FORGING THE



WARRIOR SPIRIT

The JRTC and Fort Polk Guardian

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Home of Heroes @ Fort Polk, LA

March 26, 2021

IMCOM Deputy Commanding General visits JRTC, Fort Polk

barracks renovations on Fort Polk March 23.

GUARDIAN STAFF

FORT POLK, La. – Maj. Gen. Timothy P. McGuire, Installation Management Command deputy commanding general, paid a visit to the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk March 23 to see first-hand renovations and new construction to housing and barracks, improvements in Quality of Life and the installation's Facility Investment Plan.

During a driving tour of Corvias housing areas, McGuire, who was JRTC and Fort Polk commanding general from March 2015 to May 2016, was shown improvements and repairs made in the wake of hurricanes Laura and Delta in late summer 2020, as well as the ice storm that hammered the post in February.

During the trip, Col. Ryan K. Roseberry, commander, U.S. Army Garrison Fort Polk, and Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Ausbun, garrison command sergeant major, escorted McGuire through renovated barracks that afford Soldiers more privacy.

They also pointed out to McGuire Quality of Life projects, such as swimming pool improvements and an indoor recreation facility for Families.

Weekend weather

87

66

35%

84

68

2%

Please see IMCOM, page 5

69

51

48%



Maj. Gen. Timothy P. McGuire, (left) IMCOM deputy commander, Col. Ryan K. Roseberry, (middle) Fort Polk garrison commander, and Command Sqt. Maj. Christopher Ausbun, garrison command sergeant major, prepare to check out

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Viewpoint

In our view

Guardian staff asked the JRTC and Fort Polk community, **"What was your favorite purchase bought with a tax refund?"** Here are their responses:



Staff Sgt. Pascal Charmant: "I invest my refund instead of just wasting it. I want that money to grow."



Staff Sgt. Laurence Henderson: "I put it right into my savings account. That way I have a cushion when emergencies like COVID-19, hurricanes and ice storms hit unexpectedly."



Pfc. Travis Wyatt: "'I'd like to spend my refund on a plane ticket to go somewhere new. Life is too short to stay in one place."

Pfc. Kara Kraft: "A gift for my dad. I bought him a cross necklace. I'm wearing a matching necklace right now."





Spc. Charles Wheaton: "'I typically save it and collect interest. I think long term and would like to use it one day as a down payment on a home. If there is nothing I need, I just won't spend it."



Pfc. John Dias: "I bought my wife a new car."



Nyandoro Niles: "I want to get a new paint job for my car. It needs it. I'm debating between burgundy and olive green."



Luis Valdez "I just paid off some of my credit cards."



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Fort Polk. For more information on Fort Polk units and happenings visit the following Facebook pages: @JRTCOperationsGrp, @ BayneJonesACH or @fortpolkmwr.

NewScope

Briefs

Walking town hall

Brig. Gen. David Doyle, commanding general of the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk and Col. Ryan Roseberry, Fort Polk garrison commander, host a Dogwood Terrace Walking Town Hall Tuesday. The walk begins at 6824 Lankford St. at 4 p.m. and the team will visit Moen, Stewart and Batora streets. The team will then walk across Moen Street to the playground.

CYS health fair

Fort Polk's Child and Youth Services hosts an Interactive Health Fair April 2 from 3-6 p.m. Topics of interest include growth mindset, environmental health, life hacks, dental care, sleep health and more.

The event is free and open to the public. For more information call 531-6004 or visit <u>www.polk.armymwr.</u> <u>com</u>.

Council meeting

The Volunteer Advisory Council meeting takes place Wednesday from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Family Readiness Center, bldg 924. The meeting is for unit and organization volunteer managers. For more information call 531-1895.

Ten-Miler

Intramural sports hosts the second Army Ten-Miler qualifier April 16 at 6:30 a.m. at Marion Bonner Trail. Preregistration is through April 15. Go to <u>www.polk.armymwr.com</u> or Wheelock Fitness Center to preregister. You can also register the day of the event from 6-6:30 a.m. The event is open to all active duty personnel. For more information call (337) 378-2201.

Arts and craft

The Fort Polk Arts and Crafts center hosts a whimsical tree canvas paint April 10 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The cost is \$25 per artist, which includes supplies and refreshments. The event is for ages 10 and older. Register by April 8. For more information call



Sgt. 1st Class Kelly Slaughterbeck, (left) Observer, Coach/Trainer paralegal noncommissioned officer in charge, and Maj. Kathy Denehy, senior operational law OC/T, are pictured in the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk's training area, called the box, as they prepare to advise a rotational legal team March 8 before training begins.

Fort Polk OSJA celebrates women leading way

By ANGIE THORNE Public affairs specialist

FORT POLK, La. — March is Women's History Month — a celebration of the efforts made, challenges overcome and accomplishments achieved by women throughout history and today. Those achievements can be found in career fields, sports, politics, law and even the very perception of what women can do instead of what they can't.

A prime example of this progress can be found at the Fort Polk Office of the Staff Judge Advocate where the current Staff Judge Advocate is Col. Tiffany Chapman, only the second female to hold the post at Fort Polk — the first was Brig. Gen. (retired) Melinda Dunn, and Fort Polk's two female observer/coach trainers, Maj. Kathy Denehy, senior operational law Observer, Coach/Trainer, and Sgt. 1st Class Kelly Slaughterbeck, OC/T paralegal noncommissioned officer in charge, the first female JAG OC/T leadership team.

Chapman said Fort Polk's JAG Corps provides principle counsel to the clients of a globally responsive force.

"In addition to being subject matter experts in the legal realm, we must also serve as trusted staff members, advisors and leaders and guide our legal teams to do that as well. That's why I think it's important that we are promoting diversity at all levels. Not only can we relate to a more diverse customer base, it also helps us incorporate different perspectives and viewpoints while building knowledge and expertise," she said.

Chapman said her part in that diversity means leading the legal team on the installation while helping the commanding general pursue his initiatives and priorities.

"It's a multifaceted practice, but my focus is leading an effective team while providing legal advice and solving problems," she said.

Chapman said Denehy and Slaughterbeck contribute to JAG's diversity. Denehy is the first female to lead Fort Polk's OC/T team.

"They interact with every unit that trains at JRTC and Fort Polk to maintain readiness in pursuit of the Army's mission," Chapman said.

As OC/Ts, Denehy and Slaughterbeck said they work with legal teams that come with brigades training at the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.

Six months before a legal team ever reaches Fort Polk, Denehy said they are in touch to begin preparing them for their rotation.

"What legal teams do in combat is very different than what they do in garrison," she said.

Topics legal teams can potentially advise their command about during rotation in-

Please see OSJA page 7

Army News

One of Army's few female tomb guards reflects on accomplishment

By C.J. LOVELACE Army News Service

FORT DETRICK, Md. — His uniform was impeccable. His buttons, badges and boots glistened under the auditorium lights. His movements were methodical and perfectly executed.

Then a young private first class, Danyell Walters vividly remembers the first time she witnessed the spectacle of what it took to be a sentinel at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Walters, the first African-American woman to serve as a tomb guard, also remembered that the Soldier performing the routine looked nothing like her. But that was hardly an impediment for what she knew she could achieve.

"What I admire most about my younger self was that when I saw the tomb guard presentation, I looked past that it was a man standing out there," Walters said. "I immediately put myself there ... that is what led me to see it through."

During Women's History Month, Walters, now a sergeant major serving as the senior enlisted advisor for U.S. Army Medical Logistics Command at Fort Detrick, reflected on her time as a tomb guard nearly 25 years ago.

At age 22, then-Sgt. Wilson became one of just four women to ever serve as a tomb guard with the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment, known as "The Old Guard." She followed Sgt. Heather (Johnson) Wagner, who was the first woman to earn her tomb guard badge in 1996 after the Army opened the assignment to women a few years earlier.

