

Soundoff!

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FTMEADE.ARMY.MIL

Full house

Freedom Inn Thanksgiving
draws record crowd **PG 10**



PHOTO BY NATE PESCE

(Clockwise from left:) Pfc. Justin Stannard, Pvt. Dylan Sheffer, Pvt. Michael Chol and Pvt. Robert Thompson, all of Army Student Detachment, 551st Signal Battalion, celebrate Thanksgiving at Freedom Inn. The feast was attended by 567 service members, retirees, civilian employees, family members and guests.

CROSSING THE BRIDGE

Five Cub Scouts
become Boy Scouts

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday, 7-10 a.m.: Coffee with a Cop, Fort Meade Dunkin' Donuts
Saturday, noon-4 p.m.: ESC Holiday Party, Pershing Hill Elementary
Dec. 7, 7 p.m.: U.S. Army Field Band Holiday Concert, Meade High
Dec. 9, 5-6:30 p.m.: Tree Lighting Ceremony, Main Post Chapel

GIVING BACK

Deadline to donate
to CFC draws near

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Soundoff!

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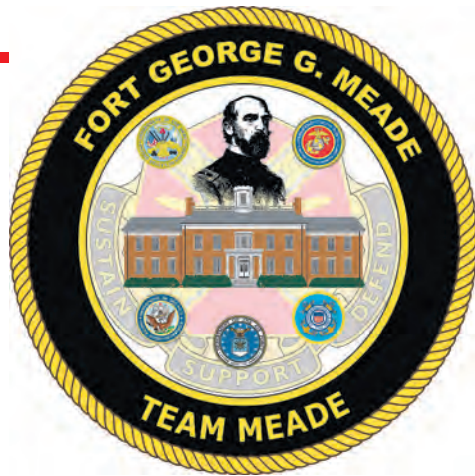
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COMMANDER'S COLUMN - GUEST

What vets need to know about VA home loans

Each year on Veterans Day, we show appreciation to those who have served with tributes, patriotic ceremonies and special offers.

But appreciation is not limited to just one day in November for service members seeking home ownership or veterans in need of an affordable home loan.

About 72 years ago, Congress created the VA Home Loan Guarantee program as part of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944. The program was meant to reduce "to the greatest extent possible" the sociological and economic problems of millions of post-war men and women who had served in the U.S. Armed Forces.

Today, the home loan program, regulated by the Department of Veterans Affairs, provides low-cost loans with no down payment to qualified applicants.

However, being a real estate agent, I see that the VA home loan is one of the most underutilized benefits for serving in the U.S. Armed Forces, whether one is on active duty or a veteran.

So let's touch on just some of the benefits associated with the VA loan.

Who qualifies?

Veterans, active-duty service members, members of the National Guard or Reserve, and a military spouse all may be eligible to use the VA home loan benefit to purchase an owner-occupied home.

The length of service or service commitment, duty status and character of service all determine eligibility.

A veteran with an honorable discharge or an active-duty service member meets minimum requirements after 90 days of active service during a time of war or 181 consecutive days during peacetime.

A member of the National Guard or Reserve with a minimum of six years of peacetime service or 90 days of active service is also generally eligible for this benefit.

Unmarried surviving spouses of service members, who died in the line of duty or as the result of a service-related disability, also may be eligible.

A VA-approved lender can help you determine if you are eligible by obtaining



By Lynn Nichols

CHAIRPERSON,
MILITARY
AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE,
WEST ANNE
ARUNDEL
COUNTY
CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE

the required Certificate of Eligibility — typically in a matter of seconds.

A priority for the VA is to protect qualifying home buyers from purchasing a home they cannot afford.

So all prospective home buyers interested in a VA loan must also meet basic credit and income requirements.

Since a portion of the VA home loan is guaranteed by the US government and because this loan program is a benefit, the qualification standards can be more lenient than some other loan programs.

For example, some loan programs require buyers to wait seven years after a bankruptcy to

obtain financing. But a VA loan requires a minimum of two years.

What are the benefits?

The VA home loan benefit is one of the few programs available that allow for 100 percent financing — no down-payment is required. Mortgage insurance also is not required.

In addition, VA rules regulate the amount of fees a buyer can be charged, making this a lower-cost loan program. It allows for the seller to pay for closing costs and up to an additional 4 percent in seller concessions.

The VA home loan benefit can be reused under certain circumstances.

If a prospective buyer has already used the VA loan benefit in the past, there are circumstances that allow for its benefits to be used again, even if there was a prior short sale or foreclosure.

Also, if someone has a disability as a result of military service, there is no funding fee charged on the loan to that individual.

Generous loan amounts are also available to qualified buyers.

Typically, you can borrow up to \$417,000 with your VA loan. However, there are counties where you can finance higher amounts.

For example, Anne Arundel, Howard, Baltimore and Harford counties allow for up to \$517,500 for a one-unit property. Prince George's County, however, allows \$625,000 for a one-unit property.

See a VA home loan specialist.

For more information, call the Housing Services Office at 301-677-7748 or visit va.gov.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Army finishes 5-year environmental review

The U.S. Army has completed the first five-year review of environmental remedies undertaken at Installation Restoration Program and Military Munitions Response Program sites on Fort Meade.

The focus of this National Priorities List five-year review was a former mortar range munitions response area (FGGM-003-R-01 and FGGM-003-R-02) and a former pesticide shop (FGGM-13).

There is a low probability that the former mortar-range munitions response area may contain munitions and explosives of concern and/or material potentially presenting an explosive hazard.

The remedy implemented consisted of land-use controls with long-term management.

The former pesticide shop contained pesticides in soil, and volatile organic compounds and pesticides in groundwater. The remedy implemented consisted of soil excavation with off-site disposal, enhanced reductive dechlorination with long-term monitoring of groundwater, and land-use controls.

The five-year review was conducted to determine whether the remedies remain protective of human health and the environment, and function as intended based on the decision documents.

The five-year review also assessed factors to determine if the remedies will continue to be protective in the future.

The review determined that the former mortar-range munitions response area remedy is protective of human health and

the environment because:

- ◆ Land-use controls identified in the record of decision were implemented and are functioning as designed.

- ◆ Land uses are consistent with objectives identified in the record of decision.

The five-year review also determined that the former pesticide shop remedy is protective of human health and the environment because:

- ◆ The remedy was properly implemented and is functioning as designed.

- ◆ Land uses are consistent with land-use control objectives identified in the record of decision.

The next five-year review for these sites will be conducted by September 2021.

If you have any concerns about these sites, call the Fort Meade Public Affairs Office at 301-677-1361.

You also may use the online inquiry form at ftmeade.army.mil. Click Press Center and Contact Us.

A copy of the final report is available at the following locations:

- Fort Meade Directorate of Public Works – Environmental Division, Building 2460, 85th Medical Battalion Ave., Fort Meade, MD 20755-7068

- Odenton Regional Library, 1325 Annapolis Road, Odenton, MD 21113,

Hours are Monday-Thursday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Friday and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

For more information, call the library at 410-222-6266.

Get a jump on taxes

By JANE M. WINAND

Legal Assistance Attorney

As 2016 comes to a close, thoughts of the holidays may be dancing in our heads. Nonetheless, it is wise to also begin thinking about tax season.

During block leave, while purchasing and wrapping presents and enjoying holiday meals, it is important for service members, retirees and their family members to plan ahead for the upcoming tax season.

Consider the following:

◆ Power of attorney

The reality of military life is the uncertainty that the future holds and the possibility that a marital couple may be geographically separated when tax filing season arrives.

Deployments and lengthy TDY may come with little notice. A PCS move may result in the service member reporting to the new duty station while the spouse and children remain behind to arrange for household goods shipment.

