

Redstone Rocket

www.theredstonerocket.com

December 5, 2012

Vol. 61 No. 49

PUBLISHED IN THE INTEREST OF PERSONNEL AT REDSTONE ARSENAL, AL

Event flips switch on holiday season

Team Redstone celebrates magic of Trees and Treats

By **AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON**

Staff writer

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Even with their mother, Master Sgt. Stephanie Fortenberry, deployed to Afghanistan, there is still magic in the Christmas season for Dajsia and Laila Fortenberry.

Together with senior commander Maj. Gen. Lynn Collyar, dressed up as St. Nick's helper in a camouflage Santa suit and snowy white beard, the Fortenberry girls helped spread their Christmas cheer by flipping the switch at the Redstone Arsenal Tree Lighting Ceremony, "Trees and Treats" on Thursday, thus officially kicking off

the holiday season on the Arsenal. Everything about the holiday party was the girls' favorite, from the moment the crowd cried out with oohs and aaahs as they lit the tree, to Santa, whom they'd already seen once before this year.

"Santa's at the Botanical Garden, too," exclaimed Laila, 5.

"It's magic," explained Dajsia, 9.

For many members of Team Redstone and their families, the evening was a magical holiday celebration, complete with a chocolate fountain, chance to sit on Santa's lap, cookie decorating, scavenger hunt and more, all to the tune of Christmas carols performed by members of the AMC Band.

For Leslie Fortenberry, father to Laila and Dajsia, as well as 17-year-old Jasmine, the evening was an opportunity to get the kids out of the house for something out of the ordinary while his wife is away.

"I wanted to give them a chance to come and do something different," Fortenberry said.

Those serving overseas may have been out of sight at the event, but they were not out of mind. While the spirit was bright at the celebration, the men and women deployed were ever in the back of everyone's minds, as evidenced by Good Tidings for Troops, a chance for attendees to send their well-wishes to Soldiers serving overseas this Christmas, as well as the 100 luminaries lit in memory of those servicemembers that paid the ultimate price for their country.

"Many of you out here have been deployed around the world over Christmases in the past so you know what many of our fellow troops and other servicemembers, our civilians and our contractors are feeling as we head into this holiday season," Collyar said.

See Tree on page 6



Photo by Ellen Hudson

Ryan Bell, 3, son of Keiko and Sam Bell, runs away with excitement after his visit with Santa.



Photo by Ellen Hudson

Garrison commander Col. John Hamilton gives his remarks before the tree is lit.



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Strike up new friendships through league bowling.

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Photo by Ellen Hudson

Before the Christmas tree lights are turned on, the setting sun is all aglow around The Summit's evergreen.

RocketViews

What good tidings do you have for our troops overseas this Christmas?

By **AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON**

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Ricky Oakes

Trees and Treats supporter, Home Depot
“We want to wish them a Merry Christmas and a safe return home.”



Becky Skinner

Trees and Treats supporter, Home Depot
“Thank you for all the time that you give. We appreciate all you do. God bless.”



Barbara Holt

Redstone Arsenal Community Women’s Club
“I hope that they’re safe and happy, and that even though they are away from their family and loved ones that they get everything they hope for this Christmas.”



1st Sgt. Jonathan Dillard

Kilo Battery
“Our prayers are with them always. We serve a great nation.”

Letter to the editor

Senior leadership values the total Army family

As the principal military adviser to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, my top priorities consist of taking care of Soldiers, Department of the Army civilians and their families, and maintaining an all-volunteer force, which is ready today — and in the future — to accomplish any mission with which we’re charged.

Within the first 180 days of assuming the responsibilities as the Army deputy chief of staff G-1, I gained an acute understanding of the challenges we face as we begin the drawdown of our Army. Also during this time, I heard concerns voiced by many Soldiers, civilians and their families pertaining to the Army’s drawdown and how it affects them.

First, the Army is committed to making careful and deliberate decisions of what force shaping tools or the actions we will take in order to retain a high-quality force while meeting our drawdown goals. We are equally committed to communicate our planned actions to the field.

I am convinced that we have the right plans and people in place to make such decisions concerning our future force and to assist transitioning Soldiers to receive the support and tools necessary to be successful post their military service. The Army will achieve this by responsibly balancing force shaping across accessions, retention, promotions, involuntary separations and natural losses such as retirements



Lt. Gen. Howard Bromberg

and ETS’s.

Unfortunately, during this drawdown, there will be some good Soldiers who we cannot retain. However, I can assure you as Soldiers depart our active duty formations, the Army remains committed to assisting them and their families as they transition to the Army Reserve, National Guard or civilian life. Our Soldiers are Soldiers for life and future/current veterans deserve nothing less!

Through all the changes we will experience as our Army draws down, what will remain constant is that the Army will remain committed to taking care of its people. Even though the overall size of the Army will decrease, we will continue to recruit America’s best men and women while remaining an employer of choice for civilian and military personnel.

We pledge to remain vigilant to taking care of each of you — our Soldiers, our DA civilians and our families. You have served superbly over the last 11 years of persistent conflict and have displayed a myriad of values, character and competence that made us successful. We value your service and sacrifices. For this very reason, the Army will stand “shoulder to shoulder” with you as you so proudly stood — and served — our great nation.

Lt. Gen. Howard Bromberg

Army deputy chief of staff G-1

Quote of the week

“Yesterday, Dec. 7, 1941 — a date which will live in infamy — the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan.”

— President Franklin D. Roosevelt asking Congress to declare war Dec. 8, 1941

Rocket takes holiday break

The *Redstone Rocket* will have its annual two-week holiday break after the Dec. 19 edition.

The *Rocket* will not publish Dec. 26 and Jan. 2. The first issue of the year will be Jan. 9.

We wish you and yours a safe and happy holiday season.

RedstoneRocket

The Redstone Rocket is published weekly on Wednesday. The publisher will receive editorial content for publication in the Redstone Rocket through the Public Affairs Office, Army Garrison-Redstone, Bldg. 4488 Room A-248, Redstone Arsenal, AL 35898.

The civilian enterprise printer of the Redstone Rocket is Tennessee Valley Printing Co., Inc., located at 201 1st Ave., SE, Decatur, AL 35603.

Retail advertising deadline is 5 p.m. Thursday before Wednesday publication. Classified advertising deadline is 5 p.m. Friday before Wednesday publication.
Email: skip.vauhn@theredstonerocket.com

Editorial office: 256-876-1500 Editorial Fax: 256-955-0133 Retail Advertising: 256-340-2463 Classified Advertising: 256-260-2218 Advertising Fax: 256-260-2211

Rocket articles are available at:
<http://www.theredstonerocket.com>
<http://pao.redstone.army.mil>

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The Redstone Rocket is distributed free of cost to any personnel at Redstone Arsenal and Research Park, Huntsville. Mailing rates for off post for the Redstone Rocket are \$35 per year, tax included. We do not guarantee timely delivery. “Third class mail may receive deferred service. The Postal Service does not guarantee the delivery of third class mail within a specified time.” (Article 630 of the Domestic Mail Manual). We do not send subscription renewal notices.



Courtesy photo

All-American Chorus

The 82nd Airborne Division All-American Chorus will perform at Redstone Arsenal Dec. 14. The show, which is free and open to all ID card holders, will be held 11:30-noon in Bob Jones Auditorium. The 82nd Airborne All-American Chorus started as an informal group in 1967, getting together to sing at Sunday services in the division chapel. Now, the group has members from every unit in the 82nd. They have performed as an a cappella choral group for governors and legislators, at professional sporting events and at armed forces formal. They will also perform at the inaugural Army Materiel Command holiday formal the evening of Dec. 14.

Getting to know you

By AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON

Staff writer
amy.tolson@theredstonerocket.com**Name:** Sgt. Mark Burch**Position:** NCO-in-charge, Redstone Dental Clinic, Fox Army Health Center**What do you enjoy about your job?**

The wonderful people. I enjoy patient care and keeping everybody healthy and working with great people.

What are your goals?

I plan to retire from the Army and I want to finish my degree, but my main goal is to raise my daughters (Sky, 6, Starr, 4, and Summer, 6 months) so they can have the best life they can have and to have a great relationship with them.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I build cars.

What's on your bucket list?

I do everything I can think of doing. I don't have any regrets.

What college football team do you**root for?**

I'm not a sports fan. I do cars. That's all I do.

On this date in history: Dec. 5

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor
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In 1775: At Fort Ticonderoga, Henry Knox begins his historic transport of artillery to Cambridge, Mass.

In 1848: California Gold Rush – In a message before the U.S. Congress, President James K. Polk confirms that large amounts of gold had been discovered in California.

In 1932: German-born Swiss physicist Albert Einstein is granted an American visa.

In 1933: Prohibition in the United States ends: Utah becomes the 36th U.S. state to ratify the 21st Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, thus establishing the required 75 percent of states needed to enact the amendment. This overturned the 18th Amendment which had made

the manufacture, sale or transportation of alcohol illegal in the United States.

In 1941: During World War II in the Battle of Moscow, Georgy Zhukov launches a massive Soviet counter-attack against the German army, with the biggest offensive launched against Army Group Centre.

In 1945: Navy patrol Flight 19 is lost in the Bermuda Triangle.

In 1955: E.D. Nixon and Rosa Parks lead the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

In 1964: During the Vietnam War, for his heroism in battle earlier in the year, Capt. Roger Donlon is awarded the first Medal of Honor of the war.

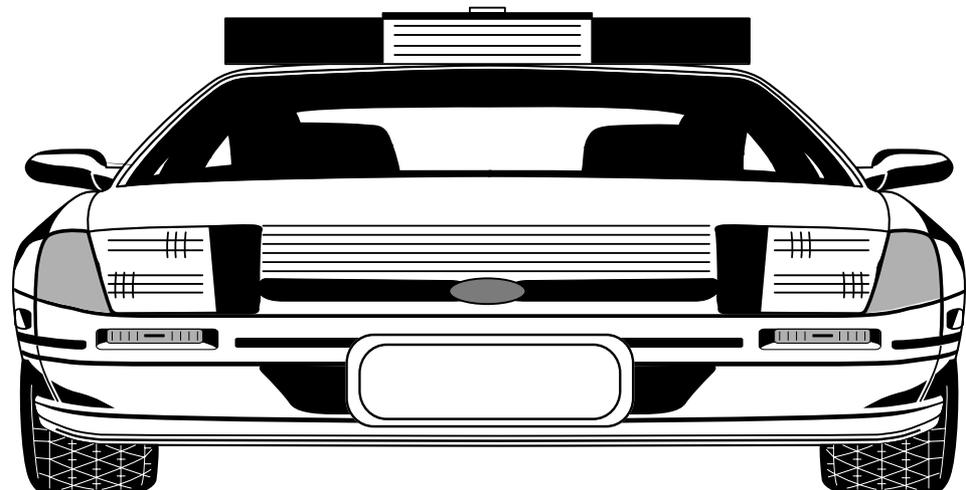
In 1978: Space Probe Pioneer Venus I, orbiting Venus, began beaming back information and pictures of the planet.

Crimes, accidents & other occurrences

The Directorate of Emergency Services, Law Enforcement Division, provided the following list of reported incidents for Nov. 18-24:

- Police are investigating the theft of copper pipe from building 3305.
- Police collected a deserter from the DeKalb County Alabama Sheriff's Office and transported him to his Fort Knox, Ky., unit.
- Police arrested a man on a fugitive from justice warrant for Escambia County, Fla., where he was wanted on various felony charges.

- Police received a report that a Redstone Arsenal security badge was stolen from a vehicle while it was parked in Huntsville.
- Police arrested a subject for shoplifting at the Redstone Exchange and later released them to their parent.
- The Redstone Arsenal game warden arrested a subject for hunting without a permit and criminal trespass in the Swan Pond Road area.
- Six U.S. District Court violation notices were issued.



Redstone Arsenal then and now

*Father of PIF
remembered*

By SKIP VAUGHN
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The late Dr. Larry Daniel's legacy lives on in the facility he envisioned as an engineering director.

Daniel, who died in 2000, served as the director of the Engineering Directorate at what was then the Research Development and Engineering Center. He saw the potential value for a facility that would provide prototype equipment rapidly to meet Soldier needs. He worked toward getting military construction funds to build it.

In 2002, two years after his death, the Larry O. Daniel Prototype Integration Facility opened in the newly constructed building 5405 as part of the Aviation and Missile Research Development and Engineering Center.

"He had some guiding principles 11 or 12 years after he passed that we still follow here at the PIF," Danny Featherston, the facility's program manager, said. "Never sacrifice your integrity. Always do things right. Be true to your values."

"Today that kind of philosophy carries over to this organization which of course carries his name," Featherston said. "So, he's the father of all of this."

Featherston has begun the development of a documentary about the facility from 2002-12. He said an event will probably be planned to show the 30-minute program at the Sparkman Center. The documentary is about 90 percent done.

The Prototype Integration Facility's motto is "Tomorrow's technology for today's warfighter." Its vision is to serve as the "Premier provider of rapid response and integrated hardware solutions."

A ribbon cutting and dedication ceremony for the \$7.6 million facility was held July 22, 2002, as part of Armed Forces Week.

Daniel began his government service as a co-op student at Redstone in 1959. After graduation, he worked as part of the NASA team during the first moon landing. He became assistant project manager for production for the Patriot missile system, responsible for transition of the system from development to production.



Courtesy photo

Dr. Larry Daniel served as the director of engineering at the then Research Development and Engineering Center until he died in March 2000.

Daniel served as special assistant to the commander of the then Missile Command for total quality management, value engineering, and system engineering. Before becoming director of engineering, his assignments at RD&E Center included director of System Engineering and Production Directorate and associate director for systems.

He served as standardization executive for the Aviation and Missile Command and the Program Executive Office for Aviation. He was a member of the Auburn College of Engineering Research Committee and Auburn Engineering Council; and he served as AMCOM liaison officer with Auburn University.

Daniel was an adjunct professor with the Florida Institute of Technology. He was twice selected as one of the Outstanding Men of America, recipient of the Distinguished Auburn Engineering Award, and the Senior Executive Presidential Rank Award. Daniel received a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Auburn University in 1964. He received a master's in industrial engineering from Oklahoma State in 1971, and a doctorate in general engineering from Oklahoma State in 1977.

Daniel was killed the night of March 13, 2000 in a one-car accident in Huntsville. He was 59. He and his wife, Judy, had a son, Larry Jr., and daughter, Laura.

Editor's note: Dr. Kaylene Hughes of the AMCOM History Office provided information for this article.



Photo by Skip Vaughn

The Prototype Integration Facility, part of the Aviation and Missile Research Development and Engineering Center, is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Larry Daniel.



Courtesy photo

Thanksgiving in Afghanistan

The Aviation and Missile Command's Lt. Col. Dan Arzonico, fourth from right, is happy to help serve a Thanksgiving meal to the Soldier/civilian team assigned to Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. Arzonico deployed to Afghanistan last summer to serve as the support operations officer for the 1109th Theater Aviation Sustainment Maintenance Group. Seated with Arzonico are dining facility servers and, from left, Maj. Ray Chicowski, officer-in-charge of the 1109th TASMG at Bagram Airfield; Lt. Col. Karl Stahlecker, aviation sustainment manager for AMCOM's Contract Oversight Team; and Chief Warrant Officer 5 Bruce Delea, aviation maintenance officer of the 1109th TASMG. "It was an honor to serve the Soldier/civilian team here at Bagram Airfield on Thanksgiving. The Soldier/civilian team here is made up of some of the most dedicated people I have ever worked with in my career," Arzonico said.

Operation Christmas Bear embraces military this weekend

By **AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON**

Staff writer

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As long as their moms and dads wear the uniform, their sacrifice remains the same, and for that the local community would like to say “thank you.”

