

Redstone Rocket

www.theredstonerocket.com

November 28, 2012

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Military family time

November brings celebration of Military Family Month

Gathering at their Redstone home are Lt. Col. Steve Van Riper, wife Amy, son Nick, 13, and daughter Emma, 10. The black Labrador, Maverick, is a Seeing Eye dog in training. Amy is a guide dog puppy raiser, with help from the rest of the family.



Photo by Ellen Hudson



COMMUNITY NEWS

Patient advisory council serves Fox beneficiaries.
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WIN OR LOSE

Ten-Miler team alums gather for reunion.
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RocketViews

What's your favorite holiday tradition?

By **AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON**

Staff writer
amy.tolson@theredstonerocket.com



Carrie Hightower
Member of
The Summit
"Spending it with
family and friends."



JoAnn Miller
Member of
The Summit
"Being with people and
family. Definitely not
shopping. I'm not cook-
ing this year. It's time for
the kids to take over."



Alex Adams
Missile Defense
Agency
"Spending time with
family. I'm from
Huntsville and my
father has 14 siblings,
all live here except for
three, so we all come
together to cele-
brate at the oldest sister's house."



Ellen Hudson
Redstone Rocket
"Pickled peaches. My
grandmother always
had pickled peaches."

Letter to the editor

Warrior Care Month observed in November

November is traditionally the month when Americans reflect on the service of our nation's veterans and give thanks for the freedoms we enjoy because of their courage and sacrifice. Since 2008, the military departments have observed "Warrior Care Month" during November as a time to reaffirm our country's commitment to care for and support our wounded, ill and injured servicemembers and their families. The theme for this year's joint observance is "Success Through Transition – Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship."

Since this program began in 2007, approximately 50 percent of all Soldiers in Warrior Transition Units have returned to the force. Approximately 23,000 of them are back in the fight and our veterans who do leave military service are prepared to lead strong and productive lives. This program, overseen by the Warrior Transition Command, currently cares for 10,000 Soldiers in Warrior Transition Units and 9,000 Army veterans through the Army Wounded Warrior Program.

Warrior care goes well beyond providing the highest quality medical care possible to these Soldiers. We help wounded, ill and injured Soldiers to achieve employment and educational goals so they may return to their civilian communities prepared to succeed. And we are not alone in this important endeavor. We are grateful to the educators and employers across the nation who recognize the unlimited potential and invaluable contributions of these men and women and open their doors and hearts to them.

Warrior Care Month is the time to tell this story and to pay tribute to those who have sacrificed so much for the defense of our nation. There is no greater calling than helping to heal our brothers and sisters in arms when they return home from battle. Together, let's celebrate the resilience and

strength that our wounded, ill and injured Soldiers demonstrate every day. Army Strong!

Raymond Chandler, Sgt. Maj. of the Army;
Gen. Raymond Odierno, Army chief of staff;
John McHugh, secretary of the Army



Photo by Ellen Hudson

Summit perch

David Campbell is among several FMWR workers putting on the greenery and then ornaments for the Christmas tree in front of The Summit on Nov. 21.

Quote of the week

'The military is a close-knit community and the loss of a brother in arms cuts deep, both to those of us in uniform and the extended families.'

— Col. Stuart Sharpe

RedstoneRocket

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On this date in history: Nov. 28

By **SKIP VAUGHN**
 Rocket editor
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In 1814: *The Times* in London is for the first time printed by automatic, steam powered presses built by the German inventors Friedrich Koenig and Andreas Friedrich Bauer, signaling the beginning of the availability of newspapers to a mass audience.

In 1843: On Ka Lā Hui, Hawaiian Independence Day, the Kingdom of Hawaii is officially recognized by the United Kingdom and France as an independent nation.

In 1893: Women vote in a national election for the first time: the New Zealand general election.

In 1963: President Lyndon B. Johnson announced in a televised address that Cape Canaveral would be renamed Cape Kennedy in memory of President John F. Kennedy, who had been assassinated six days earlier. Johnson said the name change had been sanctioned by the U.S. Board of Geographic Names. Johnson also ordered the space facility to be renamed John F. Kennedy Space Center, NASA. On May 18, 1973, Florida Gov. Rueben Askew signed a Florida statute requiring that Cape Kennedy be renamed Cape Canaveral. The name John F. Kennedy Space Center, NASA was not changed.

In 1996: The U.S. space shuttle "Columbia" had a screw loose. A stuck hatch (later blamed on that loose screw) prevented astronauts Tammy Jernigan and Tom Jones from taking a spacewalk. "I'm pushing as hard as I can," Jones said. "It just doesn't seem to want to move," Jernigan agreed.

Getting to **know you**

By **AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON**
 Staff writer
amy.tolson@theredstonerocket.com

Name: Benny Pitsinger

Position: Building information model manager, Corps of Engineers, Huntsville Center

Where do you call home?

Huntsville, Ala. My however many great-grandfather was the first permanent white settler of North Alabama.

What do you enjoy about your job?

Joining the Corps of Engineers has given me an opportunity to be a part of something much larger than myself and to join an elite group of engineers whose goal is to make life better for the brave Soldiers who serve our country.

What are your goals?

My immediate goal is to finish remodeling our house so that I can have more free time to spend with my wife, my grandchildren and my music. My ultimate goal is to retire so that I can have even more free time to spend with my wife, my grandchildren and my music.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I am a musician in my spare time, when I have any, playing guitar and singing in some local clubs under the pseudonym "Gentle Ben." I also build electric guitars and do watercolor



paintings when I am not busy remodeling our home.

What's on your bucket list?

I would like to see the Statue of Liberty, the Grand Canyon and Mount Rushmore.

What college football team do you root for?

I'm an Auburn football fan, when they actually have a team.

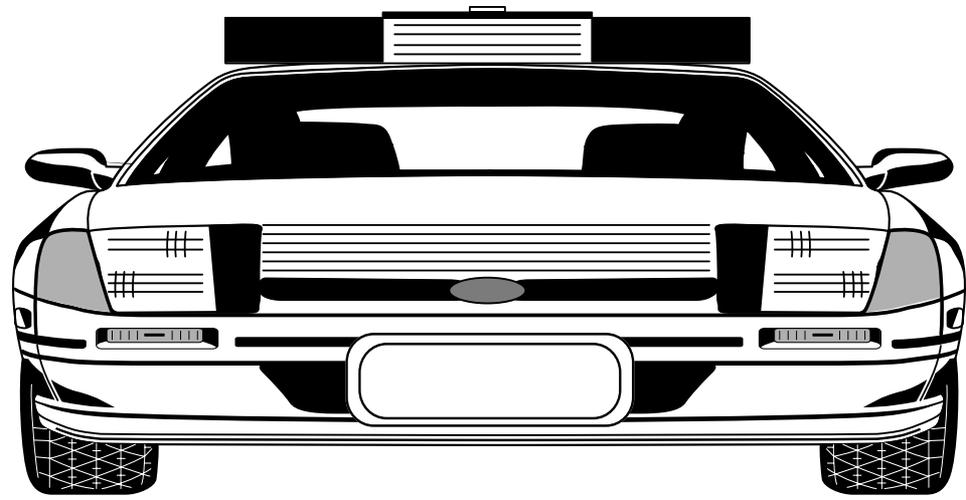
Crimes, accidents & other occurrences

The Directorate of Emergency Services, Law Enforcement Division, provided the following list of reported incidents for Nov. 11-17:

- Police investigated a two-vehicle, without injury, accident on Vincent Drive at Goss Road.
- Police investigated a two-vehicle, without injury, accident in the parking lot of building 3474.
- Police collected a deserter from the Madison County Sheriff's Office and returned him to his Fort Polk (La.) unit.
- Police investigated a two-vehicle, without injury, accident on Rideout Road south of Gate 9.
- Police investigated a two-vehicle, without injury, accident on Rideout Road at Goss Road.
- Police cited a driver for having a prohibited item when he was selected for a random inspection at Gate 7.
- Police investigated a two-vehicle,

without injury, accident in the parking lot of building 3148.

- Police investigated a single-vehicle, without injury, accident on Rideout Road north of Goss Road.
- Police received a report that a military dependent identification card was stolen from a vehicle while it was parked in Huntsville.
- Police investigated a two-vehicle, with injury, accident on Patton Road south of Gate 10.
- Police investigated a two-vehicle, without injury, accident on Goss Road at Bennett Drive.
- Police investigated a two-vehicle, without injury, accident on Patton Road at Honest John.
- Police and Fire responded to a fire at building 3495 involving rubbish and the side of the building.
- Eleven U.S. District Court violation notices were issued.



Undersecretary talks tough issues with AMC workers

By **CHERISH WASHINGTON**
AMC Public Affairs

“We could never be the Army that we are – not today, not yesterday – without the civilian work force that we have,” undersecretary of the Army Joseph Westphal said at a town hall meeting with Army Materiel Command employees Nov. 14.

AMC is the largest civilian organization in the Army; 96 percent of the 73,000 employees are civilian.

Westphal visited Space and Missile Defense Command, AMC and Program Executive Office for Missiles and Space to meet with leaders, Soldiers and civilians of each command.

During his time at AMC, Westphal addressed the headquarters staff with a few remarks and a short question-and-answer session.

“I want to make sure that you understand that when those of us in Washington are sitting in our forums looking at issues at a very macro-level, we are very concerned to make sure that we all understand the value civilians bring to the work force, to the Army, defense, our security and country,” he said. “Our future as a country is very dependent on your ability to continue to serve our communities and nation.”

A key opportunity for the civilian work force is ensuring future professional development, which Westphal

“We need to invest in our civilian work force. We need to invest in your development, your professional development. We need to ensure that the jobs that you have and the responsibilities you hold are understood, so that you can deliver a better service to our country.”

Joseph Westphal
undersecretary of the Army

addressed.

“We need to invest in our civilian work force. We need to invest in your development, your professional development. We need to ensure that the jobs that you have and the responsibilities you hold are understood, so that you can deliver a better service to our country,” Westphal said.

He also assured the work force to remain positive about the future despite the uncertainty surrounding the budget.



Photo by Cherish Washington

The Army Materiel Command briefly hosted undersecretary of the Army Joseph Westphal during his visit to Redstone Arsenal on Nov. 14.

“You have leaders on your side that are truly doing their best to understand the dynamics of the decisions we will have to be making over the next three to six months,” he said.

Westphal described that we have a lot of work ahead of us, but still feels positive about the future – looking at

the glass half full instead of empty.

“We’ve got really good leaders today. We may not be the most talented or the smartest, but we are working together,” Westphal said.

He concluded, “Thank you for all you do. I really do believe deeply in public service.”

Career fair offers last chance for job seekers

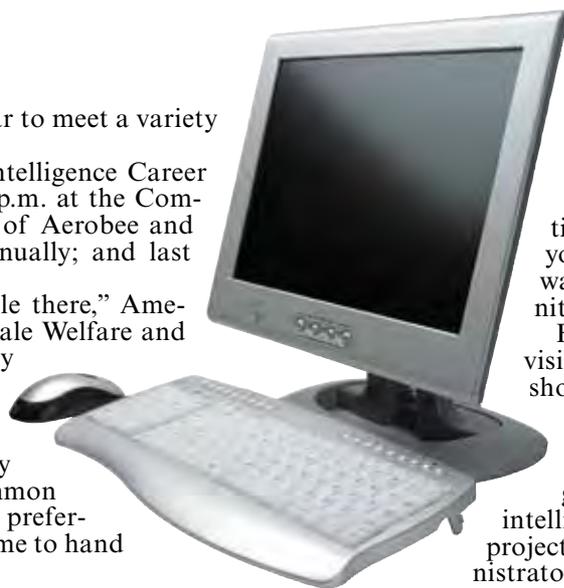
By **SKIP VAUGHN**
Rocket editor
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Redstone job seekers have one more chance this year to meet a variety of potential employers in one setting.

The Redstone Arsenal Defense Technology and Intelligence Career Fair will be held Tuesday, Dec. 4 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Community Activity Center, building 3711 at the corner of Aerobee and Patton roads. Usually two such events are held annually; and last summer’s fair drew an estimated 300 people.

“It was busy and there were a lot of young people there,” Amelia Flanigan, marketing director for Family and Morale Welfare and Recreation, said. The sponsors include FMWR, Army Community Service, and Transition Careers, a private company owned by a former servicemember and based in Mt. Airy, Md.

This career fair is open to job seekers who already have access onto Redstone, with a military ID or Common Access Card. An active federal security clearance is preferred. Attendees should bring many copies of their resume to hand out to employers.



“With all the new personnel on Redstone Arsenal, especially with BRAC (base realignment and closure) being complete, it began to help spouses and adult children of folks transferring here to find employment,” Flanigan said of the event’s purpose. “Redstone Arsenal and Huntsville are fortunate in still having job opportunities where a lot of cities don’t.”

This career field can help job seekers “to see what new positions are out there,” Flanigan said. “It’s a great way to sharpen your job seeking skills, your networking skills. I think it’s a good way to keep your resume sharp, to see if the next best opportunity is out there.”

For a list of exhibitors, jobs being offered and to preregister, visit www.TransitionCareers.com. If unable to attend, job seekers should post their resumes on that website.

Invited to the fair are job seekers – military, civilian and contractor – with backgrounds and experience in the following: information technology, software engineering, aerospace, logistics, acquisition, electrical engineering, communications, intelligence, finance, analysts, counterintelligence, cyber security, project management, network administrator, linguists, systems administrator and human intelligence.

Fox advisory council keeps patient care in forefront

By AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON

Staff writer

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At Fox Army Health Center the focus is on the patient, so who better to provide feedback on patient care than the patients themselves.