Breaking down barriers was the last thing on Walters' mind when she took her first daylight watch over the tomb in 1997. She said it wasn't until afterward — when she was asked if she knew the significance of what she had just done — that she realized her accomplishment.

"That was not my focus," Walters recalled, as she remained intent on accomplishing the "nofail mission" of a tomb guard. "... When it came to The Old Guard, the Army was changing when it comes to being diverse in gender, and we were a part of that change."

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, located at Arlington National Cemetery, honors the remains of unidentified American Soldiers and is guarded 24 hours a day. The hourly changing of the guard at the tomb is a solemn event that's attracted crowds in the nation's capital since it was first opened to the public in 1932.

Between ceremonies, a lone sentinel marches 21 steps along a black mat behind the tomb. They turn and face east for 21 seconds, then north for 21 seconds, and then retrace 21 steps back. The 21 steps and 21-second pauses symbolize the military's highest honor — the 21gun salute.

Looking back on the experience, Walters recalled the strict training regimen that went into the assignment, but as a military police officer with high standards of appearance and a desire for perfection in all she did, it was something that came naturally.

She said she was proud to set an example and be an inspiration to future female Soldiers to know that, despite traditional societal norms and hurdles, whatever they wanted to achieve was possible.

"I think it's easy when you have someone who looks like you doing something that hasn't been done before to get inspired," she said. "Because



Then-Sgt. Danyell (Wilson) Walters takes her watch as a sentinel at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery in 1997. Walters, now a sergeant major and senior enlisted adviser for U.S. Army Medical Logistics Command, is one of just four women to serve as a tomb guard with the prestigious 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment, known as "The Old Guard."

now you know your potential is limitless. Even if there is a barrier, you're more motivated to penetrate it."

Walters' drive to succeed began as a teenager growing up just outside Montgomery, Alabama. The oldest of four siblings to a single mother, she attended an all-black school where teachers shared a passion to celebrate their heritage and never let it be a barrier to future success.

As she graduated high school, Walters, who latched onto the former slogan "Be All You Can Be," saw the Army as an opportunity.

It turned out to be a lifetime of opportunity for Walters, who

reenlisted in 1998 as a medical logistician. In February, she marked 28 years of active-duty service.

Since joining AMLC, Walters has served as a leading voice for Soldiers throughout the organization, as well as its Project Inclusion campaign to work toward the Army's goal of promoting diversity, equity and inclusivity and building a more cohesive workforce.

"I never thought I would have a story to be told," Walters said, looking back on her time as a tomb guard. "But I'm thankful that I do ... hopefully, our stories can inspire others to look past barriers and reach their full



IMCOM

Continued from page 1

McGuire ended his visit by presenting IMCOM coins to six members of the Fort Polk Garrison IMCOM team: Chris Reed, DFMWR; Sean McCroary, DFMWR; Amanda Pete, DES; Laversa Wiltz, PAIO; Chuck Cannon, PAO; and Ron Semerena, Range Management Authority.

He then spoke to those gathered for the awards ceremony.

"It is great to see so many IMCOM professionals who are members of the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk team," McGuire said.

"I will tell you this is coming back home for me. It is special to see first-hand the work the team is doing here, and what I've heard about since I left."

McGuire urged the JRTC and Fort team to, "continue to stay after it, because there is no place that does more to build readiness and take care of Soldiers, Families, Department of the Army civilians and Soldiers for Life than JRTC and Fort Polk."

McGuire said IMCOM Headquarters is doing its best to do the right things to make the JRTC and Fort Polk team's jobs easier.

"You are at the tip of the spear," he said. "If you've got a good idea, please let us know. Stay after it."

Roseberry said that it was a great opportunity to show McGuire how far the installation has progressed since his time as JRTC and Fort Polk commanding general.

"Many of the quality of life initiatives were started on his watch," Roseberry said. "Major General McGuire has been integral to the improvement in the IMCOM housing initiatives across the Army. It is a privilege to have him see our progress and plans for improved housing."



Maj. Gen. Timothy P. McGuire, (left) IMCOM deputy commander, and Brig. Gen. David S. Doyle, commander, JRTC and Fort Polk, stand in front of Woodfill Hall.



Maj. Gen. Timothy P. McGuire (second from left), IMCOM deputy commander, presents a coin to Spc. Yaser Ali, 52nd Translator Interpreter Company as Brig. Gen. David S. Doyle, (left) commander, JRTC and Fort Polk, looks on March 23.



Maj. Gen. Timothy P. McGuire, IMCOM deputy commander, Col. Ryan K. Roseberry, Fort Polk garrison commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Ausbun, garrison commander sergeant major, stand with Fort Polk IMCOM civilians who were awarded IMCOM coins during a ceremony March 23. From left: Ron Semerena, Roseberry, Chuck Cannon, Amanda Pete, Laversa Wiltz, McGuire, Chris Reed, Ausbun and Sean McCroary.



Maj. Gen. Timothy P. McGuire, IMCOM deputy commander, awards IMCOM coins to civilian workers during a visit to the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk March 23 as Col. Ryan K. Roseberry, Fort Polk garrison commander, looks on.

K CANNON/ GUARDIAN

Fort Polk Soldiers found guilty for UCMJ violations

OSJA

FORT POLK, La. — The preamble to the Manual for Courts-Martial states, "The purpose of military law is to promote justice, to assist in maintaining good order and discipline in the armed forces, to promote efficiency and effectiveness in the military establishment and thereby strengthen the national security of the United States."

At the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk, the commanding general and subordinate commanders take good order and discipline seriously.

Across Fort Polk, the following disciplinary issues continue to be prevalent: Violations of General Order #1, driving under the influence of alcohol, wrongful use/possession of controlled substances, fraternization, sexual assault and underage drinking.

Below are recent examples of adverse legal actions for units within the Fort Polk jurisdiction.

• A specialist, assigned to 1st Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment, was issued a General Officer Memorandum of Reprimand for failing to complete a lawfully required test to measure his blood alcohol content level, in violation of Article 92, Uniform Code of Military Justice.

• A specialist, assigned to 5th Battalion, 25th Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, was found guilty at a Summary Court-Martial for failing to obey a lawful general order, in violation of Article 92, UCMJ. The Summary Court-Martial Officer sentenced the Soldier to a forfeiture of one-third pay per month for one month; extra-duty for 7 days; restriction for 7 days and an oral reprimand.

 A specialist, assigned to 2nd Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 3rd BCT, 10th Mtn Div, was separated under Chapter 14-12c (Commission of a Serious Offense). The Soldier was issued a General Under Honorable conditions characterization of service and a bar to post. Generally, this characterization of service results in the loss of a service member's educational benefits.

• A private, assigned to 2nd Bn, 30th Inf Reg, 3rd BCT, 10th Mtn Div, was separated under Chapter 14-12c(2) (Misconduct-Abuse of Illegal Drugs) for wrongful use of a controlled substance. The Soldier was issued a General Under Honorable conditions characterization of service and a bar to post. Generally, this characterization of service results in the loss of a service member's educational benefits.



• A private, assigned to 2nd Bn, 30th Inf Reg, 3rd BCT, 10th Mtn Div, was separated under Chapter 10 (Discharge in Lieu of Trial by Court-Martial) for sexual misconduct. The Soldier was issued an Other Than Honorable conditions characterization of service and a bar to post. Generally, this characterization of service results in the loss of a service member's educational and health benefits

Soldiers, Family members should take note of hurricane claims

OSJA

FORT POLK, La. — On May 29, 2019, the Army discontinued paying for claims for unusual occurrences when the damage was caused by flood, hurricane, earthquake or other acts of nature or weather phenomena. The policy, published in Army Directive 2019-21, sought to encourage Soldiers who reside in on-post housing to obtain renters insurance.