It's not too late to sign up for Saturday's Operation Christmas Bear, the Tennessee Valley's ninth annual holiday celebration for active duty, Guard, Reserve and deployed Department of Defense civilian family members, as well as wounded warriors and their families. To register, call Army Community Service at 876-5397 with your sponsors' name, rank, unit and number of children attending.

“We want to express our appreciation to our active duty, National Guard, Reserve and those people that support our military, our deployed Department of Defense civilians,” Mary

Breeden with Army Community Service said.

Saturday's event begins at 1 p.m. at the Huntsville Jaycees building, 2180 Airport Road, with Santa arriving by fire truck. The afternoon continues with professional photos with Santa, inflatables, robots, trains, face painting, crafts, a magician, food and more – all at no cost to the military families.

With the drawdown in Iraq and the departure of many of the Arsenal's young Soldiers due to BRAC in recent years, the community has a tendency to forget that there is still a strong military presence in the Huntsville area, organizers said. Their service and sacrifice should not go unrecognized.

“We do have a military here and we love them and all the sacrifices that they make,” Breeden said. “This is just one day that we can step back and say thank you. We're not a big post with all the flags waving and the troops moving

Photo by Ellen Hudson

2nd Lt. Kris Davis and his wife Leslie help their daughters, Sydney, 5, and Alexis, 13, at the 2011 Operation Christmas Bear.

out in mass, we're the one or two families sitting at an airport waiting for somebody to come back or say goodbye. This is the chance for us to all get together.”

More than 300 children attended the event last year. This year organizers are hoping for even more, with 350 stuffed bears waiting to make their home in the arms of a military child.

“We're looking forward to seeing all of them,” Breeden said.



Scholarships for Military Children opens this week

Applications for 2013 arrive at commissaries

By **TAMMY REED**

DeCA marketing and mass communications specialist

FORT LEE, Va. – In 2012, the Scholarships for Military Children Program celebrated a major milestone as it reached more than \$10 million in scholarships awarded to 6,742 students from around the globe.

It's time, once again, to add to these impressive numbers, as applications for the 2013 Scholarships for Military Children Program will be available starting this week at commissaries worldwide. You can also find them online through a link at <http://www.commissaries.com> and directly at <http://www.militaryscholar.org>.

Scholarship awards will be based on funds available, but the scholarship program awards at least \$1,500 at each commissary. If there are no eligible applicants from a par-

ticular commissary, the funds designated for that commissary will be awarded as 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 to celebrate the commissary's role in the military community.

“DeCA is focused on supporting a good quality of life for our military and their families,” Defense Commissary Agency director and CEO Joseph H. Jeu said. “We do that by delivering a great commissary benefit, while our industry partners and public donations help the scholarship program provide money for higher education to many worthwhile students.”

To apply for a scholarship, the student must be a dependent, unmarried child, younger 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 2013 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 chosen by the Fisher House. The essay topic will be available this week on <http://www.militaryscholar.org>. Applications must be turned in to a commissary by close of business Feb. 22.

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, manages and awards these military scholarships. If students have questions about the scholarship program application, call Scholarship Managers at 856-616-9311 or email them at militaryscholar@scholarshipmanagers.com.

No government funds are used to support the Scholarships for Military Children Program. Commissary vendors, manufacturers, brokers, suppliers and the general public donate money to fund the program. Every dollar donated goes directly to funding the scholarships. (DeCA release)

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:

Right arm roundup

“Put out the fire, bring your office mini-me, second-self, shadow and alter ego” to Team Redstone's Right Arm Roundup scheduled Thursday at 4 p.m. at the Firehouse Pub, building 114 on Hankins Drive. Mingle with your co-workers at this event with mu-

sic, free hors d'oeuvres, and a business card drawing for prizes. For more information, call 842-3070.

NCO call

Calling on noncommissioned officers from all services – active duty, retirees and veteran NCOs. This month's event is Dec. 13 at 4 p.m. at the Firehouse Pub, building 114 on Hankins Drive. For information call Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Kyle Crump at 876-5331.

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Photo by Ellen Hudson
Spc. Jordan Roberts enjoys some chili and a candied apple with his family, wife Misty, daughter Evelyn, 1, and son Alex, 4.



“Keep them in your thoughts and prayers as we light this tree in their honor.”

As the children climbed in Santa’s lap to rattle off their Christmas list, Arsenal leaders encouraged attendees to be mindful of the gifts the men and women serving overseas give the American people every day.

“I wish you all a very, very Merry Christmas,” Garrison commander Col. John Hamilton said. “I ask that you all use this time to reflect on the many blessings that we have here in America, remember all those who are deployed in harm’s way and use this opportunity to spend time with your family.”

Photo by Ellen Hudson
Abby Kraus, 9, provides a taste test for the icing used at the cookie decorating table.

Combined Federal Campaign makes difference

By **TERRI STOVER**

For the Rocket

The Tennessee Valley Combined Federal Campaign goal for 2012 is within reach but needs more.

This year's goal is \$2.5 million, and \$1.6 million has been raised so far. That's 64 percent of the goal.

"There is still time to make a donation," Capt. Justin Strom, chairman of the Local Federal Coordinating Committee, said. "The last day to turn in pledge cards for a payroll deduction is Dec. 14, but we will take cash or check donations until Jan. 11."

Each year the local federal coordinating committee sets a goal just higher than the previous year. There are six counties in the North Alabama area, plus Lincoln County, Tenn., with more than 20,000 employees who have the opportunity to contribute to the CFC. These employees work at the post office, federal courthouses, Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant, here at Redstone, and many other federal agencies in the area.

All federal employees and military personnel can make either a one-time contribution with cash or check, or they may use the pledge card to have a set amount deducted from each payroll. Contractors are also welcome to make cash or check donations to CFC.

There are more than 2,500 charities to choose from, which include organizations on the local, national and international level.



Photo by Terri Stover

A thermometer sign on Patton Road shows Redstone has reached more than 60 percent of its goal for the Tennessee Valley CFC.

Charities range from local animal shelters and homeless programs, to national organizations focusing on youth, to international organizations working to bring clean water to villages. Almost every cause or service focus is included in the catalog of charities.

"These are economically uncertain times, but I think this goal is attainable," Strom said. "In the end, the money goes to your charities of choice."

Contact your organization's CFC keyworker for a pledge card, or catalog of charities. You can also call Strom at 426-7285, or visit the Redstone CFC website at <http://cfc.redstone.army.mil/>.

Williams household has Army family Thanksgiving

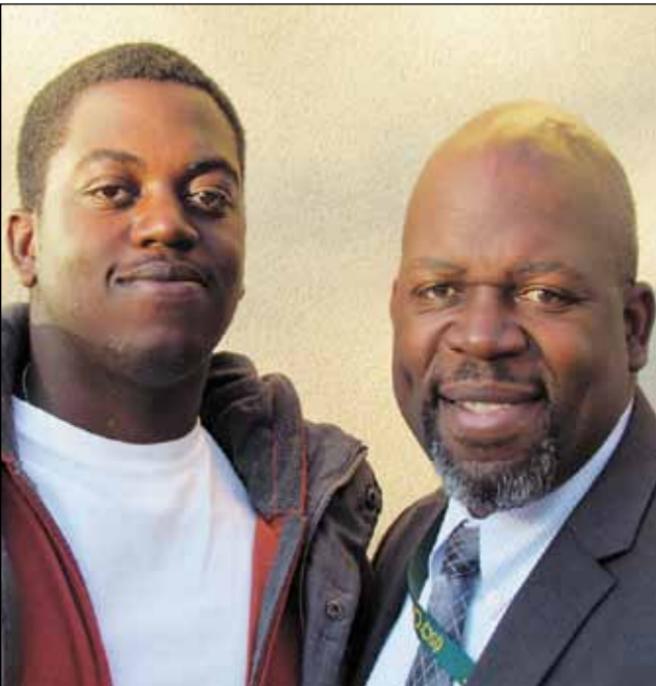


Photo by Skip Vaughn

Spc. Jonathan Williams Jr. has followed his father's footsteps into the Army. Jonathan Williams, an information technology specialist at the Network Enterprise Center-Redstone, retired as a sergeant first class.

By **SKIP VAUGHN**
Rocket editor
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Thanksgiving was extra special this year at Jonathan Williams' home in Harvest.

The retired sergeant first class and his wife, Harriet, had their oldest son, Spc. Jonathan Williams Jr., 21, and his wife, Damesha, over for the holiday from Fort Stewart, Ga.

Their youngest son, Pfc. Joshua Williams, 19, was there visually from Korea via Skype. He's in the 11th month of a yearlong tour and will be home in January.

"It was a very relaxed and grateful Thanksgiving," the senior Jonathan said. He's an information technology specialist at the Network Enterprise Center-Redstone.

Rounding out his military family is Reserve Spc. Camil Williams Potts, 24, who resides in Huntsville with her husband, James, and their son Carson, 14 months. She also has a stepdaughter, Shannon, 3.

"It was good to be home, back with family and friends," Jonathan Jr. said. "The last time I was able to take leave was like last Thanksgiving (in 2011)."

Jonathan Jr., a unit supply specialist with the 92nd Chemical Company, 83rd Chemical Biological Radioactive and Nuclear Brigade at Fort Stewart, has been in the Army for four and a half years. He and Damesha are expecting their first child in July.

He called the Army "a great experience, it's a job. It's a way to network and meet people of different cultures and different backgrounds. Come together with the same intent to accomplish the same goal and missions. It's a very enlightening experience."

Jonathan Jr. said he plans to re-enlist soon for another four or five years, "working toward my promotion to become a noncommissioned officer and better provide for my wife and child."

Joshua entered the Army in April 2011, completed basic training at Fort Benning, Ga., and advanced individual training at Fort Gordon, Ga., in computer/detection systems repair, followed by his assignment to Korea.

Camil travels to her unit in Birmingham each month as a food service specialist with the 926th Engineering Battalion, Company A. She works in Huntsville as an accounts payable clerk with Keystone Foods.

The senior Jonathan, 46 – who retired from the Army as a sergeant first class in 2006 after more than 20 years – earned his certification Nov. 1 as an information system security professional.

"We're always looking for lifelong learning professional development and continued growth," he said. "We're just trying to progress. The only way I know how to do that is through education, and I try to instill those ideals into my children. So I'm thankful I made the choice to join, I'm thankful they decided to make that choice. We're happy, we're grateful, glad to see them for the holidays."

Read about what's new at Post Library

The Post Library, building 3323 on Redeye Road, is open Tuesday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The phone number is 876-4741.

To see the library's catalog, visit www.redstonemwr.com, click on Recreation, click on Library and then click on online catalog.

Some of the library's new items include the following:

Adult fiction: "The Panther" by Nelson DeMille – Anti-Terrorist Task Force agent John Corey and his FBI agent wife, Kate Mayfield, search for the mastermind behind the bombing of the USS Cole in Yemen. ... "The Racketeer" by John Grisham – When a federal judge and his secretary fail to appear for a trial, panicked clerks call the FBI which results in a murder trial and the imprisonment of a lawyer.

Adult nonfiction: "The Universal Sense: How Hearing Shapes the Mind" by Seth S. Horowitz, Ph.D. – Reveals how the human sense of hearing manipulates how people think, consume, sleep and feel, explaining the hearing science behind why people fall asleep while traveling, the reason fingernails on a chalkboard causes cringing and why songs get stuck in one's head. ... "The Well Trained Mind: A Guide to Classical Education You Never Had" by S. Wise Bauer – Helps readers fill in the holes in their education as it looks at great works of fiction, autobiography, history, poetry, drama and other genres and provides annotated listings of suggested readings.

Young adult fiction: "Days of Blood and Starlight" by Laini Taylor – The sequel to Daughter of Smoke and Bone (also available at the Post Library) finds Karou struggling to come to terms with her nature while seeking revenge for her people.

Children fiction: "Son" by Lois Lowry – Unlike the other Birthmothers in her utopian community, teenaged Claire forms an attachment to her baby, feeling a great loss when he is taken to the Nurturing Center to be adopted by a family unit. (A conclusion to the Giver Quartet – all available at the Post Library.) ... "Spike the Mixed-up Monster" by Susan Hood – Spike is a scary-looking salamander who keeps trying to frighten other animals, until he finds that using fear is not the best way to make friends.

Children nonfiction: "Abraham Lincoln: A Nonfiction Companion to Magic Tree House 47" (available at the Post Library) by Mary Pope Osborne – Discusses what it was like to grow up in a log cabin, what Lincoln's family life was like, and how he became the 16th president of the United States.

DVDs: "Doctor Who: Resurrection of the Daleks" with Peter Davison, Janet Fielding, Mark Strickson ... "Inspector Lewis: Series 5" with Kevin Whately, Laurence Fox, Clare Holman ... "Nature: Oceans Giants" cameramen Doug Allan and Didier Noiroit ... "Poirot: Series 5" with David Suchet, Hugh Fraser, Philip Jackson.

Passion for teaching adds up for engineer

Volunteer math tutor honored by coalition

By **KARI HAWKINS**
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Daphne Henry is making a difference one math student at a time.

As she teaches the principles of math, she also mentors and befriends her students, hoping to help them reach their potential in the classroom as well as in their lives.

But this time, it's those students who have helped Henry.

In November, Henry was inducted into the Greater Huntsville Area Chapter of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women because of her commitment to education and her desire to help young people grow into successful adults. She began her journey to become a member of the coalition with the help of Phyllis McMillan, a parent of one of her students who is also the president of the local coalition.

McMillan introduced Henry to another member – retired school teacher Erlese Keat – who sponsored her for chapter membership.

"I received a letter of recommendation and I went through a panel interview where I was asked about my experience and my community activities. I was asked about what I thought the challenges were in our community and why," Henry said.

Once she made it through the panel interview, Henry was among 16 women who were introduced as candidates for induction to the coalition's members at social events. She participated in a private pinning ceremony on Nov. 15 and then in the induction ceremony on Nov. 16, which was the seventh anniversary celebration for the coalition in Huntsville.

The induction into the coalition is a professional and personal highlight for Henry.

"The National Coalition of 100 Black Women is an organization or a sisterhood where women come together to address community issues, including education, health and economic development," Henry said. "I wanted to be a member of this organization because it aligns with some of the goals that I have. I want to leverage this opportunity to embark on some



Courtesy photo

Daphne Henry of the Program Executive Office for Missiles and Space, is one of the newest members of the Greater Huntsville Area Chapter of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women. She wants to expand on her work as a volunteer math teacher to improve education through the coalition's initiatives.

goals that I have."

Henry was joined in the induction process by other Arsenal employees, including Stephanye Bankston, Mattie Collier, Stephanie Edwards, Janice Garrett, Cynthia McCrary and Vivian Williams.

In her professional career, Henry is the propulsion integrated product team co-lead for the Hydra system, which is part of the Joint Attack Munition Systems Project Office, Program Executive Office for Missiles and Space. Hydra 70 rockets are fired by the Army's AH-64 Apache and OH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopters, and are also fired by the Marines, Navy and Air Force.

Henry has worked in her current position for nearly four years. Prior to that, she worked in the automotive

industry for such companies as General Motors, Delphi and Continental Electronics.

But while she loves the challenge of her profession, Henry also has a passion for teaching.

"I've tutored ever since I was a student myself at the University of Alabama," said the 46-year-old Linden native. "I try to make a difference through the educational realm with tutoring and mentoring. My mom and grandmother and great-aunt were all teachers. I come from a legacy of educators and, even though I was an electrical engineering technology major, I hope to also make a contribution in the area of education."

She has helped as an education ambassador in the classroom at Farley Elementary. Currently, she is tutoring students in the evenings at the Huntsville/Madison County Public Library.