Fox Army Health Center's Patient Advisory Council, comprised of Fox leadership, staff, and most importantly, patients, met Nov. 14 to address questions and concerns regarding the facility and patient care, and provide an update to the community on the latest happenings within Fox. The meeting was an opportunity for beneficiaries and their health care providers to talk candidly about the health care experience at the military treatment facility.

"We value the opinions of our beneficiaries, we can't fix everything by ourselves," Fox commander Col. William Darby said. "It is through their eyes that we see the things that we need to do better to serve them and provide the effective and efficient care that they deserve."

All beneficiaries of Fox are welcome to join the council, which meets monthly. To inquire, call patient advocate Faleshia Hill at 955-8888, ext. 1152. The next meeting is Dec. 12 at 10 a.m. in the Command Suite Conference Room.

"The Patient Advisory Council offers the community great insight on what we as a facility are doing, and it's also a forum for them to bring their concerns, their issues, and to help improve the quality care that we provide to our patients," Hill said.

"If we don't know something is wrong, we can't fix it," Lt. Col. Timothy Talbot, deputy commander of clinical services, said.

Through the monthly meetings, Fox is able to interact face to face with beneficiaries to determine what needs improvement at the facility, what pro-

cesses may need more explanation, to hear where staffs are doing well, so they can carry that model into other areas, and also to give beneficiaries an in-depth look at how the facility functions and operates. The Nov. 14 meeting allowed for updates on the pharmacy, performance improvement and renovations, one of the more noticeable happenings at Fox that is impacting the patient.

"Fox Army Health Center is positioned to make the patient care experience more pleasurable," Tracy A. Lonon, chief of the Facility Management Division, said. "We've had many renovation projects over the past several years. Patient satisfaction is a key component to getting some of these projects off the ground. Reinvesting in our beneficiaries is key. The reason we are able to get a lot of this money is because of patient satisfaction. It's all about the patients. We'll continue to ensure that our facility is standing tall."

Numerous renovation projects are under way at Fox, including a nine-phase renewal of the HVAC system, which will provide the facility, staff and beneficiaries with better air quality and airflow. Each of the nine phases is expected to take 45 to 60 days, at which point certain areas of the facility will be moved into trailers located in the parking lot at the east side of the building. Signs alerting beneficiaries of what areas are currently located in these trailers are posted throughout the facility. The project is expected to be completed by mid-2014. First and second floor windows will also be replaced during this time. Funding for the window replacement project came from MED-



Photo by Ellen Hudson

Fox Army Health Center Patient Advisory Council members, from left, Barbara Williford, Tonya Daniels and Cheryl Stewart listen attentively at the November meeting of the council.

COM Energy dollars. The facility will also replace the gazebos currently located on Fox grounds with eight new ones in December and will also install new patient walkways at the south en-

trance, as well as replacing the roof of the health care facility.

For more information about the Patient Advisory Council, call Hill at 955-8888, ext. 1152.

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:

Tree lighting

The Redstone Arsenal tree lighting is Thursday from 4:30-7 p.m. at The Summit. The ceremony starts at 5:15. This free holiday event is open to the entire Redstone community. For more information, call 313-3255.

Book sale

The "Books-R-Fun Book Sale" con-

tinues through Thursday from 6:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Sparkman Cafeteria. On sale are fiction, non-fiction, cookbooks, children's books and more. For more information, call 876-8741.

Links party

The Links annual Christmas party is Friday at 6 p.m. at the golf course. There will be free drinks and food, fun and fellowship, special prices in the Pro Shop beginning at 6 and free gift-wrapping until Christmas. For more information, call 842-7977.

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REDSTONE ARSENAL THEN AND NOW

BICENTENNIAL REMEMBRANCE

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Redstone Arsenal then and now



Photo by Skip Vaughn

The former Toftoy Hall, building 3495, is being renovated for its future occupants – the Education Center staff and college extensions.

*Maj. Gen. Toftoy
remembered as U.S.
missile, space pioneer*

By SKIP VAUGHN

Rocket editor

skip.vaughn@theredstonerocket.com

The former Toftoy Hall is located on Patton Road, near Redstone Lanes and across the street from Heiser Hall.

Like the other former buildings of the Ordnance Munitions and Electronics Maintenance School, building 3495 is being renovated for new occupants. The Education Center staff and college extensions are slated to move in next year.

Toftoy Hall was dedicated Nov. 3, 1967, in memory of the late Maj. Gen. Holger Toftoy, a pioneer of this nation's missile and space program.

Toftoy, commander of Redstone Arsenal 1954-58, is credited with bringing the famed rocket science team led by Dr. Wernher von Braun from Germany to the U.S. in 1945. The contributions made by that team, along with American scientists, engineers and technicians, advanced missile capabilities to the point of

putting a man on the moon.

Most of that work went on at Redstone Arsenal, thanks to Toftoy's vision and persistence to bring the team to Huntsville, a city still thriving from this early missile mission.

Many members of the Toftoy family reunited for the first time in Huntsville in June 2002. In November 2007 the Ordnance school, which would move to Fort Lee, Va., under base realignment and closure, held a ceremony celebrating 40 years of basic electronics training in Toftoy Hall. Three members of the Toftoy family – his daughter, Doris Williams and her two sons, Ken and Dan – were among the attendees.

Toftoy arrived at Redstone Arsenal in 1952 as director of the Ordnance Missile Laboratories, which was responsible for planning, technical control and supervision of what had become the nationwide Army guided missile and rocket development program. Within two years, Redstone had become recognized as one of the Army's most important technical centers, and Toftoy, first as a brigadier general, then as major general in command of Redstone Arsenal, had laid the

See Toftoy on page 9

Bicentennial remembrance



Photos by Ellen Hudson

A plaque under the Christmas tree in front of Bicentennial Chapel is dedicated to the memory of prisoners of war and those missing in action.





AMCOM History Office photo

The 55th U.S. Army Band of Redstone performs Nov. 3, 1967, at the dedication of Toftoy Hall.

Toftoy

continued from page 6

foundation of today's huge complex. He served as Redstone's commander from Sept. 1, 1954, until his appointment on March 31, 1958, as deputy commander of the Army Ordnance Missile Command.

He remained at Redstone until July 1958, when he was named the commander of Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. In 1960 Toftoy retired from the Army because of ill health. He died in April 1967 at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., and was buried with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery.

Charles Williams, education service officer, said he and his staff at the Education Center are to move into the renovated building along with the following colleges: Alabama A&M University, Athens State University, Columbia College, Embry Riddle Aeronautical University and the Florida Institute of Technology. "The last word I received was March 2013 time frame," Williams said of the move.

The Garrison said Army training will be conducted during the day in that facility and college education classes will be held during the evening.



AMCOM History Office photo

The building was dedicated in 1967 in memory of the late Maj. Gen. Holger Toftoy, a pioneer of this nation's missile and space program.

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

Read about what's new at Post Library

The Post Library, building 3323 on Red-eye Road, is open Tuesday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and Saturday from 10-4. 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: "Bone Bed" by Patricia Cornwell – Kay Scarpetta investigates the discovery of a body in Boston Harbor and clues about other unsolved cases, a situation that leaves Scarpetta wondering whom she can trust. ... "Casual Vacancy" by J.K. Rowling – The early death of a small town councilman reveals deep-rooted conflicts in the seemingly idyllic community of Pagford.

Adult nonfiction: "Cooking with Trader Joe's Cookbook: Lighten up!" by Susan Greeley – Make simple tweaks in the way you eat for the long term. ... "Into the Fire: A Firsthand Account of the Most Extraordinary Battle in the Afghan War" by Dakota Meyer (Medal of Honor recipient) – A Marine sniper shares the story of his heroism facing a Taliban ambush during which he saved Afghan soldiers and Marine advisers, a victory that resulted from him disobeying orders and assuming



command without reinforcements or artillery support.

Young adult fiction: "Seconds Away" by Harlan Coben – When tragedy strikes close to home, Mickey

Bolitar and his new friends find themselves at the center of a murder mystery.

Children fiction: "Dinosaur Thunder" by Marion Dane Bauer – Brannon is afraid of thunder until his older brother compares thunder to Brannon's favorite subject, dinosaurs. ... "One Cool Friend" Toni Buzzeo – Elliot, a very proper young man, feels a kinship with the penguins at the aquarium and wants to take one home with him.

Children nonfiction: "Comets, Asteroids, and Meteors" by Stuart Atkinson – Takes readers on an imaginary trip through the universe with instructions on how to prepare for the journey, including training and what to bring.

DVDs: "Abraham Lincoln, Vampire Hunter" with Benjamin Walker, Dominic Cooper, Anthony MacKie ... "Atlas Shrugged: Part I" with Taylor Schilling, Grant Bowler, Jon Polito ... "Brave" voices: Kelly Macdonald, Billy Connolly, Emma Thompson ... "Cabin in the Woods" with Kristen Connolly, Chris Hemsworth, Anna Hutchinson ... "Marvel's The Avengers" with Robert Downey Jr., Scarlett Johansson, Jeremy Renner

Audio books on CDs: "Comes the dark stranger" by Jack Higgins (reader Michael Page) ... "Gun games" by Faye Kellerman (reader Mitch Greenberg)

Battalion in Alaska benefits from resiliency training

By Capt. MICHAEL ODGERS
SMDC/ARSTRAT release

FORT GREELY, Alaska – The 49th Missile Defense Battalion kicked off the beginning of their resiliency training with a two-day spiritual luncheon Nov. 15-16 at the Community Activity Center on Fort Greely.

For the Army, fall begins a new training year and a renewed focus on required training. One of those required training programs is resiliency. The program teaches that six core competencies – Self-awareness, Self-regulation, Optimism, Mental Agility, Strengths of Character and Connection – will significantly increase your ability to cope with life's stress.

“Resiliency is one of my top five priorities,” Lt. Col. Joseph Miley, commander of 49th Missile Defense Battalion, said. “We had some challenges last year and I wanted to increase access to the resiliency training program.”

The intent of the program is to provide the tools necessary to help Soldiers bounce back from life's hurdles. The program is a proactive rather than reactive approach.

With the remote location of Fort Greely, winter right around the corner and the days with sunlight getting much shorter, there couldn't be a better time to start talking about resiliency.

“People who have never been up here to Alaska don't understand what we mean by remote,” Staff Sgt. Bowles, chaplain assistant in Alaska National Guard, said. “When you're in a remote location in Alaska, especially in the dead of winter you are so isolated. Then when you add the long periods of darkness, it really just wears on you.”

Communities in Alaska are not just categorized by large or small but on or off the road system. The capital Juneau is only accessible by boat or air.

Getting resources to the Soldiers is paramount for Lt. Col. Richard Koch, the Alaska National Guard chaplain. Whether those are spiritual, counseling or even quality of life resources, getting them to the Soldiers helps in maintaining their resilience.

The Alaska National Guard occasionally does commissary runs bringing a commissary, in the form of a loaded C-130, to some of Alaska's more remote communities.

Virtually all of the Soldiers at Fort



Courtesy photo

Lt. Col. Joseph Miley, 49th Missile Defense Battalion commander, presents a sword to retired 1st. Sgt. Richard DeBilzian as Riki Ellison of the Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance looks on. The sword was presented during a resiliency luncheon Nov. 16 at the Fort Greely (Alaska) Community Activity Center.

Greely come from somewhere else. They're working long hours around the clock and they are a long way from the resources they might need.

“Being at Fort Greely is almost like you're deployed. But now you have your family with you,” Bowles said. “We have a large contingent of Puerto Ricans here. The size of the community and language barriers can create their own isolation.”

Because of the factors that can affect family members, Miley has been focusing his efforts on increasing access to the training to family members and civilians. He plans to bring this training to the local schools.

“Forty-four percent of the school children in the community are dependents of 49th Soldiers,” Miley said. “Ages 16-19 are at the highest risk of self-injury and Alaska in general has higher rates.”

According to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Alaska ranks second in suicides with 23.1 suicides per

1,000. Wyoming is first with 23.2 and Montana is third at 22.9.

The luncheon had several speakers discussing the importance of spirituality in maintaining your resilience. The keynote speaker was Riki Ellison, former NFL player, three-time Super bowl winner and

“People who have never been up here to Alaska don't understand what we mean by remote. When you're in a remote location in Alaska, especially in the dead of winter you are so isolated. Then when you add the long periods of darkness, it really just wears on you.”

Staff Sgt. Bowles
chaplain assistant
Alaska National Guard

founder of the Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance.

“The guest speakers were just great,” Sgt. 1st. Class Diane Singh said. “I loved the way Riki Ellison used his life as a football player to show the adversity that he overcame.”

Singh, a body builder, fitness and nutritional expert and football fan, said she related to Ellison's stories.

“He said things in life don't fulfill us, it's what we do for each other,” Singh recalled of Ellison's comments. “He was a successful football player, he had gained a lot of wealth but in the end it left him empty. In the end, it's the people that we impact that give us that fulfillment.”

“He was saying a lot of things to me,” Singh continued. “I thought wow, this is exactly what resiliency is about – serving others is the bottom line.”

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Above par donation



Photo by Susan Wilhide

With the help of the Redstone-Huntsville Chapter of the Association of the U.S. Army, the Redstone Arsenal Community Women's Club raised \$5,000 during its recent Pineapple Open golf tournament at the Links. Originally, the AUSA chapter and the women's club agreed to split the proceeds from the fund-raiser. But the local AUSA board of directors decided to donate its half of the proceeds back

to the women's club. The proceeds will be used to fund community "Salute" grants and college merit scholarships issued each year by the women's club. With the "big" \$5,000 donation check are, from left, Jeff Wishik of the AUSA chapter and Eric Post of the Links, and women's club president Tiffany Kraus, Merit Awards chairman Stacy Prater, Community Assistance chairmen Suzanne Sullivan and Lana Barshinger, and second vice president/fund-raiser Michelle Nash.

