Affairs

Even though it's the most successful helicopter in the U.S. military, the history of the OH-58D Kiowa Warrior carries with it the spirit of 49 aviators.

Photo by Kari Hawkins

Retired Lt. Gen. William "Bud" Forster praises the Kiowa Warrior as the best helicopter in the Army fleet during a dedication ceremony Friday for the OH-58D Kiowa Warrior static display in front of the Program Executive Office for Aviation. During his 30-year career, the aviator was the first program executive officer for aviation, served as a program manager for the Kiowa Warrior and was the first officer selected by the Army for astronaut training.

Both the helicopter and those aviators – all of whom have perished flying the Kiowa Warrior in defense of the nation – were memorialized Friday during a dedication ceremony for the newest helicopter static display that now stands sentinel to the headquarters of the Program Executive Office for Aviation.

"This is the most successful helicopter program in the Army, no doubt," said retired Lt. Gen. William "Bud" Forster, who was the first program executive officer for aviation and who served as a program manager for the Kiowa Warrior.

The Kiowa Warrior – which has the highest optempo of any aircraft in the Army and probably the entire military, and which has flown more than 690,000 hours in combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan (with more than 750,000 hours for all missions) – was first introduced in Vietnam in 1969 as a scout helicopter with its mission to run reconnaissance on targets for other aircraft. From the beginning, the helicopter, manufactured by Bell Helicopter, was below budget in cost and quickly "outperformed every expectation," Forster said.

In 1987-89 during Operation Prime Chance, the Kiowa was upgraded for armed support in the Persian Gulf. In 1991, it was given a better weapons system to increase attack capabilities and, as the Army embraced its combat potential, it was armed with a .50-caliber machine gun and four Hellfire missiles.

Built to fly 96 hours every three months and then be rebuilt, the Kiowa has put up impressive combat hours during the 10 years it has flown missions in Iraq and Afghanistan. In Iraq, it has flown more than 100 hours per airframe per month, and has had a mission capable rate of above 84 percent, the highest of any Army aviation rotary wing aircraft.

"In Afghanistan, it is a different event and a different type of flying. It's a tough bird," Forster said. "It's an infantryman's helicopter. In Iraq, commanders canceled night patrols when there was no Kiowa helicopter (to provide air defense). That's how important and how precious this aircraft is."

Forster said that the contractor team that Bell Helicopter put together in the 1960s to work with the Army in developing and manufacturing the Kiowa Warrior "was absolutely essential to its success and something I've never seen again … (And then equipping the Kiowa Warrior with attack capabilities) was the best team effort I've ever seen between the Army and industry."

The retired general congratulated today's Kiowa Warrior employees, many of which were crowded around the event's tents, for their continued team effort on behalf of Soldiers.

"All of you have taken what we did and turned it into the best scout helicopter in the world, the best armed helicopter in the world," he said. "I wish I could come back and be your program manager again."

The display, which was the idea of Col. Robert Grigsby, the project manager for Armed Scout Helicopters, will allow program executive office employees as well as visitors to "take pride in the sacrifices and victory we've had on the battlefield and remember those who perished for us in defense of this nation," Mike Herbst, deputy project manager for Armed Scout Helicopters, said.

Grigsby's first order when he came to the program executive office for aviation a year ago was that "we would put a Kiowa Warrior on prominent display. His second order was that it would be dedicated to those who gave the ultimate sacrifice training and fighting in this aircraft," Herbst continued.

Those 49 aviators who have died while flying the helicopter were recognized in a roll call on Friday followed by the playing of Taps. Beside the Kiowa Warrior display there is a plaque listing their names.

"It's an honor to be here to acknowledge their sacrifice," said Lt. Col. Mathew Hannah, who was named the new product manager for Kiowa Warrior earlier Friday.

Kiowa Warrior's success on the battlefield is directly related to "a group of great Americans back here that work every day to give this program their passion in support of Soldiers … What happens in the field every day is enabled by Army aviation," said Maj. Gen. Tim Crosby, the program executive officer for aviation.

Photo by Kari Hawkins

Speaking to reporters at Friday's dedication of the Kiowa Warrior static display are, from left, Mike Herbst, deputy project manager for Armed Scout Helicopters; Lt. Col. Mathew Hannah, product manager for Kiowa Warrior; and Maj. Jeff McCoy, deputy product manager for Kiowa Warrior.

New leadership

Lt. Col. Steven Van Riper, left, incoming product manager for Apache Sensors, accepts the colors from Col. Shane Openshaw, center, project manager for Apache Helicopters, during a change of charter ceremony July 7 at Bob Jones Auditorium. Van Riper was the assistant program manager for sensors and weapons with the Technology Applications Project Office at Fort Eustis, Va., then the director for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology Directorate with the 402nd Army Field Support Brigade in Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Lt. Col. John Vannoy, right, is the outgoing product manager.

Photo by Sofia Bledsoe

‘Sun never sets on Space and Missile Defense Command’

SMDC/ARSTRAT commander compliments his work force

By Jason Cutshaw

SMDC/ARSTRAT Public Affairs

Members of the Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Forces Strategic Command came together for a town hall meeting July 6 in Bob Jones Auditorium.

This was the second town hall meeting by SMDC/ARSTRAT commander Lt. Gen. Richard Formica. He talked about his vision for the future and what he sees as some of the command’s challenges.

“There are not too many commanders who wear three hats and have three different functions, all at the same time,” Formica said. “The sun never sets on SMDC and our Soldiers are located around the world doing a fantastic job. And those of you here are providing them with the best support anyone could ask for.”

The general discussed numerous issues including the command being a diverse, complex and global organization that provides critical capabilities to the Army. The command performs its mission at a high level while being split based, multi-component with diverse constituencies at dispersed locations with a talented work force of Soldiers, civilians and contractors who contribute on a daily basis.

“There are unique roles all of you, our Soldiers and civilian work force, play in the Profession of Arms and I am proud of each and every one of you,” Formica said.

He talked about SMDC/ARSTRAT being the Army’s force modernization proponent for space, high altitude and global missile defense, as well as the Army’s operational integrator for global missile defense now and in the future.

“It is what we do at the Future Warfare Center and at the Tech Center that is important to our growth and those are the capabilities that make us a viable command,” Formica said. “We have to figure out how at USASMDC/ARSTRAT we can develop capabilities and provide them to the war fighters.”

Photo by Carrie E. David

SMDC/ARSTRAT chief of staff Col. Daniel Shanahan responds to a question about Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay/Voluntary Early Retirement Authority during the command’s town hall meeting July 6 at Bob Jones Auditorium.

Formica invited one of the command’s senior noncommissioned officers to speak to everyone in the stead of the SMDC/ARSTRAT Command Sgt. Maj. Larry Turner and inform them of some events that SMDC/ARSTRAT Soldiers are taking part in as well as training and safety issues that affect everyone in the command.

“Our command is spread out, we have a lot going on and the sun never sets on SMDC,” G-3 Sgt. Maj. John Mattie said. “The sun may be setting somewhere, but the mission and our Soldiers are still carrying on.