"Just to see the difference you are making in the lives of students makes it all worthwhile. I'm not just their tutor. I also want to be someone they can talk to about their problems or someone who will celebrate with them when they succeed," Henry said.

"It is, indeed, a time commitment. But when I think about quitting, I can't imagine my life without tutoring. This is something I am committed to and have a passion for. When you are part of someone's life that's the truest legacy you can leave."

As a math tutor, Henry has seen how an hour of tutoring time with a student can help them overcome their problems with numbers and number equations, and help build their confidence with math while at the same time giving their parents assistance to overcome a situation that can be frustrating and difficult.

"Math is a subject that many students struggle with," Henry said. "And yet, it is so important to master if you want to pursue careers in science, engineering, medicine and many other fields. Even careers that don't involve

math require a basic understanding of math concepts."

With new students, Henry takes the time to learn about them, and to find out what they like and don't like about math.

"Since it's one-on-one tutoring, I like to personalize it and tailor it to their interests. I tutor to their style," she said. "I want to understand them and why they are behind in math or why they dislike math, and that is my springboard or strategy to tutor them from."

"I want to do things that will build their math muscles. So, if I have a student who is going to the store to buy a toy, we will use that in our math lesson to learn a math concept."

Henry tutors math students from elementary school age all the way through high school. Many of her students begin coming to her at about fourth-grade.

She encourages her students to commit study time to math.

"This year, I've been trying to have them tell me what their goals are in math," she said. "I am trying to get them into goal setting. I want to know how much math study time they will commit to. I want to know what they are going to do to learn math and how they will involve their parents in supporting their math goals."

As a new member of Huntsville's National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Henry hopes to make a difference on a broader scale. The coalition is a supporter of the AIDS Action Coalition, KJF Memorial Foundation, American Cancer Society, Teen Pregnancy Initiative and other community initiatives programs. The organization is focused on leadership development and gender equity in the areas of health, education and economic empowerment throughout community service and mentoring.

"I want to build a foundation of public service. I want to be a part of something locally and nationally where I can give back. I hope, through the contacts I make with this organization, to make an impact on a national scale," Henry said.

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Photo by John Pearson

Education outreach

Donna Hood, right, an equipment specialist at Black Hawk Technical Data Division, speaks to students at East Limestone High School after her presentation to the Math Club. Hood encouraged the students to use their passion for the subject to find career opportunities. She spoke to 40 students as part of AMCOM's Army Educational Outreach Program.

'Hello? What's your call sign? It's Marshall calling'

Arsenal's amateur radio club sends out signals to world

By **KARI HAWKINS**

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Redstone Arsenal's Ham Shack is the place to be if you want to talk to lots of different people.

But this Ham Shack isn't a socialite's favorite lunch spot or a party lover's nighttime hangout.

Rather, it's the place to be if you are into the serious business of amateur "ham" radio.

Located in a nondescript cement building surrounded by antennas and isolated from other Arsenal activities just southwest of the Martin Road/Rideout Road intersection, the Ham Shack refers to the Michael Kalange Memorial Station, amateur radio call sign WA4NZD. It is the headquarters of the Marshall Amateur Radio Club.

Also known as building 4622, the Ham Shack is where technical types from throughout the Arsenal gather on a regular basis to communicate with other amateur radio enthusiasts around the world, experiment with the latest technology in amateur radio, participate in national and worldwide ama-

teur radio contests, and test and maintain their capabilities in case they are called on to provide emergency communications for the Arsenal.

"Part of the function of a club is to bring in interested people and teach them about what the club is focused on. A lot of people are getting into amateur radio because it's cool to communicate with other people all over the world and because it's neat to be able to help out in an emergency," said Alan Sieg, a COLSA Corp. employee who works for NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center and who helped to restart the club after it had been on inactive status for several years.

"It's fun to come out here and play with the radios and experiment with them, and to show other people how they work. This is real-world science you can do in your basement. But to have a facility like this takes it to another level."

Although most of the Marshall radio club's members do have working amateur radios set up in their homes, they also enjoy the camaraderie of gathering at the Ham Shack.

"This is a neat group that has the same interests that I do," said Ottis Airhart, an employee of the Program Executive Office for Aviation who has been a ham radio operator since 1998.



Photo by Kari Hawkins

Marshall Space Flight Center contractor Alan Sieg enjoys working with the antennas and the latest amateur radio technology at Redstone Arsenal's Ham Shack, home of the Marshall Amateur Radio Club.

Rob Suggs, who works for NASA's Engineering Directorate, said the Marshall radio club has given him a chance to indulge his interest in scientific experiments and interna-



Photo by Kari Hawkins

Army employee Ottis Airhart, left, and NASA employee Rob Suggs set up amateur radios at the Ham Shack for a demonstration of the different brands of radios.

tional communication.

"I've been a geek ever since I was a kid and I became interested in astronomy," Suggs said. "The idea of ham radios just seemed to be a good hobby for someone like me that likes geek activities."

Since becoming a ham operator in 1973, Suggs' long list of contacts includes ham radio operators in Portugal, Spain, Belgium, Argentina, Mexico and such U.S. states as North Dakota and Texas.

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“We can talk to people all over the country. We are all over the world,” he said.

The Marshall radio club first organized with the call letters WM4SFC in 1971, during the Apollo days. It began operating special events to commemorate various NASA achievements, and thousands of amateur radio stations made contact with WM4SFC during the last Apollo mission. About 9,000 contacts were made during the Skylab missions in 1973.

More than 2,000 contacts were made with more than 30 countries during the two-day special event celebrating the launch of STS-1. One especially meaningful event was made in 1983 with STS-9 when astronaut Dr. Owen Garriott (W5LFL) became the first “ham in space” and logged more than 350 two-way contacts. About 10,000 ham operators sent in reception reports to document their contact with Garriott.

Ham radio operators who made contact with the Marshall radio club during those early days received a certificate confirming their contact. Today, the club continues to send out postcards to ham radio operators who make contact with the Ham Shack.

One member who has seen the club’s

membership ebb and flow through the years is club president Don Hediger, a member since 1984.

“This club started in the early 1970s, but NASA reductions-in-force in the late 1970s and then in 1990s were times when the club went inactive,” Hediger said.

“For about 10 years in the mid- to late-1990s we were not active. About three years ago we reactivated.”

That’s when Sieg – whose own call sign is WB5RMG – discovered the amateur radio station. It was neglected and in disrepair. With some hard work, the station was returned to operable condition and received a new call sign – WA4NZD.

Today, the Marshall radio club has about 15 active members.

“This time, we’ve not only reactivated with new membership, but we’ve also reconnected with emergency management on the Arsenal and we are considered a backup for communications,” Hediger said. “We actually participated in an emergency exercise this past summer to show what our capabilities are. We’re definitely a communications unit.”

That test, which occurred on June 14, involved a severe weather exercise conducted by Marshall Emergency Management. As part of the exercise, the radio club staged two radio operators at the Ham Shack, much like they would if it had been an actual tornado watch event.

When the Marshall Emergency Man-

agement Office notified storm spotters via their commercial radio system, the Ham Shack operators also received notification and responded by establishing the Marshall Amateur Response Network on their amateur radio system, which included both the amateur radios at building 4622 as well as personal handheld radios that provided real-time contact with the club’s members. The network made contact with 14 other radio stations, including the Marshall EOC, the Huntsville-Madison County EOC and Fox Army Health Center.

The simulated exercise demonstrated the Ham Shack’s ability to receive an emergency weather report on their ham radio channel and then relay that message to the EOC over the commercial radio service. It also demonstrated the Ham Shack’s independent communications with other radio stations in the area.

“Above everything else, we support public service communications,” Sieg said. “The exercises we do and the competitions we participate in help us exercise our skills with ham radio so that when we are needed in an emergency we can go fully operational very quickly.

“The whole thing is about communications – some just for fun, some for practice and some for preparing for an emergency. Having the ability to communicate when no one else can is the driving force of this hobby and this club.”

Today’s technology allows ham radio operators to communicate beyond the traditional amateur radio setup of four transceivers, amplifiers, and a computer for logging and for digital modes. Now, they can also use their call signs on handheld radios that allow them to communicate from nearly anywhere.

Ham radio stations each have their own call signs. Station operators maintain a reception report, which is a log of the different operators they make contact with, and the different states and countries where they reach out to with their communications. Countless lists of those communications can be found at the Ham Shack, providing a glimpse of the station’s historical significance.

Often, in a home environment, ham radio operators are limited by the size and number of antennas they can post. That is not an issue at the Marshall radio club’s location, where there is plenty of room for any number of antennas.

“You can never have enough antennas,” Sieg said. “Each antenna gives you more capability. Our antennas can pick up frequencies from all over the world. With the antennas here at the club we can direct and focus the signal.”

The Marshall radio club does face some challenges. Its members want to refurbish the 100-foot antenna tower just outside the Ham Shack. It could provide multi-band high frequency radio signals if it was cleaned up and refurbished. But members lack the ability to lower the antenna to work on it.

And there are always opportunities to add more radio capability. On a recent night at the Ham Shack, club members were comparing the reception quality and operations of two different types of radios. The club recently received funding from the Marshall Activity Center to purchase a new radio. Yet, more funds are needed to continue to upgrade the club’s equipment.

There is always an activity or something going on at the Ham Shack these days. Although they officially meet the first Thursday of each month, the Marshall radio club’s members are free to use the Ham Shack whenever they have time and a yen to talk to someone on the other side of the world.

“Some of us are really into talking to lots of different places and participating in contests. Others of us are really interested in building antennas and seeing what kinds of new capabilities they will give us,” Sieg said.

“There’s something for anyone who is interested in ham radio. And we all enjoy sharing our specialties with each other. What someone doesn’t know, someone else is likely to be an expert in.”

Editor’s note: The Marshall Amateur Radio Club is accepting new members. To learn more, visit its website at <http://wa4nzd.wordpress.com> or email Alan Sieg at wa4nzd@somenet.net.

Marshall's rocket park shines bright for holidays

Photos by Ellen Hudson

Marshall Space Flight Center families gathered Friday evening at NASA's rocket park for their annual holiday lighting of the rocket.



Children from the Marshall Day Care Center sing Christmas songs for the crowd.



Santa Claus arrives to the delight of youngsters and the young at heart.



The rocket lights are turned on by Marshall director Patrick Scheuermann and Santa.



Under the setting sun, attendees enjoy refreshments from big green buckets.

Keeping their Soldier's memory alive

*Mom, children
cope with loss*

By KARI HAWKINS
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Raised as a Southern gal, Mary Ramsey had to go all the way to Alaska to find her Soldier.

Some 20 years later, she lost her Soldier in the war in Afghanistan.

Ramsey and her two children – Bradley, 8, and Megan, 6 – are now searching for their own place in life, learning how to live without their Soldier and how to be happy despite the tears that now lace their memories of family times.

These days, Ramsey and her children regularly visit the gravesite of their Soldier – Alabama National Guard Capt. Waid “Chip” Ramsey – in Maple Hill Cemetery. Their Soldier was killed Aug. 4, 2011, in a small-arms fight when his unit was attacked in Afghanistan’s Paktika province.

“We talk about Chip all the time,” Ramsey said. “Bradley and his dad were inseparable. Megan was a daddy’s girl. He is still very much a part of their lives.”

As a college student back in 1991, Ramsey traveled to Alaska to live with her sister and her husband for a year. While there, she met, dated and fell in love with Chip Ramsey, who was an enlisted active duty Soldier.

“My dad joked with me that I went all the way to Alaska to meet an Alabama boy,” Ramsey recalled.

Eventually, the two moved back to the South, Ramsey to her hometown of Chattanooga and Chip Ramsey, who had taken an early out from the Army, to Arab, where his father had moved after marrying his stepmom. The couple married and settled into a life of work and school, both graduating from college with accounting degrees, she from the University of Alabama-Huntsville and he from Athens State University.

“I encouraged him to get an accounting job with a defense contractor like I had done,” Ramsey said. “But he was great with spreadsheets and formulas, and he ended up in contracts and pricing for a defense contractor.”

Chip Ramsey, who had been an infantryman with the Army, continued his military career in the National Guard, serving in units in Cullman; Cleveland, Tenn.; and Arab. He left the Guard for a while only to rejoin with a Huntsville unit, and



Photo by Kari Hawkins

The Ramsey family – mom Mary, and children Bradley and Megan, who are wet from running through a morning rain – pose for a picture with Gen. Denis Via, commander of the Army Materiel Command, following a Veterans Day breakfast at the Huntsville Roundhouse just prior to the beginning of the Veterans Day parade in downtown Huntsville. Via was among many active and retired servicemembers who shared their appreciation with the Ramsey family during the Veterans Day activities.

then attend Officers Candidate School at Fort Benning, Ga. After a deployment to Afghanistan, he joined Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 20th Special Forces Group (Airborne) in Birmingham, where he was a company commander.

“He just loved serving. He loved his Soldiers. He loved it all and wouldn’t have chosen anything else,” Ramsey said.

“I remember the first time he was getting ready to deploy, I asked him ‘What if you get killed?’ He said ‘If I do, I do. I’m not afraid to die,’” Ramsey said.

Sadly, through the years and the births of their two children, the couple grew apart. In February 2011, they divorced and Ramsey moved into her own home just a few blocks from where they lived as a couple. The split was amicable, and the two easily shared responsibilities for their children.

“We were trying to get everything settled. Chip decided to stay in our home for a while, so I still had a lot of stuff there and so did the kids,” Ramsey said.

“He wasn’t supposed to have to go on a deployment. He didn’t do any of the pre-deployment training. He didn’t know until



Photo by Kari Hawkins

Sitting on her son Bradley’s bed, Mary Ramsey holds a picture of her children with their dad, Alabama National Guard Capt. Waid “Chip” Ramsey. It was the last picture the three of them took together. Chip Ramsey was killed in Afghanistan on Aug. 4, 2011.

the last minute that he was even going. He told me ‘I should be there for my men.’”

Soon after the April 27, 2011, tornadoes in North Alabama, Chip Ramsey began preparations to deploy with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 20th Special Forces Group. He shipped in mid-June, but managed to stay in contact with her and the children through phone calls and Skype.

“On the last call that we had with him, Bradley said ‘My dad wants me to go in the Army.’ The last words his dad ever said to him were ‘Bud, you do whatever makes you happy,’” Ramsey recalled.

“Chip was in Special Forces and he was training Afghanistan troops. He told me several times that it wasn’t as safe a place as he thought it was going to be.”

About six weeks after Chip Ramsey deployed, the worst happened.

“I knew something was up,” Ramsey said. “He always called at 8:30 at night. On this night, I was putting the kids to

bed and realized we had not heard from Chip. I had left my cell phone downstairs and when I went to get it I saw the clock on the stove and it said 8:30. Later, I found out that was around the same time it happened. Of course, he never called.”

The next day, Ramsey took her children with her to work because they were out of their summer school daycare program for a week before the school year started.

“They were at work with me when I found out,” she said. “The security people called to see if I was there. I knew. I just had this feeling. I left the kids in my office with a co-worker and I went downstairs to the lobby. As soon as I saw the two Soldiers I knew.”

Unbeknown to her at the time, while she was being told about Chip Ramsey’s death, Bradley was asking one of her co-workers about heaven.

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Photo by Judy Wilson

Engineer speaker

Lt. Col. Eric Ekstrom, deputy resident engineer for the Redstone Resident Office, Army Corps of Engineers Mobile District, was a featured speaker at the November Sustaining Member Update sponsored by the Huntsville Post, Society of American Military Engineers.

AMCOM aviation workers receive recognition

By **DAN O'BOYLE**

AMCOM Public Affairs

Two Army Maintenance Management System-Aviation employees of the Maintenance Information Operations Branch in the AMCOM Logistics Center received recognition during a recent town hall meeting.