On November 13, 2020, based on a request from the JRTC and Fort Polk leadership, the Secretary of the Army granted an exception to Army Directive 2019-21. Under this limited exception, Soldiers who lost items during Hurricane Laura, such as from food spoilage or a limb falling on a car, could file a claim with the US Army Center for Personnel Claims online at http://www. JAGCNet.army.mil/Pclaims. Because of the command's efforts in obtaining an exception, 24 claims have been paid out to Fort Polk Families with a total payout of more than \$11,000.

The time frame for filing a claim for dam-



age or loss due to Hurricane Laura has not can call 531-2580 to schedule an appointexpired — you can still file a claim. If you need assistance, or have any questions, you

ment with a Legal Assistance or Claims Attorney.



OS.JA Continued from page 3

clude scenarios such as whether a bridge can be blown up or legal obligations to prisoners of war.

Training the rotational brigade's lawyers can be challenging, said Slaughterbeck. That's one of the reasons she said it's rare to see female OC/Ts.

Denehy said she thinks another reason is because, historically, any combat based position went to men.

"Before combat positions were open to females, males went into those positions because we associated them with fighting and combat. As that has changed, more opportunities have opened up for women to fill positions that were traditionally held by males," she said.

Denehy said she sometimes feels frustrated that there is still an attitude of surprise that women can do some of the same jobs men do.

"There are areas in the military that people still see as traditionally male. I think that's why it's important for women to be seen in leadership positions like ours. If they see us, they might think they can do it too," she said.

Slaughterbeck said Women's History Month, to her, is an acknowledgment of how far women have come while realizing how far they still have to go.

Denehy said even women who have grown up in today's world still feel the limitations placed on them.

"It's important to show young women what's available to them and help them realize that those opportunities weren't always there," she said. "It's not something

that we should take for granted."

Slaughterbeck said she admires women like her mother who helped pave the way for her success.

"Seeing her strength as she met the challenges of raising three children as a single mother inspired me," she said. "I know I'm capable of doing anything I set my mind to."

Slaughterbeck said watching the females that came before her gives her the strength to continue to pave the way for young women following her lead.

Denehy said in the military, there are many women who have broken the glass ceiling long before she came along, but it can still be difficult.

"In my time in the Army, I've been told 'that's a job we're going to let the guys do.' That kind of attitude still exists. It's important to let young female Soldiers know they may encounter this kind of mentality, but that doesn't have to stop them as we keep making that hole in the ceiling bigger," she said.

Chapman said women set an example of what's possible.

"Whenever you have a first, it establishes the fact that something is possible and makes the path easier for successors to come along and do the same. Not only does it shape the viewpoints of the people in an organization, but it shapes the perspective of all those who are following as well," she said.

easier for other women.

"There are no limits or jobs that only interact with each other," she said.



'men' can do," she said. "If there is something you want to do, don't be afraid to go for it.'

As women continue to achieve their goals, Chapman said those firsts will soon cease to be exceptional and become the norm.

As for the future of women in the military, Slaughterbeck said she hopes women continue to take on challenging jobs.

"Progress has been made and there is reason to be optimistic when it comes to changing mindsets," she said.

Chapman said she supports the recognition of all aspects of the military - every demographic. Women's history is part of that diversity.

"That diversity is a force multiplier that Denehy said she hopes her efforts make it we can celebrate and recognize. It enhances our readiness and ability to understand and

Message from Sgt. Maj. of Army on Army Combat Fitness Test

In our continued efforts to improve the Army Combat Fitness Test (ACFT), we knew there would be changes along the way. Today, we formally announce ACFT 3.0, effective Thursday.

What has changed?

First, the plank has been added as a full 100-point alternative to the leg tuck. Each Soldier will indicate which

core strength test event they will do before the test begins. The reason we are keeping the leg tuck, and adding the plank, is that the leg tuck is a better correlation to fitness requirements for Warrior Tasks and Battle

Drills (WTBDs) and Soldier common tasks. By making the plank a fully graded, alternate assessment, we are working to give Soldiers who are currently struggling with the leg tuck, a chance to succeed on the ACFT, while adapting their physical read-

iness training to the Army's changing culture of fitness.

I challenge all Soldiers to continue to train for the leg

tuck, but encourage you to choose the event best for you to meet the Army standard.

MESSAGE

Second, "how" your ACFT performance may be used in the future for assessments

and promotions. The absence of Army policy has led many Soldiers to conclude that only the ACFT raw-score would be used. However, as we continue to refine the ACFT, we identified that use of a rawscore alone does not allow us to account for physiological differences between men and women. In ACFT 3.0, the Army is exploring a gender based tier system with the goal of both accounting for recognized physiological differences between men and women, while fostering and recognizing above-average physical performance,

Please see ACFT page 11





Deployed to support vaccinations

Top left: Spc. Miranda Moore, (left) a licensed practical nurse, sits with Sgt. Tabitha Moore, a combat medic. Both are assigned to the Urban Augmentation Medical Task Force - Medical Command, and stationed at Fort Polk. They are temporarily working as vaccinators at the territorially-led, federally-supported COVID-19 Community Vaccination Center in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands.

Top right: Sqt. Tabitha Moore, (left) prepares a COVID-19 vaccine for a local community member while Spc. Miranda Moore, verifies information and asks if there are questions or concerns.

Bottom left: Sgt. Tabitha Moore prepares to administer a COVID-19 vaccine to a local community member at the territorially-led, and federally-supported COVID-19 Community Vaccination Center, located at University of Virgin Islands, St. Thomas, March 5. U.S. Northern Command, through U.S. Army North, remains committed to providing continued, flexible Department of Defense support to the Federal Emergency Management Agency as part of the whole-of-government response to COVID-19.

Brown Out: Be prepared for the Army's IPPS-A pause

By 1st Lt. GIA CRUZ G1 IPPS-A OIC

FORT POLK, La. - With the much anticipated release of the Integrated Personnel and Pay System-Army for the Army's active component, human resources professionals are excited to have a consolidation of 40+ HR systems, into one.

One warning from the IPPS-A leaders located in the Pentagon is that Soldiers and leaders should have their records up-todate before the brown out period.

The brown out is what the Army is considering an administrative pause. From Dec. 1-21, the new system needs time to transfer data from HR legacy systems into IPPS-A. This means that all systems will be temporarily shut down providing zero capabilities for Soldiers and leaders to update any administrative data. The brown out will also put a pause to all permanent change of sStation movements.

How does this affect Individual Soldiers? Soldiers will not be able to add or update any of their personal or military records. Whether it is to add an award, or update life changes (birth of a child, DD93

or pay inquiries to name a few), the Soldier will not be able to amend any files until after Dec. 21. This could affect Soldiers who may be going to promotion/separation boards, had a change in marital status or an outdated address for Basic Allowance for Housing purposes.

How does this affect commanders and units? Monthly reports will not generate due to the brown out. Units should pull reports and documents from their systems right before the systems temporarily stop working. This will provide the most up to date data, and while the Army is conducting a transition of systems, unit clerks will manually input any additions to their most up-to-date roster and reports. Units will not be able to in/out process Soldiers, submit pay inquiries or update records.

Affected documents include, but are not limited to:

- AAA rosters
- PERSTEMPO
- ORB/ERB/SRBs
- PRR/DD93s
- Service computation
- Promotion point work sheet
- Gains rosters



The Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk IPPS-A team briefs 705th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company leaders about the impacts of the brown out period.

- Loss rosters
- TA requests

• Retirement/separation packet submission

Unit commander's finance reports

After the brown out period is concluded, Soldiers and leaders will be able to upload data and update any information that wasn't accessible during the transition between the legacy systems and IPPS-A.

Training tools are made available to Soldiers and leaders through the G1 Sharepoint and monthly face-to-face training from the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk IPPS-A team.