It is imperative for the service member and spouse to have powers of attorney authorizing each other to file federal and state income tax returns. Such powers of attorney may be drafted and signed in the Legal Assistance Division of the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate.

◆ Deployed service members and filing deadline extensions

The IRS and most state Departments of Revenue extend the deadline to file taxes for service members deployed in a combat zone.

If you know you will be deployed or are currently deployed during tax season, IRS Publication 3 “*Armed Forces Tax Guide*” will clarify whether your deployment zone

qualifies as a combat zone for a deadline extension.

Those who are deployed or about to be deployed during tax season should ask their spouse or close family member to collect and organize pertinent papers and forms during the deployment. Thus, when the service member returns home, the documents are available to meet the extended tax filing deadline.

◆ IRS Form W2 documents income received from an employer as well as federal and state income tax withheld and other payments.

Employers typically send out W2's in mid-January and early February. You should not wait for your W-2 before compiling necessary tax information.

Take a day out of the holiday season to gather necessary receipts and materials to support credits and exemptions. Write down questions you may have for your tax preparer. Be proactive and research changes to tax laws that may affect you and your family.

Keep these materials in a folder for the upcoming tax season.

Tax season can be stressful but does not have to be. Take a few moments to begin your tax preparations and lighten your preparation load when tax season rolls around in January.

The Fort Meade Joint Installation Tax Center will open Jan. 30 at 4217 Morrison St. on the first floor in the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate.

For more information about tax preparation before the opening of the tax center, call the Legal Assistance Division at 301-677-9504 or 301-677-9536.

After Jan. 30, call the tax center at 301-677-9366 to speak with a tax assistant.

Traffic signal change in works

By DIRECTORATE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

Within the next 30 days, the installation's Directorate of Public Works will change the light cycles of the traffic lights at night to a flashing red cycle.

Work is expected to be completed before Dec. 22.

The traffic lights will cycle to four-way red flashing 7 p.m. to 5 a.m. daily.

The light timing change will not impact the routine morning or evening rush hour traffic.

The Installation Traffic Safety Council

recommended the change after receiving numerous suggestions and complaints from the Fort Meade community. The ITSC hopes the new light cycles will reduce delays and assist smoother traffic flow for motorists.

Officials at the Directorate of Emergency Services remind everyone that when the lights change to four-way flashing, drivers must make a complete stop at the stop line before the intersection and only proceed through the intersection when it is safe to do so.

Maryland Transportation Articles dictate that the first vehicle stopped at such an intersection has the right of way.



Making the grade

Three higher-education institutions serve high school grads, Fort Meade community

STORY AND PHOTO BY LISA R. RHODES

Staff Writer

For more than 20 years, representatives from three institutions of higher learning have worked at Fort Meade's Army Education Center to help military personnel, family members and other members of the Fort Meade community obtain an education and career training beyond high school.

Graduates of Meade High School who are military dependents and want to continue their education can consider the Army Education Center as an option.

The current representatives at Fort Meade are Vickie Fromm, coordinator of college services for Anne Arundel Community College; Farrah Sarvandani, assistant director of stateside military operations for the University of Maryland University College; Sandra Farnham, military education coordinator at UMUC; and Linda Zedan, program administrator at Central Michigan University.

The representatives help active-duty service members, their dependents, Reservists, National Guardsmen, veterans, retirees and DoD civilians with college admissions, registration, tuition assistance and course selection.

John Anderson, director of the Army Education Center, said all three educational institutions are regionally accredited and meet the highest standards for post-secondary education.

"This is an effective program," Anderson said. "I have had Soldiers here who have finished their associate degree in the two or three years they've been on active duty."

All three institutions have been rated as "military-friendly schools" by Victory Media, a veteran-owned company based in Pittsburgh that rates colleges, universities, high schools and companies across the country according to their ability to provide quality services to the military community.

UMUC ranked seventh in the *Military Times* 2017 Best for Vets survey. The university has ranked in the top 10 for the past three years.

In addition to meeting personally with the representatives, eligible active-duty Soldiers, Army Reservists and Guardsmen can enroll in classes through GoArmyEd, a portal that also can be used to request tuition assistance.

The institutions offer traditional and online classes, as well as a military discount rate for in-state tuition.

AACC

"There is nothing more important than the needs of the student," Fromm said.

A former petty officer 3rd class, Fromm was assigned to Fort Meade from 1977 to 1981 with the former Naval Security Group and lived on post.

Anne Arundel Community College "is very knowledgeable and respectful

of the military," Fromm said.

The community college offers a wide range of academic programs for the associate degree and certificates.

The most popular degree programs for Fort Meade students are transfer studies, cybersecurity and computer information systems.

The transfer studies degree allows students to choose an area of interest or a concentration while achieving their general education requirements. Students can obtain a well-rounded associate degree to pursue a career goal or transfer to a four-year-college, according to the AACC website.

Fromm said student activity at the community college is cyclical. Eight weeks before the start of a semester, the Fort Meade office can help between 120 to 150 students per month.

The college representatives, however, "complement each other" and don't compete for students, she said.

"Everyone seeks satisfaction in life and achieving an educational goal is one of the most rewarding experiences to enjoy"

John Anderson, director, Army Education Center



From left: Fort Meade's college representatives — Vickie Fromm, of Anne Arundel Community College; Linda Zedan, of Central Michigan University; Farrah Sarvandani, of the University of Maryland University College; and Sandra Farnham, also of UMUC — help members of the Fort Meade community obtain college degrees.

Prospective students can complete their associate degree at AACC and continue to a bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree at UMUC or Central Michigan University.

UMUC

Sarvandani agreed.

"Our goal is to help [students] reach their academic goals and guide them to a degree," she said.

In addition to working at Fort Meade, Sarvandani oversees military education representatives at Aberdeen Proving Ground and the National Security Agency.

The UMUC university system enrolls about 84,000 students worldwide each year. UMUC offers online classes and traditional classes at military installations across Europe, Asia and the Middle East.

Sarvandani said UMUC has sent more than one faculty member to forward bases in Iraq to teach classes to service members.

Farnham said the highest student enrollment for Fort Meade students is in cybersecurity and business management.

"We are committed to serving our military students no matter when or where," she said.

UMUC assists about 180 prospective and current students a month at Fort Meade.

CMU

Zedan comes from a military family. Her father served in the Air Force and her husband served in the Navy.

As a military spouse, Zedan earned her bachelor's degree from UMUC when her husband was stationed at a Naval component in Spain in the early 1980s.

The CMU Fort Meade center offers a Master of Science in administration degree with concentrations in public administration and general administration.

"We recognize that service members and their families deal with unique situations that may have an impact on their education plans," Zedan said. "For example, they have TDY or PCS orders, work unusual hours, or do double duty while their spouse is away and it can take a longer time to finish their degree. We try to help them achieve their education goals by offering condensed academic terms with a selection of formats to choose from to include online, traditional and hybrid courses."

About 60 Fort Meade students are currently enrolled in degree programs at Central Michigan University.

Anderson said a higher education is a viable and important option for people affiliated with the military.

"I am always very proud of service members, family members and other members of the military community who complete their degree despite very challenging military and personal schedules," he said. "Everyone seeks satisfaction in life and achieving an educational goal is one of the most rewarding experiences to enjoy."

To learn more about the Army Education Center, call 301-677-6421.

For more information on Fort Meade school events, go to Page 6.