Cecil Smith and Danny Hollingsworth had served on active duty as Army Aviation Maintenance members, and after retirements are now TAMMS-A 2410 Hotline Team members.

Both have been singled out for working a special request from Afghanistan to "scrub" the Safety of Flight 2410 records database for all aircraft in a deploying unit. Their actions included the 2410 data review for the aircraft, as measured in terms of the full use of the parts, flying hours for those parts or disposal of parts.

In this case, Smith and Hollingsworth analyzed the maintenance records for all of the unit's aircraft, clearing those aircraft for combat missions.

The Army Maintenance Management System does the following:

- Tells whoever installs equipment, reports on helicopters what and how to report that installation information
- Tells helicopter operators and maintenance personnel the rules for how many hours parts can fly on helicopters
- Tells depot maintenance, government and contractor personnel the rules for continued use or disposal of parts
- Tells units how to implement and track modifications

"Hotline personnel have a great responsibility in their service to the Aviation war fighter," branch chief Allen Miller said. "When an Aviation Main-



Photo by Glenn W. Campbell

Danny Hollingsworth receives an award from Maj. Gen. Lynn Collyar, commander of the Aviation and Missile Command.



Photo by Glenn W. Campbell

Cecil Smith receives an award from AMCOM commander Maj. Gen. Lynn Collyar.

tenance war fighter calls the 2410 Hotline, that means Safety of Flight help is needed with an aircraft. The pair's service and contributions has been acknowledged and recognized by flight crews in Afghanistan."

Soldier serves the hungry in his community

By AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON

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What Chief Warrant Officer 5 Edward Peterson Jr. has done for the least of these, the Soldier has done for Christ.

“You can’t be complacent as a Christian,” said Peterson, legal administrator, Office of the Command Counsel, Army Materiel Command. “You always have to work at it. All of us fall short of God’s grace, and only through His divine spirit can we be redeemed.”

Peterson and his family have been anything but complacent since they arrived in Huntsville in 2011 and joined The Brook Church in Madison, where Pastor Brian Mayfield drew them in with his message that one cannot be indifferent when it comes to their faith. So Peterson and his wife put their faith into action, becoming involved with OneHarvest Food Ministries.

“When we got to The Brook we really stepped it up a notch and got involved in the church,” Peterson said. “It’s very important to show our kids that you have to do the Lord’s work and support

people that don’t have anything. It’s really a humbling experience to see some of the folks that are struggling to get through life. They might not have a meal every day, or maybe only one meal a day. It makes you appreciate the blessings the Lord has given you.”

OneHarvest, a nonprofit, non-denominational faith based organization, serves families by offering affordable pre-packaged food boxes each month at locations across the Southeast, including The Brook. Anyone can purchase the boxes, which typically range in price from \$20 to \$50, and include items such as fresh frozen produce, including green beans and strawberries, hot dogs, muffin mix, ground beef, chicken breast and pancake mix.

“It’s a significant savings,” said Peterson, who has purchased the low-price groceries before.

Each month Peterson brings flyers for the boxes available for purchase that month, such as this month’s Fresh Frozen Veggie box or Premium Grilling Special box, to the Arsenal, including Army Community Service, to help get the word out about the low-cost grocery

ministry. Boxes may be ordered online, or by phone. Together with his wife and teenage son, he then joins with other volunteers at The Brook to distribute the food boxes once a month at the church on Highway 72 across from the new Walmart in Madison. While the family participates in the ministry each month, as Christmas approaches, they find their work to be particularly important.

“Christmas is the time where people are going to feel the want or the need,” Peterson said. “This month alone we’re going to do as much as we can to support people so that they can at least have a pleasant holiday.”

The couple’s 3-year-old daughter might even soon get in on the distribution day volunteer efforts.

“It’s important to set a good example that shows you want to help people who are less fortunate and to do the Lord’s work,” Peterson said.

Editor’s note: Deadline for December orders is Thursday at 5 p.m. To purchase a OneHarvest food box, visit www.oneharvest.com or call Wanda at 503-0485. Pick up is Dec. 15 from 9 to 10 a.m. at The Brook in Madison.



Photo by Ellen Hudson

Chief Warrant Officer 5 Edward Peterson Jr. explains his volunteer work with OneHarvest Food Ministries.

Long career in public affairs reaches final chapter

MDA's Pam Rogers retires to pursue other interests

By KARI HAWKINS

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Telling the military story has been a way of life for Pam Rogers.

This longtime public affairs professional began her Department of Defense civilian career with the *Redstone Rocket*, and then went on to support several Redstone Arsenal weapon system programs for the Missile Command, the Aviation and Missile Command and, lastly, the Missile Defense Agency, where she has served as deputy public affairs director.

Now, with nearly 33 years of public service, Rogers is stepping down, taking a retirement break from the fast-paced demands of a public affairs career and possibly going on to pursue a second career outside of government service.

"I've always loved to write and I may take on some freelance writing jobs later on," said the 56-year-old Decatur resident. "But right now, I'm just thinking about enjoying the Christmas season.

"A friend of mine encouraged me to keep a journal when I retire. People have told me 'Your life is going to change more than you realize.' And I'm looking forward to that."

Ever since she hit the 30-year-mark in her career, Rogers has considered the possibility of retiring. But a recent health scare led her to see retirement as an opportunity to relax and enjoy life, to journey into other interests, and to spend time with family and friends, including her long-distance boyfriend, Gordon Scheet, who lives in Omaha.

"My goal in my career was to do the best I could and to have a positive impact," Rogers said. "Early on, I knew I wanted to be more than a GS-9. But I never really aspired to be the director anywhere. I think I've reached where I really wanted to be."

The 1978 University of Alabama communications graduate began her career as a graphic illustrator for UA's University Television Service, which was a feeder station to Alabama Public Television. Though a step in the right direction, it wasn't quite what her father, George Sipes, had in mind for his daughter.

"My father actually came to my office

one day. He showed up unannounced and said 'You are not working here anymore. Fill out these applications for government employment,'" Rogers recalled with a laugh.

Sipes, who worked for the Research Development and Engineering Center, knew that the federal government was wanting to hire women to diversify its work force. And he wanted his daughter to see that as an opportunity.

But the only job she was offered was as a clerk/typist for the Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior, which had an office in Tuscaloosa. It didn't matter. Rogers did accept the job as an opportunity for government employment, and soon found out it involved much more than office work.

"We were so short of people that I got to go around the state to do title searches at courthouses," Rogers said. "We had a wildlife biologist on staff who provided environmental impact statements. So, we also had things like pet mice and pet snakes in the office.

"I really enjoyed all of it. We had a word processor specialist in the office, and she taught me about word processing.

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Photo by Kari Hawkins

Pam Rogers stands near a Dr. Wernher von Braun display inside the Missile Defense Agency at Redstone Arsenal. She is retiring from a nearly 33-year career in public service, with most of those years as a public affairs professional supporting the Missile Command, the Aviation and Missile Command, and, lastly, the Missile Defense Agency.

Teenager takes inspiring journey to Rome

By AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON

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Even when she was in her mother's womb, St. Kateri Tekakwitha was watching over Sarah Shontz.

The prognosis for retired 1st Sgt. Walt Shontz and his wife Gina's unborn baby was not good – the baby would likely have Down's syndrome, and doctors recommended that they abort the child. Instead, they prayed to the then called Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha for her intercession in the health of their unborn child.

"Here I am today, no medical problems," said Shontz, now a senior at Hazel Green High School.

Eighteen years later, Shontz traveled to Rome to witness the woman her family believes interceded for her as an infant become a saint. She will share the story of her trip to Rome for the canonization of the Catholic Church's first Native American saint at the Military Council of American Women's Advent Potluck Luncheon and Baby Jesus Shower, Friday at Bicentennial Chapel. The event begins with a holy hour at 11, followed

by mass at noon and a luncheon.

Together with her grandparents and two aunts, Shontz attended the canonization of Kateri, the rite of the Catholic Church that declares someone a saint, Oct. 21 in St. Peter's Square. Shontz's grandparents, Rudy and Leona Gonzales, who live on the Tuscarora reservation in New York, have long prayed to the Native American woman for her intercession, and always knew that if her sainthood ever occurred in their lifetime, they would travel to Rome to witness the canonization firsthand. Even though the Vatican does not consider it a miracle, Leona attributes her recovery from thyroid cancer 10 years ago to the prayers she made to the now-saint. When Pope Benedict XVI announced Kateri would become a saint in February 2012, the Gonzales knew their granddaughter, who had chosen Kateri for her confirmation name, was destined to make the trip with them. Seated a mere 20 to 40 feet away from the altar for the mass, the experience was life changing for the teenager.

"This trip meant the world to me," Shontz said. "If I had the chance to relive the experience over again, I'd do it in a heartbeat. It changed me personally.



Photo by Ellen Hudson

Sarah Shontz, a senior at Hazel Green High School, holds her medal of St. Kateri Tekakwitha, whose canonization she attended in Rome in October. Shontz wears the medal of the Catholic saint every day.

I'm a calmer and more patient person since I've been there."

In addition to the canonization, Shontz

and her family traveled to many other holy sites throughout their journey, including the Sistine Chapel, St. Catherine's Basilica in Siena, St. Paul's Basilica in Rome, St. Francis and St. Clare's Basilicas in Assisi, and St. Anthony's Basilica in Padua, where they were able to see the saint's incorrupt vocal chords and tongue.

"It was the coolest experience ever," Shontz said. "All the churches we toured, once we walked in I felt holier than ever. It was like Jesus was right there. I felt like I had a stronger sense of my faith than I ever have before."

The highlight of the trip for Shontz was their trip to the Scala Sancta, the Holy Stairs, believed to be the 28 steps that lead to Pontius Pilate's praetorium in Jerusalem, where Jesus stood during his Passion. The stairs may only be ascended on one's knees.

"You have to kneel up the steps, but instead of kneeling up it felt like you were on clouds, like angels were helping you," Shontz said. "That was where my faith felt the strongest."

Kateri, the daughter of an Algonquin mother and Mohawk chief, was born in upstate New York in 1656. When she was

See Saint on page 29

Entertainment business is all in the family

Andrews shares love of music

By **AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON**

Staff writer

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When she's on stage or behind the curtain, it's not about her role as a performer or director, but rather, Angie Andrews' audience.

"It's not really about me," Andrews said. "If I can bring something to the stage and help somebody, then my destiny is fulfilled. If I can sing a song that blesses someone, or causes someone not to fear anymore, or grasp on when they're wanting to give up – that's what I'm wanting people to walk away with."

While by day she is a contract specialist with the Corps of Engineers, Huntsville Center, there is more than meets the eye when it comes to Andrews, who is also a playwright, singer, actor, producer and director. It's all a labor of love for the accomplished performer, who hopes her audiences walk away from her performances with a new outlook on life.

"I hope they walk away with challenges of how to better themselves and better their life," Andrews said. "I hope they walk away with hope and a new lease on life. All in all, I promote love. I hope they walk away with the fact that love can bring it all together."

Andrews has had a song in her heart ever since she was a child, the youngest of 24 children. Her parents were both singers and her father played both the piano and harmonica, making music and theater a natural fit for Andrews and her siblings.

"We had to come up with some creative things and we had a ball doing it," Andrews said. "Singing, playing around, it was in our DNA."

But it wasn't until she began singing at church, Little Indian Creek Primitive

Baptist Church, at age 8 that she truly got her start performing, and from there it's all come natural for the Huntsville native. Through church and at school at Bob Jones High School, she learned what music was, how to create harmonies and make the words on the page come to life. Together with her husband Chester, an accomplished pianist and songwriter whom she married in 1988, she's been making a difference through words and song, teaching choirs and praise and worship teams, and writing, directing and performing in theatrical plays that she's brought to the stage in St. Louis, Chicago and now Huntsville.

"Music can change people, their perspective on life, just with one song," Andrews said. "I can sing 'God really loves you,' or 'it's going to get better,' and look at a person's emotions, see them crying and see them feel what I'm singing – that's the best feeling in the world, to be able to change somebody's life at that moment."

Her first play that she wrote was "Lamb of God," a 50-plus cast member show based on the passion of Jesus Christ, which considered the actions and emotions of other central players in the story, such as Judas, Pontius Pilate and Peter.

"I love the Easter story," Andrews said. "I'm a Christian, and I'm a true believer in what Jesus did for us, and I'm so passionate about it."

Andrews writes all of her productions herself.

"It just kind of trickles down – it's like, 'God, what's next?' I'm sitting there and my fingers just go," Andrews said. "I see the plot, the end, and I see the building up toward that, and I also get a glimpse at the people that need to play the parts."

Once she has the groundwork laid, Chester helps fill in the musical portion of the production, while daughter Charity, who has an interest in fashion and also works for the Corps of Engineers,



Photo by Ellen Hudson

From left, Charity, Chester and Angela Andrews work together as a family to produce theatrical plays in the Tennessee Valley. Not pictured is daughter Destiny, who is currently living in Los Angeles working on her music career.

helps her visualize how to bring her vision to life on stage. Together the family sees the production from start to finish, ideally bringing two big shows a year to the stage, due to the time commitment involved.

"We have everything we need right in the house," Andrews said of her entertainment oriented family. "Whatever your purpose and destiny in life, everything you need to fulfill that is already inside of you."

One family member that hasn't been as involved as of late is daughter Destiny, a.k.a. Adia, who is off pursuing her music career in Los Angeles, where she is working with Champion Music and was

featured on Deitrick Haddon's "A Beautiful Soul" movie soundtrack.

"I'm so proud of her," Andrews said. "She took on the love and passion of this art. I can honestly say that I know that she gets it from God. She's a trailblazer."

Through the family's new company, Limitless Entertainment, one of their goals for the future is to provide a place in Huntsville where adults can go out to enjoy a safe environment, good food and enjoyable entertainment, whether it be acting, singing, dancing, jazz, rhythm and blues or gospel music.

"We want to be the entertainment mecca of Huntsville, Alabama," Andrews said of her work in progress.

Survivors

continued from page 19

“He wanted to know what happens when you go to heaven. He sensed something. Just the week before, he had started talking out of the blue about his dad being dead. Somehow he just sensed something was happening,” Ramsey said.

Mustering all the strength she had, Ramsey took her children home and, with the help of a family friend, she told the children what happened to their dad. The next few days were filled with a trip to Delaware to receive his body and a funeral in Huntsville with full military honors attended by family, friends, servicemembers who knew Chip Ramsey, and hundreds of mourners, including Huntsville Mayor Tommy Battle, U.S. Rep. Mo Brooks and state Rep. Bill Holtzclaw.

Now, just over a year since their loss, Ramsey and her children are still struggling to get their footing without their Soldier in their lives. Ramsey worries about her children so much that she has left her career as a director of accounting for a defense contractor to be a stay-at-home mom for her children. Bradley, who was once happy-go-lucky and carefree, is now quiet and withdrawn. Megan has seemed less distressed by the loss of her dad, bouncing back with a joy that is often a blessing to her mother.

“I remember before school started that year, I was upset that Chip would miss her first day of kindergarten. Little did I know that he would miss the rest of her life,” Ramsey said.

“School started the Monday after Chip was killed. I had decided to send the kids to their first day of school. I was crying that morning, and Megan said to me ‘Mommy, why are you crying? Daddy is in a good place. He’s in heaven.’”

Both children have enjoyed recent Veterans Day events where their father was recognized. They attended the Veterans Day Dinner, where they led the Pledge of Allegiance, and the Veterans Day Breakfast, where they, their mom, and their grandfather and step-grandmother were recognized as a Gold Star family.

“It’s tough to pull Bradley out, and these kinds of things do seem to help him,” Ramsey said. “He likes to hear people talking about his dad and he loves getting the coins that officers give him. He loves hearing that his dad is a hero.