“Whether you are a Soldier or a civilian, your job is important as we support our men and women in the field all around the world.”

Before concluding the town hall meeting, the general welcomed new military leaders and presented service awards and length of service pins to several civilians.

The civilian honorees included Barry Anderson, G-3, Commander’s Award for Civilian Service, and Wanda Tucker, G-8, Achievement Medal for Civilian Service. The civil service length of service awards went to Kenneth South, 40 years; Samuel Bertling, 35 years; Dr. Steven Messervy, 35 years; Terrance Bauer, 30 years; David Crouch, 30 years; George Knowlton IV, 30 years and Olive Jordan, 30 years.

“Thank you for all you do, I am proud to serve with you all,” Formica said.

Seabees help keep Army testing on target

By Sherry Hilley
Redstone Test Center S3 Office

Rain or shine, you can see the Navy Seabees from the Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 24, the "Double Dozen" headquartered in Huntsville, hard at work at Test Area 4, one of the test ranges of the Test and Evaluation Command's Redstone Test Center.

From grading roads to rebuilding a damaged wall for the water test stand, this diverse group of Seabees is dedicated to supporting our testing mission. Since early June, these active reservists have spent 10-hour days on specific projects to not only keep RTC testing on target, but to further their careers and stay in condition for subsequent activation of their battalion in support of the current operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

To date their savings to the Army is more than $100,000. And Lt.j.g. Don Bowen, assistant operations officer, indicates they not only are keeping their Seabee Operational Readiness Training Status up through attaining key construction skills, but they are utilizing a combination of RTC and Seabee equipment to obtain said skills – both of which are essential when the battalion is activated in the near future.

Their efforts were recently recognized by the Redstone Test Center commander Col. Steve Kihara, when he visited the site and extended his thanks for a job well done.

Photo by Ed Harris, Redstone Test Center
Redstone Test Center commander Col. Steve Kihara, third from left, thanks the Navy Seabees from the Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 24.

"What you are doing here is great for our center, great training for you," Kihara said. "We can't thank you enough."

Kihara shook hands with Bowen, steel worker 1st class Jody Roberts, steel worker 1st class David Kirby, equipment operator 3rd class Paul Menard, builder 2nd class Kelvin Henry, construction man/engineering aide Clay Perry and equipment operator 1st class Joshua Burton.

Under Roberts' supervision and guidance, the group is not only finishing the repair of the wall, but will construct three-sided concrete wall enclosures around existing test equipment and clean out an existing overgrown drainage ditch at TA 4.

And the Redstone Test Center is not stopping there. RTC facilities manager Chuck Cassidy has the Seabees lined up to work on the TA 3 road repairs, TA 5 security light repairs and TA 5 test stand rip-rap installation.

The Seabees' simple motto tells the story: "With compassion for others, we build, we fight, for peace with freedom."

Their value to Redstone Test Center can't be measured in dollars and cents, but their dedication and can-do attitude should be the foundation for motivating all of us toward achieving our goals.

Community leaders

AMRDEC director Eric Edwards, standing at far left, received the Government and Industry Award from the Alabama A&M University Huntsville Progressive Alumni Chapter at its 10th annual Leadership Awards Banquet on June 4. Nine community leaders were honored during this year's event which supports the programs, activities and students of Alabama A&M University. Standing, from left, are Edwards, Dr. Sonnie Hereford, Arthur McDonald, Wilbert Brown and representative for elder Timothy Rainey. Seated are Pearlie Stamper, Rachel Walker, Pastenna Nunn and Stephanie Malone.
Photo by Jerome Saintjones

Dog play is all in day's work for canine team

Two teams win at nationals
to bring honor back to post

By Kari Hawkins
AMCOM/Garrison Public and Congressional Affairs

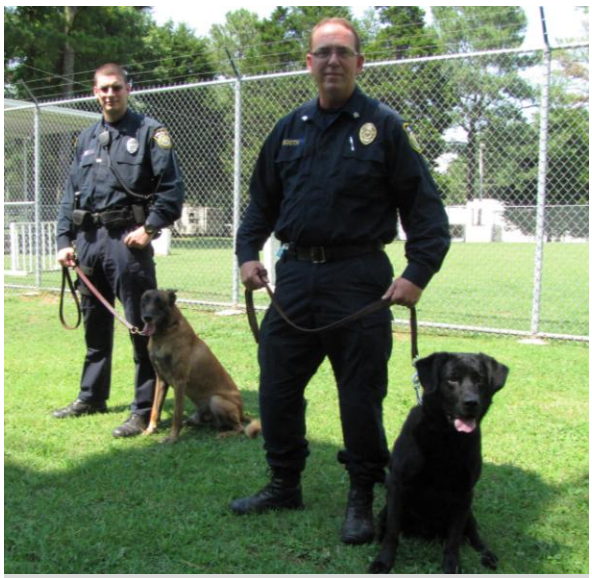


Photo by Kari Hawkins

Redstone Arsenal's winning military working dog teams now include Officer Eric Moe and his dog Bruno, left, and Sgt. Billy Booth and his dog Bleckie. This year's competition at the U.S. Police Canine Association's detector dog trials was a first for Moe as a handler with Bruno and for Bleckie as an explosives detection dog working for Booth.

Bleckie and Bruno are two dogs who know how to put on a show.

But their dog shows aren't based on fluffy hair, bows and nail polish, or their breed's physical good looks.

Rather, these two military working dogs compete at dog shows that judge their ability to detect explosives.

And as members of one of the best military working dog units in the nation, Bleckie and Bruno – and their handlers – followed tradition by bringing home to Redstone Arsenal yet another group of trophies won at the U.S. Police Canine Association's regional and national detector dog trials.

"We have consistently done well within the region and nationally," said Sgt. Billy Booth, the handler for Bleckie, indicating several trophies in the office of the Directorate of Emergency Services' military working dog section. "We are very confident with our dogs. And we like to continuously test ourselves. That's how we get better."

At the regional competition in Chattanooga in April, Booth and Bleckie brought home first place in indoor explosives detection, outdoor explosives detection and overall explosives detection; and Officer Eric Moe and his dog Bruno brought home third place in agility in the patrol section and second place in indoor explosives search. As a team, the foursome placed second in the region, which included canine law enforcement teams from Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee.

Because of their high scores, the foursome went on to the national detector dog trials held in Pearl, Miss., in May. Booth and Bleckie won second overall in explosive detection, first place in outdoor explosives search and second place in indoor explosives search. Moe and Bruno won fifth place overall in explosive detection with a third place in indoor explosives search.

"This competition was very important to us and brought with it a certain amount of stress because we wanted to do well not only for our personal reasons but also for everyone else who works here at the kennel in the canine section," Booth said.

"Everyone here is involved in everything we do for our dogs. It takes all of us to train these dogs and to care for them. We set out training problems for each other, and we all help with grooming, bathing, vet medications and anything to do with the well-being of the dogs. And all of us have had to play the bad guy role for the attack dogs."