NSU honors Soldier grad

Dr. Chris Maggio, Northwestern State University president, (left), Capt. Fulton R. Johnson II (center) and his spouse, Kimberly, were present as Johnson was honored for his military service during NSU's football game held March 20. The ceremony continues the university's tradition of recognizing veterans at home athletic events. Johnson serves as a Forward Support Company Observer with Task Force 2, Joint Readiness Training Center Operations Group. A native of Baton Rouge, Johnson graduated from Northwestern in 2013 and commissioned as a logistics officer through NSU's Reserve Officers' Training Corps program where he earned Airborne wings, the Air Assault badge and served in the leadership position of Demon Battalion executive officer.

Geronimo arms room leads way, sets standard

By T.C. BRADFORD Public affairs specialist

FORT POLk, La. — Walk through the Headquarters and Headquarters, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment orderly room and in the rear of the building, next to the gym, you will find the arms room. Arms rooms are an integral part of any unit and have a lot to do with the success of the organization.

An arms room is where all the sensitive equipment is stored, tracked and maintained. There are weapons there including rifles and side-arms, but peripheral equipment is also stored there including mortar tubes, night-vision goggles, sights and other items the units need to accomplish their mission. They are also used to house privately owned weapons for those who live in the barracks or otherwise have no safe place for storage.

Being an armorer can be a daunting job. Armorers are fiscally responsible for equipment worth millions of dollars and must be familiar with reams of regulations required by the job and a large checklist of tasks to be accomplished daily.

Amanda Pete, physical security supervisor with the Directorate of Emergency Services Physical Security Division, brought a group of new armorers and alternates to the HHC arms room to show them how to do their job properly. She chose the Geronimo arms room as an example of best practices.

"They are in the top 1% of arms rooms on the installation in the areas of security, accountability and maintenance of sensitive equipment," she said. "They've proven themselves by passing inspections through the years and they always come out on top."

During the training, Pete went through the armorer's checklist, showing that the arms room staff is well organized.

The head armorer is Sgt. Nikolas Lukens, HHC, 1/509. According to Pete, Lukens has the arms room running like a well-oiled machine.

"We have a pretty good system set up. Before (Lukens took over) we were okay. We passed inspections and were good with sensitive items," he said. "When I came in, I wanted to set up a system so that any armorer who came after me could hit the ground running."

Lukens said he went through the arms room and set up systems to assist inventory, accountability and security. He talked with other sections asking them what he could do better. With the input he received, he was able to set up a smoothly running system that has made processes like drawing weapons quicker and more efficient.

It takes organization skills to ensure your arms room is within regulations and working at maximum efficiency, skills Lukens admits he needed to learn.

"I was unorganized when I first joined the Army. I had a chaotic way of organizing stuff," he said. "When I (was assigned as armorer), it took me a while to put things in order, but once I did, I noticed I didn't have to work as hard to maintain it."

Lukens takes his job seriously as he is

responsible for about \$19 million worth of equipment. But his main concern is ensuring his Soldiers can quickly and efficiently draw the equipment they need to meet rotational Soldiers on the field of battle.

"At times, it's stressful, but I can see the outcome of the work I've put in here, I see how things are going well," he said. "I go through the checklists, refer back to my system ... that reduces the stress."

Lukens' efforts have made the life of an HHC Soldier a lot easier. Because of the way he runs the arms room, Soldiers know when they need to draw equipment to head out to the field, the process will be as painless as possible.

"My commander and first sergeant are happy when the arms room is busy, because that means something is about to happen in the field," Lukens said. "The processes we put in place have made my unit's life a little easier. It shortens the timeline so they don't need to be here before dawn to draw a weapon they need at noon. We can get the entire section drawn in about 15 minutes."

Pete said DES inspects all arms rooms on the installation annually. She said organization is the key to running a successful arms room.

"If you aren't doing these things well, you will get extra attention from us. The best way to be accountable for the equipment under your charge is to be organized," she said. "If it's disorganized and (the armorer) can't find things, it hard to keep track of where their equipment is."

Please see Geronimo, page 10

Geronimo-Continued from page 9

Pete talked about the voluminous work an armorer faces when they step into the job. "There is a massive amount of paperwork involved with the job, and new armorers aren't always ready for it. We try to give them an introduction during classroom and hands-on portions of the training," she said.

She said the Army is searching for the right solutions to automate arms rooms systems like utilizing computers to scan items. Pete said a successful armorer needs the right personality.

"The more you care, the better job you are going to do," she said. "I can give you a brand-new phone with all the bells and whistles, but if you don't care about it, you're not going to do a great job with it. Success relies on personality as much as technology and methodology."

Lukens and his fellow armorers are setting the bar for arms room operations and their efforts have not gone unnoticed. Not only are they held up as the standard for Fort Polk, they have been submitted for the Army Achievement Medal for their efforts.

"I thought I was just another armorer, doing my job like every other armorer in the Army. I knew I had a good system and was confident it was the way to do things. There are processes put in place that insured I would not have a failure when it comes to drawing equipment at any time, Lukens explained. "I felt proud when I found out our arms room was one of the best on the installation."



Amanda Pete, (right) physical security supervisor with the Directorate of Emergency Services Physical Security Division, walks new armorers through an arms room inspection checklist during a recent training session.

Pete said when she performs an arms room inspection, she gets indications of the health of the organization.

"What I can tell about that unit is they have standards. I know that they are performing excellently on a larger scale," she said. "I can tell just by walking through an arms room how that unit is running."

If you are an armorer who thinks things can be done better, or you need guidance on the best method to accomplish your mission, Pete has some advice for you.

"Come to our training. Then invite us into your arms room and let us live there for a day or a week to get you on track," she said. "We want to give you the information you need and then help you implement what you have learned, but it all starts with training." Call (337) 531-7756 to schedule training or for more information.



O/The Guardian March 26, 2021 ACFT-Continued from page 7

something inherent to Army culture.

The current plan is that each October, we will separate men's and women's scores and rank order them from highest to lowest. The top 1% of scores in each gender may make up the Platinum category, top 2-10% in the Gold category, top 11-25% in Silver category, and top 26-50% in the Bronze category. The green category may be for Soldiers who pass the ACFT, but do not place in the top 50% of scores across the Total Army.

While the Army is exploring the potential to use these tiers in the future, ACFT 3.0 maintains the gender neutral baseline of 60 points in each event, for a total of 360 points on the ACFT.

This baseline is the expected standard to be a Soldier in any MOS, and is directly related to a Soldier's ability to successfully complete combat-related WTBDs. Independent research shows that the ACFT is nearly twice as effective at predicting WTBD performance, compared to the APFT.

While we already know that the ACFT is a far better test than the APFT, the Army will continue to refine the ACFT as necessary and appropriate.

These adjustments will make the ACFT the most effective test for the Army and



our Soldiers. The refinements will be data driven and it's critical we make training for, and taking the ACFT, one of our highest priorities. As of last week, only 25% of the Army had taken the test. We cannot, and should not, make final policy decisions based this limited data set. Taking the ACFT and putting scores into DTMS is critical to allow leaders to make these decisions.

While we expect to be ready for full implementation around March 2022, we will only make policy changes when sufficient data exists for Army leaders to make fully informed decisions.

Until full implementation, any diagnostic score recorded in DTMS will not be linked to your name in any Army personnel system and no administrative actions will be taken for or against you on the basis of your performance on the ACFT during this ongoing transition period.

Training resources are available at <u>www.</u> <u>army.mil/ACFT</u>, including the ACFT Training Guide, which contains a full 30day training plan.

While there is often a focus on fitness, as it is one of the cornerstones of a fit and lethal force, fitness is just one metric the Army rewards excellence for. Soldiers understand there are many leadership and



• ALL Soldiers are expected to pass the 60-point Army Standard on each test event — regardless of age or gender.

• Soldiers will choose either the leg tuck or plank for their core strength test event.

• The Army is exploring options for Soldiers to be tiered based on their gender and total ACFT score.

• Take the test! The diagnostic ACFT scores uploaded to DTMS will not be used against you or even available to your local command, but are critical to providing sufficient data for Army leaders to make fully informed decisions.