“But after all the excitement and as we’re on the way home from these things, I will see Bradley rubbing his eyes, blinking and looking out the window. I know he is thinking about his dad and how much he misses him.”

Dedicating her time to her children is important to Ramsey not only because of their loss but also because there is not much other family support to rely on.

Ramsey’s father has passed away and her mother is suffering from the paralyzing symptoms of Guillain-Barre. Chip Ramsey’s mother also has medical issues, and his father and stepmom, who live in Arab, only see them occasionally.

“It feels like Chip’s death was only yesterday,” Ramsey said. “We’re in the same exact place we were a year ago. At first, I didn’t want to leave my job because I didn’t want to be at home to think about it. Friends tried to get me to take time off, but I didn’t. It’s hard to give up your job when you are a career-oriented person.

“But this decision to be at home was ultimately about my kids. I need this time to help them heal, to help us heal. Chip always wanted me to be a stay-at-home mom anyway. I was cleaning out some emails one day and I found a bunch that were from Chip. That was my sign that I needed to be at home for a while.”

The family has recognized important family events – Chip Ramsey’s birthday, the anniversary of his death – quietly, with balloon releases at his gravesite. Often, on their visits there, Bradley will leave a Happy Meal toy at his dad’s gravesite and he recently left a ceramic turkey for Thanksgiving. On Veterans Day this year, they participated in a program at the children’s school – Hampton Cove Elementary – where a tree was planted in their dad’s memory. Bradley wrote a letter to his dad on Veterans Day thanking him for his service and signing it “Your Son.”

“Since Chip was killed, Megan has really come out of her shell. It’s weird how life events change us. For Bradley, he has gotten introverted and quiet, and clingy. He still goes to counseling,” Ramsey said. “I tell the children I don’t want them to forget their dad. He was a huge part of their lives and he was so proud of them.”

They have not yet participated in any of the Survivor Outreach Services programs offered at Redstone Arsenal, but Ramsey said she wants to begin doing more things that bring her children into contact with other children who have lost their Soldier.

At home, Ramsey is now trying to fill the role of both mom and dad for her children.

“Chip was so happy-go-lucky. He was honest, dependable and trustworthy, and I want his children to know that. He always had a smile on his face and he was happy with whatever life gave him. He was truly genuine and a kind man, and he loved kids,” she said.

“I strive to be more like Chip was. I was always the strong one, the disciplinarian. He was like a kid himself. I used to tell the kids they were so lucky to be growing up with a dad like him. Little did I know ... I hope they grow up to be good people and live a happy life. I don’t want this to be a cloud over their lives. I hope they learn from what has happened and that they go on to have happy lives.”

Rogers

continued from page 23

I was very young and gung ho about everything.”

As a 23-year-old, Rogers got to travel to Atlanta and Washington, D.C., to work on environmental impact statements for the Department of the Interior.

Yet, again, though, her father pushed Rogers into pursuing a better career.

“He told me ‘I think this organization doesn’t have the pay scale you need. You can do better. Fill this out.’ It was an application for the Army Materiel Command Intern Program,” Rogers said.

Soon, she got a call from Redstone Arsenal’s personnel office and came to the Arsenal for an intake interview.

“The personnel office was in the warehouse area of the Arsenal. They put me in a room, and three or four men came in and sat on one side of the table and I was on the other side,” Rogers recalled.

“I don’t know how I kept my composure because I was scared to death. They kept popping questions at me with no structure and then one of the men said ‘You do know we make things that kill people. You won’t be working for NASA.’”

Months went by, the Bureau of Land Management closed, and Rogers took a clerk job with the Veterans Administration Hospital in Tuscaloosa and then with the Bureau of Mines. One day, she got a call asking that she once again make the trip to the Arsenal for an interview. This time it was for a public affairs intern position.

“I went to building 5250 (now headquarters for the Program Executive Office for Missiles and Space) for the interview and out comes this man who had interviewed me during that intake interview,” she said.

That man was Dave Harris, the Missile Command’s public affairs chief.

“He told me ‘I have to have an intern. But I said I would only take an intern if I could pick them myself. They gave me a stack of applications to go through and I found one with my handwriting on it that said ‘I would hire this person.’ I didn’t re-

member you. So, I figured I needed to get you back in for an interview.”

Rogers was hired in 1984 and joined a public affairs office that included Skip Vaughn, who continues as the *Redstone Rocket* editor; Ginger Stephens, who is now with the AMCOM Congressional Affairs Office; and several other more senior public affairs specialists. Harris was not only Rogers’ boss, but also became her mentor.

“I was very lucky to come work for the Army,” Rogers said. “My first job was to write for the *Redstone Rocket*, and read *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Birmingham News* and *The Huntsville Times* every day to pick out articles that would be of interest to MICOM leadership.”

She particularly enjoyed working for the installation’s weekly newspaper.

“It was great. It was like being paid to have fun,” she said. “I was scared to death, though, because I worried someone was going to find out I had no idea what I was doing. There were all kinds of interesting things to write about, and I came to know more about the Arsenal than my father knew.”

After she completed the two-year internship, Rogers worked in media relations and internal communications. During Operation Desert Storm/Shield, she supported hundreds of media queries about weapon systems, particularly Patriot, developed at Redstone.

“There were days we worked well into the night,” she said.

After the war, Rogers was tasked with producing a music video of weapon footage from Desert Storm. She soon became an expert on video production.

Then, in 1987, Rogers moved briefly to NASA.

“That was a misguided career move,” she said. “NASA was nothing like the Army. I didn’t like it. I liked the people, but it just wasn’t home for me. Three months later, Mr. Harris was having trouble filling the position I had left and my co-worker Ginger (Stephens) told Mr. Harris ‘I think I know someone who would take Pam’s job ... Pam.’ They rehired me and I started back with the Army one day before a 10-year hiring freeze.”

During her time with MICOM and then AMCOM, Rogers learned about ev-

ery aspect of public affairs. She grew in her profession with the mentorship of Harris, who was well-respected both by Army public affairs professionals and throughout the local community.

“He was a fountain of knowledge. He was like a second father to me,” Rogers said. “Ginger and I grew up under him. I remember we’d run into his office and say ‘Boss, you won’t believe the horrible thing I did and what I messed up.’ He’d say ‘Stop. Did anybody die? If not, then it can be fixed. Nothing is that horrible.’ The other thing he would always tell us was ‘There is no room for ego in public affairs.’ Our job was to make our command and our commander look good, and to tell the Army story.”

Harris also taught her that “you get back from people what you give to them,” an important lesson for working in media relations, where the public affairs professional must provide information and then rely on the media outlet to tell the story.

Of all her public affairs responsibilities, Rogers most enjoyed media relations.

“It was always something different. Every time someone had a question, it started you on an investigative journey to get the answer,” she said. “And when there was an incident, you were right there supporting the Army mission and telling the Army story.”

In 2005, Rogers left AMCOM and took on the challenges of a one-person public affairs shop for MDA at Redstone.

“It was very different because MDA has a very corporate environment. There were no standard operating procedures. It was still a very young organization that worked under regulations from the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Being a joint organization made it different,” she said.

“At AMCOM, I knew everyone and everything had become second nature. Coming to MDA was like starting all over again with establishing contacts and understanding the environment.”

Yet, she didn’t have a learning curve on one of the weapon systems she supported. Rogers made the move to MDA because THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense), one of the major programs that she had supported at AMCOM, was shifting to MDA.

The other weapon system – the Sea-based X-Band Radar – was a whole different story, one that Rogers had to get up to speed with quickly to prepare for an upcoming media day.

“That media day was the first time I saw the Sea-based X-Band Radar, and it was quite impressive,” she said.

Since then, she has made several trips to White Sands, N.M., to support THAAD media requests, and to Hawaii to support the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense System and the Sea-based X-Band Radar media requests, including a unique request from *Rolling Stone* magazine, which went on to do a tongue-in-cheek story on the program.

“You just can’t turn that stuff down,” Rogers said. “It was a viable request, and it hit an age group that we targeted. If we could get young people interested in engineering and working for the Army from a story in *Rolling Stone*, then we hit one of our target audiences.”

Today, the MDA public affairs office at Redstone includes four government employees and one part-time contractor. It reports to the director of public affairs at MDA’s headquarters in Arlington, Va.

Last summer, Rogers had a brain aneurysm. It was discovered after she experienced light headedness, vertigo and vision problems, and her doctor ordered an MRI.

“When you are sitting still at your desk and all of a sudden your chair feels like it’s turned a 45-degree angle ... Well, you should pay attention to that,” Rogers said. “That happened a few times over a couple of months. At first, I thought I had a stomach virus.”

The MRI found the brain aneurysm and she had surgery to repair it with an endovascular coiling with stent assist.

“I’d been thinking about retiring for a couple of years. When something like this happens, it really gets your attention, and I decided it was time,” Rogers said, adding that she will miss all the friends she has at Redstone Arsenal.

To young public affairs professionals, Rogers’ advice is simply: “Write, write and write, and get a master’s degree if you can in something that’s useful, like crisis communications. I’ve seen a decline in the quality of writing and that’s something you just can’t get around.”

Saint

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just 4, her parents and brother died from smallpox and she was taken in by her two aunts and an uncle. She converted to the Catholic faith as a teenager, despite hostility from members of her tribe, and died at age 24. She was considered deeply faithful to the Eucharist and the cross of Christ. Of Native American descent herself, and living as a Catholic in the predominantly Protestant Bible Belt South,

Shontz identifies with St. Kateri.

“I’m questioned about my faith all the time, and she was questioned and ridiculed for her faith,” Shontz said.

Contrary to common misconceptions, Catholics do not worship the saints, but rather pray to them for their intercession. One of the requirements for sainthood is that at least two miracles must be attributed to them. To be authenticated, the miracle must defy scientific laws. St. Kateri’s first miracle occurred within minutes of her death, when the smallpox scars that had disfigured her face since she was

a child completely disappeared, a miracle that Pope Pius XII authenticated in 1943. Pope Benedict authenticated her second miracle in 2011, the mysterious recovery of a young boy from a flesh-eating bacterium in 2006 after his family prayed for her intercession.

While the Shontz family’s miracles may not be authenticated by the Vatican, they can still feel the work of St. Kateri in their own lives. Every day the teen puts on her Kateri medal that her mother mysteriously found for her at a Redstone Arsenal Community Wom-

en’s Club event over the summer. Gina stopped by a table that was selling religious items to ask if they had a Kateri medal, and while they had none on sale, one of the women at the table reached into her purse to retrieve a medal. Her daughter, like Shontz, had chosen Kateri for her confirmation name, but was given two medals instead of one. The woman, by chance, had been carrying the medal in her purse when she met Gina.

“She said, ‘I think this belongs to your daughter,’” Gina said.

Shontz has worn the medal ever since.

Military officers group honors new second lieutenants

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

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The seven young men sat together at one of the round tables in the dining room. On cue they all got up at the same time and took their place in the chow line.

Welcome to the Army, gentlemen.

This was just a taste of their life to come.

The seven ROTC cadets, who will receive their commissions as second lieutenants, received symbolic gold bars during an annual Gold Bar presentations luncheon Nov. 28 held by the Huntsville Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America.

"We look forward to great, great careers as you serve our great country," guest speaker Col. Bert Vergez, of the Program Executive Office for Aviation, said. He will retire Jan. 8 after more than 25 years.

Alabama A&M University's ROTC will have its commissioning ceremony Dec. 13 at 3 p.m. at the Ernest L. Knight Center on the A&M campus. The graduating cadets, and their chosen branches, include Patrick Williams (Signal), Robert Ward (Transportation), Clinton Tuggles (Quartermaster), Deniro Smith (Transportation), Bruce Cole (Ordnance); and from the University of Alabama-Huntsville, Zachary Folk (undecided), Kevin Long (Armor) and Ty Myatt (Transportation). Myatt was not among the luncheon's 30 attendees at The Summit.

Alabama A&M's program has commissioned more than 900 officers since 1971.



Photo by Skip Vaughn

From left, guest speaker Col. Bert Vergez stands with future officers Zachary Folk, Kevin Long, Bruce Cole, Deniro Smith, Clinton Tuggles, Robert Ward and Patrick Williams.

The Alabama A&M University graduation is 9 a.m. Dec. 14 at Elmore Gym; and the UAH graduation is 10 a.m. Dec. 15 at the Von Braun Center.

The Military Officers Association of America has 470,000 members and 500 chapters nationally. They include active duty, retired, National Guard and Reserve officers from all services. MOAA actively lobbies Congress on a regular basis.

Air defense system intercepts test target

WHITE SANDS MISSILE RANGE, N.M. – The Medium Extended Air Defense System successfully intercepted an MQM-107 target Thursday, demonstrating 360-degree cued search and track capability during its first flight test.

The MEADS test configuration included: a networked MEADS Battle Management Command, Control, Communications and Computers Intelligence tactical operations center; a lightweight launcher firing a Patriot Advanced Capability-3 Missile Segment Enhancement; and a 360-degree MEADS Multifunction Fire Control Radar.

This event was the first time engagement of an air breathing target by the MSE weapon system.

Preliminary test data indicated all

mission objectives were achieved.

Representatives at the flight test from the United States included the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Portfolio Systems Acquisition, PEO Missiles and Space, Lower Tier Project Office, U.S. MEADS National Product Office, PAC-3 Product Office, Fort Sill (Okla.) Directorate of Combat Developments, and the Space and Missile Defense Command Targets Management Office.

International attendees included the National Armaments Director from Germany, representatives from the German MEADS National Product Office and the NATO MEADS Management Agency. (Program Executive Office for Missiles and Space release)

Photo by Barry Chandler, RTC

Electronics overview

Redstone Test Center electronics engineer Michael Tousak gives an overview to RTC commander Col. Steve Kihara and Col. Sharlene Donovan, project manager for Instrumentations Targets and Threat Simulations. He discussed the capabilities of state-of-the-art tracking equipment consisting of two optical tracking mounts, radar and an instrument van. Redstone Test Center officially accepted the Mobile Multi-Sensor TSPI System from the PM-ITTS at Redstone on Nov. 15.



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IMCOM commander visits Korea and Japan



Photo by Tetsuo Nakahara, U.S. Army Garrison Japan
Public Affairs

From left, Command Sgt. Maj. Katrina Najee, command sergeant major of U.S. Army Garrison Japan, Lt. Gen. Mike Ferriter, commander of Installation Management Command, and Maj. Gen. Michael Harrison Sr., commander of U.S. Army Japan and I Corps (Forward), visit the construction site of the Japan Ground Self Defense Force's Central Readiness Forces headquarters on Camp Zama Nov. 24. The CRF headquarters at Camp Zama is scheduled to open in spring 2013.

Installation Management Command release

CAMP ZAMA, Japan – The completion of an aerial tour of the Sagami General Depot, Hardy Barracks and the Sagami Family Housing Area in Japan on Nov. 24 brought to an end a trip to the U.S. Army Garrisons in Korea and Japan for the commander, Installation Management Command, Lt. Gen. Mike Ferriter.

Escorted by Pacific Region director Debra Zedalis, IMCOM Command Sgt. Maj. Earl Rice and Pacific Region Command Sgt. Maj. Karl Schmidt, Ferriter's weeklong visit started in Yongsan, South Korea on Nov. 19.

The primary focus of the commander's visit was on addressing Ready and Resilience programs; specifically, placing emphasis on Sponsorship, Sexual Harassment and Assault Response Prevention Program, Substance Abuse, Suicide Prevention, and Transition, Intramurals and Sponsorship.

It was also important to connect with senior leaders, and during his visit to Korea, Ferriter met with Gen. James Thurman, commander of U.S.