Swedish pilots prepare to fly new Black Hawks



Photo by Ellen Hudson

From left, Bruce Norton, case manager for Sweden, SAMD; and Jody Sanders, chief, utility systems division, SAMD; stand with Magnus Larsson, program manager, Sweden; who visited Huntsville Nov. 14-16 to get an update on the Black Hawks SAMD is delivering to the Swedish Armed Forces as part of the first European buy of the UH-60M. Ten of the 15 helicopters Sweden has purchased have already been delivered.

Helicopter represents first European buy

By AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON

Staff writer

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At a glance, the Black Hawk looks like any other UH-60M, but the three crowns it bears on its tail are not something found on the everyday Army aircraft.

AMCOM's Security Assistance Management Directorate will complete its latest shipment of UH-60M helicopters to Sweden Dec. 10, as two of the foreign military sales' 15 aircraft will be loaded into a C-17 at Huntsville International Airport and delivered to the Swedish Armed Forces in Linköping. The sale is the first European buy of the UH-60M.

The UH-60Ms will replace Sweden's fleet of Super Puma helicopters, currently deployed in support of the U.S. international security assistance force in Afghanistan. Due to attrition and the harsh Afghanistan climate, the Super Pumas need to return to Sweden. Typically when SAMD goes on

contract for an aircraft it can take 36 months for delivery, a process that was expedited to assist in the replacement of the Super Pumas. The initial case began in January 2011, and by December, the first UH-60M was delivered. Swedish pilots began training on the aircraft in January 2012. The quick turnaround was one of the reasons Sweden chose the Black Hawk, according to Magnus Larsson, program manager, Sweden, so that the mission would not be interrupted. Ten of the 15 helicopters have already been delivered; two will be delivered before the end of the year and the remaining three will be delivered by April.

"We have the possibility now to extend the Swedish participation in the Afghanistan mission," said Larsson, who was in Huntsville Nov. 14-16. "We are planning to deploy and be ready by April of next year. We now have that helicopter capability."

Each helicopter receives the normal assault configuration, which allows for crew chiefs to fire M240 machine guns from the aircraft, as well as a hoist and patient handling system for transporting up to four wounded Soldiers,

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and a fast rope insertion extraction system. The helicopter is also fitted with an enhanced ballistic protection system, including plates in the floor and armored protection, and an emergency locator transmitter, which will emit a signal in the event of a crash. With the reconfigurations, come expanded capabilities for the Swedish Armed Forces in Afghanistan.

“We use our helicopters today for tactical medevac, to move from hospital to hospital on a more fixed basis, but the Black Hawk is a much more robust helicopter system,” Larsson said. “We’ll be able to use it for forward medevac to go into combat zones and evacuate personnel.”

The FMS case is what SAMD calls a “total package approach,” meaning the support doesn’t begin and end with the hardware, but rather, training is provided to teach the Swedish forces how to use their new helicopters.

A group of 22 Swedish pilots were trained on the UH-60M, in addition to 32 technicians.

“We’re not just here to field equipment, we’re here to provide the tools, to provide training and support,” said Jody Sanders, chief, utility systems division, SAMD. This is also very much a combined effort across the Security Assistance enterprise with significant support from the AMCOM LCMC to include PEO Aviation, Army Contracting Command, as well as other commands.

While the Swedish soldiers will be the immediate beneficiaries of the foreign military sale, the importance of the buy goes much further than that as the Swedish forces provide support for the U.S. international security assistance force mission in Afghanistan.

“These Soldiers will actually be performing medevac missions for all forces in Afghanistan, including U.S. Soldiers; or replacing a portion of our Soldiers that are in Afghanistan doing this mission” said Bruce Norton, case manager for Sweden, SAMD. “It’s a very important mission.”



AMCOM workers receive priorities for 2012-13



Photo by Grant Thompson

Maj. Gen. Lynn Collyar, commander of the Aviation and Missile Command, addresses the AMCOM town hall meeting Nov. 20 in Bob Jones Auditorium.

Commander applauds level of dedication

By DAN O'BOYLE
AMCOM Public Affairs

AMCOM commander Maj. Gen. Lynn Collyar presented the command's goals for the rest of this year and into 2013 during a town hall meeting Nov. 20 at Bob Jones Auditorium.

War fighter support, stewardship excellence and work force development will guide the Aviation and Missile Command, according to Collyar.

"Under each one of these elements, we have identified initiatives that we will execute and manage together," he said. "For example, we just hosted an Iraqi military delegation at Letterkenny Army Depot (Pa.). The visiting leaders saw what we can do to partner with them on modernization efforts, as well as combat equipment Reset efforts.

"They came away impressed with our depot's unique capabilities, and we are confident that Letterkenny's customer base will increase accordingly. Not only is the depot's work important and significant, but also the work that the entire command does is of such high quality that it is that very work that will keep us in business.

"We do the work well and at an affordable price, but we all need to keep

in mind that we are only as good as the last piece of work that we put out."

Collyar also highlighted AMCOM's strategic communication efforts, again, measured in terms of war fighter support, stewardship excellence and work force development.

A number of key command personnel were recognized for their contributions and receipt of distinguished awards, including the Safety Office's Pat Vittitow and Eric Atchley, as well as the AMCOM Logistic Center's Danny Hollingsworth and Caesar Smith.

AMCOM's town hall was the day after Collyar's meeting with Army chief of staff Gen. Raymond Odierno.

"Last night, the chief emphasized that we will drawdown the Army's strength to 490,000, from a high of 570,000," Collyar said. "The chief stressed that this drawdown will be carried out in a coherent fashion, despite the uncertainties of sequestration."

Early on in the town hall, Collyar mentioned the uniqueness of the Team Redstone community.

"You know the second week after I came to Redstone, we celebrated Armed Forces Week – not just Armed Forces Day," he said. "And just this month, we celebrated Veterans Week, not just Veterans Day. I'm telling you, that level of dedication is something that you don't see everywhere."

Business leaders hear from Army Materiel Command



Photo by Douglas Brewster

Army Materiel Command commander Gen. Dennis Via gives AMC's update during the National Defense Industrial Association conference Nov. 14-15.

By **CHERISH WASHINGTON**
AMC Public Affairs

The Tennessee Valley Chapter of the National Defense Industrial Association held a conference Nov. 14-15, which offered a venue for Army Materiel Command to showcase its small business opportunities to more than 300 businesses in 31 states.

AMC commander Gen. Dennis Via gave the command's update on small business.

"There are and will be in my view within Army Materiel Command increased opportunities for small business both at home and abroad," he said.

Via gave a brief overview of AMC and its major subordinate commands.

"These commands (AMC's subordinate units) manage systems throughout their entire life cycle from concept to sustainment to divestiture, and all of these commands and activities are invested in small business with direct report to the higher headquarters," he said. "They know my focus on small business and the importance that it means to our command and the accomplishment of our mission."

The conference offered a myriad of updates and panel sessions. One in particular highlighted ways to optimize contracting opportunities with small businesses, where three AMC leaders spoke.

Maj. Gen. Lynn Collyar, commander of the Aviation and Missile Command, spoke on its opportunities and how to overcome challenges during a drawdown of forces.

Collyar described that he is working to increase visibility of parts from wholesale to the parts being used in U.S. Army Central Command to business and Defense materiel managers.

"Right now everybody can see only components of that supply system," Collyar said. "That's one of the ways we help small businesses stay viable is by giving you more information that allows you to control and manage your budgets better."

Brig. Gen. Theodore Harrison, commander of the Expeditionary Contracting Command, which is the only expeditionary contracting capability within the Department of Defense, explained his command's unique mission.

ECC plans and executes effective and

agile contracting support for Army service component commanders in support of Army and joint operations.

Conrad Bonner, director of operations at the Security Assistance Command, also participated in the panel offering insight on foreign military sales.

"We are a small organization leading a big enterprise," Bonner said as he explained the government-to-government transactions.

During an evening social, Col. Daniel Mitchell, executive officer to the AMC deputy commander, received the 2012 NDIA-Tennessee Valley Chapter Management Award.

His nomination highlighted Mitchell's extensive experience as a depot commander at Red River Army Depot, Texas. As commander he was instrumental in expanding AMC's industrial capabilities and successfully led his team to improve manufacturing processes, which has resulted in savings to the command in terms of material and labor cost.

The conference also offered breakout sessions, outreach and networking opportunities with Department of Defense, industry and small business representatives.

Combat aviation brigade completes aerial gunnery

By Sgt. ADRIANNA BARNES
Army News Service

YAKIMA, Wash. – The 16th Combat Aviation Brigade began its transition from a force-generating build-up into a training phase, in accordance with Army Force Generation model, with its first aerial gunnery at Yakima Training Center from Oct. 7 to Nov. 8.

Each subordinate battalion qualified on their individual aircraft weapons system in preparation for the upcoming Collective Crew Training, or CCT, beginning in mid-November. The CCT training will be 16th CAB's first combined training, which will incorporate multiple airframes to achieve a single-mission goal.

Both the aerial gunnery and CCT are cumulative exercises used to prepare for scheduled training rotations at the National Training Center in southern Calif., in 2013.

“We trained to qualify on our primary weapons systems, which will allow us collectively to peruse more advanced training,” said Capt. Matthew Ford, 16th CAB assistant operations officer. “This training also will allow us to support other neighboring units and their training requirements, and ultimately to deploy to combat theater and fight to win.”

Units qualified on various weapon systems for each airframe, including the OH-58D Kiowa, UH-60 Black Hawk and the AH-64D Apache helicopters. The 46th Aviation Support Battalion played a crucial role by providing training capabilities such as dining facilities, medical support and forward arming and refueling point personnel.

“The biggest lessons we’ve learned (are) how to integrate the support efforts of multiple [military occupational specialties] so that we can ‘plug and play’ into a variety of support scenarios,” said Lt. Col. Mark Sisco, the 46th ASB commander. “The exercises have given us a higher degree of support flexibility.”

“We had a lot of young Soldiers,” said Lt. Col. Bryan Hoff, commander of the 2nd Battalion (Assault), 158th Aviation Regiment. “It was their first time in the field and one of our greatest challenges was ensuring they were all well trained



Courtesy photo

An Apache helicopter pilot flies an aircraft to the ammunition restock point after unloading all its rounds into a target at the 16th Combat Aviation Brigade aerial gunnery at Yakima Training Center, Wash., Oct. 24.

and didn't have any accidents, especially when asking them to drive vehicles in excess of 20,000 pounds on uncommon treacherous roads. We took it slow and safe.”

The gunnery allowed helicopter gunners to prove they have basic skills and are able to properly identify and engage targets before moving into a CCT and working in a multifunction task force.

Soldiers worked together to properly engage targets while hovering, landing and en route, as well as at various levels of Effective Translation Lift. The ETL is the transitional state present as a helicopter moves from a hover to forward flight. During the CCT, air crews were placed in realistic combat scenarios and all weapons systems were used.

“Collectively, we have some challenges we will face and, when adding the various aircraft together. As we move forward, we are going to make sure we are deliberate, safe and well-thought-out before we proceed forward,” Hoff said.

Working in multifunction task forces generates the ability to use the different capabilities each airframe brings. By using the various types of helicopters together, unit commanders maximize the strengths of each aircraft, which can support each other with unique, airframe-specific capabilities.

Aerial gunnery is the starting point for several training phases and exercises the 16th CAB will conduct as the unit prepares itself to become fully-mission-capable and ready for worldwide deployment.

Natick Soldiers, employees help soup kitchen patrons



Photo by David Kamm, NSRDEC Public Affairs

Spc. Rebecca Fant poses with her fellow Soldiers, who take time to volunteer once a week at the Salvation Army Soup Kitchen in Framingham, Mass. Fant gave a pair of her boots to a woman there who needed shoes.

By **ALEXANDRA FORAN**
NSRDEC Public Affairs

NATICK, Mass. – A Soldier’s boots tend to get a bit more wear than those of the average person. This is especially true for Spc. Rebecca Fant of Natick Soldier Systems Center, who gave up an extra pair of her boots to a woman without shoes during a weekly trip to a local soup kitchen.

“I was proud of her,” said Staff Sgt. Sharalis Canales, training noncommissioned officer for the NSSC Headquarters Research and Development Detachment. “That’s something I would have done. It was just nice to see that those values and morals are instilled in her.”

Fant wasn’t looking for praise or credit after performing such a selfless act. It was only after Canales posted the kind deed a

Soldier performed as her Facebook status that the Public Affairs Office was able to track down Fant.

A woman who was a regular patron of the Framingham (Mass.) Salvation Army Soup Kitchen was walking around in socks. Fant told Canales that she should ask where the woman’s shoes were. The pair went outside to speak to the woman and found out that she didn’t have any shoes.

Fortunately, Fant wears the same size shoes as the woman and had a pair of Army winter boots in the trunk of her car. She and Canales went, without anyone else knowing, and put the boots on her. The woman gave them both a hug and said “thank you.”

“It’s a nice thing to do,” Fant said when asked about why she helps out at the soup kitchen. “I was always raised that

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you're supposed to give back when you have an opportunity, because you're blessed to be a blessing – so, give back. I've never been homeless or anything, but I know about hard times. So, hopefully, I will always have the opportunity to give back."

Soldiers and employees from NSSC have been assisting the "Miracle Kitchen" for years. Outreach from the base began in 1998 with Combat Feeding Directorate employees, and the NSSC community has participated ever since. On the third Thursday of each month, workers from the base donate time to give back to those in need in the local community.