Modernizing for the future battlefield isn't just about technology and equipment. We must modernize the way we view physical fitness and train our bodies to ensure we remain the world's most fit, ready, and lethal force. Thank you for what you do each and every day for our Army and our Nation.

People First. Winning Matters. Army Strong.

Sergeant Major of the Army, Michael A. Grinston



"I got the COVID-19 Vaccine to stay safe and keep others safe."

Sgt. Francisco Dimas Health Care Specialist Emergency Department Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital

Hilmes talks Army safety during Joint Readiness Training Center visit

By CHUCK CANNON Command Information officer

FORT POLK, La. - Brig. Gen. Andrew Hilmes, commanding general, U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center and director of Army Safety, visited the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk training team March 24. A member of the IRTC and Fort Polk Public Affairs Office interviewed Hilmes prior to returning to his home station at Fort Rucker, Alabama.

Q: What is the purpose of your visit to the JRTC and Fort Polk?

A: As the commanding general of the Combat Readiness Center and director of Army Safety, my charge is to run the Army safety program day-to-day. The best way I can get a sense of where we're at is to get out and visit as many installations as possible and gauge their safety program.

By visiting with installations, meeting with leadership there, finding out what challenges they have, it helps me make informed decisions when it comes to safety policy and safety program management.

My sergeant major and I usually travel quite a bit, but the pandemic has put a halt to a lot of that. We're just now getting back on the road. The JRTC and Fort Polk was at the top of my list because of the mission here. This is one of the Army's premiere training centers, and touches thousands upon thousands of Soldiers each month. When we think about safety, especially tactical safety, and how to train safely and successfully at the same time, there's really no better place to visit than to one of the Army's combat training centers. We were very eager to get here.

Q: Have you been to the JRTC before? When? For what purpose?

A: I came here a couple of years ago to check on a unit. I was in the 3rd Infantry Division and we had several of our units that rotated through. I came to check on those Soldiers and see how they were performing.

Prior to that, I've been here as part of a rotational unit, not always the most pleasant experience, both times in preparation for deployments.

Q: Did you have any expectations of what you would find at the JRTC, and how were those expectations met?

A: The one thing that hasn't changed is the professionalism of the Soldiers and leaders, and the dedicated DA (Department of the Army) civilians that run Fort Polk and the JRTC. It is a premiere installation, professional in every aspect. I did get to spend



Brig. Gen. Andrew Hilmes, commanding general, U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center and director of Army Safety (left), discusses drivers training issues with Brig. Gen. David S. Doyle, commanding general, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk March 23 during Hilmes' visit to the JRTC and Fort Polk.

some time during this trip with members of Ops Group, and their professional reputation is solidly intact. That was more of a confirmation of what I've always thought of this location.

JRTC and Fort has always had a reputation as being a tough place. We don't train to mediocrity, we train to a very high standard. Fort Polk has always done a very good job of pushing you. Units come here and think they are pretty good, and maybe they self-identify one or two weaknesses. The JRTC is good at making you understand those are definitely weaknesses, and then they help you make it better.

I've been impressed with the complexity we've brought into the rotational scenarios. JRTC is flexible in the way it will change each rotation. The mission sets are never quite the same. You may start with live fire one rotation, you may end with it the next, and put it in the middle in the next. It doesn't matter.

What you've done at Peason Ridge is impressive, and I think it is probably one of the best, if not the best, way in the Army we can truly test a brigade combat team's operational reach by forcing them to make that movement.

JRTC has evolved with the times to meet the complex operations we expect our forces to fight in.

Q: What do you think of the JRTC teams who facilitate training and the job they do during rotations?

A: I'm impressed. I spent a lot of time with the respective safety offices here; the team is small but I would say they punch well above their weight. When a brigade combat team comes through here for a rotation, typically they bring a safety officer who is on the brigade staff. The JRTC team does a good job of linking up with that safety officer months in advance, advising them on friction points they can expect to receive while here and what they need to focus on. Once that safety officer is on the ground, they have multiple touch points with that individual daily.

The challenge at JRTC is that the brigade combat team is typically 4,000 or 4,500 Soldiers, and you do a great job of stressing that brigade and spreading them out over a large distance. You don't have the luxury, with a small safety office, to cover down that brigade combat team. The only way we can compensate for that is through our observer/controller trainers — they essentially become safety disciples themselves, covering down at echelon, across that formation, and they do a lot of the work to make sure that rotational unit is not taking on unnecessary risks.

It's truly a team effort.

Q: What is your message for the JRTC team?

A: My message would be they are doing a great job. In the safety business you can nev-



Hilmes Continued from page 12

er rest on your laurels. You're only as good as your last meal. The challenge is how you ensure proper risk mitigation is being conducted throughout a rotation. JRTC does a wonderful job identifying when units are at the most risk. What I heard yesterday is that it is typically during RSOI (Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration) when the units are acclimating to Fort Polk, and then at the end of the mission when they are getting ready to start rotating Soldiers back to the RUBA (Rotational Unit Bivouac Area). The unit might be prone to smelling the barn, so to speak, and get a little bit complacent.

Q: Studies have shown that military vehicle driving mishaps spike from April through June. Can you provide insight as to why that is and its importance?

A: We are entering a period of elevated risks for tactical vehicle mishaps. Every year, about a third of the Soldiers who die in tactical vehicle mishaps, are lost in the months of April, May and June.

Why is that? Some of that is operation tempo. May and June are not the busiest months in terms of miles driven, but it's right around the time that we start to increase our mileage. That's probably based on weather — the summer months are usually better for training. You have longer periods of illumination.

The other, probably more important, driving factor is that we start to see a lot of Soldiers PCSing. Each summer in the Army, about a third of our Soldiers take PCS orders and move somewhere else, often, without a replacement on site to backfill them, especially at the noncommissioned officer level. The challenge then becomes at the E-5, E-6 and E-7 levels, do we

have transition plans for those noncommissioned officers who are leaving? If it's not viable to have the backfill on site to replace them, and we have to have someone to act in that position, we must be deliberate and ensure they understand what we expect of them, what their responsibilities are going to be, and that we have a good leader handoff.

That's the challenge I would throw at JRTC: How are you going to mitigate that risk during what the data tells us is a high risk time for vehicle mishaps? Is Fort Polk going to rise up and set the standard for the rest of the Army? That's the challenge.

Q: What is the answer to cutting the vehicle mishap numbers?

A: The first thing is the Army's drivers training program needs to be a big deal to us. Every year, 20% of the Soldiers who enter the Army do not have a civilian driver's license. The first time they are likely to drive a vehicle in the Army will be a big, unwieldy, multi-ton Army vehicle with tons of blind spots. We need to make sure we have good programs in place to train our Soldiers to standards. The 40-hour course we have that gives them their license is not good enough.

We expect our Soldiers to drive off-road, with night vision goggles, in convoy movements driving extended distances, with dust and other limiting conditions.

I've spoken with Brigadier General (David S.) Doyle, (commanding general, JRTC and Fort Polk) and he is already all over it. We had a team here about a month ago providing training to 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, but he (Doyle) had already done a pretty deep dive on driver's training across the installation to see where Fort Polk units were.



Brig. Gen. Andrew Hilmes, (left) commanding general, U.S. Arny Combat Readiness Center and director of Army Safety, visits with Brig. Gen. David S. Doyle, commanding general, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk March 23 during Hilmes visit to the JRTC and Fort Polk.

I know that as rotational units come through, OC/Ts now take time looking at the driver's programs units are bringing with them, they're making sure units' drivers are licensed and qualified on the vehicles they are assigned. We're not going to risk the great training you provide here.

170000

The second thing is evaluate how well units are conducting their troop leading procedures at echelon.

OC/Ts are in good position to stop a unit if they see a failure to conduct the right pre-combat checks, the right pre-inspections and a failure to do sufficient planning before you start a movement.