Forces Korea, and Lt. Gen. John D. Johnson, commander of 8th U.S. Army.

Throughout the week, Ferriter scheduled lunches with Soldiers, visited numerous IMCOM facilities and met with the IMCOM work force whenever possible. He also participated in such events as a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Commiskey Community Activity Center in Yongsan, the Thanksgiving Day meal at Camp Red Cloud and a Soldier combative training session at Camp Humphreys.

"The Korea trip included visits to Garrison Yongsan, Humphreys, Daegu (including Camps Walker, Carroll, and George), and Camps Red Cloud and Casey. While at the garrisons, we conducted employee Town Hall meetings and took the opportunity to recognize select employees for their outstanding achievements/performance," Ferriter said. "On Thanksgiving Day, we had the opportunity to serve the Thanksgiving meal to and dine with the great Soldiers of the 2nd Infantry Division at Camp Red Cloud. We also had the opportunity to visit the DMZ and view the Joint

Security Area."

Ferriter and his team left the land of the Morning Calm in Korea on Nov. 23 and later that day arrived in Japan, the land of the Rising Sun.

While in Japan, the group met with Maj. Gen. Michael Harrison, commander of U.S. Army Japan and I Corps (Forward), and visited Garrison Torii Station in Okinawa where they toured the 1st Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group Barracks and visited Garrison Japan at Camp Zama and toured the Sagami Family Housing Area.

"Overall, it was a great trip! A worthwhile opportunity to meet with the United States Forces Korea, 8th Army, and United States Army Japan leadership and address concerns and also an exceptional opportunity to meet with and address the outstanding Soldiers serving our country in Korea and Japan," Ferriter said. "What an outstanding group of dedicated Soldiers we have at these garrisons, and I was impressed by the Senior Commander/Garrison Commander teams at each of the locations we visited."

Ammunition amnesty program on target for personal safety

By TERRI STOVER
For the Rocket

In an effort to continue to keep Redstone safe, to minimize hazards and potential personal injury, Redstone adheres to the Department of the Army Ammunition Amnesty Program.

Army Regulation 710-2 established the AAP for all Army installations in recovering military ammunition, explosives and residue items. The program assists individuals in returning ammunition that may have been erroneously left in their possession after a turn-in. Returns can be made without fear of prosecution.

However, at Redstone, with the diminished troop numbers, civilians and others also can take advantage of the program.

Redstone's policy is primarily for small arms, .50 caliber and smaller. Personnel can turn in these small arms, and/or live ammunition, to the amnesty collection box, located south of the Patton and Buxton roads intersection. The red box is clearly marked with signs and can be seen from the road. The box is available 24 hours a day.

"The amnesty box has been out there for over a year," Kevin Waldrep, the Garrison quality assurance specialist ammunition surveillance, said.

He sees an influx in the use of the amnesty dropoff box during and after hunting season.

This practice is fine with Rusty Brands, the Garrison explosive safety officer. "We'd rather get the ammunition out of your hands if you don't need it, and explosives out of hands that shouldn't have it," Brands said.

What the amnesty dropoff box is not designed to hold are items larger than .50 caliber. Rarely, items are placed in or near the dropoff box that really should be handled in a different manner. The Redstone program covers these items as well.

If people have items that are larger than .50 caliber, they can call the Ammunition Surveillance Workshop at 842-9078. Ammunition and explosives above .50 caliber are more hazardous and need to be handled differently. Trained personnel can arrange to pick up these large items, also with no questions asked and no penalty involved.

Redstone's policy states "the AAP is not a substitute for normal turn in



Courtesy photo

The ammunition amnesty program dropoff box is south of the Patton and Buxton roads intersection. Small arms, .50 caliber and below, can be dropped off 24 hours a day with no questions asked.



Courtesy photo

A fragmentation grenade is an example of what can be turned in through the ammunition amnesty program but not in the dropoff box. Such items should be handled by the quality assurance specialist ammunition surveillance experts.

procedures and will not be used to circumvent standard supply procedures."

Occasionally, items are found in the amnesty program that can be returned to service.

"Trained safety personnel can determine what are serviceable assets," Brands said. "These items can be used for training purposes, and save taxpayers' money."

Apache helicopter leaders test drive Echo model



Photo by Katie Starck, Aviation Flight Test Directorate

Apache project manager Col. Jeffrey Hager prepares for an orientation flight on the Apache E model.

“The Apache helicopter was already an impressive performer, and these new improvements make it even better.”

Col. Jeffrey Hager,
Apache project manager



Photo by Katie Starck, Aviation Flight Test Directorate

Mike Meely, a test pilot with the Apache Helicopter Project Office, looks on as Lt. Col. Tal Sheppard, product manager for Longbow Apache, adjusts his helmet in preparation for an orientation flight on the latest version of the Apache.

By **RANDY TISOR**
PEO Aviation Public Affairs

For leadership in the Apache Helicopter Project Office, getting flight time in the front seat of the AH-64E (Block III) has taken a back seat to managing the latest version of the world's foremost attack helicopter.

During an orientation flight conducted at the Aviation Flight Test Directorate, Col. Jeffrey Hager, Apache project manager, had a chance to fly the recently re-designated Apache E model for the first time since the aircraft was introduced nearly a year ago. Lt. Col. Steven Van Riper, Lt. Col. Brian Stehle and Lt. Col. Tal Sheppard, product office managers for sensors, Block III and Longbow, respectively, also had the opportunity for a familiarization flight in the E model.

With Mike Meely, a veteran Apache E model test pilot with the Apache project office in the rear pilot's seat, each officer took a turn in the co-pilot position up front.

“We each received about an hour of an orientation and demonstration flight in the Apache,” Van Riper said. “The flight gave us firsthand experience and knowledge of how the aircraft works in terms of advances in performance and avionics and the experience of what it's like in the cockpit.

“I was lucky enough to have a portion of my flight during darkness, so I was able to exercise the night vision system as well and use the sensors in the hours of darkness, so it provided a great orientation experience.

“To me, the aircraft felt a lot more powerful in terms of responsiveness,” he said, noting the aircraft's power in spite of the fact that the helicopter was in a heavy, testing configuration at the time of the flight. “We had done a max performance takeoff from the airfield, and we were doing almost 150 knots when we left the departure end of the runway, which was exceptional in my opinion. That's a great deal of power in the aircraft.

“When we arrived at our intermediate airfield to do some flight maneuvers and some more demonstrations,” Van Riper continued, “it was clearly evident when we had the aircraft in different hovering conditions, in ground effect and out of ground effect, that the available power and power margin were significant.

“The aircraft had a performance increase over the D model and is a total departure from where we were in the A model. Even at the heavier condition we were in, it was fun to fly. We didn't have

to worry about exceeding any limitations.”

The Target Acquisition and Designation Sights/Pilot Night Vision System, Van Riper said, performed the same as on the D model, but when those systems were combined with increased performance of the E model, the result was a “total system,” one that, according to Van Riper, would be advantageous to the Soldiers out in the field – aviators and maintainers alike.

“But really, the improvement that I really noted was the integration of the advanced avionics and the speed of the avionics along with some of the other pilot/vehicle interface improvements and that exceptional MTADS/PNVS imagery. The overall workload comes down for the aviator,” Van Riper said. “It's a synergistic effect where the sum is greater than all the parts. That's what made it feel like we finally had the aircraft performance and the avionics performance and all the sub-systems performing together in a much improved state.”

Hager's impressions were similar.

“The ease that the aircraft departed the ground on takeoff was surprising,” Hager said of the E model, adding that the power to weight ratio compared to the nearly equally heavy although less powerful D model was a considerable contrast.

“Straight and level flight was also a pleasant surprise. The new composite rotor blades make the aircraft smoother in flight and more maneuverable,” Hager said. He noted that the combination of increased available horsepower and advanced rotor blades made the aircraft faster than any previous version, and a fact that was clearly evident as he put the helicopter through various combat-type maneuvers.

“I could not believe that the aircraft could hold the airspeed as well as performing tight turns and targeting maneuvers,” he said. “Return-to-target flight maneuvers will allow the combat aviator to better perform operations.”

Hager also noted that normal flight, takeoff and landings were all improvements over recent models.

“The Apache helicopter was already an impressive performer, and these new improvements make it even better,” Hager said. “I do believe that the entire Apache team is owed a big thanks for what this aircraft can do today. The performance is increased, several critical components are improved and the aircraft provides additional combat capability to the Soldier. The entire Apache team, both government and industry made this aircraft a reality.”

Helicopter flies over California with pilotless control

AMRDEC release

In a Nov. 5 flight over the Diablo Mountain Range, San Jose, Calif., members of the Aviation and Missile Research Development and Engineering Center successfully demonstrated low-level autonomous behaviors critical to the next generation of military rotorcraft.

While pilots were aboard the aircraft, all flight maneuvers were conducted autonomously: obstacle field navigation, safe landing area determination, terrain sensing, statistical processing, risk assessment, threat avoidance, trajectory generation, and autonomous flight control were performed in real-time during the two-hour test flight.

“This was the first time terrain-aware autonomy has been achieved on a Black Hawk,” Lt. Col. Carl Ott, chief of the Flight Projects Office at AMRDEC’s Aeroflightdynamics Directorate, said.

Testing was conducted on the Rotorcraft Aircrew Systems Concept Airborne Laboratory, or RASCAL, a JUH-60A Black Hawk equipped with the H.N. Burns 3D-LZ laser detection and ranging system for terrain sensing.

“The RASCAL aircraft was the ideal platform upon which to demonstrate this technology, as it provides a unique, fully programmable fly-by-wire flight control system and advanced sensor interfaces for rapid prototyping of new concepts, while maintaining the standard UH-60 hydromechanical flight control system as a safety backup,” Jay Fletcher, RASCAL project manager, said.

Throughout the flight, the aircraft maintained an en route altitude of between 200 and 400 feet above ground level. During the final obstacle field navigation flight segment, the safe landing area determination algorithm autonomously identified a safe landing spot within a forest clearing and commanded the aircraft to approach and hover at 60 feet over the identified landing spot.

The final hover was achieved with 1 foot accuracy.

“A risk-minimizing algorithm was used to compute and command a safe trajectory continuously throughout 23 miles of rugged terrain in a single flight, at an average speed of 40 knots,” Matthew Whalley, the Autonomous Rotorcraft Project lead, said. “No prior knowledge of the terrain



Army photo

The Aviation and Missile Research Development and Engineering Center demonstrates autonomous landing site selection and approach in a JUH-60A Black Hawk helicopter during a Nov. 5 test flight over the Diablo mountain range, Calif.

was used.”

The crew members present on this historic flight included Army experimental

test pilots Lt. Col. Mike Olmstead and Lt. Col. Carl Ott, RASCAL system operator Dennis Zollo and Dr. Marc Takahashi.

Military families meet with first lady at White House

By C. TODD LOPEZ

Army News Service

WASHINGTON – The children of military families sat patiently in the front row of seats set up in the East Room of the White House, Nov. 28, to listen to remarks by Michelle Obama.

“Our military families truly represent the very best that this country has to offer, and I’ve seen it up close,” Obama said. “You all do so much for this country, and you do it with such amazing poise and grace.”

Behind the children, the East Room was filled with military families.

The first lady commented on the sacrifice of military families, their contributions to the community and the contributions to the nation’s defense. She also highlighted the sacrifices of their young children who may have to move many times around the

“Our military families truly represent the very best that this country has to offer, and I’ve seen it up close. You all do so much for this country, and you do it with such amazing poise and grace.”

Michelle Obama

country and the world as part of a military family.

To illustrate her point about the sacrifices of military children, she asked for one of the children to volunteer how many times they have had to change schools. One child, only 10

years old, had changed schools four times.

“Four schools at 10 years old – that is typical,” Obama said. “You meet these kids and they’ve been to so many schools and they are adjusting and keeping their grades up. And so many of you step up and handle your business while mom or dad is away, right? I just want you all to know just how proud we are. We are so proud of you, and we think you are amazing individuals. It may not feel that way, but you are special. We are grateful for your sacrifice and your service.”

In the few days following the Thanksgiving holiday, volunteers from around the country descended on the White House to help decorate the first family’s home for the Christmas season.

Included in those decorations, the

first lady said, are 54 trees, including the “official” White House tree, which is 19 feet tall. This year, that tree bears the words “Joining Forces” and is decorated with ornaments made by the children of military families from around the globe, Obama said.

Another tree in the White House, she said, “honors our men and women in uniform for the extraordinary sacrifice they and their families have made.” That tree is decorated with gold stars bearing the names of those who have died in service to the country.

“Any Gold Star family who visits the White House during this season will have the opportunity to decorate their own ornament and hang it on that very tree for the holiday period in honor of their loved ones,” Obama said.

Contract awarded for missile guidance section

The Army Program Executive Office for Missiles and Space, in conjunction with Aviation and Missile Command,

announced Friday the award of a contract for the Joint-Air-to-Ground Missile Guidance Section to Raytheon Com-

pany Missile Systems for the Extended Technology Development Phase.

The not-to-exceed value of \$10.4 million contract has an option that will be negotiated in the future.

The adverse weather capable JAGM system will enable war fighters to attack critical, high-value, fixed and moving targets – day or night – while remaining effective against a variety of countermeasures. When fielded, the JAGM system will provide an improved air-to-ground

missile for use on rotary-wing aircraft and unmanned aircraft systems for the joint services.

The JAGM Extended TD Phase will address affordability and reduce the overall cost before entering the Engineering and Manufacturing Development Phase, by adopting an incremental strategy for qualification of the JAGM Guidance Section.

PEO Missiles and Space awarded a similar contract to Lockheed Martin on Aug. 15.

Security assistance workers buy into training program

By KIM GILLESPIE

USASAC public affairs officer

Having a trained and ready work force is a priority for the Army Materiel Command and its subordinate Security Assistance Command. As AMC's lead for security assistance, USASAC is also responsible for ensuring its trained and ready work force includes its Security Assistance Enterprise members who support security assistance programs and Foreign Military Sales.

One initiative championed by Maj. Gen. Del Turner, USASAC's commander, is to "train the enterprise," and includes a Developmental Assignment Program. The program is designed to let employees from other SAE organizations (which includes the various USASAC location offices, the AMC life cycle management commands' Security Assistance Management Directorates, and the Program Executive Offices) rotate junior-level personnel through 60-90 day assignments to learn what their counterparts do and need in their jobs.

The program is currently in a "beta test" stage, with formal implementation scheduled for 2013. Two employees who participated in the most recent beta phase came from different organizations within the SAE but shared similar experiences.

Jessica Rasich, a USASAC country program manager for the PACOM/SOUTHCOM Directorate, and Tamika Hamilton, a TACOM Security Assistance Management Directorate logistics management specialist, each served 30 days working different jobs at different locations. Rasich worked at USASAC's New Cumberland, Pa., office serving as a central case manager for the country of Colombia and other SOUTHCOM countries, while Hamilton worked as a CPM in USASAC's PACOM/SOUTHCOM Directorate.

"The program is really beneficial – you truly gain an appreciation of what everyone else does," Rasich said. "It was great to see the process full-circle and to understand how what we do affects the process."

As a CPM, Rasich works with SOUTHCOM countries Colombia and Costa Rica from the pre-Letter of Request stage, until the formal agreement, or Letter of Offer and Acceptance, is made between the U.S. and its international partner for a FMS case. In her developmental assignment, Rasich worked the implementation side of the FMS case, which involves everything from requisitioning, transporta-



Photo by Kim Gillespie

Jessica Rasich, right, a country program manager at USASAC's Redstone Arsenal office, spent 30 days working at USASAC's New Cumberland, Pa., office as part of the command's Developmental Assignment Program. Rasich worked with New Cumberland's country case manager Deana Paul, left, and AI Thomas, center, deputy director of PACOM/SOUTHCOM.

tion and reconciliation to case closure for Colombia.