Preparing for competitions doesn't mean changing the routine at the military working dog section. Training is an everyday activity that requires a higher standard than that set by the police canine association. Army regulations for military working dogs are much more stringent that those followed in civilian police and search units.

"Getting them ready for the trials wasn't any different than what we normally do. We are continuously training," Booth said. "We did, though, work more on the national odor recognition test because they had to pass that before they could compete in the operational testing."

To pass the odor recognition tests, dogs must be able to detect the odors in 18 different cans. At the trials, the canine teams are judged on their speed and accuracy in locating explosives while adhering to accepted search

practices and procedures. They are also judged on leash control, the canine's quick alert response, the thoroughness and consistency of the search, and the attitude of both the handler and the dog.

"The three judges and chief judge score you and your dog as a team," Booth said. "So, it is very important that the two of you understand each other, that you can read each other's body language and that you can respond quickly to each other."

For Booth and Bleckie, a 4-year-old black Labrador retriever, there was a steep learning curve as they developed as partners. The two have only been together since February, being partnered by the military working dog section's lead, Capt. Jack Rush, after Booth's dog of five years, Eestabon, died of cancer. This was their first competition working together.

Moe and Bruno, a 10-year-old Belgian Malinois, have been together for two years. Bruno is trained both as an explosives detection dog and as an attack dog. Though Bruno has competed before, it was Moe's first experience as a handler at a competition.

"I was nervous," Moe said. "Anytime you go before other dog handlers – your peers – and you want to do your best, it can make you nervous. Competition causes a lot of stress. And your dog knows it. They can tell it in your body language and how you hold the leash tight. But they also know how to work with it."

Photo by Kari Hawkins

Sgt. Billy Booth puts his dog Bleckie through a training exercise at the Directorate of Emergency Services canine section facility. The handler-dog team recently placed in both the regional and national U.S. Police Canine Association's detector dog trials.

Knowing each other and being able to work together in all kinds of situations are part of the bonding experience between a handler and a canine.

"When a handler is partnered with a dog, there is a period where you are building rapport," Moe said of his friendship with Bruno.

"For the first two weeks to a month, you just hang out together, going for walks, playing ball and being yourself so that the dog gets to know your body language and your demeanor. After that, you start using commands and work up to him obeying you. Once we had that rapport, we worked on explosives training and attack training together."

The handler-dog team is based on a bond that develops with time and experiences together. Booth and Moe both look forward to different experiences they can share with their dogs, such as doing demonstrations for organizations on post.

"We need to know how our dogs respond to live situations. They can cause a lot of stress," Booth said. "So, it's good to put both the handler and the dog in situations that can help prepare them for the real thing. The dog has got to be able to perform just as well even when their handler is under a lot of stress."

Both Booth and Moe, like the other handlers at the section, enjoy the time they spend with their military working dogs, both on and off duty.

"You get to play with the dogs all day," Booth said.

"They are very controllable dogs. They are not mean dogs by any means, but they have been trained to have controlled aggression. One of the first things in training is making sure we can approach civilians with our patrol dog. We try not to take any chances. We put a lot of time and training into these dogs."

The two handlers like the competitions for more than the trophies they bring home. The events also give them the opportunity to learn different training techniques, network with other dog handlers and spend a lot of time with their dogs.

"Since we have a kennel facility here, we don't take our dogs home with us," Booth said. "So, when we get to stay in a hotel room with our dog, we get 24 hours of bonding time. I really noticed a difference in Bleckie after the time we spent together in Chattanooga. We just got to know each other better."

Both Booth and Moe have a lot of experience as dog handlers. Booth grew up in the country with hunting dogs and became a military working dog handler after joining the Arsenal's police force.

"I kind of lucked into this job," Booth said. "Once I got into it there was no turning back. I just really, really enjoyed it."

Moe grew up with three German shepherds. After 9/11, he joined the Army's military police force, hoping to eventually be assigned to a military working dog unit. In 2002, he was stationed at the Arsenal, working as a military police officer and spending his off time volunteering at the military working dog section. He was eventually assigned to the section while at Redstone. After six years in service, Moe left the Army and returned to Redstone to work in the military working dog section.

There is close camaraderie between the officers who work in the Arsenal's military working dog section and between the officers and the section's dogs.

"These dogs are our partners," Booth said. "From a law enforcement standpoint, you are working with them all the time, and that increases your confidence level in your dog's abilities."

"Handlers have a real strong bond with their dog. You can't replace it," Moe added.

Huntsville Center interior designers pass professional exam

By Jo Anita Miley

Huntsville Center Public Affairs

Two Army Engineering and Support Center-Huntsville employees have joined the ranks of the professional interior designers.

Lauren McCaul and Lauren Ploetze of the Huntsville Center Engineering Directorate's Architectural Branch Interior Design Section passed the National Council for Interior Design Qualification Examination April 1-2.

Reaching this milestone in their careers is part of a five-year process from acceptance into an interior design program to completion of interior design licensing requirements.

An interior design practitioner offers or renders services in connection with the creation and design of spaces that protect the health, safety and welfare of people in the finished space within the site surrounding the buildings that its principal purpose is human occupancy for use.

Licensed interior designers are trained to functionally create spaces that meet building codes, life safety codes and the standards set by the Americans With Disabilities Act.

McCaul said the NCIDQ protects public health, safety and welfare by identifying interior designers who have the knowledge and experience to create interior spaces that are not just aesthetically pleasing, but also functional and safe.

"While most people think interior designers just 'decorate,' we have to be able to take a new or renovated building and lay out the interiors so that all codes are met and the end users needs for things such as private offices, cubicle spaces, break areas, restrooms, corridors and egress are met as well," McCaul said. "This must be done while staying within the parameters of a building. The work we do can be compared to a giant puzzle – we're given the pieces and have to make them all fit."

Photo by Jo Anita Miley

With 3,250 hours of supervised interior design under their belts, Huntsville Center's Engineering Directorate's Architectural Branch interior designers Lauren McCaul and Lauren Ploetze took the National Council for Interior Design qualification examination in April and are now licensed by NCIDQ, an organization of regulatory boards and provincial association in interior design. Both are graduates of Auburn University's interior design programs.

McCaul said gaining ample real world work experience prior to taking the NCIDQ exam is very important. Interior design is a profession you have to practice to improve. It is not something you come out of college ready to do. A lot hinges on the experience you gain from the interior design businesses and the number of hours of qualifying experience in interior design work. Candidates must obtain a bachelor's degree from a school that participates in the Council for Interior Design Accreditation accredited interior design program and

have 3,250 hours qualified hours of interior design experience while under a registered interior designer or registered architect before they are eligible to take the exam.

The 16-hour NCIDQ exam is given twice a year, and consists of two four-hour multiple choice question sections and an eight-hour hand-drafted practicum. The exam can be taken in separate parts or all at once. McCaul and Ploetze said they wanted to get it over with, so they took the entire test at one time. The exam has three parts: two four-hour multiple choice question sections and an eight-hour hand-drafted practicum that tests the knowledge of interior designers and deems them capable of creating and designing spaces that protect the health, safety and welfare of people in the finished spaces. Candidates must pass all three sections before they are given a certificate.