If we don't do a sufficient map or physical recon of the route we're about to use, and we don't identify potential hazards along that route, we're increasing our risk profile.

I think JRTC is well positioned to help with that challenge, but make no mistake, it's an Army-wide issue.

In closing, Hilmes spoke about the most dangerous time of year for Soldiers.

With safety, much of the risk when we lose Soldiers is predictable.

Part of it is knowing when to expect more risks and when things are more dangerous. Ground safety, it's the third quarter when we see more mishaps occurring.

Most people think the holidays are the most dangerous times for off duty safety, because Soldiers are going home on leave, doing a lot of traveling over Thanksgiving and Christmas when the weather might be bad, but it's actually not the most dangerous period. The most dangerous period is later this summer over the July 4 weekend.

The Fourth of July is our most dangerous time, and July is the most dangerous month to be driving, whether motorcycle or four-wheeled vehicle.

Community

Briefs

Story time

Reading a good book can whisk children away to different worlds and invigorate the imagination.

Allen Memorial Library hosts Story Time and Craft Tuesdays at 11:30 a.m. beginning Tuesday.

After the book, kids can enjoy a fun craft.

Pre-readers 0-5 years of age and children 6-12 are invited to participate. Space is limited.

Registration is required the Friday prior to the event.

For more information call 531-2665.

Intramural sports

As the weather warms up, Fort Polk's Intramural Sports hosts a variety of outdoor activities for Soldiers and Families:

• Saturday — a three versus three pick-up basketball tournament begins at 9:30 a.m. at the Warrior Fitness Center outdoor courts.

Teams are three to four players each. Sign up is Saturday from 9-9:30 a.m.

This event is open to active duty Soldiers, retirees, Family members and Department of Defense civilians 18 years and older.

For more information call 531-2056.

• Monday through April 1 — Intramural Sports hosts a soccer tournament beginning at 6 p.m. Monday. Teams may consist of between 7-10 players.

The tournament will be a doubleelimination format and will follow the most recent NCAA rules.

The championship game takes place April 1 at 7 p.m.

BOSS

Ready to have some fun playing pool?

Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers hosts free pool for single Soldiers Saturdays and Sundays from 2-6 p.m. at the Anvil Bar.

For more information call 531-1948.



Social distancing and mask wearing were a big part of the first in-person Military Spouse Employment Fair since the pandemic began. The event was held March 24 at Fort Polk's Youth Gym.

Fort Polk spouses take advantage of employment fair

By ANGIE THORNE

Public affairs specialist

FORT POLK, La. — The first in-person Military Spouse Employment Fair since the pandemic began took place March 24 from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at Fort Polk's Youth Gym. It was a different look compared to past fairs that were packed with employers and large numbers of potential employees. Due to an abundance of caution and COVID-19 requirements such as social distancing and a mask mandate, the fair had more manageable numbers when it came to both employers and attendance numbers.

Stacey Delgado, Fort Polk's Employment Readiness Program manager, said though the numbers were smaller, she felt the event was a success.

"It has been a positive turnout. There are a nice amount of spouses coming through the doors and the chain of command has been supportive of the event," she said. "We have employers hiring military spouses on the spot and that's a great thing.'

Carrie Rohloff, a military spouse, said she thought the COVID-19 precautions were a good thing.

"I think the event has been well done considering the circumstances," she said.

Rohloff said she attended the employment fair because she was done trying to be a stay-at-home spouse.

"I have to be doing something. I want to be productive and have a purpose," she said.

Rohloff said many of the jobs she has held in the past have been in the retail sector, but she is open to trying something new.

"I like the exposure I'm getting to different employers at the employment fair. This event is giving me a chance to see what jobs are available," she said.

Lori Clouse, Fort Polk branch manager of Barksdale Federal Credit Union, said the employment fair gave Barksdale visibility as a potential empoyer.

"Often, people are surprised that we have a branch on post," she said.

Clouse said many of the spouses she talks to bring experience to the table, but even if they don't, it's not a problem.

"We can help train them. It's a chance for them to get a foot in the door and take those skills with them when they leave Fort Polk. We like to do our part to support spouses," she said.

Also attending the event, Juwell Pope, an Army spouse, said she liked what she saw at the employment fair.

"I've been at Fort Polk for about a month and this is a great opportunity for spouses coming from other posts," she said.

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Spouses

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Pope said the people at the employment fair were welcoming and friendly.

"I was impressed with the potential for advancement, income and their flexibility," she said. "I think the fair offers a good variety of employers and job opportunities."

Ashley Rachal, a Lowe's scheduling and staffing administrative employee, said Lowe's participated in the employment fair because Fort Polk is an important part of the Leesville community.

"We are here to support Fort Polk spouses because they deserve an opportunity to get a job when they need one," she said.

Julia Nielsen, Fort Polk Exchange employer recruiting assistant, said the spouse employment fair was a wonderful event and a great way to support the Fort Polk community.

"We have had quite a few spouses stop by to talk to us about possible employment," she said. "It's about our family supporting their Family."



Carly Manzanares (left), a military dependent, interviews with Ashley Rachal, a Lowe's scheduling and staffing admin employee, at the Fort Polk Military Spouse Employment Fair March 24.



Alizabeth Cannon (left), a military dependent, fills out an application to work at Goodwill as Paul Dunham (middle), Goodwill donation service attendant, and Victoria Sitting, Goodwill assistant manager, stand ready to answer questions.







Beth Robson (left), Walgreen's Leesville store manager, interviews military spouse, Juwell Nielsen, at the Fort Polk Military Spouse Employment Fair March 24 at the Youth Gym.

Fort Polk Warrior Wrestling Club heads to State Championship

By T.C. BRADFORD Public affairs specialist

FORT POLK, La. - Fort Polk has a youth wrestling team and they aren't playing around. There are about 15 wrestlers on the team winning medals from tournaments across the region. The team just returned from the regional competition, 'Texarkana Classic' and every wrestler brought home a medal. The team falls under the Directorate of Family Morale, Welfare and Recreation Child and Youth Service Sports Program with wrestlers varying in age from 5 to 14 years. Sgt. Chris Horne, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment, is one of their coaches. He spoke about the Texarkana Classic.

"We (the coaches) are very proud of these kids. We took 15 wrestlers to the meet and all of them placed in the top three of their weight class," he said. "These kids are coming together, putting in the work and doing an outstanding job."

The Texarkana Classic brought competitors from Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas and Louisiana. Next up is the state match taking place in Baton Rouge March 27-28. Horne said the team is in good shape heading into the meet.

"We're strong and everyone is ready to compete," he said. "Going to a state championship is intimidating but these kids want to go. They want to get out there and have fun."

Horne talked about coaching the kids and how they learn to wrestle. Much depends on the age of the wrestler. He said wrestlers on the younger end of the scale are learning the moves and actions by rote, building muscle memory, but there is a time that the lessons click.

"They get more mature as they grow and practice and, at about 8 years old, something clicks and they become more interested in what they are doing. They really fall in love with it," he said.

Sgt. 1st Class David Giganti, Special Operations Training Detachment, also coaches and has a son and daughter on the team. He explained why his kids wrestle.

"It's one of the few sports where it's you against your opponent. Win, lose or draw, it's all on you," he said. "There are no excuses. You give it all you have and at the end of the day, either you did, or you didn't."

Giganti said he wanted his children to grow up in a sport that requires accountability and the one-on-one competition of wrestling develops that trait.



Fort Polk's youth wrestling team and their coaches brought home winning medals from the Texarkana Classic and the team has been practicing for the state competition that takes place in Baton Rouge Saturday and Sunday.



"Basketball or football team members can always lay the blame elsewhere: 'Our quarterback had a bad day' or 'Our defense is terrible'. With wrestling, it's you. If you lose, you have no one to blame but you. Win and it's all on you as well," he said.