Canales decided to take this community service a step further. As president of the Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program at Natick, Canales has brought Soldiers to the Miracle Kitchen every Thursday night since March as part of the BOSS program.

"The Soldiers wanted to go more often," Canales said. "They enjoyed going, so we decided to go every Thursday from now on."

Fant was actually in charge of taking the Soldiers to the soup kitchen every week while Canales was away for training.

"She was providing transportation for them and taking them on her own personal time," Canales said, "and she influences my Soldiers now to go."

Canales was, at one point in her life, very much like the patrons who come to the soup kitchen – homeless and alone. Now she goes back to help, and it reminds her of when she used to be in the same position as the patrons.

"It feels good to go back and help the cooks there out," Canales said. "Some of the homeless people ask me why we come, and I tell them I used to be in your same shoes.

"I just find it very rewarding, and what

I like is the fact that the Soldiers like to go and give back to the community. It opens their eyes to a lot of things and helps them appreciate the small things that we have, especially because a lot of the homeless people that go there are veterans that served."

Soldiers and civilians alike help out with tasks such as cooking and cleaning. Whatever soup kitchen coordinator Jimmy Williams needs, they do their best to accomplish.

"I love when the U.S. Army comes," Williams said. "They're hard workers."

Williams makes a monthly schedule and knows he can count on Natick Soldiers to be there every week. He also has a "wish list" of items the kitchen needs. Items like nine-inch Styrofoam plates, drink mixes, metal serving spoons, coffee, and canned goods are helpful. Big cans of soup top his list.

"With winter coming, I like to be able to have some hot soup going for our patrons," Williams said.

Williams also coordinates delivery of meals to approximately 20 elderly homeless people who cannot make it to the soup kitchen.

Lee-Ann Barkhouse, S&T Environmental Program coordinator at Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center, coordinates the civilian part of the service outreach with the soup kitchen. She got involved when a friend from CFD asked her to help when they were short-handed.

"She knew how much I love cooking," Barkhouse said. "I am thankful that I am able to give back to the community.

"Over the years, I have met a lot of great friends I would normally not have the opportunity to interact with," she continued. "Knowing that we as a team go to the kitchen with one goal, to prepare a fabulous meal, while having fun and making a difference to just one person – that really makes me thankful."

Serving the community in this way allows the NSSC community to give back. After all, Fant is right: Having the opportunity to help those in need is a blessing.

Raytheon facility grows 'Rocket City' reputation

New missile production plant continues von Braun legacy

By **KARI HAWKINS**

Assistant editor

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Redstone Arsenal is once again living up to its reputation as "Rocket City, USA."

With a ribbon cutting ceremony for the 70,000-square-foot Redstone Raytheon Missile Integration Facility near Gate 3 on Monday, the Arsenal is now officially home to "the most technologically advanced missile facility in the world," according to Vice Adm. James Syring, director of the Missile Defense Agency.

Raytheon's \$75 million automated missile facility, built on a 200-acre site, will provide final assembly and testing for Raytheon's Standard Missile-3 and Standard Missile-6 interceptors, two ballistic missiles associated with the nation's worldwide missile defense strategy. The facility also provides greater capability for Raytheon to grow its missile production at Redstone.

SM-3 is part of the Missile Defense Agency's sea-based Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense, with deployment on Navy cruis-



Photo by Kari Hawkins

Sen. Richard Shelby comments on the Dr. Wernher von Braun legacy that continues with the ribbon cutting officially opening the Redstone Raytheon Missile Integration Facility. The facility, located in the southeastern section of the Arsenal near Gate 3, will assemble and test Standard Missile-3 and Standard Missile-6 interceptors.

ers and destroyers, on Japanese destroyers to defend against short- to intermediate-range ballistic missile threats in the ascent and midcourse phases of flight, and at land-based sites in Europe. SM-6 is an extended range anti-air warfare missile fired from Navy ships against fixed- and rotary-

wing aircraft, unmanned aerial vehicles and cruise missiles.

For MDA, the mission of the SM-3 is clear: "to defend the U.S. and deployed forces, and allies and friends from ballistic missile attack," Syring said.

For Redstone Arsenal, the facility con-

tinues to grow its reputation for advanced missile development, assembly and testing.

"We're proud to be a part of this area's aviation and aerospace corridor. This region continues to be a hub for advanced missile technology," Dr. Taylor Lawrence, president of Raytheon Missile Systems and an Alabama native, said.

Lawrence wasn't the only leader who emphasized Redstone Arsenal's reputation for missile development. So, too, did Rep. Mo Brooks and Sen. Richard Shelby, who has been a strong supporter of the Raytheon missile facility from its inception.

"I think the spirit of Dr. Wernher von Braun is here with us today," Shelby said, referring to the German-American rocket team that came to Redstone Arsenal in the 1950s to build the foundation of the nation's missile and space programs.

And then, Shelby's comments went on fast-forward to the present, stressing the importance of missile development and production to the nation's security.

"We live in a tough world and it's getting tougher," he said. "These missiles make us more secure."

Lawrence told the audience of about 200 at the ribbon cutting ceremony that

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Redstone Arsenal along with the North Alabama community and the state of Alabama provided many reasons for building the new Raytheon plant at the Arsenal. Besides economic incentives from the state, the company also benefited from a good working relationship with the Garrison's Directorate of Public Works and its contractor, Brasfield & Gorrie; from the high-tech community in North Alabama that provides qualified employees for its work force; from the location of the facility at the same installation where the Missile Defense Agency resides; and from the availability of land that gives the company a significant buffer zone for safe missile testing.

The Arsenal site was ideal for Raytheon's continued mission to provide "affordable, effective and responsive missile systems" for the nation, Lawrence said.

Raytheon is excited about the opportunity to grow its missile manufacturing presence in North Alabama.

"When we started planning this facility we planned it with the future in mind, and with the knowledge that missile systems will become larger and more complex over time," Lawrence said.

To build a facility for future missile technology, Raytheon visited car manufactur-



Photo by Kari Hawkins

From left are Vice Adm. James Syring, director of the Missile Defense Agency; Rep. Mo Brooks; Sen. Richard Shelby; Raytheon Company chairman and CEO William Swanson; Dr. Taylor Lawrence, president of Raytheon Missile Systems; and Lt. Gov. Kay Ivey.

ers to learn about the use of automation in factories. It has incorporated robotics and automation in the Arsenal facility to ensure "production quality, mission assurance and employee safety," he said.

In the audience Monday were representatives of Japan's government and military. Raytheon is partnering with Japan to build a larger SM-3 that will be tested in 2014 and deployed in 2018. Plans are to assemble that missile at the Arsenal facility.

Currently, about 40 employees work at

the Raytheon facility. By 2014, that number will grow to 130 at the facility with another 170 Raytheon jobs focused on other Huntsville and Department of Defense related activities based out of Redstone. Those jobs will be added to the 550 Raytheon employees already located in Huntsville.

The first missile set to come off the production line will be the new SM-6, which will be complete in the first quarter of 2013 and then delivered to the Navy. Before they leave the facility, each missile is tested with the use of automated guided vehicles that move the missile down a concrete corridor into a test cell that uses a comprehensive, multi-layered system of protection from any potential explosion. Automatic controls guide the vehicles through the corridors to the test cells. It is the safest and has the highest explosive capacity of any of Raytheon's missile production facilities.

The first SM-3 missile will come off the production line in the second quarter of 2013. The SM-3 is currently being produced at Raytheon's Camden, Ark., facility. But that production along with missile depot maintenance and recertification is being moved to the Arsenal facility.

"Countless lives may one day depend on these advanced technologies," Lawrence said, adding that Raytheon is focused on providing missiles that "Preserve freedom, liberty and security around the world."

Above all the benefits of locating in North Alabama, Lawrence and Raytheon

Company chairman and CEO William Swanson emphasized the importance of its partnerships with federal, state and local governments; MDA, the Navy and the Department of Defense; and industry contractors.

"This brings to mind a quote from (automobile industry leader) Henry Ford — 'Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success,'" Swanson said.

"Our success is the safety and security of our nation. ... We are so proud to do all of this in Huntsville, Rocket City, USA."

The Arsenal facility represents one of the largest, single investments made by Raytheon, "and we couldn't be happier with the results as we develop, manufacture and deliver advanced missile capability well into the future," the Raytheon chairman said.

Appreciation for the Raytheon partnership was also expressed by Lt. Gov. Kay Ivey during the ceremony.

"We're all shareholders in this important venture," she said. "It really underscores and demonstrates the value of strong partnerships in this community and this state.

"We're pleased that Alabama has achieved an attractive environment where companies like Raytheon can grow and develop and expand. ... Today's ribbon cutting further confirms the importance of Alabama's role to be an incubator of invention and a vessel of growing technology to strengthen our nation's security."

Operation Solemn Promise serves as valuable reminder

By **KARL WEISEL**
USAG Wiesbaden

WIESBADEN, Germany – A year after asking Soldiers and civilians to take a hard look at whether or not they truly embody the Army's Values in their daily lives during the launching of Operation Solemn Promise, 5th Signal Command's Brig. Gen. Bruce Crawford was joined by Command Sgt. Maj. Gerald Tyce with a reinforcing message Nov. 16 at the Wiesbaden Fitness Center.

Calling on hundreds of listeners both in the hall and listening via live streaming to "re-energize a dialogue in Army Values," Tyce said, "Operation Solemn Promise is a constant reminder of why we serve."

Soldiers and civilians from throughout the command who were based in from throughout Germany or watching online were asked to re-commit themselves to the core elements of the profession of arms – trust, military expertise, honorable service, esprit de corps and stewardship. Like the Army Values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage, the men

and women who raised their hands to recite their respective oaths during the ceremony vowed to uphold those oaths of service.

"These values are our foundation," said Tyce, adding that he is "honored and proud to serve."

"Today we renew our commitment to the profession of arms," Tyce said, calling it the "most respected institution in society."

Tyce said it is the responsibility of each member of the Army family team to preserve his or her ethical standards. Calling it a noble calling to serve the nation, Tyce said Soldiers will be continuously called upon to focus on the various aspects of the profession in the future.

"You are part of a team," he said, charging his listeners to embrace their legacy of service and to live up to their commitment to serve.

Calling it a professional development opportunity, Crawford said the recommitment is a time for "clarity and purpose to an ongoing Army dialogue about Army Values.



Photo by Karl Weisel

Soldiers reaffirm their oath during the 5th Signal Command's Operation Solemn Promise commemoration event Nov. 16 at the Wiesbaden Fitness Center in Germany.

"You are empowered to make a difference," 5th Signal's commander said, adding that members of the profession of arms must set the example for others to follow.

"Almost a year ago today I asked you to rededicate yourselves to becoming more accountable," Crawford said, saying that while strides have been made,

there is more work to be done to ensure the Army is ready to meet the challenges of the future.

Calling the Noncommissioned Officer Corps "the heart that pumps the blood that fuels the team," Crawford also praised "the love and commitment of military families" – particularly during November, the Month of the Military Family. He also praised the support of local national employees and asked everyone to remember those still serving in harm's way.

Addressing young noncommissioned officers and officers, Crawford said he was optimistic the future of the Army is bright and in good hands.

During the ceremony that featured vocal renditions of the U.S. and German national anthems, "God Bless America" and "God Bless the USA," attendees also joined in welcoming a group of new young recruits during a mass enlistment ceremony.

"These are our sons and daughters," Crawford said. "This is why we serve. This is what it's all about."

Soldiers bring warmth to community in Korea



Photo by Pvt. Lim Hong Seo, IMCOM

Capt. Vladislav Silayev, commander for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, U.S. Army Garrison Yongsan, leads a group of Soldiers delivering briquettes Nov. 19. Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Garrison Yongsan, along with Seoul American Middle School students and the Korean Foreigners Friendship Cultural Society, delivered coal briquettes to the households of elderly and low-income families living in Ahyeon-dong, so they could stay warm over the winter.

By Pvt. LIM HONG SEO

Installation Management Command

AHYEON, Republic of Korea – Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, U.S. Army Garrison Yongsan, along with Seoul American Middle School students and the Korean Foreigners Friendship Cultural Society, delivered coal briquettes to the households of elderly and low-income families living in Ahyeon-dong Nov. 19 so they could stay warm over the winter.

Briquette delivery is an annual event hosted by the USAG Yongsan's Good Neighbor Program, which is done to strengthen the Republic of Korea, or ROK, and United States alliance by engaging in and communicating with the local community. More than 20 Soldiers and 20 Seoul American Middle School students partook in the meaningful event.

More than 4,000 briquettes were delivered to a location well-known for its high elderly population, who live alone and have a low income.

Led by Capt. Vladislav Silayev, company commander for HHC USAG Yongsan, and local administrators, the Soldiers and students started delivering the briquettes in an organized way. While the Soldiers carried the briquettes, the dark stains from the briquettes smeared their faces and uniforms. After hours of enduring inclement weather, the coal briquettes were successfully delivered to 20 households that were in need.

"Today's briquettes delivery went really well and it was a meaningful experience," Silayev said. "Working with the Korean folks out here, we could see how people live and learn how to interact with them. I am sure that it was also a good opportunity for the local Koreans to get to know us, and see us giving something back to the community. They would see ROK and U.S. Soldiers in a more positive light."

According to Silayev, this forged the friendship between the local Korean community and the U.S. Soldiers, and also strengthened the alliance between the ROK and the U.S.

"I think this type of event is an outstanding method to improve the ROK and U.S. alliance, which is the strongest international alliance in the world," Silayev said. "Anything we could do to help improve upon the alliance is worth doing. It is a very good step, set in a right direction."