Anne Arundel County Public Schools

Upcoming Events

- Dec 3** First Annual Vendor Craft Flea Fair: 8 a.m. to noon
Meade High School, Admission: 25 cents
- Dec 5** SAT Testing – Meade High School
Visit MeadeSeniorHigh.org for more information
- Dec 6** Winter Wonderland Elementary Student Art Exhibit
Artist Reception: 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Westfield Annapolis Mall
- Dec 7** Army Field Band Jazz Ambassadors: 7 p.m.
Meade High School Auditorium
Fort Meade, MD
- Dec 10** ACT Testing – Meade High School
Visit MeadeSeniorHigh.org for more information
- Dec 13** Be a Star Anti-Bullying Rally: 10:15 – 11:15 a.m.
MacArthur Middle School
- Dec 16** Winter Dance Concert: 4 – 7 p.m.
Meade High School, Tickets: \$6.25
Purchase at www.tututix.com/MeadeHighSchool

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For more information, visit: www.aacps.org

COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN

'Be a Hero' to someone in need

BY FORT MEADE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

The Combined Federal Campaign is well underway.

Service members and federal civilian employees have the opportunity to "Be a Hero" — this year's theme — by donating to the charities of their choice through payroll deduction, cash or check through Dec. 15.

Last year, Fort Meade's CFC raised \$292,161 for local, national and international charities. This year's goal is \$300,000.

Capt. Jerry Tseng, the Fort Meade CFC chairperson, is contacting all 118 units and organizations on Fort Meade to ensure all personnel are aware of the campaign and have the opportunity to participate.

The CFC is a great way to "Be a Hero" to someone in need. Pledging is quick and easy using the myPay system.

Donors have the opportunity to give to one or more of the nearly 20,000 charities approved in this year's campaign.

As in previous years, donors can give to national or international charities, along with local charities across the country. You may direct your pledge to the charity of your choice locally, in your hometown or other location in support of family, friends or other efforts that are meaningful to you.

"I believe that many people don't give to a charity through CFC simply because they are not asked," said Samson Robinson, Chesapeake Bay Area CFC project lead.

"There is a 'soft ask,' which is speaking to a group of people at once, and the 'hard ask,' which is asking an individual, one on one and face to face, to give to CFC."

Robinson encourages the Team Meade community to participate.

"The CFC belongs to you — the federal employee," he said. "It doesn't belong to the federal government or to the charitable organizations that benefit from it. You control where your gift will go."

"CFC provides employees with an opportunity to make a difference in the



lives of those in need to help sustain community, state, national and international health, educational, environmental and human services."

For 55 years, the CFC has offered:

◆ Choice

You get to direct your pledge to the organizations that are closest to your interests. This year, more than 20,000 are listed through the online database.

◆ Convenience

Workplace giving has advantages. Through payroll deduction, you can give more while only having a small amount deducted from each paycheck. Cash and checks are also accepted.

Payroll deduction and credit card donations are available through online giving.

◆ Confidence

Each charity is screened. Requirements of each charity include a Health and Human Service impact statement, IRS determination letter, Tax Form 990, and certified audits where appropriate.

◆ Charity endorsement

Charities receive larger donations through payroll deduction.

"My motto is 'Each one, reach one.' There's no telling how far our giving will go and how powerful our reaching can be," Robinson said.

To pledge, visit the campaign website at cbacfc.org. Search for the charities of your choice.

Note the five-digit codes for those charities, then log on to myPay to enter the per-pay deduction amount, and the amount designated for each charity you have selected.

For more information, contact your unit or organizational representative, or email Capt. Jerry Tseng at jerryj.tseng@mail.mil.

The United States Army Field Band

Ambassadors

SOUND THE BELLS!

A HOLIDAY CELEBRATION 2016

Wednesday
DECEMBER 7 – 7PM

Meade High School Auditorium
Ft. Meade, Maryland

ONLINE TICKETING
at
ArmyFieldBand.com

for more information
ARMYFIELDBAND.COM

Cubs cross bridge to become Boy Scouts

BY MADDIE ECKER
Staff Writer

Waiting for their name to be called, three young boys stood eagerly at the edge of a short wooden bridge they had built earlier.

One by one they finally crossed the bridge that signaled their passage from Cub Scout to Boy Scout.

The boys were participating in the Arrow of Light and Bridging ceremony, a traditional rite of passage for Cub Scouts moving to the next level.

Fort Meade's Boy Scout Troops 377 and 119 conducted the ceremony Monday night at Argonne Hills Chapel Center.

At the start of the program, Cub Scouts from Pack 377 posted the colors and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance, Scout law and Scout oath. Cubmaster Zach Friend served as emcee.

Nine Scouts were awarded their Bobcat badge, the first badge a Cub Scout earns as entry point to the Scouting journey. One Scout received his Tiger badge, the next level after Bobcat.

Scoutmaster Melissa Weeks read the "Legend of the Arrow of the Light," which details the story of Akela, a member of a Native American tribe who wished to be a warrior.

The tribe's chieftain announced that young members of the tribe would only become warriors after meeting the challenges of the arrow of light.

Friend called five Cub Scouts to the stage and presented them with handmade Arrow of Light plaques, adorned with an arrow. Parents were presented with a pin to thank them for supporting their child on their journey.

John Weeks, John Groefsema and Tim Michel Jr. held their plaques close as they waited to cross the bridge.

Fellow Webelos Tanner Nishikawa and Dylan Steiner were unable to attend the ceremony.

Standing on the other side of the bridge to welcome the new Boy Scouts were Weeks' sons Peter and Steven from Troop 119, and Xavier Wade and Luke Lemley from Troop 377. They each read a portion from the "Four Winds" crossover ceremony script.

As each Scout was called to cross the bridge, their parents removed their Cub Scout neckerchief. When they reached the other side, the three boys were presented with a Boy Scout shirt from Pack 119 and a neckerchief and slide from Pack 377.

Scoutmaster Eddie Smith of Troop 377 welcomed the five new Scouts and their parents. He held up a worn copy of the Boy



John Weeks, 10, crosses the bridge to become a Boy Scout.

Scout handbook and gave them advice.

"Use the Scout book and listen to the boys right behind you," he said.

To become a Boy Scout, Cub Scouts must be 10 years old and achieve a certain standard for a number of different wilderness and first aid skills. They include cooking healthy meals outdoors, pitching their own tent, and keeping themselves and their environment clean.

Volunteer leaders Melissa Weeks and Tim Michel were each presented with handmade hiking sticks — that were burned, stained and knotted by parent volunteers — as they move to the next Scouting level with their children. The third leader, Kenji Nishikawa, was unable to attend.

Melissa Weeks then called all the Scouts to the stage to participate in an interactive song, "Hello, My Name is Joe."

After the 45-minute ceremony, attendees celebrated with cupcakes topped with red, white or blue icing.

For John Groefsema, the bridging ceremony was important because he became a Boy Scout with the support of his family.

The 10-year-old, who was a Cub Scout for three years, enjoys participating in camping and archery with the rest of his pack.

But he has already set his sights on joining the 4 percent of Scouts that make it to the top.

"I want to be an Eagle Scout," said John, a fifth-grader at Pershing Hill Elementary School. "Well, I want to try to be one."

Weeks, wife of Air Force Tech Sgt. Matthew Weeks, lives on post and home-schools her five children.

"I was reluctant at first [to volunteer],"



PHOTOS BY PHIL GROUT

Scouts John Weeks, in front of his mother Melissa; John Groefsema, with his parents John Groefsema and Sarah; and Tim Michel Jr. and his father Tim Michel Sr. hold Arrow of Light plaques at the bridging ceremony Monday night.



Wolf Scouts Gabriel Thomas, Michael Holler and Ryan Maclean participate in the ceremony at Argonne Hills.

she said, "I thought my husband would do the Scout thing, but being a Scoutmaster has taught me leadership skills I didn't realize I had."