"It not only instills ethics like working hard and personal accountability, but helps foster character. How do you deal with defeat? You are the team," he explained. "When the kids lose, they take it personally, you can see the emotion. The elation when they win is amazing, too, because they know they did it on their own."

Horne said he tries to break younger wrestlers out of their shell and teach them wrestling is an aggressive sport.

"It's all about having fun and being aggressive in the ring. If we can teach the kids to attack, be aggressive and have fun while doing it, they usually come out on top," he said.

Giganti said wrestling helps the kids understand and overcome their limitations,



A coaches leads wrestlers in skill drills during a recent practice for the state championship meet.

and develop their skill set.

"My children understand that God gave them a skill and an ability and they want to do the best with their ability," he said. "There are hundreds of kids at these tournaments and it's great seeing them offer up a prayer before entering the ring. Many of them will say a prayer afterwards thanking (their higher power) for the win or for the lessons they learned in a loss."

The team practices every Tuesday and Thursday at 6 p.m. in the Youth Gym, bldg 2070. The team is preparing for the state championship and Giganti said he thinks they will do well.

"I think we're going to bring home some medals and I won't be surprised if a couple of them are championships. We've been doing well at tournaments all over the state and I think we have a really good shot," he said.

If you have a child that might be interested in joining the team, you can call Horne at (937) 844-8461.



Hurricanes: Preparedness is essential to safety

By MARK S. LESLIE DPTMS and MIKE BUTERBAUGH ACS

FORT POLK, La. — 2020 was a historic year for many reasons, but none more so for southwest Louisiana than hurricanes Laura and Delta. The surrounding parishes and Fort Polk felt the full impacts and there is still recovery going on from these disasters.

For many longtime residents of the area it was an eye-opening experience and for the newcomer, likely

COMMENTARY

a "what I have gotten myself into" moment. The storms destroyed or damaged homes and

businesses, made roadways impassable and damaged power grids, subsequently affecting power and water in homes.

Fort Polk was not immune to this and the residents suffered some hardships for several days. The installation did a magnificent job of preparing, responding and recovering from these disasters and the residents are fortunate to have such a dedicated team that prepares in depth every year for hurricane season.

The 2021 hurricane season is right around the corner (June — November) and early analysis from the National Hurricane Center out of Miami, is calling for, once again, an active hurricane season. The Fort Polk team is in full preparation mode, busy hardening the installation, posturing assets and reviewing plans to ensure the Fort Polk community remains prepared and protected. However, for the newcomer to Fort Polk and maybe even the long-time residents, there are some things the individuals can and should do to prepare themselves for this season.

Throughout the hurricane season, you will see articles in the Guardian and Fort Polk's social media platforms from the installation emergency manager as well as other sources informing residents how to prepare and be ready. However, this article is not about what the installation is doing to make you safe — it is about what you can do to prepare for hurricane season at your level to keep you and your family safe and comfortable.

Mike Buterbaugh (Army Community Service) and I both worked many long hours at Fort Polk during hurricanes Laura and Delta and we (and our families) both were experiencing the effects of the hurricanes on our own homes off post. We prepared and were able to focus on the mission at Fort Polk and know our families were safe and relatively comfortable.

In this article, we will share some of the personal preparations that enabled us to focus on Fort Polk and hopefully, some valuable lessons learned to help the reader prepare for the 2021 severe weather season.

Probably one of the most important things is to have is power when the power goes out — that means a generator. Several

> years ago, I purchased a Generac (fueled by natural gas). It powers the whole house and comes on au-

tomatically when the power switches off. Prior to the Laura and Delta hurricanes, it would come on maybe for a few hours (at most) before we regained power.

In hurricane Laura and Delta it got a workout! We lost power for 16 days and it held up. I would turn it off in the evening when I returned home for a few hours, check the oil and give it a break while we slept. This allowed my wife to have air conditioning and be able to cook, refrigerate and everything else.

Additionally, several years back, I started saving any tea jug, 2 liter soda bottle, orange juice containers — whatever drink we emptied (except milk). Once done with them, we sanitize them, fill them with tap water and put them in our little barn. When we lost water, we had about a hundred of them. A good water supply to use to flush the toilets, wash dishes and cook.

Additionally, I always keep an emergency supply of bottled water (several cases). These preparations allowed me to know my wife was safe and comfortable while I was tending to Fort Polk.

While all may not need or want a generator capability to the level of my Generac, a generator in hurricane season is key. I highly recommend getting a small generator that can power the essentials BEFORE hurricane season, as they are hard to find during the season and expensive during a crisis — if you can find one at all.

I also recommend training yourself how to operate it safely BEFORE hurricane season. You do not want to be figuring it out by flashlight and discover you are missing something (like heavy-duty extension cords).

Additionally, fuel for the generator is



key. To keep a generator running full time is a chore and requires a lot of fuel. Fuel that likely will be in high demand and maybe even rationed. Get several fuel cans when you purchase the generator, fill them up and store them outside. I also recommend buying some fuel stabilizer to ensure the fuel stays good. Rotate it out every hurricane season to ensure the fuel does not go bad. Fill up your car, lawn mower or other tools out of your cans and refill your fuel cans so you will be ready for whatever comes.

We will talk briefly about insurance and claims. If you live in post housing or rent a home in one of our partner parishes, I recommend you purchase renters insurance. It is very cheap and well worth the investment. We used this insurance for years (when active duty) and it came in handy during PCS moves when invariably, something was broken.

As a rule, the Army no longer pays for damages caused by natural disasters. For hurricanes Laura and Delta — the Fort Polk installation Staff Judge Advocate office was able to pull off a miracle and get a waiver, so claims could be filed for the damages and loss caused by these hurricanes, but that may not always happen. Protect your property with renters insurance. This is a personal responsibility, much as it is for homeowners to have insurance for their homes — and renters insurance is cheap!

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Shooters bring out long guns for friendly competition

By ANGIE THORNE Public affairs specialist

FORT POLK, La. — Sixteen competitors took to the firing line March 20 to test their shooting skills at Fort Polk's Directorate of Family Morale, Welfare and Recreation Rifle Competition at the MWR Recreational Shooting Range.















Preparedness

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Mike's comments hit some important areas worthy of sharing:

Have cash on hand to pay for fuel for the generator and more canned food than you think you need. When the power was out, it was impossible to find a place to use debit cards. With limited cash on hand, we did not have enough for everything the family needed. I highly recommend that families put a little cash to the side each payday so that they have a few hundred dollars cash on hand during a crisis.

Canned food and non-perishable foods are necessary to have when power outages occur. If you have a gas stove or a grill (with an extra propane tank) then you can still cook, but if you have an electric stove, you will find yourself relying on some of these canned foods as the primary source of food.

Grocery store supplies were limited, so stock up and have a four-day supply of non-perishable food and potable water. Rotate your food throughout to ensure it is not expired when you need to use it.

Limited storage for a four-day supplies of water for the entire family was an issue. Part of the solution was the "old-fashioned" filling the bathtubs with water prior to the storm solution. This allowed us the ability to flush toilets and do laundry until the water service resumed.

Fuel for the generator was problematic. I did not have enough gas cans to keep the generator operational as much as we needed it and by the time I recognized this, the shelves were empty of gas cans. By then the subsequent "gas dash" had begun and long lines at the fuel stations were problematic.

Another area that is worthy of highlighting is medication. Personal medication for conditions such as diabetes and other medical conditions that require regular medication could be a real issue if not prepared. Having at least a four-day supply of medications is vital.

Most pharmacies were closed and not able to provide refills. Additionally, having a plan to keep critical items like medication and breast milk properly stored in cold storage is important so they don't spoil. Coolers and extra ice packs on hand to freeze prior to the storm will help in preserving them during a loss of power.

The last thing we wanted to provide is some tools to the reader and Fort Polk residents (and those that live in the community). A good resource is the book "The Hurricane Preparedness Handbook" by Bob Stearns. It covers the full gauntlet of things to consider for those living in the hurricane impact zone and I would recommend anyone moving to Fort Polk, Louisiana or the Gulf Coast to look at it. It is crammed packed with just about every contingency.