UAH student gains from Army aviation experience

By HEATHER R. SMITH
AMRDEC Public Affairs

“Priceless” is how University of Alabama-Huntsville student Chryssa Mayhall describes the real world experience she has gained as a co-op with the Aviation and Missile Research Development and Engineering Center.

Mayhall, majoring in mechanical engineering with a concentration in aerospace engineering, is a co-op in the AMRDEC Aviation Engineering Directorate’s Sustainment Division.

“I am really interested in the safety aspects of flight,” the three-year co-op program participant said. “As someone who has a tendency to get a little nervous about flying, safety has always been the area of aerospace engineering that interests me most.”

Within AED, Mayhall has been a part of the Source Approval Request team and the Critical Safety Item team, working on waiver requests and specific questions from companies regarding helicopter parts.

“The experience I have obtained as a co-op for AMRDEC is priceless,” Mayhall said. “Not only have I been able to review drawings and specifications, I have gotten the opportunity to travel to manufacturers and see how helicopter parts are produced in accordance with the drawings and specifications.

“In school, I am learning about the aerodynamics of various aircraft and how parts are designed and manufactured. The knowledge I have gained by working for AMRDEC has not only enhanced the information I have learned in school, but it has allowed me to see it at work firsthand. My career goals are to be a well-rounded engineer and to one day have a leadership position within the government. I believe that the skills I am gaining as a co-op will prepare me for those goals in the future.”



UAH photo

University of Alabama-Huntsville student Chryssa Mayhall supports the safety and sustainment of Army helicopters as a co-op with AMRDEC’s Aviation Engineering Directorate.



Courtesy photo

Security assistance award

AI Thomas, deputy director of the Security Assistance Command’s PACOM/SOUTHCOM regional directorate, stands with Lt. Gen. Huang Yi-bing, deputy commander of the Taiwan Army Headquarters. Thomas, who will retire Dec. 31, received the “Order of Resplendent Banner with Special Rosette” award Oct. 15 during his last Security Assistance Review with the country. The award was presented for his contribution toward military cooperation between the two countries.



Photo by Kari Hawkins

Bargain hunting

Michelle Smith fills her shopping cart with Black Friday sale items while holiday shopping on Friday at the Redstone Exchange. She was excited about the 50 percent off sales in the store. The Exchange opened at 4 a.m. Friday and had extended hours throughout the weekend to accommodate holiday shoppers.

Family serves as foundation of Army strength

AMC commander encourages building strong relationships

By **KARI HAWKINS**

Assistant editor

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The love and support of family is at the heart of what sustains Soldiers and makes them successful.

For Gen. Dennis Via and his family – wife Linda, and sons Brian and Bradley – there is no better place to learn values, morals and character than in the Army family. And the family is the foundation on which Soldiers stand.

“We’ve heard our chief of staff (of the Army), Gen. (Raymond) Odierno, say: ‘The strength of our nation is our Army, the strength of our Army is our Soldiers, and the strength of our Soldiers are their families, that’s what makes our Army Strong’ and there’s much meaning in his statement. Strong families are essential for our Soldiers to deploy, be effective and accomplish their mission” Via said.

“That also goes for our civilians as well who have deployed, many of them multiple times. Their separations are no less challenging. Their sacrifices no less great. Today’s Army leadership understands and appreciates the contributions and sacrifices of our families.”

Via, commander of the Army Materiel Command, and his wife and teenage son Bradley live on Redstone Arsenal. Their oldest son, Brian, attends the University of Virginia, where he is a junior in the Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy. The couple have been married nearly 30 years. They met at Virginia State University, where Via was a cadet in the ROTC program and Linda Via was voted Miss ROTC as a sophomore.

“He was a junior and I met him during the second week of my freshman year of college. I did not date anyone else after that time,” Linda Via said.

“We quickly realized we truly, truly enjoyed one another’s company. Several things clicked for us on many levels.”

Their attraction and commitment to each other has resulted in a strong Soldier-wife command team that believes in building relationships within the Army organizations where they’ve served, in reaching out and touching

those they work with on a personal basis, and in supporting Army families.

“The family programs that are in existence today were not even part of the Army 30 years ago,” Via said. “The saying back then was ‘If the Army wanted you to have a family, they would have issued you one.’ Family programs didn’t really begin to evolve in the Army toward current day programs until Desert Shield/Desert Storm. Today, the support for Army families that you see from our president and first lady and senior leaders has never been seen before in our Army.”

The Army’s ability to build strong family units hit home with Linda Via when one of her husband’s company commanders and his wife lost their infant son due to an accident.

“To see the unit in action, to see us as we wrapped our arms around this young family, and the outpouring of love and support, made me begin to understand and appreciate that we do take care of each other. We feel each other’s pains and we shoulder each other’s sorrows. We also enjoy each other’s celebrations,” she said. “There’s always a need and we can help with that need.”

As the couple added Brian and then Bradley to their family, they made some tough choices – they decided that Linda would defer her human resources career in order to provide their sons stability at home. Via’s tours in the 82nd Airborne Division, during which both of their sons were born, entailed long work hours and often took him away from home on missions and deployments.

“Command is very demanding, and we had to make a shift to ensure our sons got the quality time they needed,” Linda Via said. “It was a balancing act with time and commitments. From a personal perspective, I wanted to be a good wife and mother while also volunteering, helping with Army family programs, supporting my husband’s command and its families, and playing a key role in our sons’ education so they wouldn’t get lost in the shuffle as the new military kids.”

As their sons grew older, the Via couple made a commitment to involve them in the military lifestyle they had chosen. They included them in military social events and ceremonial programs, including deployment and



Photo by Kari Hawkins

Gen. Dennis Via credits his success in the Army to the support of his wife Linda, their sons Brian, left, and Bradley, and to their extended family, both in their hometowns and in the Army. Via’s office on the sixth floor of the Army Materiel Command headquarters includes several photos of his family.

Welcome Home events.

“With my family, as parents and as a married couple, we’ve strived to serve as an example for our units,” Via said. “We wanted them to know the importance of family, so we included our sons in everything.”

Linda Via recalled one Christmas Eve when a transportation unit returned from a deployment. The couple and their sons were in attendance at the Welcome Home celebration.

“We walked into that gymnasium and we could feel the love of those

families and their anticipation of their Soldiers’ return,” she said. “It was emotional and poignant to see family members excitedly waiting for their Soldiers. That left an impression on us that is hard to describe.”

Both Brian and Bradley willingly share their Army family story with their friends. At college, Brian often adds the perspective of a military kid to discussions on public policy.

“Growing up as a military kid has

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'When is my daddy coming home?'

Alabama Guard Soldier close in hearts of family and friends

By KARI HAWKINS

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Dana Osborne is counting the time away from her Soldier by the holidays.

Since her husband left for a deployment in August, he has missed the family celebrations of his wife's birthday and his own birthday, Halloween and Thanksgiving. By the time he returns home in August, he will also have missed a family wedding, his son's 4th birthday in February, his own wedding anniversary in April, Christmas and Easter, and a handful of other family and national holidays.

"There's a lot coming up and that keeps me really busy," said Osborne, who juggles her responsibilities at home with her job as the chief of Unmanned Aircraft Systems operations, Program Executive Office for Aviation. "But when Rudy gets back he will have missed everything in a year that's about us."

Osborne's Soldier – Alabama National Guard Staff Sgt. Rudy Will – is assigned as the battalion S6 (communications) noncommissioned officer in charge of the 1-167th Infantry Battalion (4th Alabama). The 600-plus Soldiers of the 1-167th, based in Talladega, deployed to Kabul, Afghanistan in August to provide security details.

Will, who is actually assigned to the 31st Chemical Brigade in Tuscaloosa and who works full time for Colsa Corp. in support of the Advanced Research Center in Cummings Research Park, agreed to deploy with the 4th Alabama after they requested his communications expertise.

"When they called, Will sort of told them he would go. They were adamant that he deploy with them," Osborne said.

"He asked me if it was OK. I said 'Yes' because this is what he signed up to do. Since I work for the Department of the Army, I understand he needs to do this."

Asked about the deployment by email, Will admitted that he wished he'd talk to his wife more about the decision to deploy before he made any type of commitment to the 1-167th. Even so, he's glad to be able to serve his country.

"It's easy for me to remember that day back in 2011 when I agreed to come on this deployment. None of

us can forget April 27, 2011," he said, referring to the line of tornadoes that left large paths of destruction in North Alabama on that day.

"As I recall there was a rare break in the sky above, I was at lunch on the Arsenal and said 'yes' that I'd come on this deployment. Why? Well, there is very large part of me committed to serving my nation, but moreover my fellow Soldiers would need an experienced signal support Soldier with just the right attitude and skill set. He wasn't able to deploy, so I said 'Yes!'"

Will said the work he and his fellow Soldiers do is much like the work of a civilian company's information technology department. As a member of the Army's Signal Corps, he works communication systems that keep commanders and Soldiers connected throughout theater and on the battlefield. He travels by ground or air to forward operating bases in the Kabul area to support communication systems.

"I ensure solid communications for over 500-plus Soldiers dispersed throughout Afghanistan and its divided regional commands," he wrote. "I work with a wide variety of equipment such as Blue Force Tracker, tactical radios, computers, printers, TVs or, as I come to understand, anything with an ON/OFF switch. It's sort of like a combat-ready 'Geek Squad.'"

As such, Will spends most of his time at Camp Phoenix or visiting the area's forward operating bases.

"Camp Phoenix is very nice compared to some other more remote camps, outposts and posts scattered throughout Afghanistan," he wrote. "We have a lot of the creature comforts others do not, I am the proud owner of a Keurig coffee maker, a fridge and TV.

"I personally have what could be best described as a 'desktop fighting position.' This doesn't mean we are not busy. We support the mission seven days a week and are never really off the clock. We do get off time or 'down' time for working out, playing videogames, visiting the Green Bean, or whatever a Soldier is inclined do with his or her free time. I personally read my Kindle Fire and watch a fair amount of Armed Forces Network TV."

This is Will's second deployment.

"One month after we got married in 2007 he deployed to Iraq for a year," Osborne said. "This time, though, it's a lot different because now we have a child."



Photo by Kari Hawkins

Dana Osborne and her 3-year-old son Hayden cherish the picture they have of their Soldier, Staff Sgt. Rudy Will. The framed photo shows Hayden and his dad together with his half sister, 8-year-old Sarah. Their Soldier is deployed to Afghanistan.

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Family

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Their son, 3-year-old Hayden, is rambunctious and high energy. When not at home with his mom, he is at the Whitesburg Baptist Church child care center; enjoying time with the family's extensive network of friends and family in the area; or participating in a sports enhancement program for preschoolers at the Little Gym, where he enjoys tumbling and sports like tennis, basketball and soccer. Osborne and her son cook together in the evenings and they talk with their Soldier every day, often by Skype so they can see each other on the computer.

"We do stay busy, especially since my job does require some traveling," said Osborne, who redecorated part of the family's home after Will deployed. "Staying busy keeps your mind off of where he is and what he's doing. It's dangerous where Rudy is right now. They just got hit around Kabul. Rudy called and told me about it. I was glad to get that call from him because it was already on Google and CNN when I got to work that morning. You worry because you never know."

Even with the busyness of everyday life, Hayden often asks "When is my dad coming home?" Hayden misses story time with his dad and the fun they had playing with Legos together. Will said he misses his wife and son in Alabama, his 8-year-old daughter Sarah who lives with her mom at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., his extended family and friends, Alabama football and just about everything he left behind at home.

Although Will's deployment has been hard on his family, his wife is accepting of her husband's chosen career.

"I knew what we got married that I was signing up for this, too," she said. "I knew he wanted to finish out his career in the National Guard."

Will has 14 years active duty as a Marine and seven years in the National Guard. He recently hit his 21-year military career mark, celebrating it by signing up for five more years.

"He wants to get to 30 years. He likes what he does. He loves working with Soldiers. He loves being a Soldier," Osborne said.

Osborne knew when she married Will that he would not be leaving his life as a Soldier behind. She understood it was very much a part of the man she had fallen in love with.

"The act of being a Soldier is hard

work, but, for me, it has intangible rewards," Will wrote. "I enjoy the sense of being part of something larger than myself. I am part of an extended family. I feel a sense of purpose through my service. At the end of the day, I feel a tremendous pride in my service."

Serving with the 1-167th has made the deployment easier for Will.

"The 1-167 Infantry Battalion, 4th Alabama, is proud to represent our state and our nation, and they are the best men and women I have had the privilege of serving with," he wrote. "In fact, this is my second time with this unit, and that greatly influenced my decision to deploy with them. Our nation called and the state answered with over 500 of its best citizen Soldiers."

Osborne and her family have felt the care and concern of both their church and work families during the deployment.

"We had going away parties for Rudy," she said.

"A lot of the members at my church (Big Cove Holiness Church) mail cards and let him know they are still thinking about him. My co-workers have been great about emailing him. Our officers are always asking about him and wanting to know if he needs anything. My

office has been a very good support group for me. Most of them lived it with me the first time he went."

That support is welcome for a Soldier who is part of U.S. troop actions in Afghanistan that are making a difference.

"As we hand over the mission to the Afghans allowing them to provide their own security, we have after a long decade of war begun to write the closing chapters of the Afghan campaign," he writes.

"The significance is that it has broad impacts on our society, our security, our armed forces and, on a very personal level, the Soldier. As to what I hope to provide the people of Afghanistan, I hope that they can experience freedom, a freely elected government and an increased sense of human dignity."

For his family and friends back home, Will hopes for a holiday season that is "a true season of peace and joy. Try not to miss me too much. The work I'm doing is important. Though I am at present far from home, they are never far from my thoughts and my heart. Next to world peace and being home with my family, my Christmas wish is for an Alabama national championship! I promise I have been a good Soldier, Santa!"