Weeks strives to teach her Scouts optimism, service, compassion, integrity, and how to earn respect.

"I believe that the Boy Scouts [of America] is one of the last organizations to help pass on character-building to the new generation," she said. "It teaches independence and participation in the community."

As a Scoutmaster, Weeks plans the pack's camping, hiking and fishing trips throughout the year. The pack has visited Antietam National Battlefield, Patapsco State Park and the Underground Railroad Trail.

"I want to get them off post and get them to see Maryland," she said. "I want to get families outdoors."

Scouts are responsible for running their weekly den meetings, a responsibility Weeks expects them to do with the same efficiency as adults.

"That's making the world a better place," she said.

Sarah Groefsema, secretary of Pack 377 and mother of John, enjoys the family-oriented projects and trips that the organization offers.

"This is a good way for children to socialize," she said. "They learn a lot of things that they don't realize they're learning like public speaking when they sell popcorn."

Scoutmaster Eddie Smith, a plans analyst at Cyber Command and a retired Air Force senior master sergeant, reached the Life level when he was a Boy Scout. Scouting, he said, instills important values.

"They get life lessons, plain and simple," he said.

For him, there is one overarching value of Scouting: helping others at all times.

"If you can do that, you'll be golden," Smith said.

Smith's Fort Meade troop is now 70 years old, a year older than the Air Force.

"We're always looking for new members," he said. "[This troop] is not going away on our watch."

Editor's note: For more information, contact Scoutmaster Eddie Smith at 443-542-0545 or eksmith91@hotmail.com.



Howard Mountain, project manager and chef at the Freedom Inn, and his wife, LaTonya, talk with CW4 Luis Aviles of 406th Army Field Support Brigade, Fort Bragg, N.C.

Full house

Crowds flock to Freedom Inn for Thanksgiving

BY RONA S. HIRSCH
Assistant Editor
PHOTOS BY NATE PESCE

As hundreds of hungry patrons entered the Freedom Inn Dining Facility on Thanksgiving Day, they were greeted by a changing line of officers and non-commissioned officers serving turkey, ham, gravy and all the fixings.

Stunned by the number of high-ranking officers scooping mashed potatoes, green beans, and baked mac and cheese, two young Soldiers returned to the food line with their smartphones to take their picture.

"I think it's just really cool having officers serving us," said Pfc. Justin Stannard of Army Student Detachment, 551st Signal Battalion. "They are willing to come here and serve us because we're not home. That lifts our spirits."

Wearing dress uniforms and tall chef hats, the senior leaders participated in the long-standing Army tradition of serving junior-ranked service members on Thanksgiving.

"This allows us to give thanks to the Soldiers and the families," said Maj. Gen. Stephen Fogarty, chief of staff at U.S. Cyber Command, "This is my first time at Fort Meade, but I do this almost every year."

The tradition, however, is not limited to the Army. Fogarty served Thanksgiving fare alongside Coast Guard Rear Adm. Kevin Lunday and Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Ryan

Heritage, both of Cyber Command.

"The best place to be is with the troops on Thanksgiving," Heritage said.

This year, a record-breaking 567 service members, military retirees, DoD civilians, family members and guests streamed through the Freedom Inn for a traditional Thanksgiving meal from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The facility featured a festive fall decor with skirted buffet tables.

"It's thrilling," said Melba Taylor, contract manager at the Freedom Inn. "We watched the place transform. It's a good feeling. It's one of the best things we do all year."

Unlike typical meals at the Freedom Inn, Thanksgiving patrons are permitted to order any combination of entrees and return for seconds — all for \$9.05.

The Thanksgiving feast included lobster and shrimp bisque, shrimp cocktail, roasted turkey, grilled T-bone steak, honey-glazed ham, garlic mashed potatoes, candied yams, vegetables, sparkling cider and egg nog.

Dessert ranged from bread pudding and red velvet cake to a variety of cupcakes and pies.

"We've been working since Sunday night, planning since August," said Howard Mountain, project manager and chef for Son's Quality Food for the Freedom Inn. "Here, they allow us to be a little more creative on Thanksgiving and do things most dining facilities can't do."

As in past years, the showstopper was three



Thanksgiving cupcakes take center stage at the dessert table that included red velvet cake and a variety of pies.



Capt. Tanya Bolden, a Kimbrough nurse, helps Muriel Galloway, 85, to her seat.

suckling pigs, each weighing 45 pounds and served whole with cherry tomatoes in their eyes. Mountain himself prepared and slow-cooked each of the pigs with a combination of steam and dry heat to keep them moist.

The pork went quickly. "They demolished it!" said Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Rodwell L. Forbes, who carved pork slices beside his wife, Patricia. "They even wanted the skin."

After serving the first shift, Garrison Commander Col. Tom Rickard dined with his wife, Lisa, and their 11-year-old daughter Sarah.

He didn't hesitate when asked what foods he enjoyed. "Oh, my gosh — everything! It was all very good," Rickard said. "They did an awesome job. The chefs are very talented."

This wasn't Rickard's first time serving Soldiers on Thanksgiving. During his deployment last year, he served troops at a dining facility in Kabul.

"But this is far better, and it's wonderful to be home with my family," he said.

Taking his place in line, Col. Daniel G. Bonnichsen, commander of Fort Meade Medical Activity and Kimbrough Ambulatory Care



Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Rodwell L. Forbes and his wife, Patricia, carve pork for Pfc. Joshua Belser during the Thanksgiving feast at the Freedom Inn. Three suckling pigs, each weighing 45 pounds, were served whole with cherry tomatoes in their eyes.

Center, served turkey, ham and steak.

"The steaks are really popular," he said. "The Soldiers want everything; they fill up the entire plate. They've already been back for seconds."

But, he said, manning the food line is not a chore. "It's a simple way for us to give back to Soldiers and the military family members," Bonnichsen said. "We enjoy it, it's fun. It's a way to get shoulder to shoulder and give these guys a break — those who serve Soldiers and families the meals every day."

Sitting over a plate of vegetables and steak, retired Sgt. 1st Class Robert Drake took a spoonful of corn as he contemplated dessert.

"I'm working on the vegetables first and they're almost gone," said Drake, 91. "I was going to get dessert. I like dessert, but I don't think I can eat anymore."

Every year, the Glen Burnie resident celebrates Thanksgiving at the Freedom Inn. A combat veteran who served in Germany in the waning months of World War II, Drake worked as a civilian in the Army Readiness Program on Fort Meade from 1960-1983.

"I usually come here on Thanksgiving because I'm an old Soldier," he said. "The food is always good, and I like the way they dress up when they serve. They're all very polite."



Civilians and service members pass turkey sandwiches on a line that reaches the front door. The festive meal featured turkey, ham, steak, shrimp cocktail and sides.

Drake chatted with another Soldier eating alone at his table, Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Smith of Fort Carson, Colo., who is taking a course at the Defense Information School.

"I was texting my wife and kids all morning and watched the Macy's parade," he said.

Though away from home, Smith, too, enjoyed the lavish meal.

"It was beautiful, and I got a good picture of the pig — pretty crazy looking," he said. "It was really good. I tasted all the meats. I'm done."

For Pfc. Anthony Zendejas, of the DINFOS Student Detachment, the good food was a bittersweet reminder of home.

"I'm feeling melancholy," said Zendejas, whose family resides in Burbank, Calif. "I'm



Retired Sgt. 1st Class Robert Drake, 91, a World War II veteran and former civilian employee at Fort Meade, celebrates Thanksgiving every year at the Freedom Inn.



(From right:) Col. Daniel Bonnichsen, commander of Army Medical Activity and Kimbrough, Garrison Commander Col. Tom Rickard and Maj. Chris Besser, deputy commanding officer of Kimbrough, greet guests while serving.

happy to be here. At the same time, I wish I could be with family. I just miss my mom. The food here brings back good memories."