McCaul has been with the Corps of Engineers for the past two years. Upon graduating from Auburn University's College of Architecture Design and Construction with a bachelor's degree in interior design in 2008, McCaul took a job with the government working as an interior designer at Huntsville Center, using her work experiences to prepare her for the exam.

"My past projects have helped to prepare me for the exam," McCaul said. "I've already worked on two major programs at the center."

McCaul said NCIDQ is very specific about what is required to take the exam. Getting the right experience is a plus. She used the experience she gained while supporting Huntsville Center's Centralized Furnishings Program and Integrated Modular Medical Support Systems Program in the Installation Support and Programs Management Directorate gave her the specialized experience she needed.

Ploetze, who also received her degree in interior design from Auburn, began government service with Huntsville Center as well as an interior designer on the center's ISPM's furniture team in 2009.

Ploetze said working at Huntsville Center the past two years has been similar for her, due to an added focus on professional development.

"Working for the government has given me more opportunities for complete professional development," Ploetze said. "I was given ample time to pursue my license and afforded the opportunity to work on diverse projects."

Ploetze said working on Huntsville Center's Centralized Furnishings Program afforded her the opportunity to work on projects that involved solving unique interior design issues. This has prepared her for a career where she can be utilized in any interior design capacity and makes her a strong asset to Huntsville Center.

McCaul and Ploetze said working in Huntsville Center's Architectural Branch is very conducive to the licensure process. They had the full support of their supervisors: Todd DuVernay, chief of the Architectural Branch, and Carol Elder, supervisor for the Interior Design section at Huntsville Center. The Architectural Branch purchased study materials for their section's use and sponsored a study workshop in Huntsville to help them prepare for the exam.

McCaul said the professional development training doesn't stop with passing the exam. There is also a continuing education requirement that has to be fulfilled to maintain their licensure.

There are four licensed interior designers in Huntsville Center's Architectural Branch including McCaul, Ploetze, Amy Webb and Stephanie Woods.

Although there is no requirement at Huntsville Center for interior designers to become licensed, this is recommended for professional development. McCaul and Ploetze elected to take the exam as soon as they were eligible, to further their careers.

McCaul and Ploetze both said they also highly encourage other interior designers to pursue their professional licensure. Several interior designers within their section are in the process of pursuing NCIDQ certification as well.

"Having this designation just says that we have been tested and proven to be able to protect peoples' lives through our designs," McCaul said. "It really doesn't really change what we do in our job. It just certifies that we can do it better."

Deployment award

Col. Thomas Magness, commander of Afghanistan Engineer District-North, presents an award in Afghanistan to Arkie Fanning of the Engineering and Support Center-Huntsville. Fanning served as assistant chief of construction and chief of the quality assurance branch from July 15, 2010 until July 3, 2011.
Army photo

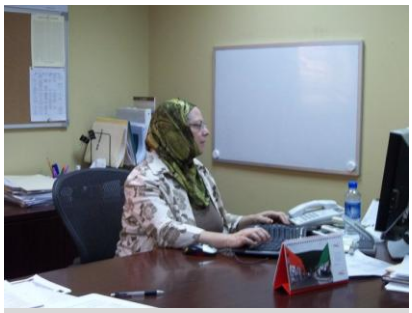
Contracting specialists join Soldiers overseas

By Ann Jensis-Dale
Army Contracting Command Public Affairs

The Army Contracting Command's Deployable Cadre program supports critical contracting requirements by providing skilled and experienced contracting specialists to support missions beyond the scope of ACC's day-to-day mission.

Deployable cadre opportunities range from responding to natural disasters, emergencies and urgent requirements to augmenting Expeditionary Contracting Command mission operations.

Courtesy photo
Lynn Roberts, a contract specialist at ACC-Redstone and member of the ACC Deployable Cadre program, has worked for the government for 39 years and deployed to both Iraq and Afghanistan.



Courtesy photo
Deborah Doyle is the ACC-Kuwait Special Projects Division chief and ACC Deployable Cadre program member.

Deployable cadre program members not only receive financial incentives when serving, but gain experience and professional development.

"We are a part of getting the mission done to ensure the continuity and availability of services required by the war fighters here and downrange," Deborah Doyle, a cadre member, said.

The Army Contracting Command deployable cadre is committed and ready to serve and support the ultimate customer – the Soldiers.

ACC Deployable cadre facts include the following:

- Volunteers support enduring overseas contingency missions.
- Volunteers stand ready to support short-notice critical requirements.
- They choose to be considered for overseas deployment, stateside TDY, or both.
- They are guaranteed return rights to their current assignments.
- They receive readiness training prior to overseas deployment.
- Overseas deployment is typically six months.
- Requirements include: ACC employee in the 1102, 1103 and 1910 career fields; DAWIA Level II or III certified; meet medical and dental requirements for overseas deployments; and sign a commitment to deploy agreement.
- Benefits include: pride in service; professional development; real-world experience; career enhancement; travel opportunities; generous financial incentives; and adventure experience of a lifetime.

For more information, go to www.armyhire.com/volunteer.

Defense contracting focus of Redstone summit

By Chris Swart
Army Contracting Command-Redstone

The Army Contracting Command-Redstone contracting center held a government/industry Defense Contract Audit Agency Summit June 21-22 at the Sparkman Center.

Participants included senior leadership from the Aviation and Missile Command and the DCAA, and major suppliers for aviation, missile and space products and services.

"Contracting and DCAA have the same objective – to be good stewards for the taxpayer," Cathy Dickens, ACC-Redstone executive director/principal assistant responsible for contracting, said.

Issues were identified from industry, contracting officers and auditors for discussion. Government panels with representation from DCAA and ACC provided solutions and answered questions to provide clear guidance to industry.

The guidance is expected to pay dividends in improving the proposal and audit process which allows for better deals for the taxpayer and more timely support to the Soldier.

Courtesy photo
Ken Saccoccia, DCAA assistant director of policy and plans, discusses the DCAA rules of engagement.

Courtesy photo
Cathy Dickens, ACC-Redstone executive director/principal assistant responsible for contracting, speaks to the group during the June summit.

Local Army chapter thrives with post growth

Association will redouble its efforts in support areas as troops depart

By Kari Hawkins
AMCOM/Garrison Public and Congressional Affairs

The growing synergy of Army aviation and missile support activities at Redstone Arsenal often works as a magnet for new business development, attracting companies and professionals interested in supporting the military's high-technology programs.

And that magnet has caught Paul Elliott in its grip.

This former Army aviator was drawn to Huntsville a dozen years ago, opening an office for a Washington, D.C. consulting company.

Soon he also became active in the Redstone-Huntsville Chapter of the Association of the U.S. Army. He represented the chapter as its vice president of legislative affairs, which led to his nomination to and service for seven years on the national AUSA Resolutions Committee.

Today, Elliott is president of one of North Alabama's most influential military organizations, leading a 54-member board of directors, nearly 3,000 members and more than 300 corporate members.