"It was good to see their frustration with us (CPMs)," Rasich joked, "to fully understand how much goes into what we ask them for on a daily basis."

Rasich kept a daily journal of her 30-day training as documentation and reference.

"Every day is different," she noted. She also learned what and why certain information is needed. "The (implementation work) that is performed at New Cumberland is very metric-based. I didn't realize that CCMs only had 10 days to complete requisitions," Rasich said.

Seeing the implementation portion of the cases also gave her an appreciation for the teamwork involved.

"As a CPM, you work more independently, but as a CCM, you are constantly working with and relying on your team," Rasich said. Rasich credits the two supply technicians and two supply specialists with much of the team's success at executing cases, and is especially grateful for her CCM mentor.

"I was very lucky to be working with one of the most experienced CCMs, Deana Paul. She had vast experience with all responsibilities of CCMs."



Photo by Michelle Harlan

Tamika Hamilton, a logistics management specialist from TACOM, worked at USASAC's Redstone Arsenal office with Shawn Drake, a country program manager at USASAC.

Rasich said transportation is probably one of the biggest challenges, especially when a country frequently changes freight forwarders.

"I was lucky to get to do some transportation training while I was in my assignment. While it was probably pretty basic for the personnel at New Cumberland, it was perfect for a newcomer like me," Rasich said. "I think sometimes it helped having me there. For example, an amendment was in the works that I already knew all about because I worked it as the CPM, so I was able to share my information with the team."

As part of the second phase beta

test, Rasich and her mentor, Paul, were in agreement about what she learned.

"The amount of time/research involved in providing answers to questions from country, commands, and the CPMs," Paul said about the most important lessons learned by Rasich. "I think the number of systems we use was also eye opening."

Rasich's recommendations for improving the program included adding more structure, and considering shorter-term assignments.

"While the 30-day assignment is optimum, it may not always be feasible because of issues such as backfilling your job while you are gone."

While Rasich and Hamilton were coming from different organizations and positions, their experiences and assessment of the program were very similar.

"I learned about the daily activities of a CPM, but it really was about the relationships and communication – I saw the bigger picture," Hamilton said. The bigger picture Hamilton refers to is being part of the SAE. "It really helped put down some misconceptions, too," she added.

Hamilton, who worked as a CPM for Japan, the Philippines, and even Mexico, also learned that there were more similarities than differences in how she conducts her job as a case writer for the TACOM SAMD and as a CPM for USASAC's PACOM Directorate.

"There is a package for everything, and collecting and writing the info is the same thing I have to do as a case manager."

Hamilton also credits her mentor at USASAC, CPM Shawn Drake, with providing overall guidance.

"I had continuity with Shawn, and then I also got to work with other CPMs for specific cases issues, such as diversions," she said. Drake, like Rasich, characterized the DAP as a two-way learning process.

"I've learned a lot from her. We're sharing ideas of how other LCMCs work. I've gained a lot of insight on the case writing process," he said.

Like Rasich, Hamilton also recommends more structure continue to be added to the program. "It would be great to have a daily checklist," Hamilton added.

Rasich and Hamilton also agree that the program benefits the countries they are working by enhancing their understanding of the entire FMS process.

"You have your little piece, but by working someone else's job, you appreciate their priorities and their requests," Hamilton said.

Win or Lose

League bowlers strike up new friendships

*Redstone Lanes
place to meet*

By **SKIP VAUGHN**
Rocket editor
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There's more than competition during the bowling leagues Monday through Friday at Redstone Lanes. It's a good way to meet friends.

Just ask Mary Kight, a procurement technician in contracts management at the Garrison's Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security. She bowls Thursday nights at 6 at Parkway Lanes in Huntsville and Friday nights at



Photo by Skip Vaughn

Members of the Pin Busterz include, from left, Fran Ford, Iona Deckman (seated) and Cyndy Gaskin.

6:30 at Redstone Lanes.

"I like to bowl, it's fun. And I make lots of friends," she said. "It's kind of like family because I've made some really good friends. Since I moved from Texas (in June 2009), that's how I've made most of my friends – it's at the bowling alley. I've made some really good friends at the bowling alley."

She averages about 150 for the James Gang in the Thursday night Penny Pinchers league and for the Hall of Famers in the Friday night mixed league. They're among 22 teams on Thursday nights and 24 teams on Fridays. Her teammates on Thursdays include James Early, Terri Fowler and Bobby Hargis, all contractors at the Army Materiel Command. Her Friday teammates include Diane Hall of the Army Contracting Center, Diane's son Rob, and Redstone worker Denisa Anderson.

"This is my third season with Penny Pinchers (league) and my first season with Friday night," Kight said. "I used to bowl on Tuesday nights. I bowled on Tuesday nights for three seasons."

"Just come out and bowl. It's fun. You meet new people. You all have the same interest because you're at the bowling alley. So yeah, it's great."

Last Thursday morning, three lanes at the Redstone bowling center were busy with women from the Thursday Morning Ladies league. The league has six three-member teams and is always looking for new members.



Photo by Skip Vaughn

Cyndy Gaskin takes aim Thursday morning for the Pin Busterz team at Redstone Lanes.

The competitors included the Pin Busterz team which boasts the league's oldest and youngest members. Iona Deckman, 90, of New Hope, has been bowling in local leagues since 1962. Her teammates are Cyndy Gaskin, 40, wife of Redstone police Sgt. John Gaskin; and Fran Ford, 79, who became a charter member of this league in 1970.

"I like it," Deckman said. "They let me come back every year."

Said Ford, "I enjoy it and I like all the members of the league. I enjoy the members of the league and the bowling. It's fun. I bowl because of the social side of it not necessarily for the scores. It's the social side."

Photo by Skip Vaughn

Mary Kight, who works at the Garrison, says she's made most of her friends through league bowling since moving from Texas in 2009.



Gaskin has been bowling for seven years. Her mother, Judy Finch, the league secretary who plays for the Alley Bama team, got her started.

"The camaraderie is wonderful," Gaskin said.

Redstone Lanes has nine leagues with 152 total teams. The leagues include Monday Night Military Mixed, Monday Night RTC, Tuesday Night Mixed, Wednesday Night IMMC, Wednesday Night Men's, Thursday Morning Ladies, Thursday Night LOGSA, Friday Morning Ladies and Friday Night Mixed.

"Call (876-6634) or come see us and we'll give you the league secretary's name and their phone numbers," John Howard, business manager for Redstone Lanes, said. "And even if you don't join up fully, you can still sub."

Navy should beat Army in annual classic

By **SKIP VAUGHN**
Rocket editor
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Skip's Picks were 508-175 for 74 percent after 13 weeks in the college football season.

I predict Navy (7-4) will get past Army (2-9) on Saturday at Lincoln Financial Field in Philadelphia.



Photo by Lauren Smith

Pep talk

Maj. Gen. Lynn Collyar, commander of the Aviation and Missile Command, tapes his message to be broadcast during halftime of Saturday's Army-Navy football game. It will be aired on "Sports Radio" WZZN, 97.7 FM. Collyar graduated from West Point.

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Sports & Recreation

Run to remember

A Redstone Arsenal chapter of Run to Remember is meeting Saturday mornings to jog together as a living memorial to fallen Soldiers. For meeting locations and times, call Charity Watral 542-1208. Members are encouraged to wear royal blue T-shirts or the Run to Remember T-shirt that can be ordered from <http://www.wearblueruntoremember.org>.

Conferences & Meetings

Catholic mass

Our Lady of the Valley Catholic Community at Bicentennial Chapel invites the Redstone community to its mass services noon Monday through Thursday, 5 p.m. Saturday and 9 a.m. Sunday. For baptisms, weddings or any questions, call 842-2175.

Protestant women

Protestant Women of the Chapel holds Bible Study classes every Thursday at 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.

at Bicentennial Chapel. Child care is available at the Child Development Center on a first-come, first serve basis for the 9:30 study. PWOC also provides supervision for the home-schooled children at the Youth Services building. For more information, call Bicentennial Chapel 842-2176. You can also email PWOC ladies at Redstone@pwoc.org.

Sergeants major

The Sergeants Major Association conducts a monthly meeting every third Thursday of the month at 6:30 a.m. at The Summit. 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.

Advent potluck luncheon

The Military Council of Catholic Women will hold its 43rd annual Baby Jesus Shower and Advent Potluck Luncheon on Friday, beginning with a Holy Hour at 11 a.m., followed by noon luncheon at 12:45 p.m. and presentation by Sarah Shontz on the canonization of St. Kateri Tekakwitha. Items received will be given to adopted babies, foster care babies and mothers in need through Catholic Family Services. Baby items most needed are clothes. If you cannot attend the luncheon but would like to contribute, drop your gifts off in the bassinette located in the vestibule of Bicentennial Chapel by Thursday.

Reserve officers association

Reserve Officers Association, Chapter 20, will hold a quarterly business meeting Friday from 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Java Café, building 3711, on Aerobee Road. For information email ruby.lardent@us.army.mil or call 799-1246.

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 2013 will be installed. The Huntsville High School Crimson Beat Choral Group will entertain. Ticket price is \$15 this year. For reservations, call Kay Linsey 880-7721. For more information, call 508-8250 or 539-1333.

Special Forces group

The North Alabama Chapter (Chapter 92) of the Special Forces Association will meet at 11 a.m. Saturday at the China Grill Buffet, 9016 Madison Boulevard, Madison. All Special Forces qualified and personnel who served with or contributed in a unique and definable way to Special Forces units are welcome to attend. For more information, visit <http://www.chapter92sfa.com/>.

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 Marva Morse 430-0860. 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 Huntsville Christian Church, 171 Indian Creek Road. 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.

Sons of revolution

The Sons of the American Revolution will meet Monday at 11 a.m. at the Huntsville/Madison County Public Library downtown and honor local police and firefighter heroes. The subject is “War in the Southern Colonies”; and the speaker is compatriot Hoyt Smith. Refreshments will be provided. For more information, visit sar1776.com.

Field artillery association

The North Alabama-Redstone Arsenal Chapter of the U.S. Field Artillery Association will hold a reorganizational meeting Friday at 5 p.m. at The Summit ballroom. All current and former members as well as anyone interested in joining the association are welcome to attend. Refreshments will be served. For more information, call Ed Poniatowski 426-8874 or email Skibert@aol.com.

Civilian leadership summit

The second annual AUSA sponsored, Department of Army Civilian Leadership Summit will be held Jan. 31 at The Summit. A leadership panel will share their insights on leadership challenges and civilian opportunities. Mark your calendars, and look for registration information coming soon.

Miscellaneous Items

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

Thinking of changing your military

See Announcements on page 41



Photo by Ellen Hudson

Investment goes up

Construction progresses on Mills Road at the new site for Redstone Federal Credit Union.

occupational specialty or entering a commissioning program and need to take an Army Personnel Testing examination? If so, call the Army Education Center Testing Office 876-9764. Tests offered include the Armed Forces Classification Test, Alternate Flight Aptitude Selection Test and the Defense Language Aptitude Battery test. If you speak a language and want it annotated on your records, call and make an appointment to take the Defense Language Proficiency Test. All Soldiers and qualified DA civilians are eligible to take the DLPT. In addition to APT exams, the Education Center offers the ACT, SAT, Test of Adult Basic Education and GT Improvement exams. If you are taking college classes and need a proctor, proctoring services are free and available to the Redstone Arsenal community (military/government ID card holders). Call 876-9764 to see if you are eligible to test and to schedule an appointment.

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 Phyllis Chunn 880-7080 or email rspv.dir@senior-

view.com.

NASA surplus

NASA/Marshall Space Flight Center's surplus property can be purchased through the General Services Administration sales website. Go to www.gsaauctions.gov, search by state of Alabama, and there you will find items located at MSFC and other federal agencies in Alabama to bid on. For more information, call 544-1774.

Re-entry information

Just back from an overseas assignment and new to the Redstone Arsenal community? Feeling like a stranger in your own homeland? Contact the Relocation Readiness Program, Army Community Service, for a re-entry briefing to learn about community programs and services. All newly assigned/attached military personnel, appropriated and non-appropriated fund civilian personnel, contractors and spouses, as well as retirees are welcome to call Mary Breeden, relocation readiness program manager, 876-5397 or email mary.breeden@conus.army.mil.

Lending closet

The lending closet is stocked with basic household items to use before your household goods arrive or after you have been packed for your new assignment. Items may be borrowed for

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30 days. ID cards and a copy of your PCS orders are required. All newly assigned/attached military personnel, appropriated and non-appropriated fund civilian personnel, contractors and spouses, as well as retirees are welcome to call Mary Breeden 876-5397 or email mary.breeden@conus.army.mil. Stop by Army Community Service, building 3338 on Redeye Road, from 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Computer classes

Free self-paced computer classes are offered at Army Community Service from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Classes are available in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Access, QuickBooks and SharePoint. Each class has about three levels and will take about three hours to complete each, but you can work at your own pace. Certificates of completion are issued after you successfully complete each course. Call 876-5397 to pre-register.

Fraud prevention

Every hour Medicare loses \$6.8 million to waste, fraud and abuse. These costs are ultimately passed down to the beneficiaries and taxpayers. The federal government is cracking down on abusers but they cannot do it alone; they need the help of all current beneficiaries, including you. The Senior Medicare Patrol program, which is made up of beneficiaries within our community, was created in 1997 to help detect and report the red flags of Medicare fraud. Local SMP volunteers can help Medicare stop the loss. For more information on reporting concerns or being a part of the program, call your SMP coordinator Patricia Rogers at TARCOG 830-0818.

Child care center

The Marshall Child Development

Center on Redstone Arsenal accepts all members of the Redstone family with Arsenal access. The MCDC currently has openings for children in the Preschool A area with birthdates ranging from Sept. 2, 2007 through Sept. 1, 2008. For more information, call Kelli Wright 544-8609 or visit <http://mcdc.msfc.nasa.gov/>.

Save lids to save lives

In support of breast cancer awareness and education, Zeta Tau Alpha is teaming up with Yoplat for the 2012 "Save Lids to Save Lives" campaign. Between now and Dec. 15, drop off your pink "SLSL" Yopliat lids in the pink collection box in the Sparkman Center Cafeteria (by the doors to the courtyard). For each lid collected, Yopliat will donate 10 cents to Susan G. Komen for the Cure to benefit breast cancer outreach programs and research.

Thrift Shop news

If you are interested in volunteering or consigning, call or stop by the Thrift Shop for more information or to pick up a packet. The shop is open Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Thursdays from 9-5 and the first Saturday of the month from 10-2. Consignments are Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9-11:45 a.m. unless otherwise stated on the No-List recording at 881-6915. The Thrift Shop is in building 3209 on Hercules Road. The phone number is 881-6992. ... Holiday closings are Dec. 25 through Jan. 3. The shop will reopen Saturday, Jan. 5 from 10-2.

Merit award applications

The Redstone Arsenal Community Women's Club is taking applications for Merit Awards. These financial awards are available to graduating high

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Photo by Carrie E. David

SMDC sendoff

Col. Eric Handy, division chief, G-31 Training and Exercise Division, Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Forces Strategic Command, presents Teri Mayo, chief, Civilian Workforce Development Branch, and her husband, Charles, a retirement pin during a ceremony Nov. 30. Mayo retires with 33 years of service.

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school seniors, college students and spouses who are family members of military and DoD civilians whose primary residence is located within the Redstone Arsenal community, and who meet the eligibility requirements. All information and applications are available at www.rsacwc.org. You may also contact the merit award chair for more information at www.rsacwcmeritawards@gmail.com. Applications will be accepted through Jan. 31. The Redstone Arsenal Community Women's Club is a non-profit, private organization not affiliated with Redstone Arsenal or the Army.