Via

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been a positive lifestyle,” Brian said. “It has given me a broader perspective of the world, and it has given me the ability to react to challenges and change. I think it has made me a better person, a more adaptable person who has a greater appreciation for what people do in life.

“Given my experience, I feel a responsibility to spread awareness of what it’s like to grow up in a military family. It makes us ambassadors.”

Both boys have said that living in seven different states during their young lives have made them comfortable with reaching out and making new friends.

“When I go to a new school, I like to learn everybody’s stories and who could be a good friend. You learn how to find your own place,” said Bradley, who attends Huntsville High School.

Brian attended three high schools in four years. Bradley will attend two high schools before he graduates.

“Their experience is so different from what their mother and I experienced growing up in small towns

in rural Virginia,” Via said. “I’m a little amazed that they were able to adjust, and that they’ve been able to stay grounded with all the moves and all the changes. They are very resilient.”

Today, the Army works to help families live with transitions and tough issues through a variety of programs, including the Army Family Action Plan, Strong Bonds, Family Readiness Groups and Survivor Outreach Services.

“It’s difficult to fix every problem. There are just not enough resources,” Linda Via said. “But leadership does listen. Change takes time, especially during a time of dwindling resources. We’ve got to make sure money is spent on programs families truly want and that will make a difference.”

Via said the Army’s support of families will always remain strong, and funds will be spent on the most effective and needed programs. But he also encouraged Army families to take the time to strengthen their relationships.

“The thing that sustains Linda and

By the numbers: Military families

1,000 is the approximate number of service-members at Redstone.

1,500 is the estimated number of military family members.

14 general officers are assigned on post.

me during demanding times, those times when I’m away and working long hours, is that we have a strong relationship with each other and with our sons,” he said.

“Families should always spend time, quality time, building and strengthening their relationships because challenges will come in life. Adversity will inevitably show up on your doorstep. You have to be careful not to let the assignment or the job consume you.”

The couple also said that Army families should remain connected

with their own personal families outside of military life.

“Keep your family connected to their roots. The Army can take you away from your family. You have to make them a priority,” Via said.

The key to a successful Army lifestyle for any family is balance and compromise, the Via couple said.

“There always has to be compromise. You have to be understanding of each other, respect what each of you brings into the relationship, and be kind to each other,”

Linda Via said. “Balance time as a couple, as a family, and for whatever recharges you, whether that be spiritually or something you enjoy as a hobby.”

The couple encourage Army families – Soldier and civilian – to take time during the upcoming holidays to enjoy each other and reflect on their lives.

“This time of year affords us the opportunity to pause and reflect on how very fortunate and blessed we are as a nation, even with the challenges we have,” Via said.

Army Community Service represents military family

*Most of ACS staff
military connected*

By **SKIP VAUGHN**

Rocket editor

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The staff members of Army Community Service know all about the challenges on military families – including the uncertainty of deployments, the frequent moves, the demands of time and responsibilities.

That's because most of them have lived that lifestyle. No fewer than nine of the 11 staff members are military connected.

ACS division chief Sue Paddock and staff members Kerrie Branson, Debra Jefferson and Mary Breeden were sitting at a table in their building during a lunch break.

"Around this table we have all retired military spouses," Paddock said. "Isn't that interesting?"

So, military families, you really do have a friend at ACS. Of course, Army Community Service also serves the entire Redstone community – including active duty and retired military, National Guard, Reserves, their family members and Department of Defense civilians.

"Basically anyone who has access to Redstone Arsenal," Paddock said.

"And it goes beyond the gates," Breeden added. Survivor Outreach Services, for example, covers 11 counties of North Alabama.

Breeden serves as the relocation assistance program manager and information referral program manager. Branson is the Army Emergency Relief and Survivor Outreach Services program manager. Jefferson is the employment readiness program manager and ACS volunteer program support coordinator.

Army Community Service "provides social service programs to improve the quality of life," according to Breeden.

Its clientele has changed because of the departure of the Ordnance Munitions and Electronics Maintenance School and young Soldier trainees to Fort Lee, Va., under base realignment and closure.

"Because of the unique makeup of Redstone Arsenal, we are seeing more civilians now than we had when the Ordnance school was here with young Soldiers," Paddock said. "We're still providing military families' support but it's for a more senior element than it was for young Soldiers."

In support of military families, ACS teaches classes and links the families with available resources. "We teach them to be more resilient and more employable and more financially stable," Paddock said, "and better parents and better spouses by strengthening marriages. And we help families with special needs. That can include elderly parents now. The population now is seeing the need for education of taking care of their elderly parents."

ACS has many partnerships with organizations off-post and on-post with expertise to present classes on such subjects as estate planning and grief counseling. Its staff members are versatile so they can assist in each other's programs.

"Everyone on staff is cross trained to cover different programs so we have continuity of service," Paddock said.

"We also have a great strong volunteer force," she added. "Our volunteers are part of our ACS family. We have close to 20 (volunteers) now, who support all of our programs and special events. We are very fortunate to have different groups of volunteers who support us throughout the year for special events – for example, Operation Christmas Bear and Survivor Outreach Services events and Special Olympic track and field and the AER campaign."

The other staff members include family advocacy program manager Virginia Dempsey, new parent support program manager Charlene Cox, quality of life program manager Carie Green, financial readiness and mobilization deployment program manager Kathleen Riester, exceptional family member program manager Natalie Taylor, victim advocate/sexual assault response coordinator Perrar Joseph, social services assistant Angel Solomon, volunteer coordinator Kim Anton and information referral/front desk volunteer Sharon Samuelson, who also volunteers with the Community Action Plan forum, Army Family Team Building and special events. Linda Via, wife of Army Materiel Command commander Gen. Dennis Via, serves as the honorary volunteer adviser.

ACS, building 3338 on Redeye Road, can be reached at 876-5397.



Photo by Skip Vaughn

From left are Debra Jefferson, Sharon Samuelson, ACS division chief Sue Paddock, Kerrie Branson and Mary Breeden.

Phone numbers for military families

883-6100: Redstone Exchange

955-6627: Commissary

955-8888: Fox Army Health Center

313-6422: Police dispatch

911: Emergencies

876-5397: Army Community Service

876-9005: Legal Assistance

876-2073: Family and Morale Welfare and Recreation

Seasonal festivities bring families together

Trees and Treats opens holidays at The Summit

By AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON

Staff writer
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On Redstone Arsenal, it's not Christmas until the lights of the season are shining at The Summit.

Team Redstone will kick off the festivities Thursday with "Trees and Treats," the annual holiday celebration and tree lighting at The Summit, from 4:30-7 p.m. The ceremony begins at 5:15 with the tree lighting at 5:30. The event is open to the entire Redstone Arsenal community.

"This event is a wonderful way to start the holiday season on Redstone," Natalie Crawford, special events coordinator for FMWR, said. "It is such a fun event that really welcomes our Redstone Arsenal family into The Summit to have a great time and view the beautiful holiday décor."

In addition to the traditional tree lighting, plenty of treats will be available, including a chocolate fountain, caramel apple dipping, apple cider and Ms. Ruby's chili, as well as a variety of activities, including a cookie decorating station, photo booth messages to troops, Home Depot Santa's Workshop, pictures with Santa, Summit Tree Scavenger Hunt and festive music from the AMC Band.

"Family and Morale Welfare and Recreation is here to provide all that our name represents to our wonderful Redstone Arsenal community," Crawford said. "Programs like this are fantastic morale boosters and are a great opportunity for all of Team Redstone to gather, relax and have a little festive holiday fun. Over the years, this event has grown to be such a favorite and we look forward to continuing that tradition."

Marshall Space Flight Center will hold its annual rocket lighting ceremony Friday at 4:45 p.m. at Marshall's Rocket Park. Hot chocolate, cookies, holiday favorites sung by the Marshall Child Development Center and everyone's favorite North Pole resident will be on hand to make the season bright. All members of Team Redstone are welcome.

The holiday festivities don't stop at the installation's gates. Operation Christmas Bear returns for its ninth year from 1-4 p.m. Dec. 8, this time at a new location, the Jaycees Building, on Airport Road in Huntsville. The free event includes food, inflatables, pictures with Santa, face painting, robots, trains, clowns and of course, stuffed bears. The event is open to all National Guard, Reserve and active duty military families, as well as De-



Photo by Ellen Hudson

Like the 2011 tree lighting celebration, this Thursday's "Trees and Treats" at The Summit will open Redstone's holiday season.

partment of Defense civilians deployed to a war zone. To register, email Mary Breeden at mary.c.breeden.civ@mail.mil or call Army Community Service at 876-5397 with your sponsors' name, rank, unit and number of children attending.

Catch the Christmas cheer without even leaving your car at the Huntsville Botanical Garden's Galaxy of Lights, now through Dec. 31, every evening from 5:30 to 9. Larger than life animated displays fill the holiday light spectacle, including nursery rhyme characters and a twinkling icicle forest. Cost is \$20 per car, up to 10 people; \$20 for vans and tour buses up to 10 people, \$3 for each additional person. For more information, visit www.hsvbg.org.

Take a trip to the North Pole (a.k.a. Constitution Village), to see Santa's Village, now through Dec. 23 from 5-9 p.m., at 109 Gates Ave. in Huntsville. The annual holiday attraction gives young and old the opportunity to visit with Santa, his reindeer and even those busy elves, while enjoying nightly snow shows, craft projects, musical entertainment, and Santa's Magic Garden, which includes talking and singing Christmas trees. Cost

is \$5 per person. To order tickets, visit earlyworks.com/santasvillage/.

If your Christmas season isn't complete until you've heard the angels singing Hallelujah, make room on your calendar for the Huntsville Community Chorus and Huntsville Youth Orchestra's performance of Handel's Messiah. The concert, which will include Part One and the Hallelujah Chorus, plus additional holiday selections, will be Friday at 7:30 p.m. at First Baptist Church, 600 Governors Drive. Advance general admission tickets are \$18 for adults; \$5 for college students, \$10 at the door; high school students free of charge and children 12 and under free with a paying adult. To purchase tickets, call 533-6606.

Head up to Monte Sano for Burritt on the Mountain's Candlelight Christmas Friday and Saturday, from 4-9 p.m. More than 600 candles will light the mountain, while guests enjoy music and food, including cider, cookies and figgy pudding. Activities for kids include stringing cranberries and popcorn, making paper punch ornaments and handmade cards and icing cookies. Kris Kringle will also pay guests a visit. Cost is \$9 for adults, \$8 for seniors and military, \$6 for students ages 13-17, \$5 for children ages 3-12, kids 2 and under free; if you are a Burritt member, cost is \$2 per person. For more information, visit www.burrittonthemountain.com.

Take a stroll through the second annual Tinsel Trail at the west side of Big Spring Park, adjacent to the Huntsville Museum of Art's ice rink. Approximately 200 live evergreens decorated with twinkling lights, bows, bells and more will spruce up the park with the Christmas spirit. The trail is free and open to the public from Dec. 1 to Jan. 1. For more information, visit tinseltrail.wordpress.com.

The Huntsville Ballet invites all military families to enjoy their performance of the holiday favorite, "The Nutcracker," and holiday concert by the Army Materiel Command Band, Dec. 6, at 6 p.m. at the Mark C. Smith Concert Hall, Von Braun Center. The performance is free to all military, retired military and their families with show of military ID card.

Another holiday favorite, "A Christmas Carol," takes the stage at the Von Braun Center Playhouse, Dec. 7-9 and 13-16. Travel with Scrooge as he visits ghosts of Christmas past, present and future in the musical staging of the Charles Dickens' story. Performances are Dec. 7, 13 and 14 at 7 p.m.; Dec. 8, 9 and 15 at 2 and 7 p.m.; Dec. 16 at 2 p.m. Cost is \$14 for students 17 and under, \$20 for adults. For tickets, visit letthemagicbegin.org.

Each year First Baptist Church brings a Christmas tree to life – literally – through



Photo by Ellen Hudson

On Santa's lap during last year's Operation Christmas Bear is Dasiya Price, 5, daughter of Tiffany Price.



Photo by Ellen Hudson

Steve Edge, a blacksmith and tour guide at Constitution Village works in the wood working shop. Santa's Village is open now through Dec. 23 from 5 to 9 p.m. nightly.

song at The Living Christmas Tree. The 39-foot tree and more than 13,000 lights lined with vocalists singing Christmas carols will come alive at performances Dec. 13-15 at 7:30 p.m.; Dec. 15 at 4:30 p.m.; Dec. 16 at 3 p.m. (abbreviated for young children) and 5:30 p.m. To reserve your free tickets, call the Living Christmas Tree ticket office at 428-9422 or stop by the ticket office at First Baptist, 600 Governors Drive, now through Dec. 14 between the hours of 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., closed Saturdays and Sundays. For more information, visit www.fbchsv.org/ltc.

Designed with the kids' Christmas lists in mind, the U.S. Space & Rocket Center will hold Parent's Shopping Day Out, Dec. 8 and 15 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Children ages 6 to 12 will enjoy space-related activities, lunch and the MathAlive! exhibit while mom and dad take care of their holiday to-do list. Cost is \$25, \$20 for each additional child in the same family; USSRC members receive a 10 percent discount. Reservations must be made by 2 p.m. the Friday prior to the event. To reserve your spot, call 721-7114.

For more events throughout the Tennessee Valley in December, visit www.ourvalleyevents.com.

Bear hug for military kids returns Dec. 8

By **AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON**

Staff writer

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In thanksgiving for the sacrifices military families make, the Tennessee Valley will wrap them up in a big Christmas bear hug Dec. 8.