"This organization is run by lots of volunteers," Elliott said. "We are very fortunate that our chapter enjoys a lot of volunteers who put in a lot of time and hard work to make our programs successful. We've got a lot of great people taking care of this chapter."

Elliott's work on the local AUSA board and with the national organization was a natural progression from his Army career. The retired lieutenant colonel culminated his 23-year Army career with his last assignments at the Pentagon, where he worked for the Army chief of staff in the acquisition corps, and in the Office of Legislative Affairs, where he advised senior Army leadership on congressional issues and prepared them for testimony in congressional hearings.

"I've been a member of several military groups – AUSA, Quad A, American Helicopter Society and other professional organizations that support the Army and Army aviation – for many years," Elliott said.

"In regards to AUSA, there were several chapters in the D.C. area that were very active, very productive. I am familiar with those and the national AUSA in D.C. This chapter here does a super job. We are very active. We have been chapter of the year in our size category numerous times because of the work we do for the Army and the Soldiers, and the activities that we have."

While the local chapter's size is substantial and new members are always welcomed, Elliott said the chapter's success is not so much tied to its size as it is to the programs it coordinates in support of the Army. Even with most of the young Soldier population leaving the Arsenal community due to 2005 Base Realignment and Closure recommendations, there is still plenty of opportunity for the local chapter to grow in terms of membership and programs.

"We will continue to adapt to the changes the Army makes. We gain a unit, lost a unit," Elliott said. "We've lost Soldiers, but we've gained a four-star command, we have a larger general officer and senior executive service population, and a substantial Department of the Army civilian population.

"This is not just an organization for Soldiers or officers or enlisted or active duty. We are also an organization for active Guard and Reserve Soldiers, military families and retirees, Department of the Army civilians and the contractor work force that supports the Army. That's a key difference between our organization and many others, and we want all those groups involved in our activities. We want to expand our outreach and service to the Army."

Programs and events that focus on Soldier activities, and "programs that highlight excellence in the Army" are among Elliott's favorites. The annual Armed Forces Celebration Week with its patriotic Concert in the Park, and recognition programs for Soldiers and appreciation events for families are among his personal favorites.

"With the Soldier ranks leaving Redstone, we will change some of our events from being focused on the individual Soldier unit at Redstone Arsenal to broadening our focus to the National Guard and Reserve units throughout our chapter footprint," he said. "We also want to establish ROTC and JRTOC units as AUSA cadet companies."

The local AUSA chapter footprint is quite extensive, including all of North Alabama and reaching south to Birmingham and Montgomery.

"Because we cover such a large physical area, it is important for us to encourage the establishment of satellite chapters, such as the one we have in Anniston," Elliott said. "We need to pursue additional satellites in places like the Shoals and Birmingham so we can better serve our members."

With a large board of directors that includes assignments in all areas of concern to AUSA, including Army recruiting, retiree and veterans affairs, corporate affairs and ROTC/JROTC awards, Elliott's role is more as a spokesperson for the chapter rather than a program coordinator or mission organizer.

Photo by Kari Hawkins

Retired Lt. Col. Paul Elliott now leads the Redstone-Huntsville Chapter of the Association of the U.S. Army as its new president. His two-year assignment will be a transition time for the active organization as Redstone Arsenal's large contingency of young Soldiers leaves the area and the chapter redoubles its efforts in support of National Guard, Reserve and ROTC/JROTC units as well as Army civilians, general officers, retirees and military-connected families.

"Our chapter officers are the ones who accomplish the mission of taking care of the membership and supporting the Army," he said. "There are a lot of activities, a lot of behind-the-scenes coordination to make these events happen. We are fortunate to have a large volunteer support group of people who want to be active with the chapter. Our corporate members are the sponsors who provide support for our programs. Without corporate sponsorships we would not be able to put on the programs that we do."

Joining the AUSA board as new officers this year is Rick Turner, vice president of Department of the Army Civilian Affairs; Willie Pullom, vice president of Soldier Affairs; and Clayton Hanna, Jim Bradford and Linda

Crutcher as board members at large. Kris McBride assumes the role of executive vice president, which is the position the next president often holds. Other board members remain the same, although the may have shifted to different positions on the board. Information on the chapter can be found at http://www.ausaredstone.org.

Elliott enjoys his involvement in AUSA and remains committed to the organization because he views it as a chance to "pay back and continue to support the Army." Elliott's military career, which began in 1999, included serving as a pilot for the OH-58 Kiowa Warrior , UH-1 Iroquois and UH-60 Black Hawk with two tours in Korea and a deployment to Germany.

"I loved the people. I made friendships for a lifetime and worked with some great Americans," he said.

Now working as the vice president for Army programs for AgustaWestland, Elliott predicts plenty of growth in the local aviation community and its expertise level as the U.S. draws down its involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan, and synergy further develops between aviation organizations at Redstone.

"The Army will be so much more experienced from combat in terms of tactics, techniques and procedures," he said. "Huntsville, Redstone and the Program Executive Office for Aviation, the Aviation and Missile Command, the Aviation and Missile Research Development and Engineering Center, and the Redstone Test Center are now a center for all aviation support for helicopters, fixed wing and unmanned aircraft vehicles."

Scholarship winners experience week at Space Camp

By Jason Cutshaw
SMDC/ARSTRAT Public Affairs

For a few young students, their journey to reach the stars began early.

Sixteen students received the Air, Space and Missile Defense Association Space Camp scholarship and got to spend July 3-8 at Space Camp at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center.

On July 6, the scholarship winners were treated to a lunch by members of the ASMDA board and got a chance to speak to those who made the week possible.

"The technologies that you are going to take away from here and study are the ones that are going to take us back to the moon and beyond," Deborah Barnhart, U.S. Space & Rocket Center chief executive officer, said. "Someone your age is going to be the first person to step on Mars. The reason you are here, the reason people thought so much of your intellect and your capability is so you can take us forward into the future.

"So go home and inspire your friends and encourage them to study math and science and technology so that they can help you get to Mars as well."

NASA photo

Members of the Air, Space and Missile Defense Association gather with the 16 recipients of the ASMDA Space Camp Scholarship. Since 1996, ASMDA has sent 173 students to Space Camp.

Since 1996, ASMDA has sent 173 students to Space Camp.

Any child age 9-11 of a parent or guardian currently assigned to Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Forces Strategic Command, Program Executive Office for Missiles and Space, Joint Functional Component Command-Integrated Missile Defense, Missile and Space Intelligence Center, Marshall Space Flight Center, and Missile Defense Agency, whether military or government civilian, was eligible for the scholarship.

The 16 Space Camp students this year are from Huntsville, Decatur, Madison; Colorado Springs and Pagosa Springs, Colo.; Delta Junction, Alaska; Germany and Kwajalein Atoll, Republic of the Marshall Islands. They include Katherine Ambrose, Nicole Ansley, Michael Aughtman, Abigail Baez, Neeley Bowden, Graeson Cossey, Cade Cowan, Isaiah Fowler, Harrison Kiser, Drenen Magee, Grace Palenapa, Brittany Ransom, Carson Rowell, Moriah Schlichting, Brian Shockley and Zachary Taylor.