Fellow student Pvt. Edward Randolph of Fontana, Calif., said the camaraderie helped soothe the pain of being so far from home.

"I told them this morning it's hard being away from family," he said. "But this is our first year together and we're creating a new family."

For many retirees, Thanksgiving on Fort Meade is an annual tradition shared with family. Retired Master Sgt. Jose Rodriguez of Odenton and his wife, Theresa, have celebrated the holiday on post for 27 years.

"I want to be together with the military," said Rodriguez, 87, a veteran of Vietnam and Korea who served 36 years. "And the food is wonderful."

This year, the couple was joined by 11 family members, including relatives who traveled from Puerto Rico, Colorado and Pennsylvania.

"I've been coming every year since I married 15 years ago," said their daughter-in-law Amesha Rodriguez of Millersville who attended with her husband, Jose Ramon, and their children: Kayla, Genesis and Jose.

"I love it," she said. "The food is excellent and it makes my father-in-law happy."

JIBBER JABBER - OPINION

Just don't say they lost it

Due to the senseless rampage on Monday in Columbus, Ohio, there will be no vitriol regarding The Ohio State University or the state of Ohio. Though anyone who watched Saturday's football game against Michigan can probably guess what I would be saying if 21st-century reality hadn't reared its evil head.

Instead, after about 70 hours of moping, pouring over videos, listening to pundits, reading countless articles, and a few strolls around Burba Lake — including one jaunt in the rain on Tuesday — I'm ready to admit Ohio State won on Saturday.

That is much different than saying Michigan lost. I will never admit that because that did not happen.

Sure, Michigan's quarterback Wilton Speight threw two interceptions, which led to 14 OSU points. He also fumbled the ball on the Michigan 1-yard line, and the offense failed to move the ball in the fourth quarter, which Michigan led until the last play of regulation.

Defensively, Michigan could have stopped OSU on a few occasions. They gave up 17 unanswered points, and the world's most famous fourth-and-1 would not have occurred if the defense tackled Curtis Samuel behind the line of scrimmage on third down.

Those things happen when you play a very good team like OSU — especially when you play them in Columbus.

Bad officiating happens, too. So even though anyone with an ounce of integrity would admit the referees' "judgment" helped Ohio's cause, you have to play better than the refs' calls — or lack thereof when you look at the blatant pass interference in double overtime, which the refs failed to call and would have given Michigan a first down inside OSU's 15-yard line.

Michigan went on to kick the go-ahead field goal.

With those admissions, Michigan still did not lose the game and here's why: After the aforementioned field goal, Michigan took a 27-24 lead, and Ohio State was given the ball needing a field goal to tie or a touchdown to win. Anything else and OSU loses.

Three plays later, OSU was faced with a fourth-and-1. They could have attempted a field goal and potentially push



Chad T. Jones

PUBLIC AFFAIRS
OFFICER

the game into a third overtime. Instead, OSU's coach Urban Meyer decided to go for the first down. It was close, but clear, that OSU's quarterback J.T. Barrett didn't make the first down. <http://bit.ly/2gD6JQQ>

And at the moment Michigan stopped him, the game did what it needed to do to win the game — forget about the turnovers, the handful of busted plays, Harbaugh's momentary melt-

down and the poor officiating.

When Michigan stopped Barrett on fourth down, they won the game.

The problem is, the game wasn't over. The refs made their judgment call, took 20 seconds to confirm it, and then on what should have been fifth down, OSU scored a touchdown and the game was over.

I'm sure this all sounds like sour grapes, and that's because it is.

But you know what? Sour grapes make the Champagne for the slighted.

Regardless of fact, I know every sentence or article or take about Saturday's game is going to end with OSU winning.

Regardless of how convincing the replays might be, or how certain I am the referee will finally step from the video replay booth and say, "the ruling on the field has changed," I know after each replay of Barrett's run, the refs are still going to give him a first down.

Worst of all, from this day until my death, I know Buckeye fans will talk about how OSU won the greatest game in the history of "The Game." And deep down inside — in those places people don't like to talk about — I'll know they are right.

But one thing I will never accept, and the one thing OSU can never say is, Michigan lost it.

A final fun fact for Penn State, Colorado and Wisconsin fans to chew on before they start complaining about Michigan getting into the playoffs before them; 63 points. That is the total combined points Michigan beat Wisconsin (7), Colorado (17) and Penn State (39) by this season.

If you have comments on this or anything else to do with sports, contact me at chad.t.jones.civ@mail.mil, or hit me up on Twitter @CTJibber.

SPORTS SHORTS

Fort Meade Run Series

The final race in the 2016 Fort Meade Run Series is the Reindeer Run 5K on Dec. 10 at Murphy Field House.

The race starts at 8 a.m. and includes a 1-mile walk.

The race, sponsored by Fort Meade's Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation, is open to the public.

Registration costs \$25 per person, and \$60 per family of three to six people.

Preregistration fee for the Reindeer Run is \$15 for individuals; \$60 per family of three to six; and \$85 for groups of seven to 10.

All preregistered runners will receive a T-shirt.

Register online at meade.armymwr.com/us/meade/programs/run-series.

For more information, call 301-677-7916.

New Year's Eve cosmic bowling parties

The Lanes is hosting cosmic bowling parties on Dec. 31 for a night of bowling, shoes, pizza, soda, party favors and games.

A family party is scheduled from 5-8 p.m. A Prime Time Party is from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.

Advanced reservations are recommended.

To reserve a lane, call 301-677-5541.

Pigskin Pick'em Contest

Take part in the NFL Football contest at The Lanes that runs through December.

Participants can pick up a free entry form and select the anticipated game winners of all Sunday NFL games.

Entry forms will be available every Tuesday beginning at 4 p.m. for that Sunday's game.

Entry forms must be submitted by 1 p.m. Sunday at The Lanes.

Weekly winners will receive a prize pack and be entered for a chance to win the grand prize.

The free contest is open to the Fort Meade community.

Watch Sunday games on The Lounge's large TV screens, and enjoy food and beverage specials.

For additional contest guidelines and rules, visit meade.armymwr.com.

EFMP Bowling

The Exceptional Family Member Program offers bowling for exceptional fami-

lies on the third Wednesday of every month from 5:30-7 p.m. at The Lanes.

The next event is Dec. 21.

Exceptional family members can bowl one free game with free shoe rental.

Discounted games and shoes are available for \$2 each to other family members.

To register, call Sonya Zoller at 301-677-4779.

Dollar Day

Dollar Day is offered at The Lanes every Thursday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Bowling, shoe rental and food specials each cost \$1.

For more information, call 301-677-5541.

Youth Sports registration

Registration for the 2016-2017 Youth Sports winter season is underway.

Sports include futsal and basketball.

Volunteer coaches are needed for all sports, and will receive free training and a coach's discount for their children.

For more information, call the Youth Sports & Fitness Office at 301-677-1329 or 301-677-1179.

Tae Kwon Do

Child and Youth Services offers a Tae Kwon Do class Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Youth Center.

Classes are broken into different age groups.

Classes for ages 4 to 6 cost \$45 per month. Classes for ages 7-17 cost \$85 per month.

For more information, call 301-677-1149.

Gaffney fitness classes

Gaffney Fitness center offers a variety of fitness classes.

Classes are open to authorized users ages 18 and older.

Cost is \$3 per drop-in class; \$20 for a 10-class pass; and \$40 for a 20-class pass.