The North Alabama Veterans and Fraternal Organizations Coalition's Operation Christmas Bear, a free holiday party for all servicemembers – active duty, Guard and Reserve – and their families, as well as the families of Department of Defense civilians deployed to a war zone, returns for its ninth year Dec. 8 from 1-4 p.m. To register for the event, email Mary Breeden at mary.c.breeden.civ@mail.mil or call Army Community Service at 876-5397 with your sponsors' name, rank, unit and number of children attending.

"As both a veteran who served with the 82nd Airborne Division, and a parent of four small children, I am quite familiar with the challenges of military service and the toll associated with frequent deployments," Rodney Pennywell, chairman of this year's event, said. "I am thrilled to be the face of so many dedicated volunteers, many who have served this event since its inception nine years ago, and to see firsthand the joy brought to these children. We want these par-

ents who have given so much to enjoy a stress-free afternoon as they enter their holidays."

For the first time this year, the event will be held at Huntsville's Jaycees facilities, located off Airport Road and Jaycees Way, close to the Arsenal and centrally located to where many of the afternoon's honored guests call home. Santa kicks off the afternoon, arriving by fire truck at 1 p.m., and the fun continues from there with food, trains, a magician, inflatables, crafts, pictures with Santa and more. The afternoon is made possible through the work of dedicated volunteers grateful for the sacrifices this nation's military – and their families – have made, and continue to make today.

"As a result of recent news accounts indicating that our military has redeployed from Iraq, the public is lulled to believe that our military servicemembers are not actively engaged in conflicts and are fast returning to a peacetime Army," Pennywell said. "This notion could not be further from reality as many of our servicemembers still make sacrifices associated with overseas efforts in Iraq, Afghanistan, Africa, Asia and many other locations. In fact more than 1,200 persons here at Redstone Arsenal are currently



Photo by Amy Guckeen Tolson

Santa arrives by fire truck at Operation Christmas Bear in 2010.

deployed. The Tennessee Valley community respects these servicemembers and their families who make these unseen sacrifices. The North Alabama Veterans and Fraternal Organizations

Coalition organizes Operation Christmas Bear with the support of 52 organizations in an effort to show this region's deep gratitude to our Soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines."



Photo by Ellen Hudson

Family outing

Enjoying a night of bowling Nov. 20 at Redstone Lanes are, from left, Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Brunick, wife Darcy, 4-year-old daughter Ashling, Darcy's mother Donna Veeder and 5-year-old daughter Genevieve.



Photo by Ellen Hudson

Grocery shopping

Staff Sgt. Joaquin Aguon shops at the Commissary with his wife Karlene, and their 5-year-old son, Trey. Waiting at home are Trey's twin brother Tye, 9-year-old Khalia and 13-year-old Jaylene.

Military childhoods shape civil servants

By AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON

Staff writer

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There was never a question of whether or not Robert “Glenn” Robertson Jr. would serve.

Growing up as a military child, Robertson’s father, a “diehard” Soldier would often proclaim to his son, “When you’re in the Army,” no ifs involved, but rather, one path laid for his son – as a Soldier.

“It was one of those things – ‘You will serve. There is no other option,’” Robertson said. “That’s what you were born and bred for.”



Photo by Ellen Hudson

John Crown describes his experience growing up as a military child. He now is employed for SMDC/ARSTRAT.

But something happened to the senior Robertson as his son was weighing the options with his college and ROTC prospects. Deployed in support of Desert Shield/Desert Storm, the elder Robertson found piles of paper stacking up on his desk, each piece representing a young Soldier’s death or casualty of war. When discussing college funding and ROTC options following his wartime experiences, something changed in the tried and true Soldier.

“He just looked at me very solemnly and strongly expressed we were going a different way,” Robertson said.

Instead, a door opened for Robertson that had never been there before, and he was able to pursue his love for computer engineering at Mississippi State University. Even though that different way may have led him away from the uniform, Robertson still serves his country, as an information technology specialist supporting Knowledge Management & SharePoint Technology for the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Forces Strategic Command.

“It was one of those things that I was pretty much born and bred that I was going to have some service level,” said Robertson, who has worked for the command for more than five years. “I still feel like I seek to serve a higher calling.”

All across Redstone Arsenal you will find military children, all grown up, continuing their parents’ legacy of serving their country, some in uniform, but many not, as civil servants. At SMDC, Robertson is just one



Photo by Ellen Hudson

Abby Brandon describes her experience growing up as the daughter of a Marine living overseas.

of many military children that come to work not to just make a dollar, but to support the Soldier.

“It means something just to be a military family, whether you’re serving active duty or serving as a spouse or dependent,” Robertson said. “I don’t know if you ever quit serving. We were born into it.”

One of John Crown’s first memories as a military child is driving across Tyndall Air Force Base in Panama City, Fla., to get to school and seeing a huge tent city suddenly erected out of nowhere. In his later years he discovered it was the 82nd Airborne setting up camp, preparing to jump into Cuba during the Cuban Missile Crisis. As a military child, his father having served in the Air Force, Crown attended 14 different schools throughout his educational career before he followed in his dad’s footsteps and joined the service himself, as a Marine in 1971. He later received an appointment to West Point and was commissioned into the Army. Even though he left active duty in 1987, Crown, deputy G-3, SMDC, has continued to respond to his higher calling, serving as a civil servant ever since.

“There is something satisfying about working for something besides just the dollar,” Crown said. “I’d like to think I’m still making a contribu-

tion.”

For Abby Brandon, her job as a program analyst at SMDC is an extension of her father’s service as a Marine. Growing up as a military child not only led her to her career, but also changed her worldview – quite literally – as she and her family traveled the world before she was even in the third-grade, living in places like Austria, the former Yugoslavia and Chile.

“It did shape a lot of my perspective, even though I was pretty young at the time,” Brandon said. “It gave me a big awareness that there’s a lot more out there than just the United States. Really, I didn’t know a lot about the United States, except for our hometown in Louisiana, because that was the norm, being overseas. We were surrounded by young Marines, treating us like little sisters. There was a big awareness that there were scary things out there as well, because we had to be very cautious. My parents would do drills with us in case someone would break into the house.”

The family was living in Belgrade when everything began to fall apart. Brandon remembers her parents waking her and her younger sister up in the middle of the night during the demonstrations, the sound of gunshots in the distance.

“At the time, that was pretty normal, but once we got to California in third-grade and I was on base and living in a more normal setting I started to realize that that was actually not the experience that everyone shared,” Brandon said.

While their roles at SMDC may not leave them with much in common, having grown up as military children unites Brandon, Crown and Robertson.

“It prepared me for life,” Robertson said. “You’re faced with challenges that you might not see when you’re younger. You’re educated in a different manner – trial by fire.”

Crown agreed.

“Moving so frequently tends to make people more adaptable,” Crown said. “You learn to deal with change, how to make friends in new places.”

Despite the fact that Robertson never wore the uniform as planned, his father is still proud of what he has accomplished, and in fact encouraged him to become a civil servant.

“He wants me to do as much as I can with my life,” Robertson said. “Our parents lay the path and groundwork. They always want you to achieve more than they’ve achieved.”

Spiritual faith seen strengthening family ties

Teachings of values, morals can grow with your children

By **KARI HAWKINS**

Assistant editor

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For many military and civilian families, building a strong family unit begins with building faith.

No matter the religion, providing children with beliefs and morals based on the teachings of God gives them the tools to overcome life's trials and tribulations while also showing them the importance of a loving, caring and understanding family unit.

"If you're biblically minded, raising your children in the faith is a commandment of God," Garrison Chaplain (Maj.) Paige Heard said. "For biblically minded parents, it's a duty to teach the commandments and the law of God."

Often, churches, synagogues and other faith-based organizations assist parents with the responsibility of faith teaching by providing small-group programs, such as Sunday school classes, confirmation classes and other types of religious training.

"Children of faith grow up knowing religious education is important," Heard said. "If you teach children the truths of God, when they become teenagers and young adults they won't depart from that, and they will know at their core that God loves them, God has a plan for them and God never leaves them. Knowing and believing in those things are important when they are making choices."

In times of war, faith often grows deeper for both Soldiers and their families.

"When you are facing the uncertainty of the future and the reality of danger, and it's more apparent of being in harm's way, you think more about what happens after life. The assurance of life after death gives families security. And when parents are secure in what they believe, the children can pick up on that," Heard said.

Faith also gives families a way to connect with each other, a commonality that binds them together and guides their lives.

"When I was a child, I had trust in God because my parents trusted in God," Heard said. "My parents gave me an example, and a sense that Christianity was very real and that God was worth following."

It's not uncommon for young adults, even if they grew up in a faith-based

home, to stray from the traditional forms of religious instruction. Yet, as their own lives mature to include marriage and children, religious instruction often takes on a new dimension of importance.

"Once you start having children, you have a sense of responsibility. You are in charge of this little person and you have to give them everything," Heard said. "Often, that includes returning to church or other organizations of faith. The principles and truths that parents received when they were young are now what they want to give back to their children."

Many organizations of faith will cater programs to young parents and children with a desire to provide faith-based experiences that strengthen the family and grow the beliefs of all family members. On Redstone, events such as the recent October Slam, combine fun activities in a loving, caring and nurturing environment that promotes faith in God for children of all ages.

"In Huntsville, there are plenty of churches and faith organizations that reach out to children and youth through lots of different programs," Heard said.

"When finding the right faith community for their family, I encourage people to find a place where their children are loved, where they feel they can give back and make a difference, where their family is being fed a faith that makes them strong. It should be a place where you can sense a feeling of belonging and a place where God is present."

While many families begin faith teaching for their children at a young age, the importance of such teachings grows as children grow into teenagers. Many faith organizations provide safe and nurturing environments where teenagers can feel comfortable talking about issues and challenges they face as they move out into the adult world.

"Even as Proverbs tells us to surround ourselves with wise people, young people should surround themselves with people who would make the same kind of faith-based choices that they would. It's good to be around people who believe the same way you believe," Heard said.

"As a person of faith, it is reaffirming to be with others who also believe in God, who believe that truth matters, who believe that there are absolutes, and who believe there is a right and a wrong based on what they believe in."

Faith gives children and adults a basis on which to make decisions involv-



Photo by Ellen Hudson

Gathering for a meal is one way to help grow the faith of family members and bind them closer together. Dining at the Redstone Arsenal Protestant congregation's Thanksgiving Fellowship Dinner on Nov. 18 are, from left, Julie Goodridge, Allie Shepard, John Shepard and Cason Shepard.

ing all aspects of their lives, and particularly in times when taking the easy way out may seem better than doing the right thing.

"A personal relationship with faith helps you make good decisions," Heard said. "If you put in good spiritually, if you read God's word and if you pray, then that's the kind of people your family is going to be. It's so important to teach children that God's word is absolute, and then later in life they will know what right is without having to make a decision."

A faith community can also be a tremendous support system in good and bad times. It is there to provide love and concern when a family member gets sick or passes away, when there are marriages and baby showers, when parents just need a little help in nurturing their children's spiritual lives.

For Christians, the Advent season is an ideal time of year to express their faith and to share in faith-based activities with other Christian families. Beginning with the first weekend in December, families can use Advent guides to share a devotion related to the birthday of Jesus Christ. During other times of the year, daily devotionals and Bible readings can bring families together as can regular gatherings around the dinner table, talks in the car going to and from after-school activities, and other times during the day when activities

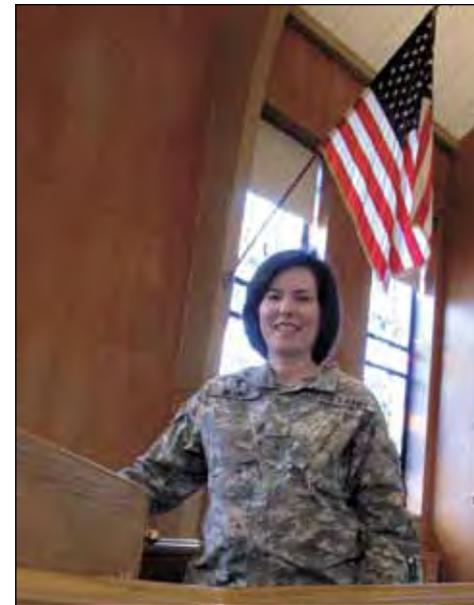


Photo by Kari Hawkins

Chaplain (Maj.) Paige Heard encourages military and civilian families to grow their faith together. She serves as the Garrison chaplain and leads the Protestant worship at Bicentennial Chapel.

bring parent and child together.

"Parents should find opportunities where they can talk to their children about what has gone well in their day, what good things or bad things have

Hearts Apart cares for those left at home

By AMY GUCKEEN TOLSON

Staff writer

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This Christmas, the lyrics of “I’ll Be Home for Christmas” will take on an entire new meaning for the Kraus family.

For the first time since his kids, Kohl, 12, and Abby, 9, were born, Col. Karl Kraus is gone, serving his country on a 365 day in-country tour to Iraq, with hopes of returning to Alabama for R&R this Christmas. But while Kraus may be away, his children, and wife Tiffany are not alone – Hearts Apart is there for them until their loved one returns home.

“The military clings to one another,” Tiffany said.

Hearts Apart, an outreach of Army Community Service, provides support for all military, Department of Defense civilians and family members geographically separated due to their commitments to the military. The services keep families connected to the military, even when their loved one that gives them that connection is away, providing them with support materials, such as deployment dolls and deployment videos, information about events in the community, a discount card through FMWR that includes \$1 bowling and free swimming, and any “materials that will try to ease that transition,” said Mary Breeden, Hearts Apart coordinator.

“We try to keep the families linked up with the military, and then if they have concerns we can answer them almost immediately,” Breeden said. “We do a lot of emailing back and forth.”