Another great resource is the "Ready Army" web site <u>https://ready.army.mil/</u> — a site that covers everything that could happen to an Army family at any installation in the world.

Another resource is the Louisiana Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) "Get a Game Plan" App (more information at: https:// www.getagameplan.org). It is specific to our region and available in your App store free.

Lastly, an additional great resource that I use quite frequently, not just in hurricane season, is the DOTD "LA 511" APP (https:// www.511la.org/map#:News). All kinds of good information on road conditions, closed roads, live feed cameras and a host of invaluable tools. Check it out.

This year is likely to be an active severe weather season: Take the time, "build a kit, make a plan and stay informed!"





Patriot Warrior Restaurant 7 Day Menu Breakfast: \$3.65; Lunch: \$5.85; Dinner: \$5.10; Brunch: \$6.55; Supper: \$8.00 Hours of Operation:

Breakfast: 0730-0900; Lunch: 1130-1300; Dinner: 1700-1830;

Brunch: 0930-1300; Supper: 1600-1730.

Open to all military and civilian personnel. 2020 Glory Loop, Building 1162 Fort Polk, LA 71459

29 MAR 21	30 MAR 21	31 MAR 21	01 APR 21	02 APR 21	03 APR 21	04 APR 21
					-	
Breakfast Boiled Eggs Scrambled Eggs Omelets Turkey Bacon Oven Fried Ba- con Pork Sausage Home Fried Potatoes White Rice Biscuits Asst. Fresh Smoothies Creamed Gravy Creamed Beef Asst. Fruit Pancakes Oatmeal and Grits	Breakfast Boiled Eggs Scrambled Eggs Omelets Turkey Bacon Oven Fried Ba- con Pork Sausage Home Fried Potatoes White Rice Biscuits Asst. Fresh Smoothies Creamed Gravy Creamed Beef Asst. Fruit Pancakes Oatmeal and Grits	Breakfast Boiled Eggs Scrambled Eggs Omelets Turkey Bacon Oven Fried Bacon Pork Sausage Home Fried Pota- toes White Rice Biscuits Asst. Fresh Smoothies Creamed Gravy Creamed Beef Asst. Fruit Pancakes Oatmeal and Grits	Breakfast Boiled Eggs Scrambled Eggs Omelets Turkey Bacon Oven Fried Bacon Pork Sausage Home Fried Pota- toes White Rice Biscuits Asst. Fresh Smoothies Creamed Gravy Creamed Beef Asst. Fruit Pancakes Oatmeal and Grits	Breakfast Boiled Eggs Scrambled Eggs Omelets Turkey Bacon Oven Fried Ba- con Pork Sausage Home Fried Potatoes White Rice Biscuits Asst. Fresh Smoothies Creamed Gravy Creamed Beef Asst. Fruit Pancakes Oatmeal and Grits	Brunch Boiled Eggs Scrambled Eggs Omelets Oven Fried Ba- con Pork Sausage Home Fried Potatoes White Rice Biscuits Creamed Gravy French Toast Grits Roast Pork Baked Black- ened Salmon Bourbon Chick- en Chicken Pot Pie Seasoned 5-Way Veggies Calico Corn Hot Rolls Chicken Gravy Short order Asst. Salads Asst. Desserts Asst. Fresh Fruit Soup	Brunch Boiled Eggs Scrambled Eggs Omelets Oven Fried Ba- con Pork Sausage Home Fried Potatoes White Rice Biscuits Creamed Gravy Pancakes Grits Roast Turkey Onion Lemon Baked Fish Rosemary Grilled Pork Chops Herbed Broccoli Cauliflower Hot Rolls Brown Gravy Short Order Asst. Salads Asst. Deserts Asst. Fresh Fruit Soup
Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Easter Lunch	Lunch		
 Beef Stroganoff Grilled Salmon S Spice Chicken White Rice Pork Fried Rice Oven Baked Potatoes Herbed Broccoli Vegetable Stir Fry Egg Rolls Asst. Fresh Smoothies Asst. Salads Asst. Desserts Asst. Fresh Fruit Short Order Asst. Pizzas Soup 	 Tacos Shrimp Fajitas Savory baked Chicken Pork chops Lemon pepper Fish Refried Beans Oven Glow Pota- toes Mexican Corn Herbed Green Beans Jalapeño Corn- bread Asst. Fresh Smoothies Asst. Salads Asst. Desserts Asst. Fresh Fruit Short Order Asst. Pizzas Soup 	 Spaghetti w/ Meatballs Lasagna Chicken pasta Hot Italian Sau- sage Lyonnais Rice Lyonnais Pota- toes Seasoned Corn Herbed Cauli- flower Garlic Bread Asst. Fresh Smoothies Asst. Salads Asst. Salads Asst. Desserts Asst. Fresh Fruit Short Order Asst. Pizzas Soup 	 Cornish Hen Honey Glazed Ham Grilled Steak Crab Legs Fried Shrimp Mac & Cheese Broccoli Cheddar Rice Casserole Sweet Potato Casse- role Collard Greens Com on the cob Hot Rolls Asst. Fresh Smoothies Asst. Desserts Asst. Fresh Fruit Short Order Asst. Pizzas Soup 	 Salisbury steak Baked Chicken Buttered Penne Noodles Home Fried Potatoes Fried Cabbage Peas with Mush- rooms Hot Rolls Asst. Fresh Smoothies Asst. Salads Asst. Desserts Asst. Fresh Fruit Short Order Asst. Pizzas Soup 		
Dinner	<u>Dinner</u>	<u>Dinner</u>	<u>Dinner</u>	<u>Dinner</u>	<u>Supper</u>	<u>Supper</u>
 General Tso Chicken Basil Baked Cod Parsley Buttered Potatoes Orange Rice Peas & Carrots Succotash Egg Rolls Hot Rolls Asst. Fresh Smoothies Asst. Salads Asst. Desserts Asst. Fresh Fruit Short Order Asst. Pizzas Soup 	 Herbed Baked Chicken Beef Pot Pie Parmesan Fish Paprika Pota- toes Rice Pilaf Spinach Marinated Glazed Carrots Hot Rolls Asst. Fresh Smoothies Asst. Salads Asst. Desserts Asst. Fresh Fruit Short Order Asst. Pizzas Soup 	 Chicken Parmessan Lemon Baked Cod Braised Beef Tossed Green Rice Baked Potatoes Oriental Veggies Lima Beans Garlic Bread Asst. Fresh Smoothies Asst. Salads Asst. Desserts Asst. Fresh Fruit Short Order Asst. Pizzas Soup 	 Szechwan Chicken Pork Adobo Grilled Salmon Oven Glo Potatoes Steamed Rice Cauliflower Green Beans Hot Rolls Asst. Fresh Smoothies Asst. Salads Asst. Desserts Asst. Fresh Fruit Short Order Asst. Pizzas Soup 	 Chicken A-la- King Creole Fish Long Grain Wild Rice Mashed Pota- toes Calico Cabbage Succotash Hot Rolls Asst. Fresh Smoothies Asst. Salads Asst. Salads Asst. Desserts Asst. Fresh Fruit Short Order Asst. Pizzas Soup 	 Orange Honey Glazed Cornish Hens Veal Parmesan Lemon Baked Fish Parsley Buttered Potatoes Buttered Egg Noodles Seasoned Peas and Carrots Creole Summer Squash Hot Rolls Asst. Salads Asst. Desserts Asst. Fresh Fruit Short Order Soup 	 Beef Stew Chicken Bulgogi Mustard Dill Fish Loaded Mashed Potatoes Steamed Rice Succotash Green Beans Hot Rolls Asst. Salads Asst. Desserts Asst. Fresh Fruit Short Order Soup

RANGER

MOUNTAIN