- Spin and Hip-Hop Spin
- Virtual Wellbeat
- Vinyasa yoga
- Pilates
- Body Tone
- Belly Dancing
- Metabolic Effect
- Strength and Core
- Rip and Roll Cyle + Abs
- Zumba

For more information, call 301-677-2349 or 301-677-3716.

NEWS & NOTES

The deadline for Soundoff! community "News and Notes" is **Friday at noon**. All submissions are posted at the editor's discretion and may be edited for space and grammar. Look for additional community events on the Fort Meade website at ftmeade.army.mil and the Fort Meade Facebook page at facebook.com/ftmeade.

How to submit announcements

Community members can advertise their upcoming event, meeting or class on the *Soundoff!* community announcements page by visiting ftmeade.army.mil and clicking on the Press Center tab.

Once you are in the Fort Meade Press Center, click on PA services, story or promotion request and electronic inquiry form.

Inquiry forms should be submitted at least two weeks before the date of the event, meeting or class.

NEWS & EVENTS

VCC hours

Operating hours at the Demps Visitor Control Center are Monday to Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. at 902 Reece Road. The VCC is closed weekends and from 7 a.m.-noon on the third Wednesday of each month for training.

All individuals who do not have a DoD-issued identification card must go to the VCC for a day pass.

Visit the VCC at least 10 business days in advance to apply for a long-term access pass.

Visitors who arrive on post when the VCC is closed must be escorted on post by an authorized DoD cardholder. This includes weekends and federal holidays.

For more information, call the VCC at 301-677-1064 or visit the Fort Meade Facebook page for announcements on temporary changes to operating hours.

ACP holiday operating hours

Operating hours for the installation access control points will be reduced during the following holiday periods:

◆ Dec. 23-26

◆ Dec. 30-Jan. 2

Access Control Points:

• Reece Road: Open daily 24 hours

• Mapes Road and Route 32: Open daily from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

• Rockenbach Road: Closed

• Mapes Road and Route 175: Closed

For more information, call Joseph Shin-skie, chief of Physical Security, at 301-

677-6618 or email joseph.r.shin-skie.civ@mail.mil.

'Sound the Bells' holiday concert

The U.S. Army Field Band's Jazz Ambassadors will present "Sound the Bells! A Holiday Celebration" on Wednesday at 7 p.m. in the Meade High School auditorium.

The free concert is open to the community.

Registration is encouraged.

To register or for more information, visit armyfieldband.com or call 301-677-6586.

Tree Lighting Ceremony

Fort Meade's annual Tree Lighting Ceremony will be held Dec. 9 from 5-6:30 p.m. outside the historic Main Post Chapel, 4419 Llewellyn Ave. and Roberts Avenue.

The Religious Support Office is sponsoring the 90-minute event.

Garrison Commander Col. Tom Rickard will light the tree.

The U.S. Army Field Band's Brass Quintet will perform.

The ceremony also will feature caroling, cookies and a visit with Santa. The USO will provide hot chocolate.

For more information, call 301-677-6703.

DHR closure

The Directorate of Human Resources, Military Personnel Division, ID Card Section, Administrative Services Division, Education Center, Soldier for Life-TAP, Retirement/Transition Office, Finance, Transportation, Personnel Support Detachment (Navy), and Alcohol and Substance Abuse Office will close Dec. 9 at 11 a.m.

Normal operations will resume Dec. 12.

For more information, call DHR at 301-677-5406.

WWE Tribute to Troops

The WWE will hold its annual Tribute to the Troops show on Dec. 13 in Washington, D.C.

The USO of Metropolitan Washington-Baltimore is partnering with the WWE for the event.

USO-Metro will distribute thousands of tickets to local military.

In addition, there will be visits from the WWE's cadre of stars.

One team of four to six stars will visit Fort Meade on Dec. 13.

The interactions and matches will be filmed and will air Dec. 14 on the USA network.

WWE schedule at Fort Meade:

◆ Meet and Greet at Asymmetric Warfare Group: 8-9:30 a.m. Team will participate in challenges.

◆ Anti-bullying rally at MacArthur Middle School: 9:30-11:30 a.m.

◆ Meet and Greet at the Exchange: 12:30 -2:30 p.m.

For more information, call the Fort Meade USO at 410-305-0660.

New Year's Eve Cosmic Bowling Parties-

Join the fun at The Lanes at Fort Meade on December 31 for a fun filled night of bowling, shoes, pizza, soda, party favors, games and much more! A Family Party is scheduled from 5:00 - 8:00 p.m. and a Prime Time Party is scheduled for 9:00 p.m. - 1:00 a.m. Advanced reservations are recommended. Call 301-677-5541 to reserve your lane today!

For more information about Family and MWR events and programs please visit us at www.meade.armymwr.com.

Tax Center seeks volunteers

The Fort Meade Office of the Staff Judge Advocate seeks full-time and part-time volunteers to work as tax preparers or administrative personnel at the Joint Installation Tax Center from January through April.

No tax experience is necessary. All required training will be provided and conducted on Fort Meade in January.

This is an opportunity to build your resume, gain experience in tax preparation, and develop customer service skills.

This is also an opportunity to support the community by providing free, electronic filing of federal and state income tax returns for service members, retirees and family members from all military services.

For more information, contact the Tax Center attorney in charge, Yosefi Seltzer, at yosefi.m.seltzer.civ@mail.mil or 301-677-5038.

Brass Lounge

The Brass Lounge is open every Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 4-8 p.m. at Club Meade.

An assortment of beverages and appetizers are available.

Music and television entertainment will be provided.

The Brass Lounge is open to all military ranks and services, and civilians.

For more information, go to meade.armymwr.com for more details.

Thrift Shop hours

The Post Thrift Shop, located at 392 Llewellyn Ave., is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and the first Saturday of the month from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
Start Strong • Serve Strong • Reinforce Strong • Remain Strong

SFL-TAP
December Seminars

Dec. Dress for Success
2 Friday
12:00 p.m. — 4:00 p.m.
McGill Training Center, Classroom 1

Dec. Apply for a Federal Job
7 Wednesday
9:00 a.m. — 11:00 a.m.
McGill Training Center, Classroom 1

Dec. Disability Claims Information
7 Wednesday
12:30 p.m. — 1:30 p.m.
HHC Conference Room
8501 Simmonds Street

Dec. Financial & Benefits Education
8 Wednesday
12:30 p.m. — 3:00 p.m.
HHC Conference Room
8501 Simmonds Street

To register, call: 301-677-9871
www.ftmeade.army.mil/directorates/dhr/stf/

Seminar location:
McGill Training Center
8452 Zimborski Avenue
Fort Meade, MD 20755

Consignments are taken by appointment only.

For more information, call 410-672-3575.

Freedom Inn open to post employees

The Freedom Inn Dining Facility, located at 8502 Simonds St., is open to all active-duty service members, military retirees, DoD civilians, contractors, and Department of the Army security guards and firefighters on Monday through Friday.

Active-duty service members on Basic Allowance for Subsistence are also authorized for meals on the weekend. Family members of military personnel may purchase meals on weekdays if they are accompanied by the service member.

All other categories of customers may purchase meals as the garrison commander deems appropriate. These categories include youth groups, MEPS candidates, civilian dignitaries, guests and other visitors.

Service members with a meal card will continue to have priority over cash-paying customers.

For more information, call 301-677-5503.

Holiday concert series

The U.S. Army Field Band will perform
See **NEWS & NOTES**, page 14

NEWS & NOTES, From page 13

its annual holiday concert series, "Sound the Bells," with five free holiday concerts in the greater Baltimore area.

The concerts will include a variety of selections including holiday classics, choral arrangements and patriotic favorites.