Much of the communication and support that goes on through Hearts Apart is through email, and a family doesn’t have to be stationed at the Arsenal to receive help. Some families may go through an entire deployment without ever setting foot in ACS, but receive the same amount of support, just in different ways, such as emails about community events they can attend for free or at a discounted cost.

“They’re not going to come sit in the center and get services, they’re going to have to have something that we can reach

out to them with,” Breeden said. “We don’t want people to think, ‘I can’t get help.’ In these days and times we can get you linked up.”

Fall kept the Kraus family calendar busy with the kids’ sports schedules, but now that Christmas is around the corner, Tiffany, Kohl and Abby will make time for some holiday events Breeden tipped them off to, including the tree lighting at The Summit this Thursday, The Nutcracker Dec. 6 and Operation Christmas Bear Dec. 8.

“As soon as I found out Karl was deploying, even before we told the kids, I came over to Army Community Service and said, ‘We’re not from Alabama, we have two kids, one in elementary school and one in middle school, and their dad is getting ready to deploy for the first time, and I know that y’all have so many things at your fingertips for resources, what do you have available?’” Tiffany said. “I just signed up for information and weekly, daily, I’ll get information on services that are being offered.”

Just as Breeden’s emails have kept the Kraus family in the loop when it comes to support available stateside, technology has been a great help for the family through Kraus’ deployment to Iraq, which he began in July. At least four times a week the family gets to FaceTime with him, Abby showing off her school projects and Kohl receiving homework help on tricky subjects such as adjacent angles. Father and son even take time out for the occasional Iowa Hawkeyes game.

“That raises his spirit,” Kohl said. “We put the iPad in front of the TV on a chair and we can watch the game together.”

Being able to see their kids connect with dad means a lot to Tiffany.

“FaceTime has made it a lot more bearable, it makes it appear he’s not as far away as he is,” Tiffany said.

Despite the many sacrifices they make, the Kraus family is proud to be a military family. Throughout the course of their marriage, Tiffany and Kraus have moved 10 times, and by the time Abby was 1 she had already lived in three states. For the Kraus family, it’s all part of the adventure.

“You get to go to new places,” Kohl said



Photo by Ellen Hudson

From left, Tiffany Kraus and children Kohl, 12, and Abby, 9, link up with events and support in the community through Army Community Service’s Hearts Apart program while their Soldier, Col. Karl Kraus, is deployed to Iraq.

of what he likes about being a military child. “If later in life your job requires you to move, you don’t really have a problem with that, it’s been that way all your entire life, you’re used to it, while other people aren’t, so you have a leg up on other people. You can make a bunch of friends and have connections worldwide. You have friends all over the world, and sometimes you might re-encounter them.”

For mom Tiffany, there is great honor in being part of a military family.

“There’s great honor in that, pride,” Tiffany said. “When I grew up, my dad wasn’t in the military so I didn’t really grow up around it. For me, it’s been this huge sense of community. It’s been wonderful. It’s given me the opportunity to travel and go places; I never really left West Virginia growing up. It’s always a new adventure.”

It is an adventure, their Soldier said, that

they could not embark on alone.

“We are truly grateful for all the support we’ve received from our family, our friends and the greater Redstone Arsenal/Madison county community,” Kraus wrote in an email. “Military families are taught to be self-sufficient. However, nobody and no family can do it on their own. We are strengthened every time people take the time to ask how we are doing, or to offer to provide assistance. It is quite humbling and comforting to know that there are so many people and organizations like the Hearts Apart program that seek to serve families of deployed servicemembers in our time of need.”

If you would like to receive the latest information on the Hearts Apart program, including local community events, call Breeden at 876-5397 or email mary.c.breeden.civ@mail.mil.

Faith

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happened, and what they can be thankful for,” Heard said. “Families should take time together to reflect on things that are happening, and these are good times when parents can impart some truth.

“A ride in the car to school together may be an opportunity that is a God-given thing for the parent to spend

time with their children. Sometimes it’s our children’s simple belief in God that can bring us to faith.”

And incorporating prayer into those special times continues to reinforce and grow the entire family’s faith, and their love for each other.

“God is about relationships,” Heard said. “He created the world in us to be in relationships with God and with others.”

While most Christians believe that being a regular member of a com-

munity of believers is important in growing their faith, often other things – sporting events, illness, vacations, deployments, etc. – can take them away from that family, at least temporarily. Faith organizations have tried to counter that by providing their own version of sports programs and by offering religious activities at different times throughout the week.

“All denominations have different traditions,” Heard said. “Some truly believe in a Sabbath. Some don’t view

the Sabbath as a time of rest. Some see it as a time to enjoy activities. I don’t think there is any one right answer. We don’t earn our way to heaven.”

What is right is to ensure that children learn about faith from their parents.

“Parents need to ask themselves ‘What values are we trying to give our children?’” Heard said. “Children pick up on what is important from their parents. And the most important thing to teach those children is that God loves them.”

Ten-Miler team members gather for reunion

Winning legacy started in 2007

By **SKIP VAUGHN**
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In 2007 Redstone Arsenal finally hit its stride in the annual Army Ten-Miler in Washington, D.C.

That was the year Team Redstone captured its first first-place trophy in the government division after years of finishing no better than second. Redstone won again the following year. And in 2009, Redstone added first place in the all comers division.

Team Redstone has won first place in both divisions every year since. Its sixth straight title in the government division and fourth straight in all comers came Oct. 21 at the 28th annual Army Ten-Miler near the Pentagon.

Members of this year's team and alumni from previous teams gathered Nov. 19 in front of the Garrison headquarters for a brief reunion and photo session.

"Again, I appreciate all your hard work and effort," team coach Harry Hobbs told his fellow runners.

He also recognized the support from the Association of the U.S. Army, the

Garrison, and Family and Morale Welfare and Recreation.

Redstone Two won the government division with a combined time of 3 hours and 50 minutes for its top four runners. Too Slow for APG was second with 3:55:34 and ATEC 2 placed third with 4:43:46 out of 30 teams.

Redstone One won the all comers division with 3:55:01, followed by Fort Lee AC Mil (3:57:23) and Operation Renewed Hope Foundation (4:09:27). Sixty teams competed in all comers.

Redstone Two runners included George Heeschen (56:05), Brad Schroeder (56:46), Tim Vinson (58:31), Erik DeBolt (58:39), Sgt. Maj. Corey Smallwood (1:19:32), Hobbs (1:22:16) and Col. John Hamilton (1:44:54).

Redstone One runners included Brandon York (50:44), Rob Youngren (58:27), Tim Pitt (1:02:02), Rob Whitaker (1:03:49), Randy McFarland (1:06:12), Brett Wilks (1:07:11), Alex Gornik (1:07:57) and assistant coach Skip Vaughn (1:48).

Retired Col. Tom Newman and retired Command Sgt. Maj. Rick Cooper, both members of past teams, also attended the afternoon reunion.

"Congratulations to the current team. Outstanding job," Newman, who retired in June 2009 and became a defense contractor, said. "Team's getting



Photo by Amanda Wilks

Some members of Redstone's team get together last year in Washington, D.C. Kneeling, from left, are Tim Pitt, Joseph Robenson, Sgt. Maj. Corey Smallwood, coach Harry Hobbs and Randy McFarland. Standing are assistant coach Skip Vaughn, Brandon York, Rob Youngren, George Heeschen, team captain Brad Schroeder, Brett Wilks and Erik DeBolt.

better every year, it looks like."

Hobbs acknowledged the alumni's support in building a winning legacy

which continues today. "I appreciate all you've done for our team," he said, "and what you continue to do."

Bama edges Georgia for conference title

By **SKIP VAUGHN**
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Skip's Picks were 468-165 for 74 percent after 12 weeks in the college football season. Here are my predictions for this week's games:

Florida State at Georgia Tech – **FSU**
Georgia vs. Alabama – **Bama**
Oklahoma at TCU – **Oklahoma**
Louisville at Rutgers – **Rutgers**
Kansas at West Virginia – **West Virginia**
Middle Tennessee at Arkansas State – **Ark. St.**
South Alabama at Hawaii – **Hawaii**
Cincinnati at Connecticut – **Cincy**
Boise State at Nevada – **Boise**
Texas at Kansas State – **K-State**
Oklahoma State at Baylor – **Okla. St.**
Pittsburgh at South Florida – **Pitt**

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Army sprint football champs have local connection



WEST POINT, N.Y. – Army's sprint football team has won this year's national championship. The football league exists on the East Coast where the players can weigh no more than 172 pounds. West Point's squad included Barret Crawford, a sophomore backup offensive lineman and special teams player from Huntsville.

His father, Bill Crawford, is an engineer at the Aviation Development Directorate of the Aviation and Missile Research Development and Engineering Center.

"He was the two-time captain of the Grissom (High School) Tigers and is a member of the class of 2015 at West Point," Bill Crawford said. "Ironically, he is also assigned to my old company F-2, which is a pretty rare occurrence."

Army sprint football recorded its 18th undefeated season in program history by beating rival Navy 21-18 on Nov. 2 in the annual Star Game in Annapolis, Md. Both teams entered the game with identical 6-0 marks as the contest decided the College Sprint Football League champion. Despite being held scoreless in the second half, the Black Knights clung to the lead they built in the first half to capture their 32nd CSFL title.



Courtesy photo

Barret Crawford is a sophomore backup offensive lineman and special teams player from Huntsville on the U.S. Military Academy's team which won the College Sprint Football League title.



Photo by Ellen Hudson

Taking aim

Master Sgt. Matt Calhoun helps his 12-year-old son, Isaiah, during Outdoor Recreation's annual Turkey Shoot on Nov. 17 at the Black Powder Range.

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>.

UAH hockey game

The Redstone-Huntsville Chapter of the Association of the U.S. Army is sponsoring the UAH vs. USA National Team hockey game Saturday at 7 p.m. at the Von Braun Center.

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 Dec. 7, 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 Dec. 6.

Reserve officers association

Reserve Officers Association, Chapter 20, will hold a quarterly business meeting Dec. 7 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.

Special Forces group

The North Alabama Chapter (Chapter 92) of the Special Forces Association will meet at 11 a.m. Dec. 8 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.

Parkinson's support group

The Parkinson's Support Group will meet Dec. 4 from 4-6 p.m. at the Hudson Alpha Conference Center. Dr. Ray Watts, dean of the Medical School at UAB, and three other researchers will talk about their latest findings. The public is invited. For more information, call 859-6523.

Government accountants

The Northern Alabama Chapter of Government Accountants will hold its monthly meeting at 11:30 a.m. Thursday at the Lone Star Steakhouse, 5901 University Drive (near Madison Square Mall). The guest speaker is Dr. Gregory Stargell, president and founder of the Von Braun Speakers Group. Stargell, who works in Missile Defense Agency's Models and Simulation Division, give a presentation on leadership. For reservations and more information, call Heather Smith 313-9285 or email heather.smith.ctr@mda.mil.

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

Rocket Announcements

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.

Gold Bar presentations

The Huntsville Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America announces its annual Gold Bar presentations at a luncheon today at 11 at The Summit. ROTC cadets being commissioned as second lieutenants will receive symbolic gold bars. The cadets are from UAH and Alabama A&M University.

Field artillery association

The North Alabama-Redstone Arsenal Chapter of the U.S. Field Artillery Association will hold a reorganizational meeting Dec. 7 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 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 Jennifer Anderson 513-8290 or email rsvp.dir@seniorview.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 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.

Rocket Announcements

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 Yopliat 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.

Gift-wrapping benefit

Christmas Gift Wrapping at the Redstone Exchange is a great way to raise funds for your school or organization. If you're interested, call retired Command Sgt. Maj. Mike McSwain, of the Sergeants Major Association, 313-1598.

AMCOM business opportunities

The Aviation and Missile Command, in partnership with Team Redstone, will hold the 2012 Advance Planning Briefings for Industry on Dec. 10-11 at Redstone Arsenal.

This year's theme is "Partnering for Efficient Warfighter Capabilities." Senior leaders will be sharing organizational long-range technology and capability development objectives during the event. Registration is open until Dec. 3. Register at <https://conference.redstone.army.mil/>. For information call 842-9967 or email usarmy.redstone.amcom.mbx.g3-apbi@mail.mil.

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.

Nashville bus trip

Pack your bag and travel to Nashville with the Pilot Club of Florence on Dec. 4-6. See a little bit of something new and a whole lot of something wonderful. Itinerary includes: Gen. Jackson Christmas Lunch, show and cruise; tour and dinner at Belmont Mansion; Opry Mills shopping; tour of Schermerhorn Symphony Center in downtown Nashville; Rockettes Christmas show; Christmas Decorations at Opryland; Uptown Art Uncorked; lunch at Loveless Cafe; and a chance to explore Downtown Franklin's Victorian Christmas. For more information, call Judy Grady 810-8899 or Allene Belew 766-4579.

Merit award applications

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

Arts and crafts sale

The Huntsville/Madison County Senior Center's annual art and craft sale, "Crafts Around the Christmas Tree," will be held at the Senior Center on Thursday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Friday from 9-2. The sale, in

the Twickenham Ballroom, will feature entertainment and demonstrations of heritage arts such as quilting, caning and weaving. There will also be holiday desserts for sale, many homemade. For more information, call Doris East 880-7084 or Pam Donald 513-8294.

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 service members, 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 \$62.50 per person and reserved tables for eight can be purchased for \$500 through Dec. 1. After that, ticket prices will go up to \$75 and \$600 for a table. 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 Dec. 6 from 9-11 a.m. at Army Community Service, building 3338 on Redeye Road. Topics will include how to search for vacancies on USA-JOBS, 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 Dec. 4-15 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 during the week of Dec. 10-14. 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 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 Dec. 8 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.