“This is a great day for ASMDA, this is one of the most fun days we have because we get to come to the Space & Rocket Center and we get to eat lunch with the space campers, also known as ASMDA scholars,” Debra Wymer, ASMDA president, said. “Make the most of your time here. Learn all you can, make new friends, make memories, and I ask you all to go back and talk to your friends and let them know how much you learned and how much fun you had at Space Camp.

“Encourage them to apply for next year because we want to continue to have boys and girls, just like you, back here next year,” she told the campers.

Students were selected for the scholarship based on an essay, school grades, interest in science and space, and financial need. The scholarship covers one week at Space Camp, travel, a flight suit, clothing package, a calling card and spending money.

“I want to congratulate each and every one of you for being here today because you had to want to be here,” Madison Mayor Paul Finley said. “This wasn’t something that was just given to you, you had to work for it and I think what you are going to find in life from here on out is that if you are going to make a difference and you are going to continue to challenge yourself, you are going to have to work for what you want.

“You are learning things this week that are critical to taking the next step in technology. You are learning about communication and how important it is to taking that next step. You have to have a passion and a vision to move forward. You can’t just be willing to stay where you are. Take what you have learned and don’t be afraid to push yourself.”

One speaker at the luncheon brought his unit’s colors, which spent 161 days and flew more than 65 million miles in outer space aboard the International Space Station.

“When we were your age, the notion of going to the moon was absurd, and then in our lifetime it happened,” Lt. Gen. Richard Formica, SMDC/ARSTRAT commander, said. “There is something that you are talking about today or this week at Space Camp that is absurd, but in your lifetime you and your contemporaries will make happen. And you will make it happen because of the intellectual investment you will make and your excitement about what can be.

“I want you to keep learning, keep active, keep trying and help others. None of us succeed on our own. We all succeed because we are part of a team and someone depends on you besides you. You are doing great things and I want you to get excited about where you are going to take America in the future because something absurd is going to happen, and those of us who are going to benefit from it thank you in advance.”

After the lunch was over, some of the campers spoke about what they had learned and how excited they were to be at Space Camp.

“This week has been going very well,” said 11-year-old camper Brian Shockley from Colorado Springs. “I am having so much fun, I have enjoyed everything we have done.

“I thought this would be a great experience and I have always been interested in space. I am going to tell all my friends they should come.”

The luncheon was held as part of the children’s week at Space Camp. During the week the children participated in other activities including rocket construction and launch, water activities, a simulated Space Shuttle mission, Mars mission simulators, Manned Maneuvering Unit, Multi-Axis Trainer and enjoyed an IMAX movie.

“This week has been amazing,” said 10-year-old Graeson Cossey from Kwajalein. “I like a lot of things but I have really enjoyed the ride that you sit in a chair and it spins you around really fast. I rode the ride that shoots you straight up really fast and it was so much fun.

“The reason I came is because I thought it would be very neat to learn about space. I have always wanted to go up in space sometime and see the planets and learn about different things in space because science has always been my favorite subject.

“I am going to tell all my friends how great it is and that they should come here because it is very fun and you learn a lot,” she added. “I love it here.”

Tobyhanna Army Depot: center of radar excellence

TOBYHANNA ARMY DEPOT, Pa. – A large, white radome dominates the high ground at Tobyhanna Army Depot in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania. It symbolizes the growing number of radars and sensors, including Air Defense, Air Traffic Control, Ground Surveillance, Airborne, Shipborne, Range Threat systems and critical Counter Fire systems, which Tobyhanna personnel maintain and support for the Army, Air Force, Marine Corps and Navy.

"Tobyhanna has been repairing and testing radars since the 1960s," says Col. Charles Gibson, commander of Tobyhanna Army Depot, "so we have extensive capability and experience in this critical commodity."

Tobyhanna has flexible and modern facilities to effectively handle today's radars and accommodate additional systems. The depot's Antenna and Radar Range Campus offers 12 distinct radar test sites comprised of multiple test pads and specialized support facilities and equipment. Indoor testing includes several anechoic chambers, Near Field Probes, an elevated temperature burn facility and rain testing. Outdoor testing includes modified Munson Road facilities (used to ensure systems will function after being driven over rough terrain) and a Tower Track calibration range.

Army photo
Dan Nawrocki, an electronics mechanic at Tobyhanna Army Depot, connects test cables to feed points on an MST-T1 Multiple Threat Emitter System antenna wave guide system. Tobyhanna employees overhaul, repair and align the Air Force AN/MST-T1 MUTES and AN/MST-T1 mini-MUTES transmitters.

"The Antenna and Radar Range Campus provides clean air volume and free-space testing that offers interference-free, unobstructed vectors in azimuth and elevation," George Galaydick, electronics engineer, Production Engineering Directorate, said. "The campus is electromagnetically quiet and allows us to perform live target, full-power testing with high energy radar systems without disruption or compromise by radio frequency interference.

"Our location and terrain also facilitate the construct of outdoor radar testing solutions that minimize unwanted phenomenon such as multipath and point clutter, commonly called radar echoes, while maximizing availability of air volume for omni-directional scanning at the depot's higher elevations." *(Tobyhanna release)*

'Aerial layer' expands Army network during evaluation

By Kris Osborn
Army News Service

WHITE SANDS MISSILE RANGE, N.M. – Aerostat blimps and Shadow unmanned aircraft systems configured with Joint Tactical Radio Systems, have been flying above the desert terrain at White Sands Missile Range, N.M, during the Army's Network Integration Evaluation.

The unmanned aircraft systems are being used to extend a mobile, ad-hoc line-of-sight network able to pass voice, video, data and images across the force in real time, service officials said.

"The aerial layer is working well. It increases the range of the WNW (Wideband Networking Waveform) and SRW (Soldier Radio Waveform) waveforms and expands the overall network," Navy Capt. Jeff Hoyle, program manager for JTRS Network Enterprise Domain, said.

Army photo
The Army has outfitted Shadow unmanned aircraft systems with Joint Tactical Radio Systems' Rifleman's Radio as part of an overall effort to expand ranges of a line-of-sight mobile, ad-hoc network during the Network Integration Exercise at White Sands.

The aerostat blimps being used in the NIE are carrying a four-channel, software-programmable JTRS Ground Mobile Radio as well as two-channel JTRS Handheld Manpack Small radios. The Shadow UAS are engineered to carry single-channel JTRS

Rifleman Radios.

The idea is to expand a terrestrial, JTRS-based communications network by adding aerial nodes designed to extend the ability to relay information across further distances through line-of-sight connections. The software-programmable JTRS radios, which can make use of encryption to safeguard information, are built to send IP packets of data, voice, video and images via multiple waveforms between static command centers, vehicles on-the-move and even dismounted individual Soldiers on patrol.

"The aerial layer allows RF (radio frequencies) to travel further and more freely. It gets you line-of-sight connections to additional nodes on the network," Jerry Tyree, deputy for material at Brigade Modernization Command, said. "We're getting ranges greater than 60 kilometers with the aerial layer."