- ◆ Saturday at 7:30 p.m. at the Hippodrome Theatre in Baltimore
- ◆ Sunday at 3 p.m. at the Hippodrome Theatre in Baltimore
- ◆ Wednesday at 7 p.m. at Meade High School

- ◆ Dec. 10 at 3 p.m. at Centennial High School in Ellicott City
- ◆ Dec. 10 at 7 p.m. Centennial High School in Ellicott City

Concerts are free but tickets are required.

To view the full schedule and print free tickets from the Army Field Band's website, go to www.ArmyFieldBand.com/tickets or call 301-677-6586.

Symphony of Lights

Symphony of Lights, a 20-minute drive-through of more than 100 larger-than-life holiday light displays, is open through Jan. 1 on Wednesdays through Sundays from 5:30-10 p.m. at Merriweather Post Pavilion in Columbia.

Military appreciation nights, today and Dec. 8, offer service members a 50 percent discount off tickets to the drive-through. Active-duty service members, retirees and Reservists with government-issued IDs and their dependents qualify.

Symphony of Lights features refurbished light displays and 20 new custom displays, a laser light show and a 3-D holiday video projected 50 feet high.

Tickets regularly cost \$20 per car except Saturdays, when the cost is \$25. Symphony of Lights is closed to vehicles on Dec. 31.

An ice skating rink also opened at Symphony of Lights — Howard County's only outdoor rink — through Jan. 8.

The rink, located near the corner of Little Patuxent Parkway and Broken Land Parkway, is open Tuesdays through Thursdays from 3 to 8 p.m. and Fridays through Sundays from noon to 9 p.m.

Two-hour admission tickets cost \$9 for adults and \$7 for children, with skate rentals for \$4.

Special-rate tickets cost \$7 for service members on Wednesdays, and for seniors on Tuesdays through Thursdays. Group rates, season passes and private rink

rentals are also available.

For more information, call 410-740-7666 or visit www.hcgh.org/symphonyoflights.

EDUCATION**Financial, Job Readiness**

Joint Services offers workshops and briefings by Army Community Service at the Community Readiness Center, 830 Chisholm Ave., and the Navy Fleet and Family Support Center at 2212 Chisholm Ave., unless otherwise noted.

The free classes are open to active-duty service members and family members, DoD civilian employees and retirees.

Registration is required for each class.

Military

- Pre-Separation Brief: Today, 9-11:30 a.m., FFSC

- Relocation Readiness Sponsorship Training: Friday, 2-3:30 p.m., FFSC

- TGPS Five-Day Workshops (Transition, Goals, Plans, Success): Monday-Dec. 9: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., FFSC

- Retiree Brief: Dec. 12, 8-11:30 a.m., FFSC

- Pre-Deployment Brief: Dec. 15, 10-11:30 a.m., FFSC

Financial

- Planning to Reduce Taxes: Tuesday, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., ACS

- Thrift Savings Plan: Dec. 13, 9-11 a.m., ACS

- Home Buying: Dec. 20, 9 a.m. to noon, ACS

Employment

- Resume Writing Workshop: Tuesday, 9 a.m. to noon

- Salary Negotiation: Dec. 8, 9 a.m. to noon, ACS

- Interviewing Skills: Dec. 15, 9 a.m. to noon, ACS

Life Skills

- Stress Management: Today, 9-11 a.m., FFSC

- Anger Management: Tuesday, 9-11 a.m., FFSC

- Effective Communication: Wednesday, 9-11 a.m., FFSC

- Time Management: Dec. 8, 9-11 a.m., FFSC

- Healthy Relationships: Dec. 16, 9-11 a.m., FFSC

Navy

- Navy Family Orientation: Dec. 14, 5-7 p.m., FFSC

Navy and Marine Corps (only)

- Budget for Baby: Dec. 16, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., FFSC

To register, call FFSC at 301-677-9017 or ACS at 301-677-5590, or visit fortmeadeacs.checkappointments.com.

Swinging Squares

Dance classes for the Swinging Squares Square Dance Club, which features Modern Western Square Dancing, are offered Thursday nights from 7-9 p.m. at Meade Middle School.

Session 1 runs to Dec. 15, with a class dance night on Dec. 17.

The session is open to adults and children ages 9 and older.

No experience, no partner and no fancy clothes required.

Swinging Squares dances the third and fifth Saturday of each month (excluding school holidays) to May from 7:30-10 p.m. at Meade Middle School.

For more information, call Carl at 410-271-8776 or Darlene at 410-519-2536.

YOUTH**ESC Children's Holiday Party**

The Enlisted Spouses' Club will host its annual Children's Holiday Party on Saturday from noon to 4 p.m. at Pershing Hill Elementary School, 7600 29th Division Road.

The festive event will feature free photos with Santa, games, face painting, crafts and giveaways.

The first group of families will receive a fresh Christmas tree.

For more information, email Mavi at vicepresident@ftmeadeESC.org.

Breakfast with Santa

Breakfast with Santa Claus is Dec. 10 from 8-11 a.m. at Club Meade.

The annual event is open to the Fort Meade community.

Space is limited. Tickets are required and are only available at the Youth Center. Tickets cost \$8 per child ages 5-11 and \$14 for ages 12 and older.

Activities include a letter-writing workshop, cookie-decorating station, Santa's Elves Workshop, story time with Mrs. Claus and photo with Santa Claus.

The breakfast buffet will feature scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage patties, home-fried potatoes, French toast, grits, biscuits, waffle and omelet stations, assorted cereals, fresh fruit and a hot chocolate bar.

For more information, call the Youth Center at 301-677-1437 or 301-677-6054.

Project Elf

Fort Meade USO's Project Elf is Dec. 14 from 4-7 p.m. at the USO at 8612 6th Armored Cavalry Road.

The annual project matches military children to donors to make sure that the children have presents for Christmas.

More than 400 Fort Meade children will receive gifts.

For more information, call 410-305-0660.

RECREATION**Out & About**

• **Christmas Village** at the Inner Harbor, modeled after traditional German Christmas markets, is open at 11 a.m. daily through Dec. 24 (closed Tuesday) at West Shore Park, 501 Light St.

The free event features gift vendors, food and visits from Santa. For more information, visit baltimore-christmas.com.



• **BOSS National Aquarium trip**, sponsored by Better Opportunities for Single Service Members, is Dec. 10 at 1 p.m. at Baltimore's Inner Harbor. Cost is \$15. Only 15 spaces are available.

For reservations or more information, see your BOSS representative or visit meade.armymwr.com.

• **Williamsburg Shopping Trip** is offered by Leisure Travel Services on Dec. 17. Shop at the Williamsburg Pottery Factory Mall in Virginia. For more information, call 301-677-7354.

• **Toby's Dinner Theatre** presents "A Christmas Carol through Jan. 8 at 5900

COFFEE WITH A COP
02 DECEMBER 2016 From: 7-10 a.m.
At the Fort Meade Dunkin' Donuts (Mapes Road)

The Fort Meade Police Department is currently accepting donations of children's gloves and hats for our local needy children.

Please help by donating today!

Donations will be accepted now through 16 DEC 2016

Donation box at 6619 Mapes Rd

Symphony Woods, Columbia. Discounted tickets are available at Leisure Travel Services. For more information, call LTS at 301-677-7354 or Toby's at 410-730-8311.

• **Christmas Spectacular** featuring the Rockettes at Radio City Music Hall in New York City on Dec. 8. Bus leaves at 7 a.m. Cost is \$155. Purchase tickets at Leisure Travel Services. For more information, call 301-677-7354.

• **Leisure Travel Services** will offer its next monthly bus trip to New York City on Dec. 24 from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. Cost is \$60. Discounted tickets to attractions will be provided. For more information, call 301-677-7354.