Alabama A&M extension

Alabama A&M University has an office at the Education Center, building 3222, room 13, on Snooper Road. Office hours are Thursday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Available is program information leading to the undergraduate degree in Logistics and Supply Chain Management, credit evaluations (prior academic and military), advising, and information for other degree programs offered at Alabama A&M. Academic advisement is ongoing for the spring semester; classes begin Jan. 7. The Logistics and Supply Chain

Management degree is available to active duty servicemembers, their spouses and adult children, retirees, civilians employed on Redstone Arsenal, and on a space-available basis for all others. Classes are taught in the evenings to allow working professionals the opportunity to earn their degree without career interruption. For more information, contact retired Lt. Col. Samuel Scruggs at samuel.scruggs@aamu.edu or 372-8216 or 479-2730 and Kris Reed at kris.reed@aamu.edu or 372-5753. Those interested may also visit <http://www.aamu.edu/business>.

Holiday social

The public is invited to a "Christmas Social," sponsored by CWB Television, on Dec. 12 from 5-8 p.m. at Watercress at Bridge Street, 365 The Bridge Street northwest, Suite 125. RSVPs are requested at cwbtelevision@gmail.com, phone (202) 421-0840.

Gala fund-raiser

The 100 Black Men of America-Greater Huntsville Chapter's annual Holiday Gala is Dec. 29 at the Von Braun Center's North Hall. The reception starts at 6 p.m. with the program at

7; and the event continues with dining and entertainment through midnight. "The theme for the event is 'The 100 as One: Mission-Vision-Cause,' and the program will reflect the organization's emphasis on mentorship and their commitment to growing and developing community youth," a prepared release said. "The gala is one of two annual fund-raisers that support academic scholarships and the organization's 'Four for the Future' cornerstone programs (mentoring, education, economic development and health and wellness). The scholarships are awarded to area youth who meet prescribed requirements without regard to gender, race or religious preference." Tickets are now \$75 per person and \$600 for reserved tables of 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.

Commissary news

The Commissary has the following schedule for the holidays: Christmas – open Dec. 24 but closes at 4 p.m., closed Dec. 25, reopen Dec. 26. ... New Year's – open Dec. 31 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., closed Jan. 1, reopen Jan. 2.

Employment briefing

An Employment Briefing, designed

to help participants understand the federal application process, will be held Thursday from 9-11 a.m. at Army Community Service, building 3338 on Redeye Road. Topics will include how to search for vacancies on USAJOBS, different types of recruitment sources, how candidates are evaluated and the referral process. This session is open to the Redstone Arsenal community (with own access to enter the installation). To reserve a seat, call 876-0446 or email debra.d.jefferson.civ@mail.mil.

Post Library offer

Come in to the Post Library through Dec. 15 and get a free commemorative "The Hobbit" bookmark with your checkout, in anticipation of the release of "The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey," in theaters Dec. 14.

Book fair volunteers

The Mills Road Child Development Center and Goss Road CDC will be having book fairs Dec. 10-14 from 3-5 p.m. The theme is "All Star Book Fair: Every Reader is a Star." Volunteers are requested to help make each book fair a success. All purchases benefit the Child Youth and School Services CDCs; and book fairs help encourage an early love of reading. If you would like to volunteer to help with either of

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**WASTE...
...RUINS MY TASTE**

**Keep storm drains clean
for those downstream!**

**Keep Redstone Arsenal water streams free of pollutants.
For more information call the Garrison Environmental Office,
Storm Water Program manager at 955-8501.**



This is not a closed course,
I'm not a professional driver,
and you get all the gas for
free. ENLIST ARMOR!

VAROOM!

JIM BOROCZ
23 NOV
Inspired by a cartoon
by Willy Peeters

Rocket Announcements

these book fairs, email Bernadette Paschel at redstonepacpresident@gmail.com. The Parent Advisory Council is a private organization not affiliated with Redstone Arsenal or the Army.

Kindness gala

The inaugural 4 Miles Kindness Gala, sponsored by the Miles Blackwell Foundation, is Saturday from 6-11:30 p.m. at the Roundhouse Depot 320 Church St. It will include appetizers and mingling, dinner, an event speaker, band, dancing and door prizes. The Miles Blackwell Foundation was developed to reach out to the community in remembrance of Miles Thompson Blackwell. The foundation consists of two parts: the 4 Miles Kindness Scholarship Fund and the 4 Miles Kindness Donation. Tickets are: single, \$55; couples, \$100; and corporate tables, \$1,000. Attire is evening/formal wear. All proceeds will be donated to the Miles Blackwell Foundation. For more information, call Karen Stradford-Wright 226-1962 and visit www.4mileskindness.com.

Church events

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church in America announces its Christmas season calendar of events: today, first Wednesday Advent Service at 6:30 p.m. ... Dec. 9, second Sunday of Advent. ... Dec. 12, second Wednesday Advent Service at 6:30 p.m. ... Dec. 16, third Sunday of Advent. ... Dec. 19, Community service of carols and lessons at 7 p.m. ... Dec. 23, fourth Sunday of Advent. ... Dec. 24, Christmas Eve services at 5, 7:30 and 11. ... Dec. 30, first Sunday after Christmas. ... Jan. 6, second Sunday after Christmas (Epiphany) afternoon – take down decorations.

Community blood drive

LifeSouth Community Blood Center and Donatos Pizza will hold a blood drive Monday, from 1-6 p.m. at Donatos Pizza, 7500 South Memorial Parkway. All blood donors will receive a free pizza and T-shirt. All blood types are needed. LifeSouth supplies blood to the community's hospitals.

Chapel holiday services

Bicentennial Chapel has the following holiday services in addition to its regularly scheduled services: Catholic – Christmas pageant, Dec. 24 at 4:30 p.m.; Christmas Eve Family Mass, Dec. 24 at 5 p.m.; Midnight Mass, Dec. 24 at midnight; Christmas Day Mass, Dec. 25 at 9 a.m.; Mary, Mother of God Vigil Mass, Dec. 31 at 5 p.m. ...

Protestant – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, Dec. 24 at 7 p.m.

Professional development

Members of the Huntsville Post, Society of American Military Engineers, can brush up on PDH hours Thursday at no cost. Three one-hour PDH sessions will be held beginning at 5 p.m. in Room 105, UAH Civil Engineering Building. Topics and instructors include the following: Session 1, BIM in Construction Practice, Raul Gomez, Robins and Morton; Session 2, UFC 4-010-01 AT/FP for Federal Buildings, John Nevels, Huntsville Center Corps of Engineers; Session 3, ASHRAE 189.1 Tom Meier, Huntsville Center, Corps of Engineers. For more information, call Molly Richardson 895-2561 or email molly.e.richardson@usace.army.mil.

Tree cutting

Anyone with access to Redstone Arsenal is authorized to cut trees on a self-serve basis in the old storage yard area on Warehouse Road, located west of building 7427. Trees cannot be cut for commercial or unauthorized use, only for personal use in your home. The gate entering the area has been marked with pink flagging for easy recognition. The tree cutting area is surrounded with a chain link fence. Vehicle travel will be limited to the one road entering the gate and the two turnaround roads. Any further travel will be on foot, so work boots or protective footwear is suggested. Cutting operations will be limited to inside the Christmas tree cutting area only. Caution should be exercised to prevent straying outside the area or off the access route and removing any objects other than a Christmas tree. Trees can be cut through Dec. 24 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The trimmings should not be left on grassed rights-of-way or access roads. For more information and a map, call Outdoor Recreation 876-4868, building 5132, or the installation forester's office 313-3258.

Blood drives

American Red Cross blood drives this month include the following: Dec. 6 from 7 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at building 5400; from 7-noon at the Sparkman Center; and 7-noon at Missile Defense Agency. ... Dec. 7 from 7-noon at building 5400. ... Dec. 14 from 6:30-noon at Corps of Engineers; and from 7-noon at building 5681. ... Dec. 19 from 7 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at building 5400. ...

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Photo by Ellen Hudson

Moonlight

The full moon rises Thursday evening next to the Christmas tree in front of the U.S. Space & Rocket Center.

Rocket Announcements

Dec. 20 from 7-noon at MDA building 5222; and from 7-noon at building 6263. ... Dec. 21 from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at NASA building 4487; and from 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at building 4545. ... Dec. 27 from 7-11:30 a.m. at MDA building 5222. ... Dec. 28 from 7-noon at the Sparkman Center.

Redstone Exchange news

Here's the Redstone Exchange holiday schedule: **Dec. 24** – Main Store open 6 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Alteration Shop, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Barber Shop, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Barber Shop at VBC III, closed; Flower Shop, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; GNC, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Laundry, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Nail Shop, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Firestone, 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Express, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Optical Store, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Optometrist Dr. Van Hartman, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Anthony's Pizza/Sub, 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Charley's, 6 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Church's Chicken, 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.; American Eatery, closed; Burger King, 6 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; Café (Fox Army Health Center), closed. ... **Dec. 25** – Main Store closed; Alteration Shop, closed; Barber Shop, closed; Barber Shop at VBC III, closed; Flower Shop, closed; GNC, closed; Laundry, closed; Nail Shop, closed; Firestone, closed; Express, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Optical Store, closed; Optometrist Dr. Van Hartman, closed; Beauty Shop, closed; Anthony's Pizza/Sub, closed; Charley's, closed; Church's Chicken, closed; American Eatery, closed; Burger King, closed; Café (Fox Army Health Center), closed. ... **Dec. 26** – Main Store, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Alteration Shop, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Barber Shop, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Barber Shop at VBC III, closed; Flower Shop, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; GNC, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Laundry, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Nail Shop, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Firestone, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Express, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Optical Store, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Optometrist Dr. Van Hartman, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Anthony's Pizza/Sub, 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Charley's, 6 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Church's Chicken, 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.; American Eatery, 7 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Burger King, closed; Café (Fox Army Health Center), 7 a.m. to 2 p.m.

... **Dec. 27** – Main Store, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Alteration Shop, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Barber Shop, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Barber Shop at VBC III, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Flower Shop, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; GNC, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Laundry, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Nail Shop, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Firestone, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Express, 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Optical Store, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Optometrist Dr. Van Hartman, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Anthony's Pizza/Sub, 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Charley's, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Church's Chicken, 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.; American Eatery, 7 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Burger King, 6 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; Café (Fox Army Health Center), 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. ... **Dec. 28** – Main Store, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Alteration Shop, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Barber Shop, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Barber Shop at VBC III, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Flower Shop, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; GNC, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Laundry, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Nail Shop, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Firestone, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Express, 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Optical Store, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Optometrist Dr. Van Hartman, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Anthony's Pizza/Sub, 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Charley's, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Church's Chicken, 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.; American Eatery, 7 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Burger King, 6 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; Café (Fox Army Health Center), 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. ... **Dec. 29** – Main Store, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Alteration Shop, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Barber Shop, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Barber Shop at VBC III, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Flower Shop, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; GNC, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Laundry, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Nail Shop, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Firestone, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Express, 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Optical Store, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Optometrist Dr. Van Hartman, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Anthony's Pizza/Sub, 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Charley's, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Church's Chicken, 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.; American Eatery, 7 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Burger King, 6 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; Café (Fox Army Health Center), 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. ... **Dec. 30** – Main Store, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Alteration Shop, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Barber Shop, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Barber Shop at VBC III, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Flower Shop, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; GNC, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Laundry, 8 a.m. to

6 p.m.; Nail Shop, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Firestone, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Express, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Optical Store, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Optometrist Dr. Van Hartman, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Anthony's Pizza/Sub, 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Charley's, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Church's Chicken, 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.; American Eatery, 7 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Burger King, 6 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; Café (Fox Army Health Center), 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. ... **Dec. 31** – Main Store, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Alteration Shop, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Barber Shop, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Barber Shop at VBC III, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Flower Shop, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; GNC, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Laundry, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Nail Shop, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Firestone, 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Express, 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Optical Store, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Optometrist Dr. Van Hartman, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Anthony's Pizza/Sub, 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Charley's, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Church's Chicken, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; American Eatery, closed; Burger King, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Café (Fox Army Health Center), closed. ... **Jan. 1** – Main Store, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Alteration Shop, closed; Barber Shop, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Barber Shop at VBC III, closed; Flower Shop, closed; GNC, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Laundry, closed; Nail Shop, closed; Firestone, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Express, 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Optical Store, closed; Optometrist Dr. Van Hartman, closed; Anthony's Pizza/Sub, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Charley's, closed; Church's Chicken, closed; American Eatery, closed; Burger King, closed; Café (Fox Army Health Center), closed. ... **Jan. 2** – Main Store, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Alteration Shop, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Barber Shop, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Barber Shop at VBC III, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Flower Shop, closed; GNC, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Laundry, closed; Nail Shop, closed; Firestone, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Express, 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Optical Store, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Optometrist Dr. Van Hartman, closed; Anthony's Pizza/Sub, 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Charley's, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Church's Chicken, 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.; American Eatery, 7 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Burger King, 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Café (Fox Army Health Center), 7 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Financial classes

Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University will have classes on Thursdays, Dec. 13 through Feb. 21, from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Army Community Service, building 3338 on Redeye Road. Classes include: Dec. 13, Super Saving; Dec. 20, Relating With Money; Dec. 27, Cash Flow Planning; Jan. 10, Dumping Debt; Jan. 17, Credit Sharks; Jan. 24, Buyer Beware; Jan. 31, Clause and Effect; Feb. 7, That's Not Good Enough; Feb. 14,

Of Mice and Mutual Funds; and Feb. 21, From Fruition to Tuition. Prospective class members should call Chris Woodard 1-800-227-3223, ext. 5339, to order the \$89 kit. Register for the class online at the Member Resource Center, using code 219930, at <https://mrc.daveramsy.com/military>. Please bring the kit to each class. For more information, email kathleen.k.riester.civ@mail.mil.

Rhythm and blues show

R&B artists Avant and Tank will perform at the Von Braun Center's Mark C. Smith Concert Hall on Dec. 29. The show will be hosted by comedian Tommy Davidson. Doors open at 7 p.m. and the show starts at 8. For more information, call 551-2345 or visit www.vonbrauncenter.com.

Community concert series

The Valley Conservatory is continuing its Community Lyceum Series. A master class with Metropolitan Opera mezzo-soprano Marilyn Mims will be held Dec. 14 from 4-6 p.m. in Roberts Hall on the campus of the University of Alabama-Huntsville. The Messiah will be presented Dec. 16 at 4 p.m. at the First Christian Church, 3209 Whitesburg Drive. Admission is free. For more information, call 534-3131.

Louisiana election

The state of Louisiana will hold a runoff election Saturday in the 3rd Congressional district to decide between Republican incumbent Jeff Landry and Charles Boustany Jr. The 3rd Congressional district consists of southwest Louisiana and includes the cities of Chalmette, Gonzales, Houma, Thibodaux, Morgan City and New Iberia. You can request an absentee ballot by mail, fax or electronically using the FVAP online wizard at: www.fvap.gov. The deadline to request an absentee ballot is 4:30 p.m. Friday. The deadline for returning voted ballots is 8 p.m. Saturday. If you have already requested but have not received a state ballot for Saturday's runoff election, go to www.fvap.gov. Contact your Unit Voting Assistance Officer for assistance.

Ballet performance

On Thursday, all military personnel and their families are invited to a special showing of the Huntsville Ballet Company's Nutcracker Ballet. The show will take place in the Mark C. Smith Concert Hall at the Von Braun Center. Enjoy a pre-performance concert at 6 p.m. with the Army Materiel Command Band, and the ballet beginning at 7. You must show a military ID at the performance. For more information, go to www.huntsvilleballet.org.