Part of the rationale for JTRS technology is to afford battlefield communications in an austere environment where satellite technology might not always be available.

Non-proprietary wideband networking waveforms such as Soldier Radio Waveform and Wideband Networking Waveform – which use a larger portion of the available spectrum than legacy waveforms to transmit information – are key to the development of JTRS technology.

The GMR radio can transmit information using the high bandwidth waveforms such as WNW and SRW as well as numerous legacy waveforms such as Single Channel Ground and Airborne Radio System, UHF, VHF and Enhanced Position Location Reporting Systems.

Two-channel HMS radios can also transmit via multiple waveforms such as SINCGARS and SRW, among others.

Both SRW and WNW have the ability to seamlessly route and retransmit information, Hoyle explained. SRW is targeted for the individual Soldier, individual small units and sensors; WNW can move information longer distances and is designed for technologies such as Aerostat blimps and mobile command posts.

SRW is designed to efficiently use spectrum in 1.2 Megahertz bandwidth allotments, Hoyle said.

WNW can also support 1.2 Megahertz allotments, but it operates more efficiently and effectively at 3 or 5-Megahertz bandwidth allotments (up to 30 Megahertz when available) to deliver even higher network capacity, he added.

Court orders halt to 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' enforcement

By Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals has ordered the government to stop enforcing the terms of the law that prevents openly gay servicemembers from being in the military.

The Defense Department will comply and is informing commands worldwide of the court's order, Pentagon spokesman Marine Corps Col. Dave Lapan said.

The court lifted a stay put in place Nov. 1. DoD and Justice Department lawyers are studying the ruling.

The stay was put in place after 9th Circuit Judge Virginia Phillips ruled the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" law was unconstitutional. The case went to a three-judge panel on the Court of Appeals, which released its ruling July 6.

Since the court issued the stay in November, Congress passed and President Barack Obama signed repeal of the 1993 law.

"In the meantime, implementation of the DADT repeal voted by the Congress and signed into law by the president last December is proceeding smoothly, is well under way, and certification is just weeks away," Lapan said.

The repeal act calls for training the force and for the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the secretary of defense to certify to the president that the conditions for repeal are met.

Three golfers named to league honor roll

Matt Philie

CENTER VALLEY, Pa. – Not only did the Army golf team experience success on the course by winning the Patriot League Championship and advancing to the NCAA Tournament, the Black Knights also excelled in the classroom.

Junior William Park and sophomores Kelsey Eargle and Matt Philie were all named to the Patriot League Academic Honor, it was announced by the league office June 27. Park, Eargle and Philie are among the 42 league golfers who earned at least a 3.20 grade-point average during the spring semester.

Philie, from West Friendship, Md., posted the highest grade-point average of all of the honorees with his 4.248 in the spring semester as a Systems Engineering major. Because of his military work, Philie was able to surpass a 4.0.

Eargle, from Montgomery, Texas, showed a 3.729 grade-point average in Systems Engineering while Park, from Chapel Hill, N.C., registered a 3.229 in Economics.

Army concluded the 2010-11 season by competing in the NCAA Arizona Regional at the Omni Tucson National. *(Army Athletic Communications release)*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sports/recreation

Football officials

The North Alabama Football Officials Association is in search of new officials. If you are interested, visit the website http://nafoa.biz/dnn/ or call Bob Arnone 763-1796. The first meeting is July 10 at the Red Cross building, 1101 Washington St. New officials can be accepted until the last two weeks of the regular season.

Golf tournament

The 12th annual John Riche Memorial Golf Classic, sponsored by 100 Black Men of America's Greater Huntsville Chapter, will be held July 22 at the Links at Redstone. Registration starts at 6:30 a.m. followed by tee time at 8. This fund-raiser was named in honor of Riche, a local businessman and charter member who died in 2004. The entry fee includes green and cart fees, grab bag, and lunch provided by Carrabba's Italian Grill. Prize money will be awarded for first, second and third place. For more information, call Mirie Westbrook 694-0646, Robert Clark 759-6060 or the 100 BMOA-GHC Business Office 536-8050.

Boating safety class

The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary boating safety class, Boating Skills and Seamanship, will begin Aug. 11 and run Thursdays from 6:30-9 p.m. at building 3687 on Neal Road. Cost is $25 for the textbook. The course is to provide the boater with comprehensive understanding of safe boating operation and handling. For more information, call Tom Kunhart 830-6621 (home), 527-4475 (cell) or email tkunhart@knology.net.

Conferences/meetings

Weekly worship

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

Sergeants major

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

Men's ministries
Men's Ministries, "addressing the needs of men and planting seeds for spiritual growth in Christ Jesus," meets every second or third Saturday – for exact monthly date, call Harry Hobbs at 425-5307 – at 9 a.m. at the Redstone Links golf clubhouse. Breakfast is served for $5. For more information, call Hobbs 425-5307.

Leadership summit
Cove Church is a host satellite location for Willowcreek's Global Leadership Summit on Aug. 11-12. "Through the Global Leadership Summit, you have access to a faculty lineup that brings incredible depth and breadth of leadership talent, perspective and insight," a prepared release said. "Gain practical, hands-on wisdom as some of the world's brightest leaders download their experiences and expertise." For more information and to register, visit willowcreek.com/summit.

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.

Engineer post
The Huntsville Post, Society of American Military Engineers, will hold its monthly luncheon July 21 at 11 a.m. at the Holiday Inn on University Drive adjacent to Madison Square Mall. Sign up begins at 11 with lunch at 11:30. Cost is $15. For reservations, email rsvp@samehsvpost.org.

Civil War round table
Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table will meet Thursday at 6:30 p.m. at the Elks Lodge, 725 Franklin St. Morris Penny of Piedmont will discuss, "Did Lee's subordinates undermine him at Gettysburg?" Optional chicken buffet is available at 5:30 p.m. for $8.95. Visitors are welcome. For information call 539-5287.

Lunch and learn
Huntsville-Madison County chapter of Blacks In Government will hold its monthly Lunch and Learn session July 21 at 11 a.m. in the Redstone Federal Credit Union Executive Conference Room on Wynn Drive. Richard Lewis will discuss "How to Enhance Your Well-Being and Performance." The public is invited. "For those eating lunch, we will have a limited amount meals available to the attendees for a small price; in addition there will be a limited selection in the cafeteria," a prepared release said. For more information, call Ronnie Hawkins 876-8810 or Angela Jones 955-2494.

Logistics society
The International Society of Logistics, Tennessee Valley Chapter, will have a luncheon July 26 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church in Huntsville. Gary Nenninger, president of Tennessee Valley AAAA Chapter and vice president of Army aviation programs for Huntsville Operations, L-3 Communications Corporation, will speak on "The evolution of acquisition and sustainment from Goldwater-Nichols to the present." Make reservations by noon July 22. The cost is $15 for members, $20 for nonmembers. The student rate is $10 for student members, $15 for student nonmembers. RSVP by calling Sharon Adams 533-5789, ext. 271, or emailing sadams@logicorehsv.com.