MEETINGS

• **Monthly Prayer Breakfast**, hosted by the Religious Support Office, is held the first Thursday of every month at 7 a.m. at Club Meade. The next prayer breakfast is today. There is no cost for the buffet. Donations are optional.

Menu features eggs, bacon, sausage, biscuits, gravy, grits, Danish pastries and fruit.

All Fort Meade employees, civilian and military personnel, and family members are invited. For more information, call 301-677-6703.

• **Anne Arundel Genealogical Society's** next meeting and holiday gathering is today from 7-9:30 p.m. at Severna Park United Methodist Church (Fellowship Hall), 731 Benfield Road, Severna Park.

Guests are welcome.

Tom McCarriar, the AAGS president, will discuss "Sarah Goldsborough: Civil War Widow — Persistence Pays Off."

Shelley Pollero, AAGS past president, will present on "Using Power Point to Share Your Family History Research."

Louis Sapienza, research volunteer for AAGS, will share "Tips for Finding Maiden Names."

Refreshments and networking will follow the meeting.

For more information, visit aagenso-c.org or call the group at the Kuethe Library at 410-760-9679 from Thursday to Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

• **"Sip and Share,"** hosted by the Exceptional Family Member Program, meets the first Thursday of every month from 9:30-10:30 a.m. at the Fort Meade USO, 8612 6th Armored Cavalry Road. The next get-together is today.

Inform each other about resources available in the local community.

For more information or to register, call 301-677-4779.

• **Fort Meade First Class Petty Officer Association** meets the first Thursday of every month at 3 p.m. at The Lanes. The next meeting is today. All first class petty officers are invited. For more in-

formation, call PO1 Jennifer Wonch at 410-854-2763.

• **Meade Rod and Gun Club** meets the first Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. at Perry's Restaurant and Odie's Pub at 1210 Annapolis Road, Odenton, in the banquet hall in back of the building. The next meeting is tonight. Dinner is served at 6 p.m. For more information, call Charisma Wooten at 240-568-6055.

• **Moms of Multiples Group** meets every first and third Thursday of the month from 1:30-2:30 p.m. at the Family Advocacy Program, 2462 85th Medical Battalion Ave. The next meeting is today. For more information, call 301-677-7823.

• **National Alliance on Mental Illness of Anne Arundel County** offers a free support group for families with a loved one suffering from mental illness on the first Thursday of every month at 7 p.m. at the Odenton Library, 1325 Annapolis Road. The next meeting is today. For more information, visit namiaac.org.

• **Retired Officers' Wives' Club's** Holiday Brunch Meeting is Tuesday at 11 a.m. at Club Meade.

The meeting will feature a performance of holiday music by the Archbishop Spalding High School Chorus.

Cost of the brunch is \$20.

Reservations, or cancellations if you are on the permanent reservation list, must be received by 5 p.m. today.

Call your area representative or Betty Wade at 410-551-7082.

Annual membership dues are \$25.

Members may bring guests to the luncheons, which are held the first Tuesday of each month, except January, June, July and August.

For more information, call Lianne Roberts, ROWC president, at 301-464-5498.

• **Families Dealing with Deployment** meets the first and third Monday of every month from 5:30-6:30 p.m. at the Family Advocacy Program, 2462 85th Medical Battalion Ave. Children welcome. The next meeting is Monday.

The group is for families experiencing an upcoming or current deployment, or the service members who have recently returned from deployment. For more information, call 301-677-7823.

• **Daddy & Me** interactive playgroup for fathers with children ages 2-4 meets the first and third Monday of every month from 5-6 p.m. at the Family Advocacy Program, 2462 85th Medical Battalion Ave. The next meeting is Monday.

Space is limited. Registration is required for each session. For more information, call 301-677-4118.

• **Kritikos Toastmasters Club** meets on the first three Mondays of every month at 6:15 p.m. at Perry's Restaurant, 1210 Annapolis Road, Odenton. The next meeting is Monday.

The club offers an opportunity to service members and civilian residents in the Fort Meade community to improve their public speaking skills in a supportive environment.

For more information, go to 1686.toastmastersclubs.org or call 410-305-9190.

• **Fort Meade E9 Association** meets the second Friday of every month at 7 a.m. in the Pin Deck Cafe at the Lanes. The next meeting is Dec. 9. The association is open to active, retired, Reserve and National Guard E9s of any uniformed service. All E9s in this area are invited to attend a breakfast and meet the membership. For more information, go to e9association.org.

• **Meade Branch 212 of the Fleet Reserve Association** meets the second Saturday of each month at 10 a.m. at VFW Post 160, 2597 Dorsey Road, Glen Burnie. The next meeting is Dec. 10. Active-duty, Reserve and retired members of the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard are invited.

For more information, call 443-604-2474 or 410-768-6288.

• **Marriage Enrichment Group**, sponsored by Army Community Service, meets the second and fourth Monday of every month from 3-4 p.m. at the Community Readiness Center, 830 Chisholm Ave. The next meeting is Dec. 12. For more information, call Celena Flowers or Jessica Hobgood at 301-677-5590.

• **Single Parent Support Group** meets every second and fourth Monday of the month from 5:30-7 p.m. at School Age Services, 1900 Reece Road. Children welcome. The next meeting is Dec. 12. For more information, call 301-677-7823.

• **Glen Burnie NARFE Chapter 1519** meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 1 p.m. at the Holy Trinity Parish Hall, 7436 Baltimore Annapolis Blvd., Glen Burnie.

The speaker is Anne Healy from Blue Cross/Blue Shield who will discuss health care changes.

Federal employees and retirees who are members of NARFE are welcome to attend.

For more information, call Barbara Jacobs at 410-969-5980.

• **Enlisted Spouses' Club** meets the third Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at Potomac Place Community Center, 4998 Second Corps Blvd. Location and time subject to change. For child care during ESC functions, email membership@FtMeadeESC.

For more information, call 301-908-3773.

• **Moms Walking Group**, sponsored by Parent Support, meets Thursdays from 8:30-9:15 a.m. at the Family Advocacy Program, 2462 85th Medical Battalion Ave. To register, call 301-677-3617.

MOVIES

The movie schedule is subject to change. For a recorded announcement of showings, call 301-677-5324. Further listings are available on the Army and Air Force Exchange Service website at www.aafes.com.

Movies start Fridays at 6:30 p.m., Saturdays at 6 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. PRICES: Tickets are \$6 for adults (12 and older) and \$3.50 for children. 3-D Movies: \$8 adults, \$5.50 children.

Today through Dec. 11



MARK ROGERS/LIONSGATE

Friday: "Hacksaw Ridge" (R). World War II Army medic Desmond T. Doss, who served during the Battle of Okinawa, refuses to kill people, and becomes the first man in American history to win the Medal of Honor without firing a shot. With Andrew Garfield, Sam Worthington, Luke Bracey.

Saturday: "Doctor Strange" (PG-13). A former neurosurgeon embarks on a journey of healing, only to be drawn into the world of the mystic arts. With Benedict Cumberbatch, Chiwetel Ejiofor, Rachel McAdams.

Sunday & Dec. 10: "Trolls" (PG). After the Bergens invade Troll Village, Poppy, the happiest Troll ever born, and the curmudgeonly Branch set off on a journey to rescue her friends. With the voices of Anna Kendrick, Justin Timberlake, Zooey Deschanel.

Dec. 9 & 11: "Almost Christmas" (PG-13). A dysfunctional family gathers together for their first Christmas since their mom died. With Kimberly Elise, Omar Epps, Danny Glover.

Dec. 10: 2 p.m. FREE SCREENING (PG-13). Tickets available at the Exchange Food Court. Seating open to non-ticket holders 30 minutes prior to showtime.