Performance workshop
PPT Solutions Inc. and EASPI are presenting the third of a monthly series of workshops on High Performance Organizations. This workshop provides an overview of Knowledge Management concepts, current industry technologies and best practices. It will be held Thursday from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Venice Room at The Westin, 6800 Governors West. Sign up via email at hposs@pptsinc.com.

Defense women
Women in Defense, Tennessee Valley Chapter, will present "Leadership Challenges in National Defense," a half day workshop on the afternoon of Oct. 27 at the Marriott in Huntsville. The event will include a luncheon (with keynote speaker), afternoon focus panels and an evening reception. Speaking invitations to high-level government leadership have been extended. Additional workshop details to include agenda, registration information and sponsorship opportunities will be announced soon.

Business workshop
The Women's Business Center of North Alabama, along with the Chamber of Commerce of Huntsville-Madison County, will present a Lunch & Learn event Friday from 11:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. at the Chamber of Commerce Auditorium, 225 Church St. Ellen Didier, of Red Sage Communications, will speak on "Free (or almost free) Ways to Shamelessly Promote Your Business." Reservations are required. The cost is $20 for WBCNA clients and Chamber members. Call 535-2038 for the discount code prior to registering online. Cost for all others is $25. Credit card payment is required at the time of online registration. Reservations can be made at www.wbcna.org.

Miscellaneous

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

Women's fellowship
The Women's Ministry at Cove United Methodist Church will hold its annual Girl's Night Out on Aug. 24. "This event is fun, food and fellowship to bring women together," a prepared release said. "Our special guest speaker this year is Pam Tebow. Yes, Tim's mom, mother of five, former missionary Pam is going to share with us some of her experiences and tips for raising godly children." Tickets are $15 each. A limited number of tickets is available for a special meet and greet with Pam prior to the event. Those tickets are $100 each. If interested call Amanda Medley 457-4703.

CFC 50th year
The Tennessee Valley Combined Federal Campaign is accepting nominations for participation in the 2011 Campaign Associates Program. This year marks the 50th anniversary for CFC. Volunteers are needed to help ensure the overall success of the campaign. "This will be an opportunity for you to set an example of caring and concern, not only for your fellow employee, but for our community as well," a prepared release said. Volunteers must attend a four-day orientation in August and be available for up to 20 hours per week during the campaign period (Sept. 1 through Dec. 16). For more information or if interested in volunteering, call the CFC Office 876-9143. Supervisory concurrence is required.

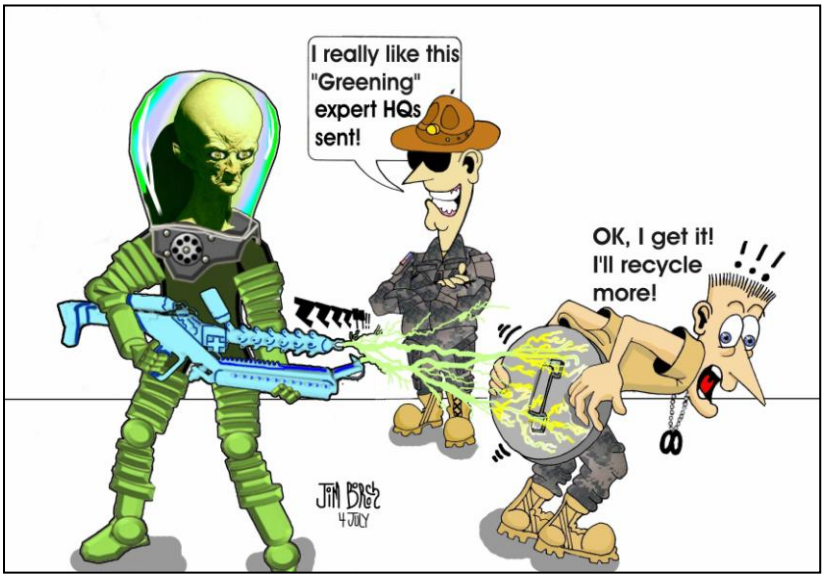
Senior volunteers
Madison County Retired & Senior Volunteer program is partnered with various nonprofit organizations in Huntsville and Madison County that utilize volunteers. R.S.V.P. recruits, places and trains individuals who are 55 or older to fill community service needs. For more information about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

Motorcycle poker run
Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association will have a Poker Run, Aug. 20 at Rocket Harley-Davidson in Madison to help raise funds for "Operation Stand Down." Registration is from 8:30-10:30 a.m. with the first bike out at 10:30 and the last bike in at 3 p.m. The route starts at Rocket Harley-Davidson goes to Black Water Hattie's, Chips and Salsa, North Alabama Biker Supply, Big D's Cycle and ends at Rocket Harley-Davidson. There will be live music, door prizes, 50/50 raffle, and food and drinks. Entry fee is $10 per rider, $5 extra hand, $5 passenger and $3 extra hand. Winnings include $150 for best hand, $75 for worst hand. For more information, call Tom Gerrish 313-0728 or 348-5898.

Chaplain anniversary
The Aviation and Missile Command will celebrate the Army Chaplaincy's 236th anniversary July 29 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Sparkman Cafeteria. All AMCOM military and civilians are invited. There will be displays about the Army chaplaincy, a cake cutting and the AMC Jazz Band will perform. A separate ceremony July 31 at Bicentennial Chapel has been canceled.

Car show
Meridianville Middle School's competition cheerleading squad will present the eighth annual Car, Truck and Motorcycle Show on July 23 at the school, 12975 Highway 231/431 North, Hazel Green. Registration is from 8-11:30 a.m. and the judging ends at 1 p.m. Awards will be given at 2 p.m. Entry fee is $20. For more information, call Martha Waldrup 603-3968.

Polka dance classes
Get ready for Oktoberfest by learning to dance the polka. FMWR will present Basic (Beginner) Polka for adult couples for five Thursdays, Aug. 4 through Sept. 1, at building 3155. Tuition is $55 per couple. No experience necessary. This course is also available as a four-week review course at $44 per couple (by eliminating the first class only) for those who have taken this course earlier at Redstone. Registration is at the Community Activity Center, building 3711, Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Deadline for registration is Aug. 3. For more information, call 876-4531.



Thrift shop
The Thrift Shop is accepting summer items for consignment. It is also accepting healthy plants in good soil and containers. Call the NO-LIST number 881-6915 before bringing your consignments. The list changes each week. Consignments are taken from 9-11:45 a.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. 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 each month from 10-2. The shop is in building 3209 on Hercules Road. Donations are always welcome and tax deductible. If you are interested in volunteering, stop by or call 881-6992.

Ardmore car show
The AQBC Car Show is Aug. 13 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at John Barnes Park in Ardmore, Tenn. Cost is $5 per person, $15 per family. Children 12 and under are admitted free. Car pre-entry is $20, day of show $25. Proceeds go to support Ardmore High School Athletic Programs. There were more than 1,000 cars last year. For more information call Sandy 656-3413, Rodney (205) 908-2677 or visit www.AQBC.net.